CALENDAR

OS ANGELES TIMES

JUNE 25, 1978

President Carter held a jazz party on the White House lawn last Sunday and invited some of the greats to play. It was possibly the most important day in the history of American music. Leonard Feather, Page 78.

JAZZ

Out of the Yard, Into the House

BY LEONARD FEATHER

I don't believe the White House has ever seen anything like this. This is hard to believe, because, as you can well see, this is just as much a part of the greatness of America as the White House itself or the Capitol building down the street. Anybody that wants to is free to go—but I'm going to stay and listen to some more music.

President Carter at White House Jazz Festival

● The overtones of the White House Jazz Festival still ring in our ears. Decades from now, history may show that last Sunday was a belated pivotal point in the accreditation of jazz as part of America's cultural development in this century.

Certainly, F.D.R. could have done what Jimmy Carter did, but the country was not ready; the racial climate was too hostile. Jazz made a modest entry into the White House when the Paul Winter sextet entertained at a dinner given by Jackie Kennedy. There have been other visits, among them Sarah Vaughan, Dizzy Gillespie and Earl Hines last November at a banquet for the shah of Iran.

Teddy Wilson plays piano at the White House concert.
Photo by Jim Pickerell

The evening most nearly comparable with last Sunday's climactic festivities was the celebration in 1969 of Duke Ellington's 70th birthday. A 10-piece band played Duke's music in the East Room, and Richard Nixon gave Ellington the presidential Medal of Freedom, the first to be awarded during the Nixon administration. But that was an accolade to one man. Last Sunday, President Carter in his own eloquent words, and with the music of dozens of artists representing a 75-year span, paid tribute to the entire art form.

It was an evening that most of us present never dared to dream would happen. There was a time when most of the greatest artists in jazz could not gain admittance to the best hotels and restaurants in Washington, let alone in the White House. As recently as the '40s, not one American newspaper devoted any regular coverage to jazz; many refused even to sully their pages with photographs of black musicians.

It may be too optimistic to hope that this idiom, now often referred to as America's true classical music, suddenly will be taken seriously at levels where it was condescended to or ignored. But certainly those of us who have been deeply involved in the campaign for its acceptance can take heart, knowing that the aura of respectability long sought by the artists of jazz is now one great step closer as a consequence of a five-minute speech delivered with the right words and attitude, before the right people, in the right place at the right time.

It was inevitable that the press would seize on the President's impromptu vocal appearance with Dizzy Gillespie as the most noteworthy aspect of the evening. A true perspective, though, reveals that during those four hours, from the time the Young Tuxedo Brass Band of New Orleans played during the buffet until the President told us that, since nothing could excel his own debut as singer, this would be the end of the concert, ev-

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All That Jazz

he coverage of jazz music in Calendar, June 25 onard Feather on the White House jazz concert and ee Anderson on Louis Armstrong), was a source of olute delight. Aside from the growing popularity of music is an awakened print media, whose valuable in the history and future of the jazz art form uldn't be underestimated.

or much of that role, public and the music world s a great debt to Leonard Feather and others like

ROYAL JOHNSON
Santa Monica

eather was at "Aint Misbehavin'" on Broadway and ects on Page 76.

White House Afterthoughts

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ery aspect, every vital phase of jazz history was at least touched on: the ancient and the avant-garde, the intellectual and the comical, the compositional and the improvisational.

●

That it all came about is due to a string of circumstances, partly fortuitous. Last summer, at George Wein's home near Nice, a free-lance writer and amateur musician named Leslie Leiber suggested that an evening of jazz at the White House would be a fitting celebration of Newport's 25th anniversary.

Wein wrote to three Rhode Island congressmen whom he had known in the early Newport years. In due course he was referred to Gretchen Poston, the White House social secretary.

"There was never a moment's hesitation," Miss Poston told me, as we sat on a South Lawn bench in the broiling afternoon sun while Wein gave his artists instructions for the evening. "When I presented the idea, the Carters were immediately receptive. As for the reaction here in Washington, the percentage of acceptance was so extraordinarily high that instead of 600 people, we had to plan to accommodate 800. It seems as though jazz has many more admirers around here than we realized.

This, of course, is part of the story that has been underlying the slow but steady emergence of jazz at high social, political and academic levels. In the present generation there are countless instances of so-called closet jazz fans—men who, like

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late at night, drank a lot and did a lot of carousing around. It took a few years for society to come together —I don't know whether the jazz musician became better behaved or if the rest of society caught up with them.

The fact is that over a period of years the quality of jazz could not be constrained. It could not be unrecognized. And it swept not only our country, but is perhaps a favorite export product of the United States in Europe and other parts of the world.

I began listening to jazz when I was quite young, on the radio, listening to performances broadcast from New Orleans. And later when I was a young officer in the Navy in the early '40s, I would go to Greenwich Village to listen to the jazz performers who came there. Then with my wife later on we'd go down to New Orleans and listen to individual performances on Sunday afternoons on Royal St., sit in on the jam sessions that lasted for hours and hours.

And then, later, of course, we began learning about the individual performers through phonograph records and radio. This has had a very beneficial effect on my life, and I'm very grateful for what all these remarkable performers have done.

Twenty-five years ago the first Newport Jazz Festival was held, so this is a celebration of an anniversary, and a recognition of what it meant to bring together such a wide diversity of performers and different elements of jazz in its broader definition that collectively is even a much more profound accomplishment than the superb musicians and individual types of jazz standing alone, and it's with a great deal of pleasure that I, as President of the United States, welcome tonight the superb representatives of this form, having performers here who represent the history of music throughout this century, some quite old in years, still young in heart; others, newcomers to jazz who've brought an increasing dynamism to it in the constantly evolving striving for perfection as the new elements of jazz are explored.

George Wein has put together this program, and I'd like to welcome him now, and thank him and all the superb performers whom I met individually earlier today, and I know that we have in store for us a wonderful treat, as some of the best musicians in our country—in the world—show us what it means to be an American, and to join in the pride that we feel for those who've made jazz such a wonderful part of our lives. Thank you very much. ●

Echoes of the White House Jazz Concert

Continued from Page 80

the President, knew and admired the music in their youth but had lost track of it along the way. Thus the climate and the time were right for this presentation.

The situation is similar in jazz education. Yesterday's academic rulers threw us out of the classroom for even mentioning the word jazz; today the dean himself and members of his faculty may be former big band musicians who now offer credit courses and even degrees in jazz. Some of these educators were on the South Lawn, rightly proud of the stand they had taken, and even prouder of the intensity with which their President was reinforcing it.

It was a night that few who were present are ever likely to forget; and Jimmy Carter made it clear that if he has anything to say about it, this will not have been the last such event. As for those who may believe the whole affair was a political ploy, they cannot have been sitting nearby, watching the President's spectrum of reactions. Either he had the time of his life or he is the most consummate actor I have ever seen. However, if his actions were not enough, his words can scarcely fail to convince the most cynical nonbeliever.

President Carter deserves our thanks for accelerating the inexorable upward journey of jazz toward full and uncompromising acceptance in the universe of the arts. ●

Text of President Carter's Speech

(Following is a transcript of the speech, given without notes, by President Carter last Sunday at the beginning of the White House Jazz Festival.)

● Welcome to the first White House Jazz Festival. This is an honor for me to walk through this crowd and to meet famous jazz musicians and the families of those who are no longer with us, but whose work and whose spirit, whose beautiful music will live forever in our country.

If there ever was an indigenous art form, one that is special and peculiar to the United States and represents what we are as a country, I would say that it's jazz. Starting late in the last century, there was a unique combination of two characteristics that made America what it is: individuality and the free expression of one's inner spirit. Vivid, alive, aggressive, innovative on the one hand; and the severest form of self-discipline on the other, never compromising quality as the human spirit burst forward in an expression of song.

At first this jazz form was not well accepted in respectable circles; I think there was an element of racism perhaps at the beginning, because most of the famous early performers were black, and particularly in the South, to have black and white musicians playing together was not the normal thing.

I believe that this particular form of musical art has done as much as anything to break down those barriers and to let us live and work and play and to make beautiful music together

The other thing that kind of separated jazz musicians from the upper levels of society was the reputation that jazz musicians had. Some people thought they stayed up

6-29-78

Bill Henderson: A Singer in the Elite

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Bill Henderson is a member of that small and elite class of male vocalists who can claim indisputably to be jazz singers.

That elusive element, the jazz tone quality, is present at all times, along with a strong natural rhythmic pulse. These qualities by themselves, however, do not necessarily constitute a flawless performance, as was evident during his opening show Tuesday at the Hong Kong Bar.

When he simply relaxes and sings, Henderson is a compelling, often blues-oriented performer. This was apparent in "Please Send Me Someone to Love." He is capable also of a subdued tenderness on a ballad such as "Don't Like Goodbyes," a charming song from the Truman Capote-Harold Arlen score for "House of Flowers," interpreted with gentle accompaniment by David MacKay.

Elsewhere, the show became too gimmicky. Henderson, peculiarly dressed, goes in for such devices as a march beat, played by drummer Jimmy Smith, to open and close "You Are My Sunshine," and a series of derivative scat choruses a la Clark Terry, followed by some tiresome yodeling on "Roll 'Em Pete."

The accompaniment is a gimmick in itself, with Joyce Collins at the piano and MacKay on electric keyboard. Sometimes this is interesting, but at other points it seems redundant.

The novelty that paid off best was a vocal duet: Henderson sang "Angel Eyes" while Collins sang "This Masquerade" in a counterpoint, showing the remarkable resemblance between the two songs. This concept could well be expanded.

Henderson potentially is a splendid jazz performer; all he needs is to get his act together. He closes Saturday.

Los Angeles Times
VIEW
PART IV
TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 1978

The Day Jazz Was Born Again at White House

BY LEONARD FEATHER

WASHINGTON—What happened Sunday evening on the South Lawn at the White House might be characterized in any of several ways.

You could call it a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Newport Jazz Festival, though it far transcended that original premise.

You might say it was a perfect Father's Day celebration for many of the 800 musicians, fans, Cabinet members, congressmen, senators and laymen present, and especially for Dr. Barnet Wein, the 84-year-old Boston surgeon whose son, George Wein, put the package together.

Others will remember it as the night Dizzy Gillespie and Max Roach taught the President of the United States to sing the vocal on Dizzy's "Salt Peanuts," after which Gillespie offered to take the President on the road.

Astonishing Blend of Information

Best of all, you could sum it up as the most triumphantly significant day in the history of jazz, a born-again day, a culmination of everything the American artists who created jazz have been striving for.

Beginning with a buffet, during which good-humored, old-timey sounds by the Young Tuxedo Brass Band from New Orleans were offered as dinner music, the concert proper got under way at 6:30 with a speech by President Carter. Using no notes, and speaking with an astonishing blend of information and enthusiasm, he set the tone for the evening by dealing with every point that needed to be made, from the unique individuality of the art of jazz to the racism that held it back for so many years.

Wein had strict instructions to end the program at 8:30, but when the two hours were up, the President, who had spent the entire time in rapt attention either seated on the grass or at a front table, said: "Anyone that wants to go is free to go, but I'm going to stay and listen to some more music."

The casual ambience on and around the lawn area matched the spontaneity of the performance. The audience spent its time sitting at one of the hundreds of wooden tables for six, or wandering back to the stands where jambalaya, pecan pie, wine, beer and soft drinks were dispensed. A hundred feet beyond stage right you might find Amy Carter and several of her young peers climbing the branches of a huge tree, paying little attention to the music. Several members of the milling crowd even sat on the steps at the side of the stage or plumped down on the grass a few feet from where the President sat, joined from time to time by the First Lady and Jack Carter.

History of Jazz on a Pinhead

The main program, utilizing 30 musicians, came remarkably close to achieving its apparent objective of writing the history of jazz on the head of a pin. For openers we had the 95-year-old ragtime pianist Eubie Blake playing his own "Memories of You," followed by Katharine Handy Lewis singing "St. Louis Blues," written in 1914 by her father, W. C. Handy. Accompanied by Dick Hyman at the piano, the 73-year-old Adolphus (Doc) Cheatham on trumpet and Milt Hinton on bass, Miss Handy sang it very straight, with no Bessie Smith inflections; she is of the old school (she turns 76 today). Later in the evening, however, Pearl Bailey offered a "St. Louis Blues" with a far looser, up-tempo jazz edge to it.

Following a roughly chronological pattern, Wein next presented Mary Lou Williams in a capsule history of jazz piano, then a swing-style group with such veterans as trumpeter Roy Eldridge and Clark Terry, saxophonists Illinois Jacquet and Benny Carter. After this set the President told Benny Carter: "I've been familiar with your music for years, and I'm proud to have a cousin like you."

JAZZ BUFF—President Carter, backed by wife Rosalynn, enjoys festival.
Times photo by James Pickerell

Jazz Born Again at the White House

Continued from First Page

The musicians, who contributed their services and paid their own way to Washington, included several whose public stance finds them playing contemporary commercial music but who on this Simon-pure occasion stayed true to their mainstream origins, playing the kind of music hardly ever heard on their recordings.

George Benson's phenomenal jazz guitar, without vocal trappings, clearly delighted the First Family. Herbie Hancock backed up Dizzy Gillespie as if to the bebop manner born, and even Chick Corea sat in with the granddaddy of the vibraphone, Lionel Hampton, whose "Flyin' Home" was one of a series of encores that caused the concert to end 45 minutes overtime.

Although these were not organized groups, the rapport among the participants was extraordinary. Only one rhythm section seemed ill at ease: Somehow the combination of pianist McCoy Tyner, drummer Max Roach and bassist Ron Carter never quite laid down the right beat for Sonny Rollins' tenor sax, but Rollins' solitary number, "Sonnymoon for Two," was a tour de force anyway.

The more advanced forms of jazz were presented by Ornette Coleman, for whom the sole accompaniment was provided by his 22-year-old son Denardo, in two seemingly disorganized pieces that would have benefited from a fuller background; and by Cecil Taylor, whose fiercely incisive atonal structures so moved the President that he leapt under the bandstand and said to Taylor: "Wonderful! I wish I could play the piano like that."

The emotional high point of the evening was one that occurred offstage. Wein called for a standing ovation to honor Charles Mingus. The President hurried over to where Mingus, who has been gravely ill, sat slumped in a wheelchair and, as he put his arms around the stricken bassist-composer, Mingus burst into uncontrollable tears.

The last half hour was a free-for-all. Stan Getz, Zoot Sims and Jacquet all played superb tenor sax; Carter listened most intently to Getz's "Lush Life." Gerry Mulligan, one of several musicians who had been invited to do some of the introducing, borrowed somebody's clarinet; Billy Taylor, who had been working as moderator for the National Public Radio airings of the entire show, finally took over at the keyboard during Pearl Bailey's two unplanned numbers, for which her husband, drummer Louie Bellson, also joined her.

Pearlie May had to expand her performance, she explained, because the First Lady had asked her for one song and Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell insisted on her following it with "St. Louis Blues."

When the blue of the night met the green of the lawn, the evening ended with a second speech by Carter, shorter than the opening address but no less appropriate.

Jazz has a true friend in the White House, and will now enjoy a more prestigious reputation throughout America, because Wein took the initiative to make this once-in-a-lifetime evening possible.

This Afro-American music has had a long, hard struggle from the grass tennis courts of the Newport Casino, where Wein presented his first festival in 1954, to the grass of the South Lawn at the White House. Perhaps now, given this seal of approval at the highest level, the music Jimmy Carter called "an indigenous art form that is special and peculiar to our country" will begin to earn the media exposure (particularly on network television and AM radio) for which it has been hungering so long.

BILLBOARD July 1 1978

President Carter congratulates 95-year-old pianist Eubie Blake upon his first White House concert.

Dizzy Gillespie with Ron Carter on bass, lays down some modern sounds.

Billboard photos by Paul Schmick, Washington Star

President and Mrs. Carter are among the appreciative south lawn participants in the first White House jazz festival.

Presidential Seal Of Approval Hits Jazz

By LEONARD FEATHER

WASHINGTON—George Wein's history-making gig at the White House June 18 was like no other concert of its kind in jazz history.

Total talent budget: zero. Total receipts: zero. Total profit, in terms of the prestige earned for jazz: almost beyond measuring.

Held on the south lawn, decked out with a couple of hundred heavy wooden tables to accommodate the 800 guests, the event, ostensibly a commemoration of the Newport Jazz Festival's 25th anniversary, turned out to be a celebration of the full acceptance of jazz at the presidential level.

Mingling with the President, Vice President, cabinet members, senators, congressman and various prominent Washington figures were countless music business figures (see separate story on page one).

The Young Tuxedo Brass Band from New Orleans, notable more for its enthusiasm and nostalgic appeal than for musical accuracy, played traditional favorites as background music during the buffet (jambalaya, pecan pie, beer and wine), served from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Because of the size of the crowd, the President mingled and chatted during the evening but did not shake 800 hands. Instead, he had made a special appearance at the afternoon rundown, when Wein and all the participating musicians stood in line to meet him individually. He

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showed a surprising familiarity with many of the names. When a remark to this effect was made while he identified Phyllis Condon, with whom he was having a picture taken, he replied: "Why shouldn't I know Mrs. Eddie Condon? Are you kidding?"

The reason became clear during his extraordinary speech that introduced the concert proper at 6:30 p.m. Following are excerpts:

"It is an honor for me to walk through this crowd and to meet famous jazz musicians and the families of those who are no longer with us . . . whose beautiful music will live forever in our country.

"If ever there was an indigenous art form, one that is special and peculiar to the United States . . . I would say that it's jazz. . . . At first this jazz form was not well accepted in respectable circle; I think there was an element of racism . . . because most of the earlier performers were black.

"I believe that this art form has done as much as anything to break down those (racial) barriers and let us live and work and play and make beautiful music together.

"The quality of jazz could not be constrained (or) unrecognized. And it not only swept our country, but is perhaps a favorite export . . . in Europe and other parts of the world.

"I began listening to jazz when I was quite young, on the radio from New Orleans. Later, I would go to Greenwich Village to listen to jazz performers . . . this had a very beneficial effect on my life, and I'm grateful for what all these remarkable performers have done.

"As President of the United States, I welcome tonight the superb representatives of this music form . . . who represent the history of music throughout this century; some quite old in years, still young in heart; others newcomers to jazz who have brought an increasing dynamism to it, in the constantly evolving striving for perfection as the new elements of jazz are explored."

The music that followed lived up to the Presidential prediction. The musicians ranged in age from drummer Tony Williams, 32, to ragtime pianist Eubie Blake, 95, who opened the program with "Boogie Woogie Beguine," and his own "Memories Of You." He was followed by Katharine Handy Lewis, 75, singing "St. Louis Blues," composed by her father, W.C. Handy.

After a mini-history of jazz piano by Mary Lou Williams, the concert evolved into a series of succinct, small combo sessions. Benny Carter led one group through "In A Mellotone" and "Lady Be Good," with solos by Roy Eldridge, Clark Terry, Illinois Jacquet, Teddy Wilson, Jo Jones and Milt Hinton.

Subsequent sets presented Sonny Rollins with McCoy Tyner, Dizzy Gillespie with an all-star sextet, Ornette Coleman, accompanied only by his son Denardo Coleman on drums; and five minutes of typically devastating avant-garde piano by Cecil Taylor.

Taylor so impressed the President that he leapt onto the stage to congratulate him. Present throughout the entire concert, Carter had been sitting at a table or, more often, squatting on the grass, at times with the First Lady or his son Jack. His reactions made it clear that he was not merely listening politely but related sensitively to the variety of idioms presented.

Significantly, the few participants who might be called chart jazz artists—George Benson, Chick Corea, Dexter Gordon and Ron Carter—all played straight ahead jazz with no hint of fusion, crossover or electronics. Benson, particularly, was in astonishing form playing in the Charlie Christian tradition.

Lionel Hampton led what was supposed to be the final group with Corea, Ray Brown, Stan Getz, Zoot Sims and others; but while he ran through the changes of "Georgia On My Mind," Jimmy Carter joined Wein at stage left for a whispered consultation. The President remained standing, listening intently while Stan Getz played "Lush Life," then stepped forward and said: "I don't believe the White House has ever seen anything like this. This is hard to believe, because, as you can well see, this is just as much a part of the greatness of America as the White House itself or the Capitol building down the street. Anybody that wants to is free to go—but I'm going to stay and listen to some more music."

What followed was a series of surprises that built climax on climax. Hampton let loose with "Flying Home," Gerry Mulligan started playing a borrowed clarinet, and the grand marshal of the Tuxedo Band strutted up and down with his bright red umbrella. Pearl Bailey, at the insistence of Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, got into the act with "In The Good Old Summertime;" then, urged on by Attorney General Griffin Bell, she encored with "St. Louis Blues"—a much freer and more jazz-oriented version than that of Katharine Handy Lewis.

With Dizzy Gillespie onstage again, the President insisted that he do one more. Backed only by Max Roach playing sticks on a foot cymbal, Gillespie said, "His Highness has asked me to play 'Salt Peanuts.' I'll do this, but there are strings attached. We want him to take the vocal."

Carter did, of course, after hasty coaching by Diz and Max about when to come in. The results were seen and heard by anybody who watched tv during the next 24 hours.

As Jimmy Carter said, nothing could follow that, so at 9:15, 45 minutes after its scheduled cut-off, the concert ended to wild applause.

It was symptomatic that "Salt Peanuts," the single trivial moment (albeit amusing) in this entire evening of splendid music, got 90% of what little coverage the event received on tv. Only National Public Radio, with Steve Rathe in charge and Billy Taylor emceeing, took the initiative to carry the entire concert live to its affiliates around the nation.

The television industry, notorious from its beginning for its almost total neglect of jazz, blew another golden opportunity here. There are no NBC, no CBS, no ABC hour-long specials devoted to this history-making occasion. Not even public tv has made any such plans.

Much of the good that could have been accomplished by President Carter's speech was vitiated simply because it was not brought to the nation on tv.

Fortunately, the President clearly meant it when he said that this would not be the last White House jazz festival.

Il Presidente Carter si intrattiene con Mary Lou Williams durante il ricevimento a suon di jazz svoltosi alla Casa Bianca in giugno.

JAZZ ALLA CASA BIANCA

di LEONARD FEATHER

Nel pomeriggio del 18 giugno la Casa Bianca ha ospitato un gran numero di illustri musicisti di jazz che hanno animato, nel Prato Sud della residenza presidenziale di Washington, un piccolo festival jazzistico che Jimmy Carter ha voluto che avesse luogo per « rendere un tributo a una forma d'arte americana » e conferirle così uno status che in patria le era stato finora negato. Ecco, nelle parole del più autorevole dei critici di jazz, il resoconto di una giornata che ha segnato una data importantissima nella storia della musica afro-americana.

••• All'inizio avrebbe dovuto essere una celebrazione del venticinquesimo anniversario del Festival del jazz di Newport. Tuttavia, essendo via via aumentato il numero dei nomi importanti riuniti sotto la direzione di George Wein, ha finito per diventare una delle più incredibilmente prestigiose serate della storia del jazz.

Il grande finale ha visto il Presidente Carter cantare *Salt Peanuts* in duetto con Dizzy Gillespie, accompagnato da Max Roach. Potete immaginare un finale più sensazionale?

Chi era presente all'avvenimento provava un senso di irrealtà. Guardandomi attorno, io potevo vedere il Presidente e la sua famiglia, il Vice Presidente, membri del Governo, deputati, senatori, numerosi critici musicali, giornalisti e amici del jazz di tutte le estrazioni. Originariamente il ricevimento avrebbe dovuto essere per seicento ospiti, ma Gretchen Poston, la Segretaria del Presidente addetta alle relazioni sociali, mi ha detto: "Dopo aver spedito gli inviti, ci siamo accorti che le accettazioni erano tanto più numerose del solito che abbiamo dovuto aumentare il numero degli invitati previsti".

Il ricevimento è stato dato nel Prato Sud della Casa Bianca: su di esso erano stati installati un centinaio di

MUSICA JAZZ - OCT. '78

Wall Street Journal

Slip-sliding away

Young black musicians are deserting jazz idiom

By Leonard Feather
Los Angeles Times Service

The idea at first seems preposterous, but serious observation compels you to consider a startling theory: the young musicians whose ancestors developed jazz as an idiom of pure Afro-American origin may be drifting slowly and irreversibly away from the music black Americans created.

The danger signals by now are as obvious as we have tried to remain oblivious. Black oriented radio stations offer a steady diet of soul sounds and rhythm and blues, with little or no pure jazz. Black colleges and universities were very slow in picking up on the initiative taken by predominantly white colleges in offering jazz as a subject for education.

There is evidence of a much more direct nature. Within the past few years, groups that had generally been all black have taken to hiring white musicians. Art Blakey and his Jazz Messengers, long considered the epitome of a jazz style in which all the best exponents were black, has hired several whites in the past couple of years. The Brecker Brothers, Bob Berg and other whites achieved some of their early prominence as members of the previously all black Horace Silver Quintet. Neither Silver nor Blakey ever discriminated in choosing sidemen; it was simply that the best men to interpret their music, in other times, were overwhelmingly the blacks. No longer, it seems.

Big bands affected too

The situation has extended into the big band area, specifically the award winning orchestra of trumpeter/composer Thad Jones and drummer Mel Lewis, both of whom have expressed concern over the increasing tilt in their own ranks. Under its biracial leadership the band, founded in 1966, was always more or less evenly divided, but the number of black sidemen has now dwindled to four, simply because Jones and Lewis are finding it increasingly difficult to locate qualified blacks and lure them into the band.

Surely, I suggested, the opportunity to join a prestigious band must still be an incitement to young blacks.

"Not if they've already gotten into club dates, rock shows, things that keep them in town and eliminate the need for traveling expenses. As for their identifying with R and B, this is killing their creativity and confining them to a quick turnover, fast buck business," Jones said.

"A case in point: there's a young black trombonist named George Lewis who I think is phenomenal. He was with Basie, but only for a short while; he has an attitude that I can't quite figure out, and we haven't been able to persuade him to come with us.

"Jon Faddis, the brilliant young trumpeter who was with our band from 1972-'75, is free lancing in New York now, making good money, I guess, but I can't understand why he's into that kind of commercial life at the age of 24. When you're young is the time to go out and make artistic inroads, explore the world. There's time enough in your late '30s and '40s to sit down and live on your accomplishments."

Ironic aspect

Mel Lewis points out an ironic aspect of the situation: the shortage has been caused in part by the opening up of job opportunities long closed to blacks, particularly in pit bands and studio work. "Various organizations were formed to get steady jobs for young black musicians. Well, they're getting them, but the idea has backfired, because it's to their own musical detriment. They're climbing forward on a bandwagon they should never have jumped on in the first place. Too many young black musicians today don't appreciate jazz as a vital part of their racial heritage."

Another aspect that deeply concerns both Mel Lewis and Thad Jones is the lack of role models on television for young blacks. "Mel and I did a radio program with Congressman John Conyers of Michigan and we brought up this point. Every form of popular music is performed on the TV network, but jazz is almost totally ignored..."

The television problem is more harmful for blacks because the jazz education system is heavily white dominated and attracts an overwhelming majority of white students. "I was just at the University of Minnesota, where they have three jazz

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Jazz orchestras seek black musicians

From Page 1

orchestras," said Jones, "and they had exactly one black student. Same thing at the college where I teach, William Patterson in Wayne, N.J.: one black musician. Why? Because they're watching TV, and they've been taught to believe that TV is where all the successful people are; so they feel they have to emulate what they see and hear."

Last fall Thad Jones took a leave of absence to serve as ...ical director at a Copen... radio station. "While ...was away I had to make some changes," said Lewis. We talked about it on the phone, and neither of us could come up with any solution."

Obviously neither leader will hire a musician simply because of his race, but the integrated character of the band worked well for many years in terms of good vibes within the orchestra and visual impact. At present the prospect of getting back to the original half black, half white constitution looks dim.

"The musicians are out there," said Mel Lewis, "but we don't hear from them. We wish they would get in touch with us. A lot of them won't even come to New York. As things stand at the moment, we've been finding white performers who can really play, and if they want to come with us, of course we take them. But this integration business is a big, hard search."

Jones' and Lewis' points need to be taken seriously by the young black musicians who are at the crossroads. They can opt for a life of economic ease, playing pseudo-jazz fusion and crossover music, rock and pop. They can cut tracks for record dates so anonymous that they don't know whose album it is, because the singer will come in next month to lay on his overdubs. Alternatively, they can undergo the educational and esthetically valuable experience of being part of a stimulating ensemble, playing music that will live long after those commercial sessions are forgotten.

The choice is theirs; but meanwhile, the survival of jazz as a medium for creative artists in the tradition of Armstrong, Tatum and Parker hangs precariously in the balance.

NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL

Jam-Packed Weekend for 30,000

BY LEONARD FEATHER

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y.—The past weekend reaffirmed, in ringing fortissimo cash registers, the unprecedentedly healthy state of jazz.

Saturday from noon until almost 2 a.m., in and around the Saratoga Performing Arts Center a crowd estimated at 30,000, creating a 9-mile traffic blockade into this town, set an attendance record for an authentic jazz concert. Sunday, another 15,000 witnessed a 12-hour procession of nine big bands at Saratoga's outdoor arts center, set in a park and surrounded by towering pine trees.

The two nights at Saratoga, staged by the Newport Jazz Festival, were only one part of a multiple picture. In New York City, in concert halls, on a riverboat and along the sidewalks of 52nd St., the two final days of the 10-day Newport event also were celebrated. Even in Newport, R.I., itself, where it all began 25 summers ago, a series of concerts was held, though not under the auspices of impresario George Wein.

A principal attraction at Saratoga Saturday was Chick Corea, riding a wave of popularity that is matched by the output in decibels of his new orchestra. The group includes a brass section, an amplified string quartet, a heavily electronic rhythm contingent and Corea's versatile associate Gayle Moran, who sings, plays keyboard and writes pretty songs with inane lyrics. The same artists, with guest soloists Gary Burton and Herbie Hancock, also were heard playing for a packed and wildly enthusiastic house Friday evening at Avery Fisher Hall in New York City.

Flora Purim and her husband, percussionist Airto, another main attraction here Saturday, now have a hypertense group that consists entirely of Brazilian musicians except for guitarist George Sopuch, whose rock style was poorly suited to Purim's material. She seemed to be straining too much of the time, trying to rise above overamplified percussion and electronics (conditions at Saratoga varied from unsettling to deafening).

The evening ended with a frenetic jam session in which George Benson, Al Jarreau, Dee Dee Bridgewater and Andy Bey joined forces with Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Jean-Luc Ponty and others.

Sunday's big-band cavalcade constituted an awesome display of variety, versatility and resourcefulness. Dick Hyman, director of the New York Jazz Repertory Society orchestra, found at the last minute that the band's library of music had been left behind in Manhattan. Unfazed, he sat down between sets and sketched out three skeleton arrangements that enabled this superb regiment of professionals to sound as though nothing were amiss.

The Duke Ellington orchestra under Mercer Ellington is gradually drawing away from Duke's shadow. Though using much of his father's material, Mercer is finding more contemporary ways in which to present it.

Harry James and Count Basie have much in common. Both bands relied heavily on the blues; both have flashy showmen-drummers (Basie's Butch Miles is white and James' Sonny Payne, a Basie alumnus, is black); both have boring singers, and both offer unspectacularly swinging music.

The emotional high point of the day was the ovation accorded Stan Kenton, perhaps for his courage in appearing at all. Obviously not yet fully recovered from his serious surgery last year, he walked and talked slowly but struggled through a set, occasionally playing one of his single-finger piano solos and giving minimal cues to the band, which played remarkably well despite generally turgid arrangements.

Others heard during the 12-hour bash were the orchestras of Buddy Rich and Maynard Ferguson, both of which played Joe Zawinul's "Birdland," the Rich version far superior and less pretentious; Woody Herman, in a typically eclectic performance including Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man"; the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis orchestra, in good form; George Russell's orchestra, coming across like a teapot in a sonic tempest, and Paul Jeffrey conducting an ensemble of 22 in a tribute to Charlie Mingus that did less than justice to the ailing bassist.

JAZZ

Blacks Steadily Leaving the Sound

BY LEONARD FEATHER 7/2/78

● The idea at first seems preposterous: Young musicians whose ancestors developed jazz as an idiom of pure Afro-American origin may be drifting irreversibly away from the music that black Americans created.

The danger signals by now are as obvious as we have tried to remain oblivious. Black-oriented radio stations offer a steady diet of soul sounds and R&B, with little or no pure jazz. Black colleges and universities were very slow in picking up on the initiative taken by predominantly white colleges in offering jazz education.

And in recent years, groups that had generally been all black have taken to hiring white musicians. Art Blakey and his Jazz Messengers, long considered the epitome of a jazz style in which all the best exponents were black, has hired several whites in the past couple of years. The Brecker Brothers, Bob Berg and other whites achieved some of their early prominence as members of the previously all-black Horace Silver Quintet. Neither Silver nor Blakey ever discriminated in choosing sidemen; it was simply that the best men to interpret their music, in other times, were overwhelmingly the blacks. No longer, it seems.

The situation has extended into the big-band area, specifically the award-winning orchestra of trumpeter-composer Thad Jones and drummer Mel Lewis, both of whom have expressed concern over the increasing tilt in their own ranks. Under its biracial leadership, the band, founded in 1966, was always more or less evenly divided, but the number of black sidemen has now dwindled to four, simply because Jones and Lewis are finding it increasingly difficult to locate qualified blacks and lure them into the band.

"It's become a real problem," says Jones. "Basically, economics is at the root of it. At one time, the scene was pretty well saturated with black musicians, but whenever there are any times of privation, they affect the black musician three times as heavily as the white, so he'll take whatever he can find to survive. Meanwhile, for every black musician, there's going to be 10 white guys waiting and ready to join us."

Surely, I suggested, the opportunity to join a prestigious band must still be an inducement to young blacks.

"Not if they've already gotten into club dates, rock shows, things that keep them in town and eliminate the need for traveling expenses. As for their identifying with R&B, this is killing their creativity and confining them to a quick turnover, fast-buck business.

"A case in point: There's a young black trombonist named George Lewis who I think is phenomenal. He was with Basie, but only for a short while; he has an attitude that I can't quite figure out, and we haven't been able to persuade him to come with us.

"Jon Faddis, the brilliant trumpeter who was with our band from 1972-75, is free-lancing in New York now, making good money, I guess, but I can't understand why he's into that kind of commercial life at 24.

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Mel Lewis points out an ironic aspect of the situation: The shortage has been caused in part by the opening up of job opportunities long closed to blacks, particularly in pit bands and studio work. "Various organizations were formed to get steady jobs for young black musicians. Well, they're getting them, but the idea has backfired.

because it's to their own musical detriment. They're climbing forward on a bandwagon they should never have jumped on in the first place. Too many young black musicians today don't appreciate jazz as a vital part of their racial heritage."

"Right," said Jones, "and some of the harm has been done not by the lesser-known people but by some of the most celebrated musicians. I think Donald Byrd is a drag, and I think Quincy Jones is a drag. Quincy was in a position to be a real leader in jazz, but he sold out so fast it was funny. Donald's sellout was very obvious and there was nothing musically valid in what he did, but Quincy had the capabilities."

Another aspect that deeply concerns both Mel Lewis and Thad Jones is the lack of role models on television for young blacks. "Mel and I did a radio program and we brought up this point. Every form of popular music is performed on the TV network, but jazz is almost totally ignored."

The TV problem is more harmful for blacks because the jazz-education system is heavily white-dominated and attracts an overwhelming majority of white students. "I was just at the University of Minnesota, where they have three jazz orchestras," said Jones, "and they had exactly one black student. Same thing at the college where I teach, William Patterson in Wayne, N.J.: one black musician. Why? Because they're watching TV and they've been taught to believe that TV is where all the successful people are, so they feel they have to emulate what they see and hear."

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GEORGE LEWIS: 'He has an attitude I can't quite figure out'

Where have all the young men gone?

JON FADDIS (right) with Stan Getz: brilliant young trumpeter

Leonard Feather reports from Los Angeles on a crisis facing jazz: young blacks are turning their backs on their 'heritage'

THE idea at first seems preposterous, but serious observation compels you to consider a startling theory: the young musicians whose ancestors developed jazz as an idiom of pure Afro-American origin may be drifting slowly and irreversibly away from the music black Americans created.

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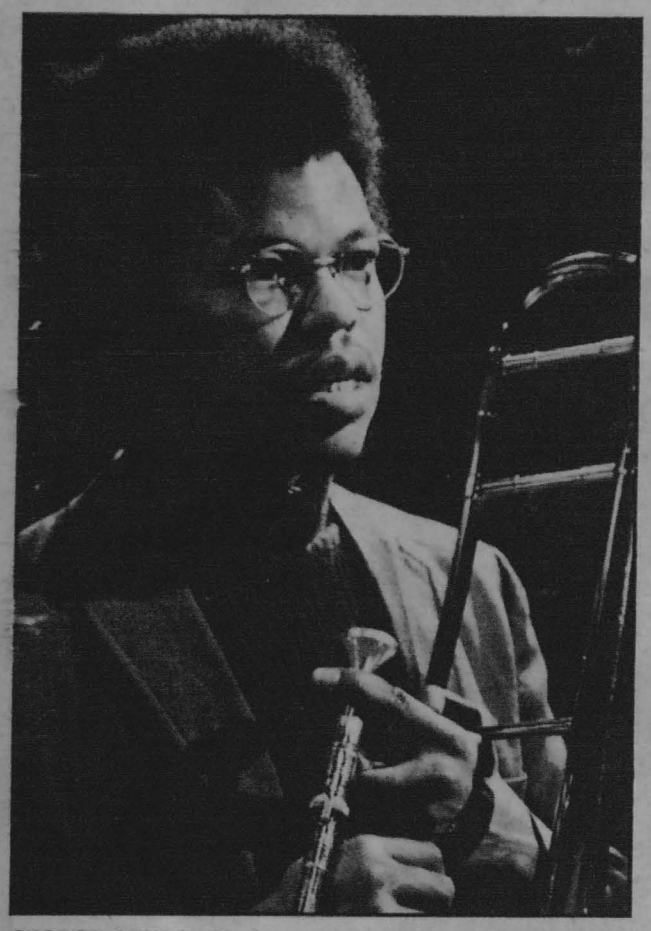
THAD JONES/MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA: *multiracial — and getting whiter*



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Black Musicians Drifting Away From Pure Jazz

Continued from page 53.

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'Duchess of Malfi' Slated For Santa Fe Premiere

SANTA FE, N.M. — The production of another American premiere, "The Duchess of Malfi," scheduled for Aug. 5, continues the Santa Fe Opera's tradition of presenting new works, resulting in 16 American premieres and four world premieres.

"The Duchess of Malfi" is an Elizabethan play by John Webster, first printed in 1623, which was set to music by British composer Stephen Oliver to his libretto and world premiered at Oxford University in 1971. The composer was then 21 years old and still a student at Oxford.

British stage director Colin Graham will direct. Graham directed the composer's most recent opera, "Tom Jones."

"The Ducchess of Malfi" is set in the 17th century and is a tragedy involving greed, intrigue, corruption, incest and murder.

"The Duchess of Malfi" will be conducted by Steuart Bedford. Soprano Pamela Myers sings the title role and tenor David Hillman is Ferdinand. Tenor James Atherton portrays the role of Antonio, bass-baritone William Dooley sings the role of the Cardinal and baritone Ronald Hedlund is Bosola. Sets are by John Conklin and Dona Granata is the costume designer. Choreography is by Pauline Grant.

Performances are Aug. 5, 11, 16, 25. For information on tickets, contact: the Santa Fe Opera, P.O. Box 2408, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501.

Alan will offer his interpretation of the late Elvis Presley at The Turn of the Century, 7300 E. Hampden Ave., Monday through Saturday. Tickets at 758-7300.

JAZZ

Mingus Back Among Us

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● The word fusion has come to take on meanings in music that imply, too often, the amalgamation of a pure element, usually jazz, with an offensive ingredient added because of commercial considerations. No such hybrid formation can be detected in **"Cumbia and Jazz Fusion,"** a new release by Charles Mingus (Atlantic SD 8801).

The title track, recorded in New York and taking up the entire first side, consists of music written by Mingus, commissioned by producer Daniel Senatore for an as yet untitled film. The movie concerns cocaine traffic between Colombia (Cumbia) and New York.

The fusion here is jazz and the indigenous Indian rhythms of Colombia. There is one long, dense passage of South American sounds involving up to nine percussionists.

Bird twitterings, street-music effects, a hint of calypso in one oboe-and-bassoon-dominated, harmonically basic passage, lead to or are intermingled with movements of "Bolero"-like intensity. A hard-swinging orchestra movement manages, with only seven horns, to create an Ellington mood, accentuated by the sometime Dukish piano of Bob Neloms.

Mingus' presence is pervasive, whether in the writing, in his enveloping bass lines or his sardonic shouting about mama's little baby and shortnin' bread that bursts out of nowhere toward the end of this 28-minute sonic kaleidoscope. Variously passionate, pensive, primitive and powerful, "Cumbia and Jazz Fusion" stands on its own merits apart from the motion picture association.

The second side is wholly taken up by music Mingus composed for another movie, "Todo Modo." Recorded in Rome in 1976, it employs Mingus' regular workshop colleagues and five Italian musicians.

"Todo Modo" ranges from rhythmless exchanges of horn improvisations to full-blooded orchestration. Ricky Ford's squawking on tenor saxophone is abrasively out of phase with the rest of the ad-libbing, but soon a passage by Danny Mixon on organ achieves a cathedral-like solemnity. Dino Piano's trombone is heard a cappella; Quarto Maltoni plays boppish alto saxophone; eventually Mingus settles into a comfortable down-home movement based on the regular blues changes.

The Mingus score was not used for the Italian version of the film; it will be heard, we are told, when an Amer-

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Jazz Records

Continued from Page 88

ican distributor has been found. With or without visual parallels, these two works are among the most chameleonic and intensely absorbing of Mingus' works. Now that ill health apparently has sidelined him indefinitely, the arrival of this album is doubly welcome. Five stars.

●

"Live at Montreux" by Don Ellis (Atlantic SD 19178), recorded last year at the jazz festival in Switzerland, is a typical Ellis production in its wild, sometimes inchoate welter of moods, textures and tempos. The orchestra includes a string section, one of whose members, violinist Jimbo Ross, is a capable soloist.

Ellis' obsession with novelty—odd meters, novel instruments such as the Superbone, the Firebird trumpet and the quarter-tone trumpet—has always fought for equal time with his half-submerged ability to compose and arrange significant music. However, on these sides, the variegation generally works. Just as you are about to become weary of the spastic rhythm shouts by the orchestra, the multiple percussion forays, the Saturday-night-in-Rio fever or the two-chord Mangione-like theme played by Ellis, he shifts gears and takes you into some different and more engaging territory.

The orchestra at that time (it has since disbanded to enable Ellis to concentrate on writing) boasted several promising soloists, notably the teen-aged Ted Nash on alto sax, the volatile trombonist Alan Kaplan and a young keyboard virtuoso named Randy Kerber. There is one sequence at the beginning of "Future Feature" in which five soloists, among them a violinist named Pamela Tompkins, engage in what sounds like a semi-written, semiimprovised counterpoint that suggests a 21st-century Dixieland.

Ellis, for all his bravura tactics and overkill tendencies, has never stopped trying to find a way, and on "Live at Montreux" his path is worth following more often than not. Three stars.

Charles Mingus

Don Ellis

Herbie Hancock's triumphant tour with VSOP, and the encouraging followup in tandem with Chick Corea, led some optimists to assume he was back in the jazz saddle again for keeps. We inferred too fast and spoke too soon. The tipoff on **"Sunlight"** (Columbia 34907) is the photograph on the back cover showing Hancock surrounded by 11 different electric keyboard instruments.

There is more. Hancock now sings. Solo and background vocals, too. Not just your ordinary singing, mind you, but vocal effects transmitted to us through the Vocoder. This marvelous machine means that "the voices you hear are entirely synthesized"—another reassurance, made in pride rather than shame, that the artificial is even better than the natural.

Tremendous technical ingenuity and engineering knowledge were involved here; the mountains labored and put forth a mouse. Toward the end there is some valid and even creative instrumental music, particularly in a track called "Good Question."

Hancock undoubtedly will add to his fortunes with the gold-bound "Sunshine." Perhaps that will enable him in due course to return to the land of the musically living. One star.

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On the other hand, Freddie Hubbard seems to be resisting the blandishments of the corporate masterminds. His **"Super Blue"** (Columbia 35386) finds him in an uncluttered, emotionally honest setting as his trumpet and fluegelhorn weave their way through such pieces as "To Her Ladyship" (with a valuable guest appearance by guitarist George Benson) and the hard-bopping, hard-swinging "Take It to the Ozone." In the combo are Hubert Laws on flutes, Joe Henderson on tenor sax and a front-burner rhythm section. Four stars.

Vocal album of the week: Irene Kral's **"Gentle Rain"** (Choice 1020), again accompanied only by pianist Alan Broadbent. Low-key, high quality ballads and originals by the singer whose name you can always safely spell backwards. ●

Jazz

'Ain't Misbehavin'' — A Lively Memorial

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● NEW YORK—"Ain't Misbehavin'" is the smash hit musical of the theatrical season, a sleeper that came from Off-Broadway to establish itself as a small-cast, low-budget model of fast moving, intimate entertainment.

It was written by Andy Razaf. Every word of it. So was "Honeysuckle Rose," the show's second best known song. Likewise "Black and Blue," which at the performance I caught received one of the evening's most powerful reactions, on the basis of its period protest lyrics.

Razaf was also responsible for "The Joint Is Jumpin," written in collaboration with J. C. Johnson; "Off Time," a 1929 ditty performed by all five singers in this lively company; "Find Out What They Like (And How They Like It)," a cheerful example of the early Harlem Risque genre; and "Keepin' Out of Mischief Now," with its lyrical message similar to that of the show's title tune. Altogether, then, there are seven Razaf songs in "Ain't Misbehavin'."

"Ain't Misbehavin'" landmarks: Fats Waller, left, who wrote the music; Andy Razaf, right, who wrote the words; Nell Carter, Andre de Sheilds, Armelia McQueen, who star in current Broadway production.

Andy Razaf? Who's that again?

If he wrote all these hits, you may inquire, why have you not been hearing about him? And why is "Ain't Misbehavin'" billed as "The New Fats Waller Musical Show"?

The reasons are several. First, Fats Waller did indeed write the melodies of all the above songs except "The Joint Is Jumpin'," and the rest of the 30 songs performed were co-written by him, with various lyricists, or were popularized through his recorded versions.

Second, Waller gained his fame not only as a songwriter, but as a uniquely influential stride pianist, and as a legendary entertainer who left an ineradicable mark in Harlem show-business history. Inevitably he became far better known than Andy Razaf. Moreover, it is often the melodist whose name becomes identified with a song. Everyone knows who Burt Bacharach is and what were his biggest hits, but how many know Hal David, but for whose brilliantly tailored lyrics "Alfie" and all those other Dionne Warwick records might not have turned gold?

If the unpretentious and generous Waller were around, he would be the first to protest such inequities, for he knew better than anyone else how vital a role was played in the completion of their most memorable works by Andreamenentania Paul Razafinkeriefo. This black nobleman worked tirelessly behind the scenes to get the songs completed, whether Fats was drunk or sober, on the loose or in alimony jail.

Razaf (he shortened his name to avoid confusion) was the son of the Grand Duke of Madagascar, who was killed when the French took over that island. He was born in 1895 in Washington, D.C., soon after his mother had escaped to the United States. Forced to quit school and earn a living, he became an elevator boy, one of his regular passengers being Irving Berlin.

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Razaf began his career as a poet and lyricist during World War I, selling his sheet music from the back of a truck on which he demonstrated his songs at the piano. One of his first works was heard in the Shuberts' "Passing Show of 1917."

Kindly but energetic and aggressive, Razaf was a perfect counterbalance for the docile and bibulous Waller. Their collaboration, which produced dozens of deftly meshed blends of words and music, was an erratic one.

"It was hard to tie Fats down to a job," Andy once told me. "My mother used to make the finest food and special cookies just to keep him at our home in Asbury Park, N.J. Our first big show score was 'Keep Shufflin',' after which Connie Immerman sent for us to write a show for Connie's Inn in Harlem, and things really started humming.

"We were working on a show called 'Load of Coal' for Connie and had done only half a chorus of a number when Fats remembered an urgent date and said, 'I gotta go!' I finished the lyric, called a lot of bars in Harlem where Fats hung out, and finally located him. When Fats said he had forgotten the melody, I hummed most of it to him over the phone, but neither of us could remember the bridge.

"Fats had me read him the lyric and said he would come up with a new bridge. I did, and he hummed me a melody. Finally we had it together. The song was 'Honeysuckle Rose.'"

After the wild success of "Load of Coal," Waller and Razaf were called on for a new score, "Hot Chocolates," to be produced downtown rather than in Harlem. "I remember going to Fats' house one day," Razaf recalled, "to finish a number based on a little strain he'd thought up. The whole show was complete, but they needed an extra tune for a theme, and this had to be it. We worked on it for about 45 minutes and there it was—'Ain't Misbehavin'.' We had 'Black and Blue' in the same show.

"Fats was the fastest and most prolific writer I ever knew. He could have set the telephone book to music. He took great pains working on the exact mood and phrasing until the melody would just pour from his fingers. He took great pride in doing an accurate job, so that even if he finished a whole piano copy in a half hour, it could be sent right down to the printer's without any changes."

Razaf and Waller had many hits—"If It Ain't Love," "My Fate Is in Your Hands," "Blue Turning Gray Over You," "How Can You Face Me," "Zonky"—but never realized their ambition of being summoned to Hollywood to write a complete score.

My own memories of Fats (or Thomas, as his wife and intimates called him) go back to a Christmas Day spent in his comfortable apartment on the outskirts of Harlem. He had a new piano and was as exultant about it as his two small sons were about the gifts under the tree. We spent several hours commuting between piano and phonograph—he had a big pile of his own records—and a bar where he kept a liberal supply of what he always referred to as "libations."

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As long as he was surrounded by friends and libations, Waller seemed as happy as the public image he projected; but any mention of poverty, hardships or racism could trigger emotional outbursts, tears and temperamental storms.

One day he invited me to a record date. I had heard rumors that Fats recorded with the aid of a bottle of gin on either side of the piano. The myth was soon dispelled: his requirements, I observed, were a beautiful woman on one side and a fifth of brandy on the other.

Fats worked his way through several songs, his five sidemen sitting quietly around while he wrote out skeleton routines consisting mainly of the chords. After a rundown of one melody, Fats said: "One thirty. That means we can stand about two choruses." A second chorus was played, with Fats calling out to the born players to take brief solos. Within 10 minutes a wax master had been cut.

"Cigarettes!" Fats cried, taking another swig at the rapidly diminishing brandy. "Now watch out for that second chorus. In that last part, I want it solid. No variations, no flowery embellishments, nothing." They tried it. "Yeah, that's what I'm talking 'bout!"

A voice from the control booth said: "On your first chorus, Fats, stick to the melody as close as possible." Then a tactful afterthought: "Is that your last bottle?"

"No," said Fats, emptying it. "This is my first."

The session went smoothly until Fats, rejecting an odd pop song with a 25 bar chorus ("No time to learn that jive"), started jamming on "If You're a Viper," a paean to pot. The horns worked out a swinging riff; Fats sang the tongue-in-cheek lyrics, and we could all see that this tune was going to be a gas. All of us, that is, except the stern voice of authority behind the glass panel.

To appease Fats, a wax was cut of "Viper," followed by a take of the pop song he disliked. A week later, when I called Fats to check on it, he told me disgustedly that the master of "Viper" had been destroyed and the pop song would be used in its place. (Ironically, "If You're a Viper" is being used nightly onstage at the Longacre in the show.)

Waller resented controls on his musical and private life. He told me that his wild reputation was a direct consequence of

FATS WALLER—Critic Leonard Feather on Fats and his late lyricist, Andy Razaf, Page 76.

the restrictions imposed on him as a child.

"My father was a minister," he said. "He thought it was outrageous to spend an evening at a dance hall. So as soon as I was old enough, I went right out and did all the things I'd been held back from doing.

"Man, the trouble I had! While I was playing organ at a silent movie house in Harlem and they'd be showing some death scene on the screen, likely as not I'd grab a bottle and start swingin' out on 'Squeeze Me' or 'Royal Garden Blues.' The managers complained, but heck, they couldn't stop me!"

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When Waller arrived in London—still my home at that time—he was met by Spencer Williams, a black American songwriter who had collaborated on Fats' first important song, "Squeeze Me." At the railroad station, Williams hustled us all off to his home in Sunbury-on-Thames, where we ate ourselves helpless on the first Southern fried chicken I had ever tasted.

Afterward, Fats sat at the piano and played his latest composition. I was pleasantly surprised to note that it was a waltz, for my fellow musicians and critics had long maintained that jazz and three-quarter time were incompatible.

Then he looked out the window. A slow drizzle had started.

"Watch out there," he said, "I'm getting my inspiration . . . let's see now. Sunday afternoon, raining outside, a country cottage."

After he had played a few measures, Williams joined him at the piano, and within minutes they had completed "A Cottage in the Rain." I doubt that anything ever became of it; Fats Waller could turn out songs faster than he could remember them.

My last and saddest memory of Fats goes back to a cold and cloudy afternoon in New York in December, 1943. His funeral services were held at Adam Clayton Powell's Abyssinian Baptist Church, with Powell's wife-to-be, Hazel Scott, playing "Abide With Me" on the organ. It was the most elaborate and heavily attended tribute I have ever seen, a heartbreaking farewell to a man who, dead at 39, had never quite achieved his full potential.

Andy Razaf survived, living his quiet life and writing new songs here and there. We worked on a couple together but never had a hit. Stricken with a mysterious paralysis, Razaf spent the last 20 years of his life in Los Angeles, bedridden and in pain. Whenever I visited him the conversation would always turn to Fats and the great days of Connie's Inn and "Hot Chocolates."

In 1972 Andy went back to New York to be inducted into the Songwriters' Hall of Fame—belated but heartwarming recognition of a career about which the public remained unaware. He came home to Los Angeles and died soon afterward, Feb. 3, 1973. The Broadway triumph of "Ain't Misbehavin'" has provided a cheerful reminder that in such cases as Waller's and Razaf's, the good that men have done lives after them. ●

AT THE BACKLOT

Singer Kay Starr Glitters at Studio One

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Kay Starr was never willing to stand still while time passed her by; she would rather make time slow down for her, jump aboard and keep on moving.

Tuesday at the Backlot at Studio One, she displayed the rich, throaty, belting style that has been a trademark since her career began. The territory she staked out for herself, at the crossroads where country and western, pop, jazz and blues converge, is still hers, but the kicker is that she has adapted it to a predominantly up-to-date repertoire.

Kay Starr

Paying tribute to Neil Sedaka, she sings "Hungry Years" and makes it all her own. On Elton John's "Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word" she is backed by a violin obbligato. The Rita Coolidge hit of "Higher and Higher" mixes decades with its old Harry James riffs played by Frankie Ortega's 12-piece band. Starr even plays a washboard while socking out Glen Campbell's "Southern Nights," a perfect song for her.

There are reminders of the early rising Starr only in "Hard Hearted Hannah," "If My Friends Could See Me Now" and a brief excerpt from "Wheel of Fortune" used as a closing theme.

Unlike most women of her generation, Kay Starr has been successful in making the transition to today's popular market; moreover, she is as attractive and bright-eyed as ever. All her set needs is a reduction of the shrillness—one or two numbers excessively strident and slightly overarranged—and perhaps the balm of a ballad, accompanied by rhythm only.

Overall, though, she provides a remarkable example of vocal strength, showmanship and adaptability to the demands of a radically changed world of music. She closes Sunday.

Henderson Group at Marino Bistro

7/29

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Marino Bistro at 2901 Washington Blvd. in Marina del Rey has initiated a policy of live jazz seven nights a week. The new regimen was installed Thursday when a quintet led by Joe Henderson opened for a three-day run (through tonight).

Henderson's intense, churning tenor saxophone has established him as one of the most forceful of performers in a style that reflects elements of John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins and hard bop. His power is reduced, however, by an inability to edit his solos, a form of self-indulgence that is echoed by the sidemen.

As a result, every tune ran at least 20 minutes and the attention span of the audience was severely tested. The material ("Blue Bowsa," "Round Midnight," a bebop blues, etc.) was too conventional to justify such elongated treatments.

Henderson's group, apparently a pick-up combo that relies almost entirely on improvisation, includes a fair trumpeter, Jerry Rusch, and an excellent rhythm section, achored by the sturdy, steady drummer Billy Higgins.

Pianist Frank Strazzeri is never at a loss for ideas; but the best of all would be for the management to have the piano tuned. Henry Franklin contributed some of the evening's most interesting work, but here again the value of succinctness was ignored. The longer a bass solo, the louder the audience will chatter.

MELODY MAKER, July 8, 1978

Jazzscene

The buff's bible

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF JAZZ IN THE SEVENTIES by Leonard Feather and Ira Gitler, with introduction by Quincy Jones. Illustrated. (Quartet Books, London, £9.95).

MILES DAVIS: makes Ruby Braff sound mild

I DON'T know just how many encyclopedias and yearbooks Feather has compiled but I know they have been of the utmost help to scholars and journalists and ordinary browsers over the past 22 years or so.

Speaking for myself, I have been using "Feather" — as these books have come to be called — since the Encyclopedia Of Jazz was published here by Arthur Barker in 1956 (it came out the previous year in the USA), and I'm still wearing down volumes with constant reference and the sort of hasty thumbing which loosens pages and wrecks bindings. The Encyclopedia Yearbook Of Jazz was published by Barker in '57, and the New Yearbook followed in '59.

Clearly, then, it is useful to people like me when new editions, particularly revised ones, of the original reference book appear; even more useful when a completely new survey is added to the series. Such a newcomer is this Jazz In The Seventies volume which already looks to be indispensable.

It contains 1,400 potted biogs, Quincy's thoughtful and hopeful-sounding intro, another dose of the "Best of the Blindfold Test" (always fascinating to read or re-read, and Miles Davis makes Ruby Braff sound mild), tabulated Down Beat poll results, and other sections on jazz education, films, books and recordings.

The biographies themselves — well compressed as usual, with neat little assessments in many cases, also short lists of relatively recent albums — include brief recapitulations of the pre-1966 careers of most of the musicians whose biogs appeared in earlier volumes of the Encyclopedia Of Jazz.

But to glean the salient facts of, say, Barney Bigard's career, a reader would need a little more than he gets in the latest Feather, even though the Bigard entry is packed with meat.

He would, ideally, have to read it in conjunction with the original Encyclopedia and/or the revised and enlarged edition of 1960 and also the Encyclopedia Of Jazz In The Sixties, published in '66.

That's the trouble with books of musicians' biographies: after a few years they become out of date, except for those entries whose subjects have conveniently retired or snuffed it.

And when an author decides to revise and update, is he to précis the earlier "histories" and use his space on bringing the old entries up to date and adding new ones, or should he opt for reprinting the old material and expanding it, and risk increasing the size of the work to uncommercial proportions?

It is a tough problem, and something has to go. Feather cut down on, or cut out, early career details where these were given in previous volumes and allotted more space to events which took place from the mid-Sixties on, also to full careers for players like Muhal Richard Abrams, Anthony Braxton, Jon Faddis, Cecil McBee, Lew Soloff and dozens more, including such singers as Phoebe Snow and Maria Muldaur.

Many people whose names no longer mean a great deal in the business have been dropped. Vinnie Dean, alto-saxophonist, to take one example, was present in Feather Number One, also the revised Encyclopedia, but had gone from Jazz In The Sixties, and he doesn't reappear here.

Jack Teagarden, I know, is long dead. But so is Mugsy Spanier who is included. Ah, but Big T had died already in the Sixties volume whereas Muggsy didn't die until '67, so I think I've got that part of the system OK.

The scope of a reference work like this changes all the time and this volume ranges wider over the jazz field than previous ones have done, although the Sixties book began the widening process by listing Skip James, Roosevelt Sykes, Marion Williams, James Brown, Son House, Dionne Warwick and many more from the blues-gospel-pop side of the fence.

The enlarged Encyclopedia Of Jazz (1960) had already found room for a few names from the blues and gospel world (Clara Ward, Big Joe Williams, John Lee, "Sonny Boy" Williamson, etc) not listed in the original tome, so it can be seen that the span of this work has been increasing bit by bit.

Naturally, a book such as this one stands or falls by the biographical entries. These "stand" as I've said, so far as they go, and the avid enquirer is advised to obtain at least two of the volumes: this one and the 1960 Encyclopedia, which is also now published here by Quartet for £9.95. At the same time, Quartet have published The Encyclopedia Of Jazz In The Sixties (also £9.95), and this appears here for the first time.

Again I stress these two are related books but separate from the new Seventies volume and cannot be considered simply as adjuncts to it. Each survey has its own features, poll tabulations and such items, and its own admirable graphic sections, as well as its biographies.

As Feather notes of the latest effort: "Although this book is self-sufficient ... it is rather the combination of all three books that is intended to provide the most complete series possible." I intend to review the other two separately, therefore, at a future date.

Finally, some more brief points about the Seventies volume. First, it is now jointly authored by Leonard and Ira Gitler (who has assisted "tirelessly" throughout the entire project). Secondly, it is profusely illustrated by some 200 photographs, many of them original and striking shots by Veryl Oakland.

And in the third place, I note a good many people who are missing (Annette Peacock was one who sprang to mind); and I was supplied with a lengthy roll of absent modern or avant-garde names by Valerie Wilmer, who said they should have been in.

But, of course, you cannot do everyone, and L.F. and I.G. apologise for those who were omitted for reasons of space or other reasons. Many a Brit figures in the listings here — Tony Coe, Kenny Wheeler, Peter Ind, Ian Carr, Ken Colyer, Humph, Mike Westbrook among them! —and I conclude that this addition to the mighty series is more than worth the money asked for it. I know it has been selling at twice the price in import shops.

MAX JONES

Sat. July 22, '78

Services Slated Today for Guitarist Teddy Bunn

Services will be held today for Teddy Bunn, 68, one of the most individual guitarists of the Swing Era and a prominent figure in the early days of 52nd St. jazz. Bunn died Thursday at Lancaster Hospital in Lancaster. Services will be held at 1 p.m. at Chapel of the Valley in Palmdale.

Born Theodore Leroy Bunn in Freeport, Long Island, May 7, 1910, Bunn recorded in the late 1920s with Duke Ellington. He later became a protege of band leader Ben Bernie and was heard on radio with a group called Bernie's Nephews, which also featured the unique scat singer Leo Watson.

Bunn and Watson sprang to prominence when their group, its name changed to the Spirits of Rhythm, played in the late 1930s at the Onyx Club on 52nd St. and made a series of recordings. Bunn also recorded with Jimmie Noone, Johnny Dodds and many others. As a vocalist, he introduced the song "Evil Man Blues" on a 1940 session with Hot Lips Page.

Moving to the West Coast, Bunn worked occasionally with Edgar Hayes and Jack McVea.

After suffering several heart attacks, he had been inactive for the last decade. He leaves his wife, Thelma, three children and a grandchild.

—LEONARD FEATHER

7/23/78

Good vibes from Lionel Hampton at Grande Parade du Jazz in Nice, France.
AP Laserphoto

JAZZ

Blue Notes From Cote d'Azur

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● NICE, France—The days here bring sun without clouds, warmth without humidity. The weather, in short, is ideal; the only avalanche to hit the city has taken the form of 207 musicians (at last count) who have descended on the 2,000-year-old amphitheater and gardens of Cimiez to participate in the fifth annual Grande Parade du Jazz.

Following a familiar pattern, the festival has grown from seven days and a heavy financial loss in 1974 to 11 days and a substantial profit this year. In effect, this is a three-in-one festival, since jazz resounds daily, from 5 until midnight, not only in the ancient Roman arena but also simultaneously in two nearby areas of the park. Every hour on the hour, the three stages are cleared and replenished.

The talent is drawn from a pool of a dozen U.S. combos and four big bands, six European groups and a miscellany of some 65 roving players who work both as guests with the organized groups and in small ad hoc units whose members in many cases have never before worked together. The company even includes a jazz tap dancer, Bunny Briggs.

During any given hour you may spend a while observing the singular chemistry of Stan Getz's guest appearance with the Mary Lou Williams trio, then wander off to the smaller stage, where Bill Evans has teamed with Lee Konitz, and wind up this segment sharing the joy Lionel Hampton is experiencing at the helm of the most illustrious all-star band he has led since his halcyon years in the 1940's.

Hampton is the epicenter of the Nice-quake; officially, the entire festival is a celebration of his 50th year as a professional musician. When time for a Hampton set draws near, the scene is quite unreal. Children have the best view, perched on high branches of trees. Around them are several thousand children of all ages huddled on the ground. There has not been the slightest sign of disorder, and the politesse is pervasive. Beer, wine and New Orleans-style food are available. The only grass seen is the kind the customers sit on.

Hampton must be the jazz world's nonpareil communicator; the reaction to each solo, or to the climactic chord on "Air Mail Special" or "Flyin' Home," is happy tumult.

"I'm having the time of my life," he told one autograph seeker. "This band is a powerhouse! George Wein, who conceived the idea of the 50th anniversary, picked the men for me. Most of them are stars and leaders in their own right—men like Cat Anderson and Joe Newman on trumpets, Kai Winding and Benny Powell on trombones, Earle Warren and Pepper Adams and my old sidekick Arnett Cobb on saxophones, Ray Bryant on piano, Chubby Jackson on bass.

"From here we're going to Italy, Germany, Tunisia—I only wish we could keep the band together for an American tour, but it's too high-priced. Well, at least we recorded our concert at Carnegie Hall."

Hampton explains his ability to exude, at 65, the same energy he displayed with Benny Goodman 40 years ago: "Music keeps me in shape. I'm like a racehorse, just waiting to break away from the post."

Before this new band was formed, Hampton was engaged for several months in a whirlwind recording project. Under the "Who's Who in Jazz" imprimatur, he recorded albums with groups representing a gamut of styles. He was as completely at ease playing with Chick Correa or Charles Mingus as with Gerry Mulligan, Earl Hines or his old Goodman colleague Teddy Wilson. He is formulating ideas for a similar series of LPs to be taped in California.

Hampton aside, the core of the festival's attraction lies in its unending series of improbable teamings and reunions. John Lewis, who has a home outside Nice, is working with such partners as Clark Terry, Stephane Grappelli, Hank Crawford—men who stimulate him into playing a driving piano style he seldom displayed in the old Modern Jazz Quartet days.

Dizzy Gillespie, whose regular quartet lacks a piano, is enabled to assemble the kinds of groups he would travel with if he could afford it. Roland Hanna, Jimmy Rowles and Mary Lou Williams were assigned to play piano on some of his sets; at one point, his 21-year-old guitarist, Rodney Jones, became part of a three-guitar team with Kenny Burrell and Bucky Pizzarelli. Burrell also made a sublime teammate for pianist Bill Evans, who said, "This is the first time in 20 years that I've played gigs with anyone except my regular trio, and I'm surprising myself by having a ball."

●

Not all the cross-pollenations work. The sophisticated alto sax of Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson seemed out of kilter with a lead-footed band from New Orleans led by an allegedly legendary figure called Prof. Longhair. The bland cocktail jazz of Jonah Jones cannot provide a suitable setting for the elegant tenor sax of Bud Freeman. The effect is like that of pouring Grand Marnier on a plate of sardines.

More typical are the good vibes that

Please Turn to Page 80

Cote d'Azur Caper

Continued from Page 79

prevail when a rhythm section is made up of Shelly Manne, the Hollywood drummer on his first visit here; bassist Red Mitchell, a former California colleague of Manne's who has lived in Stockholm for the past 10 years, and the pianist Jimmy Rowles.

"I don't really dig playing outdoors," said Manne, "but these special get-togethers make it all worthwhile. It would be even more fun if the men showed some imagination in their choice of tunes; I must have played 'Autumn Leaves' at least seven times."

To help amortize the cost of bringing so many planeloads of players from the United States, many of the men are being dispatched by George Wein to take part in a few of the estimated 20 other festivals either overlapping with Nice or following it. The North Sea Jazz Festival at The Haugue, is one of the newest and biggest; others at Montreux, Lyons, Orange and around Scandinavia are taking advantage of the unprecedented influx of talent.

The jazzman's appetite for work, with or without pay, remains insatiable. Nightly at a bar near the hotel that serves as festival headquarters, jamming goes on until all hours. One night at 3 a.m. Eubie Blake was surrounded by a knot of young admirers whom he regaled with stories about Jelly Roll Morton.

During this rap session, Bud Freeman walked by "Hello, kid," said Blake to Bud, who, having only just turned 72, is indeed young enough to be Eubie's son. Eubie at 95 is surmounting the rigors of travel better than some juniors who are taking a week to recover from jet lag.

For the customers at Nice, many of them in or not long out of their teens, the Grand Parade du Jazz is a unique and bargain-priced cornucopia. You can take in the entire seven-hour spread for 30 francs (6.90), 20 francs ($4.60) if you paid in advance.

The only worry is the dilemma of multiple choices. Shall we attend the violin summit meeting of Svend Asmussen and Stephane Grappelli? But then we will miss Gillespie's session with Getz, not to mention the blues conclave involving Memphis Slim, Buddy Guy and Junior Wells. Perhaps it would be better to split the hour, attending part of each.

This embarrassment of riches is well enough planned to avoid any suggestion of a three-ring-circus atmosphere. The ambience was best summed up for me by a 23-year-old student just arrived from Brussels. Knapsack with wine bottle and 18-inch-long French roll slung over his back, he hopped up on one of the jagged walls at the arena (all the regular seats had long since been taken, for this was a Lionel Hampon session coming up) and told me, "Every year, for 11 days in July, Nice becomes jazz heaven."

COUNT BASIE relying heavily on the blues/FLORA PURIM: hyper-tense/STAN KENTON: emotional high point/SONNY ROLLINS: heavy jamming

Jazzscene

MI

Newport: live and kicking

Report by Leonard Feather

SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK: The final weekend of the Newport Jazz Festival's Silver Jubilee (25th anniversary) celebration was held not only at various indoor and outdoor locations in New York City, but also at two wildly successful concerts, both more than 12 hours long, at the Saratoga Performing Arts Centre in the health-spa city of Saratoga Springs — normally a three-and-a-half hour drive north of Manhattan, but on this occasion many hours longer because of the gigantic traffic jam engendered by the jazz events.

Saturday, from noon until almost 2 a.m. at night, a crowd estimated at somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000 created a solid nine-mile blockade leading into the city. The figure set an all-time attendance record for any authentic jazz concert in the history of the art form.

In fact, the whole weekend reaffirmed, in ringing fortissimos and cash registers, the unprecedentedly healthy state of jazz, not only economically but artistically, too.

Despite the huge Saratoga audience, there were no signs of disorder. The beautiful park-like expanse, with its towering pine trees, surrounding the roofed but open-sided Arts Centre, was covered with reclining figures, some only inches apart, many on blankets or in sleeping bags. Some fans left the discouragingly long lines at the refreshment stands and wandered over to the arts-and-crafts tent.

In short, the al fresco atmosphere that was natural to Newport during its early years (1954-71) was restored by this return to a mass-scale outdoor setting.

The main attraction that accounted for the Saturday traffic congestion was **Chick Corea,** who is now riding the crest of a wave of popularity that is matched only by the output in decibels of his new orchestra: four brass, an amplified 75 per cent female string section, **Joe Farrell** on reeds, a heavily electronic rhythm contingent, and Corea's versatile girl friend **Gayle Moran,** who sings in a pure, pretty non-jazz voice, plays keyboards competently, and writes attractive melodies to which she sets rather inane lyrics.

The same artists, with guest soloists **Gary Burton** and **Herbie Hancock,** played for another packed house the previous evening at Avery Fisher Hall in New York. At the latter Corea also added **Woody Herman's** orchestra playing a formless, disappointing piece he had written specially for Herman, "Suite For Hot Band."

Corea had his own sound system, the quality of which was better than that offered by others on the first day at Saratoga. Nevertheless, the Corea orchestra varied from satisfying to deafening. I preferred the charming interlude in which Gary Burton, whose vibes have the character of Swiss chimes, joined with Chick for some of the most delicately interwoven and empathetic statements of the evening.

Flora Purim and **Airto,** the other main act on Saturday, now have a hypertense group that consists entirely of Brazilian musicians except for guitarist **George Sopuch,** whose loud, unsubtle style was poorly suited to Purim's material. She seemed to be straining too much of the time, especially if you remembered the original versions of such songs as "500 Miles High."

After trying so often to rise above the over-amplified percussion and electronics, she finally relaxed and sounded at ease singing "Dindi" in Portuguese, backed only by **Jose Bertrami** on electric keyboard and **Nivaldo Ornelas** on tenor sax.

The two big bands on Saturday's schedule suffered from severe problems of balance, projection and acoustics. **George Russell's** orchestra, heard to such great advantage recently at the Village Vanguard, was almost ruined in this sonic tempest. Only, the trumpet section was shown at a level not far from its potential, with **Terumasa Hino, Lew Soloff** (whose piccolo trumpet sounded oddly like a recording of a normal trumpet speeded up to double-tempo), and **Stan Davis,** well featured on "Mystic Voices."

Russell's singer, **Lee Genesis,** sounded affected and over-emotional almost to the point of hysteria in "God Bless The Child."

The Tribute To **Charles Mingus** Orchestra did less than justice to the ailing bassist, who was not present. He was replaced by **George Mraz, Larry Ridley** and **Eddie Gomez,** doing their united best to make up for his absence.

With arranger **Paul Jeffrey** conducting a pick-up ensemble of 22 men, including many who worked with Mingus at some time during the last 20 years, the result was an every-man-for-himself trip, with lack of rehearsal and team spirit painfully evident.

Curiously, the band included four guitarists: **Ted Dunbar, Jack Wilkins, John Scofield** and **Larry Coryell.** The multiple rhythm section also included **Dannie Richmond** and **Joe Chambers** on drums, and **Bob Neloms** on piano. The reeds as a section were sloppy, though **Ronnie Cuber** and **Cecil Payne** engaged in an interesting baritone chase. **Jimmy Knepper** showed superior taste and ideas in his trombone chase with **Slide Hampton.**

The evening ended with a jam session, very heavy in names, and notable for the presence in a straight-jazz context of musicians heavily involved in the fusion or crossover movements: **George Benson, Herbie Hancock, Jean-Luc Ponty, the Brecker Brothers,** and singers **Al Jarreau, Dee Dee Bridgewater** and **Andy Bey. Dizzy Gillespie** and **Sonny Rollins** were part of this wildly received bash. The audience, though reduced in numbers because of the late hour, kept yelling for more until it ended at 1.50 a.m.

Sunday's concert consisted of a big-band cavalcade, with nine orchestras taking part. The **New York Jazz Repertory Society Band** served as a house unit, playing short sets while some of the other bands prepared to work on the other half of the stage. But at the last minute **Dick Hyman,** pianist-director of the orchestra, discovered that all its music had been left in New York!

The amazing Hyman, never disturbed by anything, played a riff on his opening chorus; the band picked it up and voiced it on the second chorus, a series of fine solos followed, and the head arrangement was repeated at the end. The tune took up a full set.

Hyman then went to a dressing-room and composed a new tune, a blues, even writing out parts for each musician for the entire opening chorus. By the time the band had to play again, a couple of hours later, the new chart was ready and the band sight-read it perfectly. For the third and last appearance Hyman wrote yet another original that sounded even more complete than the others.

"Leaving the music in New York was a blessing in disguise," he said afterward. "We got three new numbers for our library."

Looking at the personnel, you will realise why so much valuable blowing resulted: **Cat Anderson, Jimmy Maxwell, Joe Newman, Doc Cheatham,** trumpets; **Eddie Bert, Benny Powell, Eph Resnick,** trombones; **Lennie Hambro, Norris Turney,** altos; **Budd Johnson, Al Klink,** tenors; **Pepper Adams,** baritone; **Hyman, Carmen Mastren** (guitar), **Jack Lesberg, Panama Francis,** rhythm.

Woody Herman followed the Repertory band's first set. His band of youngsters is still refreshingly versatile, with **Dennis Johnson** on trumpet, **Nelson Hines** on trombone, and particularly the lead and solo trombonist **Birch Johnson,** featured in **Alan Broadbent's** charming extended work, "Sugar Loaf Mountain."

The only weak spot was Woody's own blues "I've Got News For You," in which both the lyrics and the leader's outdated pseudo-black blues vocal style seemed out of place, but he is still a respected leader and a capable soloist.

Mercer Ellington led his band through a set composed entirely of **Duke**-associated material except for "Sidney's Child," an original by **Barrie Lee Hall.** But the arrangements in many cases have been updated and Mercer is gradually drawing away from his father's giant shadow.

There were 6/8 and rock moments in the opening medley of "Perdido," "A Train," "Caravan" and others. **Harold Minerve** on alto came closest to the old Ellington sound in "Star Crossed Lovers." **Larry Pivak** played interesting clarinet on "Ko Ko" and **Dave Young** got into some circular breathing effects (a la **Harry Carney**) on "In A Sentimental Mood."

J. J. Wiggins, Mercer's youthful bassist, was consistently splendid, and **Anita Moore's** singing is personable but often affected and pretentious. The band concluded with "Three Black Kings," Duke's last long piece, with that rousing gospel-flavoured third movement.

The **Harry James** and **Count Basie** sets had much in common. Both bands rely heavily on the blues; both have flashy showman-style drummers — **Butch Miles** with Basie, who is white, is almost indistinguishable from James's **Sonny Payne,** who is black and played for years with Basie; both bands have boring singers — **Dennis Roland** singing "Funny Valentine" with Basie and some nondescript lady singing stale standards with James.

However, only the James band has a girl instrumentalist: **Beverly Dahlke,** on baritone sax, who was formerly with **Toshiko.** James featured her on "Sweet Georgia Brown," but nothing special happened. Both Basie and James on the whole offered unspectacularly swinging music.

The emotional high point of the day was the ovation accorded to **Stan Kenton,** perhaps for his courage in appearing at all. Haggard and tired, obviously not over the effects of the serious operation that kept him out of action during most of 1977, he walked and talked very slowly and had painful difficulty in remembering soloist and composer names.

Still, he got through the set okay, playing a couple of his single-finger piano solos and giving minimal cues to the band, which played remarkably well despite generally dull arrangements.

Buddy Rich has a clean, together band with competent soloists and well-crafted arrangements that tend, with a couple of exceptions, to sound very much alike.

Almost all the spirit and excitement seems to derive from the amazing work of Rich at the controls. The best chart in his book, it seems to me, is a **Mike Abene** arrangement of **Joe Zawinul's** "Birdland."

Later on "Birdland" was played again, this time by the **Maynard Ferguson** orchestra, whose arrangement was far inferior and too reliant on ostentatious effects.

Try though I may, I find it difficult to derive any emotional satisfaction from listening to Ferguson. One musician said to me, "The trouble with Maynard is, he starts at the end." This remark, though meant as a joke, is close to the truth in the sense that Ferguson's big climax-like openings leave him nowhere to go from there.

There are a couple of good soloists such as **Mike Migliori** on saxes and **John Chiudini** on guitar. Ferguson himself has the same potential as always, but his lack of taste and discretion spoils it all. **Cat Anderson** can play eight bars, in the same stratospheric register, and make it more meaningful than an entire number by Maynard.

I was unable to catch all of the **Thad Jones-Mel Lewis** set, but having heard them very recently with almost the identical personnel, I can safely say they delivered a typically impressive performance, though the trumpet section needs strengthening.

Altogether, this round-the-clock marathon offered a much-needed reminder that big bands are very much alive and flourishing. It's too bad that the best of them all, **Toshiko-Tabackin,** was not among those present. Well, maybe next year — and George Wein assured us he will be back next year at Saratoga.

U.S. news

WASHINGTON: Dizzy Gillespie plays both for and with President Jimmy Carter

Jazz at the White House

Washington: Leonard Feather

IT STARTED out as a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Newport Jazz Festival. As the all-star line-up of names gathered strength under George Wein's direction, it wound up as one of the most incredibly prestigious evenings in the history of jazz.

The grand finale was **President Carter** singing "Salt Peanuts" as a duet with **Dizzy Gillespie,** accompanied by **Max Roach.** What could possibly follow that?

There was a feeling of unreality about being part of this scene. Looking around me, I saw the President and his family, the Vice-President, members of the Cabinet, congressmen, senators, numerous music critics, reporters, and supporters of jazz from every walk of life, 800 people in total.

The party was held on the south lawn of the White House, which had been decked out with a hundred or so picnic tables. Early in the afternoon, **George Wein** summoned all the musicians to a talk-through near the bandstand but there was no actual rehearsal.

THE festivities began at 5 o'clock as we helped ourselves to the special New Orleans-style supper, Jambalaya (with rice, chicken, pork), pecan pie and beer or wine. During this period, while the guests walked around celebrity spotting or looking for old friends, we were entertained by the good-humoured, old time sounds of the **Young Tuxedo Brass Band** from New Orleans.

The programme proper began at 6.30. President Carter stepped to the stage to deliver a speech that ran between five and ten minutes. At last jazz was being officially acknowledged, at the highest level, praised as an art form and lauded for its accomplishments in breaking down racism.

The music took a roughly chronological format, beginning with **Eubie Blake.** The 95-year-old ragtime kid played "Boogie Woogie Beguine" followed by his own "Memories Of You."

The introductions were made by George Wein and by several musicians such as **Billy Taylor, Gerry Mulligan** and **Sam Rivers,** who had been asked to attend as guests but couldn't be squeezed into the tightly scheduled performing part of the evening.

Katharine Handy Lewis sang "St. Louis Blues," written by her father, **W. C. Handy.**

Billy Taylor then introduced **Mary Lou Williams,** who offered a capsule history of jazz piano. The President, who had been sitting on a bench directly in front of the artists, decided to make himself a little closer and more comfortable by squatting on the grass. He remained there for much of the concert, and practically never took his eyes off the performance.

BENNY CARTER was next, leading an all-star swing group through a couple of numbers. With **Roy Eldridge, Clark Terry, Illinois Jacquet, Teddy Wilson, Jo Jones** and **Milt Hinton,** the group gave new life to "In a Mellotone" and "Lady Be Good."

Sonny Rollins was in superb form for his all-too-brief performance. He played only one number, "Sonnymoon," backed by a rhythm section that was not quite as good as the sum of its parts: **McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter,** and **Max Roach.**

Dizzy Gillespie and **Dexter Gordon** were supported by four men, all of whom have put in more than their share of time as crossover musicians, playing fusion jazz for the pop market; but tonight they were on their best and most brilliant behaviour. **Herbie Hancock, George Benson** (in his **Charlie Christian** bag), **Tony Williams** and **Ron Carter.**

JOHN LEWIS then came on stage to introduce **Ornette Coleman.** The daddy of the avant garde was accompanied only by his son, 22-year-old **Denarda Coleman.** Possibly Coleman's contribution would have been more meaningful with some kind of harmonic underpinning such as piano, guitar or even just bass; as it was, it seemed aimless and lacking in structure.

Cecil Taylor benefitted from the mandatory succinctness of the concert. He was at his most accessible, fiery, and intense as ever, during an excursion so extraordinary that the President leapt on the stage to congratulate him.

It had just begun to get dark when **Lionel Hampton** brought the last all-star group on. With him were **Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Chick Corea** (also playing straightahead jazz), **George Benson, Ray Brown** and **Louis Bellson.**

AND so the encores began, with Jacquet rejoining his old boss to relive the early Hampton years with "Flying Home." Gerry Mulligan, who supposedly was just there as an announcer, borrowed a clarinet from somewhere and began blowing. A couple of members of the Tuxedo Band joined in, including the **Grand Marshall,** who strutted up and down the stage waving a bright red umbrella.

Suddenly **Pearl Bailey,** urged on by Mrs. Carter, got into the act. She sang "In the Good Old Summertime," did a dance routine with Hampton, and, while the audience began standing on the tables for a closer look, went into a second number, "St Louis Blues", which she sang with a far looser more jazz-edged feeling than Mrs. Handy.

The President asked Dizzy Gillespie to play just one more number. Since there were no bass players around at the moment, Dizzy worked with just Max Roach playing sticks on foot cymbal. After they had ad libbed for a while, Dizzy made a tongue-in-cheek announcement:

"The President — his highness — has asked us to play 'Salt Peanuts.' We will do so, but there are strings attached. We want him to take the vocal."

There was a brief consultation on stage as Diz and Max explained to Jimmy Carter where to come in during the vocal breaks. He went along with the gag, thus becoming the first President in the history of the United States to take part in a demonstration of bebop singing. When it was over, Diz said: "I just want to ask you one thing. Will you go on the road with us?"

Jazz

On the Rigors of the Road

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● NICE, France—Vic Dickenson sat slumped in a chair while the crowd milled around him in the lobby.

"Man," he said, "I'm tired. I can't play this much."

Dickenson will celebrate his 72nd birthday in a few weeks, but if he's feeling tomorrow the way he feels today, he won't want to celebrate anything but the freedom to stay home.

He had just arrived in town after a back-breaking schedule of one-night stands. During a single two-week period between July 11 and July 25, jazz festivals were held not only in Nice, but at several towns in England, at Montreux in Switzerland, at Nimes in France, at Pori in Finland, at San Sebastian in Spain and at The Hague in Holland. Numerous American musicians have worked most of them. The U.S. jazzman finds himself in great demand during the summer, but the salaries are rarely commensurate with the price paid in physical exhaustion.

Dickenson has paid his traveling dues since he left home to join a band in 1925. He has worked with the biggest and best, with Count Basie, Benny Carter, Bobby Hackett, Sidney Bechet and Eddie Condon, and with the World's Greatest Jazzband. He has been on the Riviera for a week, but he has never "spent a week on the Riviera."

The road is a thoughtless taskmaster. When you are in Europe, troubles multiply; along with different beds and hotels and airports, you have incomprehensible currency purchased with your sagging dollar, a series of unfamiliar languages to grapple with. Vic Dickenson had worked until 1 a.m. on a night he had previously been told he would have off. After four hours of fitful sleep, he had headed for the plane that brought him to Nice. Now he felt he would have trouble lifting up his feet, never mind his trombone.

A call to the office and a talk with producer George Wein brought the relief he sought. The festival could get along without him that night.

●

Situations like Dickenson's escape the attention of the concert-going enthusiast. Stories have been told about the rigors of the road, but the reality cannot hit home unless you have experienced the traveling life from the inside.

There probably has been a record amount of battle fatigue this summer, if only because more jobs have been available to more performers, in areas more widely scattered than ever before.

Vic Dickenson

Even the seemingly inexhaustible Buddy Rich became a victim when his band, arriving in Europe, plunged immediately into the kind of schedule that looks feasible on paper but turns out to be destructive to body and soul. Missed plane connections, barely edible junk food eaten on the run, confusion about hotel reservations, amplifiers and other electrical equipment eventually will take their toll of the hardiest traveler.

"The guys in my band haven't had more than four or five hours' sleep a night since we got here," said Rich. "Today, for the first time in my life, I felt that I actually couldn't move my hands. We simply have to cancel the first night—there's no way we can be expected to play." Rich and his men accordingly premiered in Nice the following night, its leader fully in command, playing to a cheering crowd that might have been mystified and angry had the band tried to perform 24 hours earlier.

Jazz is unique in the discipline, the gut-level immediacy it demands of its participants. Inspiration, concentration, competent physique and a certain inner serenity are indispensable both to ensemble and solo playing. Hearing something he finds perfunctory or uninspired, the listener too often fails to take into consideration conditions that prevailed prior to or even during the performance.

A case in point was the European tour of the Lionel Hampton orchestra. As the nights wore on, complaints mounted in the ranks concerning the leader's refusal ever to terminate a set as long as the audience was reluctant to let him go.

"Last night," said bassist Chubby Jackson, "we were in The Hague, where I had to work not only with Lionel but also in a small combo that played until 1:45 a.m. Then we were scheduled to be up in time to catch the 6:30 a.m. plane that brought us to Nice.

"The crowd was wild tonight, and Lionel just wouldn't stop. He kept the band on stage uninterruptedly for close to three hours. Actually, not everybody stayed; one by one, toward the end, most of the horn players simply walked off. Panama Francis, the drummer, developed a severely swollen ankle. I was on the verge of collapse. Ray Bryant couldn't take it any more, so George Wein himself had to relieve him by sitting in at the piano.

"Lionel never gets tired, so he assumes everyone else has his own iron constitution."

Bill Evans, a sensitive artist who is given to understatement at the piano, is at the opposite end of the musical spectrum from the brashly extrovert Hampton. "I was sent to play a gig in Tunisia," Evans said, "where it was obvious that what they really wanted was a Lionel Hampton-type show. I had to cut out all ballads, all slow and even medium tempo tunes."

Evans' dissatisfaction with the piano at Nice, where he had played during the festival's opening night, was so obviously justifiable that Wein promptly invested a reported $22,500 in a new grand. "That's wonderful of him," Evans said, "but it still doesn't mean very much if you don't have somebody come in regularly to keep it in tune, which has not happened."

Before the Nice festival ended, his patience at an end and his artistic temperament unable to cope with the flight patterns, Evans decided he wanted out of the balance of his European tour and resolved to leave for home immediately. Finally, a compromise was struck: He agreed to play four of the six remaining dates.

The only musicians who seem to avoid most of the inherent suffering involved in a tour are the members of college bands that have been increasingly visible on Continental jazz stages. One of the most stimulating performances at Nice was given by the 23-piece Kansas State Concert Jazz Ensemble from Manhattan, Kan.

The 11-piece brass section dealt brilliantly with arrangements far more complex and demanding than those of the Hampton orchestra, which for the most part played simple blues riffs. The Kansas youths, among them a 17-year-old freshman named Carol Brown who vigorously elicited a splendid sound from her Fender bass, exhibited no signs of fatigue.

A glance at their schedule offered the explanation. It was filled with injunctions such as "Charter Bus to Lucerne—Relax, enjoy Lucerne," and "Special Tour, Zermatt and the Matterhorn," and "Day off: Relax, go swimming." Only four concerts were on the itinerary during a two-week tour. The band, self-subsidized, is not out to make a profit but an impression, to gather prestige and enjoy life. Full-time pros have neither the time for such luxuries nor the stamina of teen-agers.

My advice to the Kansas State ensemble: Think long and carefully before you take up this profession. The days ahead may offer less time for relaxation and swimming than for replacing horns or topcoats missing in transit, paying for doctors' bills and ulcer pills. You may wind up, 50 years from now, like Vic Dickenson, sitting alone in a hotel lobby wondering when it is all going to end. ●

FEEDBACK

Re: Black Flight From the Sound

Leonard Feather's provocative article, "Blacks Steadily Leaving the Sound" (Calendar, July 2), proved once again that he's basically ignoring the music of talented young artists who are creating jazz of the '70s. Why don't we ever hear about the artists who are changing the music: David Murray, James Newton, Oliver Lake, Anthony Braxton, Air, Arthur Blythe, Art Ensemble of Chicago . . . to name a few. Some of these artists have lived in Los Angeles, though you would never know it from the local press.

It was implied that George Lewis, the innovative trombonist, did not play with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis big band in order to make more money playing funk. This is not true. Lewis is an artist's artist. He left Count Basie to play with the Anthony Braxton Quartet. He's presently in Europe with Carla Bley's orchestra and is performing solo trombone concerts with electronic synthesizer and computer—not the funk variations.

MARK DRESSER
Del Mar

In response to Feather's article: I am a 19-year-old black female and I am certain that many other young blacks feel the way I do. I am sick and tired of having jazz shoved down my throat by well-meaning black jazz musicians and psychologists who fear that the enormous popularity of R&B music with black youth will bring about the death of jazz.

Whites are not told what music they should listen to. If a white person chooses to listen to or play R&B, he is rarely, if ever, criticized for it. If a white rejects "heavy metal" rock 'n' roll he is not told that he has sold out "the music of his people" or "rejected his racial heritage."

I play rhythm guitar with an avant-garde, predominately white rock outfit and I don't appreciate being told that I have "sold out" just because I have chosen to play another type of music other than jazz.

Thad Jones and Mel Lewis, don't worry. There will always be quality black jazz musicians who will resist the urge to go commercial.

All I am saying is take the burden of guilt off the shoulders of black musicians who choose to play other types of music and respect our right to be different.

CHARLEE PORTER
Long Beach

Feather made several valid points, yet generally reached false conclusions; moreover, there were two underlying themes that disturbed me: first, that young black musicians have strayed too far from "their place," and, secondly, that New York and a big name band are where it's at, the pinnacle—an Eastern elitist viewpoint.

The jazz scene from where I view it is joyous rather than bleak. There is plenty going on here on the Coast, and seemingly no puny representation by young black exponents. But jazz, like classical symphonic music, has always had a limited audience. So it is no surprise that it gets limited TV coverage.

Thad Jones' statement that economics is at the root of the apparent drift away from jazz by young blacks is only partly true. Artistic ego also plays a large part. Understandably, the young black artist must be influenced by the adulation and outlandish earnings of his counterpart on the rock scene and wants to stretch his own wings to their fullest. Artists in every form of creative endeavor have always been faced with these temptations. It is unfair to accuse the black musician of a sellout, as though he must exemplify some special kind of virtue, not demanded of his white brother.

It may be there'll never be a return to the entrenched group, the united collection of jazz artists who stay together, "band" together. In the past it was more a survival custom than anything. What we may have (and have already to some extent) and not to the detriment of jazz at all, is the individual artist contracting for short periods of time to perform with a group. This is a trend and may become the established custom.

JUNE F. ACOSTA
Los Angeles

JAZZ REVIEW

Willie Bobo at Hong Kong Bar

BY LEONARD FEATHER

One of the lessons to be learned from an evening spent with Willie Bobo, this week's attraction at the Hong Kong Bar, is that Latin and Afro-Cuban rhythms blended with jazz constitute a more effective fusion than jazz and rock.

The music of Bobo's nine-man band is unpretentiously entertaining rather than intellectually profound. The Latin element is supplied mainly by the percussionists, Bobo himself and his boldly incisive conga expert Victor Pantoga, with Aaron Ballestron on regular drums. The jazz is infused by such workmanlike soloists as Ron King on trumpet, Thurman Green on trombone and Gary Herbig on saxes.

It is a relief, in these times of self-indulgence and endless, disorganized jamming, to hear arrangements that are as tightly knit as "Always There" and "Keep That Same Old Feeling." There is also a valuable strain of humor: One number moves from a satirical oldtime tango to a burst of joyous Dixieland. Another begins with Herbie Hancock's "Chameleon" and winds up, in some sort of twisted logic, with Eddie Harris' "Freedom Jazz Dance."

The old favorites are still in the repertoire. "Evil Ways" is revived with what the leader calls "The Voices of the Bobo-ettes" (himself and Pantoga). There is a new arrangement of "Dindi," still Bobo's most appealing vocal ballad.

Rich Aronson's electric keyboard is never overbearing, either in solos or as a rhythm section component. Guitarist Steve Giavecko, slightly more rock-derived than the other soloist, is a welcome new addition to the ranks. Jim Lacefield's bass completes a rhythm team that drives the ensemble without overwhelming it.

As Bobo's sardonic raps indicate, this is a group that refuses to take itself too seriously, mixing musicianship and good spirits in a blend that very rarely fails to work. Not without reason is the band's upcoming album entitled "A Hell of an Act to Follow." Bobo closes Saturday; Joe Henderson opens Tuesday.

Lateef at Parisian Room

One of the unhappier tasks a reviewer must deal with is that of passing judgment on a performer he admires, but who is obviously working well below his potential.

Such was the case Tuesday at the Parisian Room, when Yusef Lateef opened for a two-week run. Symptoms that had begun to manifest themselves when his group was reviewed here last year have now developed into an almost total change of direction.

Gone are the flowing, cohesive sounds of swinging 4/4 music and the rhythmically sophisticated men who first fashioned them. In their place are the insistent plodding of a Fender bass, played by Steve Neil; the very heavy (in the literal sense) drumming of Greg Bandy and the electronic keyboard of Khalid Moss.

Having provided himself with this kind of setting, Lateef has altered his own direction. Rarely playing a horn solo long enough to offer a reminder of his brilliance as a flutist and saxophonist, he indulged in vocals on several numbers, including the puerile "Robot Man" and a blues backed by a loud 12/8 beat.

The best evidence of Lateef's musicianship came in a plaintive minor waltz theme that gave his flute temporary surcease from the sound-and-fury excesses.

RECORD REVIEW 8-7-78

Pianist Hyman Mimes the Greats

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"A Child Is Born." Dick Hyman. Chiaroscuro Records CR 198.

Unique is not an adjective one tosses around lightly, but it is doubtful there has ever been a record like this. Its premise is daring: Hyman, a New York musician who spent many years working primarily in the studios but has moved more and more into the jazz spotlight of late, has taken a single tune, Thad Jones' exquisite waltz "A Child Is Born," and has refashioned it in the styles of every pianist from Scott Joplin to Cecil Taylor.

Who have been the great pianists of jazz history? The most inimitable? Hyman, in this incredible tour de force, offers an opportunity to examine the evidence concerning the first question, albeit at second hand, while reminding us that the answer to the second question is simple. Nobody is inimitable. When Dick Hyman studies him, he becomes immediately imitable and the subject of an impression that is uncannily lifelike.

The A Side begins with a brief exposition of the theme itself. When the variations begin with Joplin, Jones' waltz magically becomes an authentic rag. The other cuts vary greatly in the degree to which Hyman respects the original melody (it gets pretty well lost in the Jelly Roll Morton version but is adhered to with fidelity in the Teddy Wilson).

James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, Art Tatum and Erroll Garner all come to vivid life under Hyman's fingers. The album's interest is fortified by his liner notes, in which he reminisces about the impact of each pianist on his career. The Earl Hines and George Shearing comments are particularly relevant. Of the latter, he observes that he kept the impression very short, because there is a great deal of Shearing in his own style and he was afraid of simply lapsing into Hyman-plays-Hyman.

That, in fact, is something he saves for the last and longest track, a 17-minute demonstration of Hyman's own style in a diversity of moods and tempos. The occasional complaint that "Hyman can play like everybody but himself" is effectively scotched in this personalized cut.

Does it become monotonous to hear the same song occupying an entire album? Surprisingly, not at all; the changes of style, key, tempo create almost as much contrast as if Hyman had played a dozen different compositions.

A natural for fooling your friend with blindfold tests, "A Child Is Born" is the latest in a succession of remarkable Hyman-achievements and a very likely candidate for a Grammy award.

For the Record: Carlyss-Schein in Recital

Dates for the joint recital by violinist Earl Carlyss and pianist Ann Schein were listed incorrectly in Sunday's Calendar. The correct dates are Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:30 in the First Church of the Nazarene, 2495 E. Mountain, Pasadena. At each program Carlyss, second violinist with the Juilliard String Quartet, and Schein will perform Handel's Sonata in D, Opus 1, No. 13; Sonata in B flat, K. 454, by Mozart; Debussy's Sonate; "Havsnaise" by Saint-Saens, and Respighi's Sonata in B minor

JAZZ

8/6/78

The Attack of the Pumpkin Eaters

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● Picture, if you can, the following situation: John Coltrane plays a solo, then yields to a vocal group that intones the deathless words: "Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater/Had a Wife and Couldn't Keep Her . . ."

Or imagine this: Charlie Parker puts down his horn to take part in the vocal proceedings on such verses as: "Busting my bubble/is it really worth the trouble?/got to be crazy/person that's lazy . . ."

Another image: Lester Young joins in the singing on "Shake Your Body' ("We're gonna knock this Boogah down, whoaaa . . . ') and twiddles with the roto-tom drums on another track, while the rhythm section plods away with a chunk-chunk disco beat.

Such gruesome images are palpably absurd, because those seminal saxophonists never lowered themselves to such levels of inanity. That is why their records are still selling today, decades later. Yet all the above-cited incidents actually take place on the new album by saxophonist Gary Bartz, 'Love Affair" (Capitol SW 11789). This is worth mention ing only because Bartz, a Juilliard trained musician who came up through the ranks and worked with Max Roach, Art Blakey and McCoy Tyner once had the potential to become a latter-day Col trane or Lester or Bird.

It is necessary to listen to the early Bartz albums (among them those by the widely respected Ntu Troop he led in 1969-70) to understand the extent to which an internationally respected artist has jettisoned his earlier values. It is not a question of jazz vs. nonjazz (Bartz long ago disavowed that term), but of merit vs. nonmerit. Of course, the record companies and their hit-hungry producers are mainly at fault, as usual; but Bartz can hardly escape sharing the responsibility, since he produced "Love Affair," composed four of the six songs, and wrote the rhythm, horn and vocal arrangements. While respecting Bartz's right to make any career decision he chooses, I regret his making it.

Moreover, he has allowed himself to be quoted to the effect that "I don't think music should just be listened to. It should be danced to or sung to, but you shouldn't just sit." So George Wein, Norman Granz, Jimmy Lyons & Co., you have your cue: cancel the concert dates, let Carnegie Hall and the Hollywood Bowl be torn down, call off all plans for Newport and Royce Hall. Forget about Ellington and Tatum and Coleman Hawkins and dozens more who, by fashioning an art form geared to mature listening established it as a music to be heard in the concert halls of the world. They were just squares who didn't know how to boogie, who can't have any meaning because they never hired vocal groups to tell us about Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater.

There is a final irony in the Bartz album—literally final, since it is carefully tucked away as the last cut on the second side. It is John Coltrane's "Giant Steps ' with Bartz close to his pristine form on alto sax, no hokey vocals, full-bodied string writing, and a first-rate jazz piano solo by George Cables. "Giant Steps" elevates what would have been a zero album to a one-star rating. It is still painful to

Please Turn to Page 82

Gary Bartz

Gary Bartz

Continued from Page 79

reflect that a splendid performer who started out taking the high road has been sidetracked into a disco play ground.

(But good luck on the charts, Bartz.)

Fortunately there is a wealth of inspiring music available, much of it made by companies less powerful than Capitol, where most of the true giants have been consistently ignored for many years. The following are recommended:

Red Garland: **"Red Alert"** (Galaxy 5109). The rec ording costs for this unpretentious set were an infinitesimal fraction of the bill for the Bartz fiasco; yet its chances for survival are 10 times better. Garland, the ex-Miles Davis pianist, is surrounded by two eminent saxophonists, Harold Land and Ira Sullivan, cornetist Nat Adderley, and a rhythm backup (Ron Carter, bass and Frank Butler, drums) that involves no wah-wah guitarists or multiple percussion. Three and a half stars.

Pianist Hank Jones, bassist Milt Hinton and drummer Bobby Rosengarden have formed a trio that is no weaker than these three strong links. **"The Trio"** (Chiaroscuro 188) offers a consistently tasteful set of standards and originals. Four stars.

"Shelly Manne Plays Richard Rodgers: 'Rex'" (Discovery 783) is a belated but welcome release. Because "Rex" flopped on Broadway in 1976, RCA decided not to release this set of songs, but Manne proves that the interpretations are more valuable than either the tunes or the show, thanks to the brilliant Lew Tabackin on flute and tenor sax. With the help of Mike Wofford as pianist and co-arranger, and with Chuck Domanico on bass, Manne turns these eight unlikely vehicles into a four star collection.

Roland Hanna: **"Sir Elf Plays I"** (Choice 1018) also involves Richard Rodgers, along with Kern, Harbach, Chopin et al, as this eminently tasteful pianist, backed by the Czech bassist George Mraz, comes up with yet another of his four-star sets.

Chiaroscuro, a company long associated with conservative mainstream jazz, recently made an extraordinary move. The company removed its corporate suit and tie, donned a dashiki and began to experiment extensively in the world of the avant-garde. **"The Journey"** (Chiaroscuro 187), by Dollar Brand, the South African pianist and composer who now calls himself Abdullah Ibrahim, will scare the ears off any regular Chiaroscuro customer.

There are only three tracks. "Sister Rosie" is a short, light-hearted calypso. "Jabulani" ("Joy") is a lengthy free-jazz journey, with alarums and excursions and burps and squeals by the baritone saxophonist Hamiet Bluiett, painfully flat tones from Don Cherry's trumpet, and a plethora of percussion adornment. Taking up the entire second side is a 22-minute excursion into quasi-Indian-cum-belly dance sounds. This begins with a repeated 9/4 piano figure by Ibrahim, evolving into an endless D-minor drone, complete with oboe effects. This can be soporific or hypnotic according to your mood. Two and a half stars.

Grant Geissman Quintet: **"Good Stuff"** (Concord Jazz 62). Chuck Mangione's unspoiled, 25-year-old jazz guitarist in his first LP as a leader is surrounded by other young musicians (saxophonist Gordon Goodwin is a fellow alumnus of Cal State Northridge) in a well chosen program: one old Wes Montgomery tune, "Road Song;" two originals by Geissman, two by Goodwin, and three standards. Tom Ranier on electric and acoustic keyboards, Bob Magnusson, an exceptionally skilled bassist, and Geissman all distinguish themselves in this promising debut album. Three and a half stars.

Gary Bartz's 'Love Affair' —Absurd, Gruesome Images

By Leonard Feather

THE JAZZ SCENE

PICTURE, if you can, the following situation: John Coltrane plays a solo, then yields to a vocal group that intones the deathless words: "Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater-Had A Wife and Couldn't Keep Her . . ." Or imagine this: Charlie Parker puts down his horn to take part in the vocal proceedings on such verses as: "Busting my bubble—is it really worth the trouble? got to be crazy-person that's lazy . . ."

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GARY BARTZ

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Also recommended: Flip Phillips-Woody Herman — **"Together"** (Century 1090). A reunion of the veteran, warm-toned tenor sax star with his ex-boss plus the Herman band and, on some tracks, strings. Earl Fatha Hines-Lionel Hampton (Who's Who In Jazz 21004): One of the many happy swing-era style collaborations in Hampton's new series of productions for this hyperactive new label.

Los Angeles Times

8/10

AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Plats du Jour by Woods Quartet

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Phil Woods Quartet, this week's incumbent at the Lighthouse, is a tightly knit yet loosely swinging unit, one that has established itself over the past three years as too modern and versatile to be characterized as mainstream, yet too aware of the jazz basics to be called avant garde.

With every local appearance, Woods' eloquence becomes more impressive. This could be because so many saxophonists have committed so many sins in the quest for commercial success that Woods' honesty is a joy in itself; but there is much more than this to his appeal. Few if any other alto soloists today speak so eloquently and confidently through their horns. His sound and style are, so to speak, matured in the woods.

That he still acknowledges a debt to his spiritual father, Charlie Parker, was accentuated by his use of the title "Charles Christopher" (Parker's first and middle names) for one of his original compositions. But Bird and the bop idiom represent only one of the quartet's many aspects. The pulse was just as clear but the melodic qualities were more classical in "Summer Afternoon," an enchanting work by Woods' pianist, Mike Melillo.

Woods has always been resourceful in his choice of standard material. At the set caught, he took Cole Porter's "All Through the Night" on an adventurous journey, from ad lib introduction, accompanied only by Melillo, to fast and brilliantly sustained variations, with bassist Steve Gilmore and drummer Bill Goodwin keeping up a consistently energizing beat.

Harry Leahey, whose guitar contributed so much to the combo on records, dropped out last year, tired of traveling, but even the Phil Woods Quintet Minus One remains as efficient as it is self-sufficient. Woods & Co. will be cooking up their varied plats du jour through Sunday.

Dave Pell Leads Prez Conference

BY LEONARD FEATHER

What Super Sax achieved for Charlie Parker, Prez Conference may do for Lester Young.

Previewed at Donte's last Monday, Prez Conference, conceived and directed by Dave Pell, is based on a premise analogous to that of Super Sax. The improvised solos of a famous saxophonist, in this case Lester (Prez) Young, are transcribed directly off the recordings and harmonized for a saxophone section.

Since many of Young's solos stand up almost as durably as Parker's in terms of spontaneous melodic creativity, the concept is almost foolproof. Bill Holman wrote the arrangements, sometimes using both the issued versions and out-takes of Young's work on "Lester Leaps In," "Sometimes I'm Happy," "Jumpin' at the Woodside," "Jumpin' With Symphony Sid" and others from his most innovative era. The voicing, for three tenor saxes and a baritone, produces appropriate fanning out of the original Prez sound.

Surprisingly, Pell, who had been all but inactive as a player, working in recent years as a producer, came closest to the old Young timbre; but the solos (the others were by Bob Cooper and Gordon Brisker on tenor, Bill Hood on baritone) are less relevant than the reed section ensembles, with their faithful Prezervation of the past.

Arnold Ross on piano, Frank De La Rosa on bass and Will Bradley Jr. on drums constitute a rather boppish, un-Basielike rhythm section. It would be more appropriate to hear, say, Nat Pierce or Johnny Guarnieri in this context, and a Jo Jones swing era drummer. Missing, too, but added when the combo made its first album the next day was the trumpet of Harry (Sweets) Edison, a close neighbor in the Basie ranks when Prez was in his prime.

Prez Conference is an idea whose time was overdue. How long it can be kept up is another matter. However, since Super Sax continues to develop newly found source material, Pell may prove to be equally successful.

Jazz Violinist Joe Venuti, 74, Dies in Seattle

Joe Venuti, 74, renowned for more than a half century as the first and perennially the foremost violinist of jazz, died Monday of cancer in a Seattle hospital.

A native of Lecco, Italy (despite the legend he liked to spread, that he was born aboard a ship bound for the United States), Venuti came to this country as a child and was raised in Philadelphia, where he had a thorough classical training. (He once turned down a chair in the Detroit Symphony.)

While in grade school he struck up a friendship with budding guitarist Eddie Lang. From 1925 Venuti and Lang were frequent partners, playing on hundreds of jazz recordings, some of which, particularly those by Joe Venuti's Blue Four, were hailed as classics in the chamber music jazz style.

The partnership ended with Lang's death in 1933. By that time Venuti had worked with the orchestras of Jean Goldkette, Roger Wolfe Kahn and Paul Whiteman, and had gained an international reputation that included a successful 1934 tour of England.

Throughout the Swing Era Venuti led a big band, enjoying moderate success, but by the 1950s he had stopped recording, working mainly in lounges in Seattle, where he lived, and Las Vegas.

During the past decade he staged a great comeback, playing at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1968 and appearing with consistent success during the 1970s at numerous festivals and concerts throughout the United States and Europe. His recording career resumed and he was heard in numerous albums that showed his incomparable technique and swing to be unimpaired.

Along with his fame as a musician, Venuti enjoyed a reputation as a practical joker. The stories about him were legendary, but for all his lighthearted attitude he was a serious and dedicated artist who, along with Louis Armstrong and a handful of others, was one of the first true virtuosi of jazz history.

He leaves a stepson, John MacQueen, and a sister, Florence Lamberti. Services will be held Saturday in Philadelphia.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Scrapbook

To Joe Venuti: With Love and Laughter

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Photo by Lynne Jaeger Weinstein

The Colorado Jazz Party, 1976, Sir Roland Hanna at the Piano.

■ "How could anyone act like the devil and play like an angel?"

Joe Venuti's mother is said to have made that remark about the youth who would grow up to become the world's first great jazz violinist. She was not far off the mark for the whole of his career, which spanned more than 60 years until his death last Monday, was a mass of contradictions.

He was a serious musician with all the classical credentials who turned to jazz, adapting the idiom to an instrument so difficult that very few others in jazz ever mastered it. The sound of his violin was smooth and even, but the guttural tones of his speaking voice were such that Marlon Brando, in another "Godfather" role, could play the lead in a movie based on Venuti's life.

What a movie that would be! Venuti's achievements in the area of recordings alone were monumental. It is difficult to decide which is more amazing: the exquisite swinging musicianship of "Stringing the Blues," a duo performance he made in 1926 with the guitarist Eddie Lang, or the fact that he was in prime form on records made almost 52 years later. Nobody else in the history of recorded music could match that track record.

Everything about Venuti was either admirable or astonishing. When he wasn't playing the violin for applause he was playing life for laughs. He took delight in going along with the legend that he was born on a ship that was bringing his parents to the United States from Italy, and gave various ages for himself according to the mood of the moment, until someone allegedly unearthed a 1903 birth certificate from Lecco, Italy. His first wife, however, assured me years ago that he was born in Philadelphia.

■ To many who followed his career, Venuti's life could be subdivided into four main segments: the Eddie Lang period, the big band era, the slow lapse into obscurity and small combo work, and finally, the triumphant return to center stage that began during the last decade of his life.

Lang and Venuti met in grade school when Eddie was 13, Joe 12. Their professional partnership began three years later when a drummer named Chick Granese, with whom Joe had gone to work after school hours, persuaded Lang to join his band. Before long, the Venuti-Lang coupling had achieved an unprecedented degree of musicianship; the two men could anticipate one another's every rhythmic and melodic nuance.

They worked together in several bands through the 1920s—with the Dorsey Brothers, Roger Wolfe Kahn, Paul Whiteman—and played on so many records that Venuti-and-Lang began to sound like a single word. At a time when jazz was in short pants, struggling to achieve a degree of technical maturity, Venuti and Lang dressed their music impeccably; they were as far ahead of their time as Louis Armstrong. Lang's death in 1933 (he had spent much of the last year of his life accompanying Bing Crosby) was a crushing blow to Venuti.

He had a replacement on guitar when his quartet came to England in 1934. As a teenaged jazz fan I found his sophistication unique, his personality comic and gregarious. At this point in his career he was far better known overseas than at home.

Because of America's primitive attitude toward jazz, Venuti had no access to the concert hall. He gave up his combo and, conceding to the fashion of the Swing Era, organized a big band that provided a cumbersome setting for his delicate style.

■ Nothing seemed to faze Venuti, as long as he could play, maintain his sense of humor and pull the practical jokes for which he soon became legendary.

The best known story concerns Wingy Manone, the one-armed trumpet player. For a Christmas present, Joe Venuti sent him one cuff link. Another tale, which Venuti told with wild variations, dealt with the occasion when he found the names of 37 bass fiddle players in the Musicians' Union director, called them all up and told them to meet him Saturday at 8 p.m. at the corner of 52nd St. and Broadway. The men showed up, lugging their basses, making the sidewalk impassable, while Venuti drove around the block several times, roaring with laughter at the scene he had created. ("But the union called me in and made me pay everybody scale," he said.)

In 1936 Venuti's band and the Paul Whiteman orchestra played at the Texas Centennial in Dallas. Every night Whiteman would start the program with the entire stadium darkened except for a small spotlight on him while he conducted the "Star Spangled Banner" with a lighted baton.

One evening, Venuti bribed an electrician to throw the spot on him instead. What the audience saw was Venuti, dressed only in long underwear, conducting the orchestra with a fishing pole, at the end of which was an electric light bulb.

Once Venuti auditioned a saxophone player. After letting him sit around for hours, he motioned to the youth and said, "OK, take a chorus, kid." The youngster stood up, took one chorus, then another, another . . . Venuti kept him playing until, according to witnesses, his eyes were bulging out of his head and he started repeating the same licks over and over. Finally he gave up. Venuti said, "OK, kid, now go out to the parking lot and change my tire."

Another saxophone player who bugged Venuti was the one who kept tapping his foot on the bandstand, slightly off the beat. Joe found a hammer, crept stealthily across the bandstand and nailed the miscreant's shoe to the floor.

■ Venuti once was on a live TV show sponsored by a hair cream. After a while, when the program began to bore him, he decided on a little light relief. In the middle of a commercial he bent over, showed his big bald spot to the camera, and said loudly, "This is what that cream oil did for me." The sponsor dropped the show.

Kay Starr, who sang with Venuti's orchestra for four years recalls: "Once we had to play an outdoor job, with radio time, in a bandshell near Toledo. It was one of those late spring days and people were dressed kind of summery, so figuring these people knew more about the local weather than we did, I put on my evening gown and the fellows wore their summer jackets. And of course it turned freezing cold.

"A cold horn, of course, means you blow completely out of tune. Well, a soloist couldn't just say, 'I have to tune up first' before he stepped up to take a chorus. It was murderous; but Joe found a solution.

"There was no money to buy special arrangements in those days, so we had a whole bunch of stock arrangements. Some of them Joe really hated. He took a whole pile of these, put them in a wheelbarrow, then broke up a bunch of wooden crates—everyone was scared to death he'd take the music stands and the horns next—and set fire to the whole thing right there on the bandstand.

"Each musician, before he took his chorus on the air, would go to the fire, warm his hands and his horn, go to a corner, tune up and play his solo.

"Afterward, the fire came in handy for dinner, too. We roasted wieners on it."

One night Venuti, finding his contract called for a male singer, picked up a total stranger at a roadside diner who claimed he could sing. Venuti rented him a tuxedo, bought him a dickey and tied a rubber band from the bottom of the dickey to the top of his pants, so that when he would swell out his chest the rubber band would expand.

"All right, kid, let's do 'Ol' Man River.' If you forget the words, just sing anything—only remember one thing: whatever you do, don't panic—keep on singing!"

Show time. The singer came out of the wings; when the spotlight him he went into such a state of shock that he kept walking to the front of the stage and clear off until he fell into the orchestra pit.

"You never heard such a commotion!" Kay Starr recalls. "The band was up on stage and down in the pit were chairs, music stands, boxes and Don, the singer. Our men were busy playing and didn't see all this. They got through the introduction, when all of a sudden, from the bottom of the pit, they heard:

"'Ol' man river . . . that ol' man river . . .'

"Venuti segued promptly to another song: but the payoff came after the show. The manager of the theater threw his arms around Joe and said, 'Wonderful! That's the greatest act I've ever seen!'"

With or without such mishaps, Joe Venuti was the greatest act many of us had ever seen. Many of us who were lucky enough to be there recall seeing him every Labor Day weekend, when he played at Dick Gibson's Colorado Springs Jazz Party. After each magnificent set, playing with the same zest he showed on those 1920s and '30s records, he would surround himself with a knot of younger musicians (some only in their 50s) and regale them with tales, real and apocryphal, about a life that spanned thousands of hours on nonpareil music and an equal measure of wild, uninhibited humor.

There will be an empty chair Labor Day when Dick Gibson's musicians assemble for their annual jam session. Joe Venuti's violin will be resting on it, perhaps as a reminder that the man who acted like the devil, and played so much like an angel, can never be replaced. ■

Reprinted from the Los Angeles Times, Calendar, Sunday August 20, 1978.

You are cordially invited
to the annual
Composet Typographers
Christmas Party
Wednesday,
December 20, 1978
5:30 P.M. to about 7:00 P.M.
with almost all of
the annual participants*

Al Cohn, tenor sax
Billy Mitchell, tenor sax
Jon Faddis, trumpet
Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar
Bob Cranshaw, fender bass

and maybe a few others

The usual assortment
of refreshments of cheese,
mustard, crackers, bread and
liquids of various kinds
will be available.

*Zoot will be doing a record date in California on the 20th and sends his sincerest regrets and best wishes for the holidays.

JAZZ

'Captain Fingers' Charts a Studious Course

8/13

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● "Captain Fingers," they call him: deceptively baby-faced, modest but confident. When his fingers make contact with a guitar—electric, acoustic, 12-string or a polyphonic synthesizer—sparks fly and dollars flow. The case of Hollywood-born Lee Ritenour is the ultimate illustration of a dedicated life that brings results.

In his early teens, he spent every waking nonschool hour practicing, which meant that in the summer he played and studied all day long, gigging professionally on weekends. He took classical guitar with Christopher Parkening, learned about jazz with Joe Pass and about studio work with Howard Roberts.

"I was fortunate," he says, "to come up at a time when my influences could be Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton along with Charlie Christian and all the jazz greats."

Ritenour was such a quick study that when one of his teachers, Jack Marshall, died suddenly, he was called in to take over Marshall's classes at USC. One student, looking disdainfully at the 21-year-old pedagogue, said, "You're the teacher? Why, I'm older than you are!"

By the time his teens were out and the 1970s were in, Ritenour was totally equipped for a career in the studios. As he answered from 10 to 15 session calls a week, the Captain's fingers slowly turned green: He grants that his annual income was "heavily into six figures." But he says now: "I never did all that studio work for financial gain; I always had more than I needed anyway, because I continued to live in the same style. I did it because it was fun to study my own physical endurance—how many sessions of all kinds I could handle."

For the past few years, Ritenour formed a loose association with a group of musicians who became close friends, all playing on one another's albums: Ernie Watts on saxes and flutes, Patrice Rushen or Dave Grusin or his brother Don Grusin on keyboards, Harvey Mason on drums, Steve Forman on percussion, Anthony Jackson on bass. Ritenour made a few albums with enlarged versions of this clique. Since 1974, he has limited his in-person work mainly to a regular Tuesday night job playing with this group for kicks, at the Baked Potato, a small club on the edge of the San Fernando Valley.

Last year, Ritenour reached a pinnacle of sorts when the widely circulated and influential Guitar Player magazine voted him Best Studio Guitarist. But paradoxically, in 1978 his career has taken on a significant turn in a different direction. Reducing studio activities, he formed his own group, Friendship, and during July went out on a 16-day tour.

●

The comrades in Friendship are Watts, Don Grusin, Forman, the phenomenal Peruvian drummer Alex Acuna and the equally formidable bassist Abraham Laboriel. Augmented by various helpers, they are heard on "The Captain's Journey" (Elektra-Asylm 6 E 136), his sixth album as a leader and his first for this company. "First Course" and "Captain Fingers" were on Epic. Ironically, the three others were made specially for export to Japan, thanks to the frenzied Nipponese interest in jazz and particularly in Ritenour (he toured Japan last year and previously was there with Sergio Mendes in 1973).

"We did our first 16-day U.S. tour in July,' says Ritenour, "working concerts and clubs, opening for George Duke or Al Jarreau—a good variety of dates, and all successful.

"It's quite a commitment because all the other guys are studio musicians like me and, in the case of Alex Acuna, it was a choice of deciding not to stay with Weather Report. It's a cooperative group: everyone's an equal member. We won't be together all year round—just two or three tours a year, each two or three weeks long, plus the records. So we are free to continue our studio thing most of the time, though I've cut down severely on mine. I want to make solo guitar albums, free up a bit and do more improvisation than I have been able to put on most of my records.

Lee Ritenour

"With Friendship, we're using a lot of improvised sounds, leaning toward a Weather Report kind of freedom. I don't think we will ever be in danger of getting into a rut of any one bag, what with Alex's unbelievable Peruvian input, Abe Laboriel from Mexico with his beautiful concept and the rest of us with our diverse backgrounds in pop music and jazz. We're able to pull it all together, and the fellows are all very much involved with each other as people, too, which helps make it a very tight group."

●

While "The Captain's Journey" took Ritenour on a smooth course through both the pop and jazz charts, Friendship found its audiences as receptive as they were sizable. "We had sold-out houses and standing ovations on every date. We drew a good cross section of white and black, and mostly between 18 and 30. The people were really listening, and what surprised us was that in some of the more obscure cities like Boulder, Colo., it seemed that the farther out we got musically, the more they loved it. A healthy sign."

Why is this happening? Ritenour, who at 26, is in the age bracket of his audiences, feels that they grew up with the melodic impact of the Beatles. "What came after the Beatles for a long time was artistically far inferior; attempts were made to force a lot of punk-junk down our throats. But that group of young people who grew up with the Beatles has continued to evolve.

"Our ears were trained with wonderful albums like 'Sergeant Pepper,' and there is a lively interest in a more sophisticated sort of fusion, with the beat and groove but also with the harmony, the melodic essence and the meaningful improvisation. Anyone who was 13 or 15 when the Beatles hit can understand all that; those who are 13 or 15 today can't, because they grew up on some junk that stunted their musical appreciation."

The music with which Lee Ritenour and his friends are involved, as he points out, has strong jazz roots along with some crossover into pop. "I think this is the next music. I want to keep Friendship together because it represents what we all believe in, but I haven't given up session work entirely.

"It's funny, but each time I make a little more of a name for myself as a soloist and come back into the studios, people treat me a little differently. They're afraid I'm going to be bored, so they make room for me to take solos. But I'm very grateful for my studio experience, because it gave me a lot of maturity, and it taught me to be an accompanist, which is something that a lot of virtuoso jazz musicians never learned.

"That's one thing Friendship is based on; we're all total pros, we watch out for each other, we've learned how to accompany one another. It's not just that old thing of rhythm-in-the-background-and-lead-out-front; it's a total intermingling.

"I still get to do a lot of jazz albums, once in a while a classical album. Studio work keeps you in touch with the general flow of music. Some of the greatest musicians in the world are right there in the L.A. studios—men like Mike Lang, the pianist, and Dennis Budimir, the guitarist, who have tremendous respect within the business but are totally unknown to the public."

Ritenour lives in a hillside Burbank home, a pleasant house with a view of the entire valley. "My girlfriend and I have been together since I first got things going. In those days, she went to work every day and I had one night a month at Donte's. Now it's kind of shifted around. She stays home and I work."

At 26, Lee Ritenour has crammed more diverse activities into 14 years as a professional musician than most musicians of his parents' generation could experience in a lifetime. With or without the commericial commitments of the studios, one thing is certain: The Captain's fingers will never be idle. ●

Singer Irene Kral Dies of Cancer at 46

8/16

Irene Kral, 46, the award-winning recording star who had become one of the Southland's most respected popular singers, died Tuesday in an Encino hospital after a six-year battle with cancer.

Born in Chicago, she was the sister of Roy Kral, who for many years has worked with his wife as part of the team of Jackie and Roy. Irene Kral came to prominence slowly, working in the 1950s with Woody Herman's band and later touring for two years with Maynard Ferguson.

She sang with Stan Kenton when her husband, trumpeter Joe Burnett, joined Kenton's orchestra, but except for two years of weekend dates with Shelly Manne at his club she spent the 1960s in semiretirement, raising her two daughters, Jodi, now 17, and Melissa, 12. The marriage ended in divorce in 1976. For the past seven years she gained a strong local following working at Donte's and other clubs.

Recognition came late when "Where Is Love," an album she had recorded accompanied only by pianist Alan Broadbent, was voted Best Vocal Album of 1976 by Swing Journal, the influential Japanese jazz magazine; this led to her touring Japan last year. The album also was nominated for a Grammy award. This year her follow-up album, "Kral Space," also earned a Grammy nomination.

Irene Kral was one of that rare breed of singers who successfully bridged the gap between classic popular singing and jazz singing, gaining admiration for her taste, control, choice of material and accompaniment.

In accordance with her wishes, her body will be cremated and the ashes taken to her home in Cicero, Ill.

—LEONARD FEATHER

8/27

PRODUCER'S ROLE

Just How Does a Record Happen?

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● Who really knows the nature of a record producer's role? Through what stages does an album evolve? If the average customer is only dimly aware of the realities, Wayne Henderson is in as good a position as anyone to supply an explanation. Firmly established in the catbird seat, Henderson holds the unique distinction of having six albums due for release within a single month, all the offspring of his At Home Productions.

The LPs include a new set by Ronnie Laws, whose "Friends and Strangers" at 800,000 has become the biggest Henderson-wrought seller to date; and one each by the Latin band of Willie Bobo; Ms. Hillary Schmidt ("She plays flute and soprano sax and writes very melodic songs"), an R&B group called Side Effect ("but they're dressed like the '20s and do bebop on their albums"), pianist Bobby Lyle, and drummer Michael Walden.

As if this were not enough to keep him shuttling between studios or tied up on a dozen phone lines, Henderson is co-producing an LP with Roy Ayers for Polydor. His track record is astonishing when one considers that as recently as 1976, after more than 20 years as a tromobonist and associate of Stix Hooper, Joe Sample, and Wilton Felder in the Houston-born group best known as the Crusaders, he quit to go into independent production.

Henderson sees his own role as that of an overseer who, in many cases, knows better than the artist himself what is good for him. "The artist thinks subjectively; it's hard for him to see and hear himself as someone outside his body would see him. The producer can determine more objectively just how to steer the performer's career in terms of accompaniment, style and choice of material. As much as 70% of the selection of songs is at the discretion of the producer."

After securing the talent, finding a record company that will back the project and choosing the material, all of which may take weeks or months, the next steps involve finding "a state-of-the-art studio with all the modern equipment and 24-track machines," and selecting rhythm section musicians (keyboards, guitars, basses and percussion) to lay down the basic tracks. According to Henderson, one of the crucial problems is securing an engineer who can reproduce precisely what he hears coming from the recording studio.

"Take the drummer; let's say the engineer goes into the studio, the drummer hits the snare drum, which sounds a certain way in the studio. The engineer has to get the right microphones on him, and see to it that back in the control booth the equipment will duplicate the sound of the snare and all the rest of the drums."

Why are so many microphones needed, particularly on the drums, when for so many years one microphone was considered enough to pick up the drummer?

"That," said Henderson, "is a bunch of unnecessary hype. It reflects insecurity on the part of both the engineer and the drummer. One mike, if it's just the right level above the drums, may be all that's needed; the same with the piano."

Given the right mike set-up, Henderson then brings in his rhythm musicians, exercising caution in the avoidance of using, say, bass and guitar parts that clash, or a piano that conflicts with the bass and drums. "This is where I can take advantage of the training I had at Texas Southern University, where I majored in music education and took counterpoint, sight singing and ear training. When you're trying to get good rhythm tracks, studying the correlation between various rhythms and harmonies, a knowledge of counterpoint plays a vital part.

"After you've gotten all those rhythm parts to jell, you lay down the tracks. Then, thanks to the 24 track machine, you begin the overdubs. Let's say we're recording a singer. The singer will come in and put his voice on top of those previously recorded rhythm instruments. Possibly he prefers a different studio, so we may take the tapes somewhere else.

"Next, if background vocals are required, we bring in the group—either rehearse them and then put down the tracks, or perhaps do some spontaneous group singing on the spot. Then we would get a good horn arranger to complement all these tracks, and eventually a string writer to complement all of that. And somewhere along the way we'll add congas, cowbells, tambourines and whatever other percussion we may feel needs to be added."

After these sequential stages, a remix engineer enters the picture, putting the various elements into perspective and rerecording everything the 24 channels to the final two-track tape, from which the stereo record is made.

"That represents a tremendous amount of studio time," I said.

"Yes, but in this competitive market it takes that kind of time. To get a really solid album completed, I would say 200 hours in the studios are needed."

The costs, of course, are immense. Henderson estimates that in today's supercommercial market, an album budget alone—excluding artists' advance payments—may run from $50,000 to $125,000 "to make a good, commercially viable product." The necessary sales to break even would be around 100,000 and 400,000 respectively.

The crucial contribution of the producer nowadays has made his role highly profitable. On the basis of a royalty of, say, 10% of the record's wholesale price, which is not uncommon, his take may be well into the five or even six figure bracket.

Profits aside, an inevitable question arises: doesn't this so-called "layer cake" method rob a performance of its natural human quality, resulting in an artificial, synthetic product? Surprisingly, Henderson agrees. "I only work that way when it's technically and physically impossible to record everyone and everything at once. I don't like plastic sounding music."

Then why not record direct to disc? In this system everything has to be done simultaneously, because there is no tape on which to add or subtract; moreover, the entire album can be completed in a day or two, and studio costs are cut from many tens of thousands to as little as $3,500.

"Theoretically, I'd love to do all my albums direct to disc," says Henderson. "I just recorded Chico Hamilton that way, and the music was so together that it was easy to lay the tracks down live.

"Unfortunately, this is not practical most of the time. The so-called 'toys' of contemporary music—the gadgets used to create different sounds—may be added later because the need for them may only become evident when you listen to the tape later on. With d-to-d you don't have the luxury of saying, 'I'd like to put a Mutron on the bass here,' or 'Let's try a flanger on the guitar,' and so forth. You need the freedom of coming back later, and if necessary erasing and redoing a track or two. Nobody's perfect."

Since Henderson began his career as a trombonist in the bebop J. J. Johnson mold, and in view of his eminent credits as a jazz instrumentalist, it seemed curious that he could become heavily involved in these very complicated commercial products, to the point of sacrificing his original identity. Henderson protests that it isn't so.

"I'll never lose that urge to go into a studio and just play. As a matter of fact, I'm doing that in an album I'm working on now. Sure, I've been utilizing various devices because of the commercial acceptance of contemporary music; but bebop is where I come from. My heart tells me what I like, and I still go back to Dizzy, Miles, Lee Morgan." ●

Los Angeles Times Wed., Aug. 23, 1978—Part IV 11

JAZZ REVIEW

Joe Farrell Band Meshes in Malibu

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz musicians nowadays often have two careers simultaneously: the one they want and the one they need. The former reflects their artistic aspirations; the latter is dictated by economic necessity.

A typical case is that of Joe Farrell, the award-winning saxophonist and flutist who, shortly after moving to Los Angeles from New York last March, began rehearsing an 18-piece orchestra. He is breaking in the band at a series of Monday night jobs at Pasquale's on Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu.

Some of Farrell's albums have leaned toward erratic crossover music recorded, presumably, in search of a hit; but when the orchestra opened its set with "Moon Germs," a romping minor blues, it became obvious that he has set his sights much higher than the records have implied. This is a genuine jazz ensemble, with eight brass, five saxes and even the traditional rhythm section consisting of piano, guitar, bass and drums.

Farrell has developed into a melodically creative flutist, as he showed in "Molten Glass," on which he was joined by two other flutes, two saxes and clarinet. His soprano sax was just as effectively framed in "For Kathy," a richly textured and charming original work. His strongest suit remains the tenor sax, a volatile, stabbing centerpiece in his own resourceful arrangement of "Lover Man."

Although he is the principal soloist and has written almost all the music for this exciting new group, Farrell by no means monopolizes the proceedings. Oscar Brashear on trumpet, Slyde Hyde on bass trumpet, Russ Ferrante on piano and several others maintain a high improvisational level.

The occasional jazz-rock chart showed up, with Bob Magnusson switching to Fender bass and John Guerin laying down a heavy beat. On these the melodies are as simplistic and uninspired as the rhythm, yet typically, in "Great Gorge," Farrell wrote the piece in three segments, the first and last rock-based but the second (and largest) a broiling exercise in straight-ahead jazz.

Warner Bros., for whom Farrell records, should give him an opportunity to display this new and potentially valuable development in his career. The band will be back Monday at Pasquale's, where jazz is now the steady diet seven days a week.

MUSIC MAKERS—Cleo Laine sings at Greek, accompanied by husband John Dankworth on sax.
Times photo by Tony Barnard

MUSIC REVIEW

Return to Greek for Cleo Laine

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Almost five years after her Southland debut, exactly a year after her first stint at the Greek Theater, her loyal fans followed the Lieder Friday for their trip along Cleo Laine. Once again the Greek was the scene, with John Dankworth filling his multiple roles: musical director, arranger, alto saxophonist, clarinetist, even backup singer—and, of course, husband.

The couple's perennial dry British humor remains unspoiled. In his opening set with a large orchestra, Dankworth revived his "Three Blind Mice" satire (in the styles of various swing bands). Announcing his wife's medley, he pointed out that the songs had been "juxtaposed with devilish British 'ingenuity.'"

The voice-and-alto duet "Bird Song" is still a prime example of bop-inspired comedy. In the group of poems set to music by Dankworth, Spike Milligan's ode to English teeth is hilarious ("Three cheers for the brown, gray and black"). In "Control Yourself," Miss Laine offered brief displays of all that can be fulsome or corny or pompous in pop singing, then stopped short and reverted to Dore Previn's witty lyrics.

Humor aside, the show primarily is a display of Cleo Laine's nonpareil musicianship. She was relaxed on "If," emotionally touching in "Send in the Clowns," hard swinging in "Taking a Chance on Love." Her immense range and technique, displayed less often than usual, were that much more effective for not being overused.

The tunes from her new album were more conventional. "The Merchant Song," apparently an attempt to establish a disco groove, was the weakest. Cleo seems more at home with Shakespeare ("If Music Be the Food of Love") or Gershwin ("By Strauss") than with Carole Bayer Sager or Jim Croce.

Dankworth, in his orchestral set, was in fine fettle on the alto solo features, "Didn't We" and "You Are the Sunshine of My Life," and less successful in "African Waltz," the popularity of which has always puzzled me. Two Britons—Paul Hart, playing both piano and violin, and the admirable British drummer Kenny Clare—joined with bassist Jeff Castleman to form an ebullient nucleus.

AT PLAYBOY CLUB

McNair: Too Much of a Good Thing?

BY LEONARD FEATHER

On her last visit to town, Barbara McNair was presented in the strangely inappropriate setting of a nostalgia show, "4 Girls 4." This week and next she is back, at Lainie's Room in the Playboy Club, on her own now except for the capable accompaniment of H.B. Barnum's Quartet.

Barbara McNair

McNair's image has long been a problem. First there was the split identity when she divided her time between movie acting and singing. But even within the vocal area to which she is presently confining herself, there are unresolved conflicts.

To put it briefly, her act needs work. More accurately, it needs less work, for most of what is amiss with it is due to overproduction. She has several things going for her: Aside from her obvious beauty, she is capable of achieving a good feeling on a well-tailored song like her opener, "Staying Alive," or on a ballad such as "When the World Was Young."

During the latter, however, after establishing a sensitive mood, she ruined it by breaking suddenly into a Liza Minnelli Germanic treatment of "Those Were the Days." She almost recaptured the tenderness in a segue to "The Way We Were," but by then any sense of continuity was beyond recall.

On "I've Never Been to Me," McNair gives the impression of believing in her lyrics, but her ensuing rap, addressed to "the women in the audience," and the pseudo-risque song that follows, sound like something out of the 1940s nightclub days.

McNair could improve her act immeasurably just by making it less of an act. If she simply stood there looking glamorous, bringing all the warmth she could summon to lovely songs like, say, "Lost in the Stars," with an occasional rhythm tune for pacing, her problem would be solved. Maybe she will try it some evening between now and Sept. 9. The result might surprise even her.

Ailing Stan Kenton Disbands Orchestra

Stan Kenton has disbanded his orchestra and the members have dispersed for an indefinite period. The band played its last date Aug. 20 in Costa Mesa before the veteran bandleader returned to Los Angeles for a long rest.

Kenton, 66, suffered a fall in May, 1977, that necessitated extensive brain surgery. After seven months' absence he returned last January with a reorganized ensemble, but to fans who saw him during his travels it was clear that he had not yet completely recovered and was suffering, particularly in recent months, from exhaustion. He was hospitalized briefly while on the road.

All bookings have been canceled for the rest of the year, including a date at the Monterey Jazz Festival. According to Kenton's manager, Audree Coke, he will spend the next few months at home writing music, and hopes to reorganize the band early in 1979. —L.F.

to Brooks' bittersweet style.

"How Long Has This Been Going On?" Sarah Vaughan. Pablo 2310-821. There is no greater voice than what she brings to you; and there is no more impeccable rhythm section than one composed of Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Ray Brown and Louie Bellson. Predictably, then, some sublime moments emerge from this, her first release in years. Yet the results sometimes fall short of their potential, for two reasons. The selection of material is totally without imagination. Nothing fresh or original, and no arcane or provocative revivals; just standards that have been done endlessly before, by Sarah herself or by Ella, Peggy, Carmen, June. The only innovation is a bossa nova treatment of "How Long Has This Been Going On?" Second, the group is too often fragmented; only one of the five tracks on Side Two features the full quartet. "Body and Soul" is backed by Brown's bass, "When Your Lover Has Gone" incongruously by Bellson's brushes. Vaughan has a unique reputation. With a cast like this, a five-star rating should have been automatic, yet this stacks up at three and a half. —LEONARD FEATHER

SCANDALS OPENING 8/17

Della Reese Steps In for Peggy Lee

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Bad news travels fast. Not always fast enough, however, for out-of-towners, as well as some locals who, not having heard the news on the air, arrived at the new Scandals nightclub, 1635 N. La Brea Ave., opening night Tuesday expecting to be witnesses to Peggy Lee's much-publicized appearance.

Della Reese

No such luck. The star attraction was hospitalized Saturday with a virus infection and the management remained on tenterhooks until Tuesday morning, when it was finally decided she could not make it and the hastily summoned Della Reese took her place.

The troubles did not end there. When Leonard Grant came out to explain Miss Lee's nonappearance, the great sound system about which we had been hearing so much rewarded him with a feedback.

In assessing the performance of Della Reese there was no need to take into consideration the conditions under which she opened.

A complete pro, she took the situation in stride, even managing to make the orchestra work well for her, although 8 of the 10 musicians had been selected for Miss Lee and the instrumentation (four strings and a rhythm section) was geared to her arrangements.

The Della Reese style has always been a bravura mixture of pop and gospel, with touches of a contemporary beat. Her arranger, Larry Farrow, who also played electric keyboard, and her pianist Marvin Jenkins, now in his 15th year with her, contributed to a show that hit its peak toward the end, despite her tendency to oversell on such songs as "The Greatest."

The Deniece Williams medley, "That's What Friends Are For" and "Things Could Be So Much Worse," suggested that a Reese performance and a Williams song constitute a potent brew. Reese wound up her cheerful act with "Ease On Down the Road," followed by some well-chosen good wishes for Peggy Lee and a song, "You're Beautiful," dedicated to her.

Scandals is a generally attractive room. The building showed signs of incompleteness, though the disco was fully operative.

Since Della Reese was only available for two nights, the rest of Peggy Lee's projected fortnight remains in the balance. Rita Moreno is set to follow Aug. 29, but the problem of booking big names for a room of this size, with its 400 capacity, would seem to be not unlike the difficulties that plagued the larger Westside Room and the Cocoanut Grove, both of which expired several years ago as permanent public showplaces.

Artists who are willing to sacrifice Las Vegas prices in order to see a first-class entertainment room flourish in this city may hold the fate of Scandals in their hands, or in their bank accounts. Meanwhile, call 851-8881 for further developments.

Teeing Off With Jazz and Brunch

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The recent eruption of new jazz rooms around Los Angeles has found the music flourishing in improbable locales. A most successful venture is the series of Sunday jazz brunches that teed off a few weeks ago at the Western Ave. Country Club.

Held in the spacious clubhouse of this integrated golf course at 120th St. and Western, the series already has presented Joe Williams, Supersax, the Capp-Pierce Juggernaut Band and Ernie Andrews. Last Sunday's concert drew a typically enthusiastic crowd to hear Bill Berry's L.A. Big Band. Encouraged by a pleasant ambience and the unusual schedule (11 a.m. to 2 p.m), the trumpeter and his star-rich ensemble put on one of their most stimulating performances in years.

Despite occasional Basie and bebop crosswinds, the orchestra blows along an essentially Ellingtonian course. You hear it in every section. In the brass team, Cat Anderson screams down from the mountaintop and dares Maynard Ferguson to come near him. In the trombone section, Britt Woodman (flanked by the equally gifted Benny Powell and Jimmy Cleveland) evokes memories of his Ducal days.

In the shimmering elegance of "Violet Blue" and "Star Crossed Lovers," the alto sax of Marshal Royal becomes Johnny Hodges reincarnated. Given these virtues, several other eager soloists, and a buoyant rhythm base composed of pianist Dave Frishberg, drummer Frank Capp and bassist Monty Budwig, you have a fail-safe situation.

This Sunday Plas Johnson will head a group; Aug. 27 will bring pianist Gildo Mahones into the spotlight—or rather, the daylight.

It isn't often that a band leader ends his concert by advising us to have a nice day; when Bill Berry did so, we already had. At $5 for brunch and music it's the best bargain in town.

Jazz

To Joe Venuti: With Love and Laughter

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● "How could anyone act like the devil and play like an angel?"

Joe Venuti's mother is said to have made that remark about the youth who would grow up to become the world's first great jazz violinist. She was not far off the mark, for the whole of his career, which spanned more than 60 years until his death last Monday, was a mass of contradictions.

He was a serious musician with all the classical credentials who turned to jazz, adapting the idiom to an instrument so difficult that very few others in jazz ever mastered it. The sound of his violin was smooth and even, but the guttural tones of his speaking voice were such that Marlon Brando, in another "Godfather" role, could play the lead in a movie based on Venuti's life.

What a movie that would be! Venuti's achievements in the area of recordings alone were monumental. It is difficult to decide which is more amazing: the exuisite swinging musicianship of "Stringing the Blues," a duo performance he made in 1926 with the guitarist Eddie Lang, or the fact that he was in prime form on records made almost 52 years later. Nobody else in the history of recorded music could match that track record.

Everything about Venuti was either admirable or astonishing. When he wasn't playing the violin for applause he was playing life for laughs. He took delight in going along with the legend that he was born on a ship that was bringing his parents to the United States from Italy, and gave various ages for himself according to the mood of the moment, until someone allegedly unearthed a 1903 birth certificate from Lecco, Italy. His first wife, however, assured me years ago that he was born in Philadelphia.

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To many who followed his career, Venuti's life could be subdivided into four main segments: the Eddie Lang period, the big band era, the slow lapse into obscurity and small combo work, and finally, the triumphant return to center stage that began during the last decade of his life.

Lang and Venuti met in grade school when Eddie was 13, Joe 12. Their professional partnership began three years later when a drummer named Chick Granese, with whom Joe had gone to work after school hours, persuaded Lang to join his band. Before long, the Venuti-Lang coupling had achieved an unprecedented degree of musicianship; the two men could anticipate one another's every rhythmic and melodic nuance.

They worked together in several bands through the 1920s—with the Dorsey Brothers, Roger Wolfe Kahn, Paul Whiteman—and played on so many records that Venuti-and-Lang began to sound like a single word. At a time when jazz was in short pants, struggling to achieve a degree of technical maturity, Venuti and Lang dressed their music impeccably; they were as far ahead of their time as Louis Armstrong. Lang's death in 1933 (he had spent much of the last year of his life accompanying Bing Crosby) was a crushing blow to Venuti.

He had a replacement on guitar when his quartet came to England in 1934. As a teen-aged jazz fan I found his sophistication unique, his personality comic and gregarious. At this point in his career he was far better known overseas than at home.

Jazz violinist Joe Venuti found a way to play an entire solo in four-part harmony.
Photo by Ed Lawless

Because of America's primitive attitude toward jazz, Venuti had no access to the concert hall. He gave up his combo and, conceding to the fashion of the Swing Era, organized a big band that provided a cumbersome setting for his delicate style.

●

Nothing seemed to faze Venuti, as long as he could play, maintain his sense of humor and pull the practical jokes for which he soon became legendary.

The best known story concerns Wingy Manone, the one-armed trumpet player. For a Christmas present, Joe Venuti sent him one cuff link. Another tale, which Venuti told with wild variations, dealt with the occasion when he found the names of 37 bass fiddle players in the Musicians' Union directory, called them all up and told them to meet him Saturday at 8 p.m. at the corner of 52nd St. and Broadway. The men showed up, lugging their basses, making the sidewalk impassable, while Venuti drove around the block several times, roaring with laughter at the scene he had created. ("But the union called me in and made me pay everybody scale," he said.)

In 1936 Venuti's band and the Paul Whiteman orchestra played at the Texas Centennial in Dallas. Every night Whiteman would start the program with the entire stadium darkened except for a small spotlight on him while he conducted the "Star Spangled Banner" with a lighted baton.

One evening, Venuti bribed an electrician to throw the spot on him instead. What the audience saw was Venuti, dressed only in long underwear, conducting the orchestra with a fishing pole, at the end of which was an electric light bulb.

Once Venuti auditioned a saxophone player. After letting him sit around for hours, he motioned to the youth and said, "OK, take a chorus, kid." The youngster stood up, took one chorus, then another, another . . . Venuti kept him playing until, according to witnesses, his eyes were bulging out of his head and he started repeating the same licks over and over. Finally he gave up. Venuti said, "OK, kid, now go out to the parking lot and change my tire."

Another saxophone player who bugged Venuti was the one who kept tapping his foot on the bandstand, slightly off the beat. Joe found a hammer, crept stealthily across the bandstand and nailed the miscreant's shoe to the floor.

●

Venuti once was on a live TV show sponsored by a hair cream. After a while, when the program began to bore him, he decided on a little light relief. In the middle of a commercial he bent over, showed his big bald spot to the camera, and said loudly, "This is what that cream oil did for me." The sponsor dropped the show.

Kay Starr, who sang with Venuti's orchestra for four years recalls: "Once we had to play an outdoor job, with radio time, in a bandshell near Toledo. It was one of those late spring days and people were dressed kind of summery, so figuring these people knew more about the local weather than we did, I put on my evening gown and the fellows wore their summer jackets. And of course it turned freezing cold.

"A cold horn, of course, means you blow completely out of tune. Well, a soloist couldn't just say, 'I have to tune up first' before he stepped up to take a chorus. It was murderous; but Joe found a solution.

"There was no money to buy special arrangements in those days, so we had a whole bunch of stock arrangements. Some of them Joe really hated. He took a whole pile of these, put them in a wheelbarrow, then broke up a bunch of wooden crates—everyone was scared to death he'd take the music stands and the horns next—and set fire to the whole thing right there on the bandstand.

"Each musician, before he took his chorus on the air, would go to the fire, warm his hands and his horn, go to a corner, tune up and play his solo.

"Afterward, the fire came in handy for dinner, too. We roasted wieners on it."

One night Venuti, finding his contract called for a male singer, picked up a total stranger at a roadside diner who claimed he could sing. Venuti rented him a tuxedo, bought him a dickey and tied a rubber band from the bottom of the dickey to the top of his pants, so that when he would swell out his chest the rubber band would expand.

"All right, kid, let's do 'Ol' Man River.' If you forget the words, just sing anything—only remember one thing: whatever you do, don't panic—keep on singing!"

Show time. The singer came out of the wings; when the spotlight hit him he went into such a state of shock that he kept walking to the front of the stage and clear off until he fell into the orchestra pit.

"You never heard such a commotion!" Kay Starr recalls. "The band was up on stage, and down in the pit were chairs, music stands, boxes and Don, the singer. Our men were busy playing and didn't see all this. They got through the introduction, when all of a sudden, from the bottom of the pit, they heard:

"'Ol' man river . . . that ol' man river . . .'

"Venuti segued promptly to another song; but the payoff came after the show. The manager of the theater threw his arms around Joe and said, 'Wonderful! That's the greatest act I've ever seen!' "

With or without such mishaps, Joe Venuti was the greatest act many of us had ever seen. Many of us who were lucky enough to be there recall seeing him every Labor Day weekend, when he played at Dick Gibson's Colorado Springs Jazz Party. After each magnificent set, playing with the same zest he showed on those 1920s and '30s records, he would surround himself with a knot of younger musicians (some only in their 50s) and regale them with tales, real and apocryphal, about a life that spanned thousands of hours of nonpareil music and an equal measure of wild, uninhibited humor.

There will be an empty chair Labor Day when Dick Gibson's musicians assemble for their annual jam session. Joe Venuti's violin will be resting on it, perhaps as a reminder that the man who acted like the devil, and played so much like an angel, can never be replaced. ●

8/27

PRODUCER'S ROLE

Just How Does a Record Happen?

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● Who really knows the nature of a record producer's role? Through what stages does an album evolve? If the average customer is only dimly aware of the realities, Wayne Henderson is in as good a position as anyone to supply an explanation. Firmly established in the catbird seat, Henderson holds the unique distinction of having six albums due for release within a single month, all the offspring of his At Home Productions.

The LPs include a new set by Ronnie Laws, whose "Friends and Strangers" at 800,000 has become the biggest Henderson-wrought seller to date; and one each by the Latin band of Willie Bobo; Ms. Hillary Schmidt ("She plays flute and soprano sax and writes very melodic songs"), an R&B group called Side Effect ("but they're dressed like the '20s and do bebop on their albums"), pianist Bobby Lyle, and drummer Michael Walden.

As if this were not enough to keep him shuttling between studios or tied up on a dozen phone lines, Henderson is co-producing an LP with Roy Ayers for Polydor. His track record is astonishing when one considers that as recently as 1976, after more than 20 years as a tromobonist and associate of Stix Hooper, Joe Sample, and Wilton Felder in the Houston-born group best known as the Crusaders, he quit to go into independent production.

Henderson sees his own role as that of an overseer who, in many cases, knows better than the artist himself what is good for him. "The artist thinks subjectively; it's hard for him to see and hear himself as someone outside his body would see him. The producer can determine more objectively just how to steer the performer's career in terms of accompaniment, style and choice of material. As much as 70% of the selection of songs is at the discretion of the producer."

After securing the talent, finding a record company that will back the project and choosing the material, all of which may take weeks or months, the next steps involve finding "a state-of-the-art studio with all the modern equipment and 24-track machines," and selecting rhythm section musicians (keyboards, guitars, basses and percussion) to lay down the basic tracks. According to Henderson, one of the crucial problems is securing an engineer who can reproduce precisely what he hears coming from the recording studio.

"Take the drummer; let's say the engineer goes into the studio, the drummer hits the snare drum, which sounds a certain way in the studio. The engineer has to get the right microphones on him, and see to it that back in the control booth the equipment will duplicate the sound of the snare and all the rest of the drums."

Why are so many microphones needed, particularly on the drums, when for so many years one microphone was considered enough to pick up the drummer?

"That," said Henderson, "is a bunch of unnecessary hype. It reflects insecurity on the part of both the engineer and the drummer. One mike, if it's just the right level above the drums, may be all that's needed; the same with the piano."

Given the right mike set-up, Henderson then brings in his rhythm musicians, exercising caution in the avoidance of using, say, bass and guitar parts that clash, or a piano that conflicts with the bass and drums. "This is where I can take advantage of the training I had at Texas Southern University, where I majored in music education and took counterpoint, sight singing and ear training. When you're trying to get good rhythm tracks, studying the correlation between various rhythms and harmonies, a knowledge of counterpoint plays a vital part.

"After you've gotten all those rhythm parts to jell, you lay down the tracks. Then, thanks to the 24 track machine, you begin the overdubs. Let's say we're recording a singer. The singer will come in and put his voice on top of those previously recorded rhythm instruments. Possibly he prefers a different studio, so we may take the tapes somewhere else.

"Next, if background vocals are required, we bring in the group—either rehearse them and then put down the tracks, or perhaps do some spontaneous group singing on the spot. Then we would get a good horn arranger to complement all these tracks, and eventually a string writer to complement all of that. And somewhere along the way we'll add congas, cowbells, tambourines and whatever other percussion we may feel needs to be added."

After these sequential stages, a remix engineer enters the picture, putting the various elements into perspective and rerecording everything the 24 channels to the final two-track tape, from which the stereo record is made.

"That represents a tremendous amount of studio time," I said.

"Yes, but in this competitive market it takes that kind of time. To get a really solid album completed, I would say 200 hours in the studios are needed."

The costs, of course, are immense. Henderson estimates that in today's supercommercial market, an album budget alone—excluding artists' advance payments—may run from $50,000 to $125,000 "to make a good, commercially viable product." The necessary sales to break even would be around 100,000 and 400,000 respectively.

The crucial contribution of the producer nowadays has made his role highly profitable. On the basis of a royalty of, say, 10% of the record's wholesale price, which is not uncommon, his take may be well into the five or even six figure bracket.

Profits aside, an inevitable question arises: doesn't this so-called "layer cake" method rob a performance of its natural human quality, resulting in an artificial, synthetic product? Surprisingly, Henderson agrees. "I only work that way when it's technically and physically impossible to record everyone and everything at once. I don't like plastic sounding music."

Then why not record direct to disc? In this system everything has to be done simultaneously, because there is no tape on which to add or subtract; moreover, the entire album can be completed in a day or two, and studio costs are cut from many tens of thousands to as little as $3,500.

"Theoretically, I'd love to do all my albums direct to disc," says Henderson. "I just recorded Chico Hamilton that way, and the music was so together that it was easy to lay the tracks down live.

"Unfortunately, this is not practical most of the time. The so-called 'toys' of contemporary music—the gadgets used to create different sounds—may be added later because the need for them may only become evident when you listen to the tape later on. With d-to-d you don't have the luxury of saying, 'I'd like to put a Mutron on the bass here,' or 'Let's try a flanger on the guitar,' and so forth. You need the freedom of coming back later, and if necessary erasing and redoing a track or two. Nobody's perfect."

Since Henderson began his career as a trombonist in the bebop J. J. Johnson mold, and in view of his eminent credits as a jazz instrumentalist, it seemed curious that he could become heavily involved in these very complicated commercial products, to the point of sacrificing his original identity. Henderson protests that it isn't so.

"I'll never lose that urge to go into a studio and just play. As a matter of fact, I'm doing that in an album I'm working on now. Sure, I've been utilizing various devices because of the commercial acceptance of contemporary music; but bebop is where I come from. My heart tells me what I like, and I still go back to Dizzy, Miles, Lee Morgan." ●

JAZZ REVIEW

Joe Farrell Band Meshes in Malibu

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz musicians nowadays often have two careers simultaneously: the one they want and the one they need. The former reflects their artistic aspirations; the latter is dictated by economic necessity.

A typical case is that of Joe Farrell, the award-winning saxophonist and flutist who, shortly after moving to Los Angeles from New York last March, began rehearsing an 18-piece orchestra. He is breaking in the band at a series of Monday night jobs at Pasquale's on Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu.

Some of Farrell's albums have leaned toward erratic crossover music recorded, presumably, in search of a hit; but when the orchestra opened its set with "Moon Germs," a romping minor blues, it became obvious that he has set his sights much higher than the records have implied. This is a genuine jazz ensemble, with eight brass, five saxes and even the traditional rhythm section consisting of piano, guitar, bass and drums.

Farrell has developed into a melodically creative flutist, as he showed in "Molten Glass," on which he was joined by two other flutes, two saxes and clarinet. His soprano sax was just as effectively framed in "For Kathy," a richly textured and charming original work. His strongest suit remains the tenor sax, a volatile, stabbing centerpiece in his own resourceful arrangement of "Lover Man."

Although he is the principal soloist and has written almost all the music for this exciting new group, Farrell by no means monopolizes the proceedings. Oscar Brashear on trumpet, Slyde Hyde on bass trumpet, Russ Ferrante on piano and several others maintain a high improvisational level.

The occasional jazz-rock chart showed up, with Bob Magnusson switching to Fender bass and John Guerin laying down a heavy beat. On these the melodies are as simplistic and uninspired as the rhythm, yet typically, in "Great Gorge," Farrell wrote the piece in three segments, the first and last rock-based but the second (and largest) a broiling exercise in straight-ahead jazz.

Warner Bros., for whom Farrell records, should give him an opportunity to display this new and potentially valuable development in his career. The band will be back Monday at Pasquale's, where jazz is now the steady diet seven days a week.

MUSIC MAKERS—Cleo Laine sings at Greek, accompanied by husband John Dankworth on sax.
Times photo by Tony Barnard

MUSIC REVIEW

Return to Greek for Cleo Laine

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Almost five years after her Southland debut, exactly a year after her first stint at the Greek Theater, her loyal fans followed the Lieder Friday for their trip along Cleo Laine. Once again the Greek was the scene, with John Dankworth filling his multiple roles: musical director, arranger, alto saxophonist, clarinetist, even backup singer—and, of course, husband.

The couple's perennial dry British humor remains unspoiled. In his opening set with a large orchestra, Dankworth revived his "Three Blind Mice" satire (in the styles of various swing bands). Announcing his wife's medley, he pointed out that the songs had been "juxtaposed with devilish British 'ingenuity.'"

The voice-and-alto duet "Bird Song" is still a prime example of bop-inspired comedy. In the group of poems set to music by Dankworth, Spike Milligan's ode to English teeth is hilarious ("Three cheers for the brown, gray and black"). In "Control Yourself," Miss Laine offered brief displays of all that can be fulsome or corny or pompous in pop singing, then stopped short and reverted to Dore Previn's witty lyrics.

Humor aside, the show primarily is a display of Cleo Laine's nonpareil musicianship. She was relaxed on "If," emotionally touching in "Send in the Clowns," hard swinging in "Taking a Chance on Love." Her immense range and technique, displayed less often than usual, were that much more effective for not being overused.

The tunes from her new album were more conventional. "The Merchant Song," apparently an attempt to establish a disco groove, was the weakest. Cleo seems more at home with Shakespeare ("If Music Be the Food of Love") or Gershwin ("By Strauss") than with Carole Bayer Sager or Jim Croce.

Dankworth, in his orchestral set, was in fine fettle on the alto solo features, "Didn't We" and "You Are the Sunshine of My Life," and less successful in "African Waltz," the popularity of which has always puzzled me. Two Britons—Paul Hart, playing both piano and violin, and the admirable British drummer Kenny Clare—joined with bassist Jeff Castleman to form an ebullient nucleus.

AT PLAYBOY CLUB

McNair: Too Much of a Good Thing?

BY LEONARD FEATHER

On her last visit to town, Barbara McNair was presented in the strangely inappropriate setting of a nostalgia show, "4 Girls 4." This week and next she is back, at Lainie's Room in the Playboy Club, on her own now except for the capable accompaniment of H.B. Barnum's Quartet.

Barbara McNair

McNair's image has long been a problem. First there was the split identity when she divided her time between movie acting and singing. But even within the vocal area to which she is presently confining herself, there are unresolved conflicts.

To put it briefly, her act needs work. More accurately, it needs less work, for most of what is amiss with it is due to overproduction. She has several things going for her: Aside from her obvious beauty, she is capable of achieving a good feeling on a well-tailored song like her opener, "Staying Alive," or on a ballad such as "When the World Was Young."

During the latter, however, after establishing a sensitive mood, she ruined it by breaking suddenly into a Liza Minnelli Germanic treatment of "Those Were the Days." She almost recaptured the tenderness in a segue to "The Way We Were," but by then any sense of continuity was beyond recall.

On "I've Never Been to Me," McNair gives the impression of believing in her lyrics, but her ensuing rap, addressed to "the women in the audience," and the pseudo-risque song that follows, sound like something out of the 1940s nightclub days.

McNair could improve her act immeasurably just by making it less of an act. If she simply stood there looking glamorous, bringing all the warmth she could summon to lovely songs like, say, "Lost in the Stars," with an occasional rhythm tune for pacing, her problem would be solved. Maybe she will try it some evening between now and Sept. 9. The result might surprise even her.

Ailing Stan Kenton Disbands Orchestra

Stan Kenton has disbanded his orchestra and the members have dispersed for an indefinite period. The band played its last date Aug. 20 in Costa Mesa before the veteran bandleader returned to Los Angeles for a long rest.

Kenton, 66, suffered a fall in May, 1977, that necessitated extensive brain surgery. After seven months' absence he returned last January with a reorganized ensemble, but to fans who saw him during his travels it was clear that he had not yet completely recovered and was suffering, particularly in recent months, from exhaustion. He was hospitalized briefly while on the road.

All bookings have been canceled for the rest of the year, including a date at the Monterey Jazz Festival. According to Kenton's manager, Audree Coke, he will spend the next few months at home writing music, and hopes to reorganize the band early in 1979. —L.F.

to Brooks' bittersweet style.

"How Long Has This Been Going On?" Sarah Vaughan. Pablo 2310-821. There is no greater voice than what she brings to you; and there is no more impeccable rhythm section than one composed of Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Ray Brown and Louie Bellson. Predictably, then, some sublime moments emerge from this, her first release in years. Yet the results sometimes fall short of their potential, for two reasons. The selection of material is totally without imagination. Nothing fresh or original, and no arcane or provocative revivals; just standards that have been done endlessly before, by Sarah herself or by Ella, Peggy, Carmen, June. The only innovation is a bossa nova treatment of "How Long Has This Been Going On?" Second, the group is too often fragmented; only one of the five tracks on Side Two features the full quartet. "Body and Soul" is backed by Brown's bass, "When Your Lover Has Gone" incongruously by Bellson's brushes. Vaughan has a unique reputation. With a cast like this, a five-star rating should have been automatic, yet this stacks up at three and a half. —LEONARD FEATHER

9/3/78

JAZZ

Phil Woods: Portrait of a Repatriate in Motion

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Composer and alto saxophonist Phil Woods has been an award winner for 22 years.

● The musical world of Phil Woods is constantly in motion. During the past 12 years its center of gravity has switched from Pennsylvania to Paris, his home base during the five years of expatriation, when he led his European Rhythm Machine quartet; from there to California, where he spent most of a frustrated 1973; then back home to Pennsylvania, within easy reach of the New York maelstrom where early in 1974 he formed the quartet he leads today.

An award-winning alto saxophonist and a composer of several major works, Woods is a passionate and lyrical player who has been winning awards off and on since Down Beat voted him the New Star of 1956. Yet there have been times, particularly since the rise of mass-scale rock, when he has felt dissatisfaction with his career, questioning and changing his direction in a fast-moving world.

He left the United States partly because his life as a New York studio musician has become a golden rut, and the chances to play the unadulterated jazz he believed in were too rare. When he came home, believing things were getting better, California proved to be the wrong choice.

"While I was out here," he recalls, "I didn't want to get back into that studio scene, but as a leader of a jazz quartet, I got almost no work at all. I formed a combo with Peter Robinson on electric keyboards; I tried out the wa-wa pedal on my horn, the ring modulator, the amplified sax, the whole electronic bit. I'm glad I conducted that experiment, because at least I learned something about the tools; however, the main thing I learned is that I don't want to bother with them.

"My strong suit, which I played when I organized the East Coast group in '74, is and always has been playing good tunes. It can be a Charlie Parker blues line, or Tadd Dameron's 'The Scene Is Clean,' or a Cole Porter song. There's always great joy in creating on those kinds of bases.

"I think it's terribly important to keep that area of American music alive. There are some good songs around now, but in general the level is absolutely dreadful. The few times I've played recent pop songs, I had to really search a while to find something that didn't stick in my craw.

"So we're all sharing this pleasure, the four of us—Mike Melillo, our pianist and composer; Bill Goodwin on drums and Steve Gilmore on bass. We're rounding out our fourth year together, which is a feat in itself nowadays, and we've never felt the urge to jump on the pop bandwagon.

"It's true that the temptation has been irresistible for a lot of people; the bucks are really heavy and it's hard to fight. But the cats who fall for it are going to make a lot of bread fast, spend it fast, and disappoint the very people who had established them. I have no interest in doing a disco album, or selling short and letting down the people that like my music.

"Not everyone has given in. There are people out there like Dexter Gordon, or Al Cohn and Zoot Sims, who are still playing the music they enjoy. Perhaps part of the secret is that you can't give up on clubs."

●

Woods is among the minority of jazz eminences who will still gladly work in a small nightclub if the working conditions are right and the money is reasonable. He admits that some of the more notorious rooms have been his nemesis: "A while back we played a club on a rainy night. The roof was leaking and there was about three inches of water on the bandstand coming out of an overflowing toilet. While the management was trying to mop up, Mike Mellilo said, 'Hey, aren't you going to put a new roof in here?' And the guys says, 'Haven't you ever worked in a jazz club before?'

"But don't get me wrong—I love playing in a funky old jazz club that has character, that has good sound, where you can communicate. We all enjoy a week at the Lighthouse." (Proudly advertising itself as "The world's oldest jazz club and waterfront dive," the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach is six months short of its 30th birthday.)

Woods' increased travel schedule during the past couple of years has enabled him to see more of the positive side of this situation. "There are a lot of rooms in smaller towns that are just music rooms in general, not exclusively devoted to jazz; they are run by young, energetic, intelligent people who bring in all kinds of groups—jazz, classical, maybe a guitar recital. The accent is still on pop, but everything gets representation."

If Woods is ambivalent about nightclubs, he has no doubts about the real problems that beset a jazz combo attempting to remain together on a year-round basis. "The fact that we've stayed on the road is not due to any help from the record companies or the airline companies. The big record outfits are too busy promoting their rock superstars, and as for airlines—well, that's my pet peeve.

"Do you realize that we spend about 20% of our income on transportation? Do you know how much it costs to lug a full-size bass around?"

The music disseminated by Phil Woods includes several splendid RCA albums, for which he has used an augmented group or has joined forces with other names. His "Images" album with Michel Legrand won two Grammy awards. A double album, "The Seven Deadly Sins," will be released within the next two months.

As Woods points out, although a tough economic problem is involved in keeping a genuine jazz unit going, such difficulties do not confront certain types of groups that are peddling a spurious product in the name of jazz.

"Am I playing jazz?" Woods asks rhetorically. "What is jazz? If all that fusion stuff and all those one-chord tunes are jazz, then what am I doing? Does it all belong in the same category? When I hear some of the stuff that's being passed off as jazz nowadays, I become very confused —and small wonder the public does too."

Woods may be unduly concerned. The pseudo-jazz he refers to attracts an undiscriminating audience that neither knows nor cares what true jazz is. The admirers who buy Woods' records, or who attend the clubs, concerts and festivals at which he performs, do not need to have the art defined for them; and fortunately, they are still numerous enough to assure men of Woods' caliber that the moment for capitulation will never arrive. ●

Grant Geissman Quintet at Donte's

BY LEONARD FEATHER

When Grant Geissman is not busy touring with Chuck Mangione, whom he joined in late 1976, he takes an occasional gig leading his own quintet at Donte's. Wednesday evening the 25-year-old Geissman had a capacity crowd listening to his well-variegated program of modified jazz/rock.

The combo has a distinctive ensemble sound that blends the leader's guitar with the electric keyboard of Randy Kerber and the tenor sax of Gordon Goodwin. Most of the music is by Geissman; for a group that works together so rarely it is remarkably cohesive. Most of the members are very young (Kerber graduated from Reseda High School in 1976); all display a contagious enthusiasm.

The compositions usually involve enough changes of pace, mood and meter to avoid any jam session atmosphere. In "The Big Splash" Geissman whipped into a chorus packed with hard, cutting lines, his sound extrovert and his technique dazzling. Soon after his solo, there was a gentle interlude of keyboard chords before the rock beat returned.

Geissman achieved a more jazz-directed, funky blues sound in "Good Stuff," a very swift three-beater that is the title number of his recent album.

Goodwin, like Geissman a Cal State Northridge alumnus, was variously warm and intense on his own composition "Slightly Out of Town." His soprano sax was used to good effect in an arrangement of a Samuel Barber piano concerto. On this piece Geissman became a little too frantic in one of the few instances of technique overwhelming style.

The set ended with a Geissman piece entitled "The 53rd Calypso," which sounded about as West Indian as Chuck Mangione. This was one of two titles Geissman said were inspired by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.; the other was a plaintive melody called "The Sirens of Titan."

Though some of its music is tough and the rhythm heavy (Tom Minor is the drummer and David Edelstein the bassist), the Geissman quintet is one of the best and most effectively organized groups in its genre. It will be back at Donte's within the next few weeks.

DICK GIBSON'S JAZZ WEEKEND

Rocky Mountain Highs—and Lows

BY LEONARD FEATHER

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—Every Labor Day weekend, the center of gravity of the jazz universe tilts to this city while Dick Gibson stages his legendary jazz party. Here at 6,200 feet it always has to be a weekend of highs; yet for the guests at his 16th annual bash the most remarkable moments, paradoxically, were the lows. Specifically, Gibson's surprise entry (every year he invites an unannounced attraction as well as the 50 eminent soloists who are the core of the event) was a bottom-heavy group called the Matteson-Phillips Tuba Jazz Consort.

This implausible 10-piece band consists of three tubas (including Harvey Phillips), three euphoniums (one is Rich Matteson) and a rhythm section. After two or three times you might expect the idea to wear thick. Yet Matteson's arrangements make such ingenious use of the low-lying horns that the band's virile, voluptuous sounds achieve a textural richness of rare beauty, aided by dynamic variety and a choice of material that cut a swath from Oscar Peterson to Keith Jarrett.

At one point during "Georgia on My Mind" the gorgeous six-part harmony carried such an emotional impact that the crowd burst into applause in the middle of a melody passage—the kind of reaction normally reserved for drum solos and wild clarinet climaxes.

Organized in 1974, the Tuba Consort consists entirely of teachers from various universities, who can work only on weekends or when school is out. The band is certainly ready for the major festivals and record companies. Ironically, its arrangements were the only written music in a weekend of otherwise typical Gibson-grade jazz in the loose, ad lib mainstream mold.

The most emotional moments along those lines were provided by a set dedicated to the late Joe Venuti. After a moving speech by Gibson, who had brought Venuti out of retirement to play the party in 1967, the jazz pioneer's violin was placed on the bandstand while a group of men who had worked many parties with him—Phil Woods, Zoot Sims, Jake Hanna, Milt Hinton and others—played songs that were the old man's favorite.

Woods and Sims were among a cluster of saxophonists who took a generous share of the party's honor. During one entirely unaccompanied interlude, this duo generated more rhythmic excitement than most contemporary jazzmen can summon supported by a truckload of amplified basses and pianos. A similar unassisted duet by Woods and Benny Carter achieved the same tension-and-release balance.

Marshal Royal's alto sax, one of a dozen new additions to the party, bounced airily through Fats Waller's "Jitterbug

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Rocky Mountain Highs—and Lows

Continued from First Page

Waltz." Illinois Jacquet took his stomping tenor sax down home with some earthy Texas blues, backed con molto funk by Roger Kellaway's piano. The presence of both Scott Hamilton, the 23-year-old tenor prodigy, and his presumptive idol, the 63-year-old Flip Phillips, offered a prototypical instance of a student outclassed by his master.

During the five jam sessions, starting Saturday afternoon and ending Monday evening, there was the customary quotient of conventional but high-spirited blowing on predictable themes—"Perdido," "The Sheik," "Indiana." The lyrical moments, however, were more frequent and memorable than usual: Ruby Braff's velvet-toned cornet on "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face"; fluegelhorn virtuoso Clark Terry playing "God Bless the Child"; Peanuts Hucko's limpid clarinet on a long-forgotten Sidney Bechet tune, "Lonesome"; the low-key guitar duet by Mundell Lowe and Bucky Pizzarelli and a deeply moving "Mood Indigo" by a splendid blend of three trombones: Carl Fontana, Bill Watrous and Jimmy Knepper. Roy Williams, the first musician imported by Gibson from England, lent elegance and a warm sound to his "Polka Dots and Moonbeams."

At the other extreme there were such applause milkers as a tour de force by Jon Faddis. Alone on stage, the 25-year-old trumpeter blew chorus after chorus of "Caravan" before winding down with "God Bless the Child."

This year Gibson called 62 musicians from a dozen cities (as always, trombonist Trummy Young, 66, blasted in from Honolulu). Among the nine-man Los Angeles contingent were Shelly Manne, Ray Brown and Ross Tompkins.

Since it is impossible to catch all 30 hours of music (the Monday marathon ran from noon to 9 p.m.), I can only guess from what I heard that this was one of the greatest parties ever. The veterans are slowly being balanced by a growing contingent of less antiquated participants; the crowd, too, is becoming slightly younger and less traditional in its tastes.

As always, the party (attended by 575 paying guests for whom the weekend meant a median outlay of around $500) was a celebration of the joys of music, a gathering of long-lost friends, a narrowing of generational, racial and all other gaps and above all a miracle of spontaneity of the kind only jazz can create.

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JAZZ

Abdul-Jabbar Shoots for the Music Basket

BY LEONARD FEATHER

● Being tall at the age of 14 had two advantages for Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. One benefit is too well known to call for any explanation. The other was his ability to convince nightclub owners that he was old enough to be allowed in.

"I was in New York between 1960 and 1969," says Abdul-Jabbar, "a great time and place to hear the music develop."

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

Abdul-Jabbar is not your everyday jazz dilettante. He has studied the music so thoroughly and is so concerned about its propagation and survival that he decided not long ago to translate his beliefs into action. He has been putting his name, time and money (along with financial and advertising help from three record companies) behind a three-day jazz festival concluding today in the Ahmanson Theatre. He claims he's staging the festival because he wants to see jazz earn its rightful place as the classical music it really is.

"The first European-Americans who listened to jazz heard it in bordellos; consequently, they tried to stigmatize it as the music of the bordello. An event such as our festival is a great way to do something about that situation."

A young black American of Abdul-Jabbar's generation might have seemed more likely to grow up on a radio-fed diet of R&B and soul music. Abdul-Jabbar demurs: "If I had been born about five years later, you might be right, but my first love has always been jazz."

Music has been a part of his life, in fact, since he was born 31 years ago. His father, Ferdinand (Al) Alcindor, went to Juilliard in 1952, studied trombone and baritone horn. "He sang in the Hall Johnson choir along with my mother. For kicks, he used to jam with Art Blakey and Yusef Lateef at the Elks Club on 126th St. in Harlem. In fact, Art Blakey knew me when I was an infant; one day he took me out in my baby carriage.

"My father soon found out that his musical training was not enough to enable him to raise a family. After his graduation from Juilliard, he realized he couldn't get employment as a classically trained performer. That had to do with racism, of course, and with other factors that have affected Afro-Americans in particular."

While Jabbar was growing up, the artists whose recordings he heard regularly around the house were Nat King Cole, Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan and particularly Duke Ellington. "My father had a very special devotion for Duke and acquired a great collection of 78s by the Ellington band and all the other great innovators of the 1940s."

During his young days as Lew Alcindor, Abdul-Jabbar studied music for a while. "They started me out on piano, but I wanted to go out in the streets and play, so they didn't force me. I studied voice, too; we had a good choirmaster at our church, and we did everything that Bach, Beethoven and those people wrote as church music. So I grew up with a musical education that was good but not intense."

Unlike most aficionados who take an outside interest in jazz, Abdul-Jabbar has delved into the music beyond its more accessible phases, taking the trouble to evaluate some of the avant-garde developments of the past decade or two.

"I used to catch Sun Ra and his Intergalactic Arkestra playing their Monday night gigs at Slugs in lower Manhattan. That was the *in* underground thing in those days. I always enjoyed Sun Ra's music because I found it truly universal. On the other hand, the music of Cecil Taylor was a little bit too narrow for me. I never could really relate to it."

Along with many students of the music during that transitional era, Abdul-Jabbar followed Miles Davis through his various phases. "My father is a big-band man; in fact, the first modern jazz album I ever really listened to was 'Porgy and Bess' by Miles. Later on, during the mid-1960s, I admired Miles' group with Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Wayne Shorter; later, I still listened when he had people like Dave Holland, Jack De Johnette and Chick Corea.

"I had known Chick since way back, when he played in Mongo Santamaria's band around 1962 along with Steve Berrios, a mutual friend from our housing project. Chick is one of the musicians I found easy to learn about as a person, just from studying his work, from the things he tried to communicate. I admired him when he had the first Return to Forever group with Flora Purim and Airto—their 'Light as a Feather' album is a classic.

"It was after Chick left Miles Davis that I began to lose interest in Miles; the quality of his personnel had started to diminish. I know Miles—he's a basketball fan; in fact, he's into sports in general. I used to go to his house and watch fight films."

Several Davis sidemen also became Abdul-Jabbar buddies: "Ron Carter, the bassist, and Jimmy Cobb, the drummer, used to play ball with us on Riverside Drive. I almost got to know Sonny Rollins, but he's such a hard person to really reach that I settle for enjoying his music."

After leaving New York and enrolling at UCLA, Abdul-Jabbar, during his freshman year, attended a jazz class for one semester. "I used to argue with the teacher, Paul Tanner, who was the only person I ever heard referring to jazz as an American music. I insisted that it has always been an Afro-American music.

Abdul-Jabbar is convinced that a successful effort can still be made to bring pure jazz to a wider public in the face of an avalanche of pop and rock opposition.

Asked to name an all-star dream band, Abdul-Jabbar mixed familiar favorites with a surprising number of relatively little-known names. The list, too long to detail in full, included Gillespie, Freddie Hubbard and Woody Shaw on trumpets; Curtis Fuller, Slide Hampton and Urbie Green on trombones; Joe Henderson and Jackie McLean on saxophones; Charles Mingus, Eddie Gomez and Miroslav Vitous on bass; Elvin Jones on drums; singers Andy Bey, Leon Thomas and Dee Dee Bridgewater.

Assuming at least a moderate success with his maiden impresario voyage, Abdul-Jabbar hopes to present a concert annually and possibly expand to other cities.

"I'm doing this festival for the music, not the money," he says. "We're hoping to break even; that's the sign we want. If we make out better than that, the proceeds will go to the Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation."

Soft-voiced, speaking with quiet, earnest conviction, Abdul-Jabbar leaves the impression that his campaign for the betterment of jazz is based on a solid understanding of and belief in the music. His perspective is not likely to be disputed; how can anyone argue with an expert who secures a 7-foot-1¾ view from the top? ●

LETTERS

ETTING'S EPILOGUE

You cannot, of course, be congratulated for having published a last interview with Ruth Etting on the day of her death (Calendar, Sept. 24). However, Leonard Feather's article was important to those of us who remember, from the early 1930s:

"How do you do, ladies and gentlemen, how do you do? This is Norman Brokenshire. Chesterfield presents . . . The Ruth Etting Show." (Segue into several bars of "Shine On Harvest Moon," sung by Miss Etting.)

If Feather and Miss Etting's landlady had not conspired to create that final conversation, a great performer's death would have been reported and forgotten in a few lines somewhere between the shipping news and the stock-market quotations. Because of a fortuitous circumstance, a few young people will, perhaps, seek out those arcane recordings that will perpetuate Ruth Etting's artistry for a few months. Or weeks. Or days.

M. K. CAMPBELL
Whittier

Feather's profile recalled a moving personal note from the past. Etting's high school in David City, Neb., published an anniversary book of what had happened to the "class of." She responded. But after the years of Broadway, Hollywood and nightclubs where she met and was entangled with the most colorful people, she answered the question "Occupation?" with "housewife." Plaintive.

RICHARD FRENCH

Jazz Scores With Assist by Jabbar

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

9-11-78

Five years ago a jazz festival was attempted in Los Angeles. Presented by George Wein, it ran a week at the Hollywood Bowl and elsewhere, and flopped resoundingly. This weekend a more modest, three-day event at the Ahmanson Theatre was mounted by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and it appeared that the novice had succeeded where the veteran had failed. Commercially, that is; artistically the success was qualified.

Of the various units into which this group was subdivided, the most successful featured Stanley Clarke, the bassist, who received an heroic ovation before he had played a note. His upright bass duet with Freddie Hubbard on fluegelhorn, in Charlie Parker's "Confirmation," was at once adroit and relaxed. Switching to electric bass, he joined with George Duke's keyboards for what Hubbard announced as "some crossover funk." Actually it was a rather creative interlude of indefinable, often abstract sounds.

A newcomer, Hillary Schmidt, brought her appealing flute into serene collaboration with pianist Cedar Walton and guitarist Wilbert Longmire on "Naima." Longmire, a protege of George Benson, clearly is a star in the probational stage. Schmidt also played soprano sax in a couple of tunes but was inadequately showcased and seemed nervous.

Tony Williams brought almost frightening energy to his drum work on "Theme for Kareem." Willie Bobo's timbales lent a 6/8 beat to "Con Alma," but the rhythm section seemed diffuse and sprawling. In fact, the jam session in general was weak on production values and organization.

The most cohesive and best planned music of the evening came right at the top. A set by Bobby Hutcheison's quartet found him dashing back and forth in dance-like sideways motions as he visited his two adjacent instruments, the vibraphone and the marimba.

For a supposed climactic surprise, Jabbar's father, Al Alcindor, who played trombone in the 1950s, was flown in from New York to blow some faltering blues licks on "Jumping With Symphony Sid," in a kindly intentioned gesture that was as unfair to him as to the audience.

LOS ANGELES TIMES CALENDAR SEPTEMBER 24, 1978

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SHY: RUTH ETTING, RADIO'S SWEETHEART

BY LEONARD FEATHER

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—It is the fate of some showbusiness giants, especially after they have long since retired, to become the subjects of such casual, almost callous remarks as: "Oh, is he (she) still around?" I confess this was my unspoken reaction concerning one such woman of distinction.

During one of the jam sessions at Dick Gibson's annual jazz party here, a guest passed me a slip of paper with a note: "I'd like to talk to you about Ruth Etting, who lives in my apartment building. She's in her 80s now and has just recovered from a broken hip."

After the music subsided, the guest explained to me that she runs an apartment house for senior citizens. Etting didn't like to give interviews nor have photos taken, I was told, but a telephone call might elicit a few facts.

Sure enough, it did. A fairly sprightly voice said, "Hello?" and Ruth Etting Alderman acknowledged that she had been advised to expect a call.

"No, I'm not feeling too great," said the woman they called "Chicago's Sweetheart" when she sang on the new-fangled radio in 1922. "Aside from the broken hip, I had surgery two years ago. An old ulcer from 30 years back was acting up, and when they operated they found a second one. It isn't fun getting old, you know."

It wasn't always fun being young, either. The career of Ruth Etting, for all its triumphs, was marked by one of the most notoriously stormy marriages in Broadway history. In 1920 she had met Martin (Moe the Gimp) Snyder, who took over the handling of her career, and married her in 1922.

Etting's big break was stardom in the "Ziegfeld Follies of 1927." Other shows followed: "Whoopee" in 1928, "Simple Simon" in 1930, another "Follies" in '31. The 1930s found her in constant demand for major radio shows; she was seen in a few movies, such as the 1933 "Roman Scandals," and by 1936 an international name, was presented as a star on the London stage.

Etting's forte was the simple, basic sentimental song, though she could handle a rhythm tune with the lilting panache of the Jazz Age. Her career and life seemed to be in high gear; then scandal intervened. She made big headlines when there was a shooting incident. The victim: her pianist, Myrl Alderman; the perpetrator: the jealous Mr. Snyder. Eventually, after her relationship with Snyder broke up, she had a long and happy marriage with Alderman. All this was told in "Love Me or Leave Me," a typically fictionalized Hollywood movie made in 1955.

"Do you ever see that film on late-night television?" I asked.

"I wouldn't want to. I'm sorry they chose Doris Day for that part. No reflection on Doris; I like her, but I really had Janie Powell in mind—she's prettier than I was, but she would have been the right one. Anyhow, the picture made my character too tough; they had me drinking all through it, and I never, never drank."

The last time I had seen Ruth Etting, in the early 1960s, she and her husband were guests at a now long-forgotten jazz club in Studio City, where they had come to listen to the music of an old friend, cornetist Wild Bill Davison. I asked where she had spent her time in the years since then.

"Well, I've been living off and on in Colorado Springs for 35 years. My husband died in 1966, and I've been alone. But I have friends and admirers everywhere. It's incredible how they manage to find me; I still get letters and autograph requests from all over the world.

"Another thing that amazes me is these records they keep putting out. Some of them are taken from transcriptions I made on those great big discs that were used by radio stations. I have one right here; it has a picture of me, and a big heart on the front, and a microphone, and the words 'Ruth Etting: Sweetheart of Radio.'"

The manufacturers of the recording, she said, give her no payment but send her free copies. She doesn't mind. "I was paid in the first place. It's nice to see them around again."

"How long has it been since you stopped singing professionally?"

"My goodness, it's about 35 years." (Not quite that long, actually; according to the reference books, she made her last comeback in clubs and on radio in 1947-48.) The inevitable next question: What does an old, nonsinging lady who once had the world at her stage door now do with her time?

"Well, I'll tell you this, I don't listen to

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Ruth Etting in "Roman Scandals," 1933.

'20s Singing Star Ruth Etting Dies

Ruth Etting, radio and Broadway singing star of the 1920s and '30s, died Sunday in Colorado Springs, Colo.

She was about 80 years old, and she had been in ill health for several years. A family spokeswoman said funeral services will be held Tuesday or Wednesday in Colorado Springs, where she had lived for 35 years.

Oddly, after years in obscurity, Miss Etting was featured in a cover story by jazz critic Leonard Feather in The Times' Calendar magazine on the day of her death.

Miss Etting's life story was the stuff of melodrama: the talented farm girl who goes to the big city to sing her way to fame, fortune—and tragedy.

Please Turn to Page 5, Col. 3

RUTH ETTING

Continued from First Page

In fact, her life story was turned into a highly fictionalized 1955 motion picture, "Love Me or Leave Me," starring Doris Day as Miss Etting. The real Miss Etting never cared for the Hollywood version.

She said she thought the movie made her out to be "too tough," as she told Feather in the interview printed Sunday. "They made me drinking all through it," she said, "and I never, never drank."

She became a superstar of the era in 1927 when she performed in the "Ziegfeld Follies" of 1928. Other Broadway hits followed, including "Whoopee" and "Simple Simon." She made several movies in the early '30s, among them "Roman Scandals," and continued to star on popular radio shows.

Ruth Etting, right, with stepdaughter Edith Snyder, at investigation of shooting incident in 1938.

James Cagney, Doris Day in "Love Me or Leave Me" (1955), based on the career of Ruth Etting.

RADIO SWEETHEART

Continued from First Page

many singers. It all seems to be turning to country music now, and you know that's not where I come from. I was a product of the jazz and Dixieland days. I had Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey on records with me."

Contrary to her self-image, Ruth Etting was the classic MOR performer of her era, singing in a pure, sedate style with generally demure accompaniments. She can be heard in "Penthouse Serenade" and three other songs on a five-record set produced by the Nostalgia Book Club ("70 Immortal Performances from the Golden Age of Popular Music and Jazz"), issued last year by Columbia Special Products on album P5 14320.

She has very little time or patience for what is happening on today's music scene: "I don't understand the lyrics of the songs they're doing today. I was raised with the great writers, men like Gus Kahn and Walter Donaldson, who wrote 'Love Me or Leave Me.' You don't hear that kind of thing on television. And how anybody can waste time listening to 'Hee Haw' I just don't know. The singers nowadays are about equal to the songs."

I decided to draw her out a little on this point. "Haven't you ever heard Sarah Vaughan?"

"Oh, yes—in fact, just the other night on the Jerry Lewis Telethon. She's different—a little weird, but she has a terrific range. Fine singer. I like Ella Fitzgerald, too—there are just a few people of that generation that you see once in a while.

"To tell you the truth, what I really like to watch is

MUSIC REVIEW

Marian McPartland at UCLA

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

In an unusual booking, Marian McPartland played two contrasting concerts at UCLA, one Thursday at Schoenberg Hall, mainly a piano recital with a modern rhythm section, the other Friday at Royce Hall with a traditionalist jazz sextet under the de facto leadership of cornetist Jimmy McPartland, whom she introduced as "my great and good friend" (they are the jazz world's happiest divorced couple).

Hindsight tells us it would have been better to telescope both concerts on Friday, thus filling up Royce Hall and presenting the spectrum of Ms. McPartland's talents to a combined audience. Neither hall being air conditioned, the humidity was a burdensome factor for all.

Nevertheless, both evenings brought moments of enrichment. Thursday, aided by an ex-Shearing drummer, Rusty Jones, and a prestissimo bassist named Steve La Spina, McPartland skipped from pop standards ("Sweet and Lovely") to Chick Corea's "Windows," turned "All the Things You Are" into a fugue, and offered luminous samples of her compositions in "Ambiance" (first night) and "Afterglow" (second).

During the second half Thursday she yielded the spotlight to Mary Osborne, a long-respected, understated guitarist who applied rhythmic grace to her few standards.

Jimmy McPartland made a token appearance, to plug his gig the following night. He was joined Friday by Eddie Miller on tenor sax and by the protean Dick Cary, who played F trumpet (pitched a fourth lower than your regular trumpet) and the E-flat alto horn.

The dark timbre of the F trumpet contrasted well with McPartland's bright, 1930s-style cornet. Old standards were relied on—"Royal Garden Blues," "Louisiana," "St. James' Infirmary," several with trivial, good-humored vocals by McPartland. These were high-spirited performances in which Marian McP. adjusted perfectly to the circumstances.

SOLO—Jimmy McPartland blows cornet during concert by ex-wife Marian McPartland at UCLA.
Times photo by Dave Gatley

Eddie Miller's "Lazy Mood," his standard party piece for 40 years, remains a sinuously fascinating line. Cary's E-flat horn sublimated an ancient Bing Crosby hit, "Please." Marian McPartland's sensitively reexamined Bix Beiderbecke's "In a Mist" reminded us that this 50-year-old work remains a jazz masterpiece.

All in all, hearing the McPartlands together was like watching time stand still and move forward simultaneously.

JAZZ

9/17/78

COMMOTION TO EMOTION

BY LEONARD FEATHER

When music history books are written 20 years from today, it's just possible the late 1970s may be remembered as the years when jazz turned the corner from commotion to emotion, from fusion to transfusion. That, in any event, is the way one group of musicians, and their record producer, would prefer to see things go.

This weekend three men of great stature and long tenure in the field, tenor saxophonist Sonny Rollins, bassist Ron Carter and pianist McCoy Tyner, took to the road as the Milestone Jazzstars. Milestone is one of the four jazz labels of the Fantasy group, based in Berkeley.

The show, with drummer Al Foster rounding out the combo, plays the Santa Monica Civic on Saturday, completing a six-day West Coast tour. The quartet will reassemble Oct. 11 in Milwaukee for a series of 11 dates, winding up Oct. 29 in Philadelphia.

What is so remarkable about this? First, the nature of the music to be played. Not since Herbie Hancock's V.S.O.P. broke the ice last year has a nonfusion, electric jazz group undertaken, on its own, a tour of the nation's major concert halls. (Hancock and Chick Corea, though hardly qualifying as a combo, did tour last February playing acoustic pianos.)

According to Ron Carter (who was also a member of V.S.O.P.), "There will be no synthesizers on the piano; people will see a drum kit for just one drummer, rather than a whole drum-shop load of equipment; they will observe no pedals around our feet, and they will not hear Sonny Rollins' horn electrified or distorted in any way. In short, what they see will be what they hear."

Second, the convocation of three poll winners to make this brand of ungimmicked music has the unstinting backing of the record company that instigated the venture.

"Our company is treating this like the major event it is," says Orrin Keepnews, veteran jazz fan and producer who established Milestone Records in 1966. "The fact you have artistically sound merchandise doesn't mean you simply package it in a plain brown wrapper. Given aggressive, forceful sales techniques, you can put across something with musical integrity.

"We're doing this tour with all the trappings: full-color posters, a souvenir program booklet, T-shirts, an ad in Rolling Stone, pretaped radio interviews with Ron, Sonny and McCoy. Normally you might expect a record company to be a little diffident about making investments of that kind in acoustic jazz; but we have seen a marked increase in the demand for this kind of music, and by bringing it to the attention of the public, not only in the obvious urban centers but also in places like New Haven, Conn., and Albany, N.Y., we're exposing this group to a much broader audience. People who live in places like that and happen to be fans of Rollins, Tyner or Carter very seldom have a chance to catch them in person.

As spokesman for the combo, Ron Carter expressed his encouragement. "We've been complaining for years that the record companies only put their promotion behind the million-selling pop or fusion stars. All we needed was someone to recognize that a substantial demand exists for the best acoustic jazz, and to back it with their money and enthusiasm."

From left, McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter and Sonny Rollins form Milestone Jazzstars.

Carter, a man of basketball-player dimensions, quiet-voiced but loquacious in his advocacy of musical integrity, is the main link in the foursome. "I'm the only one who has worked with all three others. I was with Sonny Rollins in the mid-'60s, played on five of McCoy's last eight albums and worked with Al Foster on Horace Silver's recent recordings."

Rollins, whose long bursts of linear improvisation are often touched with streaks of sardonic humor, may have the most to gain from the tour. For all his eminence, he has never quite achieved a transcendent reputation comparable with John Coltrane's. "I think the reason for that," Carter says, "may be that Coltrane had such a strong cult following, as opposed to a pure musical following. Don't forget, too, that Sonny went into long periods of retirement, in the early '60s and again from '68 to '71. Since his reemergence, his work has had a stronger impact than ever. This tour will provide ample opportunity for those who knew him but lost track of him to be reacquainted; those who have never heard him in person will become aware of a phenomenal saxophonist and be awed by his presence."

An odd aspect of the foursome's personnel is that McCoy Tyner earned his definitive acceptance with Coltrane, whose music tended toward long vamps and chordally barren works, in sharp contrast to the song-oriented predilections of Rollins. "This will be a fresh, challenging outlet for McCoy," Carter insists. "No matter what 'Trane was playing, Tyner always liked to deal also in songs with demanding chord changes. With a giant of Sonny's stature he will have a chance to show this side of his personality; he'll be different, he'll play more chords and will sound just as amazing alongside Rollins as he ever did with 'Trane."

Coinciding with the Milestone tour, individual albums by the main participants have been released, featuring them in different and larger contexts. Sonny Rollins' "Don't Stop the Carnival" (Milestone M-55005) is a two-LP set with some typical, blusteringly vital work by the leader, but the presence on trumpet of Donald Byrd, who seems to have lost either his chops or his soul during the long hiatus since he last played genuine jazz, is a detriment to the album. Listening to him attempt to negotiate Kern's "Nobody Else but Me," one wonders why he allowed this cut to be released.

Carter may be right in his estimate concerning Tyner's ability to adjust to Rollins' very different demands; however, Tyner's "The Greeting" (M-9085) offers scant evidence. Starting with the harmonically simplistic "Hand in Hand," this is for the most part a high-energy set, with Coltrane-like saxophone solos by George Adams and modal excursions by Tyner. The shadow of Coltrane hangs over the one piano solo track, "Naima," 'Trane's best-known ballad, played with surging drama.

Ron Carter's "A Song for You" (M-9086) is by far the most cohesive of the three albums. Accompanied by an excellent small group, with discreet background use of four cellos, Carter doubles on regular bass and piccolo bass. The latter, with its lighter, more penetrating sound, has enabled him to establish himself as a solo virtuoso. □

Uma enciclopédia viva

Uma das presenças marcantes deste Festival de Jazz é, certamente, a de Leonard Feather. Considerado o mais importante crítico de Jazz dos Estados Unidos (escreve para as revistas **Down Beat** e **International Musician** e mantém colunas do **Wasghinton Post** e **Los Angeles Times**), Feather é o autor da mais completa publicação sobre o jazz, **The Enciclopedia of Jazz**, uma verdadeira bíblia para os jazzófilos, além de outros livros sobre o assunto, como **From Satchmo to Miles**, **Inside to Jazz**, **The Pleausure of Jazz** e **The Enciclopedia of Jazz in the 70's**.

Leonard Feather, juntamente com o disc-jockey Felix Grant foi dos que mais incentivaram e divulgaram o ritmo brasileiro nos EUA. Seu primeiro contato com a música brasileira aconteceu na década de 50 - antes mesmo do surgimento da Bossa Nova - através do guitarrista Laurindo de Almeida. Este músico, que vive há 30 anos nos Estados Unidos, foi o primeiro a levar a música brasileira para aquele país, tendo se apresentado com o grupo do saxofonista Bud Shank.

Mas tanto Feather quanto o público americano de uma maneira geral começaram a se interessar mais pela música do Brasil por volta de 1962, a partir da Bossa Nova.

"Houve muitos músicos norte-americanos — explica Feather — que vinham ao Brasil para ouvir, conhecer a música daqui. Foi o caso de Dizzy Gillespie, de Stan Getz e mesmo de Charles Byrd, que introduziu nos Eua 'Desafinado' e 'Samba de uma nota só'.

Desde então, segundo Feather, mais e mais fertilizou o entrosamento entre os ritmos e os músicos dos dois países. "Isto porque os ritmos, dentro de uma perspectiva de jazz, são muito parecidos. Ambos sofisticados de diferentes maneiras, mas muito parecidos." E é uma semelhança que Feather atribui às origens afro da música brasileira e da norte-americana: a africana propriamente dita no Brasil e a afrocubana nos EUA.

Esta "integração" entre os ritmos pogressivos, conforme Feather, é que tem feito da música brasileira a mais influente nos meios norte-americanos entre as dos países latino-americanos. E hoje, João Gilberto, Tom Jobim, Milton Nascimento, Airto Moreira, Flora Purim e Raul de Souza são nomes bastante conhecidos dos aficcionados do jazz progressivo, fazendo parte das paradas musicais e sempre programados na KBCA, de Hollywood, emissora que transmite somente jazz, 24 horas por dia.

Além de assistir a todos os concertos do Festival, Feather, que destaca a importância de terem sido programadas apresentações conjuntas de músicos brasileiros e norte-americanos, deverá proferir duas palestras dentro da programação paralela do evento. Na primeira, a se realizar sábado, às 19 horas no auditório do Anhembi, ele falará sobre a história do **traditional jazz**, discorrendo sobre estilo, criação, músicas e vida de nomes como Louis Armstrong, Billy Holliday, Sarah Vaughn, Jack Teagardem e Nat King Cole, entre outros "gigantes do jazz". Na palestra de domingo, no mesmo local e horário, Feather, que também é compositor, instrumentista, letrista e produtor, falará sobre Duke Ellington, "O HOmem e a Obra", ocasião em que serão exibidos filmes exclusivos e inéditos no Brasil. E após esta palestra, Feather participará de uma mesa-redonda com o grupo de **ellingtonianos** de São Paulo.

TERMINOU ONTEM O 1.º FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE JAZZ DE SÃO PAULO, NO PARQUE ANHEMBI, COM AS APRESENTAÇÕES DE MÁRCIO MONTARROYOS E SEU GRUPO, BANDA DE FREVO DO RECIFE E JOSÉ MENEZES, JOHN MCLAUGHLIN E A ELETRIC BAND

LEONARD FEATHER, CRÍTICO DE "JAZZ"

"OS MÚSICOS BRASILEIROS ESTÃO ERRADOS, AO BUSCAR INSPIRAÇÃO NO "ROCK" E NO QUE DE PIOR SE PRODUZ NOS EUA"

Fernando Zamith

São Paulo — "Os músicos brasileiros estão errados, ao buscar inspiração no *rock* e no que de pior se produz atualmente nos Estados Unidos", adverte Leonard Feather, autor da *The Encyclopedia of Jazz*, compositor, instrumentista, dono de colunas semanais no *Washington Post* e no *Los Angeles Times* e também conhecido por divulgar a música brasileira em seu país.

No auditório J do Anhembi, palco do 1.º Festival Internacional de Jazz de São Paulo, Leonard Feather se prepara para pronunciar a segunda conferência das duas que apresentou — Gigantes do Jazz e Duke Ellington, o Homem e a Obra. Tranquilo, com a precisão de seus anos de jornalismo e de conhecedor profundo de *jazz*, mostra-se decepcionado com a atual fase de Milton Nascimento, de quem escreveu a contracapa do primeiro disco *Courage*, lançado pelo músico brasileiro nos Estados Unidos: "A música que Milton apresentou aqui no festival está fora do tempo. Gosto dele, mas prefiro ir para casa e colocar seus discos antigos na vitrola."

Leonard Feather é um dos mais respeitados críticos de *jazz*. Além das suas colunas nos jornais, escreve para a *Down Beat, Melody Maker, International Musician*, e revistas suecas, alemãs e japonesas. É também músico: estudou piano e música com Lennie Tristano e clarinete com Jimmy Hamilton. Como compositor, lançou Dinah Washington com sua música *Evil Gal Blues*, além de ter obras suas gravadas por Ella Fitzgerald, B. B. King, Sarah Vaughan, Cannonball Aderley. O prêmio Grammy, de 1964 coube a ele pelo disco *The Duke Ellington Era*.

— Não gosto de ouvir os músicos brasileiros, que são excelentes, tocando as coisas ruins dos Estados Unidos. Veja o caso de Raul de Souza: ele é ótimo quando toca como o fez com Frank Rosolino, aqui no festival. Mas, sua *performance* isolada revela-se o oposto.

Etta James, para o público, predominantemente jovem que lotou o Anhembi, foi um sucesso. "Ela é péssima" — observa Leonard Feather — "o público que a encara como representante da música norte-americana foi enganado.

Ele não guarda adjetivos, entretanto, para o trabalho de Sarah Vaughan, principalmente pelo seu último disco — com músicas brasileiras, inclusive algumas de Milton Nascimento. "Lindo", "maravilhoso", salienta o crítico norte-americano.

Para Leonard Feather, outro músico de seu país, George Duke, que se apresentou com uma parafernália eletrônica no Anhembi, não passa de "mero *showbusiness*". O crítico sentiu-se na platéia de um cassino de Las Vegas.

No auditório J, enquanto os técnicos de projeção aprontavam as cópias de um filme de Duke Ellington, de 1949 e outro mais recente, de comemoração dos 70 anos do famoso *jazzmann*, Leonardo Feather ouve um resto do som de Chick Corea, na sessão da tarde de domingo.

— Penso que os próximos anos vão revelar ainda a influência da música eletrônica no *jazz*. Entretanto, para se criar uma boa música, é necessário dosar o acústico com o eletrônico. Chick Corea é um bom compositor, que sabe dosar os instrumentos naturais com os eletrificados. Ele conseguiu um agradável contraste, sobretudo com as invenções de Joe Farrel. Ouvimos música e não barulho, ou o que vocês aqui chamam de *pauleira*.

Leonard Feather elogia o disco de Sarah Vaughan com músicas de autores brasileiros e critica Etta James: "Ela é péssima!"

A cada instante de sua estada em São Paulo, Leonard Feather não se descuida de seu trabalho, anotando em um caderninho, "informações preciosas". Ele desconhecia que o Festival de Jazz, no Anhembi, estava sendo transmitido para quase todos os Estados brasileiros. "Não é só São Paulo e Rio? *Wonderful.*"

— Esse festival é muito importante para o *jazz*. Domingo passado, vi trechos, pela televisão, do *show* na estação do metrô, com Dizzy Gillespie e Benny Carter. Estavam lá 2 mil pessoas e sem divulgação. Incrível toda essa gente se interessar por *jazz*.

Leonard Feather conta que, nos Estados Unidos, as emissoras comerciais de televisão não se interessam em transmissões desse tipo. Nem o Festival de Jazz de Nova Iorque merece essa atenção, acrescenta ele, por motivos exclusivamente comerciais. "Há apenas um único canal, governamental, que transmite exibições de uma hora ou pouco menos. Este festival de São Paulo é o primeiro, no mundo, a ser inteiramente filmado e transmitido direto pela televisão", diz Leonard Feather, sempre anotando em seu caderninho, usando caneta com uma pequena lampada acesa. "Até o Amazonas está assistindo? É ótimo saber que uma grande parte do Brasil esteja ouvindo o *jazz*".

O pequeno auditório J, do Anhembi, já recebe o público para a sua conferência sobre Duke Ellington. São os fãs de *jazz*, chamados de *os ellingtonianos*. Leonard Feather demonstra vivo interesse pelo atual trabalho de Egberto Gismonti e elogia os brasileiros que "estão tocando *jazz*, impregnado de raízes da sua própria terra".

— Gismonti está usando violão de oito cordas? (escreve no caderninho: "Guitar with 8 strings"). Preciso reouvir mais seu trabalho.

O autor da *The Encyclopedia of Jazz*, considerada a *bíblia dos jazzófilos* e também responsável por títulos como *Inside Jazz, The Pleasures of Jazz, From Satchmo to Miles*, e *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in 70's*, revela que vai escrever sobre o que se viu e ouviu no 1.º Festival Internacional de São Paulo. "É o que já estou fazendo", comenta com humor, principalmente, depois de um ligeiro engano do intérprete, que traduziu "pesquisador" por "anthropologist".

— A influência da música eletrônica vai prosseguir no *jazz*. Mas, se deve evitar a sua descaracterização por músicos que exageram na eletrificação. Os instrumentos acústicos têm 300 anos e até hoje seu efeito é maravilhoso. O contrabaixo, por acaso, foi deixado de lado? Aceito que os conjuntos usem a música eletrônica, mas de forma adequada. O Weathermen Report, por exemplo, é um belo exemplo.

E quanto aos músicos brasileiros?

— Que não copiem o que há de pior na música norte-americana. E que também, os brasileiros que moram nos Estados Unidos e escutam muito *rock*, não busquem a influência errada.

Leonard Feather

Tony Bennett

"The best in the business;
he's the singer who gets across what the
composer has in mind,
probably a little more."
Frank Sinatra

Popular singing has undergone cataclysmic changes since the advent of rock. The generation whose gods are Peter Frampton, Elton John and The Bee Gees has established a radically new set of values not only in the types of performance it prefers but in the form and content of the songs it accepts.

Due to these developments, the term "classic pop" has acquired a special meaning. It denotes certain singers, mature in style and often in years, all of whom are notable for their clear articulation, and their ability to sing in a relaxed fashion (but to achieve a potent fortissimo if the moment calls for it).

Bing Crosby is the father figure for many of these artists. Ella Fitzgerald is the earth mother for the women. In selecting their repertoire, they are loyal to the great American songwriters with whose traditions they came up: Gershwin, Rodgers & Hart, Kern, Hammerstein, Porter, Ellington, Berlin. Some of the more fortunate among them are survivors who, though no longer inhabiting the charts with any regularity, have a faithful following and a sense of artistic security that protects them from the inroads of time. Among them, the most consistent and respected is an artist who signs his paintings with his real name, Anthony Dominick Benedetto, but whose marquee billing in Las Vegas proclaims him as Tony Bennett.

Bennett has earned the unanimous endorsement of his peers and predecessors ("The greatest singer I've ever heard" – Bing Crosby; "The best in the business; he's the singer who gets across what the composer has in mind, probably a little more" – Sinatra). What is more important, he has kept his sights high in the face of tremendous pressure to compromise.

Coincidentally, Bennett's career got underway at the time when Sinatra's was floundering, in the early 1950's. Born in 1926 in Astoria, Long Island, New York, Bennett studied music and painting at the High School of Industrial Arts. He worked in an uncle's grocery store, was an elevator man at the Park Sheraton and a singing waiter in an Astoria restaurant. Toward the end of World War II he put in some time in the Army, doing mopping-up work in Germany and France.

On a recent sunny afternoon Tony Bennett sat in the living room of the Beverly Hills home where he has lived since his family's 1974 move from New York. Nearby was a newly completed Benedetto painting of his striking blonde wife, Sandy. He spoke with affection of the unique era in which he acquired his basic love of the singer's art. "I ought to be envied, because I grew up during a great time for music. In fact, one of my voice teachers, Miriam Spier, lived right on 52nd Street when it was alive with all the immortal jazz artists in those little clubs. She told me, 'Just listening to them will be your best lesson,' and of course it was, because there were these giants like Lester Young, Stan Getz, Ben Webster, Billie Holiday, Erroll Garner, Art Tatum, George Shearing – all working within one block on this street.

"We haven't filled the void yet for the marvellous inspiration of those days. There was so much healthy competition, so much love exchanged, whereas today it's almost a feeling of 'Let's put the music through computers. Let's not get emotionally involved. Instead of dedicating our whole lives to it, let's just get it over with, take off and have a nice vacation."

Bennett continued, "The interpreters nowadays are minimized; in fact, the interpreter very often is the writer himself. There was something special about the craft of writing a great song: when Arlen or Berlin or Porter composed a tune, you could do it as a march, as a waltz, as a ballad, or in straight 4/4. Today you have Paul Williams, for instance, who writes terrific songs, but the problem is, they're one-dimensional. Songs like his are good for the original guy who writes and performs them, but there isn't too much that can be done with them. They don't filter down to the instrumental soloists and become permanent jazz standards like so many of the forties and fifties songs.

"There is a great art to songwriting, and an art to just interpreting. I don't hear anyone among the new singers or groups trying to tackle a masterpiece like *All The Things You Are*, because they just don't know how to deal with it."

Bennett's concern with excellence was, according to his recollection, a pervasive source of friction between himself and the record company, Columbia, with which he was affiliated ever since his first single, *Boulevard of Broken Dreams*, became a moderate hit in 1950. He remained with the label for 24 years, recording 580 songs including 74 albums, but he says it was

Sherman Hines

neglect of the media, particularly radio. "It's all top 20 nowadays; they don't want to program their shows on the basis of merit. I heard a shocking thing recently about one of our top radio stations – I can't mention the name, but they had this tremendous library of records, as big as the BBC's. The finest collection of albums imaginable – all the great Armstrongs and Ellingtons, all the best bands and singers over the decades. I walked in there one day and saw the room bare. I found out they'd thrown the entire collection away! They didn't even sell it, or give it to another station – some hotshot profit-minded station manager just came in, not realizing their value, and told them to get rid of these masterpieces. They tossed them out like so many rags.

"It's all part of the psychology of planned obsolescence that's been eating away not only at the music business, but at our society. When we made things by hand and cared for one another and cared for what we created, something wonderful was happening in this country. There was a spirit of hope. But now it's what Norman Mailer has called American insanity. If a person buys an automatic garage door opener and it falls off two weeks later, that's just the way things are. We have to recapture that love of creating and of cherishing our traditions, whether it's a doorknob or furniture or fine artistry of any kind.

"I think there's one country that is ahead of us on this level, and that's Japan. Those people really believe in workmanship, in true artistry. I did a television special there a few years ago and was tremendously impressed with their sensitivity. To my great surprise I found they had assembled a special collection of my records for reissue – not just the predictable collection of hits, but also some of the little-known things I'd call art recordings. If I'd compiled that album myself it couldn't have turned out any better."

Part of Bennett's plan to go his own way, branching out in whatever direction he might find attractive, involved a fling at acting. He had a successful film debut in *The Oscar*, but the expected follow-up never materialized, a situation he ascribes to his great selectivity in accepting suitable roles. "But my very good friend Abby Mann has been kicking around some ideas, with me in mind. He did that marvelous TV film 'King,' which some reviewers felt was the best thing ever seen on television. The people who understand realize this, despite the fact that it got low ratings."

It was suggested to Bennett that the ratings appeared to contradict his theory that the public really wants quality.

"That point is very debatable," said Tony, his voice and emotions rising. "Someone has a computer and they tell you X number of people were watching, but someone has to push the button to the computer. If something comes on that's maybe a little bit liberal, and if you have a far right guy who's in control, don't tell me that computer can't be manipulated. Any advertiser will tell you that if they want it to go a certain way it will go a certain way."

Bennett, in fact, refuses to accept the postulate that ignorance has to be part of the American way of life. "I think in the long run the majority of people are smarter than people give them credit for. How come a Woody Allen movie found its way to the top? How come Vladimir Horowitz is suddenly selling so many records? That's unheard of – and it's one of the most wonderful things that could happen in this commercialized music business.

"I'm like Duke Ellington, ..., in that I deplore the use of categories. Art knows no boundaries..."

"Remember, we grew up with a genuine spectrum of music available to us. We weren't force-fed a diet of top 40; we had better access to folk music, classical music, jazz, rhythm and blues, everything. That all changed when Alan Freed came along and started playing a lot of low quality stuff and screaming 'This is your music!' to all the gullible teenagers. He blocked out all the Ellingtons and Basies – he took those pillars of American music and shoved them all aside.

Given the attitude of the taste arbiters, the manipulation of talent and its dissemination via radio, TV and records, what hope can there be for a future Tony Bennett or Lena Horne to come along and have hope of any measure of acceptance?

It was at this point that Tony hedged a little. "I'm not that much of a musicologist; I can't predict what's going to happen. I'll admit that I met a couple of wonderful young artists who were rejected by record companies. Everybody's going after what is supposedly 'happening' right now; they go by demographics and won't take any chances. I have one particular case in mind. My secretary has a boy friend, a wonderful singer named Joe Gold. He sings nice, straight, popular intimate songs, plus semi-classical and some Broadway material. A real artist, a true pro, and he's been trying for years to make it. There's a whole army of singers who have had a hell of a time getting through the record company doors. They are told that they have to compromise, otherwise nobody even wants to talk to them."

It would be comforting to believe in the optimistic self-confidence of this noble artist who has spent better than a quarter of a century showing us, on record and in the Nevada casinos, on TV (when they'll let him) and in concerts around the world, that quality can prevail, that what has variously been characterized as "middle-of-the-road" or simply "good music" will survive despite the seemingly insuperable obstacles that face it. Yet when you ask Bennett to name his preferences among the singers of either sex or generation, whom does he name?

"Joe Williams, of course; and Frank Sinatra, for everything he's ever done. Ella, Sarah, Peggy Lee; and of course Lena. I toured with her for a year and she is the most disciplined singer I have ever heard, male or female." Significantly, these are all more or less contemporaries of Bennett, most of them actually a few years his senior. Nobody came to mind who has emerged during our ongoing multi-billion dollar record business era. It is not that there aren't newcomers of the same calibre willing and able to display their talents; it's just that the studios are closed to them.

Nevertheless, one senses that there may be more than mere wishful thinking in Bennett's attitude. Perhaps the best summation of the way he looks at life could be found in a remark made when we fell into a discussion of classic pop, rock and other musical categories.

"I'm like Duke Ellington," he said, "in that I deplore the use of categories. Art knows no boundaries. A church front window that's painted primitively in Harlem has the same value as a stained glass window in Rome. You never know where the next great artistic stimulus is going to come from; you just leave yourself wide open and hope for the best.

"You know what Sinatra told me, many years ago? He said, 'Money follows talent. Create the talent and someone will want it.' So I'm firmly convinced that despite all the problems young people today have to face, the best is yet to come." ★

Ben Vereen: A Pip of a Show

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Chicken George is alive and very well indeed at the Greek Theater. The state of his health was never more evident than Wednesday night during his closing number, the gospel blues-flavored "New World Comin'," when George, a.k.a. Ben Vereen, leapt off the stage, jumped across rows of seats, shaking hands with members of the packed house, then bounded up to the top of the amphitheater, all the while continuing the song with the help of his cordless microphone. After making the long run back to the stage, he resumed his song without losing a beat or a breath.

Ben Vereen's physical condition is only one notable aspect of an extraordinary act. Every number in his perfectly paced show has a character of its own; seldom has there been a better assembled or more diversified performance.

Lithe and graceful, a trim figure in his white suit, he is as much a dancer who also sings as a singer who likes to dance. His "Pippin" dance number is as delightful choreographically as his "Cockeyed Optimist" is vocally. His "Sim Shalom," sung partly in Hebrew, achieved such intensity and conviction that the whole audience was brought to its feet.

There are reminders of his various career achievements in a medley drawn from "Hair," "Pippin" and "Jesus Christ Superstar." There's a delightful suprise in a long-forgotten swing-era hit called "Posin'," introduced in 1937 by the Jimmie Lunceford Orchestra but as modern as tomorrow when Vereen's voice, feet and expressive face take over.

With Mark Dicciani conducting, he makes intelligent use of the orchestra, with occasional excellent jazz solos by Tony Salicondro on alto sax and others. But it is impossible to characterize this as a jazz, pop or any other kind of show. Ben Vereen exudes a sense of joy and good humor, theatricality and drama, that are riveting, flawless and beyond category. He reaches out and touches the audience, both figuratively and literally, with a charm that is quite irresistible.

A curious aspect of his singing is that his slightly nasal, high-pitched voice bears a strong resemblance to that of Della Reese, who opens for him. Close your eyes during a song by one of them and you might almost believe it was the other.

Miss Reese with her throaty contralto was in even better form than during her recent stint at Scandals. Her show, too, is an engaging mixture of all types of songs. Like Vereen, she harks back to her gospel roots, with "Stop and Smell the Roses" done Baptist-church style.

There will be many roses to smell at the Greek Theater through Saturday.

VERY VEREEN—Ben Vereen proved he and show were in top condition at Greek opening.
Times photo by Mary Frampton

Los Angeles Times Tues., Sept. 26, 1978

Jazz Festival a First for Brazil

BY LEONARD FEATHER

SAO PAULO, Brazil—Jazz, with which Brazilian music has so often been fused during the past 15 years, took a significant step forward here with the presentation of Brazil's first International Jazz Festival.

Held under the auspices of the state of Sao Paulo and its secretary of culture, science and technology (a former jazz trumpeter named Max Feffer), the eight-day series of concerts which ended last week drew unprecedented media coverage. Nationwide live television broadcasts brought the entire festival to an estimated 2 million viewers every night.

Monday it was announced by Paulo Maluf, governor-elect of the state of Sao Paulo, that the festival will be presented again next year.

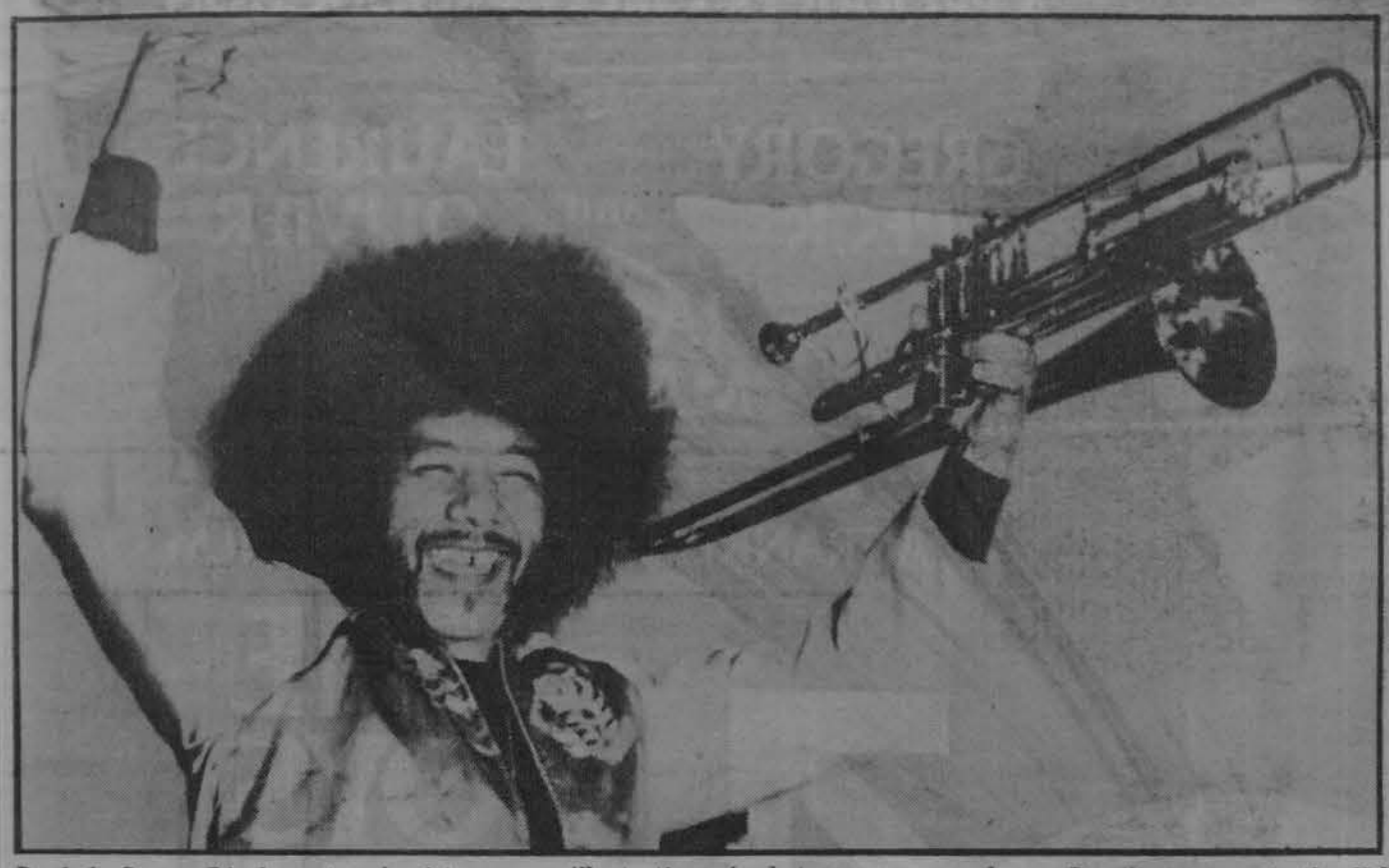
In the course of the 15-concert marathon, the festival presented a dozen American or American-led groups, an equal number of Brazilian combos, and one band from Argentina. Among the participants who came from the United States were Dizzy Gillespie with his quartet, Benny Carter, Chick Corea, George Duke, a college band from the University of Texas and an all-star Jazz at the Philharmonic unit.

Capacity audiences attended many of the shows, which were staged at a 3,500-seat auditorium in Anhembi Park, not far from the center of Sao Paulo.

The festival, which spanned every idiom from mainstream music to jazz/rock, avant-garde and sambas, cost an estimated $450,000, of which $250,000 was recouped at the box office; much of the balance is expected to be recovered through the sale of live recordings made during the concerts.

A detailed report on the festival and the Brazilian jazz scene will appear in Sunday's Calendar.

JAZZ



Raul de Souza, Rio-born trombonist, was an illustration of what goes wrong when a Brazilian moves to the U.S.

THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL AT BRAZIL JAZZ FESTIVAL

BY LEONARD FEATHER

RIO DE JANEIRO—The First International Jazz Festival, held for eight straight days in Sao Paulo, ended the other day amid lively controversy. In at least two respects the event was unique: By most accounts it was the biggest musical event ever staged in South America and unquestionably it was the first jazz festival anywhere to be televised in its entirety.

Those who stayed home to catch the festival on TV or the stereo radio simulcasts were well situated. Instead of a half-hour lull for stage set-ups between acts, they followed the musicians backstage, listened to lively discussions by critics, and to interviews, often bilingual, with the artists. After a week in Sao Paulo, catching the shows in person, I watched the final night on a color set in a hotel room overlooking the Copacabana beach in Rio, less than an hour's flight away.

During the 1960s, Brazilian music was a welcome zephyr that helped to counteract some of the hot air blowing across the American jazz horizon. In the 1970s, American music had a deleterious effect on the sounds south of the border; too many Brazilians are now aping U.S. jazz/rock, pseudo-free jazz and electronic music. In short, we got the best of the bargain.

Our heroes of yesteryear—Antonio Carlos Jobim, Luiz Bonfa, Marcos Valle, Joao Gilberto—were nowhere to be found at the festival; their luminous compositions were seldom heard, and except for a couple of side events shuttled off to smaller rooms near the main auditorium, there was little acknowledgement of the vital role played by the bossa nova in the creation of an inter-American fusion.

The music being created today by the Brazilians, as heard in Sao Paulo's Anhembi Park auditorium, breaks down into four categories. One consists of the authentic, ethnic sounds best demonstrated by a 16-man percussion ensemble whose members are part of a "samba school" led by Djalma Correia. Their impact was somewhat vitiated by the addition of the Swiss-born pianist Patrick Moraz, a former member of the group Yes. Hearing Moraz with his neoclassicisms pitted against the furious onslaught of cross rhythms on the drummers' wild variety of instruments was not unlike tuning in two overlapping radio stations.

The only other music heard in Sao Paulo that reached back into the African rhythmic roots was not heard at the festival, but at a nightclub, the Oba Oba, where a Las Vegas-type show is decorated by a dozen black and beautiful showgirls and by a brilliantly percussive band whose specialties, often with flute and other horn touches, achieved an orgiastic quality that outswung anything I had heard at the festival. As one Carioca (Rio resident) remarked, "This is to Brazilian music what Dixieland is to American jazz; it gets right back to basics."

The second brand of Braziliana shows the extent to which musicians here have been influenced by north-of-the-border sounds. Most of them have been visitors or residents in the United States; several studied at the jazz-oriented Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Sometimes the urge to Americanize produces happy fusions; sometimes it results in a hybrid. A group called Azimuth (heard in the United States with Flora Purim), featuring a saxophonist/flutist named Nivello Ornellas, played "Light as a Feather" agreeably, but occasionally seemed uncertain how Brazilian to remain or how American to become.

The same infirmity of purpose plagued a combo led by Wagner Tiso. Playing piano and accordion, Tiso was backed by a hopelessly unswinging drummer. His saxophonist, playing 10 times as many notes as Benny Carter had used the night before, had 10 times less to say.

The avant-garde was best represented by Egberto Gismonti, whose set reminded us of the enormous diversity among the various regions of this huge country. Starting with a couple of numbers at the piano that suggested he could become the Brazilian Keith Jarrett, Gismonti switched to an eight-stringed guitar. Backed by flute, bass and drums, he played several mysterious, angular melodies with flamenco touches and reflected the influence of the Xingu Indians, whose teachings he says were important to him during the time he spent with them in the Amazon jungle. Gismonti was responsible for some of the festival's most unadulterated moments of true Brazilian beauty.

Scandal erupted with the appearance, on the festival's final night, of a trumpeter named Marcio Montarroyos. His set began agreeably enough in the post-hard-bop style, but soon degenerated into a second-rate drum orgy followed by a chaotic "Composition for Electronic Orchestra," lasting so long that his self-indulgence was suddenly cut short, his plugs were pulled and he was evicted from the stage. Backstage, two critics engaged in a dialogue, for the TV audience, questioning why the group was booked in the first place ("Worst thing we've heard all week," one of them said). This kind of instant analysis, usually reserved in the United States for political speeches, was refreshing in its candor.

The third type of music played by the Brazilians was American contemporary jazz. Victor Assis Brasil, a splended Phil Woods-like saxophonist, did not allow his long U.S. sojourn (five years in Boston, including Berklee) to confuse his values. Using upright bass, drums and acoustic piano, he offered music that seemed firmly implanted in the soil of both countries: the Latin rhythms that are now common parlance in North and South America, and the good old songs-based-on-chords system that still works for so much of the best jazz. His "Love for Sale" was a bristling, driving treatment that never seemed uncertain about its sense of direction.

Equally sure of himself was Helio Delmiro, an all-points eclectic electric guitarist whose set with pianist Luiz Eca was packed with inspired effects, modal touches, and challenging duels with Eca. The latter, a bossa nova veteran, toured the U.S. in the 1960s with his Tamba Four. The pair played everything from "St. Louis Blues" to "One Note Samba."

In a fourth and somewhat amorphous category were the maverick Brazilians, inconsistent and unclassifiable but not untalented. Hermeto Paschoal is the strangest of them all. A stumpy, gnome-like figure almost invisible behind mountains of yellow hair, he began by banging on what looked like the lid of a garbage pail, moving later to more orthodox instruments such as sax, flute and keyboards. Though Paschoal demonstrated his ties to the fundamentals of Northeastern Brazilian music, there were indications that he is a closet progressive rather than a true primitive. Paschoal took part in jam sessions with Chick Corea and John McLaughlin.

Milton Nascimento, long respected as a composer, singer and guitarist, went after some eerie effects with excessive echo. Backed by two drummers and two keyboards, he seemed to be somewhat out of it; the prestigious Jornal do Brasil called his performance "catastrophic."

Big band jazz was scarce at the festival. Paulo Moura led a large orchestra, composed mainly of amateurs (engineers, lawyers, a plastic surgeon) and six professionals. Moura, an erudite black soprano saxophonist and successful studio musician, was showcased in his own engaging arrangement of "Alfie." There were no traces of the samba in his set, which leaned toward bop and Basie. An attempt to re-create Dixieland found the trumpet and clarinet soloists out of their depth.

Raul de Souza, a Rio-born, Berklee trained trombonist, offered an unwitting illustration of what goes wrong when a Brazilian musician moves to the United States (he now lives in Los Angeles). De Souza began pleasantly, playing "Stella by Starlight" and "Corcovado" in tandem with the mature American trombonist Frank Rosolino. The latter then disappeared and De Souza introduced his own combo, imported from Hollywood and displaying all the worst aspects of crossover disco-rock, complete with two undulating girl backups who uttered inane vocal sounds.

This could just as well have been any American group; it lacked any of the individuality for which De Souza had made his name in the first place. I was reminded that of all the Brazilians who have moved to the United States, not one seems to have benefited artistically; on the contrary, they have gone steadily downhill while making material success their main goal. Sergio Mendes will never duplicate the incandescent beauty of his original Brasil '65.

American musicians had more to learn by going to Brazil in the 1960s than Brazilians had to gain musically by coming north. Whether this historical trend can be reversed is debatable, a point I'll take up when the American contributions to the festival are surveyed here next week. □

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JAZZ REVIEW

Etta Jones, Houston Person Partnered

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz singers, particularly the female of the species, are an all but obsolete breed. Potential new recruits are quickly sidetracked into channels that are deemed more "commercial." If only for this reason we should be grateful that artists like Etta Jones are still around, keeping the faith.

Wednesday evening, opening at the Parisian Room, Jones was presented with an offhandedness that bordered on discourtesy. She made her first appearance, unannounced, in the second chorus of "I'm in the Mood for Love," played by a trio under the direction of Houston Person, who shares billing with her.

Her set was too short, but long enough to offer renewed evidence of her strong, vibrant sound and unique manner of making an occasional note skip upward a few tones before landing back where it belonged.

Some of her melodic twists bring Billie Holiday to mind; so does her tendency (sometimes overused) to lag behind the beat until the trio is a bar or two ahead of her.

The Jones repertoire, at least during the set heard, consisted entirely of songs of the 1930s. An occasional blues or a bossa nova would add needed variety. So would her own 1960 hit "Don't Go to Strangers." But as has often been the case with jazz singers, the personal touch she brings to the material compensates for its antiquity.

Houston Person is a warm-toned, straight-ahead tenor saxophonist whose renditions of "Skylark," "Corcovado" and other standards are typical of their genre, with Sonny Phillips at the organ and Hank Brown on drums. Phillips' attempt to play a couple of solos entirely with the foot pedals was hampered by distorted sound.

Though the partnership of Jones and Person has been on the road for five years, it could use some reorganization in order to present Etta Jones in a manner more befitting to her talent. The show closes Oct. 15.

10/9

MUSIC REVIEW

Cal Tjader at Marina Bistro

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Everything must change, we are told; nothing stays the same. The rule is especially applicable to the world of music, yet even here there are exceptions, as the case of Cal Tjader aptly exemplifies.

Heard over the weekend at the Marina Bistro supper club, Tjader offered substantially the same diet of miscellaneous Latin rhythms and jazz that has been his hallmark since he formed his original combo in San Francisco almost a quarter-century ago.

Tjader plays the vibraphone in a controlled, unpretentious manner, with jazz inflections that show the influence of Milt Jackson. As a leader, he knows how to diversify his library in a manner calculated to retain the jazz audience while holding onto adherents of the bossa nova, even the cha-cha and the mambo.

Nothing happens that is spectacular or innovative; more often soothing is the fitting adjective. Occasionally Tjader leaves the vibes and accentuates the Latin beat on timbales or cow bells.

During most of the set, the conga drums of Pancho Sanchez are a powerful element, but around the halfway mark there is a conga-free interlude devoted to ungarnished 4/4 jazz, with propulsive ad libbing by Clare Fischer on keyboards and Rob Fisher (no relation) on bass. Completing the group is drummer Vince Lateano.

Clare Fischer, a versatile composer/arranger who contributes some of the combo's most attractive original works, was featured in a solo devoted, most effectively, to Chopin's Prelude No. 5 (updated a couple of years ago by Barry Manilow as "Could It Be Magic").

Actually the only change notable at the Bistro was in the room itself. Since the jazz policy was inaugurated in August, the bandstand has been shifted from the end to the center of the room, making for better visibility and audibility. With its commendable cuisine and music policy, this should become one of the Southland's few genuine jazz supper clubs.

Joe Farrell opens at the Bistro Tuesday for a five-day run. Tjader will be back in town Nov. 7 for a week at Concerts by the Sea.

AT LAINIE'S ROOM

Esther Phillips at Playboy Club

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Esther Phillips is back in town. That tart, vinegary voice used to draw crowds to Memory Lane; now she is bringing her totally individual timbre and style to a somewhat different audience at Lainie's Room in the Playboy Club. Tuesday night she fascinated the keyholders with a program devoted to four types of material:

—Something old: Lennon and McCartney, impressed with her acidulously sensuous reworking of "And I Love Him," invited her to appear with the Beatles on the BBC in 1965. The song remains a staple of her act.

—Something new: In her latest album are several songs that seem tailor-made for her sardonic readings: "Pie in the Sky," "The Man Ain't Ready" and "There You Go Again." Incorporated in this last item is a standard, "Stormy Weather," that would startle and delight Harold Arlen.

—Something borrowed: Phillips was often likened to Dinah Washington, though today she is unmistakably herself. Her show opens with the song that was Washington's big hit, "What a Difference a Day Makes."

—Something blue: Nobody else on the present-day scene can do to the blues what Phillips does in her version of the quaintly risque "Long John." As a bonus she takes over at the piano to play a couple of choruses in slashingly rhythmic indigo chords.

For the rest of the show it's Henry Cain at the keyboard —adequate, but no Esther Phillips. Wes Blackman supplies some evocative guitar obbligatos. Bill Upchurch on bass and William (Bubba) Bryant on drums complete one of the best of her recent accompanying units.

Esther Phillips has paid some heavy dues in a long, up-and-down career. The evidence at Lainie's Room indicates that she is headed for another peak. She cannot be classified as a jazz, pop, blues or soul singer; only as the possessor of one of the most individual and compelling sounds you are ever likely to hear. You have until Oct. 21 to judge for yourself.

New Jazz Heroes

JAZZ, From L4

hard-bop style, but soon degenerated into a second-rate drum orgy followed by a chaotic "Composition for Electronic Orchestra," lasting so long that his self-indulgence was suddenly cut short, his plugs were pulled and he was evicted from the stage. Backstage, two critics engaged in a dialogue, for the TV audience, questioning why the group was booked in the first place ("worst thing we've heard all week," one of them said). This kind of instant analysis, usually reserved in the United States for political speeches, was refreshing in its candor.

The third type of music played by the Brazilians was American contemporary jazz. Victor Assis Brasil, a splendid Phil Woods-like saxophonist, did not allow his long U.S. sojourn (five years in Boston, including Berklee) to confuse his values. Using upright bass, drums and acoustic piano, he offered music that seemed firmly implanted in the soil of both countries: the Latin rhythms that are now common parlance in North and South America, and the good old songs-based-on-chords system that still works for so much of the best jazz. His "Love for Sale" was a bristling, driving treatment that never seemed uncertain about its sense of direction.

In a fourth and somewhat amorphous category were the maverick Brazilians, inconsistent and unclassifiable but not untalented. Hermeto Paschoal is the strangest of them all. A stumpy, gnome-like figure almost invisible behind mountains of yellow hair, he began by banging on what looked like the lid of a garbage pail, moving later to more orthodox instruments such as sax, flute and keyboards. Though Paschoal demonstrated his ties to the fundamentals of Northeastern Brazilian music, there were indications that he is a closet progressive rather than a true primitive. Paschoal took part in jam sessions with Chick Corea and John McLaughlin.

Milton Nascimento, long respected as a composer, singer and guitarist, went after some eerie effects with excessive echo. Backed by two drummers and two keyboards, he seemed to be somewhat out of it; the prestigious Jornal Do Brasil called his performance "catastrophic."

Big-band jazz was scarce at the festival. Paulo Moura led a large orchestra, composed mainly of amateurs (engineers, lawyers, a plastic surgon) and six professionals. Moura, an erudite black soprano saxophonist and successful studio musician, was showcased in his own engaging arrangement of "Alfie." There were no traces of the samba in his set, which leaned toward bop and Basie. An attempt to recreate Dixieland found the trumpet and clarinet soloists out of their depth.

Raul de Souza, a Rio-born, Berklee-trained trombonist, offered an unwitting illustration of what goes wrong when a Brazilian musician moves to the United States. (He now lives in Los Angeles.) De Souza began pleasantly, playing "Stella By Starlight" and "Corcovado" in tandem with mature American trombonist Frank Rosolino. The latter then disappeared and de Souza introduced his own combo, imported from Hollywood and displaying all the worst aspects of cross-over-disco-rock, complete with two undulating girl backups who uttered inane vocal sounds.

This could just as well have been any American group; it lacked any of the individuality for which de Souza had made his name in the first place. I was reminded that of all the Brazilians who have moved to the United States, not one seems to have benefited artistically; on the contrary, they have gone steadily downhill while making material success their main goal.

American musicians had more to learn by going to Brazil in the 1960s than Brazilians had to gain musically by coming north. Whether this historical trend can be reversed is debatable.

Oct. 8

JAZZ

RIO FESTIVAL: THE BEAT GOES ON

BY LEONARD FEATHER

RIO DE JANEIRO—The world may be growing smaller, yet the distances still lend confusion to the view. Among the dozen American attractions seen at Sao Paulo's First International Jazz Festival, six or seven offered a fair cross section of the present U.S. jazz scene, from Ahmad Jamal to Taj Mahal. The others were artists who didn't quite belong here, or in a couple of cases simply didn't rate a place in any consequential musical event.

The Brazilian audiences who caught the shows in person (as I did for seven nights) or on national TV (as I did on the eighth and last night) may well have drawn a slightly distorted impression of what constitutes jazz. The most horrendous example was the choice of a woman singer.

Sarah Vaughan was not present, though the beautiful LP of Brazilian songs she cut in Rio a year ago would have made her a logical choice. Also absent were Ella, Carmen, Esther, Cleo and many others less well-known but truly representative of their craft. Instead, we were offered the egregious Etta James, whose R&B background established her in the 1950s with such hits as "Good Rockin' Daddy" and "Roll With Me, Henry." Her group provided a leaden background for one of the most raucous displays of vocal and visual vulgarity it has ever been my burden to witness.

A Rio critic, commenting on a press release that likened Ms. James to Mahalia Jackson, observed that Mahalia's body must be spinning in the grave on being subjected to such a comparison.

It is difficult to say which was more depressing, Etta James' screaming or the reaction to her, for it is true that the crowd went ape over these excesses. It seemed likely that she would prove a hard act to follow, yet happily, Al Jarreau, who closed, was rewarded with a wild ovation.

Jarreau suffered from balance problems that combined with his offhand diction to make the lyrics incomprehensible even for those in the crowd who understood English. His vocalese effects, however, particularly the percussion imitations, were delightful, and the audience flipped along with him as he persuaded his vocal cords to turn somersaults.

For Jarreau, Chick Corea, Benny Carter and several other Americans, it was a first visit to this jazz-hungry country. Carter, along with Dizzy Gillespie and others, kicked off this world series by giving a free concert at a Sao Paulo subway station entrance for a very youthful audience, an event that found them both on the next evening's television news.

To the hipper Brazilian fans in the Anhembi concert hall, for many of whom Carter had been a legendary name, his elegant alto sax was a revelation, and his hastily assembled backup group an occasion for special pride, consisting as it did of Nelson Ayres (pronounced Irish), a capable Brazilian pianist; Zeca Assumpcao on bass, and an American-born-but-Rio-based drummer, Ted Moore.

Carter closed with "Take the A Train." As soon as the stage had been reset, the University of Texas at Arlington Jazz Band opened its set with "Take the A Train." Twenty minutes later, as part of this band's dreary, corny Swing Era medley, the tune was played yet a third time.

Poor programming aside, why was this band selected to represent American big band music, or college band jazz? There are many fine college outfits, but this one, with its often abysmal arrangements and accurate yet uninspired playing, was by no means typical. One wonders who paid the huge transportation expenses, and how little more it might have cost to bring, say, the Akiyoshi/Tabackin band, or Thad Jones and Mel Lewis.

R&B singer Etta James in Rio de Janeiro . . . "a raucous display of vocal and visual vulgarity."

The appearance of Jazz at the Philharmonic, assembled by Norman Granz, took the audience to the nitty gritty of 200-proof jazz. It is odd that JATP has not toured the United States since 1957 but is still well-known overseas. The reactions were enthusiastic, especially to Milt Jackson playing Jobim's "Wave," and to a delicate outlining by pianist Jimmy Rowles of Fats Waller's "Jitterbug Waltz." The blues tunes and ballads medleys were similar reminders of the value of maturity as Roy Eldridge and Sweets Edison on trumpets, Zoot Sims on tenor sax, Ray Brown on bass, drummer Mickey Roker (the baby of the band at 46) and Rowles all enchanted the audience during a far too short set.

The catholicity of the Brazilians' taste was illustrated in the reaction to a relatively unknown pair, Larry Coryell and Philip Catherine. Though their guitars were slightly amplified, this was essentially an acoustic set ranging from quasi-classical original works to "Father

Christmas" (dedicated to Charles Mingus), and "Blues in Sao Paulo" (touches of latter-day Reinhardt as Coryell indicated the direction Django might have taken if he were still around). Coryell, American, and Catherine, an Anglo-Belgian, are a sensitive, constantly creative and mutually stimulating pair. Their relatively low-key performance was greeted with roaring calls for an encore.

Ahmad Jamal, backed by bass, drums and percussion, played contemporary piano in a style variously delicate and demonstrative. Though he included his old hit "Poinciana," most of the tunes were originals; clean, crisp, commanding, the left hand often going into suspenseful contrapuntal effects.

Jamal is one of a kind and knows it; backstage, asked by a TV interviewer who were his influences, he replied: "I am my own influence. Other people don't influence me; I influence *them*."

Stan Getz was perhaps the American best known to the locals, on the strength of his apocalyptic 1962 "Jazz Samba" album; but Getz, who has visited Brazil four times since then, seemed determined not to be branded with the bossa nova image. Fans who came to hear "Desafinado," "One Note Samba" and "The Girl from Ipanema" were left waiting; in fact, it was not until his encore that he played a Brazilian tune, Milton Nascimento's "Cancao do Sol."

Finally, there was John McLaughlin. Before his performance, McLaughlin talked loftily to a woman TV interviewer about music as a bridge between cultures. He spoke about his various shifts of musical direction in a manner that suggested the handing down of a sermon from the top of Corcovado.

He came onstage at 11:30. The first 35 minutes were devoted to two drone-based works, with an occasional shift into a peri-

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JAZZ

In Sao Paulo, the Music Was Lively—And so Were the Brazilians

By Leonard Feather
Los Angeles Times

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil—The First International Jazz Festival, held for eight straight days in Sao Paulo, ended the week before last amid lively controversy. In at least two respects the event was unique: By most accounts it was the biggest musical event ever staged in South America, and unquestionably it was the first jazz festival anywhere in the world to be televised in its entirety.

Those who stayed home to catch the TV shows, or the stereo radio simulcasts, were well situated. Instead of a half-hour lull for stage set-ups between acts, they followed the musicians backstage, listened to lively discussions by critics, and to interviews, often bilingual, with the artists. After a week in Sao Paulo, catching the shows in person, I watched the final night on a color set in a hotel room overlooking the Copacabana beach in Rio, less than an hour's flight away.

During the 1960s, Brazilian music was a welcome zephyr that helped to counteract some of the hot air blowing across the American jazz horizon. In the 1970s, American music had a deleterious effect on the sounds south of the border; too many Brazilians are now aping U.S. jazz-rock, pseudo-free jazz and electronic music. In short, we got the best of the bargain.

See JAZZ, L4, Col. 1

THE WASHINGTON POST
L4 *Sunday, October 1, 1978*

8 Days in Sao Paolo

JAZZ, From L1

Our heroes of yesteryear—Antonio Carlos Jobim, Luiz Bonfa, Marcos Valle, Joao Gilberto —were nowhere to be found at the festival; their luminous compositions were seldom heard, and except for a couple of side events shuttled off to smaller rooms near the main auditorium, there was little acknowledgment of the vital role played by the bossa nova in the creation of an inter-American fusion.

The music being created today by the Brazilians, as heard in Sao Paulo's Anhembi Park auditorium, breaks down into four categories. One consists of the authentic, ethnic sounds best demonstrated by a 16-man percussion ensemble whose members are part of a "samba school" led by Djalma Correia. Their impact was somewhat vitiated by the addition of Swiss-born pianist Patrick Moraz, a former member of the group Yes. Hearing Moraz with his neo-classicisms pitted against the furious onslaught of cross rhythms on the drummers' wild variety of instruments was not unlike tuning in two overlapping radio stations.

The only other music heard in Sao Paulo that reached back into the African rhythmic roots was not heard at the festival, but at a night club, the Oba Oba, where a Las Vegas-type show is decorated by a dozen black and beautiful show girls and by a brilliantly percussive band whose specialties, often with flute and other horn touches, achieved an orgiastic quality that outswung anything I had heard at the festival. As one Carioca (Rio resident) remarked: "This is to Brazilian music what Dixieland is to American jazz; it gets right back to basics."

The second brand of Braziliana shows the extent to which musicians here have been influenced by north-of-the-border sounds. Most of them have been visitors or residents in the United States; several studied at the jazz-oriented Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Sometimes the urge to Americanize produces happy fusions; sometimes it results in a hybrid. A group called Azimuth (heard in the U.S. with Flora Purim), featuring a saxophonist-flutist named Nivello Ornellas, played "Light as a Feather" agreeably, but occasionally seemed uncertain how Brazilian to remain or how American to become.

The same infirmity of purpose plagued a combo led by Wagner Tiso. Playing piano and accordion, Tiso was backed by a hopelessly unswinging drummer. His saxophonist, playing 10 times as many notes as Benny Carter had used the night before, had 10 times less to say.

The avant-garde was best represented by Egerto Gismonti, whose set reminded us of the enormous diversity among the various regions of this huge country. Starting with a couple of numbers at the piano that suggested he could become the Brazilian Keith Jarrett, Gismonti switched to an eight-stringed guitar. Backed by flute, bass and drums, he played several mysterious, angular original melodies, with flamenco touches and reflecting the influence of the Xingu Indians, whose teachings he says were important to him during the time he spent with them in the Amazon jungle. Gismonti was responsible for some of the festival's most unadulterated moments of true Brazilian beauty.

Scandal erupted with the appearance, on the festival's final night, of a trumpeter named Marcio Montarroyos. His set began agreeably enough in the post-

See JAZZ, L5, Col. 1

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See JAZZ, L5, Col. 1

The Washington Post STYLE Entertainment / Arts SHOW
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1978

This Year Public TV Could Be a Contender

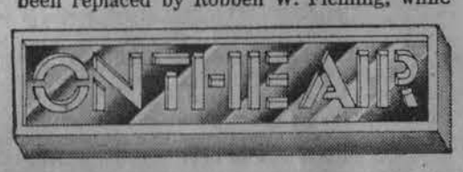
By Tom Shales

LAWRENCE K. GROSSMAN is the president of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). This is not to be confused with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). In fact, however, it is confused with it all the time.

"My mother still doesn't know which I work for, CPB or PBS, or what the difference is," says Grossman at a conference table in his L'Enfant Plaza office. "All she cares about is when she turns on the damn set and sees what's coming out. And what's coming out on public TV is uneven, but it is also often awfully terrific and very exciting."

The new public television season begins today, and Grossman sees it not as the moon, not as the stars, but as another step toward the ideal that for 25 years public television has managed to avoid. Among his reasons for hope are a communications satellite, newly installed in space, which enables PBS to transmit, at a relatively cheap cost, three different programs to its stations at one time.

But Grossman is also encouraged by the fact that Henry Loomis, a holdover from public TV's Cold War of the early '70s, has left his post as president of CPB—the PBS overlord—and been replaced by Robben W. Fleming, while



Newton N. Minow has taken over as PBS chairman. What this means is that the final traces of the Nixon administration and its attitude of containment toward public TV are gone, and that the era of constant territorial bickering between CPB and PBS may be ending.

"Where Loomis has been coming from, and where CPB has been coming from, and what really began in the Nixon years, is a totally local system for public TV," Grossman says. "That's what Loomis said; there should be no national programming, it should all be local, and every once in awhile when something interesting comes up that has national interest, you could fund it.

"Now where *we* are coming from, where I come from and where this system comes from, is that it's very important that stations have their local stuff and their identity and provide a service to their own community. But television is also something else. It's the one national unifying element that we have, and the way to really strengthen your local stuff is to have compelling major programs to draw an audience, to serve as a centerpiece, and then to build on that."

There are a number of compelling major programs on the new PBS schedule. These include a seven-week festival of Eugene O'Neill plays; a new Sunday night series of original or acquired documentaries to include the controversial "California Reich"; a "Cinema Showcase" of 10 recent theatrical features that range from Lina Wertmuller's "Seven Beauties" and "Swept Away" to the muscleman saga "Pumping Iron"; Laurence Olivier, Alan Bates and Malcolm McDowell in Harold Pinter's enig-

See AIR, L2, Col. 1

New on PBS, from the top: Glynn Turman in "Charlie Smith and the Fritter Tree," Laurence Olivier in Harold Pinter's "The Collection," Arnold Schwarzenegger (second on left) in "Pumping Iron," Giancarlo Giannini in "Swept Away," wrestlers in William Shakespeare's "As You Like It" and Gemma Jones in "The Duchess of Duke Street."

Dour Edinburgh, The Gracious Host

A Sober Capital Presents a 'Staggering' 21-Day Festival

By Arthur Holmberg

EDINBURGH IS a beautiful but forbidding city. Every one of its gaunt stone houses seems to evoke the shadow of John Knox, and a harsh climate, an infertile soil, and a particularly virulent form of Calvinism have conditioned the inhabitants to husband their resources carefully. All the more surprising, therefore, that each fall day the city plays gracious host to one of the most important cultural festivals in the world.

For three weeks in early autumn, theater and music hold sway and something akin to joy prevails in an otherwise dour environment. As one of the chief violinists of the Chicago Symphony explained to me, "Edinburgh is the artists' favorite festival because audiences here take music seriously. Salzburg and Bayreuth are for dilettantes and snobs." Some might say soberly rather than seriously; and Peter Diamond, who retires this year after 13 years of distinguished service as the festival's director, once remarked that his greatest and most difficult achievement was to convince at least one Edinburgh restaurant to stay open after 10 p.m.

The sheer number of happenings that occur during the 21 days of the festival is staggering. The official program offered well over 60 different events including concerts, plays, opera, ballet and poetry recitals. In addition, the film

See EDINBURGH, L12, Col. 1

Arthur Holmberg, who is teaching literature at Harvard, writes frequently about the arts.

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By Leonard Feather
Los Angeles Times

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See JAZZ, L4, Col. 1

Nathalie Baye in "The Green Room."

Two New Films Go a Step Beyond

By Alan M. Kriegsman

OF ALL THE arts, film has the strongest power to mirror reality on the one hand and to simulate dreams on the other. Some films do both, of course. The filmmaker will start with a real situation but take it a crucial step beyond; and by pushing mundane desires, hopes or fears to extremes, uncover something new about the human condition.

This is the case with two of the most striking features screened at the 16th New York Film Festival, which runs through Oct. 8 at Lincoln Center. The two pictures—Bertrand Blier's "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs" and Francois Truffaut's "The Green Room"—stand at opposite poles: The Blier is wildly funny, while the

See CROSSCURRENTS, L10, Col. 1

Spinning 'Platinum' to Gold

By Joseph McLellan

CALLING IT 'Platinum' wasn't our idea," said Will Holt (book and lyrics), leaning back in his chair at the Act III restaurant and gazing thoughtfully into the sauce on his lunch ("Is that Bearnaise? It looks Russian to me.")

"Paramount asked us to change it to 'Platinum' after they came in with a major investment," added Gary William Friedman (music). "We were calling it 'Sunset' when we brought it to Buffalo—the idea of a fading movie actress and a fading rock singer going off into the sunset, but Paramount thought people would confuse it with 'Sunset Strip.' When we thought about it for a while, we thought 'Platinum' was a pretty good name.

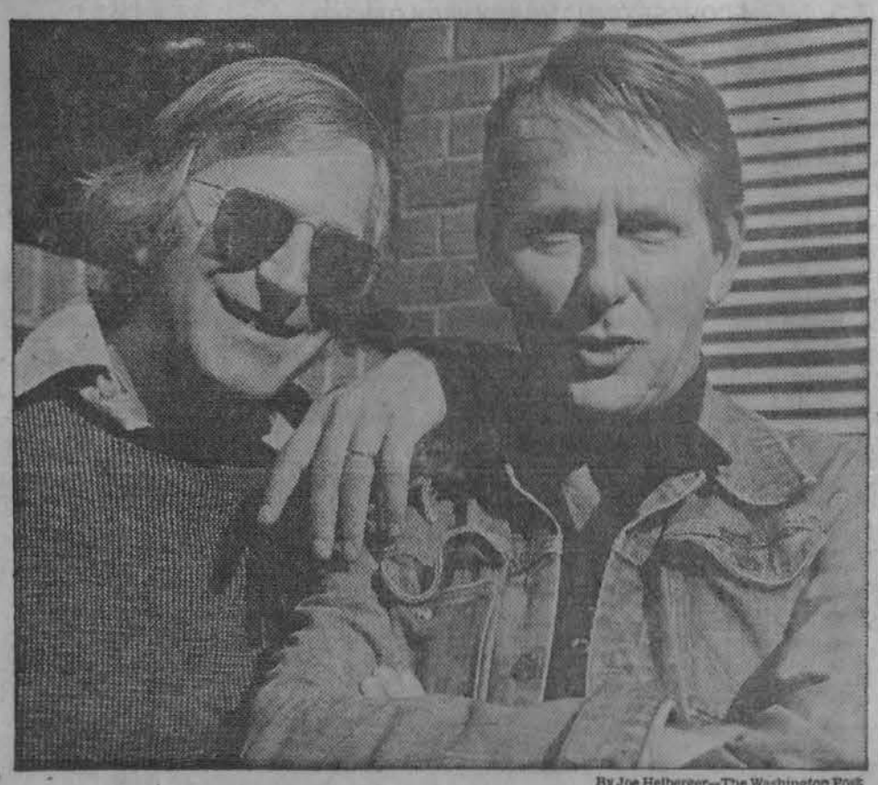
"At first, I wondered whether people who are not in the business would catch the meaning of platinum, but then I thought of my 10-year-old son, Courtney; he listens to the radio all the time and the disc jockeys are always chattering at him about gold and platinum. He didn't have any trouble at all."

For those who lack Courtney Holt's expertise, "Platinum" is the industry jargon applied to a record that has sold a million copies. It is also the post-Buffalo title of the new musical that has just opened at the Kennedy Center Opera House and will go on to New York's Mark Hellinger Theatre (where "My Fair Lady" got its start) on Nov. 12. Holt and Friedman, who have already worked together successfully on "The Me Nobody Knows," have been shaping the show through a variety of changes for the last three years.

Holt and Friedman naturally hope that their original cast album will fulfil the promise of its title, but at the moment they aren't even sure who will record and distribute it.

"One thing is sure," said producer Fritz Holt (no relation to Will), who has been lining up the $1.25 million required to take the show from Buffalo, through Philadelphia and Washington to Broadway, "it won't be recorded by Paramount. They don't make records; there's a company called ABC-Paramount, but it has no connection with the film company. We will have

See PLATINUM, L6, Col. 4



Alexis Smith and Richard Cox (left photo) in "Platinum," a new musical at the Kennedy Center Opera House by Gary William Friedman and Will Holt.

By Joe Heiberger—The Washington Post

MUSIC REVIEW

10/16

Big Sax Sound of the Little Giant

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Johnny Griffin has been here and gone. It is regrettable not only that his visit to Concerts By the Sea was so brief (three nights), but also that apathy or ignorance produced a less-than-full house Friday.

A 50-year-old tenor saxophonist who became an expatriate in 1963, Griffin has been making his first United States tour in 15 years. He has rightly been called "the little giant," a small man with a sound so big on his horn that you expect to see a figure of Dexter Gordon's towering physique.

Griffin is a hard-driving performer with a crackling, energetic sound and the ability to create flawlessly swinging lines that never let up. For openers he tore into "Autumn Leaves," filling the cool night air with boundless enthusiasm and joyful emotion.

Next came Griffin's own impish, angular tune, "A Monk's Dream," named for Thelonius Monk and fitted up with twists and turns and close intervals that recalled the master himself. The opening passage was played by Ronnie Matthews, an unfailingly coherent and incisive pianist.

The apex of the set was reached with another Griffin original, "Soft and Furry," its ominous, feline theme introduced by the astonishing virtuoso bassist, Keith Copeland, playing with a bow in harmony with Griffin's horn. Later a long, tense, unaccompanied interlude by Griffin led into a pizzicato solo by Copeland that established him as surely the most brilliant undiscovered bassist of the year.

Fourth and last in this all-too-brief hour, there was "Blues for Harvey," taken at a spaceship pace with time for drummer Roy Drummond to work out on his own.

Sharing the bill with Griffin was a quintet led by a guitarist named Wilbert Longmire. This sounded like yet another instance of a potentially fine talent being turned into a commercial product, furnished with all the predictable disco cliches and groomed for stardom, even trying to sing.

Longmire would have had a better chance to express himself naturally had he simply sat in with Griffin's group. He might also have learned a little of what jazz is all about, and how to make it swing.

Concerts By the Sea will be closed this week, reopening Oct. 24 with Morgana King.

Noto, Most in Jam of Sams at Donte's

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz has always had its share of artists whose talents have been obscured by circumstances beyond their control. Such is the case with Sam Most and Sam Noto, who have been in town this week recording an album for Xanadu Records, under whose auspices they were presented at Donte's Wednesday evening.

Though they have seen service with name bands (Sam Most with Louie Bellson and Buddy Rich, Noto with Bellson, Basie and Kenton), both men have put in more than their share of time in the stultifying atmosphere of Las Vegas. Justice should demand that the history books document Most's role as the first truly creative jazz flutist. (His credits go back to the early 1950s.) Though his sound may not be "legitimate" by orthodox standards, he is a rhythmically engaging performer whose peppery, witty style may take hold of a set of chord changes and never let go for a half-dozen beautifully constructed choruses.

"I Love You" was Most's tour de force. The other tunes in an energetic, informal hour-long set were "Star Eyes," "But Not for Me" and a blues. In all of these, Sam Noto reminded the audience that he is not to be discounted as a jazz artist, even though his scene nowadays is the commercial music world of Toronto. His sound is clear and strong, his style cast in the Clifford Brown mold. If he were free to play jazz full time, he might well develop into a major force on the horn.

The accompanying rhythm section comprised three men similarly deserving of greater recognition. Pianist Dolo Coker, a bebopper of the Bud Powell school, knows the value of understatement, often holding his considerable technique in reserve. Monty Budwig is everybody's dependable bassist, supple and swinging.

Frank Butler pulled off a coup during the closing minutes. Working under a handicap—his cymbals had just been stolen—he created a magically subtle solo playing on the snares with his bare hands. He is conceivably the most underrated drummer in Los Angeles.

Coming next week: a two-night celebration of Donte's 12th anniversary, with Clark Terry Monday and Pete Jolly Tuesday.

Whatever mishaps overcame him, accidental or self-imposed, Charles eventually dealt with them in a manner that reflected his capacity for overcoming and for self-discipline. At 15 he was tooling down the streets on a motorcycle, scaring everybody but himself. In later years his knowledge of engineering was so keen that he could land his private plane should something happen to the pilot.

The forces that shaped his musical tastes in the early years were by no means limited to the gospel and blues with which he first became nationally identified. He listened to the black and white swing bands on radio remotes; Artie Shaw inspired him to take up the clarinet. He became a hillbilly fan ("I can't recall a single Saturday night . . . when I didn't listen to the Grand Old Opry") and a jazz student who idolized Art Tatum, Earl Hines and Teddy Wilson; but Nat King Cole was his main man in the shaping of his early career. (This was after he fled to Seattle because a friend, inspecting a map, told him it was the farthest place in the country from Florida.) Charles sang and played so much like his hero that his first records, made in Los Angeles in 1949, find him leading a Cole-type trio (piano, guitar, bass) in material that recalled Cole and a similar trio led by Charles Brown.

In Seattle he wrote arrangements for big bands, an art he had begun to develop at the age of 14, dictating the parts note by note for each musician. He even showed his arranging methods to an aspiring teen-ager named Quincy Jones.

It was in Seattle that he began fooling with drugs. Smoking grass felt good; two or three months later he was shooting heroin, but he denies that grass leads to heroin: "I know too many people who have lived long, productive lives smoking grass every day—and never done anything else. I've always liked those counterarguments which show you that milk leads to heroin, since all addicts at one time drank milk."

He is cool and remorseless in discussing his junkie years. After a couple of arrests, with the threat of jail hanging over him, he decided to kick cold turkey. "I can't say that kicking was a nightmare . . . it was harder for me to give up cigarettes." Nowadays he leads an addiction-free life: "I dig pot. I like a good smoke, just like I enjoy the taste of gin, but if my days pass and I can't have either, I ain't going nuts. It's not like missing a fix . . . gin lubricates me. Reefer mellows me. And between the two of them and some strong, black coffee, I perk along just fine."

Charles is no less candid in discussing his insatiable sex life. He deals with the accessibility of some of the Raeletts over the years. A woman who entangled him with one of two headlined paternity suits was the attractive mother of a teen-aged Raelett.

"I had a child with Louise, I had a child with Margie (Hendrix), I had three with my wife Bea," he says, "and there are four other times when I fathered kids." He grants that the extramarital affairs, the paternity suits, the dope addiction and his constant traveling hardly qualified him as the ideal husband. "I have to blame myself," he says, "for 80 or 85% of the damage to our marriage."

Despite the sex, dope and abundant four-letter words, this is less a sensationalist tome than an unsparingly personal document, told in a style that bears a striking resemblance to Ray Charles sitting around with close friends rapping.

"Brother Ray" falls short in only one respect: there is a certain lack of analysis of the musical components that went into the process of making him a star. For example, an intriguing section tells how Charles, at 18, becomes the only black in a country and western band. ("You might think that by working in such a group I'd encounter all kinds of nasty crap—tomatoes being thrown at me, folks making fun of the blind nigger trying to play white music. But I'm here to tell you that it just ain't so. I was accepted and applauded along with everyone else.") A little more of the musical facts of such phases, and a fuller explanation of the route that took him from Nat Cole imitator to influential original, would have been welcome.

Still, there is very little we fail to learn about Charles as man and musician. Because of his utter frankness we see him, in his bandleader role, as something of a testy martinet, not always popular with his sidemen. His philosophy leans to the conservative: after praising Dr. Martin Luther King, he says: "Militancy doesn't get you far . . . It can even be counterproductive . . . . (but) I could never tell anyone not to be angry. The militants of the '60s had their limitations, but they also had their purpose."

He is against welfare, and a firm believer in the work ethic: "I believe that hard work and good luck can still do the trick in America. If taxes don't eat you up or the unions don't drive you mad, a musician can make a decent living by keeping his nose to the grindstone and playing what he thinks is right."

A strange, contradictory, brilliant man, a self-described loner, Ray Charles emerges from these pages almost larger than life. This starkly emotional book ranks high among the musical biographies that have proliferated in the past 15 years. Picked as an alternate selection of the Literary Guild, it has already gone into a second printing.

If they gave Grammy awards for books by musicians, "Brother Ray" would be a certain winner next year.

□

While I was in Sao Paulo, gremlins crept into my Sept. 17 article and the Milestone Jazzstars (McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter, Sonny Rollins), whom I had called "a nonfusion, nonelectric jazz group," became a "nonfusion, electric jazz group." My apologies to these fine nonelectric musicians, and to anyone who may have been confused by reading the typo. □

LETTERS

Sao Paulo, Brazil, and note that the headline of the report (Calendar, Oct. 8) by Leonard Feather erroneously referred to this event as taking place in Rio de Janeiro instead of in Sao Paulo. Also, the information under the accompanying Etta James picture mentioned her appearance at the festival as taking place in Rio instead of in Sao Paulo. Since the rivalry of city pride between Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro is at least as intense as between L.A. and San Francisco, this mistake in the headline and the photo caption should be brought to the attention of your readers.

HAROLD JOVIEN
Los Angeles

'STAR' IS BORN

While it is sometimes hard for me to be objective about anything regarding "Star Trek," it seemed to me that Wayne Warga's story (Calendar, Oct. 15) was well written with great care for accuracy. Unfortunately, Harold Livingston was not listed as co-writer of the "Star Trek" motion picture. I should have made it very clear that I was only the co-writer of the film and my only excuse is the brevity of the interview covering many subjects.

GENE RODDENBERRY
Hollywood

ANIMATED REBUTTAL

Three times in Chuck Champlin Jr.'s article on Ralph Bakshi's animation of the Tolkien Trilogy (View, Aug. 24) Bakshi is credited with bringing about a new style or technique to animation. Here is one quote: "There's the new style of ani-

SAO JAZZ NOTES

Recently I attended the jazz festival in

10/15

JAZZ

BROTHER RAY CHARLES: HE TELLS IT AS IT REALLY WAS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

If ever there was a musician whose life and hard times qualified him as a subject for an intriguing autobiography, Ray Charles would have to be the man.

All the ingredients are there. Born black and poor in the segregated South of the 1930s, Charles at 5 stood by helplessly while his brother, 4, drowned in an outdoor washtub. During the next two years, he gradually lost his vision.

These scenes, and others better known that eventually brought him to a position of eminence in black show business in the 1950s and worldwide in the '60s, all have been dealt with, somewhat superficially, in conventional magazine articles, during most of which Charles, a very private man, tended to hold back.

Now the whole story has been told in "Brother Ray: Ray Charles' Own Story" (Dial Press: $9.95). The medium is a white 34-year-old jazz fan from Dallas named David Ritz, who shares the by-line with Charles.

The story of Ritz's campaign to land the assignment is a fascinating example of perseverance that paid off. "I knew this was a book that had to be written," says Ritz, "but I couldn't even get near Ray—not even near his manager, Joe Adams.

"I kept reminding Dallas musicians who worked with Ray, mainly saxophonists David Newman and James Clay, to put a bug in Ray's ear. Ray never accepted my phone calls. I sent him a long letter, but it only reached Joe Adams. Then I spent a lot of money sending long telegrams to Ray in Braille, which I figured would *have* to reach him.

"Adams offered to see me; I came to Los Angeles, then had to wait five days. Adams wanted to see everything I'd ever written, and insisted I make a tape telling Ray why I wanted to do the book. Ray heard it, then agreed to talk to me and finally said, 'Let's go,' but from the beginning of my campaign until the signing of the contract a year elapsed.

"I spent another year interviewing him, and three months visiting Greenville, Fla., where he was raised, and the school for the blind he attended in St. Augustine, Fla.

"I had long passages of my manuscript transcribed into Braille. Ray would go over them, making innumerable changes. He knew exactly which nuances sounded right, which seemed too white, how much profanity to leave in, how to make it really sound like Ray Charles. He is a brilliant man with a rapierlike mind."

The book reflects these painstaking efforts. Charles comes through as a man devoid of self-pity, never trying to explain away his deficiencies. It would have been easier to write the story of a victim drowning in his own tears. There was plenty to cry about: He had no father to speak of, lost his sight at 7 and his mother at 14, scuffled for work in Jacksonville and starved in Orlando, spent 17 years as a junkie.

PHOTO BY JACK CASPARY

Ray Charles and David Ritz work on "Brother Ray: Ray Charles' Own Story."

10/22/78

JAZZ

COMMITTED VOICE OF AL JARREAU

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Recently, in reviewing a performance by a jazz singer, I observed that this seemed to be a dying breed, and that potential newcomers to the jazz vocal world were being steered away from it by producers and others whose concerns were commercial rather than aesthetic.

Clearly, though, there are exceptions to this rule, among whom none is more conspicuous at present than Al Jarreau. With his latest album, "All Fly Home" (Warner Bros. BSK 3229) taking off like a moon shot and already past the 200,000 mark, Jarreau has become the symbol of the committed artist in this area who, by staying with his beliefs, achieves the desired results in both music and dollars.

Recalling his introduction to the world of jazz, Jarreau said, "I listened to music that sounded good to me, that felt good, and decided this was what I wanted to do. After a while, though, I became conscious of various attitudes toward this music, and certain attitudes it had engendered.

"There were some elitist attitudes, some supremacy attitudes, and a feeling among jazz people that they had something very special going on, something that very few people could appreciate or get into. Now there was a grain of truth to this, but on the other hand they tended to push a lot of people away by making them think they couldn't get into it. Some were turned off because they felt that this attitude among jazz people was kind of supercilious," he said.

"Although I began to sense this undercurrent of diverse reactions and postures, my own thoughts at the same time were really quite basic: I dug the music. It was as simple as that. Various opinions were developing in the community, but it really didn't matter to me, because I was doing it, believing in it, and was glad to accept whatever category or label they put on me."

"Who," I asked, "were the real jazz singers who were meaningful to you at that time?"

"Mainly people like Joe Williams, Jon Hendricks, Ella Fitzgerald. Carmen McRae was emerging—this was in

Al Jarreau: "I just do what I do, and whatever they label me, I'll just keep on doing it."

the middle or late '50s. Billy Eckstine, Sarah Vaughan, of course; Mel Torme. People of that ilk were the first I thought of as jazz singers, though there were others skirting around the edges. Maybe Frankie Laine, perhaps Nellie Lutcher; the list grows pretty long."

"Obviously you consider yourself a jazz singer; But have any of the people associated with you at the business end advised you against identifying with jazz?"

"Oh, I've had all kinds of advice from several quarters about considering myself part of jazz, or allowing others to classify me as part of that scene. My feelings are very deep, though, and they go far beyond any misgivings I might have about losing out in popularity, or financially, by associating myself with the jazz label. To me, the idea of deliberately disassociating yourself is ugly, primitive, even insidious. So I fight it all the time.

"It's not that I am that much concerned about labels; I just do what I do, and whatever they call me, I'll keep right on doing it."

Jarreau's analysis of what constitutes a jazz singer corresponds with the views of most musicologists who have dealt with this thorny question. He agrees that an improvisational attitude is one of the essentials; that a certain emotional commitment is called for; and that you have to master your horn—which in the case of a singer simply means your vocal chops, your technique.

"These factors, combined with the desire, the daring and bravado, that enable you to step out there and try something new and different that expresses whatever you feel—the sense that this moment the performance is different from the way you did it last night—all these facets together constitute the essence of a jazz artist, vocal or instrumental," said Jarreau.

"In my case, I also use some phrasing that is specifically associated with jazz, and then I like to scat in those wordless syllables that have been associated with jazz almost since the beginning."

He agrees that the artist's instrumental setting may determine whether he or she sounds like a jazz singer during any given performance. "Context has a lot to do with it. If you put yourself in the context of certain rhythm and blues concepts and get a lot of R&B radio play, like Stevie Wonder or Aretha Franklin, then you are classified as an R&B rather than a jazz singer. But taking into consideration the depth and sensitivity of feeling, I have to consider Stevie and Aretha, and yes, Roberta Flack, as jazz singers of a sort."

Would he advise young singers coming up not to worry about being stuck with the jazz label? "I sure would. If you are a jewelry maker, a watchmaker, and you enjoy a certain kind of handicraft, I don't think it matters that someone later puts the label of Bulova or Wittnauer on the product you have created. That's all after the fact."

"How do you explain someone like Bill Henderson? He is a jazz singer if ever there was one, but he has never quite made it commercially on records. Is it just a matter of luck?"

"Luck is always a factor, although by your own planning you may make some of your own luck, good or bad. Bill Henderson truly has the gift, and there's no reason in the world why he shouldn't be happening as one of the contemporary male singers. But the market isn't making much room for Bill Henderson—or Sarah Vaughan, for that matter.

"The music that is making it today is not just swing any more; it's not that straight-ahead four-beat kind of sound. Bill Henderson does that beautifully; but the kinds of people being considered jazz people on the contemporary market are really involved in fusion."

The fusion elements in his own albums, Jarreau rightly points out, have been central to his success. His self-examination offers a cogent summary of the formula that has brought him to his present plateau:

"I've maintained a lot of characteristics that are central to the core of jazz. At the same time, all this other music going on around me has been an influence. At various times I sense a number of other forces driving me: I feel some African things, which are the roots of jazz. I find myself doing straight-ahead personalizations of what I believe to be the root African sound.

"All these characteristics put together are the things that make me whatever I am; they are the elements I'm fond of in music. But the jazz attitude, the desire to be here and now, to let loose my feelings of the moment, that's the real heart of it all.

"I've never been afraid of that word. In fact, I can't remember when I haven't been flattered to be called a jazz singer and to be welcomed into the company of people who have earned that badge of distinction. They are the greatest. so for me to be linked with them—how could I ask for more?" □

10/22 L.A. TIMES

JAZZ BRIEFS

"GREEN DOLPHIN STREET." Sonny Rollins. Quintessence QJ 5181. This is one of a series of 16 albums of jazz reissues for which material was drawn from the catalogues of several labels—in this instance Impulse. Rollins' tenor, then as now, was a surging central force on the contemporary jazz scene. In addition to a long workout on the title song, there are a calypso standard, "Hold 'em Joe," a brief treatment of "Blue Room" and an oblique, melody-avoiding "Three Little Words."

Contrary to the implication of the liner notes, there are no "pianoless trio" tracks; all the above feature pianist Ray Bryant, drummer Mickey Roker and bassist Walter Booker. Moreover, on "Alfie's Theme" (from the movie, for which Rollins composed and recorded the score in England in 1965), the guitarist, pianist and large accompanying orchestra are all unidentified. These details aside, the album makes available again, at a budget price, some important music from a potently energetic phase in Rollins' evolution.

Other names in Quintessence series are Berigan, Basie, Corea, Ellington, Hawkins, Hodges, Mingus, Rich, Sims and Waller. —LEONARD FEATHER

"HIGHWAY ONE." Bobby Hutcherson. Columbia JC 35550. Despite the presence of strings or a horn section on a couple of tracks, this intelligently conceived album never conveys a feeling of having been overproduced. It is yet another illustration of Hutcherson's peerless qualities as a contemporary vibraphonist (and, on two tracks, composer). A central figure is George Cables, whose work as composer and pianist keeps the album on the right track. The only flaw is a needless repetition of the opener, "Secrets of Love," in a second version on the B side with a vocal added by Jessica Cleaves. Good notes by Lee Underwood; also, for musicians, it is fascinating to see the lead sheets of all five compositions reproduced on the sleeve. Hutcherson continues to sell albums while making meaningful music, never selling out. His policy should be an object lesson to the fusion fanatics. —L.F.

MUSIC REVIEW

Carmen McRae Sings It Her Way

10/21

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Carmen McRae is one of a kind. Living through revolutions in vocal styles and songwriting structure, she has survived the attempts of record producers to steer her in "commercial" directions by adapting to these changes.

Presently, in a two-week stint at the Parisian Room, she continued to be her exceptional self, bringing to such songs as "Star Eyes" and "But Beautiful" the burnished, personal timbre and arch turns of phrase that have long been her hallmarks.

There were moments of sublime craftsmanship. At one point she merged a Ray Brown tune called "Parking Lot Blues," which she sang wordlessly, with an ancient Billie Holiday blues. Later came a little-known and most attractive Bobby Troup song, "Away, Away, Away."

The throwaway songs ("A Foggy Day," "Thou Swell"), during which she would demolish two breakneck choruses in 90 seconds, were played for humor as well as speed.

It was not, however, a perfect set. "Trouble Is a Man" brought trouble: first, when she stopped in her tracks to wait for some slight audience noises to simmer down; second, a few bars later when she publicly admonished pianist Don Abney to play slower. (He sounded rubato to me.) On neither occasion was there any need to lose her cool.

Her rhythm section was excellent; Abney is a mature accompanist, bassist Ed Bennett took over the entire background task for two numbers ("I'm a bass freak," said Carmen) and Frank Severino, who has worked with her off and on for years, is happily back at the drums.

As is her custom, McRae moved to the piano to end the set accompanying herself, in "There's No Such Thing as Love" and "Ain't Misbehavin'." Observing the sensitivity of her keyboard work, you realize how much of this schooled musicianship is applied to her singing.

She closes Sunday. On Oct. 31 another of the great survivors, Esther Phillips, will take over for a week.

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DUKE ELLINGTON

By Leonard Feather

WHO IS DUKE ELLINGTON? The question must be asked in the present tense, for although he left us on May 24, 1974, hardly a day goes by without an Ellington medley played at a concert in some corner of the world; scarcely a week passes without an album that includes a tribute of some sort to the man and his legacy. Ellington is with us in many ways: in his compositions, in the touches of Ellingtonia heard in the thousands of performances and compositions that reflect his inspiration; even in Duke Ellington Boulevard, the name recently given to a stretch of West 106th Street in Manhattan where, in a fitting coincidence, I lived for ten years; in the Duke Ellington Cancer Fund; and in the scholarships awarded in his name.

But Duke Ellington is more than a sound recreated or a name preserved and documented. To many of us fortunate enough to have shared part of his years on earth, he is a vital figure, striding magisterially to the keyboard, playing the introductory chorus that we know will lead to a four-bar break followed by the band's entry on "Take The 'A' Train." He is the grandiloquent raconteur who tells us stories, many of them apocryphal, about how he wrote this or that composition, the social or romantic conditions that inspired it. He is the tall, dignified figure who, as the applause mounts and the men begin to put away their instruments, tells us that he loves us madly, and says so not just in English but in every one of the dozens of languages of the countries he visited during the last 41 years of his life.

Edward Kennedy Ellington was an enigmatic man, so deeply involved in the making of his music that nobody was ever able completely to remove the mask, to penetrate the wall he kept between his innermost feelings and even the dearest of his friends and family. I came close when I worked for him, in the great days of the early 1940s when at long last he was beginning to earn respect as a concert artist; and again during the early '50s when the orchestra was in a temporary decline of popularity, though the pace of his activity was as hectic as ever.

Occasionally, when I was alone with him in his office, in hotel rooms, or backstage at concert halls, he might open up with stories about some of the frustrations he had to deal with in his career, or his relationship with sidemen and business associates. Some of these thoughts were forcefully expressed in the kind of language Ellington never allowed the public to hear, since the image he wanted to project was that of an artist and entertainer for whom all was sweetness and light. His semi-autobiographical memoir, *Music Is My Mistress*, published only months before his death, included scarcely a negative word about anyone he had encountered in a career that spanned close to six decades.

By the standards of black society at the turn of the century, the Ellington family was fairly secure. Duke was an only child until he was 16, when his sister Ruth was born. The family lived under modestly comfortable circumstances in Washington, D.C. Born April 29, 1899, Duke was given his nickname by a young friend as a tribute to his elegant bearing.

His father worked as a butler, then during World War I took over a big house on K Street and rented out rooms, working also as a caterer and later as a blueprint maker in the Navy Yard. Duke, raised as a "pampered child, spoiled rotten" (his own words), was extremely close to his parents. He was six or seven when his mother decided he should take piano lessons.

His teacher was a Mrs. Clinkscales. Duke probably was not a good student. He never did take the piano too seriously, he said, because baseball, football, track, and athletics were what the real he-men identified with. Nevertheless, he played his Czerny exercises, learned something about chords and intervals, and won Mrs. Clinkscales' compliments when he played at a church concert; but it was not until his high school days that music came to have much meaning for him.

His main talent, a growing interest during the years at Armstrong High, was for drawing. He entered a poster contest sponsored by the NAACP, and won. Just before leaving Armstrong he was offered a scholarship to the Pratt Institute of Applied Arts in Brooklyn; but fortunately for the music world he turned it down.

Duke took regular music classes with Ernest Amos at high school; soon he decided to investigate the complexities of music more thoroughly with Henry Grant.

According to Grant, Ellington was a very good student who almost from the start of their association grasped the requirements for harmonizing a melody at the piano, for creating a sound that "rang," as he put it, either because it was mellifluously concordant or because it was bizarrely discordant. It was during this period that he built a solid basis in the understanding of theory, harmony, and keyboard technique.

At this point also he discovered ragtime piano and became enthralled with it. In 1916, though still intrigued with drawing, he told a neighbor that he would not take it up as a profession, that he most probably would be a pianist, and that "one of these days I'm gonna be famous."

In Barry Ulanov's book *Duke Ellington* (published in 1946 but still a priceless reference source) Duke was quoted: "Those ragtime pianists sounded so good to me! And they looked so good! I noticed that the left hand was the trick of it...so I developed a showy left hand. I had little but a vague remembrance of those piano lessons in my mind, but I could see that the rag pianists employed more affected fingering than the concert pianists, and that attracted me very much. I hit that fingering hard and somehow it seemed to come natural to me."

Duke's increasingly deft polyrhythms were heard at private house parties, and eventually at a big gathering where James P. Johnson, the reigning ragtime king of the day, played his own famous "Carolina Shout." Duke, who had learned the tune by playing James P.'s piano roll version, followed him, hands leaping impressively

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Leonard Feather is the author of many books and countless articles on jazz and jazz musicians, including the monumental Encyclopedia Of Jazz *(Horizon Press) as well as his monthly Piano Giants Of Jazz column in* Contemporary Keyboard. *His personal association with Duke Ellington, which began in the 1930s, is discussed in more detail in this month's From The Publisher column (see p. 3).* —CK

...of "live."

...n the piano, and, according to wit-...sses, "ran James P. right out of the joint."

Working at the Poodle Dog Cafe, a well known soda fountain establishment, he soon composed his own "Soda Fountain Rag" and played it in every conceivable way, as a one-step, a two-step, a fox-trot, a waltz. He was fast on his way to becoming a local hero. In 1917, leaving high school a few months before graduation, he began to organize a group, with such men as bassist-saxophonist Otto Hardwick and trumpeter Arthur Whetsol, both of whom would remain with him well into the 1930s.

For a while he was one of the five pianists in a huge band led by Russell Wooding, one of the most commercially successful black orchestras in Washington. But Duke wanted more than sideman status. Taking the biggest ad possible in the classified telephone directory, offering his musical catering services, he soon found himself in demand to supply music for prominent white functions as well as black engagements.

Duke was soon doing well enough to move his family to a bigger and better home, to marry his local sweetheart, Edna Thompson, in 1918, and to become the father, the following year, of his only child, Mercer Kennedy Ellington (born March 1919).

It was in 1919 that William Alexander "Sonny" Greer, who was to become an influential force in the Ellington career, arrived in Washington from New Jersey, where he had been playing drums in a trio with Fats Waller. Sonny was as flashy a performer on the drums as young Edward Ellington had become at the keyboard. Joining Duke's coterie of youngsters, he painted fascinating stories for them of the life in glamorous New York. Soon he engineered a chance for Duke to go there, for a strange job playing in a vaudeville show for one Wilbur Sweatman, whose novelty act included playing three clarinets at once.

The job was short-lived. Duke and Sonny scuffled for a while. As Duke said, "We were getting more bored than desperate, until one day I had the luck to find fifteen dollars on the street. Then we had a square meal, got on the train, and went back to Washington to get ourselves together before we tried it again."

It was not long before they tried it again. In the spring of 1923 Fats Waller, only 19 but already a well-established New York professional, had dinner at the Ellington house and convinced him to return to New York. On assurances from Greer, Hardwick, and Whetsol, who had preceded him to the Apple, Duke arrived, but found that a promised job had not materialized. The Washingtonians, as they now called themselves, finally found a little security when Ada Smith, later renowned in Europe as the legendary Bricktop, recommended them for a gig at Barron Wilkins', one of Harlem's high-life spots. Along with banjo player Elmer Snowden, the four men moved into Wilkins'. Snowden was the nominal leader, but Duke organized rehearsals at which both "head" and scored arrangements were devised.

VERYL OAKLAND

Within a few months Ellington and his associates were welcome in Harlem circles. Snowden left, replaced by Freddie Guy, and Duke became the official leader. Soon afterward the group moved downtown to the Hollywood Cafe at 49th and Broadway (later known as the Kentucky Club). It was there, during an engagement that lasted well over three years, that the group began to expand and Ellington was able to develop some of his first important orchestral ideas, in addition to nurturing the solo styles of such gifted youngsters as trumpeter Bubber Miley, trombonist Joseph "Tricky Sam" Nanton, and saxophonist Harry Carney, who joined up in 1927 and remained in the Ellington band until several months after Duke's death, a run of slightly over 47 years.

It was during this downtown period, too, that Ellington made his first records, with an augmented group that enabled him still further to flex his orchestral muscles. He was even hired to write his first revue score, for a show called *Chocolate Kiddies*. Although it never reached Broadway, the show, with several songs Duke had written using lyricist Jo Trent as a collaborator, ran successfully for two years in Germany, featuring Adelaide Hall and Josephine Baker.

One of Duke's closest buddies and major pianistic influences during those early years was Willie "The Lion" Smith. In his book *Music Is My Mistress* he describes his first meeting, when Sonny Greer said to the Lion: "I want you to meet the Duke. He is just a yearling, you know." The Lion invited Duke to sit in for a couple of

Continued on page 36

DUKE ELLINGTON

Continued from page 33

numbers; as Duke recalled, "He was a gladiator at heart.... Anybody who had a reputation as a piano player had to prove it right there and then by sitting down and displaying his artistic wares. And when a cat thought that he was something special, he usually fell into that trap (or, you might say, into the jaws of the Lion) and he always came out with his reputation skinned up, covered with the lacerations of humiliation, because before he got through too many stanzas, the Lion was standing over him, cigar blazing."

According to Ellington, the Lion, who died in 1973, was one of the greatest influences on most of the rising pianists of the day—among them Fats Waller, James P. Johnson, Count Basie, Donald Lambert, Joe Turner, and Sam Ervis; and, Duke added, "of course I swam in it." He pointed out that "even Art Tatum, as wonderful as he was—and I know he was the greatest—showed strong patterns of Willie Smithisms after being exposed to the Lion. For me, the biggest moment at [my] White House birthday dinner in 1969 was when I saw my man, the Lion, sitting there at the concert grand piano with his derby on, playing behind the President of the United States. He is wonderful, and I love him...."

Ellington was not writing much of his own music in the first years, although "Jig Walk," a song from *Chocolate Kiddies*, was included in one of his earliest record dates, as were a couple of other originals. Nor was he often featured as a pianist; even at this early stage, Duke was interested more in extracting every possible tonal coloration from his musicians, and from various combinations of them, than he was with featuring himself at the keyboard.

It was during the Hollywood/Kentucky Club tenure that Ellington was discovered by Irving Mills, a shrewd man-about-music, occasional singer, and song publisher. Mills took over as Ellington's manager, enabling Duke to establish himself extensively on records (for several years the band recorded under a variety of pseudonyms, making different versions of the same tunes for several labels) and eventually engineering the job that was to be pivotal in bringing about national recognition for the orchestra: On December 4, 1927, Duke began an engagement at the Cotton Club, a gangster-owned Harlem rendezvous on Lenox Avenue.

By now the orchestra was enlarged to ten pieces, and there were numerous records already available of original Ellington works that were to endure through the decades: "East St. Louis Toodle-oo" (the band's original radio theme) and *Black And Tan Fantasy*, both collaborations with Bubber Miley; "Birmingham Breakdown," "Hot And Bothered," "Creole Love Call," and "Black Beauty." All were copyrighted in 1927–8. "Black Beauty" is of particular interest, since one of the several versions recorded during this period was an unaccompanied piano solo. Dedicated to the late Florence Mills, one of the most glorified of the early black show business figures, it was a buoyant piece in the post-ragtime tradition, and like many of Ellington's earlier works, it avoided the formularized 32-bar or 12-bar chorus pattern that constituted a basis for so many of the early orchestral jazz records of the day, notably those by Fletcher Henderson's orchestra.

Duke would intersperse minor and major themes, add four-bar interludes, interweave reeds and brass with a degree of complexity that was startling by the standards of its day. It is difficult to estimate the extent to which his piano style and

VERYL OAKLAND

technique dictated the character of his compositions and arrangements. Probably at that point there was a closer relationship than in later years, when his techniques became so refined and sophisticated that he would hear in his head the most involved voicings and textures, some of which conceivably were easier to transfer from his mind directly to manuscript paper than to play on the piano.

The number of his piano solo appearances was minimal. In addition to the above-mentioned version of "Black Beauty" there was "Swampy River," recorded at the same 1928 session; "Lot O' Fingers," recorded in 1931 at a primeval 33-1/3 session (in those pre-microgroove days, it was part of a medley incorporated into a 16" record). The next piano records of any consequence were not heard until 1939–40, when he recorded six duets with bassist Jimmy Blanton.

The Cotton Club years left room for the breaking of many barriers, most of them involving numerous leaves of absence from the club. In great demand for tours and theatre dates, the band played the Palace and the Paramount; traveled to California to appear in its first film, *Check And Double Check*; and was booked in as a dual attraction and accompanist with Maurice Chevalier at New York's Fulton Theatre.

Perhaps even more significant than any of these credits were two concurrent accomplishments. In 1930 the band recorded "Mood Indigo." The original title was "Dreamy Blues," and according to Irving Mills, it was Mills who suggested the alternate title and arranged for lyrics to be added. This was the first in a long line of tunes originally recorded as instrumentals that would ultimately be equipped with lyrics and established as world-wide standard pop songs.

Not long afterward, while still at the Cotton Club, Ellington proved a point that was of vital importance to him: he wanted to show that his genre of Afro-American music did not need to be confined to the three-minute form dictated by the 78 rpm record. On January 20, 1931, he recorded "Creole Rhapsody" on both sides of a 10" single, under the name of the Jungle Band. Five months later he extended the work still further to cover both sides of a 12" record, in a version on Victor Records under his own name.

Both "Creole Rhapsody" and "Mood Indigo," in their very sharply contrasted ways, indicated the shape of things to come. One was the harbinger of a series of masterful instrumental works, most of them adhering to the conventional brief format but used with increasing subtlety and orchestral grandeur; the other was the simple, basic theme that would help to establish Ellington alongside Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers, and other peers as a giant of popular music, a writer capable of devising relatively simple melodies accessible to the mass audience.

This image was at once a blessing and a curse for Ellington. A blessing because it helped tremendously in establishing his reputation with an audience that was perhaps not ready to relate to his more complex instrumental pieces. Ellington's "medley of our hits" eventually became an indispensable part of the repertoire for performances given by the orchestra for the last three decades of his career. This was understandable when one noted the applause of recognition automatically accorded to such hits as "Solitude" (first recorded in 1934), "In A Sentimental Mood" (1935), "I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart" (written by Duke as part of his score for a Cotton Club Revue in 1938), "Don't Get Around Much Any More" (recorded as an instrumental in 1940, under the title "Never No Lament"), "Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me" (recorded as an instrumental entitled "Concerto For Cootie" in 1940), "I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good" (introduced by Duke's vocalist, Ivie Anderson, as part of the revue *Jump For Joy*, presented in Hollywood in 1941), "I'm Beginning To See The Light" (1944), and perhaps a half-dozen others, though the above-mentioned were usually the backbone of his medley presentations.

Another number often included, and more significant for its title than for inherent musical value, was "It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing." This was recorded February 2, 1932, with a vocal by Ivie Anderson. Its importance lay in the use, three or four years before the swing

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Bigard on clarinet respectively, were released with different titles, "Echoes Of Harlem" and "Clarinet Lament"—possibly because the word concerto might have sounded intimidating or too highbrow to the audiences of those days. Nevertheless, Ellington continued the practice, from time to time, with great success. He wrote "Trumpet In Spades" and "Boy Meets Horn," both featuring the unique style of Rex Stewart; a long series of works built around Johnny Hodges' exquisite alto saxophone; "The Golden Cress" for trombonist Lawrence Brown; "The Golden Feather" for baritone saxophonist Harry Carney; and many others.

Paradoxically, it was a long time before Duke got around to writing a concerto for himself. One of the first was "Dancers In Love," also known as "Stomp For Beginners." Unlike most of his works, this was virtually identical every time he played it—a light, unpretentious ditty that formed the last movement of the four-part *Perfume Suite* in 1945.

As will be discussed later, Ellington eventually featured himself more extensively, but his concern for at least the first 25 years of his career as leader of a vitally important orchestra was to spotlight the band itself and/or the brilliant instrumentalists who interpreted his music.

Another innovation for which Ellington deserves credit was the concept of taking a small unit, usually seven or eight pieces, out of the band, and recording it under the name of one of the sidemen. These ventures enabled the soloists to stretch out a little more and even gave Duke himself somewhat more solo space than had been the custom in the big band. The importance of these sessions can best be gauged by the fact that many numbers introduced on the combo dates became so successful that they were eventually taken up, recorded, and regularly featured by the full orchestra.

The first and perhaps best known example was "Caravan," written by Juan Tizol, Ellington's valve trombonist, who recorded it as a member of what was called Barney Bigard's orchestra on a December 1936 session. Similarly, "C Jam Blues," recorded by the big band in 1942, had begun as a spontaneously devised number entitled "C Blues" on a Bigard session in 1941.

The Johnny Hodges contingent introduced many works that were later played not only by Ellington's orchestra, but by other jazz groups: "Jeep's Blues," "The Jeep Is Jumping," "Hodge Podge," "Wanderlust," "Day Dream," "Good Queen Bess," and Mercer Ellington's "Things Ain't What They Used To Be." Cootie Williams also recorded a series of admirable sessions, starting in 1937 and continuing until shortly before he left the band in 1940.

Rex Stewart and his orchestra, also composed of Ellington sidemen, was responsible for introducing "Subtle Slough," later to become famous in its expanded version as "Just Squeeze Me."

It was during the period when Ellington was leading this double life on records as maestro of his own band and as sideman in the smaller groups led by Bigard, Hodges, Stewart and Williams, that he was responsible for two highly significant personnel changes. Late in 1939 Ben Webster joined the band on tenor saxophone, and Jimmy Blanton, an 18-year-old discovery from St. Louis, became the Ellington bassist.

DUNCAN SCHIEDT COLLECTION

Recording with Louis Armstrong, 1946.

Webster's contribution added a dimension seldom heard before in the Ellington ranks: his warm, pleading tenor saxophone sound was as subtle and beautiful in its own way as Johnny Hodges' alto, as smooth as Lawrence Brown's trombone, as eloquent as Cootie Williams' trumpet. But if Webster was one of the major voices from 1939 until he left the band in 1943, Blanton offered something even more revolutionary. His facility and imagination were such that he had the effect of updating the entire role of the bass in jazz.

Realizing his potential, Ellington recorded a half-dozen piano-and-bass duets: "Blues" and "Plucked Again" for Columbia, recorded in 1939; and "Pitter Panther Patter," "Sophisticated Lady," "Body And Soul," and "Mr. J.B. Blues," recorded in 1940 for RCA. All six are extraordinary not only for what they show about Blanton's innovative technique and creativity, but also for the extent to which they give Ellington an opportunity, so rare in those days, of displaying his affecting and technically adroit piano style.

Still another important arrival, in 1939, and by far the longest-lasting, was William Strayhorn, affectionately known as Billy or Swee'Pea. Ellington made his first record of a Strayhorn composition, "Something To Live For," early in that year; later in 1939, Strayhorn, who had originally wanted to submit some of his lyrics to Ellington and had no thought of writing music for the band, became a regular arranger, occasional pianist, and close confidant of Ellington.

During the next few years Strayhorn composed and arranged some of the most durable music ever recorded by the Ellington orchestra, the best known selection being "Take The 'A' Train," of which he was the sole composer, and which soon became the band's permanent theme. Others were the Ravel-tinged "Chelsea Bridge," the luxuriant "Day Dream," featuring Johnny Hodges, "After All," "Rain Check," "Johnny Come Lately," "Passion Flower," "Midriff," and dozens more.

Strayhorn collaborated with Ellington on the *Perfume Suite* and on many of the other extended concert works. As I wrote in *The Encyclopedia Of Jazz*, "The musical vibrations between Strayhorn and Ellington were so sympathetic that sometimes neither they themselves nor members of the band could recollect at what point the work of one had left off and that of the other had begun." Ironically, one of Strayhorn's best known compositions, "Lush Life," for which he wrote the ultra-sophisticated lyrics as well as the harmonically intricate music, was never recorded commercially by the Ellington orchestra; in fact, it lay dormant for a decade until Nat King Cole's recording established it as a standard in 1949.

As a pianist, Strayhorn was also all but indistinguishable from Duke, though he was inclined to be a little more technically extrovert and flowery. He played piano with the band on his own "Chelsea Bridge," and occasionally on subsequent records, but the details were rarely documented.

If the 1930s were years of valiant experiments, the 1940s became a decade of triumphant acceptance. In January of 1943, Ellington at long last made his Carnegie Hall concert debut. A highlight was the premiere of *Black, Brown And Beige* (subtitled "A Tone Parallel to the History of the American Negro"), his longest attempt at extended composition. Owing to the recording ban, this was never recorded at the time in its entirety, except for private use; it was not until 1978 that Fantasy Records released *Black, Brown And Beige* in its live, unabridged form. Though some critics, particularly the classicists, felt that Ellington had overextended himself, in retrospect it is clear that this work was a vital step forward in combining the essential elements of jazz into a major concert work.

At subsequent annual recitals in Carnegie Hall, Duke introduced several other long works, among them the *Deep South Suite, Blue Bells Of Harlem, Liberian Suite, New World A'Comin'*, and *The Tattooed Bride*. One of the noblest of these works, a suite entitled *Harlem*, was played at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1951 in the only concert ever given there by a major jazz orchestra.

The band went into something of a slump during the early 1950s. Ellington lost the services of Johnny Hodges, who left to form his own group (he rejoined Ellington in 1955). Sonny Greer also departed, but his replacement by Louie Bellson brought a newer and more modern rhythmic feeling.

There were fewer concerts, but one notable occasion found the Ellington orchestra in tamdem with the Symphony of the Air, to introduce his *Night Creature* at Carnegie Hall in 1955.

The road upward, launched with the return of Hodges, continued with a highly successful appearance in 1956 at the Newport Jazz Festival, when a roaring ovation

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greeted the performance of one of Duke's earlier extended works, *Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue*. None of us who were there will ever forget the almost hysterical excitement created by Paul Gonsalves, the tenor saxophonist, who whipped the fans into a frenzy by playing some 27 ad lib choruses. As a direct outcome of the sensation created by this Newport appearance, Ellington belatedly made the cover of *Time* magazine.

He began writing more prolifically, was seen in a remarkable color TV spectacular built around him (*A Drum Is A Woman*, on CBS in 1957), introduced a suite written with Strayhorn and inspired by characters from Shakespeare's works (*Such Sweet Thunder*, at Town Hall in 1957), and teamed with Ella Fitzgerald for an album and Carnegie Hall concert.

Just as his acceptance on other levels had arrived belatedly, Ellington had to wait until 1959 to be invited to compose a score for a motion picture. This was *Anatomy Of A Murder*, in which he also made a brief appearance in an acting role as a pianist in a night club. In later years he scored *Paris Blues* and a few other films, but none was an outstanding success.

During the 1960s Ellington became more and more closely associated with Norman Granz, who was responsible for sending him on a series of annual European tours. The band also made its first State Department-sponsored tour, playing in the Near and Middle East in the fall of 1963. Among many other overseas tours, most of which inspired suites, were those in Africa, 1966, the West Indies, 1969, and the Far East, 1970.

If any one period can be said to have been the busiest of Ellington's entire career, it would be the summer of 1963. He played regular dates with the band, commuted to Canada to write original music for a production of *Timon of Athens* at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, and helped to form a "Second Ellington Orchestra," composed mainly of past and present members of the band, conducted by Jimmy Jones and supervised by Billy Strayhorn, to play in Chicago for the Ellington stage production *My People*, commissioned by the Century of Negro Progress Exposition.

The last decade of Ellington's life was marked by an accelerating flow of honors and awards—degrees from universities, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Legion of Honor, Grammy awards, keys to cities, meetings with kings, queens, and presidents all over the world—but the events by which Ellington himself probably would best like to be remembered were his sacred concerts. There were three, the first of which was introduced at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco. Ellington, the band, a choir, solo vocalists, and tap dancer Bunny Briggs all praised the Lord in their various ways. There were performances at cathedrals, churches, and synagogues in many countries. The third and final sacred concert was heard at Westminster Abbey in October 1973.

Though Ellington's later years were those of the greatest triumphs, they were also a time of mourning. In 1967 Billy Strayhorn died; in his memory, Duke recorded an album of Strayhorn's compositions, *And His Mother Called Him Bill*, unquestionably one of the finest Ellington albums of all time. There were many other losses and defections. Johnny Hodges died

RAYMOND ROSS

Rehearsing in New York for second Sacred Concert, 1967. Louis Bellson at left.

in 1970; Ray Nance, the trumpeter and violinist who had been a key figure from 1940 until 1963 and had rejoined the band frequently thereafter, became ill and was only sporadically active. Jimmy Hamilton, a clarinetist and major soloist in the band for 26 years, left in 1968.

Ellington himself was hospitalized briefly late in 1972 during the Los Angeles taping of a TV special entitled *Duke Ellington—We Love You Madly*. His condition deteriorated gradually during the next year and by early 1974 it was obvious that he was gravely ill. He spent his 75th birthday in a hospital bed and died Friday, May 24, 1974, a victim of lung cancer. Three days later memorial services were held at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine before a congregation that had arrived from all over the world. On the very next day, true to a promise Duke had made, his son, Mercer Ellington, took the band to Bermuda to fulfill a commitment.

The Duke Ellington orchestra has remained together since then, though the last vestiges of the old sound disappeared with the deaths of Paul Gonsalves (a week before Ellington) and Harry Carney (a few months later) and the retirement of Cootie Williams. Today there are many younger men in the orchestra. In order to avoid too many comparisons, the pianist is not extensively featured and does not attempt to imitate Ellington. Mercer Ellington is trying simultaneously to forge a new direction for himself and yet retain enough of the Ellington image to avoid disappointing those who come to hear the music they associate with his father.

It has not been an easy job, nor would it be for any son who has to step into the shoes of a father so universally respected. Mercer describes the problems of his own life and his father's in a book published recently (see the bibliography below).

Whether or not Mercer's orchestra survives, and whether or not it remains true to the Ellington tradition, one thing is certain: The music, the mystique, and the legend of Edward Kennedy Ellington will live through the ages as one of the most innovative forces to emerge in the music of the twentieth century. □

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Stanley Dance, *The World Of Duke Ellington*, Charles Scribners Sons, 1970. Not a biography, but mainly a series of recollections by and interviews with members of the orchestra, with a brief contribution by Ellington himself, and some enlightening Dance dialogues with Duke and Mercer Ellington.

Duke Ellington, *Music Is My Mistress*, Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1973. Not strictly autobiographical in form, but cheerfully reminiscent and an unconscious revelation of Ellington's cautious style as a writer. For all its errors of omission, this is an invaluable work, actually written by Ellington.

Mercer Ellington, *Duke Ellington In Person*, Houghton, Mifflin, 1978. Described as "an intimate memoir," the book offers some valuable insights but, as with his father's book, there are notable omissions and evasions. Mercer's analysis of his father's personality was strongly colored by Duke's on-again, off-again affection for his son.

Derek Jewell, *Duke: A Portrait Of Duke Ellington*, W.W. Norton & Co., 1977. This was the first posthumous work, and consequently the first to deal candidly, and without fear of reprisals, with Ellington's character, warts and all. There are, however, numerous factual errors, partly due to the fact that the author lives in England and was not nearly as close to Ellington as Mercer or Dance.

Barry Ulanov, *Duke Ellington*, Da Capo Press. Though published in 1946, and long unavailable until its republication last year, this is a valuable and highly personal insight into Ellington, his work, and his family. Billy Strayhorn, in particular, is dealt with at far greater length here than in the Mercer Ellington book. □

DUKE ELLINGTON:
A SELECTED AND ANNOTATED DISCOGRAPHY

By Leonard Feather

NO WORDS ON PAPER, no speaker giving a lecture can even begin to evoke the grandeur that was Duke Ellington. In order more fully to understand his contribution it is necessary to resort to what is fortunately a large body of recorded evidence—the albums that span almost a half century of his career.

Well over a hundred Ellington albums have been issued legitimately, not to mention a flood of bootleg releases. The following list consists of albums that either

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show the orchestra in prime form at various stages of its career, or that feature Ellington in relative prominence at the piano. All have good recorded sound; bootleg records were not included.

As far as possible I have limited the list to LPs that are still theoretically available; however, these availabilities fluctuate. Items no longer in the catalog may be obtainable from such sources as Ray Avery's Rare Records, 417 E. Broadway, Glendale, CA 91209.

Mood Indigo, Camden (dist. by Pickwick Int'l., 135 Crossways Park Dr., Woodbury, NY 11797) DL2-0152. An excellent cross-section of the band between 1927 and 1931. A 2-record set.

This Is Duke Ellington, RCA, VPM-6042. Another 2-record set with samples from 1927 to 1945.

Hot In Harlem, MCA, 2076E. The band in 1928–9.

Rockin' In Rhythm, MCA, 2077E. 1929–31.

At His Very Best, RCA, LPM 1715. Long since deleted, but worth looking for, since it contains the studio-recorded excerpts from *Black, Brown & Beige*. 1927–46.

Duke Ellington, 1938, Smithsonian (Box 10230, Des Moines, IA 50336), R003.

Duke Ellington, 1939, Smithsonian, R010.

Duke Ellington Carnegie Hall Concerts, Prestige, P-34004. An invaluable live 3-volume set that includes the original *Black, Brown & Beige* in its entirety, and also *Blue Belles of Harlem*, built around Ellington's piano.

Carnegie Hall Concert, 1944, Prestige, P-24073. Includes the *Perfume Suite*.

Carnegie Hall Concert, 1946, Prestige, P-24074. Contains *A Tonal Group*, three-part suite.

Carnegie Hall Concert, 1947, Prestige, P-24075. Contains a Johnny Hodges medley; also the five-part *Liberian Suite*, and "The Clothed Woman," a five minute work featuring Ellington's piano.

The Golden Duke, Prestige, P-24029. Includes big band material recorded in 1946, and the Ellington-Strayhorn piano duets made in 1950.

Hi-Fi Ellington Uptown, Columbia Special Products, CCL830. Hard to find, but worth looking for, since it includes *The Controversial Suite*, one of Ellington's least known and most provocative extended pieces.

Piano Reflections, Capitol, M11058 (out of print). Fourteen piano solos, with bass and drums, recorded in 1953.

Ellington At Newport, Columbia, CS 8648. Includes the crowd-pleasing *Diminuendo & Crescendo In Blue* mentioned above. 1956.

Such Sweet Thunder, Columbia Special Products, JCL1033. The famous Ellington-Strayhorn series of impressions based on Shakespeare's characters. 1956.

Nutcracker Suite & Peer Gynt Suite, Columbia Odyssey, 32-16-0252. Ellington-Strayhorn arrangements of the classics. 1960.

Piano In The Background, Columbia, CS 8346 (out of print). Orchestral tracks, with Ellington's piano prominent throughout. 1960.

Louis Armstrong-Duke Ellington, Roulette, SR 52074 (out of print). Sextet tracks with plenty of piano. 1961.

BETTMAN ARCHIVE

First Time, Columbia, CS 8515. A unique set featuring the combined orchestras of Ellington and Count Basie. 1961.

Duke Ellington-John Coltrane, Impulse, AS-30. Quartet tracks. 1962.

Duke Ellington-Coleman Hawkins, Impulse, AS-26. Small band tracks, 1962.

Ellington, Charles Mingus, Max Roach: Money Jungle, United Artists, UAS 5632 (out of print). Remarkable trio tracks. 1962

Piano In The Foreground, Columbia, CS 8829 (out of print). 1963.

Duke Ellington's Jazz Violin Session, Atlantic, SD-1688. Small groups with Stephane Grapelli, Ray Nance, and Svend Asmussen on violins and viola respectively. 1963

Duke Ellington, Pianist, Fantasy, F9462. Piano solos. 1966. 1970, 1974.

Concert Of Sacred Music, RCA, LSP-3582 (out of print). Recorded at New York's 5th Avenue Presbytarian Church, 1966.

And His Mother Called Him Bill, RCA, CSP-3906 (out of print). Compositions by Billy Strayhorn (see comments above). 1967.

Second Sacred Concert, Prestige P-24045. 1968.

Ellington With The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, MCA, DL710176 (out of print). Three long works with piano and orchestra. 1968.

The Intimate Ellington, Pablo, 787. Various groups, including trio cuts. 1969–70.

New Orleans Suite, Atlantic, SD 1580. 1970.

Afro-Eurasian Eclipse, Fantasy, 9498. Eight-part concert work. 1971.

Togo Brava Suite, United Artists, UXS92 (out of print). Also includes new versions of several other works. 1971

Third Sacred Concert: The Majesty Of God, RCA, APL1-0785 (out of print). Recorded in Westminster Abbey. 1973.

Duke's Big Four, Pablo, 703. With Joe Pass, Ray Brown, Louie Bellson. 1973.

Duke Ellington, Eastbourne Performance, RCA, APL1-1023. Recorded during Duke's final concert tour five months before his death.

This One's For Blanton, Pablo, 721. Includes *Fragmented Suite For Piano And Bass*. 1973.

Continuum, Fantasy, F-9481. The only posthumous album released to date. With Lloyd Mayers at the piano and Mercer Ellington conducting the orchestra. 1974–5. □

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Most of them were really devotees who went back to the '20s and '30s; they were all people my father's age—guys who had gone to Yale, who had snuck out of high school and gone to the Cotton Club to hear him. I was the baby of the whole bunch.

Were you one of the few people your age who got close to Ellington during his last years?

Yeah. There wasn't any other quite like me in that I took so much time to really care about his music, and I think he was very flattered by that. He got a big kick out of it, in fact. I guess there was a time in the '60s when you could say I was at my height of nerve in that I was hoping to help him out more at the piano and maybe even write a few charts, but that never came to be. I did submit some of my own compositions and he was very gracious about them, but as far as I know he never used them.

How long did it take to establish a friendship with him?

Not that long. Like with Willie, it was just a matter of the fact that when any performer sees a person hanging around the bandstand who's sincere and not jiving and isn't there for anything but the music, he'll feel better about getting to know that person. When I think it hit home to Duke was when he gave a concert at the Philharmonic, which is now known as Avery Fisher Hall, here in New York on April 16, 1971. The concert itself was pretty mediocre—not because of him, but because of the state of the band at the time—but nobody particularly cared, so it was my idea to invite as many ex-members of the band up to my place as I could afterward. Even vocalists like Betty Roche and Al Hibbler [both Ellington band alumni] showed up. Duke was quite moved. He had to do a benefit later on that night at the Apollo Theater with Dizzy Gillespie, so he left, went to the Apollo, and then he came back, and we were told that this was unprecedented. Also, at most parties like this the host had a favor to ask him or a contract rolled up in back or something, but this whole evening had been arranged out of love for him, and nobody else but him. Willie was of course there, and they sat at the piano for about two hours and really tore it up! I think that's when Duke actually realized that there was no underlying motive with me. I was kind of pleased when he gave me my copy of his book [*Music Is My Mistress*, Doubleday, 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10017], and he had inscribed it with the words, "Thanks Millions."

What specifically attracted you to Ellington's piano style?

Well, I thought he was a very clean pianist in the way he would strike or arpeggiate chords and make voicings. He always had a very clear conception and a very well-ordered mind. His touch was the thing that knocked me out, though. It was clear as a bell, and he worked at that cease-

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LEONARD FEATHER

PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ

Jimmy Rowles

MOST OF THE JAZZ PIANISTS who have attained international stature have made a name for themselves early in their careers. Art Tatum, Bud Powell, and Teddy Wilson were in their early twenties when their records established them. Jimmy Rowles, on the other hand, remained relatively unknown, respected by those who knew him but never fully appreciated until the last few years. Presently, just past his sixtieth birthday, he is making more records and receiving more publicity than at any other time in his life. [*Ed. Note: For an interview with Rowles, see* CK, *July '78.*]

This is odd, for Rowles is not only a superb pianist but a many-faceted man: jazz soloist, studio musician, accompanist to singers, occasional singer himself, composer, lyricist, and artist (one of his album covers was decorated with a self-caricature). He has worked with many of the best bands and almost all of the great jazz singers (who else can claim to have been gainfully employed, and lavishly praised, by Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, Carmen McRae, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, and Anita O'Day?).

Born August 19, 1918, in Spokane, Washington, and educated at Gonzaga U., Rowles studied piano privately. He was encouraged early in his career by Ben Webster, the great tenor saxophonist then playing with Duke Ellington, who helped him secure some of his early jobs.

Moving to California, Rowles worked with a band led by another great tenor player, Lester Young, and put in the first of many stints with Billie Holiday. Over the next decade (1941–51) he saw name band service with Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Les Brown, Tommy Dorsey, and Bob Crosby. During most of the 1950s and '60s he was deeply involved in studio work for movies, TV, and countless recordings; for three years he was a staff musician at NBC.

By the early 1970s Rowles had played such an endless variety of jobs, in so many areas of music, that he was pretty much taken for granted in Hollywood circles. He did begin to make small inroads as a songwriter, however, when Carmen McRae recorded his satirical pseudo-Western "Ballad Of Thelonious Monk." This was included in a live album he made at Donte's that also featured one of Rowles's more serious compositions, *Behind The Face* [Atlantic, SD 2-904].

In 1974 Rowles went to New York again, playing long engagements at The Cookery and Bradley's. He attracted the attention of influential critics, received extensive publicity, and took part in a series of albums on which he was the featured soloist. Understandably, he became a full-time New York resident.

In earlier years Rowles had recorded with Ben Webster and Benny Carter; since his career moved into high gear following his decision to settle in New York, he has made albums illustrating that he is as compatible an associate for saxophonists as he is for singers: he has LPs out in which he is co-featured with Zoot Sims (Pablo); Lee Konitz (Choice); Al Cohn (Xanadu); and Stan Getz (Columbia).

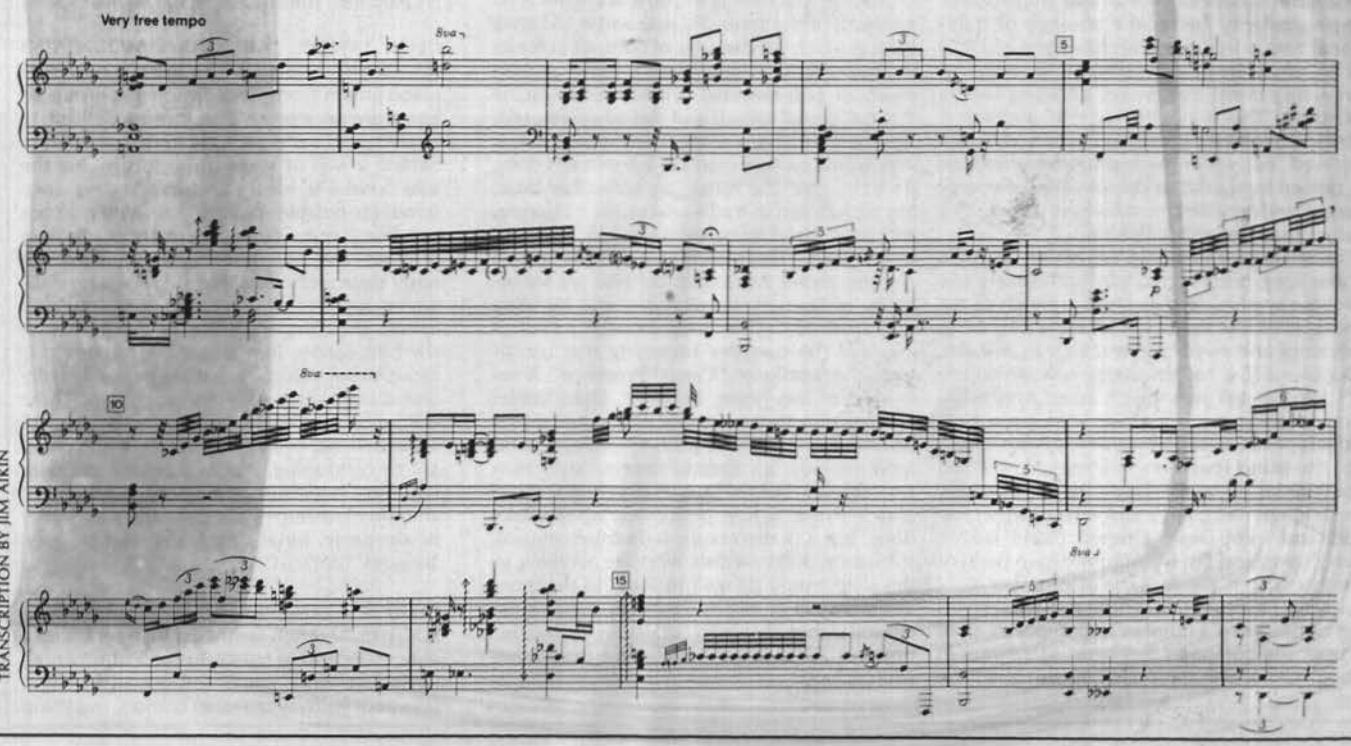
It is on the last of these, *Stan Getz Presents Jimmy Rowles: The Peacocks* [Columbia, JC 34873] that Rowles plays an extraordinary unaccompanied rendition of "Body And Soul." (On most cuts Getz also appears, with or without a rhythm section.)

The performance is in free time, and the transcription is therefore inseparable from a careful study of the record itself. There is some question about the bar lines; for example, after the two-bar introduction, the next measure actually incorporates the first two bars of the melody. Something similar happens in bar 11, when two bars are telescoped into one.

Rowles's harmonic approach to the melody involves subtle changes of chords and, in some instances, of the melody itself. For example, in bars 5 and 13, the last two notes of the original melody were C and *Bb*, against an *E* diminished chord. Instead, Rowles plays *B* and *A* against *Em7* and *A7* respectively—a simple but effective way to make the line and the composition more interesting.

The solo is liberally sprinkled with the kinds of unexpected effects that are so typical of Rowles—for instance, in bar 7, the chromatic upward series against the repeated *C*'s; similarly the suspenseful use in bar 15 of the series of *Cb*'s before he finally hits the expected C-natural. Rowles has displayed a sense of humor both in his songs and in his music; for instance, the trill effect of the brief sequence of *B*-naturals and *C*'s that interrupts his downward run in bar 11.

Though he has clearly been influenced by Tatum, Ellington, and many others, it is impossible to ascribe any one style to Jimmy Rowles. He is his own man, an artist for whom the trite and obvious has always been reprehensible and the sound of surprise perennially desirable. "Body And Soul" is only one of several tracks in this magnificent album that attest to his brilliance.



TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI: THE LEADER OF THE BAND / LEONARD FEATHER

When Toshiko Akiyoshi steps away from the piano and directs her 16-piece, all-male orchestra in a stomping arrangement of her own composition, "Yellow Is Mellow," something very special is happening.

First—in the seven decades of jazz that have been primarily a product of the creations and constant innovation of American black, and occasionally white, musicians—Toshiko Akiyoshi is the first member of an Oriental race to contribute something vitally original and exciting to an Afro-American art form. Second, she is the only woman in the history of jazz to have composed and arranged an entire library of music and (with her husband and co-leader, Lew Tabackin) hired her own orchestra to perform it. Though not yet a household word, her band is fast gaining acceptance as a force for the modernization of the "big band" scene—a jazz form that had been sinking into a morass of nostalgia.

In the latest *down beat* International Jazz Critics' Poll, for instance, Akiyoshi placed second in the Best Big Band category. She raced past such veterans as Stan Kenton, Count Basie, and Woody Herman to win the 1977 Readers' Poll in Japan's *Swing Journal*, and to be named leader of the Number One Big Band. In 1976 and 1977, her albums were nominated for Grammy awards. In concert, the standing ovations that have greeted the band's appearances at the Monterey and Newport jazz festivals recall the golden years of Duke Ellington, with whom Akiyoshi is often compared. Like Ellington, she plays piano while considering her main instrument to be the orchestra itself. Like him, she is a genius at weaving rich, complex tone colors.

The past year has been Akiyoshi's most successful to date. In March the band appeared as the closing act in the First Annual Women's Jazz Festival in Kansas City. In August they played their first New York nightclub date (at the Village Gate) and their first European concerts in Belgium and Holland. Next year the orchestra will embark on its third tour of Japan.

Akiyoshi conducts; husband and co-leader Tabackin heads the reed section.

The Akiyoshi phenomenon is not easily pigeonholed. Her lighter pieces are a fascinating update of the classic, swing-band tradition of brass and saxes, with its easily assimilated arrangements and loosely swinging rhythm section. Several of her most creative works, however, are an unprecedented cross-pollination of cultures. As Lew Tabackin explains: "Toshiko is not one of those foreign musicians who try to be ultra-American. Through her attitude, she achieves a very special kind of oneness."

Her composition called "Kogun" (on her newest RCA release by the same name), for instance, was fitted up with pretaped percussion sounds and vocal cries from Japanese Noh drama, with the brass section pitted against the Noh actor's piercing tones. "Children in the Temple Ground" begins with long, unaccompanied vocal wails in Japanese that blend logically into a gorgeous melody stated by Tabackin's flute and the orchestra, with firm yet delicate variations by Toshiko's piano.

"Tales of a Courtesan" attests to the writer's pride in her sexual as well as ethnic identity. "The European concept of the courtesan is too happy," she says. "For three centuries under the shoguns, poor families had to sell their daughters into slavery. Though some courtesans were highly educated, they had no freedom; attempted escape meant punishment by death. My music expresses the contrast between the superficially luxurious life of some of these women and the tragic denial of human rights they suffered."

Akiyoshi's crowning achievement, a suite called "Minamata," was inspired by the tragedy of a small Japanese fishing village in which industrialization led to pollution, mercury poisoning from the fish, and many fatalities. The suite begins with Akiyoshi's teenage daughter, Michiru, intoning a brief introduction—the same words that are to be repeated toward the end by a Noh actor. Aided by two *tsuzumi* drummers, the band then proceeds to evoke a kaleidoscope of moods the like of which has been heard in no jazz work since Ellington's empyrean days. A wild climax is reached through the effects of a weird, writhing sax section. "Insights,"

Photograph by Marianne Barcellona

the album on which "Minamata" appears, was voted Best Jazz Album of the Year by readers of the highly influential *Swing Journal*. It came out ahead of 1,800 other LPs from all over the world. (All works discussed here have been released in the United States by RCA.)

In person, Akiyoshi is a trim, small woman whose appearance belies her 48 years. She was born in Manchuria of Japanese ancestry. Her father, owner of a textile company and a steel mill, was financially destroyed by the political turmoil of World War II, and returned with his family to Japan when the Chinese Communists began to take over Manchuria. Akiyoshi, then 16, landed a job, at four dollars a month, with a dance band despite having played a Beethoven concerto for her audition.

Her knowledge of pop music and improvisation was mainly empirical. One day a friend played her a Teddy Wilson record. "A whole new world opened up for me," she remembers. "I said, 'Oh, jazz can be beautiful!' I had really dumb luck as a pioneer in the jazz field: if you were just a little bit better than the next guy, you got the job. I became the highest paid studio musician in Japan."

Akiyoshi played with three

Her band is gaining recognition as a modernizing force in the "big band" scene.

symphony orchestras and 10 Tokyo jazz groups, and then formed her own combo in 1952. Oscar Peterson, traveling with Norman Granz's "Jazz at the Philharmonic" troupe, heard her in a club, and arranged for Granz to record her. When that recording was heard in the United States, it earned her a scholarship at Berklee, the jazz college in Boston. Soon, she was both studying and working.

"In the early years in America," she recalls, "I dealt with both racial and sexual prejudice. I played clubs and TV wearing a kimono, because people were amazed to see an Oriental woman playing jazz."

Her private life and career took shape slowly. A marriage to the former Stan Kenton saxophonist, Charlie Mariano, dissolved in the mid-1960s. Akiyoshi began to divide her time between New York and Tokyo; between work with Charles Mingus and playing with her own trio. Then in 1967, while organizing her own Town Hall concert with a big band, she met Tabackin. Passive in speech and manner but passionately involved when he picks up his tenor sax, he became both a musical and personal helpmeet. "I had reservations about the relationship," she says. "Lew is the only son in a very tight Jewish family. But finally I decided that Buddha knew we were meant for each other."

They were married in 1969. In 1972, they moved to California, and began to organize the orches-

tra while Tabackin earned a living as a sideman in Doc Severinsen's "Tonight Show" band.

"Jazz is still thought of as a very masculine music," Akiyoshi says now, "and men don't like to see women involved in it. But my musicians respect me. They know what I am trying to do. I want to keep on creating sounds that will add something to the American tradition, without distorting its basic character."

Leonard Feather, the author of "The Encyclopedia of Jazz" (Horizon), writes a nationally syndicated jazz column for the Los Angeles "Times." As a producer in the 1940s, he was the first to record such pianists as Hazel Scott and Barbara Carroll and the first to produce an all-women jazz instrumental album.

"A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE GROOVE"

Compiled by Susan McHenry with Jill McManus

The contributions of women musicians to the vitality of instrumental jazz has been little acknowledged until this year—when it was celebrated in such milestone events as the first Women's Jazz Festival in Kansas City (see "Ms.," March, 1978) and the four-day Salute to Women in Jazz in New York (sponsored by the Universal Jazz Coalition during the Newport Jazz Festival this past June). The following selected discography gives a sampling of reissued recordings and new and relatively recent releases that showcase both legendary and emerging talents among instrumental jazz musicians who are women. (Except where marked, all are available in record stores.)

Retrospective: "Jazz Women: A Feminist Retrospective" (ST 109); "Women in Jazz" (series): Volume I, "All Women Groups" (ST 111); Volume II, "Pianists" (ST 112); Volume III, "Swingtime to Modern" (ST 113). All available by mail from Stash Records, Inc., P.O. Box 390, Brooklyn, New York 11215.

These collections of previously unavailable recordings made between 1926 and 1961 feature (to name a few) pianists Lovie Austin, Lil Armstrong, Beryl Booker, Norma Teagarden, Hazel Scott (see "Great (Hazel) Scott!" *Ms.*, November, 1974), and Dorothy Donegan; guitarists Mary Osborne and Carline Ray; vibraphonists Margie Hyams and Terry Pollard; trombonist Melba Liston; trumpeters Valaida Snow and Billie Rogers; tenor sax players Kathy Stobart and Viola Burnside; and alto sax player Vi Redd.

Contemporary: *Keyboards:* Marian McPartland (piano; see "Everything a Jazz Musician Is Not Supposed To Be," *Ms.*, March, 1978), "Solo Concert at Haverford" (1974, Halcyon Records, Hal 111); Marylou Williams (piano), "My Mama Pinned a Rose on Me" (new release; Pablo 2310-819); Shirley Scott (organ), "One for Me" (1974, Strata East, SES 7430); Barbara Carroll (piano), "From the Beginning" (1977, United Artists, UA-LA778-H); Carla Bley (piano; see "Carla Bley . . . and All Her Jazz," *Ms.*, August, 1975), "Dinner Music" (1977, Watt Works, WATT / 6); Patrice Rushen (electric and acoustic piano), "Prelusion" (1974, Prestige, P-10089); Connie Crothers (piano), "Perception" (1976, Inner City, IC 2022); Joanne Brackeen (piano), "Tring-a-ling" (1978, Choice, CRS 1016); Jessica Williams (piano), "Portraits" (1978, Adelphi, AD 5005); Sharon Freeman (electric piano) on Charles Sullivan, "Genesis" (1976, Inner City, IC 1012).

Strings: Monette Sudler (guitar), "Time for a Change" (1977, Inner City, IC 2062); Carol Kaye (electric bass) on Hampton Hawes, "Northern Windows" (1974, Prestige, P-10088); Dorothy Ashby (harp), "The Best of Dorothy Ashby" (1972, Prestige, P-7638); Alice Coltrane (harp), "Transcendence" (1977, Warner Bros., BS 3077).

Horns and Reeds: Janice Robinson (trombone) on Clifford Thornton / The Jazz Composer's Orchestra, "The Gardens of Harlem" (1975, JCOA LP 1008); Sharon Freeman (French horn) and Becky Friend (flute) on Leroy Jenkins / The Jazz Composer's Orchestra, "For Players Only" (1975, JCOA 1010); Bobbi Humphrey (flute), "Bobbi Humphrey's Best" (1976, Blue Note, BN-LA699-G); Mary Fettig Park (flute and sax) on Stan Kenton and his Orchestra, "7.5 on the Richter Scale" (1973, Creative World, ST 1070); Barbara Donald (trumpet) on Huey Simmons, "Burning Spirits" (1971, Contemporary, S7625 / 6).

Percussion and Drums: Susan Evans (percussion) on Gil Evans (no relation), "Svengali" (1973, Atlantic, SD 1643); Dottie Dodgion (drums), "Ruby Braff and his International Jazz Quartet Plus Three" (1974, Chiaroscuro, CR 115).

All women groups: "Now's the Time" (new release, Halcyon, Hal 115) with Marian McPartland, piano; Vi Redd, alto sax; Mary Osborne, guitar; Lynn Milano, bass; Dottie Dodgion, drums.

Susan McHenry is a "Ms." editor with a special interest in music. Jill McManus, a former researcher and reporter for "Time" magazine, is a jazz pianist who made her recording debut in 1976 on "As One" (Muse Records) with bassist Richard Davis.

"SISTER / SISTER"—WORKING IT OUT ONSTAGE

LAURIE STONE

Sister / Sister asks the questions sisters ask: "Is it all right for me to be happy if you're not?" or "Do you still tell Mother everything?" or "Will I always be treated as the baby, the middle, or the oldest?" *Sister / Sister* is about those family patterns that keep recurring in dreams, in memories, and in ordinary, post-cocoon life with people who aren't relatives.

In *Sister / Sister*, the illusion of familiarity has been powerfully created. It is similar to the illusion of shared understanding and likeness that families, themselves, can create: although we may not know anything about the interior life of the sister, the mother, the father, with whom we grew up, the formal structure of the family—the roles, and the rituals—create an *illusion* of knowledge and intimacy. In *Sister / Sister*, seminal images, physical gestures and lines, and whole scenes recur during the performance and become rooted not only in one's memory of the play but in one's memory, period.

To achieve this effect, the writers and creative directors of the play, Clare Coss, Sondra Segal, and Roberta Sklar (founders of the Woman's Experimental Theater*), carefully sorted threads of experience—their own and that of dozens of other women. "We set up workshops of women," says Sklar, "with exercises that would evoke the sister-connection in the family. Then we gathered data: images, lines, questions." (None

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* Coss, Segal, and Sklar were formerly with Womenrite Theater. The Experimental Theater is in residence in New York City at the Women's Interart Center, where *Sister / Sister* debuted last spring. (See *Ms.*, November, 1977, for a review of *Daughters*, the first part of their trilogy on women in the family. The third part, tentatively titled *Electra Speaks*, is a reexamination of the relationships between female characters from classical theater.)

Bill Henderson at the Marina Bistro

BY LEONARD FEATHER

A few months ago it was reported here that singer Bill Henderson, despite certain admirable attributes, needed to get his act together.

On the basis of a performance at the Marina Bistro, where he opened Tuesday for a five-day run, it is pleasant to be able to report that Henderson has straightened up and is flying right. There was no gratuitious yodeling, all the affectations had been deleted and what remained was an artist in Joe Williams' class, with a persuasively rhythmic style and sound of his own.

The two-keyboard accompaniment no longer sounds like a gimmick but rather serves to complement the singer, just as Joyce Collins at the piano and David Mackay on Fender Rhodes (electric) interact with each other.

As before, the high point arrives when Collins turns assistant vocalist, singing "This Masquerade" simultaneously with Henderson's "Angel Eyes" in an ingenious demonstration of the two tunes' harmonic similarities.

With Monty Budwig on bass and Jimmie Smith at the drums, the group developed a pulse strong enough to compensate for Henderson's rather trite blues lyrics and scatting on "Roll 'Em Pete," the only weak link in a rather short set.

For the record. Henderson also sat in to duet with trumpeter/vocalist Clark Terry Monday evening at Donte's, where owner Carey Leverette and an overflow crowd celebrated the North Hollywood club's 12th anniversary. During this typically mainstream-cum-bebop evening, Lew Tabackin sat in on tenor sax while Ross Tompkins, Ray Brown and Nick Ceroli established a solid undercurrent of good vibrations. Terry was in such impeccable form, playing and singing, that the infrequency of his visits to town seemed doubly regrettable.

10/31/78

Winging It With Jarrett at the Pavilion

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Keith Jarrett, who came to prominence in the 1960s with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, today is a classical soloist most of whose music is much closer to Ravel, Debussy, Chopin and Massenet than to Ellington or Monk.

At the Chandler Pavilion Sunday evening his piano recital began in a customary spirit of total improvisation, opening with a simple melodic fragment and continuing without interruption for 45 minutes. During this first half I noticed only one change of key, but every five or 10 minutes there would be shifts in and out of tempo, or a change of mood from rhapsodic to aggressive to idyllic

The nature of Jarrett's music, based entirely on spontaneous creativity, precludes any sense of form. When you have heard him in concert several times it becomes clear that a little editing will be in order; yet his genius for distilling an almost trancelike ambience compensates for much of the self-indulgence.

As for the visual antics, it is possible that his tendency to stand, crouch, bend over backward and at times almost hit the pedals with his knees may be a reflection of the extent to which he is himself hypnotized by the acts of creation; still, these contortions do tend to become irrelevantly distracting. It is remarkable that he can retain his technical composure while doing almost everything but sitting down in the orthodox position.

The second half was more diversified, beginning with two or three minutes spent exploring the inside of the piano for a more or less percussive effect. Moving back to the keyboard, Jarrett soon embarked on a riveting 10-minute passage of glancing references to gospel, blues and funk, followed by a richly harmonic impressionist episode and a surprisingly gentle pianissimo ending.

After the mandatory standing ovation, Jarrett was deciding what to do next when a voice in the crowd shouted, "Autumn Leaves"! Jarrett no doubt knew he was kidding, for this was clearly an intelligent audience aware of his modus operandi. Nevertheless, his brief encore did consist of a present, recognizable theme from one of his earlier albums. It would not hurt his finish, and could add a needed element of contrast, if he were to insert a few such thematically oriented pieces into each concert.

Nevertheless, an evening with Keith Jarrett invariably is an enriching experience, a hazardous yet ultimately triumphant voyage into the musical unknown.

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JAZZ

EXPATRIATES RIFFIN' BACK HOME

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Slowly, but perceptibly, the tide is turning. American musicians who had been turned off by various social, racial and economic factors in the American jazz world took refuge in Europe. Now the word is out: Things are getting better back home, and now's the time to reinspect the scene.

Phil Woods, after five years overseas, replanted his roots in Pennsylvania. Dexter Gordon, after 16 years' absence, spent so many triumphant days in the United States last year that he now has an apartment in Manhattan as well as his home in Copenhagen.

Johnny Griffin's absence was longer than Woods' and more continuous than Gordon's. He left for good in 1963 and made his first American tour in 15 years during the past two months. Known as "the little giant," Griffin is a formidable saxophonist who during his pre-expatriation years did battle with such other tenortitans as John Coltrane, Hank Mobley and Eddie (Lockjaw) Davis.

"I left for various reasons," he says. "Family problems, trouble with the government about taxes and disgust with the whole rat race. I went to Europe in December of '62, and during three months there I had an awakening. The way people treated black musicians—or jazz musicians in general—was comparable to the respect they accord to classical artists.

"Coming back to New York, I ran into the same old hassles; the musicians standing around at Beefsteak Charlie's complaining about booking agents and record companies. I didn't need this any more. I'd enjoyed a period of relaxation and felt I could have a more dignified life in Europe, so I took off in the summer of '63.

"After three weeks in Holland I was invited to open at the Blue Note Club in Paris. I stayed there about a year and a half." (In America the average club booking lasts six nights.)

Griffin remained based in Paris, working all over Europe, taking the kinds of jobs that are virtually nonexistent in the U.S.: live radio programs, live jazz series on TV. He led his own quartet, worked often with the international Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland big band and recorded more often that he ever had at home.

"Paris was fine, except that living in an apartment was driving me crazy. I was married in 1968; my wife is Dutch, and her father had seen an old barn that was for sale in a little village called Berhambacht. It's on the Rhine, not far from Rotterdam. Five years ago we moved there and it's been idyllic.

"My neighbors, all the people around me, are beautiful. I just go out and make my gigs, then go back to this 500-year-old village and relax, compose, blow my horn, tend my garden.

"It's a life I couldn't live over here. The distances you have to cover to make a living are too great. Europe isn't that big; I can drive to Paris in four hours, to Dusseldorf in two; I can take a boat right over to London."

An accusation often leveled against Americans who move away is that once removed from the breeding ground of jazz they grow stale and lose their creative spark. Griffin grins: "That thought was implanted by Americans to imply how can anyone stay away from Heaven so long and still keep his roots together?

"When I left America I was 35 years old and my style was pretty well developed. Moreover, I never stop practicing, listening constantly, searching to express myself better as I go along."

Another problem for many years was that of finding competent European jazzmen with whom to work compatibly.

"It's true that when I first went over I had to seek out other Americans. I worked mostly with Kenny Drew or Bud Powell on piano, Jimmy Woode on bass, Kenny Clarke on drums. The European musicians would do their best, but they became very nervous playing with me. It was frustrating, particularly the business of trying to assemble a decent European rhythm section. They just couldn't relate to the music the way Americans do.

"Lately, though, there has been an immense improvement. Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen, the phenomenal Danish bassist, was the first exception to the rule, but today they have fine bassists all over Scandinavia; a couple of fantastic pianists in Holland and Austria, and even one or two good drummers. The musicianship has advanced so much that I can go almost anyplace now—especially in Scandinavia, Germany and Holland—and find a good rhythm section."

Of the reaction to his first visit home, playing at Carnegie Hall, the Monterey Festival and several clubs, Griffin says, "It has been overwhelming; almost like a dream. I had forgotten how well American audiences could react. Americans can relate to it because it's part of our own culture; yet on the whole they tend to hear things a little more superficially. In Europe the people are taught to accept any and all art forms, to really study and learn to appreciate them. They are magnetized by jazz; it's the strong life force in the music that grabs them."

Griffin confirms what many observers of the Continental scene have noticed, that the more esoteric forms of jazz-related music enjoy greater acceptance east of the Atlantic. "Take this free jazz, the avant-garde; I'm sure it has a better future in Europe than here. I can't imagine much free jazz in Harlem, can you? It would start a revolution! But to Europeans, it's really a big thing. They mix it into the pop and rock festivals. Groups feel they can make as much noise or cacophony as they want, and they may even say 'this is not jazz, this is our music.' Free jazz is particularly strong in Holland and Germany."

As a permanent resident of a small town in Holland, doesn't Griffin find that a language barrier sometimes obtrudes? A laugh is followed by a brief explanation: "I have a smattering of French—I went to the Alliance Francaise for a couple of weeks—and I went to a language school in Holland once or twice a week for 10 weeks. It sure is a beautiful thing to communicate with people in their own language, and my neighbors are always kidding me about learning more Dutch; but my wife

Expatriate Johnny Griffin, top sax man, is back in the U.S., after living 15 years in Europe.

speaks English, Dutch, French, German, so I can depend on her when problems arise."

For all his successes here, the American scene has its dismal overtones for Griffin. "It hurts me to see so many young musicians, even some of the older ones, sacrificing their talents when the record companies wave that big buck in front of their faces. The producers are trying to poison their souls, and there is not even any guarantee of success, especially if they can't play that commercial stuff sincerely.

"I'm not much of an electronics man. Guitarists and bassists need to be heard, so they add amps; OK, but to listen all night long to electric keyboards and synthesizers—that's disheartening."

"If you had a guarantee of making a decent living here," I asked, "would you consider moving back?"

"Well, I'm no prophet. I had no idea I'd be gone this long in the first place. The time went so fast. It's strange to look around and see how many of my friends and contemporaries have passed from the scene, how many of the old buildings have become parking lots.

"I'm sure I won't go away for another 15 years, but over there I can spend two thirds of my time at home in the village and still make enough of a living.

"I'm not getting rich, but I keep my head above water. I'm quite comfortable and it's very peaceful."

After our interview, Griffin went to Berkeley to cut an album for Galaxy Records, then to his final American gig at a church in Harlem. By the time this is read he will be in Lucerne, Switzerland, playing opposite Dexter Gordon. His visit was so short, but he left rewarding memories for those of us who were fortunate enough to hear him. One can only hope the turning of the tide will accelerate in the years to come.

RECORD OF THE WEEK: Johnny Griffin, "Live in Tokyo" (Inner City IC 6042-2). With an American pianist and drummer and a Danish bassist. Five tunes spread over four sides, among them Griffin's own affecting "Soft and Furry." □

JAZZ ALBUM REVIEWS

ALBERTA HUNTER —TRUE BLUE

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"REMEMBER MY NAME." Alberta Hunter. Columbia JS 35553.

Ostensibly, this is a sound track album of the Geraldine Chaplin-Anthony Perkins motion picture, produced by Robert Altman. In effect, however, it is a straight-ahead collection of basic jazz, much of it rooted in the blues tradition, by the veteran singer and songwriter who emerged last year from a 20-year retirement. Recently, at the age of 83, she was given her first film assignment as songwriter and performer.

Alberta Hunter does not need to use her age as a crutch. Her success is grounded in the ageless authenticity of her blues sound and in the classic character of her melodies and lyrics.

Alberta Hunter

The blues verses are liberally sprinkled with such eternal-verity lines as "He's got a handful o' gimme and a mouthful o' much obliged" and "If the blues were whiskey, I would stay drunk all the time." Some were written so long ago that they are assumed to be in the public domain. "Downhearted Blues," one of the tracks in this set, was recorded by the composer in 1923 but became a hit for Bessie Smith, and was later sung in a memorable version by Mildred Bailey.

Among the nonblues numbers, the most affecting is "My Castle's Rockin,'" used by Hunter as her theme. The hospitable spirit of the lyrics carry over into the engaging melody. "The Love I Have For You" offers a change of pace with its old-timey ballad groove.

If a certain sameness seems to prevail at times during the blues tracks, the sequencing can be blamed; for instance, the first and second tunes on the A side are both in the same key, as are the fourth and fifth.

Hunter is accompanied by her regular pianist, Gerald Cook, whose nitty-gritty blues deftly underlines the spirit essential to most of these songs. There are occasional backgrounds and solos by a preswing-style horn section, with such jazz veterans as trumpeter Doc Cheatham and trombonist Vic Dickenson. Budd Johnson accentuates the flavor with his clarinet and tenor sax.

Produced by John Hammond, a talent scout whose track record goes back to the days when the blues was the prevailing idiom in black neighborhoods (he produced Bessie Smith's last album in 1933), this set offers a welcome reminder, with contemporary recording technique to update it, of the purity, simplicity and natural beauty of the blues in its pristine form.

"A LEGENDARY PERFORMER." Fats Waller. RCA CPL-1-2904

The phenomenal success of the Broadway musical "Ain't Misbehavin'" has produced a series of fringe benefits. A while back there was an original cast album by the singers and musicians heard in the show; but for all its virtues, that was secondhand. In its "Legendary Performer" series RCA now offers the genuine article, Waller himself in his original versions of 14 numbers that are still being performed onstage.

Five cuts, including the opening "Ain't Misbehavin'" itself, are piano solos. Of these, "Handful of Keys" is a definite masterpiece of stride piano; "Viper's Drag," a haunting slow theme with an ebullient up-tempo interlude; "I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling," a typically melodic Waller pop song, and "Keepin' Out of Mischief Now" the most commercialized—almost Gershwinesque in its orthodoxy, as stride pianist Mike Lipskin points out in his long, informative and helpful liner notes.

Eight tracks feature the six-piece combos, with variable personnel, used by Waller for most of his records during the middle and late 1930s. Fats plays with the superb symmetry that was his hallmark, sings in his glorious put-on fashion and hurls imprecations at the musicians during their solos.

Most of these numbers are Waller originals ("Honeysuckle Rose," "How Ya Baby," "Lounging at the Waldorf"), but there are two songs closely associated with Waller which, contrary to the popular assumption, he did not write. They are "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter," which became a hit for him in this 1935 version, and the 1939 "Your Feet's Too Big."

The performances prove several points: that most of Waller's music is completely immune to the ravages of time; that he had a greatly underrated sideman in the guitarist Al Casey, heard occasionally on some of these tracks; and that the swing era was by no means simply a phase dominated by the big bands. "Yacht Club Swing," an instrumental by Fats and his trumpeter, Herman Autrey, offers potent evidence of the swinging power and cohesion of the best small combos during that period of jazz evolution.

Chronologically the latest, and in some way the most remarkable cut of all, is "Jitterbug Waltz," recorded in 1942. For this Fats switched to the organ and was backed not only by his regular sidemen but by a big band he was leading. The first successful composition by a jazz writer in three-quarter time, it has become a standard.

Production on this $8.98 package is superb. In addition to Lipskin's notes in the eight-page booklet there are many rare photographs of Waller, his bands and his friends. Fats, not just the clown and comic vocalist his movies might lead you to assume, was a giant of jazz. If he is not represented in your collection, here is the perfect place to start.

"APOGEE." Pete Christlieb & Warne Marsh. Warner Bros. BSK 3236.

This comes as a surprise on several levels. First, it was produced by Walter Becker and Donald Fagen, best-known for their multiple-platinum-selling Steely Dan albums. Second, it is on a label rarely if ever identified with nonfusion jazz. Third, the teaming of two such dissimilar tenor saxophonists as Christlieb and Marsh was an improbable one; yet the result is a vigorously compelling album.

Christlieb, a member of "The Tonight Show" band, has a free-swinging extrovert sound and technique to spare; Marsh's timbre is drier and his style more oblique. The cuts alternate between furious counterpoint and jolting solos, with propulsive rhythmic support from Lou Levy, piano; Jim Hughart, bass, and Nick Ceroli, drums.

The material is diverse. "Magna-tism" is a reworking of the chords of "Just Friends," arranged by a third saxophonist, Joe Roccisano, whose writing is a major factor in the album's success. "Rapunzel" is, believe it or not, a bebop tune by Fagen and Becker, on the chords of an old Bacharach-David song, "Land of Make-Believe" (not the Mangione hit).

A tune called "317 East 32nd St." recalls the address, and the influence on Marsh, of its composer, Lennie Tristano. Rounding out the set are a Roccisano blockbuster called "Tenors of the Time," the old Charlie Parker line "Donna Lee" (based on "Indiana") and Christlieb's subtle solo outing on "I'm Old-Fashioned."

The concept of juxtaposing two contrasted tenor styles is no newer than bebop itself, yet given this uncommon pair of talents, it works splendidly. Becker and Fagen, as well as the performers, are to be congratulated on bringing to a major label acoustic jazz of a consistently high order. □

Chico Hamilton at Hong Kong Bar

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Chico Hamilton, the Los Angeles-born, New York-based drummer, is back in town at the Hong Kong Bar, leading yet another quintet.

Hamilton has wafted along with the various winds of time. Since his 1956 chamber jazz unit with flute and cello, he has experimented with the avant-garde, jazz/rock, fusion music and other forms. The adaptable combo he now leads is a synthesis of various phases, a touch of rock mingling with Brazilian rhythm and mainstream melodies.

The overall group sound is subject to change without notice, since the horn player, John Purcell, switches around like a one-man band. On Steve Turre's amiably simple tune "Lotus Flower," he played soprano sax. "Lady Love," Purcell's own complex composition, found him blowing somewhat conventionally on alto. On the third song, an attractive samba-tinged piece by Hamilton, Purcell dug in deeper and more emotionally on flute.

A collection of Ellington tunes displayed the protean Purcell on baritone sax. Backed only by guitarist Marvin Horne in "Sophisticated Lady," his thin, grainy sound was impressive, but the mood fell apart when the group joined in for an overdeclamatory "Satin Doll."

The surprise star of this group is the 25-year-old Horne. Having brought Gabor Szabo and Larry Coryell to center stage during the 1960s, Hamilton has come up with yet another six-stringed winner. Horne is not yet sure of his direction, but his facility and control assuredly will take him anywhere he may care to go.

Hamilton has lost none of his own sensitivity. Only in a concluding disco tune did he overstate his case; more typical were an amusing exercise on the hi-hat cymbal and, in his own tune "Fork Tone," an illustration of the almost lost art of soloing on wire brushes.

Dave Garfield's electric keyboard is deftly worked into the arrangements, while another young discovery, C. J. McBee on electric bass, son of the celebrated upright bassist Cecil McBee, functions efficiently as soloist and rhythm component.

This fivesome is scarcely breaking new ground, but without making history like the original quintet, it offers a cheerful, effectively diversified repertoire, the young sidemen again reflecting their leader's vigilant ear for new talent. The Hong Kong has him on stage through next Saturday (off Sunday and Monday).

loves, and at the same time pleasing the mass audience out there.

"I made a break of sorts several years ago. In the days of my first albums, I was a John Coltrane devotee; I grew up during a period when he had carried bebop to some amazing extensions. I realized I could never be another Coltrane, so the next logical move was to explore some areas that hadn't been investigated, areas relying strongly on rhythmic effects, with the rhythm section as a key device in arriving at harmonic and melodic variations. I was interested in contemporary rhythms around the time when James Brown was showing what intriguing basslines and drum patterns could be achieved. The rhythm section was advancing from the point where it had fulfilled a mainly accompaniment function.

"I don't think this represented a lessening of creativity. Given whatever parameters I have set for myself, I always try to do the best I can within them. Once you decide you're going to do, say, a blues shuffle or a rock 'n' roll vamp, well, you're kind of locked in, and you do the best you can. If it turns out not to be a very inspired performance—well, that can happen in jazz too."

Just before our interview, I had played Scott a remarkable album produced by Walter Becker and Donald Fagen of Steely Dan fame. In it, two saxophonists, Pete Christlieb and Warne Marsh, play swinging, undiluted 4/4 jazz. I asked Scott whether he didn't feel an urge to return to that kind of self-expression.

"I'd like to do that; I never did it on a more than occasional basis, of course. If I thrust myself into it full time I could make a contribution in that area, and I believe there are ventures like that ahead for me. But that's not to imply that in the meantime I have 'gone commercial'—I have never yet made a dime in artist's royalties. Sure, I've done very well writing and playing on other people's records, composing and arranging for a variety of people; but on my own albums, after the recording costs are paid off, a certain percentage is supposed to go to me, and I'm still waiting to sell enough to pay off those expenses."

Scott's present direction may be said to have taken shape around 1972, when he was working one night a week in small Hollywood clubs with a group that was to evolve into the L.A. Express. "Our bassist, Max Bennett, was the first to bring in a couple of rock-oriented tunes. They weren't really trite; they were fun, and with Joe Sample on piano we found ways of extending them. The people went nuts. So what did I know? I just figured, well, let's go this way, and so the L.A. Express was born because we'd become tired of playing for nobody."

Despite his convincing rationalization, there are hints that Scott is subconsciously aware that his present direction does not encompass all his potentialities. The most direct indication of his underlying convictions was his account of an experience a few weeks ago:

"Last month I had the great honor of recording an album with Tony Williams. Stanley Clarke and Herbie Hancock were also on it. I suddenly realized that here I was working with two guys—Herbie and Tony—who were in that fantastic Miles Davis "Funny Valentine" and "Stella by Starlight" album. I used to live, eat, sleep and breathe that album. And I have a tremendous admiration for Stanley Clarke. I felt so comfortable with just the three of them and me, and I know that they, and I, along with all of us who are caught up in this jazz-pop fusion syndrome, realize that opportunities are opening up to do all kinds of music, on a straight-ahead jazz level.

"It's really something to think about, after putting my focus in other areas during these past years, that young people today are fascinated by jazz. I know I'm going to come out in that direction more and more."

UPTOWN DANCE. Stephane Grappelli. JC 35415. At the age of 70, with more than 90 albums to his credit, Grappelli, on making his first American session, finds himself subjected to the process of popularization. The manufacturers are Ettore Stratta, producer, and Claus Ogerman, arranger-conductor, each of whom wrote two original pieces for the occasion. The string-section writing measures up to Ogerman's high standard; the compositions by Erroll Garner, Tom Scott, Matt Dennis and others cannot be faulted; yet, for all these good intentions and inventions, the loose, unfettered *joie de vivre* that has always been the essence of the violin virtuoso is partially stifled. The albums Grappelli made over the decades with Django Reinhardt, Joe Venuti, Oscar Peterson and Yehudi Menuhin will long outlast this overelaborate effort. □

JAZZ 11/5

Versatile Tom Scott leads the virtual 24-hours-a-day life of the musician everybody needs.

TOM SCOTT INCHES BACK TO THE FOLD

BY LEONARD FEATHER

When Tom Scott's teen years ended, he was already a prize-winning prodigy who had mastered all the saxophones, clarinets and flutes and had racked up credits playing jazz gigs with Don Ellis, Oliver Nelson and Roger Kellaway. He had recorded two albums as a leader and was beginning to make inroads in the TV studios, where, like his father, Nathan Scott, he was to become a respected writer of series scores.

This year, Scott moved out of his 20s. What happened during his first adult decade is not easily summarized in a few paragraphs. Along with writing assignments for TV ("Baretta," "Streets of San Francisco") and movies ("Uptown Saturday Night," "Conquest of the Planet of the Apes"), he formed his own L.A. Express combo and led it onto the pop charts, backed Carole King and Joni Mitchell in concerts, wrote arrangements for a George Harrison show and won various polls, among them the studio musicians' Most Valuable Player award.

Since separating from the L.A. Express in 1975, he has toured with other groups, answered hundreds of studio calls and generally led the virtual 24-hours-a-day life of the musician everybody needs.

"Just a year ago," he said, "I decided it was time to stop spreading myself so thin and concentrate my energies in one main direction. That's when my individual career really began."

Embarking on his first solo tour last spring, he stole the show, according to one reviewer, from George Benson, for whom he was opening in Portland, Ore.

Last week saw the release of his first album on Columbia (he was previously on Epic/Ode) and the beginning of a three-month tour of the United States that starts in the East and will arrive in California early in 1979. He is leading a group with Russell Ferrante, keyboards; Steve Khan, guitar; Jimmy Haslip, bass, and Ron Aston, drums.

It is symbolic of his accelerating financial rewards that in partnership with his coproducer, engineer Hank Cicalo, he recently purchased the Beach Boys' recording studio in Santa Monica, is refurbishing it and will lease it out to Auracle and other groups, in addition to doing all his own recording there.

These facts, while attesting to Scott's commercial success, say nothing about Scott as the promising young jazzman who, in the often-expressed opinion of this writer and some other observers, somehow got lost along the way.

An articulate and loquacious self-analyst, Scott explains his motivations: "For a long time, all of us who are involved in crossover music have had to deal with the problem of being true to our artistic beliefs, our musical

AT THE ROXY

11/6

Purim Sings With Her Own Group

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Flora Purim and her husband Airto Moreira having gone their separate professional ways, the Brazilian singer presented her own group Friday and Saturday at the Roxy.

It was a pleasant surprise to hear Purim reunited with her old friend from Return to Forever, saxophonist Joe Farrell. The passages they had worked out together in unison and in harmony, along with backup singer Maria Fatima, lent the unit a potentially distinctive sound.

Working against this end was the rhythm section. Too loud and poorly balanced, it did nothing to help Purim's confidence or her intonation.

"Life as a Feather" belied its title, emerging heavy as a hammer. The chunky beat in "Nothing Will Be as It Was Tomorrow" and the disintegration of "Open Your Eyes, You Can Fly" into a duel between Alex Acuna's drums and Manolo Badrena's percussion were irrelevant to the vocal art of Purim, whose records of these songs show the importance of an integrated, temperate background.

Two other Brazilians played a dazzling warmup set. They were Egberto Gismonti, who is tall, dark-haired and pony-tailed, and Nana Vasconcelos, who is short, black, small-boned and bearded. Their exotic performance ran the gamut through Brazilian, Indian, classical and folk elements.

Gismonti, who began on a short wooden flute, later produced startling effects from an eight-stringed guitar, then picked up a Thai flute, a vertically held object that looks like six flutes bound together and sounds not unlike an accordion. He devoted the final 10 minutes of this wild set to a kinetic attack on the piano, suggesting Keith Jarrett under the influence of Cecil Taylor.

While all this went on, Vasconcelos made ominous sounds on a small cylindrical drum, produced windlike noises by shaking a metal sheet and revealed his mastery of the berimbau, which resembles an archer's bow.

No wonder the recent ECM album featuring these two is on the best-seller list. They are creating combinations of sounds, all acoustic and accessible, that are new and exciting to anyone who has never explored the northern reaches of Brazil.

11/8

JAZZ REVIEW

Bobby Hutcherson at the Lighthouse

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The economic exigencies of the music business were vividly demonstrated Sunday at the Lighthouse when Bobby Hutcherson began his set by playing "Highway One," the title tune of his first Columbia LP.

On the recorded version, his composition is supported by a brass section composed of four trumpets and four trombones. In the club, this tune, and everything else, is delivered simply by Hutcherson's vibraphone and a rhythm section. Remarkably, Hutcherson manages to convey with this minimal assistance as much fiery conviction as he did in the elaborate recording.

This is due largely to the rare artistry of all four men on the Lighthouse bandstand. Their relentless intensity is coupled with a brilliance of polyrhythmic execution that can be matched by few if any other jazz combos now operative.

Bassist James Leary and drummer Eddie Marshall, who have worked with Hutcherson off and on for years, are masters of style, celerity and subtlety. Dwight Dickerson is a temporary and invaluable addition, playing mainly acoustic piano but doubling on electric keyboard in Hutcherson's "Later Even." On this exquisite tune, Hutcherson opens with slow, stately, distant effects, using four mallets, unaccompanied until Leary establishes a hypnotic ostinato. The subdued mood provided a well placed contrast in a generally upbeat set.

Hutcherson is not only the most uncompromising and imaginative vibraphonist in jazz today, but also a most intriguing writer. Eddie Marshall's "Dreamin' " was another compositional high point.

The set ended with a "Salt Peanuts" in which Leary must have established a world record for keeping up a four-beat pulse at a pace that defied belief. Speed, however, was only a means to an end as the four displayed an unremitting empathy and energetic flow of invention.

11/9

Art Farmer Plays at Memory Lane

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Art Farmer slipped into town this week, unheralded and almost unobserved, for a short stint at Memory Lane, on Santa Barbara at Arlington.

The Vienna-based fluegelhorn soloist, an expatriate for the last 10 years, long has been respected for the maturity and beauty of his style and sound. Now on a brief tour of the United States, he took the trouble to assemble a quartet in New York to travel with him. Consequently, there was evidence of rehearsal and organization, though for the most part an improvisational atmosphere prevailed.

Farmer is most effective playing tunes that give him time to construct cerebral, lyrical lines. This quality was observed in "I Can't Get Started" and in Carla Bley's "Sing Me Softly of the Blues."

He is capable, however, of crackling, well-devised, uptempo performances, as he demonstrated in a variation on "Cherokee" arranged by a Viennese friend, Fritz Pauer.

The rhythm section supplied the swinging, nonfusion jazz beat to which Farmer remains loyal. Fred Hersch at the out-of-tune piano and Mike Richmond on bass showed their ability as accompanists and soloists, but when the leader left them to play a number on their own the mood became dull, abstract and out of character with the rest of the set.

Most of Farmer's best work has been achieved in a gentler setting, often with guitarist Jim Hall. His current drummer, Akira Tana, sometimes seems a little too extroverted to complement Farmer's sound. The whole group came together best on "My Heart Skips a Beat," an attractive semisamba with Farmer playing muted.

It is to be hoped that Farmer's admirers will soon attract bigger crowds to Memory Lane than he was able to draw on his election-night opening. He closes Saturday.

11/12 BOOK REVIEW

Two decades of jazz at Monterey

Dizzy, Duke, The Count and Me: The Story of the Monterey Jazz Festival by Jimmy Lyons with Ira Kamin (California Living Books: $19.95, hardcover; $9.95, paperback; illustrated).

This is a handsome book, its big pages (8½x11 inches) ornamented with marvelous line drawings by David Stone Martin, who used to do Norman Granz's album covers in the 1950s, with photographs of everyone from Harry James, Billie Holiday and Dave Brubeck at the first festival in 1958 to Count Basie, Horace Silver and the High School All Stars in 1977.

Jimmy Lyons, whose child the Monterey Festival has been for the past 20 years, may well consider this volume to be his grandchild. Among the 120 pic-

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

tures, you will find Jimmy Lyons at 2, Jimmy Lyons at 3, Jimmy Lyons in the saddle at an unstated age, Jimmy broadcasting jazz in the 1940s, Jimmy with Dizzy, Jimmy with John Lewis, Jimmy with Max Roach. But there are also such priceless shots as the Teagarden family in its final reunion, 1963; Duke Ellington kissing Joe Williams, 1970; the Jefferson Airplane, 1966 (yes, the festival tried going that route but didn't take long to retrench); Rex Stewart, John Coltrane, Johnny Hodges, Ben Webster and others long gone.

The weakness lies in the text. Odd patches of anecdotal reminiscences by Lyons; a year-by-year rundown of the talent rosters, with brief comments; a ridiculous, phony piece on jazz argot, and reviews of various festivals, most of them written by Ralph J. Gleason in an incisive, no-holds-barred manner that brings up the overall literary level. Gleason was at first a close confidant of Lyons, and deeply involved with Monterey, but his gradual disappointment is told starkly in the headlines: "The Fat Is Close to the Fire" (1965); "Next Time, Music Before Money" (1968); "Sour Notes at Jazz Festival" (1971), "No More Spark" (1972).

Gleason's festival comments for the last two years before his death do not appear, and for good reason: He had stopped bothering to attend.

In a sense, the book resembles what the event itself has become: a little disorganized, lacking a sense of direction, but still, at least intermittently, fun to look at.

Feather is The Times' jazz critic

LETTERS

WHO'S TOPS IN JAZZ?

Like most, I think, I consider Leonard Feather the leading expert jazz has had, and I know any list of 10 best is going to attract argument, but I was disappointed in his list of the 10 top artists in the history of the music (Calendar, Nov. 12). Does he realize that, with the possible exception of Louis Armstrong, each of his 10 was prominent in the '40s, which was perhaps the peak of his youthful enthusiasm for jazz, as it also was mine. He cites influences on others as a major factor in his selections, yet neglects to include a pioneer from the early Dixieland Era or any of the pioneers from the later eras of the '50s, '60s and '70s.

I bow to no one in my admiration for Coleman Hawkins, my all-time favorite soloist, but I would find it hard to put him in and leave out a Miles, a Monk or a Mingus. I am not personally passionate about Ornette Coleman or Cecil Taylor, but in conscience I would have to include one or the other above a Joe Venuti, a major performer on a minor instrument in this music. I wonder how can a Kid Ory, a Bessie Smith or a John Coltrane be omitted and an Earl Hines included? Even a John Lewis or Stan Kenton had greater creative impact on a whole body of music. Even an Eddie Condon, who kept alive Dixieland 20 years past its time. I tried to make up my own list of 10 and did, but felt bad about omitting several. I understand the problem.

BILL LIBBY
Westminster

PS. My 10: 1. Armstrong 2. Ellington 3. Parker 4. Holiday 5. Goodman 6. Ory 7. Davis 8. Monk 9. Mingus 10. Coleman.

Feather's series of selections concludes today, Page 1.

See also P. 97: Time/Life Reviews

LOS ANGELES TIMES

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 19, 1978

PHOTO BY PRENSA LATINA

Surrounded by members of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Fidel Castro greets Alicia Alonso, center, at Festival of Ballet.

CASTRO'S CUBA AND ALONSO'S BALLET—AN IMPERIALIST VISITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

BY MARTIN BERNHEIMER

This is the first of two reports by the Times music and dance critic on his trip to Cuba.

HAVANA—Getting to Cuba was not half the fun.

The invitation to attend the 6th International Festival of Ballet was sent from the offices of the Ballet Nacional here on June 30. It reached the land of the plastic lotus on Aug. 15. The delay may have had something to do with the fact that all mail from Cuba to the States is carried by crippled ants who make irregular detour stops in Zagreb and Istanbul. In this instance, matters may have been complicated a bit by the fact that the envelope was addressed to "*Cro.* Martin Bernheimer"—Crocodile? Crony? Croton? Crotchet? Critico? —at the "Los Angeles Times/Estados Unidos/*New York*."

No matter. The invitation, which bore the magical name of Alicia Alonso on the letterhead, did reach this old *Cro.*, and the message, when translated, proved welcome.

We knew, from the debut season last summer at the Kennedy Center, that the National Ballet of Cuba was a company of remarkable finesse and vitality. We knew that Alonso was a wonder woman who had not only conquered the passage of time—at 57 she still dances magnificently—but also the perils of partial blindness. We knew that, with a little help from Fidel Castro, she had somehow created and sustained the elitist anachronism of major ballet in an underdeveloped Communist Latin-American state. The Cuban ballet phenomenon looked interesting, and warranted closer investigation.

Yes, we replied. Yes, please.

That was when the negotiations began. Negotiations for a visa via the Czech embassy in Washington, which handles foreign affairs for Cuba but seems to be open only from 9:15 to 9:20 on very odd Thursdays. Negotiations for program data from Cuba. Negotiations for complicated travel with any number of distant-seeming airlines.

The problem, simply put, was this: one can't get to Cuba from America. Cuba may be a not-so-little island only 90 miles off the Florida coast. But forget about direct flights. The most likely routes take the intrepid traveler to Cuba via Toronto or Mexico City—if Air Canada and/or Aero Mexicana do not happen to be on strike.

Both carriers were on strike, at one time or another, while this trip was being planned. Ergo, intermediate visits to Panama and Costa Rica had to be contemplated. A friendly fate intervened at the last minute, settling both internal disputes and again making the two flights each week from Canada and Mexico feasible realities.

I left for Havana triumphant with a visa in my pocket. It had arrived 48 hours before departure time. I did not know, however, where I was going, or what I would do when I got there. Havana had not responded to any communications since the initial invitation was sent to New York. Luckily this old Cro. likes adventure . . .

□

Marti Airport in Havana does not resemble LAX. It doesn't even look like the airport in dutiful downtown Burbank. It is dinky—to call it small would be too vague —and it is lined with broken-down fighter planes, Aeroflot liners obviously just in from Moscow and Leningrad, and a few prop antiques bearing the Air Cubana banner.

Most of my fellow passengers on the incoming flight from Canada were part of the ballet mission. Dancers, photographers,

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SPOTLIGHT

The medium changes but not the message or laughs in "Same Time, Next Year." Charles Champlin film review, Page 37.

The Doors give the late Jim Morrison what he always wanted—an album of his poetry. Page 86.

Edvard Munch artworks on display at the National Gallery. William Wilson review, Page 103.

Sur la Mer—Burt Hixson's *coup sur* by the sea in Marina del Rey. Lois Dwan review, Page 109.

Book Review is published with the View section in today's Times.

AND NOW, THE OVERRATED JAZZMEN

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Just as the literature devoted to each of the arts applies itself to the true giants, an endless flow of printer's ink is continuously spilled in the adulation of others demonstrably less worthy.

For many years jazz, particularly in the United States, was at the mercy of writers inclined toward gee-whiz journalism rather than scholarly analysis. Even before jazz criticism became an influential force, the popularity attained by certain personalities and instrumentalists exceeded their aesthetic input.

In jazz as in other areas of American society, fame and success sometimes were achieved for one or more of the following irrelevant reasons:

1—The artist knew the value of becoming established as a personality, of gaining a reputation as an eccentric, a wit or a maverick.

2—The artist was white and moderately talented, and had access to more media publicity, more areas of employment and more mass acceptance than any black American, whatever his ability, could hope to achieve at the time.

3—The artist was "adopted" by a critic or group of critics, which resulted in a cult growing up around him.

4—In those days there wasn't much competition.

In selecting my candidates for the list of 10 most overrated jazz performers, I have

Conclusion of a two-part series.

borne these considerations in mind while reminding myself that "overrated" does not necessarily mean untalented. Before offended readers take to typewriters, let me clarify once and for all the conditions that governed this compilation.

Two or three of the men I chose (interestingly, no women made the list, perhaps because it is easier for them to become underrated than overrated) were accomplished musicians for whose competence I had respect. (The fact that all 10 are deceased is coincidental; there is a vast body of overrated musicians on today's scene, more perhaps than ever before, but the duration of their impact and the small extent to which they have penetrated the history books does not yet justify their inclusion.)

What we are dealing with here is not so much the degree of talent as the disproportionate kudos meted out, either by the public or in jazz literature, for one or more of the causes listed above.

At the head of the roster is an early hero in whose case this lack of correct proportion was the most objectionable. As we move through the 10 names, the degree of overreaction in the performer's favor becomes less sizable, or his having been overrated seems less important.

1—Paul Whiteman (1890-1967), as orchestra leader and so-called King of Jazz.

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LOS ANGELES TIMES

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 12, 1978

Taking the top three spots in a top 10 of jazz greats are, from left, Louis Armstrong, second place; Art Tatum, third, and Duke Ellington in the number-one slot.

PLAYING FAVORITES: THE TOP 10 JAZZ ARTISTS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

First of two parts.

Who are the 10 top artists in the history of jazz? Before you rush in with an answer, several facts call for consideration.

During the past 70 or 80 years (the exact point of departure will never be determined), jazz evolved from its incoherent origins as an almost illiterate idiom, virtually a branch of folk music, into a sophisticated art form drawn from several tributary sources—field-hollers, pre-blues chants, minstrelsy, ragtime, New Orleans parade music, Dixieland and others. It was not until a decade or two after its birth that the music was preserved to any meaningful degree on records, and it was even later, more than halfway through its life to date, that it was subjected to extensive scholarly analysis.

There's also a great proportion of neophytes among today's jazz audience, and a full appreciation of the contribution of the real giants of jazz may be all but impossible for the relatively new aficionado to achieve.

For example, how will the 19-year-old jazz enthusiast react to the question? For those to whom even John Coltrane is a cult figure, a respected legend out of the dim past, while Billie Holiday is mainly a tragic victim of society with a voice indistinguishable from that of Diana Ross, the answer may be fraught with confusion, ignorance and lack of maturity.

These reflections crossed my mind when I received a letter from Nathan Davis, director of jazz studies at the University of Pittsburgh, notifying me that the university planned to establish a Jazz Hall of Fame. I was asked, as a member of the advisory board, to select the first candidate. A list of possible names was included.

Noting that the list made no mention of Duke Ellington, I began the seemingly endless task of alternately erasing and adding. Though I have usually shied away from compiling lists of favorites, the need for a list to guide younger initiates overcame my reluctance. Moreover, it must be clearly understood that this is *not* a 10 Best or 10 Greatest pronunciamento, but a statement concerning those whose services to jazz have been most meaningful to me.

After I had compiled what appeared to be a well-balanced roster, it occurred to me that this might make a viable subject for a radio program. Before narrating the show, I made three more alterations; once it was on tape, I realized that this also might make a useful newspaper column. Further changes of heart compelled me to shuffle the list around again before the following comments went to press. (My self-contradictions may be heard tonight at 8 on KUSC-FM.)

Four basic guidelines were used in determining the qualifications for the pantheon:

1—How significant was the performer's original artistic impact?

2—What has been the power and durability of his or her musical influence on the overall course of jazz?

3—How much aesthetic pleasure have I derived from listening to this artist, in person or on records?

4—Twenty or more years from today, how valid will the artist's inclusion on this list appear to be in the hindsight of a full century of jazz?

The 10 names are listed in the order of their importance. The sequence for the first six is reasonably certain; for the rest, I remain assailed by agonizing doubts.

The noose awaits me; here goes my neck.

1—Beyond a scintilla of doubt, Duke Ellington, as composer and orchestra leader. While it is unquestionable that improvisation has been the lifeblood of jazz, and that Ellington's role was that of an unprecedented creative force in the areas of writing and interpreting, one important related fact must be borne in mind: Had it not been for the genius he developed in providing ideal settings

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STRAIT TIME FOR HOFFMAN

BY CLARKE TAYLOR

NEW YORK—"If you're an actor, you want juicy roles that are not like you in real life—a killer, a hero, a clown—and for me, a 41-year-old urban, Jewish actor on the fade, the idea of playing an American mother is exciting!"

Dustin Hoffman was referring to his 14th film role, in Robert Benton's "Kramer vs. Kramer," currently shooting on locations in New York. And, seriously, the role is unlike any of the characters he's previously played.

Ted Kramer's a regular guy, a conforming member of society. He's enjoying an upwardly mobile, middle-class Manhattan life—when suddenly he loses both his Madison Ave. ad job and his newly liberated wife and he's left to the single parenting of a 5-year-old son. At midlife Kramer has simply discovered that all the lights will not turn green.

Benton said there was a lot of the off-screen Hoffman going into Ted Kramer. And, indeed, 10 years after his overnight success in "The Graduate," all the lights have not been turning green for the actor. An open and heated feud with First Artists has recently surrounded his career with controversy. And for months, his personal life has been surrounded by gossip, as rumors circulated reporting an estrangement between him and his actress-dancer wife Anne. The couple now is said to be reunited, but Hoffman himself has had a taste of single parenting.

During a yogurt-dinner break in his trailer, Hoffman conceded a turning point in his

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The 10 Most Overrated Names in Jazz History

By LEONARD FEATHER
Los Angeles Times Service

Just as the literature devoted to each of the arts applies itself to the true giants, an endless flow of printer's ink is continuously spilled in the adulation of others demonstrably less worthy.

For many years jazz, particularly in the United States, was at the mercy of writers inclined toward gee-whiz journalism rather than scholarly analysis. Even before jazz criticism became an influential force, the popularity attained by certain personalities and instrumentalists exceeded their esthetic input.

In jazz as in other areas of American society, fame and success sometimes were achieved for one or more of the following irrelevant reasons:

- The artist knew the value of becoming established as a personality, of gaining a reputation as an eccentric or a maverick.
- The artist was white, moderately talented, and had access to more media publicity, more areas of employment and more media publicity, more areas of employment and more mass acceptance than any black American, whatever his ability, could hope to achieve at the time.
- The artist was "adopted" by a critic or group of critics, as a result of which a cult grew up around him.
- In those days there wasn't much competition.

In selecting my candidates for the list of 10 most overrated jazz performers, I have borne these considerations in mind while reminding myself that "overrated" does not necessarily mean untalented.

Two or three of the men I chose (interestingly, no women made the list, perhaps because it is easier for them to become underrated than overrated) were accomplished musicians for whose competence I had respect. (The fact that all 10 are deceased is coincidental; there is a vast body of overrated musicians on today's scene, more perhaps than ever before, but the duration of their impact and the small extent to which they have penetrated the history books does not yet justify their inclusion.)

AT THE HEAD of the roster is an early hero in whose case the lack of correct proportion in public or critical acclaim was the most objectionable.

● Paul Whiteman (1890-1967), as orchestra leader and so-called King of Jazz.

Many of us who grew up during or just after the age of the Whiteman frenzy were appalled by the "King of Jazz" slogan, and by his motion picture of the same name. The jazz content of the movie was even less than that of the band's recordings.

The sobriquet attached to Whiteman (and the ironic racial overtones of his actual name) were facets of a strange misunderstanding. There was an enormous gap between the real world of jazz and the public's adoption of the term. It was one thing to talk about the Jazz Age, equating it with Whiteman and flappers and bootleg booze; something else entirely to examine the accomplishments of Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Ellington, Fletcher Henderson and compare them with Whiteman's band. The roles of Bix Beiderbecke and the other jazz musicians who passed through Whiteman's ranks were largely subordinated to the band's "symphonic jazz" arrangements.

● Glenn Miller (1904-1944).

As in Whiteman's case, this is not a matter of totally denying a contribution. Both men hired expert musicians and directed them well. Miller, a shrewd businessman and disciplinarian, wrote many of his band's most successful arrangements and was a capable craftsman.

Some of Miller's biggest hits were jazz instrumentals. In *Jazz: A History* by Frank Tirro, more space is devoted to Miller than to Jimmie Lunceford, whose superb band Miller idolized. In effect, Miller was taken seriously as a quasi-jazz figure to the detriment of others.

HE WAS a popularizer with a knack for gauging the public's taste. His repetitious record of *In The Mood* came a year after the little-known but excellent arrangement by the band of Edgar Hayes; his *Tuxedo Junction* similarly followed Erskine Hawkins' version. Other Miller jazz numbers such as *Rug Cutter's Swing* were pleasant trivia, not on a level with contemporaneous recordings of comparable material by Basie, Goodman, Ellington, Lunceford or Charlie Barnet.

● Ferdinand (Jelly Roll) Morton (1885-1941) as pianist.

Item: Duke Ellington, in his foreword to *The Encyclopedia of Jazz*, wrote: "Jelly Roll Morton, who was mainly a writer ... played piano like one of those high school teachers in Washington; as a matter of fact, high school teachers played better jazz. Among other things, his rhythm was unsteady; but that's the kind of piano the West was geared up to." (By "West" Ellington meant New Orleans; in criticizing Morton he was making a rare departure from a lifelong pattern of avoiding negative comments about any fellow musician.)

Item: When Morton showed up unexpectedly for a record session John Hammond was producing, Hammond was incensed and had Morton ejected from the studio.

Item: Mary Lou Williams reacting (during a blindfold test) to Morton's record of *Red Hot Pepper*: "Ouch! I don't recognize that ... solos were good for their time, I guess, but no beat at all ... what does it lack? Music! No stars."

Three From the Rogues' Gallery of Jazz Hype
... from left: Eddie Condon, Paul Whiteman, Glenn Miller

A better case can be made for Morton as composer-arranger. He wrote *King Porter Stomp* and other well constructed tunes; but men whose talents in this area were far greater than his (notably Don Redman) are given relatively short shrift in the annals of jazz.

● Red Nichols (1905-1965) as cornetist.

His minor talent was blown up excessively because, during the pre-swing era, he led a series of well-conceived records under the banner of Red Nichols and his Five Pennies. He had the ability to pick sidemen who made his combos sound better than their leader. Nichols was the subject of a bland movie, *The Five Pennies*, in which he was played by Danny Kaye.

Nichols was considered important as a catalyst in the days when all-white groups dominated much of the jazz scene. His actual innate talent must be weighed against the once widespread praise accorded him, and the very fact of the movie's having been made. Today, almost 20 years later, the Duke Ellington Story has never been filmed.

● Bunk Johnson (1879-1949), as cornetist-trumpeter.

Propped up by revivalists and equipped with a new set of teeth after a long period of inactivity, Johnson in the mid-'40s became the chief symbol of reactionism and of violent opposition, by almost every leading critic, to the innovations of Dizzy Gillespie. Yet Samuel Charters in *Jazz New Orleans* wrote: "Bunk in these (late) years was a petulant, spiteful man who drank too much and played only when he was in the mood, but he had waited many years for success, and for him, at least, it had come a little too late." Had he ever been able to blow up a storm? An impartial jury was never impaneled.

● Glen Gray (1906-1963), as bandleader.

His Casa Loma Orchestra, said to have been the first big white band with a deliberate jazz policy, played watered-down riff music that endeared him to college audiences in the early 1930s. At best the band was an anemic counterpart of Fletcher Henderson.

● Milton (Mezz) Mezzrow (1899-1972), as clarinetist.

He was an opium addict for a while, and a reefer dealer befriended by musicians because he sold them pot (and eventually went to jail for it). He told all about it in a somewhat fictionalized, self-serving book, *Really the Blues*.

Mezzrow was a likable, harmless musical nonentity whose reputation as a clarinetist was built almost singlehandedly by his close friend, the French critic Hugues Panassie. He spent the last 20 years of his life in Paris. To Mezz's credit, he was an implacable enemy of racial bigotry long before it became popular to take a stand.

● Johnny Dodds (1892-1940), as clarinetist.

Part of the New Orleans legend, an associate of Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver, Dodds to this day remains a darling of the critical antiquarians. At his best, he played very simple, mildly effective solos, but his work as a whole was aptly summarized by the respected French composer and critic Andre Hodeir: "Johnny Dodds, who shows an undeniable sense of the collective style at times, commits gross errors at other times ... .His rudimentary technique does him a disservice; I can't help feeling uncomfortable when I listen to him fumbling ...."

● Kid Ory (1886-1973), as trombonist.

Listening to later masters of the trombone, one wonders about Ory in his prime time (the 1920s). As Hodeir wrote, Ory tried hard to create an expressive language on the horn, but it was left to others, later, to succeed. Reviewing an Armstrong record, Hodeir remarked: "Kid Ory uses a corny kind of syncopation ... compare this passage with Armstrong's ... How stiff Kid Ory is and how heavily he leans upon the beat, whereas Louis seems to soar above it!"

We have inherited something of value from Ory, however: he composed th ineradicable *Muskrat Ramble*.

● Eddie Condon (1904-1973), as guitarist.

Condon is included only on the basis of his limitations as a performer.

During the 1940s, with the help of an astute promoter named Ernie Anderson, Condon became a figurehead of the Dixieland clique, recording with some excellent sidemen and spearheading a series of concerts at Town Hall. Co-author of several books, Condon was an acerbically witty spokesman for his cause, but like too many musicians of his era and the critics who catered to them, he devoted time to attacks on Gillespie, Parker and Co. that could better have been given over to practicing the guitar.

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Strange as it may seem, I was on good terms with both Condon and Mezzrow, though both were well aware of our intense differences of opinion. In fact, I recall a night on the town long ago when, after exploring some of the great sounds of Harlem and 52nd Street, Mezzrow and I sat in his car outside my hotel at 4 a.m., playing the blues on two clarinets. The world lost an opportunity to hear its two least gifted clarinetists joined in quasi-harmony. If anyone had ever had a chance to overrate me, I would glady have substituted my own name for Mezzrow's in the Bottom 10.

JAZZ REVIEW

Guitarist Breau at the Sound Room

BY LEONARD FEATHER

At 37, guitarist Lenny Breau is too young to be called legendary, yet he has achieved that stature, perhaps because his erratic career never has measured up to his talent.

After living for years in Canada, then from 1976 in Nashville, Breau is back in town, playing every Monday night at the Sound Room in Studio City.

What is different about him? First, he uses a custom-made guitar, its neck longer and wider than the norm. Playing finger style, using a thumb pick and very long fingernails, he extracts from this instrument ringing, almost bell-like tones, unpredictable chords and flamenco-like tremolos.

What else is different? His choice of material is incredible. He will race through Charlie Parker's "Billie's Bounce" at a terrifying tempo, then talk about his country roots, singing and playing "Don't Think Twice" in his Bob Dylan bag, and proceed to his modal mood with John Coltrane's "Impressions."

Different, too, is his listing of pianist Bill Evans among his influences. In the pianist's composition "Funkalero," Breau's delicacy suggested a Bill Evans of the guitar. Yet he is just as hung up on Chet Atkins, with whom he recorded in Nashville.

His ballads ("The Shadow of Your Smile") are carefully arranged, with long, lyrical solo introductions, tempo passages and meter changes, backed by his bassist and drummer, and gently fading solo finales.

Can there be yet another difference? He has a sense of humor, making wry announcements and singing the Gene Autry closing theme, "Back in the Saddle Again," to wind up a set that leaves you wondering why this unique talent is not currently being preserved on records.

On Monday, his regular drummer, Carl Burnett, will be back, along with Joel DiBartolo on upright bass. Perhaps this will produce even more delightful results, though it hardly seems possible. No wonder half the audience Monday consisted of fellow guitarists. Lenny Breau is one of a kind.

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THE OVERRATED

Continued from Page 96

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We have inherited something of value from Ory, however; he composed "Muskrat Ramble."

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Condon is included only on the basis of his limitations as a performer. He represents reasons 1 and 3 on the above list of potential paths to fame.

During the 1940s, with the help of an astute promoter named Ernie Anderson, Condon became a figurehead of the Dixieland clique, recording with some excellent sideman and spearheading a series of concerts at Town Hall. Coauthor of several books, Condon was an acerbically witty spokesman for his cause, but like too many musicians of his era and the critics who catered to them, he devoted time to attacks on Gillespie, Parker and company that could better have been given over to practicing the guitar.

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Strange as it may seem, I was on good terms with both Condon and Mezzrow, though both were well aware of our intense differences of opinion. In fact, I recall a night on the town long ago when, after exploring some of the great sounds of Harlem and 52nd St., Mezzrow and I sat in his car outside my hotel at 4 a.m., playing the blues on two clarinets. The world lost an opportunity to hear its two least gifted clarinetists joined in quasi-harmony. If anyone had ever had a chance to overrate me, I would gladly have substituted my own name for Mezzrow's in the Bottom 10.

A closing word to admirers of any of the musicians I have discussed: As I tried to make clear at the outset, this was not an attempt to denigrate them totally, but rather to set their talents (and all were talented in one degree or another) in a more accurate perspective. In fact, I am even assembling for some future broadcast a program of their more successful works. This may help to prove that nobody, neither musician nor critic, is all bad. □

Paul Whiteman

Glenn Miller

Jelly Roll Morton

Red Nichols

Glen Gray

ANOTHER TOP 10: THE OVERRATED

Continued from First Page

Many of us who grew up during or just after the age of the Whiteman frenzy were appalled by the "King of Jazz" slogan, and by his motion picture of the same name. The jazz content of the movie was even less than that of the band's recordings.

The sobriquet attached to Whiteman (and the ironic racial overtones of his actual name) were facets of a strange misunderstanding. There was an enormous gap between the real world of jazz and the public's adoption of the term. It was one thing to talk about the jazz age, equating it with Whiteman and flappers and bootleg booze; something else entirely to examine the accomplishments of Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Ellington, Fletcher Henderson and compare them with Whiteman's band. The roles of Bix Beiderbecke and the other jazz musicians who passed through Whiteman's ranks were largely subordinated to the band's "symphonic jazz" arrangements.

Wilder Hobson in "American Jazz Music" (Da Capo, 1939), one of the first books to take a serious look at the real jazz, wrote that "Whiteman drew very little from the jazz language except some of its simpler rhythmic patterns . . . there was little more than a trace of the personal expression, improvisation, counterpoint, or rhythmic subtlety of natural jazz . . ."

Today's perspective tells us that we may have overreacted, and that had Whiteman never borne that absurd cognomen he might have been subjected to less vilification. In his "Early Jazz" (Oxford, 1968), Gunther Schuller summed up a countervailing attitude: "The hard-core jazz critics dismiss Whiteman summarily as a destructive influence . . . on all of jazz . . Whiteman was a sociological phenomenon responding to a particular need in the society of his time . . . The Whiteman orchestra achieved much that was admirable, and there is no question that it was admired (and envied) by many musicians, both black and white . . . Excellent intonation, perfect balance, and clean attacks do not necessarily equate with superficiality. There is in the best Whiteman performances a feeling and a personal sound as unique in its way as Ellington's or Basie's."

Mezz Mezzrow

Kid Ory

Nevertheless we must remember the imbalance between what Whiteman achieved and the hysterical acclaim accorded him as King of Jazz. Bearing that in mind, I have to award Whiteman the top spot.

2—Glenn Miller (1904-1944). As in Whiteman's case, this is not a matter of totally denying a contribution. Both men hired expert musicians and directed them well. Miller, a shrewd businessman and disciplinarian, wrote many of his band's most successful arrangements and was a capable craftsman.

Any time the slightest reservation is uttered concerning Miller, the reaction is excessively violent. I am not denying that his following is uniquely loyal, his reputation has been amazingly long-lasting and to this day fans of all ages flock to hear an orchestra bearing his name.

It was only the acceptance of Miller's jazz work that concerned me. Some of his biggest hits were jazz instrumentals. In "Jazz: A History" by Frank Tirro (Norton, 1977), more space is devoted to Miller than to Jimmie Lunceford, whose superb band Miller idolized. In effect, Miller was taken seriously as a quasi-jazz figure to the detriment of others.

He was a popularizer with a knack for gauging the public's taste. His repetitious record of "In the Mood" came a year after the little-known but excellent arrangement by the band of Edgar Hayes; his "Tuxedo Junction" similarly followed Erskine Hawkins' version. Other Miller jazz numbers such as "Rug Cutter's Swing" were pleasant trivia, not on a level with contemporaneous recordings of comparable material by Basie, Goodman, Ellington, Lunceford or Charlie Barnet.

Miller essentially was the leader of a tremendously successful dance band in the popular music market. It was symbolic of the climate of those days that a couple of times Miller's tenor sax soloist, a man of modest talent named Tex Beneke, outstripped Coleman Hawkins in the influential "Metronome" jazz poll. Any visible and prominent association with Miller back then gave you that kind of power.

3—Ferdinand (Jelly Roll) Morton (1885-1941) as pianist.

Item: Duke Ellington, in his foreword to "The Encyclopedia of Jazz," wrote, "Jelly Roll Morton, who was mainly a writer . . played piano like one of those high school teachers in Washington; as a matter of fact, high school teachers played better jazz. Among other things, his rhythm was unsteady; but that's the kind of piano the West was geared up to." (By "West" Ellington meant New Orleans; in criticizing Morton he was making a rare departure from a lifelong pattern of avoiding negative comments about any fellow musicians.)

Many authorities whom I respect have analyzed and idolized Morton and his work, building him posthumously to cult hero stature; yet when Morton, self-described "inventor of jazz," was on the scene during my early New York years, almost every musician with whom I discussed him took a stance similar to Ellington's.

A better case can be made for Morton as composer/arranger. He wrote "King Porter Stomp" and other well-constructed tunes; but men whose talents in this area were far greater than his (notably Don Redman) are given relatively short shrift in the annals of jazz.

4—Red Nichols (1905-1965) as cornetist. His minor talent was blown up excessively because, during the pre-Swing Era, he led a series of well-conceived records under the banner of Red Nichols and His Five Pennies. He had the ability to pick sidemen who made his combos sound better than their leader. Nichols was the subject of a bland movie, "The Five Pennies," in which he was played by Danny Kaye.

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COUNTDOWN: THE TOP 10 OF JAZZ GREATS

Continued from First Page

for a long line of magisterial soloists over a 45-year span, dozens of incomparable instrumentalists might have gone underappreciated or totally unknown.

It still infuriates me that Ellington, for all the honors he earned during his later years, has been revered principally for the wrong reasons. To one who merely hears an Ellington medley, he is the writer of hit songs and simple, hummable instrumentals. The truth is that if he had done nothing but compose tunes on the order of "Solitude" or jam-session vehicles such as "C Jam Blues," Ellington would not rate a place in the first 100, let alone the top 10.

As any jazz musician must know, and as anyone may learn by buying representative albums, Ellington's legacy to posterity primarily consists of several hundred works, varying in length from three to 50 minutes, in which, as he liked to put it, he used the orchestra as his instrument. The secret of his voicings went to the grave with him, for the manuscripts were unpublished and many were lost, illegible and/or disjointed, and in any case were kept secret from all but his closest associates. From "Black and Tan Fantasy" in 1927 to "The New Orleans Suite" and "Togo Brava" in the 1970s, Ellington showed, as Gunter Schuller (then president of the New England Conservatory of Music) wrote in 1968, that his forms were "more concise and symmetrical than those of any number of 19th-century romantic composers."

Suggested LPs: "Carnegie Hall Concerts: (Prestige P-34004, 24073, 24074, 24075). "This is Duke Ellington" (RCA VPM-6042). "The Many Moods of Duke Ellington" (Quintessence 25101). "Such Sweet Thunder" (Columbia Special Products JCL 1033).

2—Louis Armstrong, as trumpeter. In 1960 I called him the first vital jazz soloist to attain worldwide influence as trumpeter, singer, entertainer, dynamic show business personality and strong force in stimulating interest in jazz. Today I would eliminate much of that verbiage. Armstrong in his early years was a poignantly affecting vocalist, particularly on those rare occasions when he sang wordlessly ("West End Blue"), but on the basis of his singing during the pop years, he would no more make the top 10 than would Duke Ellington as pianist. (Possibly the top 12.)

Like Ellington, Armstrong is widely misappreciated. Millions of fans remember him only from "Hello, Dolly!" forward. Some young blacks, and whites, put him down as an Uncle Tom, never accepting him as an inevitable product of his generation (and, in any case, a man of strong latent pride and great vulnerability). It was as an instrumentalist that Armstrong carved his niche and it is for his horn, not his clowning or his singing or his show-business personality, that he ought to be remembered.

The purity, the linearity, the elegant phrasing, the melodic nature of his improvising in the early years were seminal forces in a long line that went from Armstrong to Red Allen and Roy Eldridge, thence to Dizzy Gillespie, and on to Miles Davis and Freddie Hubbard. Since each owes a vast debt to all his predecessors, clearly it is to Armstrong that jazz owes most. Nor were trumpeters alone in following him down the path; he created concepts, phrases, rhythmic nuances that are reflected to this day in the work of every soloist who devotes himself to jazz of any genre.

Billie Holiday

Dizzy Gillespie

Charlie Parker

Benny Goodman

Coleman Hawkins

Earl Hines

Suggested LPs: "Louis Armstrong: July 4, 1900/July 6, 1971" (RCA VMP 6044). "Satch Plays Fats" (Columbia JCL 708). "Satch Plays W.C. Handy" (Columbia JCL 591). "Louis Armstrong-Earl Hines" (Smithsonian 002). "Town Hall Concert Plus" (RCA LPM 1443).

3-Art Tatum. Quite clearly the most accomplished jazz instrumental virtuoso. Tatum's feather-like touch, his ability to invest the most mundane melody with a magical rhythmic spirit and his unmatched mastery of the blues are qualities that have yet to be attained, let alone surpassed, by anyone who followed. He died in 1956, only 46, his career as a solo recitalist (which he should have been all along) barely under way, thanks to racism and the general prejudice against jazz as a concert form.

LPs: "Art Tatum Masterpieces" (MCA 2-4019). Includes solo, trio and combo tracks, among them the matchless session with the blues singer Joe Turner. "Piano Starts Here" (Columbia 9655). Much later, Tatum recorded voluminously for Norman Granz; the best sets are those showing him in group settings, with Benny Carter (Pablo 10732, 10733), Ben Webster (10737), Roy Eldridge (10734) and Buddy De Franco (10736).

4—Billie Holiday. The use of the human voice, never less than the most important of musical instruments in jazz, reached its pinnacle during Lady Day's halcyon years from 1935-45. Nothing will ever again evoke the sensuality and natural majesty of her vocal and visual presence. The sight of her reducing a noisy 52nd St. crowd to pin-drop silence is a memory to be carried through a lifetime.

LPs: "The Golden Years," Vols. I, II, III (Columbia 32121, 32124, 32127). "Billie Holiday Story" (MCA 2-4006E). "Essential Billie Holiday" (Verve V 8410).

Joe Venuti

5 and 6—Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, as instrumentalists and composers. This has to be a tie, in order to avoid any involvement in the foolish rhetoric over an imagined rivalry between the two. A few confused critics feel that Parker was the real progenitor of the bebop era. Having been there throughout its birth pangs I can confirm that they were two kindred souls whose paths luckily crossed, who made a short-lived but formidable team. No trumpeter has yet surpassed Gillespie, technically or creatively; no saxophonist has caught up with the genius of Parker.

Jointly recorded LPs: "In the Beginning" (Prestige 24030). "The Verve Years" (VE 2501). "The Greatest Jazz Concert Ever" (Prestige 24024).

Parker LPs: "The Very Best of Bird" (Warner Bros. 2WB 3198). Gillespie LPs: "The Development of an American Artist" (Smithsonian R 004). "Composer's Concepts" (Mercury EMS-2-410).

7—Benny Goodman, as clarinetist and combo leader. Yet again, there is a gap between the public image and reality. Goodman's band, though certainly one of the best of its day, was not in the same league as those of Ellington, Basie and Jimmie Lunceford; the "King of Swing" hype was counterproductive. None of this is germane to the principal issue: Goodman is the most accomplished jazz clarinetist I have ever heard. In 1926, at the age of 17, he was recording, with Ben Pollack's orchestra, breathtaking solos. Other records show that by 1931 he had grown in assurance and creativity, his phrasing was faultless and his rhythmic sense unrivaled.

That he later became the first white musician to take the social risk (very considerable in 1935) of hiring blacks, and that Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton and other blacks were part of a mutually stimulating success story, is historically but not musically relevant.

The various combos he led, from 1928 through the early 1940s, are superlative examples of small group interaction. Even today, pushing 70, he is capable of assembling an admirable small group and of leading it with the consummate skill he exhibited in his earliest efforts on wax.

LPs: "A Jazz Holiday" (small groups, 1928-1934) (MCA2-4018). "Charlie Christian" (Columbia CL 652). "Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert" (Columbia OSL-160).

8—Coleman Hawkins, as tenor saxophonist. For two decades he practically monopolized the field, bringing to this hitherto-ignored instrument a rhythmic ebullience, an exquisite tonal warmth and the ability to play a ballad with a romantic yet jazz-infused feeling, an accomplishment unprecedented in jazz. Because he was eventually eclipsed in popularity by Lester Young, and because of the decline both in his health and his creative powers during the later years, Hawkins died in 1969 an all-but-forgotten man; yet anyone who lived through his glorious era of impeccable recordings will confirm my appraisal: He was the patron saint of the horn and the most widely influential tenor saxophonist of all time.

LPs: "Body and Soul" (Quintessence QJ 25131). "Hollywood Stampede" (Capitol 11030). "Blues Groove" (Prestige 7753). "Duke Ellington and Coleman Hawkins" (Impulse A-26).

9—Earl Fatha Hines, as pianist. Art Tatum's command of the piano defied anyone to emulate him; he was not the paterfamilias of any orderly hierarchy of jazz piano. Hines, a very active recording artist from the late 1920s (several years before Tatum), was the first to formulate an approach to jazz keyboard that had its own logic, its own unique dynamism, the horn-

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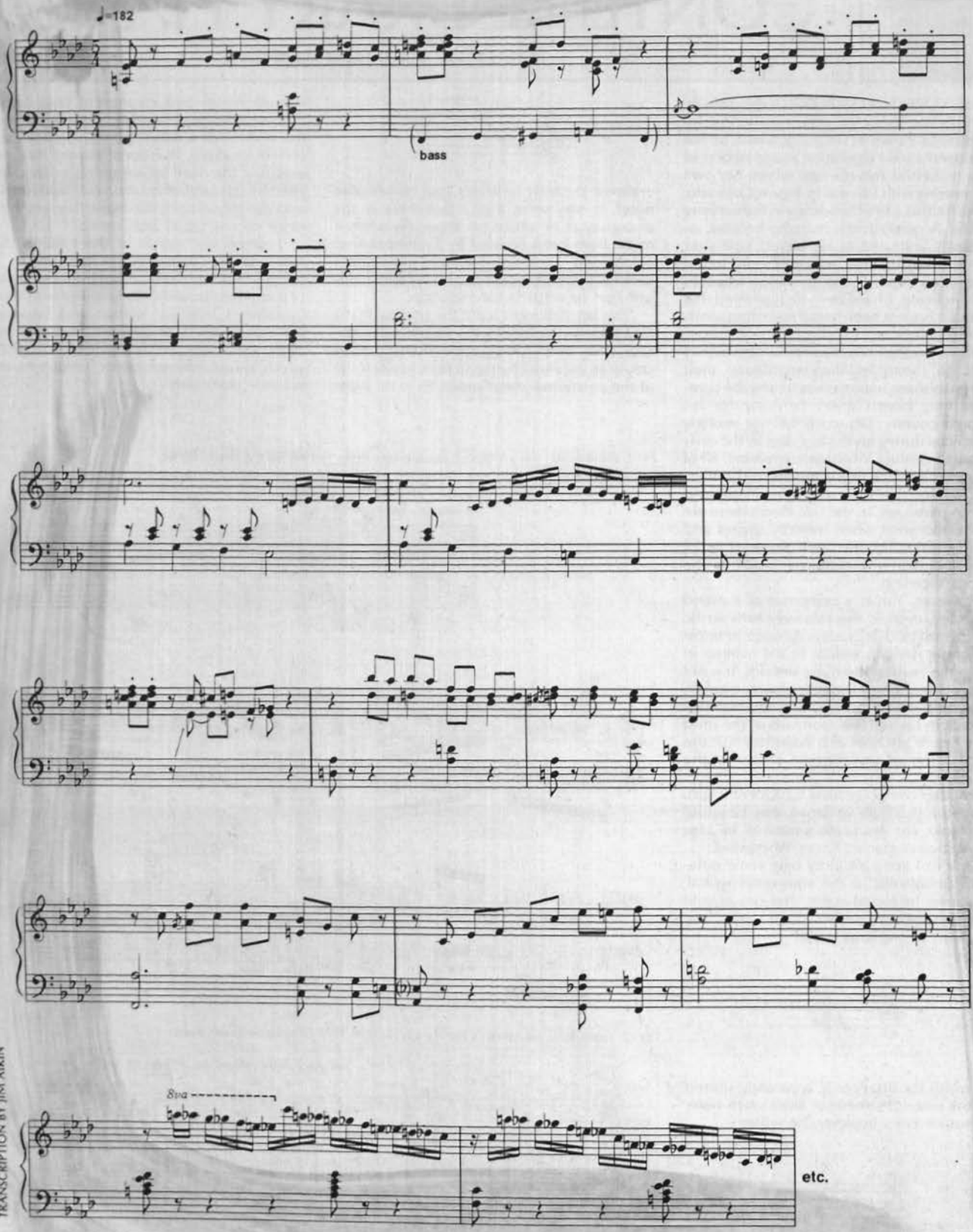

TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN

DEC. '78

LEONARD FEATHER
PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ
Johnny Guarnieri

VERT OAKLAND

THE NAME Johnny Guarnieri too often tends to be bypassed by jazz historians. Several recent scholarly works on the subject have relegated him to a passing mention or ignored him altogether. Yet this serious, dedicated artist is not only a soloist of great eclecticism but also a rare repository of knowledge concerning the history and evolution of jazz piano.

One might have expected him to grow up to be a distinguished violinist, since he is a descendant of the famous Guarnerius family of violin makers. But by the age of ten he was deeply involved in the study of classical piano, and six years later an encounter with the music of Fats Waller changed the course of his life irreversibly.

"Somebody introduced me to Fats," he recalls, "and when I saw the size of his hands, the great span he could encompass with them, I almost cried. But Fats told me, 'Don't you worry, kid. Look how you can move around with those small hands of yours. You're going to do all right.' I guess he was impressed, too, by the fact that I could improvise in his own style."

New York-born, Guarnieri landed his first major job in 1937 (he was 20), with a commercial dance band led by George Hall. He leapt to jazz prominence when Benny Goodman hired him as a replacement for Fletcher Henderson in December of 1939.

In addition to playing on several sessions with the big band, Guarnieri took part in such memorable Goodman Sextet sessions as those that produced "Poor Butterfly," "The Sheik," "A Smo-o-o-th One," and "Air Mail Special." Critics praised his technique and versatility as he played alongside such giants as guitarist Charlie Christian, trumpeter Cootie Williams, and saxophonist Georgie Auld.

After the temporary breakup of the Goodman band in 1940, Guarnieri joined Artie Shaw. Again he played not only with the orchestra but with a splinter group, this time Artie's Gramercy 5, in which he became the first jazzman to record solos on harpsichord, participating in such classics as "Summit Ridge Drive" and "Special Delivery Stomp."

He was back with Benny Goodman for six months in 1941, then rejoined Shaw for a while, and spent a year with Jimmy Dorsey before becoming a member of the Raymond Scott CBS radio house band in '43. During that time he doubled in the Cozy Cole Trio at the Onyx on 52nd Street, and for four years (until the 1948 recording ban) was in constant demand for jazz record dates, making sessions that are still being reissued, with everyone from saxophonist Lester Young and bassist Slam Stewart to Louis Armstrong and saxophonist Coleman Hawkins.

Soon afterward Guarnieri eased into the more settled life of a radio and television studio musician. Composing constantly, he racked up a total of literally thousands of works, "of all types," he says, "short of rock and roll."

After long tenures at CBS and NBC, Guarnieri tired of the New York studio grind and moved in 1962 to Hollywood. Following long residencies at the Hollywood Plaza Hotel and a hotel in Anaheim, he took a gig in 1970 at the Tail o' the Cock, a restaurant in North Hollywood, and with occasional time out for Canadian or overseas tours he has been there ever since.

During the Hollywood years he went to work seriously on an idea with which he had been kidding around ever since the NBC days three decades ago, that of playing established 4/4 songs in 5/4 time. Oddly enough, Guarnieri and I were the pioneers: I wrote a 5/4 blues in 1955 and recorded it the following year, four years before Paul Desmond's "Take Five" became a national sensation.

Guarnieri played a piano concerto in 5/4 in 1970 at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles. He will be playing it again with the Pasadena City College Symphony next spring. On request he will take just about any of the thousands of songs he knows and convert it into impeccable 5/4.

This does not mean that he has lost his affinity for Fats Waller; in fact, he recently recorded a Waller album, due out on the Taz-Jaz label, on which he sings as well as plays in the Waller manner.

The example below was recorded for a label called Bet Records (presumably because it's a fair bet you won't be able to find it). Everything in the LP, from Waller's "Keepin' Out Of Mischief Now" to the venerable "Tiger Rag," was played in five.

Guarnieri found that the melody of "Sweet Georgia Brown" best lent itself to the odd meter by being telescoped into 16 bars instead of the normal 32. In the first measure, what was originally bar 1 takes up the first three beats and bar 2 becomes four eighth-notes; a similar process is followed throughout, with occasional walking bass lines (on the record he has a bassist and drummer to whom he leaves most of the time-keeping).

It is amusing and even inspiring to drop in at the Tail o' The Cock, where the audiences tend to be old timers who remember Guarnieri from his Goodman and Shaw days. If they ask him for "Maple Leaf Rag" or some other hoary standard, he may comply by offering it up in 5/4, leaving them starry-eyed and vaguely disoriented.

He explains: "Some of the great standard tunes of years gone by have been performed less and less. To save them from oblivion, it seemed logical to find some new and different way of dealing with them. I found 5/4 to be the logical answer."

Note: The chorus shown here is only an introduction. Later in his treatment of "Sweet Georgia Brown" Johnny goes into some Fats Waller riffs, an Earl Hines style staccato passage, a bit of ragtime, and a sampling of stride—all of it without missing a beat. All of it, in fact, adding one.

(Guarnieri may be heard playing "Lover" in 5/4 on *Superstride*, Taz-Jaz Records, 1112 Mount Lowe Dr., Altadena, CA 91001, and "Carolina In The Morning" in 5/4 on *Guarnieri Plays The Music Of Walter Donaldson*, Dobre Records, Box 1987, Studio City, CA 91604.)

THE THALIANS MAGAZINE • VOLUME 23 • NOVEMBER 1978

23rd ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

the THALIANS magazine

NOVEMBER 1978 / $5

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JAZZ: THE BORN-AGAIN MUSIC *By Leonard Feather*

THE PRESIDENTS CLUB • 30's DINNER DANCE • VISIT TO KING TUT

THALIANS TELETHON • MOTION PICTURE-TV MUSEUM "CARNIVAL AT PIPS"

PARTY AT PICKFAIR • VIRGO NIGHT FEVER • THALIANS AND FRIENDS

JAZZ REVIEW

11/20

Allison at Hong Kong Bar

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Mose Allison, Mississippi's emissary of the blues, remains the old man river of his genre. This week at the Hong Kong Bar he is singing the same songs, in the same deep-fried Southern style, that constituted his repertoire 20 years ago.

Some of the material is blues more in style and story than in form. He invests popular war horses such as "You Are My Sunshine" and Duke Ellington's "I Ain't Got Nothin' but the Blues" with the identical wry character he brings to the original compositions that are his trademarks, among which "I Lived the Life I Love" is the most typical.

His dry tone and molasses-slow phrasing, influenced by Sonny Boy Williamson and other black singers he heard as a child, are curiously at odds with some of his keyboard work in which a modernist seems to be trying to break out of a traditional bag.

Before he begins to sing, there is a long, eccentric instrumental continuum that wanders unpredictably, with excessive pedaling that tends now and then to make the sounds blend and blur. Toward the end of the piano sequence he made some interesting stabs in the direction of the avant-garde, though certainly he is no atonalist.

Fred Atwood, playing upright bass, brought to his solos the technical mastery and guitar-like fluency long associated with the period. John Dentz contributed the mandatory drum solo.

Allison has always been something of a self-contradiction, a product of the often incompatible forces that have shaped a career spent variously among old blues men and young beboppers. He is still at his persuasive best telling stories about small town Southern life and the perils of the big city, or sardonically intoning the injunction of the 1947 Nat King Cole hit "Meet Me at No Special Place (And I'll Be There at No Particular Time)."

His loyal followers can find Allison at the Hong Kong through next Saturday (off Sunday, Monday and Thanksgiving).

AT BAKED POTATO

11/24

Roland Vazquez Urban Ensemble

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Eight musicians herded onto a bandstand built for four, calling themselves the Roland Vazquez Urban Ensemble, currently perform every Tuesday at the Baked Potato.

Sponsored by Dave Grusin, the band hovers on the border line where Latin sounds meet rock/jazz. Its character is determined mainly by Vazquez, who composes and arranges all the music in addition to playing drums, and by the front line, consisting of trumpet, alto sax and tenor sax.

The knife-sharp thrust of the three-horn blend is attractively used in composition that usually makes a succinct, jazz-rooted thematic statement. Vazquez avoids tedium by keeping the arrangements to a reasonable length and by diversifying the input of a heavy rhythmic barrage that includes conga, electric keyboards, electric bass and electric guitar.

"Nada por Nada," verging on a mambo beat, finds guitarist Rob Whitsett in a relatively gentle groove. Ramsey Embick achieves some wild synthesizer noises on "Dark Dreamer."

Though rarely more than competent, the horn soloists at least keep their statements brief and to the point. Ralph Rickert's fluegelhorn achieves a measure of eloquence on "The Force That Flows Is Truth." Mike Carnahan on tenor and Tom Saviano on alto are somewhat impeded by too much arrangement and rhythm going on around and behind them.

The set ends in a blaze of percussion as Luis Conte's congas engage in an energetic duel with Vazquez.

The Urban Ensemble is cast in the same mold as Seawind and other groups that have appeared at the Baked Potato. However, it achieves an identity through the horn writing and the shifting, evocative rhythmic patterns. If Vazquez can aim for additional dynamic variety, the impact of the group may be even more effective.

JAZZ REVIEW

The Juggernaut Stomps at Donte's

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Looking for a suitable club in town where a 16-man jazz orchestra can work is as easy as finding a doctor who makes house calls. It was a time for celebration when, after a long arid period, Donte's brought in a big band last weekend in the form of the Capp/Pierce Juggernaut.

Active locally for the past three years, Juggernaut speaks most often in one of two musical languages: basic Basie and occasional Ellington. The tilt is toward the former, since arranger Nat Pierce has frequently worked for the Count. In "Basie's Deep Fry," the resemblance of his elliptical piano style to Basie's was as convincing as the stomping-room-only impact of the reed and brass sections.

It isn't all "Shiny Stockings" or "Moten Swing," of course. Marshal Royal evoked memories of Johnny Hodges in "Jeep's Blues" and Chuck Berghofer updated Duke Ellington's "Jack the Bear" with an extended, eloquent bass solo.

Though Pierce and his drummer-partner Frank Capp clearly have firm roots in the 1940s, the danger of wallowing too deeply in nostalgia is averted by two methods. One is the generous supply of timeless, personalized solos. Typically, the modern tenor saxophones of Don Menza and Herman Riley—the former a macho extrovert, the latter fleet but gray-toned—were ingeniously juxtaposed in "Sister Sadie."

The other contemporary ploy is the use of new charts. The wide-ranging, elegant trombone of Alan Kaplan was splendidly encased in an arrangement of "A Time for Love" written with skill and sensitivity by Nan Schwartz, daughter of the saxophonist Wilbur Schwartz.

The lyrical trumpet of Bobby Shew addressed itself to "I Remember Clifford," and Bill Berry's cornet feature, "Softie," strengthened the band's image as a stimulating framework for individualism.

Juggernaut seems like a fitting name during the uptempo moments, yet dynamic contrast and discretion are in liberal supply, with the rhythm guitar of Al Hendrickson tying the rhythm team together in an easy four-beat pulse. This may not be the most original band around, but its statements are made with enough conviction and emotion to justify a policy close to the middle of the road (and sometimes the middle of the century).

11/28/78

Rosolino Death Shocks Musicians

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The jazz community was in shock Monday on learning that trombonist Frank Rosolino, 52, had committed suicide early Sunday morning in his Sepulveda home after shooting his two young sons. One of the boys, Justin, 9, was fatally wounded; the other, Jason, 7, was critically injured.

The Detroit-born musician, one of the first and foremost of modern trombonists, had been based in Southern California since 1954. After working for several years with Howard Rumsey's All Stars at the Lighthouse, he was a staff musician in the early 1960s on the Steve Allen TV show, where he doubled as a comedian and singer.

Rosolino was almost as well known for his comic personality as for his instrumental brilliance. Benny Carter, in whose band he often played, said Monday: "He was a fantastic musician, but behind that cut-up personality was a troubled man. He was like Pagliacci."

Diane Armesto, Rosolino's fiancee, who for several years had shared his life and helped rear his young children, said: "Frank was a very proud man, who enjoyed bringing his music to young people at college clinics. He was known and admired all over the world; in the past few years he had toured in Japan, Europe and Brazil. He played every major jazz festival. He felt very deeply about his Detroit background, and about being more than a West Coast studio musician."

Shelly Manne, and others who knew Rosolino well, confirmed that despite the universal respect he enjoyed, the trombonist was subject to fits of deep depression.

Funeral arrangements are pending and the burial is expected to take place in Detroit.

51

. . . . . Everywhere!

Peter Marshall, ctr. welcomes the Bob Petersens to CV Wood's chili cookoff.

Buckley mom Carol Lawrence bumps into Buckley pop Jimmie Baker at ABC-TV.

Debbie Reynolds greets the William Immermans as they arrive at meeting.

Cheryll Clarke, now a London resident shows preppie son Robbie around Blighty.

Fran Pytleski, social secretary to the Nat Dumonts tossed Libra party for Nat.

Bruce Belin, Phyllis Diller, Kem Dibbs, Rod Laver in Texas charity tennis event.

FAMILY TIME

'Twas a happy day for Frank and Lola LaTourette when #1 daughter Jean wed Tom Gifford in garden ceremony with Tom's mom, Mary sharing joy. Jean's a teacher of severely handicapped children, and Giffords are now decoratin' happiness house near Aspen, Colo.

Christmas Eve tree-trimming supper at Rita Hayworth's home honored Gloria Luchenbill's twin sister Connee Bayetis, husband Nick, daughter Marianne of N.J., Phillip Luchenbill and Mac Krim. After that the group trouped over to Ann Miller's for caroling.

JAZZ REVIEW

O'Day at Backlot— 'S Wonderful

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Genuine, unabashed jazz singers, few in number these days, are distinguishable by their ability to use the voice as if it were an instrument; by the extent to which they are rhythm-motivated; by the choice of their material and their accompanists. Using any of these yardsticks, Anita O'Day must be rated as the definitive, unceasingly creative artist in this shrinking field.

Anita O'Day

Her show Tuesday at the Backlot Theater at Studio One opened on a nostalgic note with the screening of a 1943 "soundie" by the Gene Krupa band, with O'Day and Roy Eldridge in their "Let Me Off Uptown" duet. As the film ended, the real O'Day appeared, live and in color, to demonstrate that with the passage of 35 years she has honed her style and kept her good looks while others who imitated her have receded into oblivion.

This was the best performance she has given locally in many years, barring a few imperfections that could be blamed on poor presentation. The light man was so inept that O'Day had to point out the soloists in order to train the spot on them. Lou Levy's piano light wasn't working for half the set.

O'Day did not merely overcome; she delivered more confidently than she has in recent memory. Her intonation was flawless, her lyricism affecting on "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" and "Soon It's Gonna Rain." The new wine of melodic freedom flowed from old bottles in "Tea for Two," " 'S Wonderful" (with an overlong drum solo by John Poole) and "Honeysuckle Rose" in her traditional treatment with just the bassist (Harvey Newmark) accompanying the first chorus.

"Four Brothers" was etched in wordless two-part harmony with Levy. "It Don't Mean a Thing" was an exercise in gymnastics, each phrase a rubber band to be stretched, released, twisted at will. O'Day is almost the only singer whose use of melismatics (she can break a syllable into half a dozen notes) enables her to weave vocal lines that are as loose and unpredictable as a horn solo. Yet when the song calls for restraint and gentle emotion, she meets this antithetical challenge: "Lush Life" was spellbinding.

Between the opening "Wave" and her closing reprise of the same theme, O'Day offered an hour-long seminar in the art of jazz singing. Her students, who should include any vocalists with aspirations beyond the cliches of contemporary pop music, are advised to show up for classes any evening through Sunday

Avoiding musical compromise vibraphonist-composer Bobby Hutcherson stays where he wants to be.

that wants to be stimulated on a higher level."

Because he has not reached a sales plateau that enables him to play concert tours or take out a large group, the sounds his fans hear in nightclubs differ, at least in the number of participants, from those heard on the record. The six cuts that make up "Highway One" (Columbia JC 35550) are played by units ranging from six to 16 members. Hutcherson normally heads a quartet, using only piano, bass and drums, for his nightclub appearances.

"It's hard to get people to use their imagination, to fill that large cushion of brass or strings, additional soloists or extra percussion. The way to compensate is to work up to a great level of intensity, so you can imagine all those other sounds. It's the quality of the composition that should bring out the value and dynamics of our performance, rather than the quantity of the personnel.

"Actually, in many cases what we recorded originally was similar to our club performances: we'd go into the studio and do the tune with the rhythm section, then Cedar Walton would hear it back and say, 'It would be nice if we added a brass section here,' or "I think a string section would bring out something special there.' So he writes out those parts and they're overdubbed. We never add anything just for the sake of getting a bigger sound."

During the 1970s, Roy Ayers, another Los Angeles-born vibraphonist, who is around Hutcherson's age, has amassed a fortune by getting heavily into electronics. The temptation to ask Hutcherson's opinion of his contemporary was as irresistible as the lure of crossover must have been for Ayers.

"I really haven't heard much of Roy's things lately. I won't let myself listen, I guess, because I like to hear him play jazz and I know he's basically a good musician.

"I don't like to think that anyone can lose faith in the idea that he can make a successful living just by staying with the music. You may have to struggle a little, but time will take care of everything.

"The concept for my new album was that we'd do something within the framework of jazz, but also something you could trip out on in a gentle way, in a twilight or early morning kind of groove. I believe it came off, and I'm happy to say we're on the jazz chart already."

"Haven't you ever been talked into making an album you are ashamed of, that made you sorry you'd done it?"

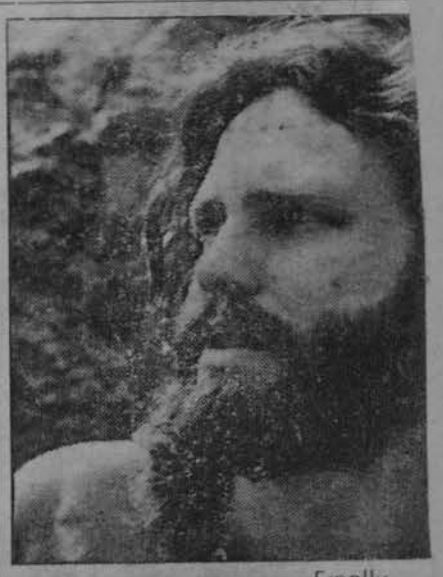
"Well, maybe some individual tunes, but not a complete album. Yes, here and there I'd let a couple of numbers go through that I felt really bad about. Later, I told myself I'd done it because I'd weakened for a moment—I was tapped on the shoulder by the devil." Hutcherson laughed at the image, then added, "Fortunately, the rest of those albums were reasonably pure, so I could point to them and say, 'Hey, I messed up and slipped a little bit there, but I didn't fall all the way down.'"

Hutcherson's stance is exceptional. Countless jazz musicians have fallen prey to the blandishments of businessmen who convince them of the vast economic rewards in making all the fashionable concessions. One can only share his hope that time will be on his side; meanwhile, he can continue to enjoy a modestly secure career and, most important, will still have his self-respect.

ALBUMS OF THE WEEK Woody Shaw—"Little Red's Fantasy" (Muse MR 5103) and "Stepping Stones" (Columbia JC 35560). Shaw, certainly the most gifted trumpeter to rise to prominence since Freddie Hubbard, is at his consummately creative peak in both these albums. He describes the Muse set accurately as "good mainstream modal bop." His aides are Frank Strozier on alto sax and a powerful rhythm section.

In "Stepping Stones," the saxophonist is Carter Jefferson, who plays tenor and alto. A different rhythm section, with Onaje Allan Gumbs at the piano, proves equally potent. Both records also offer commanding evidence of Shaw's talent as a composer. □

In last week's column, the name of French jazz composer-author-critic Andre Hodeir came out wrong due to the gremlin who lurks about newspaper offices. □



11/26

JAZZ

HUTCHERSON—NEITHER FUSED NOR CONFUSED

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Bobby Hutcherson is a trim reed of a man, taller in talent than stature. Los Angeles-born, Pasadena-raised, he heard the call to action when a Milt Jackson record caught his ear.

He has been recording as a vibraphonist, composer, marimba soloist and leader of various small combos since 1965. During this period he has won jazz magazine awards, and more valuably, the respect of fellow musicians who admire him for living with his musical principles.

At a time when so many of his contemporaries are trading their consciences for a mess of chartage, Hutcherson continues to write music that reflects his warm, direct and honest personality. With his recent transfer from Blue Note to Columbia Records, his first LP for that label shows none of the compromises and formulas that clutter up the work of so many jazz artists trying to prove themselves to a major company. He is still his own man, a crisply forceful improviser, surrounded by men like Freddie Hubbard, Hubert Laws and the pianist George Cables, bringing out the best in all of them and in himself.

"Over the years," I asked him, "how much pressure have you had from producers to change your style and move from straight-ahead jazz into fusion music?"

"A lot," said Hutcherson. "But I've stayed where I want to be, and I've been lucky enough to make a living at it. There are more and more people out there who enjoy the purity of a musical adventure. They're sophisticated enough to want to relax and let the music take them on a trip through the deep corners of their minds.

"I enjoy partying as much as anyone, and I'm not putting down people who enjoy disco. It's just that there is another audience

JAZZ ALBUM REVIEWS

JUGGERNAUT'S BASIE BEAT

BY LEONARD FEATHER

THE CAPP/PIERCE JUGGERNAUT FEATURING JOE WILLIAMS. Concord Jazz CJ/72.

Recorded last spring live at the Century Plaza's Westside Room, this band is driven, usually in top gear, by the drums of Frank Capp and the uncannily Basie-like piano of Nat Pierce (who has often subbed in the Basie band), but its compelling sound and cohesive spirit are due no less to the arrangements, reflecting Basie characteristics of various eras.

Opening with Jimmy Mundy's "Fiesta in Brass" and a Pierce blues called "Basie's Deep Fry," the orchestra then provides a velvet backdrop for Marshal Royal's alto sax in the Benny Carter composition "Souvenir."

Creativity and enthusiasm abound in numerous solos. Bob Cooper and Herman Riley are well contrasted in their tenor sax excursions on Al Cohn's "Tarragon"; in the same tune, Garnett Brown (ex-Thad Jones/Mel Lewis) and Buster Cooper (ex-Ellington) share the trombone chores.

Among the band's several Basie alumni are trumpeters Al Aarons and Frank Szabo. The rhythm section achieves that easy-riding four-beat with the help of a rhythm guitarist, Ray Pohlman, and with Chuck Berghofer on bass.

The climax is a riotous 10-minute blues sung by Joe Williams, who uses the old Joe Turner Kansas City "Cherry Red" verses along with some of his own that are guaranteed to keep this track permanently off the air. Williams is the only singer who can mix earthy blues authenticity with raunchy humor and emerge uncompromised. He steps aside long enough to let Marshal Royal display the nastier side of his character.

Williams' brief "What the World Needs Now" is too show-bizzily arranged and seems anticlimactic after the blues. Because of this single weakness in an otherwise unchallengeable set, the rating is four and a half stars.

HELL OF AN ACT TO FOLLOW. Willie Bobo. Columbia JC 35374. Bobo's first album for Columbia, produced by Wayne Henderson, clearly is aimed at a broader commercial market, yet by and large it turns out well on the strictly musical level.

Though he has made his reputation primarily as a percussionist and specialist in Latin music bordering on salsa, it is as a vocalist that Bobo makes his most impressive impact here. There is a new version of his well-remembered hit, the Jobim tune "Dindi," with English lyrics by Ray Gilbert, to which he lends his characteristically grainy timbre and laid-back beat. The other vocal cuts, hardly less successful, are "Together" and "Fairy Tales for Two." All three are embellished with string arrangements tastefully fashioned by George Del Barrio.

The five instrumental tracks are less consistently rewarding, but a couple come off particularly well. They are "Always There," with its brisk disco beat, and "Snort of Green," written by the trombone soloist Thurman Green. Though there are no individual credits, the occasional sax solos are presumably by Ernie Watts and the trumpet/fluegelhorn work by Oscar Brashear. Bobby Lyle is heard in an electric keyboard solo on "Fairy Tales." The weakest cut is the melodically jejune "Sixty Two Fifty." Overall, though, taking the objective into consideration, a promising debut for Bobo on a label that could do much to magnify his reputation.

THE GREAT TENOR ENCOUNTERS. Duke Ellington with Coleman Hawkins and John Coltrane. ABC-Impulse IA 9350-2. This is Volume 10 in Impulse's carefully produced "Dedication Series," for which Michael Cuscuna is responsible. (The original sessions were produced by Bob Thiele.)

Coleman Hawkins (1904-69) was as influential a force on tenor sax in the 1920s, '30s and early '40s as Coltrane was in the 1960s. The Ellington-Hawkins encounter, covering sides A and B, took place in Aug. 1962. Strengthened by the presence of such Ellington stalwarts as Johnny Hodges, Ray Nance, Harry Carney and Lawrence Brown, the session moves elegantly through a set of originals by Ellington, Hodges and Billy Strayhorn. Hawkins' powerful sound, allegiance to the beat and individual manner of phrasing established him as one of the most distinctive and recognizable soloists of the swing era. Though he was a little past his prime in 1962, there is ample evidence of the value of his contribution.

The Ellington-Coltrane session (on sides C and D) occurred just weeks later, in Sept. 1962. On three tracks Coltrane's bassist and drummer (Jimmy Garrison and Elvin Jones) were used; on the other four Duke's own sidemen, Aaron Bell and Sam Woodyard, seem to make him feel slightly more at ease. Because Coltrane at that stage was stretching beyond the accepted boundaries of jazz, a little mutual accommodation was needed; as a result, this comes off as one of the most accessible examples of Coltrane's work, mainly on tenor but twice on soprano ("In A Sentimental Mood," "Big Nick"). Both sessions, of course, offered Ellington a relatively rare opportunity to stretch out as a small combo pianist.

All four sides are unique and priceless, indispensable for any collector trying to build a comprehensive jazz library. Other new releases in the Dedication Series worth checking out are by Count Basie and his Orchestra (IA 9351-2), Yusef Lateef (9353-2), Sam Rivers (9352-2) and Paul Horn (9356).

PASSING THROUGH. The Heath Brothers. Columbia JC 35573. In this new set, marking the Heaths' Columbia bow, four members of the family are present: Percy Heath on bass and baby bass (the latter sounds like and presumably is similar to Ron Carter's "Piccolo bass"), Albert (Tootie) Heath on drums, Jimmy Heath, tenor sax, soprano sax, flute and composer of five of the eight tunes; and Jimmy's son, who goes by the name of Mtume, on percussion.

All four men acquit themselves creditably, aided on four cuts by an interesting brass section composed of two French horns, trombone and tuba. There are bonuses: Stanley Cowell, a pianist of rare prowess who works regularly with the Heaths, turns in some surprisingly authentic old-time boogie piano on "Artherdoc Blues," and on some tracks we are enabled to familiarize ourselves with Tony Purrone, a discovery of Jimmy Heath's and a swift, consistently creative guitarist.

Some of the originals actually offer old material in new guises. "In New York," for instance, is an up-tempo variation on the chords of "Body and Soul," used as a framework for a bass concerto by Percy Heath. "Prince Albert," written by Kenny Dorham, is a long-familiar adaptation of the harmonic pattern of "All the Things You Are."

Good packaging includes articulate notes by Peter Keepnews and a delightfully nostalgic back cover with its collection of old photographs, scrapbook style, showing the Heaths in various 1940s settings.

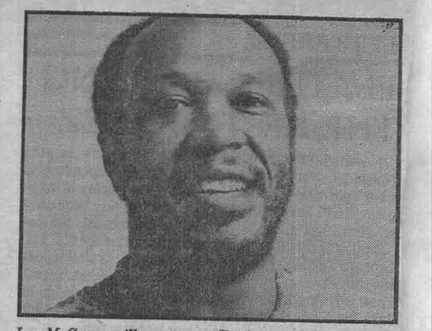
THE BEST OF THE GERALD WILSON ORCHESTRA. Pacific Jazz PJ-LA889-H. It is a pleasure to see the long-dormant Pacific Jazz label reactivated, and a double delight that Gerald Wilson is included in the first batch of releases. Until now, inexcusably, every album by this exceptionally personal ensemble had been deleted.

Five of the ten tracks are Wilson originals, all bearing his imprimatur as composer and arranger. Among them are his theme, "Blues for Yna Yna," and one of his characteristically Mexican flavored works, "Viva Tirado." "Bluesnee" offers a splendid glimpse of George Duke back in the days when he was still playing straightahead jazz piano. "Lighthouse Blues" was recorded in 1965, when the soloists included Harold Land Sr. on tenor saxophone and Roy Ayers (wrongly listed as Bobby Hutcherson) on vibes. "The Feather" is a movement from Wilson's "Teotihuacan Suite," with Jimmy Woods on alto sax.

Even in the non-Wilson compositions the orchestra's sound is uniquely distinctive. Among them are Miles Davis' "Milestones," John Coltrane's "Equinox" and Lalo Schifrin's "Down Here on the Ground."

Wilson's keen ear for talent brought into the band durin this period (early and middle 1960s) such eminent soloists as Carmell Jones, trumpet; Bud Shank, alto;Teddy Edwards, tenor; Jack Wilson, piano; Groove Holmes, organ; Joe Pass, guitar.

Produced by Richard Bock for Albert Marx Productions, these are valuable documents, but the reissue job was botched. In the first place, this should obviously have been a two-pocket set, as are most of the successful jazz reissues nowadays. Second, there are no liner notes; third, no complete personnels are listed; fourth, no recording dates are given. The powers at United Artists, who now own the Pacific Jazz catalog, would be well advised to see how all such matters are taken care of in the splendidly packaged "Dedication Series" on ABC-Impulse.



Les McCann will appear on Friday at the Long Beach Arena in the second night of a jazz-blues festival.

Continued from Page 108

of the precision lesson, Casa Loma wouldn't have made the point, and there wouldn't have been a Swing Era. As cornetist/leader, second time around, he had much better arrangements, more cooperation, and his horn had a happy lilt not ordinarily associated with the instrument; I liked it a lot.

MERION L. HAIR
Inglewood

Great Musicians: Django Reinhardt, guitar; Bud Freeman, sax; Joe Jones/Gene Krupa, drums; J. L. Higginbotham, trombone; Ben Webster, sax; Billy Kyle, piano; Lionel Hampton, vibes; Teddy Wilson, piano; Johnny Hodges, sax; Lester Young, sax.

Overrated (not-so-great): Jack Teagarden, trombone; Bunny Berigan, trumpet; Bob Zurke, piano; Count Basie, piano; Jimmy Dorsey, sax, clarinet; Tommy Dorsey, trombone; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Ziggy Elman, trumpet; Chick Webb, drums; Red Norvo, vibes.

LARRY RABB
Los Angeles

Leonard Feather has stepped up front to answer the types of questions that some people always want to ask (or do ask) any expert on jazz. The fact that Feather is one of the most respected and outstanding experts in the field must mean that he gets even more questions than some of us "other" experts.

My respect for Leonard Feather continues unabated, and I'm not sure I would have had the guts to stand up and list these people in print as he has done. Further, I owe him my thanks for opening my mind, for a relook at some of these people, so that I can judge for myself who should be selected for positions on a like list.

It does appear that the jazz musicians after the '40s have been overlooked. I find it hard to understand how John Coltrane and Miles Davis were overlooked.

JOHN HOWARD
Morro Bay

JAZZ AT THE WESTWOOD—Jon Hendricks does evocative tap dance in "Evolution of the Blues."
Times photo by Ken Hively

AT WESTWOOD PLAYHOUSE

High Stage in 'Evolution of Blues'

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The latest stage in the evolution of Jon Hendricks' "Evolution of the Blues" at the Westwood Playhouse (born in 1960 at the Monterey Jazz Festival, revised and expanded for a four-year San Francisco run in the 1970s) is the most ambitious and professional of them all. Most of the credit for the improvement belongs to Donald McKayle, whose delightful choreography and staging add a welcome new dimension.

Hendricks wears his many hats without ever wearing out his welcome: historian, lyricist, songwriter, poet, nightclub emcee and multifaceted singer. He eases comfortably into every phase of his narrative. From the opening chords of Charles Kynard's organ, with the cast of 11 marching down the aisle in the gospel groove of "Everything Started in the House of the Lord," through calypso, blues, New Orleans jazz, swing, bop, bossa nova and the rest, Hendricks keeps the ebullient sounds alive with his husky timbre, loose phrasing and witty story line.

Told in free verse, this is a sort of pre-Alex Haley musical counterpart to "Roots," leavened with humor and never falling into the trap of pontification. The first half is carefully structured, as the star's narration takes us from Africa to the West Indies, New Orleans and the rest; the second half is slightly chronological but not always logical, moving like quicksilver as it concentrates on pure entertainment by the singers, dancers and musicians.

Hannah Dean, a holdover from the original 1960 presentation, captures the female vocal honors. Her Bessie Smith scene, a period vignette using Bessie's "Gimme a Pigfoot," is as convincing as her spiritual.

Rosalind Cash the singer is no match for Rosalind Cash the TV and movie actress. Her first number, "Little Brown Chile," is sung with tenderness and warmth, but the Billie Holiday imitation ("Lover Man") is only adequate, and her low-key treatment of "St. Louis blues" should have been turned over to Ms. Dean.

The show's only other weakness is a pair of tunes by the Hendricks family gathering of Jon, his wife, son and

Please Turn to Page 20, Col. 1

Hank Crawford at Parisian Room

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Hank Crawford has been a respected name in jazz for 20 years, five of which were spent with Ray Charles and the last 15 leading small combos that have featured Crawford's alto saxophone.

In his initial appearance at the Parisian Room, Crawford began a two-week engagement Tuesday by spending at least half his time playing an electric piano, and playing it at a volume that was challenged by that of his sidemen.

Crawford turned the keyboard level up so high that it often distorted, occasionally even drowning out the amplified guitar solos of Calvin Newborn.

Crawford's first set, despite some fine blues-textured moments when he picked up the alto, was frustrating. The band's watchword seemed to be: "If you don't play rock, at least play loud." The material was on a higher level than the interpretation—"Theme for Basie," written by Newborn's brother Phineas; an occasional blues, and pop songs associated with Dionne Warwick and Lou Rawls.

Charles Green on electric bass worked hard—too hard—as did Billy Kay on drums and Gary Cardelli on percussion. It was not until the second set that Crawford began to concentrate more on his saxophone. By the time he got to "I Can't Stop Loving You," he was back in his most eloquent, big-toned, robust form.

The two sets were separated by an interlude during which Reynaldo Rey, a comedian, started and ended his routine with antiquated lines about the musicians' alleged use of narcotics. In between were 40 minutes of racial and scatological disquisitions on a fairly narrow range of topics.

Rey's rambling mixture of Redd Foxx, Richard Pryor and Don Rickles is not without its moments, and his delivery is sharp, but his closing bit, supposedly a parody on "The Night Before Christmas," brought to mind Mort Sahl's classic line, "Are there any groups left that I haven't offended?"

The show closes Dec. 17.

Dec. 4 '78

JAZZ REVIEW

Artistry at Safari in Long Beach

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

The Jazz Safari, most successful of the Southland's newer jazz clubs, is just a life belt's throw away from the Queen Mary in Long Beach. Open five days and nights a week (Wednesday through Sunday), with music for lunch and dinner, the Safari was the dream of Al Williams, a drummer who played with Hampton Hawes and Teddy Edwards. Williams and Leroy Vinnegar work the room Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays with pianist Dwight Dickerson.

Singer Beverly Kelly, owner Williams' partner, also performs at the club, where the main events take place Friday and Saturday evenings. Ernie Andrews was last weekend's attraction.

Andrews' powerful, sonorous baritone is earnest and ingratiating, especially in blues ballads that are not too strongly associated with other male singers: "Help Me Make It Through the Night" and "When I Haven't Got Anything Better to Do." Yet his perennial problem remains unconquered: He still has not carved out an identity of his own, reminding us variously of Joe Williams, Al Hibbler and Billy Eckstine. On Miles Davis' "All Blues" he sang makeshift lyrics instead of the apt words by Oscar Brown Jr.

Nevertheless, an Andrews set is time better spent than an hour with, say, the current Lou Rawls or Nancy Wilson, for a simple reason: He is a committed jazz artist without chart-conscious affectations. You believe in him.

Pianist Jack Wilson, back at work after a serious accident, led the generally efficient accompanying trio. Andrews opens Tuesday for five nights at the Marina Bistro.

Meanwhile, back at the Jazz Safari, the calendar calls for Conte Candoli, Cedar Walton and Ray Pizzi over the next three weekends. Bill Steck plays piano Wednesday through Friday, noon to 3; the Rick Lager Quartet takes over the Saturday and Sunday matinees.

The room is handsome and comfortable; acoustics are good; dinners, despite limited choices, are excellent. The beer and wine policy will be expanded next month with the arrival of a liquor license.

With its friendly, intimate ambience, the Safari reflects Al Williams' sensitive understanding of how to make a jazz room work.

12/10

JAZZ

MATRIX: TOP 40 TO TOP QUALITY

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The procedure among musical groups that takes them from a pure-in-heart, pertinacious stance to a situation involving artistic compromise, with a view to broader audiences and bigger sales, has become almost an everyday event. For this reason and others, the case of Matrix, a nine-piece band from Wisconsin, is exceptional for having reversed this process.

Matrix began as a student group at Lawrence University, playing the club-and-bar circuit mainly in Wisconsin's Fox River Valley and confining its repertoire at first to an endless parade of Top 40 tunes. Today its music is original and innovative, created from within the orchestra, much of it by John Harmon, the keyboard soloist, composer/arranger and spokesman ("but don't call me the leader—we're all leaders; it's a real cooperative thing").

"Our first two years were just a matter of expediency," Harmon recalls. "Then we declared our independence. We had been building up a library of original material and decided this was all we would play from then on.

John Harmon

"It wasn't easy. We had one big-money gig coming up just before Christmas, traveled all the way to East Lansing, Mich., and were fired after the first night. The more people canned us from jobs we had previously worked, the more stubbornly determined we were to go our own route. It cost us six months of just about total unemployment.

"We decided the only recourse was to produce our own album. After that, it was the hardest thing in life even to get someone to listen to the tapes. I can't begin to tell you how many doors I knocked on, how many phone calls we made.

"By a lucky accident, we ran into a drummer friend of mine, an old bebopper, who heard us on a date; he advised us to call a man named Fred Wacker in Chicago. Wacker came out to hear the band, called Willard Alexander in New York and told him he just had to listen to us. That's all it took and I'd been trying for a year to get to see Willard."

For Alexander, a veteran booker who handles Count Basie and a dozen other top bands of the Swing Era, taking over the reins of a progressive group such as Matrix was a departure from his conservative custom. Before long, the band was working regularly, the album was issued on RCA (currently it is under contract to Warner Bros.), and the scuffling days were over.

Harmon, despite his disclaimer of authority, is a key figure and, as he puts it, "the geezer of the group." Born Oct. 25, 1935, in Oshkosh, Wis., he graduated from Lawrence University in 1957, then went on the road for a while before putting in eight years of miscellaneous jobs in New York. ("One job that sticks out in my mind is a record session I played on, for a now defunct company, with Yusef Lateef—a pleasure to make but impossible to find.")

Returning to the world of academia, he received his master's degree in composition from the University of Buffalo in 1968. Three years later he joined the faculty at Lawrence; another three years elapsed before the Matrix die was cast.

Since the group's first artistic successes in 1976, there have been a few personnel shifts: Four present members are non-Lawrence alumni. The rainbow of sounds emanating from the band stand remains similar: Basically there are three trumpets, a trombone, bass trombone, saxophone, drums, bass and Harmon; but so much doubling takes place on fluegelhorns, synthesizers percussion and flutes that monotony is an impossibility.

In the new album, simply titled "Matrix" (Warner Bros. BSK 3260) the brief annotations indicate that Harmon used specific sources of inspiration for each composition. "Smile at the Foot of the Ladder" is described as "a musical portrait of Henry Miller's clown/saint August" ("It's the only piece of fiction I've seen by him, a little parable"), while "Wizard" attempts to offer impressions of J.R.R. Tolkien's sage Gandalf, in "The Lord of the Rings."

As Harmon proudly points out, "Our heaviest thrust is in the direction of the young college audiences, who like the electronic tunes, but we're finding that middle-aged folk get off on some of our things. Everyone seems to like 'Come September,' which I described as a father's farewell to his 5-year-old son, and the gentler pieces, such as 'Spring.'" This last, the only non-Harmon number in the set, is the work of Fred Sturm, former bass trombonist in the band. ("Fred now has my old job, teaching at Lawrence, but he still writes for us when he can; he's our continuity thread with Lawrence.")

Matrix is an instrumental ensemble that makes subliminal use of vocal effects, mostly wordless. Harmon says, "Some of these vocal sounds were overdubbed in the studio, to achieve better separation, but they're all achievable live and we have no difficulty doing them on the job."

The principal virtue of Matrix is its ability to defy categorization. It cannot be correctly called a jazz or a rock group, and fusion is too stigmatic a term to be applicable. Harmon's compositional influences range from Stravinsky, Bach, Ravel, Debussy and Richard Strauss to Webern, Boulez, Copland and Stockhausen. His jazz background, which began with boogie-woogie, became a strong force when he studied Teddy Wilson and Art Tatum. "For orchestral color and texture, Ellington and Gil Evans are my heroes."

Because of its coloristic nature, matrix might seem to be the kind of group that, given the opportunity, would want to expand to full orchestral dimensions. Harmon feels this will be unnecessary.

"We feel we are growing from within our present context; besides, we have already had a taste of synthesis with orchestral situations. We expanded several of our pieces and performed them at concerts in tandem with the Milwaukee Symphony as well as with orchestras at colleges. So we can continue to explore that aspect of our work. It's not going to be a major thrust, but it's surely going to be a spoke in the wheel." □

Dec. 12/78

Hong Kong Bar Will Go Dark

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

The Southland is about to lose one of its most popular music rooms. The Hong Kong Bar, located in the Century Plaza Hotel, despite an apparently successful attempt to keep jazz alive, will go dark next week until further notice. There is a faint chance that it may reopen later with a similar concept.

"We have nothing booked beyond Roy Merriwether, who closes Saturday," said Louis Papp, manager of the room, where the jazz policy, established in the mid-1960s, was resumed last year after a seven-year lapse.

Since April of 1977 the club has offered music of a high caliber, attracting jazz aficionados from all over the world. The closing is not due to economic problems, Papp says. Business has been generally good, the Wednesday matinees in particular packing the room with enthusiastic fans.

The trouble, according to Volker Ulrich, food and beverage director of the Century Plaza Hotel, has been that too few hotel guests are found among the clientele.

The Hong Kong Bar has presented one-or-two-week stints by saxophonists Benny Carter, Harold Land and Phil Woods; guitarists Laurindo Almeida, Kenny Burrell, Joe Pass, Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel; singers Jimmy Witherspoon and Ernestine Anderson; also Louie Bellson, Shelly Manne, Cal Tjader and Terry Gibbs.

When the room is shuttered, it will be the second major Southland loss for jazz this year. The passage of Proposition 13 led to the cancellation this fall of the 12-year-old free concerts at the Pilgrimage Theater. However, new jazz rooms such as the Marina Bistro, Pasquale's and the Jazz Safari have picked up the slack.

Akiyoshi/Tabackin Big Band 12/13

In one of its too infrequent local appearances, the Toshi-

ko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band played Monday at Concerts by the Sea.

The performance was advertised as a celebration of the orchestra's recent victory in the annual Down Beat readers' poll, as No. 1 big band. Its work Monday brought into focus all the elements that justified that honor.

The ensemble has a dual personality. Though Akiyoshi composes and arranges all the music herself, some of her compositions are firmly rooted in the swing era tradition, but modernized by the skill with which she manipulates the various sections.

Her more basic items are grounded in the chord pattern of some familiar old tunes, such as "Mean to Me," transformed into "Hanging Loose"; "I Got Rhythm" reconstituted as "Strive for Jive," or the traditional 12-bar blues, emerging as "Son of Road Time."

These simpler works are played with enough verve and team spirit to give them a fresh and radiant character. More challenging, though, are the texturally complex "Illusive Dream," with all five saxophones doubling on flutes, and "Notorious Tourist From the East," which despite its title had a Spanish flavor.

The janus-faced aspect of the orchestra is displayed about once to a set when Akiyoshi brings out one of the works in which she blends the Western and Oriental cultures. "Kogun," title tune of the band's new LP, was a striking example with Tabackin's flute a buoyant element and the tape-recorded Japanese tsuzumi drums echoing eerily through the room.

Tabackin remains a tower of power, muscling his way through the most demanding charts on tenor sax in a Rollins/Coltrane fashion but achieving moments of contrasted brilliance in his more lyrical approach to the flute.

Akiyoshi at the piano is an underfeatured soloist whose contribution to "Illusive Dream" achieved an idyllic quality evocative of Bill Evans.

Other soloists made commendable contributions, particularly Steve Huffsteter on trumpet and Bill Byrne on baritone sax, but the bulk of the orchestra's success must be credited to the two leaders. In a big band field too heavily dominated by echoes of yesteryear, Akiyoshi and Tabackin have had the courage to bring us the sound of the '70s, and it is music to these battle-weary ears.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

12/14

Forrest in a '40s Bag at the Backlot

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Coincidence has brought to Studio One's Backlot theater two consecutive alumnae of the big bands. Following Anita O'Day's successful engagement, Helen Forrest opened Tuesday for a five-night stand.

Forrest, at 60, a year older than O'Day and a year younger than Lena Horne (to whom she bears a slight resemblance in timbre and vibrato), has retained and even strengthened her confident sound. From the start of her career as a band singer, with Artie Shaw in 1938 (sharing vocal duties with Billie Holiday), she has managed to rise above material that was too often trivial, cloyingly sentimental or just plain dumb.

The Tin Pan Alley days are far behind us, but Forrest has not taken advantage of the rich lode of great songs created by newer writers whose works are lyrically sophisticated and challenging. She leans on nostalgia more heavily than she needs to; in fact, not a single number in her hour-long set was less than 34 years old.

Granted some of these songs are timeproof; one cannot take exception to "Someone to Watch Over Me" or "More Than You Know." Others, though, were valueless in the first place, and who needs "Goody Goody" or "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate" in 1978?

A staple of the Forrest act in recent years has been her medley, linked by ingenious but rather contrived autobiographical lines, recalling her association with the bands of Shaw, Benny Goodman and Harry James. The opening line, "When I was young with braces on my dentures," conjures up an incongruous image.

Because of the explanatory interruptions, "All the Things You Are" is reduced to 12 bars. It would be better if Forrest discarded the patter and took a couple of minutes to sing this ageless melody in its entirety.

Clearly her '40s repertoire must be partially retained, to hold on to the segment of the audience that expects this; but Forrest is too engaging and adaptable a singer to disregard the hundreds of American and Brazilian songs written in the past decade or two that could bring her a more up-to-date identity.

Dick Haymes, with whom Forrest spent three years on a radio series in the mid-1940s, introduced her and returned at the end of the set to join her on "It Had to Be You."

A trio led by pianist Jack English accompanied adequately, with Frank De La Rosa on bass and Alex Acuna on drums.

Hop Singh's Takes a Giant Step

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Hop Singh's will be open any day now. Or at least any week.

How about any month?

Would you believe any year?

The story of Hop Singh's, by now almost a legend, began in the fall of 1976 when Rudy Onderwyzer, proprietor of the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach, began to spread the word that he would shortly open a second spot, a grander and handier room in Marina del Rey.

The announcements were made in good faith; since then, however, there have been so many vicissitudes—among them escrow problems, the defection of backers and the countless other technicalities involved in the opening of a nightclub—that Onderwyzer's beard has grown three shades grayer and the opening of the club has always seemed three months more distant, like the tantalizing carrot.

Now, at last, it seems the impossible dream may be nearing reality. The other day I not only saw the sign and logo on the Lincoln Blvd. frontage but actually stepped inside and found that Hop Singh's, which had seemed like a myth or a long-standing joke, does, in fact, exist.

"Our speakers just came in," said Onderwyzer, pointing to a cluster of eight massive boxes in one corner of a spacious room so cluttered that it looked as though it belonged to the Collier Brothers. "We'll have a real state-of-the-art sound system, with 2,000 watts of amplification. The sound and lighting controls are upstairs, where there will also be room for 50 additional customers."

Some of the bric-a-brac, as well as some usable objects such as chairs, were relics of the old Shelly's Manne-Hole, which Onderwyzer steered successfully clear through the 1960s. But much of what was visible had been built or renovated for the room: a stage, 20x16-foot, large enough to accommodate the most demanding of rock groups with their amplifiers and gadgets; a cork-covered ceiling; a lounge as well as dressing rooms for the entertainers.

Will Hop Singh's be a Chinese restaurant? You can bet your fortune cookie it won't. Despite the tongue-in-cheek name, the food will be "general and modest," says Rudy.

Will it be a jazz room? Yes and no. Because of its capacity, which will be upward of 400, acts of every kind will be hired according to their drawing power. The bookings will include whatever jazz artists can fill a room this size, but it will also allow for pop, rock, folk, blues and country performers.

Hop Singh's once was a neighborhood disco with a nautical motif, some of which (notably the large anchor against the wall outside) will be retained. In its new format, it will afford every customer a full frontal view of the stage ("This won't be a hangout club—people will be here strictly to see the show"), and will include an outside waiting room and a rear patio, both carefully screened off in order to prevent the patrons from being distracted by the nonperformance noises that tend to spread across a typical crowded night spot.

"I'm more enthusiastic than ever," Onderwyzer said, "about the possibilities for the place."

Soon the public will be given its chance to justify his sanguine spirits.

How soon? Well, any month now. Maybe any week, or . . .

Rudy put it best. "Before the first snowfall," he said.

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JAZZ

READERS REACT TO CRITIC'S CHOICE

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The role of the critic with respect to a contemporary art form always has been debated, and often negated, particularly by the artists criticized, and often by the public at large. The recent appearance of my two columns, one listing the top 10 jazzmen, the other citing the 10 most overrated, brought a wide and informative range of reactions.

It was surprising to find out, via letters to The Times, phone calls, personal contacts and conversations on a call-in radio show, that there was more general concurrence than disagreement—not so much on the specific contents of the lists, but on the value and purpose involved in compiling them. Instead of responding with abuse and hostility, most readers made qualified endorsements such as that of pianist Johnny Guarnieri, who applauded the "monumental task" of selecting the candidates while wondering why I omitted Fats Waller from my top 10.

In fulfilling the critical function, one always must be prepared to deal with the reader who infers only what he wants to infer. For example, I hardly could have been more specific in stating: "It must be clearly understood that this is *not* (my italics) a 10 Best or 10 Greatest pronunciemento," yet one reader wrote, "If these are meant to be a list of the 10 most important jazz artists in history," and went on to make his accusations based on this palpably false premise.

Complaints lodged about the omission of Miles Davis and John Coltrane probably also were due to selective reading; after all, one of my premises was the aesthetic pleasure I have derived from listening to the artists on the basis of a full half-century of listening. If and when I draw up a list of the most influential jazz figures of the past 25 years, these men undoubtedly will be on it.

One irate caller on the radio show wondered why "all of the top 10 except Benny Goodman were black, while almost all of the bottom 10 were white." Wrong on both counts: after all, Joe Venuti was nobody's idea of an Afro-American; as for the overrated list, it included enough black New Orleans musicians (four) to incur the reverse wrath of one traditionalist who wrote a long and spirited defense of Crescent City sounds. A reader accused me of "true racism" for omitting Bix Beiderbecke; he might be interested to know that Bix was on my original list and was included in the broadcast version of the Top 10.

A jazz fan in Azusa approved of both articles but found it "incredible" that I could omit Count Basie. Bandleader Charlie Barnet called to voice his general approval, but chided me for leaving out Jack Teagarden.

To all these errors of omission I plead guilty: in fact, I have an alternate list of 10 who all should have been in the Top 10: Basie, Bix, Benny Carter, Charlie Christian, Miles Davis, Fletcher Henderson, Woody Herman, Bessie Smith, Jack Teagarden, Lester Young. The trouble, as I found out, was that 20 into 10 won't go.

The "10 most overrated" column looked to a Denver reader "like a straw man list." He may have a point; it is debatable whether such names as Mezz Mezzrow and Johnny Dodds were worth bringing up, decades after whatever impact they once may have had.

Some of the negative reaction to this column involved my citing of Eddie Condon, who, it was claimed, could not be attacked as an instrumentalist since he "never once took a solo."

Wrong! To name just one instance, I recall hearing Condon with, of all people, Artie Shaw at the Paramount Theater in New York. He took a whole chorus on his four-stringed guitar when the Shaw orchestra played a tune called "Streamline." As Shaw said when we recalled the incident the other day, "I took Eddie off the street when he needed a gig; he was really fumbling, but he did play that chorus, every show for two weeks."

Jelly Roll Morton's supporters came to his defense, yet John F. Howard, a college instructor of jazz history, wrote, "I know how I must constantly reevaluate my own thinking . . . my eyes were opened by Feather's comments about Morton, and I find I agree with him."

The dim view of Morton held by Duke Ellington was attributed by one reader to an alleged feud between the two. No such feud existed; it is simply very difficult for the die-hard Mortonian to accept that Ellington simply had no time for Morton on musical grounds.

My inclusion of Kid Ory drew no objections. On the contrary, the award-winning trombonist Bill Watrous expressed pleasure that "someone has told it like it was about Ory." The nomination of Glenn Miller was denounced on the basis of his primary image as a pop music figure, despite my having pointed out that in at least one history of jazz he has been taken seriously.

In one of the few openly antagonistic letters, an L.A. man (who misconstrued my first article as having dealt with the "10 greatest jazzmen of all time") noted the "pompous self-importance" in my implying the need for a list to guide younger initiates. In the world according to him, the treasury of records by the great artists of jazz can speak for themselves.

The trouble with this argument is that it simply isn't so. It is shocking to look through the record catalogues and note how many albums by these pioneers have been deleted. Even those that remain seldom are mentioned in print. If my first list did nothing more than send a few young students out to the record shops to find out who Coleman Hawkins, Earl Hines or Joe Venuti may have been, it served a purpose. This surely is a primary part of the critic's duty.

The whole argument was best summed up by C. J. Tirman of Los Angeles: "I would not drop one man you listed . . . The list must be longer; this should have been your conclusion. It should have brought you joy to realize that there have been so many great jazzmen in such a short time."

Indeed it did. But along with this joy, I found frustration as I noticed, along the way, how many illustrious performers never have achieved enough recognition to make any impact whatever in the jazz chronicles. This led to the decision to put together another list, but this time I am calling on readers to help assemble it: the 10 (or perhaps 20) most underrated jazz figures, living or dead.

Please name only one artist—preferably somebody who enjoyed a measure of acceptance, who has been heard on records, but who simply did not reach the plateau you feel he or she deserved to obtain. Postcards are preferred, legible handwriting is mandatory and, as before, it is impossible to acknowledge each letter individually.

Suggestions may be addressed to me c/o Los Angeles Times, Times Mirror Square, Los Angeles 90053. The eventual compilation will have one special advantage: Even if you disapprove, you cannot place blame on a pompous, arrogant, self-important critic. □

JAZZ BRIEFS

ARIGATO. Hank Jones Trio. Progressive 7004. TIP-TOE TAPDANCE. Hank Jones. Galaxy 5108. Jones' piano fuses the best and most durable characteristics of the swing and bebop eras. On the Progressive album he is backed by Richard Davis on bass and Ronnie Bedford on drums, lending his singular grace to works by Ellington, Kern, Rodgers, Milt Jackson and Gary McFarland. Somehow, though, the unaccompanied session for Galaxy is preferable. Jones needs no rhythm section; besides, the material includes three beguiling adaptations of hymns, along with such standards as "Emily," "Sweet Lorraine" and Alec Wilder's too seldom heard "I'll Be Around." The recording, too, is superior. —L.F.

PRIME TIME. Louie Bellson. Concord Jazz CJ-64. A change of pace for Bellson,whose big band yields here to a small combo with plenty of stretch-out room for Blue Mitchell's trumpet, Pete Christlieb's tenor and Ross Tompkins' piano. The first side is pleasant but rather conventional, with a ballad medley and a long workout on "Cotton Tail." Far more interesting is the B side, for which rhythm guitarist Bob Bain and percussionist Emil Richards were added, and the material is mostly Brazilianesque (Bellson's "Let Me Dream," Mitchell's "Collaborations") or calypso (Dizzy Gillespie's catchy "And Then She Stopped"). Bassist John Williams rounds out the cohesive rhythm section. —L.F.

JAZZ REVIEW 12/19

Bill Watrous: The Modern Trombone

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Bill Watrous, who recorded two noteworthy albums in 1974-75 with a big band known as Manhattan Wildlife Refuge, has assembled an analogous group of Southland musicians which he calls Refuge West. In its local debut at Donte's, where it appeared Friday and Saturday, the orchestra acquitted itself creditably, but it was the leader who deserved better than 50% of the credit.

Winner of the Down Beat poll for the last four years as No. 1 trombonist, Watrous is a phenomenal soloist. In "Sweet Georgia Upside Down," a genial melodic variant of the ancient jazz standard, he played one chorus unaccompanied, one backed by just bass, and a couple more with the full band. His slightly muffled tone, the speed-of-sound control and his ability to tell a story in which the rhythmic pulse and continuity never lag, add up to a persona without parallel in modern jazz trombone.

Although Watrous dominated every number in which he played, the band's repertoire is of more than passing interest. "Pradizer Adeus" is an attractive bossa nova by Ken Kaplan. Tom Kubis composed "The Chase" and arranged Chick Corea's "Windows," the latter illuminated by Larry Lumetta's trumpet and by a passage in which the reed section doubled on soprano saxes to create a vivid, royal blue sound.

Tommy Newsom was represented by an arrangement of Villa Lobos' "Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5," so skillfully and demandingly written that Watrous described it as "a sobriety test." Everyone walked the straight line without staggering.

The ensemble and section work was commendable for a first outing. The eight brass, five saxes and four rhythm pieces are all well qualified to interpret these diversified charts, but aside from Watrous there are no outstanding soloists.

Among the set's less rewarding moments were a couple of rock pieces for which Jim Lacefield, a fine musician, switched to fretless Fender bass, with Chad Wackerman sounding rather stiff on drums.

All Watrous needs to get this crew to pass its musical physical is more regular work, which in turn could be engendered by a return to records. At least Refuge West should be a frequent visitor at Donte's.

Jazz Musician Don Ellis Dies of Heart Attack at 44

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Jazz composer, trumpeter and band leader Don Ellis, 44, collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack at his North Hollywood home Sunday evening.

The Los Angeles-born Ellis, who in the late 1950s played with the bands of Ray McKinley, Maynard Ferguson, Charlie Barnet and others, was working as a free-lance writer at the time of his death.

In the early 1960s he led small groups in New York. He played at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1961, worked with George Russel's Sextet in 1961 and 1962 and appeared at the First International Jazz Festival in Washington, D.C., in 1962.

Later he returned to Los Angeles and in 1963 formed his own Improvisational Workshop Orchestra, making several appearances in person and on television in the East.

He also was a guest soloist with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, playing Larry Austin's "Improvisations." In 1964 he played in Gunter Schuller's experimental improvisation, "Journey Into Jazz."

After his return to Los Angeles he began graduate studies at UCLA and formed a group known as the Hindustani Jazz Sextet with Hari Har Rao, an Indian musician. At the same time Ellis led his own 23-piece orchestra.

In 1964-65 he was the recipient of a Rockefeller grant as a creative associate at the New York State University in Buffalo.

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DON ELLIS DIES

Continued from Third Page

Ellis also played at most of the major jazz festivals in the United States and Europe. His appearance at the 1968 Berlin Jazz Festival became the basis of a television special.

He also was a prolific composer, writing works performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Stan Kenton's Neophonic Orchestra and motion picture scores, the best known of which was for the movie "The French Connection."

In 1975 Ellis suffered a severe heart attack. After a long recuperation he returned and began writing for various movie studios.

In the meantime he also reorganized his orchestra, but on the advice of his doctor disbanded the group this year and turned to free-lance writing.

Among his contemporaries, Ellis was highly regarded both in the United States and Europe. Some regarded him as one of the oustanding jazz innovators of the 1960s.

His experiments included unusual variations in time and meter, use of classical forms and the influence of Indian music. His career was marked by numerous changes in policy, instrumentation, musical concept and direction.

Don Ellis

He leaves his ex-wife, Connie, two sons, Brav and Tran, and his parents, the Rev. and Mrs. Ezra Ellis.

Funeral arrangements were pending.

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JAZZMAN BETWEEN GIGS

Continued from Page 92

album. I suppose it must have sold even more than 'Good King Bad.'"

It is difficult to imagine what must go through the mind of a gifted artist who sees the men with whom he collaborated forge ahead to near-millionaire stature, while he himself, for reasons not related to the degree or nature of his talent, continues to scuffle for security. Yet Joe Farrell displays neither bitterness nor hostility toward his peers.

"I'm very happy for Chick. I met him in 1960, playing at loft jam sessions; he used to play Bud Powell style bebop piano, then went through a Horace Silver stage before finding a style and direction of his own."

Farrell is no less enthusiastic about the Benson phenomenon. As for his own popular potential, he hopes that if and when he achieves comparable success it can be done without any artistic compromise.

"I'm not sure that I like what has been happening to the saxophone lately. The only recent trend I've noticed has been toward a sort of soul style. It comes from people —well, to tell the truth, people I never really used to listen to, like King Curtis and Hank Crawford. Some of the younger cats picked that style up, embellished or exaggerated it, and it became very big. Dave Sanborn, Michael Brecker and almost everyone else I hear playing alto or tenor in small groups around the country, sound like they're trying to imitate those cats. To me this represents a step backward.

"For a long time things seemed to be moving forward, but it seems to me that when the quote-unquote avant-garde music, so called, came to the forefront, that was the beginning of the demise of jazz as we knew it. I took part in it for a while, because I was on that New York scene and everyone was into it, but it never was really my cup of tea.

"I don't dig music without tone, wihout form. My original reason for wanting to play jazz was that I enjoyed playing with chord changes, with meloday and harmony and rhythm. Those are the values I still believe in.

"I'm not hung up on the electronic thing either. I tried playing the flute using a wah-wah pedal; it was an interesting novelty, but I wouldn't want to use that as a steady diet. If I have to play with an electric band then I'll be electrified too, because that's the only way of hearing myself; otherwise I won't get into it."

What lies ahead for Joe Farrell, and for others in his temporary limbo situation, must depend very largely on how good a recording deal he can negotiate. "I hope I can get with a company that will put some real promotion behind me, so I can make an album, then put a group together and take it out on a tour for several weeks.

"One thing I really don't want to do is get back into that studio scene, or any other work where I'm just an anonymous sideman. Look at James Moody—a marvelous saxophonist and flutist, who played all those years with Dizzy Gillespie. During the last five years he's been in Las Vegas, working in show bands, just for the security. A lot of people may have forgotten him by now.

"I haven't reached that point yet, and I hope I never will." □

JAZZ REVIEW

Dakota Staton at the Parisian Room

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Dakota Staton, who became a nationally known singer during her years on Capitol Records, from 1954 to 1961, has remained on the nightclub and concert circuit since then, making new records occasionally, but relying for the most part on early material for her in-person performances.

Tuesday, at the Parisian Room for a three-week engagement, she lost no time in presenting evidence of her jazz roots. The opening "Summertime" was taken at a pace and volume guaranteed to wake up the most apathetic of audiences. The Staton sound is big, powerful and commanding, particularly on up-tempo tunes and on every type of blues.

On this occasion, the blues, a territory she staked out for herself long ago and to which she clearly owns property rights, was represented in three variations: a slow, hard-grooving "I Can't Quit You Baby" with empathetic piano fills by Dick Hindman; "Country Man," an upbeat swinger, and "The Thrill Is Gone," a minor blues long associated with B. B. King.

Staton, who is inclined toward melodramatics in her ballad work, pulled out all the stops on "How Did He Look," a vintage tearjerker, and in the seemingly inevitable "Feelings." She decorates tunes like these with visual mannerisms that tend to be counterproductive.

As if we didn't know what an audience pleaser she is, Staton responded to a request by sending an emissary to her dressing room for the music, distributing parts to her quartet and singing "Trust in Me" just as confidently as if they had rehearsed it.

She concluded with the title number of her hit album "The Late, Late Show," which has carried her handily through two decades. It would be worth her while to investigate some new songs instead of remaining so firmly in the past.

Saxophonist Red Holloway provided his usual sensitive backing, along with Hindman, bassist Allan Jackson and an excellent drummer, Doug Sides.

Joe Williams will take over the room Jan. 9.

JAZZ BRIEFS

PLAY THAT THING. Wolverines Classic Jazz Orchestra. Unnumbered. This Minneapolis-based band of young, eager white musicians has been enjoying some success with its policy of re-creating, for the most part, material recorded by black jazz bands of the late 1920s and the '30s, with an occasional ringer such as a Paul Whiteman imitation and, inexplicably, Leonard Bernstein's clumsily pseudo-jazzy "Riffs" (1949). The arrangements and solos are painstakingly duplicated, note for note. Rook Ganz, a 72-year-old black Minneapolis trumpeter, makes a couple of guest appearances, adding a welcome touch of authenticity.

The nostalgia premise will appeal to older listeners, while some very young audiences may find the Wolverines band quaint. To those in between, there seems to be little or no point in doing, many decades later, something that can be heard in its original form (some of the old records are still available; if not, it's debatable whether even they have stood the test of time). Very little orchestral jazz recorded before 1940 is listenable by today's standards. There are exceptions to the rule, but none can be found here.

Anyone interested may write to David Louis Rodgers, P.O. Box 7057, Minneapolis, MN 55407. L.F.

JAZZ

DEC 24 1978

JOE FARRELL IN LIMBO

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Joe Farrell does not correspond to anyone's definition of an unknown. In the decade since he won three Down Beat polls on three different instruments, he has been internationally respected. Who else has toured and recorded, off and on for 10 years, with Chick Corea? How many saxophonists doubling on flute have worked for Thad Jones and for Thad's brother Elvin? Who among us can claim to have played with Maynard Ferguson, Woody Herman, Horace Silver, Herbie Hancock and Charles Mingus?

By the time he moved to Los Angeles last March, it seemed as though Joe Farrell had just about done it all. Studio calls for Santana, Billy Cobham, Laura Nyro, Aretha Franklin; college clinics for the Selmer company; his own LPs, one teamed with George Benson, for the then thriving CTI Records.

The picture is misleading. CTI is not thriving these days; Farrell left to go with Warner Bros. Discussing his bout with the wheel of fortune, he revealed that he now has no record contract, and just one important gig coming up as soloist (with Freddie Hubbard and Joe Sample) in David Axelrod's "Cosmic Energy Suite" Wednesday at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

"Just when my Warner album was getting a lot of airplay," said Farrell, "they decided to drop me. Then I decided to drop my manager. People may think I'm a big star, but right now I'm just out here looking for a break."

Joe Farrell: "People may think I'm a big star, but right now I'm just looking for a break."

Farrell's situation is ironic. A master musician on tenor and soprano saxes and flute, he is at least as gifted as most of the leaders for whom he has sidemanned. He is a composer with dozens of pieces on records that have sold well, but alleges this has done him little good, since he is owed "tens of thousands of dollars" in composer and artist royalties.

Born Joseph Carl Firrantello in Chicago Heights, Ill., Farrell earned a BS in music education at the University of Illinois, moved to New York when he was 22 and joined Maynard Ferguson. The 1960s found him in continual demand; there was a period when he had overlapping jobs with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis orchestra, the Elvin Jones Trio and Chick Corea (he played on Corea's firstever album as a leader, "Tones for Joan's Bones," in 1968).

Then, he says, "things in the Apple began to fizzle out. During the 1970s I gradually became tired of the whole business trying to survive there. In 1977 I was in California for a dozen quickie visits—record dates, concerts—so between this and my having started working again for Chick, who lives here, I figured I might as well make it permanent."

He has led a combo in Hollywood jazz spots, gigged with Flora Purim, and put together a splendid 18-piece band for dates at Pasquale's, a club in Malibu. To the uninitiated, it seemed surprising that he could emerge suddenly with a full library of music. Farrell explains: "I've been composing and arranging ever since I joined Maynard, so over the years I accumulated all these charts. I found it was easy to organize a good band out here, something I'd never been able to do in New York."

Despite his reservations about New York, Farrell had his share of the spotlight, if not the financial rewards. He is represented in the Schwann catalogue by eight albums: "La Catedral y el Toro," on Warners and seven on CTI, among them such name-laden products as "Joe Farrell Quartet," on which he was supported by Corea, John McLaughlin, drummer Jack de Johnette and bassist Dave Holland.

In 1975 Farrell and George Benson made "Good King Bad," issued under Benson's name. Farrell estimates its sale at about 250,000. In the fall of 1976 he completed an album that was released simply as "Benson and Farrell." "That was after George had become an overnight superstar with 'Breezin' at Warners, but he still owed CTI an

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JAN. '79

LEONARD FEATHER
PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ
Dick Hyman

ARNOLD JAY SMITH

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF Richard Roven Hyman during a professional career that has spanned slightly over thirty years are so multi-faceted that he might best be characterized as a jack of all trades and master of each.

Though best known as a pianist, he is a brilliant composer, arranger and conductor, has played organ (once with Count Basie's band!), harpsichord, miscellaneous keyboards, and synthesizers, and was a pioneer in electronics from 1968. He has been recording LPs featuring the synthesizer for some ten years.

No less remarkable than his tools are his widespread credits. In the early years he was known primarily for his jazz piano, working with vibist Red Norvo and clarinettist Tony Scott, touring Europe in 1950 with Benny Goodman. When Birdland opened on Broadway he was the house pianist, spending several months in 1950 playing with everyone from Lester Young to a Dixieland band.

The Dick Hyman story began in New York City, March 8, 1927. He studied with Anton Rovinsky, his uncle, a distinguished pianist and teacher, and later, after a scholarship won through a radio station contest, took a series of lessons with Teddy Wilson.

"Also," he says, "I had the benefit of having a brother six years my senior who was heavily into jazz and who amassed a great collection of 78s. I doubled on clarinet in those days, and played along with them, copying every note on some of the classic jazz records. I also learned the solos on records by Louis Armstrong and Bix Beiderbecke and Jelly Roll Morton."

Hyman was one of those rare jazzmen who seriously delved into the study of jazz history. "I read a book called *Jazzmen*, Panassie's *Le Jazz Hot*, and *The Real Jazz*. I guess I learned the mythology of the art from books like that."

In the 1950s his career was devoted predominantly to commercial music. He was a staff musician at WMCA in New York, then at NBC, and from 1958–61 was musical director of the daily Arthur Godfrey live radio show. During that period, however, Dick and I became close friends and were involved in many jazz projects, writing music together, making a series of albums for MGM, and assembling a concert unit for a presentation we called *The Seven Ages Of Jazz*, which was recorded live with a cast that included Billie Holiday.

Dick's years with MGM also brought him to the mass public, with such smash chart hits as "Unforgettable" and "Moritat" (the latter became better known as "Mack The Knife"). The next decade found him composing, arranging and conducting for Doc Severinsen, Cozy Cole, Joe Puma, Al Hirt, Bobby Hackett, Carmen McRae, and Enoch Light, to name a few out of hundreds.

His knowledge of jazz history became increasingly useful in the 1970s, when he recorded a solo ragtime album, an orchestrated album of Jelly Roll Morton works based on the original recordings, and a similar set devoted to James P. Johnson. As a director of the New York Jazz Repertory Company Orchestra, he made a triumphant tour of the Soviet Union, recreating Louis Armstrong's works, often harmonizing Satchmo's solos taken directly from 1920s records.

Among his many screenwriting and playing credits was *Scott Joplin*. The example discussed here [shown on p. 24] is taken from his RCA album of the complete works of Joplin [CRL5-1106], but it differs from the rest of the contents in that it consists of Hyman's personal variations on a standard Joplin theme ("The Entertainer") and thus tells us as much about the interpreter as it does about the composer—perhaps even more.

During the four-bar introduction, Hyman sustains the C6 in the left hand while repeating the simple main phrase but transposing it into the key of *D*. In bar 3 he inserts another variation simply by lowering the last two notes of the phrase a half-tone.

During the main statement of the melody, because of the sometimes rubato feeling and the melodic extensions, the first half runs from bars 5 through 14 and the second from 15 through 23. Hyman stays with the original melody only for the first two bars, and even here he virtually transforms it with the enriched harmony of the left-hand half notes.

The melody returns unaltered again for 9 and 10, though the *Db*'s in 9 and the flatted third under the melody on the first beat of 10 are examples of his ability to update the mood of a basically simple work.

Bars 13 and 14 are supplementary measures, creating a feeling of suspense before the regular theme resumes at 15. I detect an Art Tatum quality in the parallel movement of the hands during 13. Other sounds of surprise in this sometimes tongue-in-cheek chorus are the zigzagging sixths at bar 19 (repeated a fifth lower in 21) and the funky use of grace notes that lend an Oscar Peterson quality to 22.

The second statement of the theme builds up through the more predominant use of chords in the right hand. Note, too, the effective alternation of right and left hand accents on the third and fourth beats of bar 27. In 28–29–30 Hyman returns to the fundamentals of the melody, i.e. *E* and *C*, though with alterations and repetitions, and with a descending bass line that removes whatever danger there might have been of monotony due to the repetition.

The final quarter of the chorus sounds as if it will be fairly uneventful and legato, at least on the basis of bar 32 and the first two beats of 33; but then comes that unexpected outburst of parallel single-note lines—eight of them, two octaves apart—that provides a rhythmically exciting element.

The final three measures constitute another extension, with their superb use of polytonality. What, one wonders, would Scott Joplin's reaction have been, had he been able to hear his brainchild treated to so much ornamentation, so many melodic/harmonic/rhythmic transformations? I suspect he might well have asked himself: "Now why didn't I think of doing it that way?"

Since this is only a Hyman elaboration of an 80-year-old composition, it cannot be regarded as typical of his work; neither, in fact, can anything else, since the variety of his styles is almost limitless. For an amazing example of his ability to behave like a chameleon I recommend his album *Theme And Variations On "A Child Is Born"* [Chiaroscuro (221 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019), CR-198], reviewed in the November *Contemporary Keyboard*. Although the impressions of Joplin, Waller, Tatum, *et al* are extraordinary, it is important to note that Hyman also gives the lie to those who have occasionally suggested he can play like everyone but himself. The second side consists mostly of his own 17-minute variations on the theme, in a style that is purely his own.

TV REVIEW

A 'Wordweek' Worth of English

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Dick Cavett Show last week, nightly at 11 on KCET, was subtitled "Wordweek" and consisted of a five-part look at the state of the English language. Often lively, sometimes serious, occasionally probing and provocative, the series promised more than it delivered. This was due principally to the inequitable distribution of the subject matter.

Cavett's panelists varied from night to night, as did their approach to the topics. John Simon, who writes about English for Esquire, was his predictably pedantic and, for the most part, persuasive self. Dr. Geneva Smitherman, one of the four experts who tried during the first two segments to answer the question "How Legitimate Is Black English?" was earnest and unmovable in her conviction that there is such a thing as "correct black English."

The erudite actor Tony Randall, though sometimes upstaged by essayist Willard R. Espy, provided the lightest and most diverting moments in a final show devoted to anagrams, palindromes, limericks and puns.

Cavett, always the wittiest of the talk show hosts, is such a good listener that he sometimes leaves his panelists on two long a leash. The fourth program, with William Safire and Frank Mankiewicz discussing the language of politics, suffered from insufficient participation by the host and too much repetitive talk about obfuscation and euphemisms in Washington.

One show promised to deal with usage of words in the advertising industry but never got there, addressing itself instead to subjects such as the relative merits of linguistic pluralism and unification, which already had been talked about at length in the two "Black English" shows.

It was this pair of programs that left the week's most lasting impression. Dr. Smitherman, a professor in speech communication at Wayne State University, spoke in standard English while describing her travails in taking a remedial course because, at one point, her use of the language had been "too black" to earn her a degree.

John Simon showed what appeared to be a look of unmitigated contempt as Dr. Smitherman explained that whites just don't understand the nuances of Richard Pryor's or Flip Wilson's humor. Her message was that blacks are being subjected to "cultural and linguistic imperialism," and that "if black people have to learn two languages, whites should have to do so also." She did not elaborate on what the two languages are.

It was left to Simon to point out that black English did not evolve as a language but as a pidgin form, and that blacks, like all the rest of us, got to school to learn standard English. he added: "All the blacks I've known in responsible positions speak flawless English."

If Dr. Smitherman's generalizations were correct, we might expect to find all Jews speaking like the ex-rabbi/comedian Jackie Mason, leaving us with yet another language, Jewish-English, and so forth. As one of the panelists ought to have made clear (the others were James Sledd, author of many books on language, and Dr. J. L. Dillard, author of "Black English"), ghetto usage differs enormously in the degree to which it is heard from region to region and from one social and cultural level to another.

The Smitherman premise that we should learn to accept cultural diversity is a sound one. The ghettoes of America have given us hundreds of words or meanings that have enriched the language or broadened its scope—jive, dig, hip, cool and many more have made their way into the mainstream of colloquial English.

To welcome them is one thing; to condone or justify egregious errors in spelling, pronunciation or grammar is something else. We do not all have to talk alike or use the identical accent, yet to assume that everyone should strive to maintain certain standards, as Simon insisted, is not an elitist attitude. It simply means that rules are tools, and that correctness is needed in the interest of better communication.

Because so much time was taken up by this subject, many other avenues were left unexplored. Since English is heard almost as often as our radio or television sets remain on, one evening should have been devoted to the use of language in these media; a second to the print media; a third to black English; a fourth to the entire topic of the deterioration of usage in every area. The fifth show, with its light touch, seemed fine just as it was.

Cavett should consider another series, but with the help of such experts as E. B. White to bring us conversation more clearly focused, and on an even higher level. Stimulating though it was, "Wordweek" only showed us the tip of the linguistic iceberg.

JAZZ RECORD REVIEW

A Time Capsule From Mel Torme

"The Torme Touch," Mel Torme. Bethlehem BCP 6042.

The priceless series of collectors' items on the revived Bethlehem label (distributed by Salsoul of New York) has yielded no finer time-capsule treasure than this memorable set.

For this unique occasion Torme had the good taste to hire Marty Paich as his arranger and conductor. With Paich he devised an instrumentation not unlike those of the Miles Davis and Gerry Mulligan bands associated with the cool school of the early 1950s. The trumpet, trombone, French horn and tuba, with three saxes, bass and drums (no piano) are ingeniously interwoven in charts that are an integral aspect of the album's success.

This is, in fact, an almost flawless wedding of singer, songs and charts. The only exceptions are "Lady Is a Tramp," which is barely acceptable even as a quaint period piece, and the dumb lyrics set to George Shearing's "Lullaby of Birdland." Even the latter, however, is redeemed by Torme's Fitzgerald-like scatting.

Everything Mel touches is *au point;* his intonation, phrasing and feeling constitute a definitive portrait of the jazz-pop vocal artist. His version of Duke Ellington's "The Blues" (from "Black, Brown and Beige") is second only to Duke's own. Other elegant tracks are the celebrated version of "Lulu's Back in Town"; the ageless ballad, "When the Sun Comes Out," and Paul Weston's attractive "When April Comes Again." It is amazing how fresh all this music sounds 23 years later —LEONARD FEATHER.

12/29/78

JAZZ REVIEW

Hubbard Solos in Pavilion Concert

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Freddie Hubbard was the principal soloist, and not incidentally the principal savior, in an uneven evening of music Wednesday at the Pavilion.

Hubbard appeared after the intermission to play fluegelhorn on "The Gospel Truth" and trumpet on the 30-minute, three-movement "Cosmic Energy Suite." Although he strained for unneeded high notes on the former work, he was in generally loose, engaging form throughout his intermittent solos on both these David Axelrod pieces.

Axelrod arranged all the music and composed five of the seven works that were played by a large orchestra of Southland heavyweights, including a string section 18 members strong.

Self-Defeating Genre

An early advocate of the fusion of jazz and rock, Axelrod works in a genre that is by its very nature self-defeating. Although the gospel number with its triple beat offered a change of pace, and despite a few short interludes of straight jazz, the writing was formularized along familiar lines that lacked the sound of surprise.

There were the mandatory bass vamps, the repeated riffs, the insistent harping on or around a single chord. Axelrod demonstrated, in the third movement of the suite that he can write attractively for strings and is capable of dreaming up a pleasant melodic line. Generally, though, whether due to caution or inherent limitations, he kept everything fairly simplistic: too many whole notes, too much unison and, during the five works that made up the first half, too little difference between one piece and the next.

Though one number ("Zoot Allures") was composed by Frank Zappa and another by Roy McCurdy, the arrangements were very much alike and scarcely worthy of the soloists, among whom were Joe Farrell on saxophones and flute and Joe Sample on piano and electric keyboard.

A 'Nuisance' Ignited

One of the brighter moments was an alto saxophone passage in McCurdy's "Chocolate Nuisance" by Ernie Watts, who lit a match to the whole proceedings with his impassioned, thoroughly spontaneous blowing. Some of the other soloists almost sounded as if they were reading rather than ad-libbing.

Perhaps Axelrod should not have been saddled with an entire evening of music to score. Hubbard, Farrell and Sample are all experienced composers who should have been allowed to diversify the sounds.

This was the first of three concerts presented by Amani Gardner and Stan Levy at the Pavilion. The trilogy ends Saturday with Willie Bobo, Flora Purim, Airto and the Latin rock band Tierra.

12/28/78

...indoor location. ...At one point, when Herman ...audience to dance, a dozen couples took to the floor; however, most spectators remained in the chairs that covered the front half of the room.

The functional music was agreeable enough, with Frank Tiberi, senior tenor saxophonist (now in his 10th year with the band) soloing assertively on pop standards; but this was the least stimulating aspect of Herman's omnidirectional repertoire.

Herman currently is riding high with his hottest record in quite a while, consisting of a suite written for him by Chick Corea and several pieces by Steely Dan. One of the latter will surely be heard if the listener stays around long enough. The arrangements sublimate the material.

The present personnel is strongest in its brass work, collectively and individually. Trombonist Birch Johnson, who brought a special elegance to the bossa nova beat of Alan Broadbent's "Sugar Loaf Mountain," reappeared to trade solos with Nelson Hinds in "Reunion at Newport."

Relatively new to the band, both as pianist and arranger, is Dave Lalama, featured in his own blues-oriented version of Ellington's "I Got It Bad."

Nostalgia seekers are generally well served, with Papa Chopper leading the youngsters on alto sax, clarinet and taking an occasional vocal ("Sonny Boy"); but more typical of the maestro's present direction is the Gary Anderson

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"The Torme Touch," Mel Torme. Bethlehem BCP 6042.

The priceless series of collectors' items on the revived Bethlehem label (distributed by Salsoul of New York) has yielded no finer time-capsule treasure than this memorable set.

For this unique occasion Torme had the good taste to hire Marty Paich as his arranger and conductor. With Paich he devised an instrumentation not unlike those of the Miles Davis and Gerry Mulligan bands associated with the cool school of the early 1950s. The trumpet, trombone, French horn and tuba, with three saxes, bass and drums (no piano) are ingeniously interwoven in charts that are an integral aspect of the album's success.

This is, in fact, an almost flawless wedding of singer, songs and charts. The only exceptions are "Lady Is a Tramp," which is barely acceptable even as a quaint period piece, and the dumb lyrics set to George Shearing's "Lullaby of Birdland." Even the latter, however, is redeemed by Torme's Fitzgerald-like scatting.

Everything Mel touches is *au point;* his intonation, phrasing and feeling constitute a definitive portrait of the jazz-pop vocal artist. His version of Duke Ellington's "The Blues" (from "Black, Brown and Beige") is second only to Duke's own. Other elegant tracks are the celebrated version of "Lulu's Back in Town"; the ageless ballad, "When the Sun Comes Out," and Paul Weston's attractive "When April Comes Again." It is amazing how fresh all this music sounds 23 years later —LEONARD FEATHER.

12/29/78

JAZZ REVIEW

Hubbard Solos in Pavilion Concert

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Freddie Hubbard was the principal soloist, and not incidentally the principal savior, in an uneven evening of music Wednesday at the Pavilion.

Hubbard appeared after the intermission to play fluegelhorn on "The Gospel Truth" and trumpet on the 30-minute, three-movement "Cosmic Energy Suite." Although he strained for unneeded high notes on the former work, he was in generally loose, engaging form throughout his intermittent solos on both these David Axelrod pieces.

Axelrod arranged all the music and composed five of the seven works that were played by a large orchestra of Southland heavyweights, including a string section 18 members strong.

Self-Defeating Genre

An early advocate of the fusion of jazz and rock, Axelrod works in a genre that is by its very nature self-defeating. Although the gospel number with its triple beat offered a change of pace, and despite a few short interludes of straight jazz, the writing was formularized along familiar lines that lacked the sound of surprise.

There were the mandatory bass vamps, the repeated riffs, the insistent harping on or around a single chord. Axelrod demonstrated, in the third movement of the suite that he can write attractively for strings and is capable of dreaming up a pleasant melodic line. Generally, though, whether due to caution or inherent limitations, he kept everything fairly simplistic: too many whole notes, too much unison and, during the five works that made up the first half, too little difference between one piece and the next.

Though one number ("Zoot Allures") was composed by Frank Zappa and another by Roy McCurdy, the arrangements were very much alike and scarcely worthy of the soloists, among whom were Joe Farrell on saxophones and flute and Joe Sample on piano and electric keyboard.

A 'Nuisance' Ignited

One of the brighter moments was an alto saxophone passage in McCurdy's "Chocolate Nuisance" by Ernie Watts, who lit a match to the whole proceedings with his impassioned, thoroughly spontaneous blowing. Some of the other soloists almost sounded as if they were reading rather than ad-libbing.

Perhaps Axelrod should not have been saddled with an entire evening of music to score. Hubbard, Farrell and Sample are all experienced composers who should have been allowed to diversify the sounds.

This was the first of three concerts presented by Amani Gardner and Stan Levy at the Pavilion. The trilogy ends Saturday with Willie Bobo, Flora Purim, Airto and the Latin rock band Tierra.

12/28/78

Woody's Herd Thunders at Berry Farm

BY LEONARD FEATHER

At Knott's Berry Farm, where jazz has been a rare commodity since the big name entertainment policy was launched three years ago, the holiday season was celebrated Tuesday by the arrival of Woody Herman and his Young Thundering Herd. The 16-man team will continue through New Year's Eve.

Unlike Disneyland's outdoor band settings, the Cloud Nine Ballroom is a typical 1940s style indoor location, complete with glitterball. At one point, when Herman urged his audiece to dance, a dozen couples took to the floor; however, most spectators remained in the chairs that covered the front half of the room.

The functional music was agreeable enough, with Frank Tiberi, senior tenor saxophonist (now in his 10th year with the band) soloing assertively on pop standards; but this was the least stimulating aspect of Herman's omnidirectional repertoire.

Herman currently is riding high with his hottest record in quite a while, consisting of a suite written for him by Chick Corea and several pieces by Steely Dan. One of the latter will surely be heard if the listener stays around long enough. The arrangements sublimate the material.

The present personnel is strongest in its brass work, collectively and individually. Trombonist Birch Johnson, who brought a special elegance to the bossa nova beat of Alan Broadbent's "Sugar Loaf Mountain," reappeared to trade solos with Nelson Hinds in "Reunion at Newport."

Relatively new to the band, both as pianist and arranger, is Dave Lalama, featured in his own blues-oriented version of Ellington's "I Got It Bad."

Nostalgia seekers are generally well served, with Papa Chopper leading the youngsters on alto sax, clarinet and taking an occasional vocal ("Sonny Boy"); but more typical of the maestro's present direction is the Gary Anderson arrangement of Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," on which Herman plays soprano sax.

Three worlds were conjoined—a classical composition, a jazz orchestra, a rock chart—as the band brought this handsomely crafted set closer to a fortissimo climax. No glitterball was needed; the music had its own brilliance.

From 7 p.m. on, the Herd plays every hour on the hour.

PHOTO BY DAN BALIOTTI

Combo of the Year: The Phil Woods Quartet

Orchestra: Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band.

Instrumentalist of the Year: Woody Shaw

vain, through Congress, toward the establishment of a weekly jazz program on television.

WOMEN OF THE YEAR: Carol Comer and Dianne Gregg, founders and presenters of the first Women's Jazz Festival, held in Kansas City last March. Gregg, a local radio personality, and Comer, a singer, overcame the problems of apathy and financial inadequacy to mount this venture, which featured Marian McPartland, Mary Lou Williams, Betty Carter, the Akiyoshi-Tabackin band and others. Though the networks ignored it and the media in general (except for National Public Radio) seemed less than responsive, Comer and Gregg plan a second festival to be held next March in Kansas City. Not radical feminists, they are two enthusiastic women who realize the need for greater exposure of instrumentalists and singers, some of whom have been victims of sexist discrimination.

INSTRUMENTALIST OF THE YEAR: Woody Shaw. In 1968 I forecast that Freddie Hubbard would be to the 1970s what Miles Davis had been to the '60s, a prediction that largely has been borne out. A similar prognostication now can be made with respect to the 1980s for Shaw, a trumpeter who has it all together. Despite commercial pressures, he is following a self-charted path, exploring the future while retaining the best traditions of the past. His spirited, complex improvisations and compositions are a personal extension of his Gillespie-Miles Davis-Clifford Brown roots.

RECORD COMPANY OF THE YEAR: The credits are numerous. Columbia has placed its limitless power behind dozens of jazz and fusion artists outpacing all other companies in sales. Warner Bros. (including ECM), A&M, Arista with its Novus and Savoy subsidiaries, the Fantasy group, Concord Jazz and ABC all deserve kudos.

Nevertheless, the leaps-and-bounds rise of Inner City Records is without parallel in the record business. Started just three years ago with Archie Shepp's "Doodlin'," Inner City was an offshoot of Music Minus One, a play-along label launched in 1950 by Irv Kratka.

In addition to recording its own material, Inner City spread its tentacles to take over American rights for the catalogues of a score of companies in Japan and throughout Europe. Today the Inner City and the companion Classic Jazz company have a list of 70 albums covering the entire jazz spectrum.

Because Inner City has flooded the market with quality as well as quantity, during a period when the competition has been fierce and incessant, this company and Kratka rate the order of the gilded plume.

WISH OF THE YEAR: Let the Ad Hoc Committee to Promote Jazz on Television get is wish. Failing that, let jazz infiltrate the video cassette industry. There must be some means by which the jazz student can see his preferred performers without tackling the crowds (and the cash) involved in visiting a nightclub or concert hall.

Finally, let me be the first to wish, 12 months from today, a happy decade's end to you all. □

12/31/78

JAZZ

THE 1978 GOLDEN FEATHER AWARDS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

It would take a singularly disgruntled individual, perhaps someone who is looking for Birdland to reopen or for the return of Charlie Parker, to deny that 1978 has been a healthy year for jazz. Personally, I am gruntled.

From the purely practical standpoint, few musicians, whatever their idiomatic predilections, can complain of having been denied an opportunity to express themselves, on records or in person. From the Swing Era music of the kind celebrated at the Nice Festival to the most abstract avant-gardism made available on ECM, Novus and a banquet of other labels, every sound to which the name of jazz reasonably can be attached has been heard in abundance.

Record sales are up; though still not a leading force in the marketplace, jazz today represents a larger slice of the pie than it could claim two or three years ago.

Bearing those healthy conditions in mind, I have drawn up the annual list of those who, in my estimation, have contributed invaluably toward making this a better world for the men and women who are devoted to jazz either as creators or appreciators.

In these, the 14th annual Golden Feather awards, there are, as usual, no repeats from last year. They are presented for services rendered to jazz on the artistic level and are in no way a reflection of who is upcharting whom on the best-seller lists.

Orchestra of the Year: The Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band. Winners in 1975, when only one album had been issued in the United States, this stunning ensemble has fought the almost insuperable odds that confront any big band nowadays. During 1978 the Los Angeles-based orchestra finally was heard in a New York nightclub, played its first European dates and its initial gigs in Chicago and elsewhere in the United States. Its schedule for 1979 indicates that the hazards of taking a band on the road in this country slowly are being overcome.

Incidentally, the band has just won, for the first time, the Down Beat readers' poll as No. 1 band; the runner-up was Thad Jones-Mel Lewis, followed by Count Basie, Maynard Ferguson and Buddy Rich.

Akiyoshi also was voted No. 1 arranger. In my book she also is the foremost composer now writing for a large jazz ensemble, and a pianist whose instrumental talent has been overshadowed by her gift with the pen. As for Tabackin, he may well be the most consistently creative new tenor saxophonist of the post-Coltrane era, and certainly he ranks alongside Hubert Laws as a flutist who respects and ennobles the instrument.

The orchestra, now represented by five albums on American RCA and eight on the Japanese affiliate label, leaves shortly for its third tour of Japan.

Combo of the Year: The Phil Woods Quartet. Woods has achieved the almost-impossible by keeping the same quartet together for almost five years. (On his records, for RCA, the group has been slightly augmented.) His alto saxophone, Mike Melillo's piano and the compositions of both men have steered this group along an exemplary path, retaining the values of orthodox jazz while experimenting with extended works that reflect their determination never to stagnate.

MAN OF THE YEAR (Media Division): Tim Owens, producer of the National Public Radio series, "Jazz Alive!" The long-dormant tradition of live music on radio has been revived by this splendid series. As part of its regular weekly schedule, the show (heard weekly over some 185 public radio stations) presented four specials: the White House Jazz Festival, June 18 (for which, by the way, President Carter deserves an honorary award in recognition of his unprecedented speech honoring the art of jazz); Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock, live from the Newport Jazz Festival; Sarah Vaughan live from New Orleans; and tonight's marathon New Year's Eve show from Boston and San Francisco. Running for more than eight hours, this will be the longest live nationwide jazz broadcast in history.

If there were someone in public or network television fired by the same enthusiasm as Owens and his associates, perhaps the need would be eliminated for organizations such as the Ad Hoc Committee to Promote Jazz on Television, which has been working heroically but in

1/4/79

JAZZ REVIEW

Chris Connor in Lainie's Room

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Chris Connor, who has not played a local club since the late 1960s, opened Tuesday in Lainie's Room at the Playboy Club.

The Connor sound, originally popularized during her tenure with Stan Kenton, was often likened in those days to her predecessor in that orchestra, June Christy. Whether the comparison was justifiable is a moot point. More relevant today is an individualism that has taken firmer shape with the years.

Two facets of her work have remained constant. First, she shows admirable taste in her choice of material. Several of the songs have been identified with other singers—"Good Morning Heartache" was Billie Holiday's, "A Baby's Born" was written for Johnny Mathis, Russ Freeman's "The Wind" was associated with June Christy—yet Connor takes all these products of other singers and another era and makes them distinctively her own: ornamenting the melody, moving the beat and the phrases back and forth, taking the up-tempo on roller-coaster rides.

The second characteristic is that she is an uncompromising jazz singer. Granted, some of the rhythm songs relied more on style than emotion, and a couple of times her variations led to slight lapses of pitch; but in her more relaxed moments she is an affecting delineator of very special songs, such as Rod McKuen's "I'll Catch the Sun" and the Johnny Mercer/Harold Arlen "Anyplace I Hang My Hat Is Home."

Looking somewhat like the latter-day Simone Signoret, Connor kept her announcements to a minimum and had difficulty holding the attention of the audience, a not uncommon situation in this room where apathy too often reigns. She wound up her set with a boisterous Cole Porter coupling of "I Get a Kick out of You" and "From This Moment On."

Her efficient accompaniment was provided by pianist Bill May, Jim DeJulio on bass and drummer Roy McCurdy, who played this room during his decade with Cannonball Adderley.

Connor closes Jan. 13. Coming Jan. 15: Earl (Fatha) Hines.

1/5

AT DONTE'S

Arco Iris Fuses Ethnic, Rock

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Arco Iris, heard at Donte's Tuesday and Wednesday, was billed as Argentina's No. 1 group. Actually it is a recently reorganized unit, only three of whose six members are from Argentina. A fusion combo, it demonstrates all too vividly how meaningless that term can be.

The brand of fusion changed from tune to tune; mostly it was rock merged with Argentinian ethnic, with reggae, with bossa nova. Some of the members sang or whistled, solo or in unison or harmony. The amplification and balance were so poor that it was not always easy to tell what language was being employed.

The Argentinian numbers are Danais, a tall blonde singer and composer who is credited with creating the original group; Ara, who plays a dozen instruments, from saxes to flutes to synthesizer; and Guillermo, a bassist doubling on various stringed instruments.

High-Pitched Vocals

Danais' vocals, when they could be heard above the tumult, were high-pitched, frail and nervous. Ara is at his best playing flute on the more authentic South American pieces—"Skytrain," the West Indian number on which he played a wooden flute, came off particularly well. His tenor sax excesses were a summation of all that is wrong with the contemporary approach to this once noble horn.

Ara and Guillermo also played a couple of very long cylindrical instruments that could have been the original 10-foot poles you wouldn't touch people with. Also heard were some kind of ram's horn, a set of Pan-type pipes and other miscellany.

Ironically, by far the most intriguing musician is a non-Argentinian, the Brazilian Mayuto, whose conga solos were a marvel of contagious intensity. Milcho Leviev, the Bulgarian keyboard artist, also elevated the creative level during his few solos.

The trouble with Arco Iris is that it paints on too broad a canvas, trying to gain attention by jumping rapidly from idiom to idiom. Mayuto, who plans to produce an album with the combo, needs to work on this problem before heading for the studios. After all, a 10-foot pole may look exotic and novel, but when you're listening to a record it could be a 6-inch stick.

JAZZ REVIEW

Joe Williams at Parisian Room

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Joe Williams, who is spending this week at the Parisian Room, started his hour-long performance with a song bearing the misleading title, "You Can't Get Away From the Blues," which happened to be a nonblues, and a waltz to boot.

Compensation was not long in arriving, since the follow-up was a typical blues medley, using a variety of lyrics from the ancient "Cherry Red" to the comedy-oriented "Tell Me Where to Scratch." Williams' mastery of the idiom is so complete that he is inclined nowadays to telescope the phrases, as if the original statements almost go without saying, and use up the empty spaces by adding humorous spoken asides. A more down-to-earth and less casual treatment of the blues was the equally familiar "Roll 'Em Pete," taken at a kicking, swinging tempo.

The Williams' songbook has long been as diversified as his personal musical taste. Far from locking himself into a nostalgia bag, he applies his compelling, vigorous baritone to songs by Bernard Ighner, Bill Withers and Billy Joel. In fact, Joel's "I Love You Just the Way You Are," neatly packaged in an arrangement that found pianist Art Hillery switching to electric keyboard, was the most contemporary song and one of the most effectively prepared.

The dramatic intensity of which Williams is capable was brought out in a powerful medley of material from "Big Man." This was the projected but never produced show in which he was to have played the title role; the excellent songs were written by Cannonball Adderley, with whom Williams recorded them.

These numbers came off best because Williams took himself, and the lyrical messages, seriously, something he does less often than he used to. In fact, about 15 minutes of the hour were given over to good-humored but time-consuming banter—probably an opening-night aberration.

Red Holloway on tenor saxophone and the regular Parisian Room rhythm section provided capable support.

Coming next week: Arthur Prysock.

Mon. Jan. 8 1979

Renowned Jazz Bassist Charles Mingus Dies at 56

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Charles Mingus, 56, the bassist, composer and a renowned figure in jazz for a quarter century, died Friday in Cuernavaca, Mexico. He had been suffering since 1977 from a degenerative muscular condition commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Born in Nogales, Ariz., Mingus was raised in Los Angeles, where he began studying bass with Red Callender at the age of 16. During the 1940s he worked with Louis Armstrong, Kid Ory, Lionel Hampton and others.

He later toured with the Red Norvo Trio and settled in New York, where he played in combos led by Charlie Parker, Art Tatum and others.

In the late 1950s, Mingus achieved international fame as a composer and catalyst, in whose various bands countless important musicians came to prominence. As a virtuoso of the bass, he won the Down Beat poll annually from 1963 to 1966.

Mingus' music was aimed at the extension of the horizons of jazz. He drew on many sources, gospel and folk music among them, and often recreated the works of Duke Ellington, in whose orchestra he had worked briefly.

A brilliant man of strong convictions, he was outspoken on racial and social matters and became a storm center in many confrontations during his peak years. His autobiography,

CHARLES MINGUS

Continued from Third Page

"Beneath the Underdog," was published in 1971.

Ten years ago Mingus went into semi-retirement because of ill health. He returned in 1972 and toured Europe, where he was idolized by jazz students. He continued to work in New York night clubs off and on until illness forced him to stop.

His last important appearance was a nonplaying one last June when he was seen, in a wheelchair, at the White House Jazz Festival. Introduced by George Wein, he was embraced warmly by President Carter in the concert's most poignant moment.

"Mingus went to Mexico to seek medical help," said his childhood friend, Buddy Collette, the saxophonist. "He had planned to come to Los Angeles next week to revisit old friends."

Mingus' body was cremated in Mexico. A memorial concert will be arranged soon by Collette and other early associates. He leaves his wife, two sisters, three sons and two daughters.

TAPS

RADIO FREE JAZZ
JAN - '79

Bonnie Wetzel, Beryl Booker & Elaine Leighton PHOTO: ROBERT PARENT

BERYL BOOKER:
A Mighty Might-Have-Been

By Leonard Feather

The letter was waiting for me when I arrived home from the Sao Paulo jazz festival. It was from Berkeley, California. "Well, I finally did it," wrote Beryl Booker. "After all my years in Philadelphia my daughter finally persuaded me to come out to California and start a new life here." She sounded cheerful and optimistic, as she usually had on those occasional calls my wife and I received from her at Christmas, or whenever she found herself thinking of us.

Great, I thought. I must call her as soon as I get rid of all this accumulated mail.

I was planning to call the following Monday when the news hit me like a flash of lightning: a small item in *Billboard*: Pianist Beryl Booker, 56, died Sept. 30 of a stroke in Berkeley, Ca. Services would be held in Philadelphia.

Beryl Booker was one of that long line of brilliant jazz artists who are best classified as the might-have-beens. No one factor was the cause of her not quite making it into the history books; luck played as great a role as any in determining her fate.

We had first met in 1946, when she came to New York as Erroll Garner's replacement in the Slam Stewart Trio. Perhaps coincidentally, like Garner she was self-taught and had never learned to read music; oddly, too, her style at times bore a close resemblance to Garner's.

She was not just a delightful artist, but a delightful young woman with a self-mocking manner and a penchant for puns. We had an instant rapport and, as soon as it could be set, I arranged for her to be recorded. The trio I assembled for her, with Mary Osborne on guitar and June Rotenberg on bass, was part of an all-women album I was producing for RCA.

Nothing much came of the session as far as Beryl was concerned; she continued working off and on with small combos (also, for quite a while, as Dinah Washington's accompanist) until the idea occurred to me that jazz could use one genuinely talented female group. I found a splendid bassist named Bonnie Wetzel, who had played in Tommy Dorsey's band along with her husband, trumpeter Ray Wetzel, in 1951. Ray had died and Bonnie needed a gig. Also available was a very capable drummer, Elaine Leighton.

The trio worked a few clubs around town, but the big break came when I was assembling a jazz package starring Billie Holiday for what turned out to be Lady's only European tour. We had Billie, Red Norvo's trio and Buddy de Franco's quartet. The Beryl Booker Trio, I suggested to Joe Glaser, might add just the right surprise touch.

Indeed it did. Opening the show every night, completely unfamiliar to the audiences, the trio was received with astonishment and even standing ovations. When we reached Paris toward the end of he tour, in February of 1964, we recorded the group for Vogue, with Don Byas sitting in on several tracks.

It looked as though Booker was finally about to break through. I recorded her for Discovery and Cadence, and there were a few more scattered club bookings. But it seemed too many potential employers were skeptical of the all-female concept—sexism, I found, was at least as hard to combat as racism.

By the summer of '54 it was all over; the women went their separate ways. Beryl eventually resettled in Philadelphia, where she was born. There had been an early marriage, at 17, and a daughter (now Mrs. Gillian Brown, mother of two teenagers). Beryl also had a short-lived second marriage which I remember well, since at her request the ceremony was held in my Riverside Drive apartment with Slam as best man.

We met for the last time in London in 1959, while she was on a second tour of duty with Dinah Washington. After my move to California in 1960 our friendship was sustained by occasional letters and calls. Her career, for all practical purposes, was over.

What went wrong? Why, when I tell friends that Beryl Booker died, do I get the response "Beryl who?"

There isn't any simple explanation. Beryl was admired by everyone who knew her; particularly Slam and guitarist John Collins, who worked with her and was on a date we made for Mercury in 1952. On that session, Beryl sang a somewhat off-the-wall version of *You'd Better Go Now*, which we thought might bring the break she needed. But her voice, for all its individuality and charm, never made it commercially either.

Over the years I have repeatedly made unsuccessful attempts to arrange for the all-women sessions to be reissued by RCA, the company that legitimately owns them. Ironically, the only available source of Booker material that I have observed is in one of those recent collections of questionable origin aimed at the feminist market. Beyond that, there is nothing left to remind us of an exceptional talent; no way I can convey it to the average reader, who may not have been born when Beryl was around 52nd Street, or making magic nightly across the Continent as she opened for Lady Day. What a joy it was to listen to her relentlessly swinging sound, and to hear those gifted women working together like no comparable combo before or since.

Keep that in mind next time you he me, or any other critic, using superlatives carelessly. For every "greatest" or just plain great, there may have been a dozen others equally gifted of whom, through circumstances beyond anyone's control, we've never heard.

We deplored the passing of Erroll Garner, but at least he enjoyed many years of worldwide recognition. When we lose a Beryl Booker, the loss seems even greater; for to all intents, except for those few luminescent months in 1953-54, the world never knew her at all.

PHOTO: BILL SPILKA

FRANK ROSOLINO
1926-1978

Frank Rosolino, a major bebop trombonist, died in Los Angeles in November. An alumnus of the Gene Krupa and Stan Kenton bands and many small groups, Rosolino had been active in West Coast studio work and as an educational clinician for the Conn Instrument Corp. since the mid-1960s.

In his memory, the International Trombone Association has established the Frank Rosolino Memorial Jazz Scholarship. To be awarded to the top student who applies for the award, the scholarship is to the International Trombone Workshop to be held May 28 to June 1, 1979 in Nashville, TN. Applications are available from Vernon Forbes at the University of Nebraska School of Music, Lincoln, NB 68588.

Donations to the Frank Rosolino Scholarship fund can be sent to Stan Adams, Treasurer of the International Trombone Association, at the University of Arizona School of Music, Tucson, AZ 87521.

1/7/79

HERMAN TRIES OUT IN A NEW TYPE OF HERD

BY LEONARD FEATHER

A chart-listed record by a bandleader who has been in business 41 years is not quite as common as, say, an LP by a singer who has been honing his craft for 41 days. Understandably, Woody Herman is delighted that his latest, "Chick, Donald, Walter and Woodrow" (Century CR 1110), is nestling alongside the likes of the Crusaders and Donald Byrd on the jazz best-seller lists. The slightly cryptic title refers to Chick Corea, and to Walter Becker and Donald Fagen (a.k.a. Steely Dan).

"The last time we really had a chart hit," says the maestro of the Young Thundering Herd, "was 'Light My Fire,' which we did in 1968. Our old friend Dick La Palm, who supervised that album for Cadet Records, has had a great deal to do with the concept and promotion of the new one."

La Palm is the hidden ingredient behind the current success. A former record promotion man in Chicago, he now operates the Village Recording Studio in Los Angeles, and has enjoyed huge successes there, recording some of the heaviest pop people—among them Steely Dan, who have made all their albums at Village.

"Dick had definite ideas about the Steely Dan material, and how we could make it valid by hiring the best arrangers to fix it up for us," Herman says.

Fixing it up was not the simple job entailed in the arranging of an Ellington or Coltrane standard. As Herman points out, "The arrangers had to take material that was strictly vocal and convert it to instrumental use; they had to take lines that had been used mostly with guitar sounds, electronics and so forth, and apply them to our regular instrumentation.

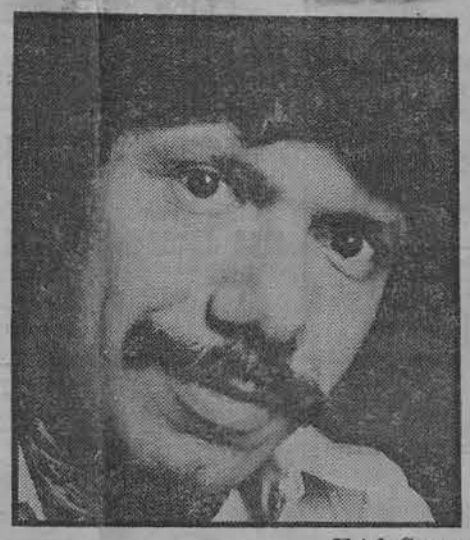
"Although Dick La Palm's interest was a principal reason for my involvement, a couple of my own guys had previously brought me tapes of Steely Dan; in fact, they'd have to interpret the lyrics for me because I couldn't quite understand them. Then when I found out that people like Victor Feldman and Tom Scott were involved in their recordings, I began to see more clearly where their music was coming from." (Scott is a guest soloist on Herman's versions of "Green Earrings" and "I've Got the News.")

Victor Feldman, another important behind-the-scenes figure in the Steely-to-Woody transfer, is a British-born former child prodigy who, on emigrating to the United States, landed his first American band job in the Herman ranks, touring as his pianist for a year and a half.

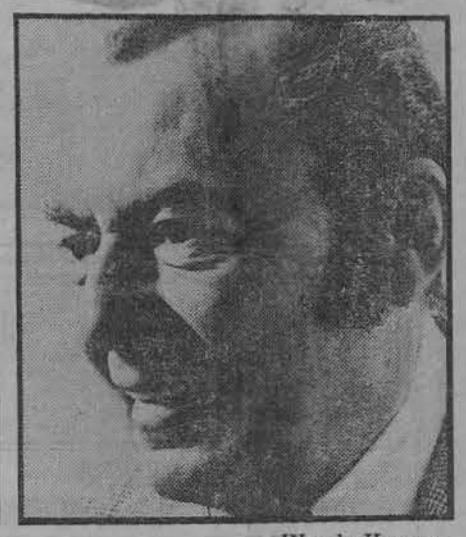
"I've kept in occasional touch with Woody," Feldman says, "and I also played on all the Steely Dan albums to date, so it all tied together very well when I got the call to write the arrangement on 'I've Got the News.' Actually I'm on this album in three different capacities: I played vibraphone on one of the other Becker and Fagen tunes, and percussion on the Chick Corea suite."

Because of the friendly feelings between Woody and his mile-long honor roll of alumni, many of them have maintained contact and several have continued to write arrangements for him from time to time. Feldman was one of five former Herman orchestra members whose penmanship contributed to the success of the Becker-Fagen-Herman alliance.

The Steely Dan side on the album indicates that all these arrangers have an intelligent grasp of how to employ this perennially creative orchestra, composed mainly of musicians in their 20s, to best advantage. The Chick Corea side, though more uneven in its use of the ensemble, has been well received and was the lucky result of a chance encounter.



Chick Corea



Woody Herman

"In the fall of 1977," says Woody, "Chick and I both happened to be guests on the Dinah Shore TV show. We began talking about the idea of his writing something for the band. A couple of months later he had the piece finished. We met in Boston and rehearsed it for a few days at Berklee."

The Berklee College of Music was a logical venue: It was there that Corea studied jazz and did his only previous big band scoring and it is there that Herman has found countless recruits for his orchestra.

The combined name power of Corea, Becker-Fagen and Herman has resulted in encouraging airplay and sales. "Dick La Palm has done a fantastic job," says the elated leader. "He put together a grouping of people around the country and got them all jumping on the album. The black stations have picked up on it, and that's very unusual—as a rule they're not interested in our kind of thing. And, of course, we've had unlimited help from the campus stations."

Although he is a ubiquitous participant, playing clarinet, alto and soprano saxes, and singing briefly on the Corea side, Woody characteristically defers to others in the attribution of credit. "I've been very lucky, over the years, to have been involved with a long succession of very creative writers—all the way back to Ralph Burns, who was my pianist and arranger in the early 1940s."

The association with Steely Dan and Corea now seems likely to predicate other such collaborations. "Chuck Mangione called the other day, and I suggested it would be wonderful if he could come up with something for the band.

"Then just this morning my grandson called to suggest that there are a couple of Billy Joel tunes that we should be playing. With all these people turning in music or just making suggestions, I've got everything going for me!" □

Charles Mingus, 1922-1979

MINGUS AND THE MUSIC OF CHAOS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"I never wanted to pin myself down so that anyone could say 'This is Mingus.' I don't ever want to be caught in any one groove. Everything I do is Mingus."

This declaration, made many years ago, probably came closer than any other to summing up the essence of the mercurial, indefinable, probing, intense man who was Charles Mingus. During his lifetime too many of us tried in vain to analyze his music, aware though we were that it resisted categorization.

When he died Jan. 5 in Cuernavaca, Mex., at the age of 56, an end was put to the ordeal through which he had suffered for more than a year: Those great hands that had produced so much vital, raw and earthy music had been immobilized by paralysis.

The headlines, of course, read "Jazz Bassist Dies," and inevitably his virtuosity as an instrumentalist, which became Mingus' original identification, overshadowed an even more significant role as a composer, leader and catalyst.

Mingus was at once a kindly, sensitive man and an angry, quarrelsome figure whose career was hampered by his inability to deal with the problems of growing up black in an obstacle-ridden society. He knew what he wanted—recognition, acceptance of his music, and a broad canvas on which to make his statements—but could never summon the patience to handle the frustrations he encountered.

I shall never forget the trauma of trying to organize an album I was assigned to produce in 1960. The record company consented to a session with Mingus' quintet. Mingus later asked whether he could add a couple of horns. This change was agreed to.

One afternoon I walked into a rehearsal to find that not one or two, but four men had been added. Mingus also mentioned some old arrangements he had long wanted to try out—material that dated back to his days in the Lionel Hampton orchestra in the 1940s. Since this music was already available and paid for, he suggested, it would be a shame not to use it. He proposed some sort of compromise that would make it possible to add a few more musicians on some tracks.

Before long the band had expanded to 14 pieces. The record company balked. Mingus screamed. He sent long, threatening telegrams to the musicians' union and to me, insisting on the larger band.

To cut a long and painful story short, after two days of crises during which it seemed the album would never be made, we wound up with a 22-piece orchestra and Gunther Schuller conducting. The album, entitled "Pre-Bird," was reissued several times. Mingus eventually sent the record company a bill for thousands of dollars to cover the arrangements which he had said were already paid for. He was paid, and in today's perspective you realize how right he was in bringing this music and these musicians together on a record. Eric Dolphy, Clark Terry, Slide Hampton, Jimmy Knepper, Joe Farrell, Booker Ervin, Yusef Lateef and Paul Bley were just a few of the participants.

"Mingus' intensity killed him," says Red Callender, the bassist who was among his earliest friends in Los Angeles. "He never did find out how to relax."

Callender was 20 when he met Mingus, four years his junior. "At that time I was playing melodies on the bass, which was very unusual in those days. Mingus was fascinated, and although I had never claimed to be a teacher, he insisted on studying with me. He had been playing cello and the bass was almost new to him, but he was very fast, picking up things by ear. After me, he studied for five years with a man named Reinschagen who had played with the New York Philharmonic."

Mingus had great discipline for playing and practicing, Callender recalls, but not for coping with the difficulties of the world in which he was growing up. "He would come for a lesson and we'd sit around for a long time talking about racial injustice. He was living in Watts, and in the early 1940s Los Angeles in general was a hopeless place for black people, especially black musicians who wanted to get into studio work."

Mingus in any case was not temperamentally equipped for the movie session life; as Callender says, he wanted to accomplish more than the studios could offer him. Eventually he would describe some of the experiences, of those early years in his autobiography, "Beneath the Underdog." The book, which Mingus carried around for years before he could find a publisher, dwelt too little on music and excessively on his sexual exploits, yet it served a valuable purpose as a catharsis for his emotions.

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"At one time," Red Callender recalls, "I had a group in San Francisco and Mingus played with me. The idea of two bass players in a small combo was unusual, and we enjoyed splitting the chores—we'd alternate playing rhythm and melody parts. During that time I never heard a harsh word from him.

"Later he went to work for Red Norvo, whom he really loved—a very kind man. But during that period I think there were some experiences that led to a more bitter attitude. One time when I was in Honolulu, Mingus tracked me down somehow and called me from New York. I was like his father confessor; we talked for an hour."

In 1951 Mingus began recording a series of New York sessions for his own label, Debut Records. The company was short-lived, but these were significant early outlets for self-expression. For several years he seemed to be groping for a direction; he flirted with European concert music and the avant-garde. His personality came into sharper focus with a series of works that reflected his social consciousness ("Fables of Faubus," sarcastically dedicated to a white Southern governor) and his debt to the church ("Better Git It in Your Soul").

Mingus was quoted at the time as remembering that all the music he heard as a child came out of the church. "My family went to the Methodist church; in addition, my mother would take me to the Holiness church. The blues was in the church—moaning and riffs, exchanges between the preacher and the congregation."

For the last 20 years of his life Mingus' music reflected these influences, along with his perennial admiration for Duke Ellington. ("The first time I heard Duke," he said, "it was a revelation—like nothing I had heard in the churches. I screamed and almost jumped out of the bleachers.")

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POP MUSIC AND JAZZ REVIEWS

Red Norvo at Donte's

Red Norvo, who opened at Donte's Wednesday for a four-day run, has at least two qualities in common with Earl Hines, who preceded him into town at the Playboy. Both men were the trend-setting pioneers in their respective areas, the keyboard and mallet instruments. Both have survived several musical revolutions to emerge with their styles basically unchanged, as ageless and timeproof today as ever.

Here the resemblance ends. Hines' masterful approach to the piano is vital and percussive; Norvo's personality, as expressed through the vibraphone, is antithetical in its finesse and laid-back gentility. He makes no use of the instrument's resonator, achieving a sound that is quiet and understated.

His choice of notes is as delightfully individual as his way of connecting them. He can take an old standard such as "All of Me" or "It Might as Well Be Spring" (the latter fitted up with a Latin beat) and give it new life with his personal brand of rhythmic delicacy.

At times, he will signal to drummer Jake Hanna and bassist John B. Williams to lay out, while he and pianist Ross Tompkins engage in a fascinating contrapuntal dialogue. There is a rare sense of tension and release when the full group swings back into action.

The absence of a guitar, normally a component of all Norvo groups and capable of blending particularly well with the vibes, probably will not be noticed even if that is what you were expecting. In any event, and in any context, Norvo is one of a kind, sounding a note of peace in an era that has almost been taken over by the invasion of the eardrum-snatchers.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Mercurial bassist Mingus composed as vitally as he played

By LEONARD FEATHER
LA Times-Washington Post Service

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CHARLES MINGUS

Before long the band had expanded to 14 pieces. The record company balked. Mingus screamed. He sent long, threatening telegrams to the musicians' union and to me, insisting on the larger band. Figuring that the end justified any means, he called me and told my wife that he was dying of cancer and, since he had only months to live, the record would be historically valuable.

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Nightmusic

ACES AND EIGHTS — Sheraton Lloyd Center: Fancy Free; Tuesday-Saturday; jazz, pop; no cover.

ALPENSTUBE — Mt. Hood Meadows: Johnny and the Distractions; Saturday and Sunday; rock, no cover.

ASPARRO'S — 832 S.E. Grand Ave.: Buddy Fite Trio; Tuesday through Saturay; jazz, pop; no cover.

BUFFALO HEAD — Tualatin: Live music; Friday and Saturday; rock; cover.

BURT LEE'S — 311 S.W. Third Ave.: Enrique and Cellia;; Wednesday-Saturday; flamenco guitar and vocals; nocover.

CHUCK'S — 823 S.W. Front Ave.: Warren Bracken Trio;Friday and Sunday;jazz. Hugh Ewart String Quartet; Saturday;classical; cover except Sunday.

DEPOT — 5015 S.E. Powell Blvd.: Velvet; Friday and Saturday; rock; cover.

EARTH — 621 N.W. 21st Ave.: Sparrow; Friday and Saturday; rock-jazz. Bob Gibson; Sunday; folk; cover.

EUPHORIA — 315 S.E. 3rd Ave.: Wheatfield; Friday; rock. Tom Scott and Steve Khan; Sunday; jazz; cover.

FAUCET — Raleigh Hills: Greg Smith Band; Friday and Saturday;rock, funk;cover.

HAYLOFT — Vancouver: Chaser; Friday and Saturday; rock; cover.

HELM — 1301 N.E. Broadway: Tuesday-Saturday; Jazz Machine; jazz; no cover.

INTERMEZZO — S.E. Milwaukie and Bybee: Jeannie Hoffman; Friday and Saturday; jazz piano, vocals; no cover.

JAZZ QUARRY — 1111 S.W. Jefferson St.: Sky Trio; Friday, Saturday and Sunday; jazz; no cover.

tol Highway: Fire Eye; Friday and Saturday; rock; cover.

OPENING NIGHT CABARET — 2223 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. Drama; Hot Banned; after hours club; cover.

OLDTOWN STRUTTER'S HALL — 120 N.W. Third Ave.: Don Kinch and Conductors; Friday and Saturday; traditional jazz; cover.

PRIMA DONNA — 2015 S.W. 4th Ave.: Wednesday-Saturday; jazz; no cover.

RED LION — 310 S.W. Lincoln St.: P.J. Proby; Monday-Saturday; rock for dancing; no cover.

ROCK CREEK — Hillsboro: Tracks; Friday and Saturday; rock; cover.

SACK'S — 737 S.W. Front Ave.: Seafood Mama; Friday and Saturday; swing, rock; Tom Grant and Friends; Sunday; jazz; cover.

SAM'S HIDEAWAY — 800 E. Burnside St.: Sunday Morning; Tuesday-Saturday; pop. Pat George Trio; Monday; jazz.no cover.

SHOWPLACE — Sheraton Airport: Sunday-Saturday; Rain; show; dancing between shows; cover.

AT PORTUGUESE ROOM

Pop, Jazz, Rock and a Rey of Harp

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The harp is an instrument of such staggering technical difficulty as to defy the performer to do more than play lush, sweeping arpeggios. That, anyway, has been its traditional role in most pop music settings.

Liza Rey, who opened recently at the Sheraton-Universal's Portuguese Room, deals with this challenge through a

Liza Rey

handy mix of correct genes (her parents are Luise King, of the King Sisters, and Alvino Rey), seasoned musicianship (a master's degree in harp followed by years of multifaceted studio experience) and evident good taste.

A tall, distinctive-looking 25-year-old blonde, she has been branded as a jazz artist, but this claim confuses the issue. True, she can improvise on the blues, and several of her vocals involve scat and other forms of wordless singing; essentially, however, she is an entertainer who can put together a thoroughly satisfying pop, jazz and rock mixture.

She brings to the harp a contemporary dimension and rare harmonic sophistication. As a vocal interpreter, she shows a full, smoky timbre that runs a graceful gamut from Chuck Mangione's "Land of Make Believe" to Stevie Wonder's "Superstition." The latter begins as a stand-up vocal and ends as a dynamic piano solo with a rock beat supplied by her drummer, Bennie Parks, and her bassist, John Giannelli.

From that moment on, she stays with the piano for the balance of the set. Her keyboard work, generally less distinctive than the harp, is serviceable but a little too heavily chorded.

Rey shows possibilities as a songwriter. Of the three originals in the set heard, the contagious beat and unpretentious lyrics of "Tame Me" offered the best evidence.

Though the economics of the room confine her to the trio, Liza Rey's various talents might best be showcased in an orchestral concert setting. The noisy crowd did nothing to help create an ambience; nevertheless, for those who sit close and listen carefully, she offers a convincing display of her multiple talents. Moreover, any 25-year-old who knows enough to include "Willow Weep for Me" and "Funny Valentine" in her repertoire is obviously blessed with the right credentials.

AT LAINIE'S ROOM

Earl Hines Opens Two-Week Date

BY LEONARD FEATHER

In presenting his show Monday at Lainie's Room at the Playboy Club in Century City, Earl (Fatha) Hines pointed out that since his last appearance here he has turned 73.

This is a doubly notable point. First, he was the original worldwide influence in jazz piano, a half century ago, and plays today in essentially the same style; second, the combined ages of his present rhythm section members add up to only slightly more than his own. Bassist Jim Cox, who joined the group last week, is 23; drummer Frenchy Gilmore, also new to the combo, is in his late 20s; and Eric Schneider, on reeds, is 25.

Because of the presence of two neophytes, the rhythm team was unsettled at times; moreover, there were problems with the bass amplifier. Cox is a promising youngster; Schneider reinforced the impression made on his debut date in town last year: He is an unregenerate bebopper whose two specialties, "Lover Come Back to Me" on alto sax and a bright, fluent blues on tenor sax and clarinet, were tackled with confidence and creativity.

All this being granted, it has to be said that the appurtenances with which Hines provides himself, in assuring an entertainment-oriented presentation, may seem more like encumbrances to some observers. The venerable Fatha is never more compelling than when he handles a few numbers on his own.

The opening solo was a slightly fitful mixture of originals and standards, but it took no time at all for Hines to remind us that his wrists are still like Ali's fists. With that singular articulation, he floats like a butterfly, stings like a bee, playing off tricky left jabs against hard-hitting melodic lines in the right hand.

An exception to the rule was the segment of "Honeysuckle Rose" in the Fats Waller medley, during which Hines used the left hand for melody, accompanied by an ongoing tremolo in the upper register.

The qualities of Marva Josie, Hines' perennial singer; have been noted here before; however, a couple of tiresome pop songs on this occasion reduced the show briefly to the level of a cocktail-lounge act, and her duet with Schneider's clarinet was too strongly reminiscent of Cleo Laine and John Dankworth. Josie's best number was her opener, "Sunday Kind of Love," displaying her attractively jazz-tinged ballad expertise.

Hines has two weeks at the club, during which he will no doubt get his new rhythm team into shape. He closes Jan. 27.

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ESTHER PHILLIPS' WARSAW CONCERTO

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Esther Phillips had her first hit record at the age of 14, when she recorded "Double Crossing Blues" as a vocalist with Johnny Otis' R&B combo. Known in those days as Little Esther, she has outlived the nickname, in prestige if not in stature, and has bounced off and on the charts ever since.

During the 1970s, she has had an uninterrupted series of splendid albums in which her blues-derived, mordant voice has dealt with every kind of material. Her updated treatment of "What a Difference a Day Makes" helped establish the vocal-disco trend.

What Esther didn't know, until a remarkable recent event brought it to her attention, was that her mocking, rocking sound had penetrated to Poland.

"It was a weird ending to a crazy itinerary," said Esther, reclining her 5-foot-1 into an easy chair. "I started out doing a week in Berlin, flew home to play a week at the Parisian Room in Los Angeles, then turned right around and opened in Paris on a Europe tour that took me through Germany and wound up in England.

"In London I performed at the Royal Theater, where the regular attraction was 'Bubbling Brown Sugar.' It was their night off and I used all their stage props, walking down their long staircase, to make my show look good.

"After it was over, Jack Jordan, my promoter—who used to manage Josephine Baker—told me some representatives of the Polish government wanted to see me backstage. My first reaction was, what would the Polish government want with me?"

Soon she found out. Phillips was told that Poland had never seen anything like her show, and that she was invited to come to Warsaw to do her own television special for a New Year's Eve airing.

"I called my manager in New York to ask him what he thought. He said, 'Don't you remember the argument we had? You called up and said you were in Warsaw, Germany, and I told you there was no such place. Well, now you can go to the real Warsaw, and it's in Poland. Very few black American performers have worked there. Take it.' So I did."

A government plane was sent to pick up the singer and her secretary-road manager, Yvonne Stoney. On arrival in Warsaw, Phillips says, "They counted every chain I had on, took inventory of all my jewelry. The customs officer looked at one piece and said, 'How much did this cost?' When I told her, she looked at me like she couldn't believe it. But Jack Jordan said, 'Keep it cool, they've just never seen anything like this before.' When I left Poland five days later they checked the entire inventory to make sure I had it all with me."

Singer Esther Phillips' rocking, mocking sound has made an impact in Poland.

The presence of a small, opulently attired black singer in Warsaw was as much of a novelty to the Poles as they were to her. "To put it mildly, I was getting curious stares everywhere I went. I probably looked like a midget to them because a lot of them—particularly the women, who seemed unusually big—looked like giants to me."

Through an interpreter assigned to her, Phillips found that the television staff knew all about her. Arrangements had been made to supply the station with tapes of her records.

Asked what other performers were on the program with her and what musicians worked the special, she replied, "None at all. The only other talent on the entire program, which ran an hour-and-a-half, consisted of a line of dancers, and the choreographer used my records instead of live music.

"On some numbers I had accompaniment tracks from my CTI albums and sang live over them; on others I used the complete tracks, including voice, from my latest Mercury album and just lip-synched.

"The television facilities were very up-to-date, and everyone was completely cooperative. The studio audience consisted of the entire TV staff and a lot of their wives and friends. When I sang 'Such a Night,' there was a standing ovation.

"The whole thing was a shock and a delight to me. The language barrier was no problem at all. And to be so well received in a country where my records aren't even available was an incredible experience."

Did you meet anybody who seemed to know anything about American musicians?

"I didn't get around enough to see the whole picture, but they seemed to be interested mostly in the jazz musicians; they were asking me about people like Freddie Hubbard, and I guess if they don't have records of these people, somehow they must have heard them on the radio. Personally, I couldn't find any American music on the air, and I kept saying to myself, why did they want me here?"

For Phillips, the brief Polish fling was marked by revealing contrasts: the extremes of temperature—"I've never in my life known any cold like that"—more than counterbalanced by the warmth of her reception.

The irony of the situation was not lost on her.

"It's too bad," she says, "that I had to go that far to get a special." In the U.S., her television apperances have been limited to a very occasional brief guest shot on someone else's show.

The trip whetted her appetite for more. "I'm tentatively set to go back in March. I'll play some more dates in Germany and France, but we'll go to some more places I've never seen—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, wherever they want me.

"Meanwhile, I learned one lesson I'll never forget. Warsaw is not in Germany." □

'THE KING' IN A LOW KEY

THE KING. Benny Goodman. Century CRDD 1150.

This will be of interest to audio fans as a direct-to-disc album. Musically, it finds Goodman in a mood so relaxed that there are only two up-tempos in the nine cuts; on two others he doesn't play at all, turning the proceedings over to saxophonist Buddy Tate, trombonist Wayne Andre and guitarist Cal Collins.

Goodman will never release a musically inferior product, but the mood here is low-key without compensatory emotional involvement. There is no attempt, in the cuts that use two or more horns (Jack Sheldon's trumpet is only heard from twice), to work out ingenious head arrangements along the lines that made Benny's collaborations with Charlie Christian and Lionel Hampton so memorable.

The rhythm section, with John Bunch on piano, Connie Kay on drums, Major Holley on bass and Cal Collins, simply doesn't measure up to the standards Goodman's groups set for him over the Swing Era. As he has shown during appearances in the past year or two, the spark is still in him; it just wasn't ignited by the company he kept on this occasion.

JAZZSTARS IN CONCERT. McCoy Tyner, Sonny Rollins, Ron Carter. Milestone M-55006. Culled from the best moments at three different performances during the group's 20-city tour last October (drummer Al Foster was the combo's fourth member), this two-album package contains almost as much music as an entire concert.

The idea of a summit meeting among this label's principal jazz virtuosi worked out splendidly; the stimulation is mutual. Tyner in particular offers renewed evidence that he has come out from under the shadow of John Coltrane; he is in superbly individual form in his own compositions "Nubia" (for which Rollins switches to soprano sax) and the unaccompanied solo "A Little Pianissimo."

The four sides are so ingeniously broken down into quartet, trio, duo and solo cuts that any possibility of monotony is eliminated. Rollins, in a new version of "The Cutting Edge" and in "Don't Stop the Carnival," is at his creative peak throughout.

Carter's bass is resiliently supportive and, in his 10-minute solo workout on "Willow Weep for Me," unflaggingly creative. Foster, best known as Miles Davis' drummer until Davis retired in 1975, ignites the group with his tasteful percussive underlines.

AS GOOD AS IT GETS. Ray Brown/Jimmy Rowles. Concord Jazz CJ-66. The cover design is a full-face front view of a Rolls-Royce—a neat symbol of how good it can get, be it Rowles, Rolls or Ray. This economically conceived duo set says all it needs to with the help of these giants. Rowles' piano is particularly affecting on his own "Looking Back" and Bonfa's "Manha de Carnaval." His tongue-in-cheek stride work adds a light touch to "Like Someone in Love" and "Rosalie." Brown is up front, limber as ever, for "Honey" and "Who Cares." Anyone who cares for the ultimate in tasteful jazz will welcome these elegant sides. —L.F.

PHOTO BY FRAN MELLEN

A HORN BLOWS AND JAZZ WAFTS OVER THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Paul Horn decided long ago that the time had come to start breaking down the great wall of China. The wall he had in mind was a figurative barrier, compounded of social ignorance and artistic separation that has kept two huge countries isolated from one another for 30 years.

Weeks before President Carter announced the establishment of diplomatic relations, the American flutist, a resident since 1970 of Victoria, B.C., had completed his own plans. Recently back from an 18-day swing through the People's Republic, he visited Los Angeles, the home base of his 1960s jazz quintet, to play a concert and to talk to the media about his pilgrimage.

"Canada has a good, open relationship with China," he said, "so my wife and I decided to go along as part of a group of 21 tourists on a trip arranged by the Chinese-Canadian Friendship Assn. We had a collective visa and the group originated from Canada so even with my U.S. passport forbidding travel to China, there was no problem; my passport now has a mainland China stamp."

Once the journey had been decided on, Horn talked to executives at his recording company, Mushroom Records, about the possibility of taping during the visit. Through the Chinese Consulate in Vancouver he drafted a letter and sent it along with two of his exotic-locale LPs (one recorded in the Taj-Mahal, the other in the Great Pyramid of Cheops). He pointed out that here would be a chance, after all these years, to establish a vital relationship in musical terms; to meet and possibly play with Chinese musicians and perhaps to make films as well as records.

"We specifically mentioned the Temple of Heaven, a beautiful place right outside the Forbidden City in Peking; I had seen pictures of it and hoped it would have good sound quality—it's all wood, circular and has a long history involving an empress who used it as a personal haven in which to pray.

"We received a letter back. It didn't say yes, it didn't say no. All I really wanted was not to be prevented by customs officers from bringing in the recording equipment. It would have taken a year to get permission to bring videotape or 16mm film, but super-8 they don't object to. I took along a sound man and a film crew, and the footage they've developed is good enough to blow up to 16mm, so we're going to put together a television documentary."

Because of the rigid tourist schedule and time limitations, not all of Horn's ambitions were realized. He met and briefly played with Chinese musicians but did not record with them; he played for Chinese listeners but not on a formalized basis.

The visit took him to Peking, Wuhan, Shangsha, Kweilin and Canton. In Wuhan he made contact with student musicians at a commune kindergarten and at a university; in Shangsha he performed at a high school.

In Shangsha he spent one of his most rewarding evenings: "Our group saw a superb ballet presented by the Music and-Dance Company from Canton. During the evening it was hastily arranged that the company director and a couple of flute players from the orchestra would meet with me afterward.

> *"I asked, wasn't it possible that a musician growing up in China could express the aims and purposes of Mao? . . . The director smiled."*

"We met in a little room backstage, where tea was served, and talked for an hour through the interpreter, with the cameras and tape recorder rolling. I asked about music in China. I know they are familiar with the standard western classical repertoire, but nothing really contemporary, and I wondered whether there was any improvisation in Chinese music, and whether they'd ever heard any jazz.

"The director's answer came back, 'Jazz is strictly for self-intoxication.' I realized I had triggered off something because his response was about five minutes long, and when I got the entire translation, the bottom line was that no music is valid if it isn't uplifting for society and the state, if it's purely for self-indulgence.

"I could sense that his definition of the word jazz was very different from mine. He associates it with pop music, particularly rock 'n' roll; maybe he sees it as physically or sexually oriented, with no spiritual qualities."

Horn, always one of the most articulate spokesmen for his beliefs, wouldn't let the matter end there: "I pointed out that in improvisation the musician is the composer and performer at the same time. I went into the philosophy of the musician-as-instrument, of his ability to express, through his playing, whatever he is and believes in. Therefore, I asked, wasn't it possible that a

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UNDERRATED MUSICIANS: WRONG PLACE, WRONG TIME

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Until a few weeks ago, when I solicited suggestions for a roster of history's most underrated jazz musicians, an accurate definition of the term had never quite crystallized in my mind.

According to Webster, to underrate is "to rate too low; set too low an estimate upon." Most of us, of course, subconsciously add a codicil: underrated compared to whom? Perhaps, instead of thinking in absolute terms, we tend to measure our praise on the basis of kudos accorded to others, whom we may find comparatively unworthy.

So it is with all the arts, and particularly with jazz. The music is about as old as the century, though its documentation, and observation by qualified experts, may not occupy much more than half that time span. During the first two or three decades, it is possible that men and women of genius sprang up throughout the United States, but because of the limited interest in the music and the frequent misunderstanding of its values, along with the deep-rooted racism in which the country was then mired, many may have lived and died virtually unobserved. They are the truly underrated—those who were never rated at all.

The great stride pianist Willie (the Lion) Smith once told me about "a guy by the name of Johnny Williams, whose wife poisoned him. He was a better cornet player than Louis Armstrong ever thought about being." There are comparable legends involving ragtime pianists, and various brass-band musicians from Indiana to Louisiana. The history books tell us only about those who happened to be in the right place at the right time. The axiom that talent will out is at at best debatable.

Among the gifted musicians who attained a measure of exposure through recordings, many achieved insufficient recognition, in terms of historiographical documentation, for one of three principal reasons.

There were some who flourished too early, whose creative years predated the use of the phonograph record. Perhaps Buddy Bolden was indeed the empyreal hornman who now remains only in legend and in the somewhat hazy memories of a few octogenarians. Others simply died too young. Jimmy Blanton, the formidable Ellington bassist who died at age 21, is a classic instance, though paradoxically Charlie Christian (1919-1942), who turned the guitar around while Blanton was modernizing the bass, is much better remembered, perhaps because of his prominence with Benny Goodman.

Second, there were those who suffered from coming up in the shadow of some contemporary on whom the spotlight shone. James P. Johnson, the "father of stride piano," was all but eclipsed, during the Swing Era, by his own disciple, Fats Waller; trumpeter Red Allen similarly was neglected because of the dominance of Louis Armstrong.

Third, there always have been jazz artists whose music is too subtle, too lyrical to gain a mass audience. Cases in point are Art Farmer, an incomparable fluegelhorn master; Jim Hall, the guitarist; Helen Merrill, an exquisite ballad singer, and the elegant pianist Jimmy Rowles.

The mail response to my call for names brought a curiously diverse list. Most musicians were named only once, and, with the exception of a male singer for whom there was a transparent attempt to stuff the ballot box, nobody was cited more than two or three times.

Among the comments that seemed especially pertinent were the following:

From Calvin Gogerty of Newport Beach: "The recordings by the King Cole Trio and Jazz at the Philharmonic are still highly expressive; Nat Cole was an inventive and artistic pianist, winner of several polls in the 1940s. Though he is better remembered as a popular singer, his contributions as a pianist were of greater importance."

Underrated-jazz musicians include Nat Cole, above, and, left, Billy Strayhorn with Duke Ellington, going over a score.

From Rollin Olsen of Santa Monica: "Joe Morello combines an almost unmatched technical virtuosity with consistently refreshing original improvisation. He is one of the few genuinely swinging drummers . . . with Dave Brubeck, he fused different musical and rhythmic styles and forms (20 years before 'fusion' became a trend)."

Dave Wagner of Arleta suggests, "The consistent excellence of Artie Shaw's work, and the fact that he was clearly individual at a time the clarinet was dominated by someone as outstanding as Benny Goodman, entitle him to more attention than has generally been given him."

Mr. and Mrs. L. Hancock of Carlsbad: Carl Fontana is "the absolute master of the trombone; no player in the history of the instrument has equaled his facility or intrepidity. A prodigious artist and swinger, he is a legend, yet is comparatively unknown."

Though the above choices are at least known to the public, others nominated are familiar only to an in-group of admirers. A typical case is that of Dick Cary, who, as Rex Allen of San Leandro points out, "plays six instruments—piano, trumpet, violin, alto horn, mellophone, euphonium, each with full command and sheer brilliance." Agreed. Moreover, Cary is an admirable composer-arranger and has worked with leading figures from Armstrong and Condon to Goodman and the McPartlands; yet he remains virtually unknown.

Since the roster of names is too long to list here, I will simply add 10 more who have been slighted or inadequately dealt with by fate, history and the historians:

SIDNEY (BIG SID) CATLETT (1910-1951). True, he won a couple of Esquire awards, but had American society allowed Catlett, rather than Gene Krupa, to become the widely publicized drummer with Benny Goodman during the first years of the Swing Era impact, and had Krupa mainly been confined, as Catlett was, to Harlem jobs that afforded him no such prominence, surely Catlett's mastery of an entirely personal style, respected by every musician who heard him, would be acknowledged properly today.

CLIFFORD BROWN (1930-1956). A few years younger than Miles Davis, he would be only 48 today and conceivably as vital a force as Davis, Gillespie or Hubbard in contemporary jazz trumpet. Until he was killed in an auto accident, Brown enjoyed brief prominence as coleader with Max Roach of a hard-driving quintet.

STAN HASSELGARD (1922-1948). This Swedish musician, the only clarinetist other than Benny Goodman himself ever to be featured in Goodman's band, might have saved the instrument from its semiobsolescence. An auto accident claimed his life, too.

JOHN KIRBY (1908-1952). Though first known as a bassist, Kirby organized the most subtle and individual small combo of the Swing years. The sextet conquered racial barriers (first black group to play the Waldorf-Astoria; his own weekly radio series) and might have lasted as long as the Modern Jazz Quartet had not the World War II draft and other factors shaken up his personnel. Kirby died a disappointed and almost-forgotten man, yet the evidence (most recently on a Smithsonian album, R 013) shows us how much he accomplished.

DON REDMAN (1900-1964). Alto saxophonist, singer and, most valuably, composer-arranger, who should have earned the credit on this level that later went instead to Jelly Roll Morton. An entire book could and should be written about Redman.

CHARLIE SHAVERS (1917-1971). A fiery trumpeter who also was principal composer-arranger for the John Kirby group; later played for many years with Tommy Dorsey.

BILLY STRAYHORN (1915-1967). A prime example of the living-in-another-man's-shadow principle. The public still attributes his "Take the A Train" to Duke Ellington. He ranks alongside Duke among the great composer/arrangers of all time.

LENNIE TRISTANO (1919-1977). Pianist, composer, teacher, catalyst, Svengali to many great musicians, Tristano in 1949 recorded the first atonal jazz improvisation, a decade before anyone else dared to innovate in that area.

FRANK TRUMBAUER (1900-1956). He played the rare C Melody saxophone, recorded with Bix Beiderbecke and was an early influence on Lester Young, Benny Carter and many others. An important forgotten link.

JOE WILLIAMS (1918-). Still among us, yet too many critics continue to give him short shrift, while writing endlessly about lesser singers. His blues recordings with Basie are masterpieces of their genre.

If my list seems to neglect young artists who appear to qualify for inclusion, the reason is simple: Their achievements gradually are being acknowledged, and one can reasonably suppose that time will treat them fairly. That is one of the advantages they gained by refusing to be born until there were enough jazz historians around to accord them due recognition. □

AT THE SOUND ROOM

Santos Aims at Afro-Brazilian Soul

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The resurfacing over the weekend of Moacir Santos was an event of special interest to students of Brazilian music.

In recent years, this former child protege from the Amazon country in northeastern Brazil has been living in the Southland, teaching and composing. The group he assembled for his two nights at the Sound Room was no match for the large ensembles that brought his songs vividly to life in his albums.

For the first 20 minutes, in fact, it might as well have been Donte's on a jam-session night. Ernie Watts blew a long, febrile solo and Bob Magnusson flexed his considerable bass chops in "Autumn Leaves," but Santos was out of sight—literally. He remained unseen and unheard during Horace Silver's "Song for My Father," sung in a pure but undistinguished style by the attractive Deborah Tompkins.

When the maestro finally showed up, he worked his way cautiously from "Cosia No. 2," a waltz on which he played baritone sax, to a more typical Brazilian song, "Homesickness Kills People," neatly arranged for Santos and Watts on two saxes.

It was not until more than a half-hour into the set that we heard the very special qualities associated with Santos and the region from which he came. The airy, joyful good humor, the sound of the flute (played admirably by Watts) and the amiable vocal duets by Santos and Tompkins had more than a touch of the old Brasil '65 flavor.

The creative level and rhythmic spirit were maintained in "Off and On," a sort of Brazilian rock waltz; in "Jiquie," with its fluffy blend of alto sax and flute, and in Santos' biggest hit, "Nana." Since Tompkins' Portuguese doesn't seem any easier for her than English is for Santos, it was not surprising that their best joint vocal venture was one in which they used the common language of vocalese.

Santos' music derives its strength from his gifts as a writer of infectious themes. They are heard to better advantage in bigger settings; still, the spirit and essence came across often enough to conjure up some authentic images of the music he likes to characterize as Afro-Brazilian soul.

—LEONARD FEATHER

AT JERRY VAN DYKE'S

Barbutti's Act a Brilliant Mixture

BY LEONARD FEATHER

At Jerry Van Dyke's, the big new supper club at 17167 Ventura Blvd., Encino, where business was brisk for the first two weeks, thanks to Helen Forrest and Dick Haymes, a new show was installed Tuesday with comedian Pete Barbutti as the headliner.

Some comics rely on written material; others need a visually engaging personality; a few are blessed with a sharp mind that enables them to be naturally funny. Pete Barbutti's act is a brilliant mixture of all three elements.

Some of his routines, though familiar through TV exposure on Carson et al, lose none of their antic charm through repetition. He continues to get mileage out of such words as "torque" and "frigate," still plays "Cute" as a cigar solo and "Tenderly" as a broom specialty. (How do you make music out of a cigar or a broom? Only Barbutti knows.) His horrendous piano manhandling of "Love Story" is still good for a laugh.

More important is Barbutti's spontaneous wit. He can rib customers and waitresses mercilessly. At the first show Wednesday, after a patron had admitted to being from Bakersfield, that city became the butt of recurrent humor for the rest of the 70 minutes. His first half-hour was unadorned standup comedy.

Some of his humor is ethnic, but without either abrasiveness or ex-post facto, "I didn't mean it, folks" unctuousness. His impressions of a black Baptist minister and a heavily accented Texan—the latter virtually in double talk—are typical of his keen ear for regional idiosyncrasies.

Barbutti praised the chef for his courage in coming back to work after being bedded down for a week with hepatitis. (Kidding aside, folks, the dinners at Van Dyke's are fine.) His send-up of a folk singer "whose name is synonymous with his music—Frankie Folk" was followed by a marvelous satire of a peace-and-harmony message.

Opening for Barbutti is Jody Donovan, who sings well but tries to do too much—special material, half a dozen impressions—and would do well to concentrate on the straight singing for which she is splendidly equipped. The elaborate show even includes an eight-man, tuxedoed band led by pianist-singer Larry Rigler.

Barbutti closes Feb. 11.

AT DONTE'S

Clora and Carol Play Gillespie

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Clora and Carol. Aside from being anagrams of one another, what do the names signify? The marquee outside Donte's Thursday said no more, but for the knowledgeable observer of the Southland music scene, this billing was enough.

Clora Bryant plays trumpet and fluegelhorn, sings and composes. Carol Kaye plays Fender bass, is a composer and music publisher, not long back after being sidelined by illness. Their quintet is completed by Jim Gordon, a tenor saxophonist who doubles on piano and dabbles in flute; Jim Daniels on guitar, and drummer Clarence Johnston.

Bryant leaves no doubt that she grew up in the Gillespie era. The group's theme is "Dizzy Atmosphere." A three-part Bryant suite, which she sang in a modest but agreeably husky voice, was called "To Dizzy With Love." Her lyrics are well intentioned but less than inspired.

Her trumpet is fashioned along bop lines. During the opening set she was unsure of herself as ideas tended to run ahead of chops. Later, her sounds on fluegelhorn, warmer and far more attractive, were effectively showcased in "Evergreen" (from "A Star Is Born") and in the old Count Basie ballad "Blue and Sentimental." The latter was supposed to be mainly a vehicle for the full-toned, Texas-style tenor of Jim Gordon, but Bryant's elegant, lyrical horn work took the principal honors.

Carol Kaye, long respected as a studio musician and too long typecast as a rock fusionist, left no doubt of her undiminished jazz facility in her blues chording on the Ray Brown tune "Brown's Back." She instilled a firm walking beat into a sometimes disorganized rhythm section. Her composition "Driving Crazy in L. A.," an attempt to show the combo as an organized unit, fell short of the mark, even during a repeat performance in the second set.

Clora Bryant's 13-year-old son Kevin sat in on drums for a couple of tunes, displaying intelligence and promise.

The Clora-Carol combination, together only on a few jobs so far, may yet evolve into a viable entity. But this ensemble could use some more time in the woodshed.

TROMBONE CO.

Getting Down to Brass Facts

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Bobby Knight's Great American Trombone Co., founded last year with the late Frank Rosolino as a central figure, has continued to play occasional jobs at Donte's with a personnel that fluctuates slightly and a repertoire that constantly expands.

Knight is one of six trombonists in the nine-piece band. This seemingly overrich brass diet is made palatable through the occasional use of related instruments (Chuck Findley doubles on trombone and bass trumpet, Knight himself on bass trombone, and Don Waldrop wields the sepulchral contrabass trombone).

Further diversity is achieved through ingenious interplay among the horns. The arrangements make resourceful use of the textural variety at their disposal. Some of the pieces by Bob Florence have a 1950s Kenton coloration; others, by Knight, his brother Jim, and Billy Byers, are more contemporary, though basically this is a conservative, mainstream band.

Bobby Knight's occasional melodic solos bring needed contrast on standard tunes ("I'll Never Be the Same"); Findley and Charlie Loper blow hard and strong, Chauncey Welsch is somewhat more subdued. The most startling brass adventurer is Alan Kaplan whose solo in a convoluted chart of "I Got Rhythm" was a skyscraper of eighth-note storeys constructed with almost impossible technique.

That Knight has a sense of humor was well illustrated in a tongue-in-cheek treatment of "Star Wars" that lapsed into blowing choruses on the old-time "Preacher" chords.

Supporting the front line are Lou Levy at the piano, Frank Capp on drums and an occasionally overamplified Ed Gaston on bass.

Knight has an engaging premise here; however, just as ıpersax uses a brass soloist for contrast, the Trombone ɔ. would benefit from a saxophone for redoubled insurıce against monotony.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Heath Brothers at Concerts by Sea

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Heath Brothers, a combo that has been together since 1974, give or take a sideman here and there, opened Tuesday at Concerts by the Sea. Two brothers, Percy and Jimmy, remain; the third, Albert, has been replaced by a younger drummer, Keith Copeland. The newest addition is Tony Purrone, a youthful, fluently inventive guitarist.

If a slogan had to be applied to the quintet it could be "healthy jazz." The brothers' music (much of it composed by Jimmy Heath) is free-swinging, and a good deal of cheerful badinage is exchanged on stage. The spirit of brotherly love has clearly spread through the group.

A broad range of blends is achieved. On "A New Blue," Heath's soprano sax played the theme in unison with the guitarist; Heath switched to tenor for a spirited solo, then moved over to the piano while Stanley Cowell extracted tintinnabulous sounds from the kalimba, a small African thumb piano.

"Gingerbread Boy," one of the best known Jimmy Heath pieces (through Miles Davis' version), consisted of short, humorous phrases, with Cowell at the piano contributing some intellectual funk, if that is not a contradiction in terms.

"Passion Flower" found Percy Heath on cello, Jimmy on flute and Cowell on electric keyboard during the relaxed, lyrical first chorus; for the second, they switched to upright bass, tenor sax and acoustic piano.

Cowell had the bandstand to himself for "You Took Advantage of Me," for which he built tightly structured formulations close to the middle of the keyboard, as if his hands were watching one another. He is a gifted and unpredictable pianist.

Keith Copeland fits well into the driving rhythm team, with Percy Heath as its heartbeat. The set ended with Jimmy Heath's soprano sax, flawless both in intonation and concept, in his own "Mellowdrama." Few performers since John Coltrane have shown such command of the horn.

The Heath Brothers' problem is that their music is somewhat too honest, too pure, for the great unwashed ears of the masses. Business was not what it should have been opening night, though word of mouth should insure an influx of the faithful before they close Sunday.

Starting next week, Concerts by the Sea will open Thursday through Saturday.

AT PASQUALE'S

2/5/79

Mark Murphy Sings in Malibu

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Mark Murphy is not so much a singer as a vocal musician. The qualities that have endeared him to a growing cult of admirers were persuasively evident over the weekend when he worked at Pasquale's, the unique Malibu jazz club where the ocean's roar is a literal stone's throw away.

Murphy has been quoted as preferring to work off the time conception of an intelligent drummer and a propulsive rhythm section. When last reviewed here he had neither of these prerequisites, performing only with a guitarist. Pasquale, a.k.a. Pat Senatore, supplied not only his own steady bass pulse but also the regenerative drumming of Roy McCurdy and the buoyant piano of Frank Collett. Consequently Murphy was at his polished, innovative best.

He is an uncompromising jazz singer, many of whose songs are based on instrumental solos, to which lyrics were set and originally sung either by Jon Hendricks (to Horace Silver's "Doodlin' "), by Annie Ross (to "Farmer's Market" by Art Farmer) or by Murphy himself, who has fashioned words for such vehicles as Freddie Hubbard's "Red Clay" and Oliver Nelson's "Stolen Moments." The Nelson piece takes on a new life in Murphy's rich-timbered, infectious treatment. This is the title tune of his current Muse album.

Murphy's deep-rooted musicianship is no less apparent in his ballad medleys. During the first show "Old Folks," with its corny yet appealing story, segued into "God Bless the Child," which he supplied with a surprise ending, modulating up half a tone for the final note. During the second show "My Ship" led into "The Folks Who Live on the Hill."

His capacious repertoire and flexible style enable him to include the blues (soulful variations on "Jelly Jelly") and such unfamiliar material as "Don't Be Blue," an easy-grooving number by John Guerin and singer Michael Franks.

The only expendables on the menu were "Day by Day" and "Bye Bye Blackbird," in both of which he was carried away by the urge to scat-sing in a manner that seemed dated and at a tempo that inhibited creativity.

In general, however, Murphy's law would seem to be: If anything can go right, given good material and musicians to match, it will. The law is more honored in its observance than in the occasional breaches.

flects a strong Gillespie influence, has recorded for Granz.

Most of the instrumentalists, singers and composers who are currently enjoying acceptance as leaders in jazz are of limited interest to Granz or those who share his views. Running down a list of the Top 10 in a recent Billboard jazz chart, I elicited these reactions:

"Bob James is a marvelous pop arranger, but he keeps repeating himself. Chuck Mangione is a latter-day Herb Alpert, but a better trumpeter; I don't think he plays jazz as I understand it. Al Jarreau? He should genuflect to Ella. He got all those little tricks from her. He's a very facile singer.

"Grover Washington is a good solid player, somewhat on the lines of David (Fathead) Newman, but I don't think he's Lockjaw by any stretch." (Eddie (Lockjaw) Davis, the ex-Basie tenor saxophonist, has recorded for Pablo.)

"Ronnie Laws? I've never heard him. Weather Report—I heard one of their albums because I was using their rhythm section on an album I made. To be honest with you, I don't understand what the hell Joe Zawinul is doing."

"Tom Scott I've never listened to. Chick Corea is not as good a pianist as he is a composer. Incidentally, I remember reading your rave review of Chick with Herbie Hancock when they did their two-piano tour. I'd like to put them up against Satch and Josh and see what happens." (Satch and Josh were the self-adopted nicknames of Oscar Peterson and Count Basie, who recorded two albums of piano duets for Pablo.)

The list concluded with Gil Scott-Heron and Pat Metheny, neither of whom Granz recalled having heard.

Summing up his overview of the present scene as represented by these names, Granz added, "With one or two exceptions, those people are really not that important abroad. On the other hand, all my artists sell very respectably overseas. The first Joe Pass solo album is now close to 100,000 worldwide, even though the domestic sales are only 35,000 or so.

"Oscar makes more money than Herbie Hancock—at least in Europe he does; I can vouch for that. And Ella makes sensational money compared to her record sales. All this doesn't bother me as long as my artists are happy with their overall income."

It is curious that Granz should even bother to be defensive about the income-tax returns of the musicians whose careers he has advanced so consistently. That a Bob James or a Chick Corea is a hot property on the current American charts should be of little concern to him; moreover, he was quick to point out that the best-seller lists do not tell the whole story.

"In those charts, the operative word is 'shipped.' A record may ship 100,000 copies and may seem at that time to be a best-seller, but what does that mean if tens of thousands of them are returned? I could make any of my artists a 'best-seller' if I were stupid by pressing and shipping huge quantities. We just completed 10 months under our current distribution deal for Pablo with RCA, and we haven't gotten a single item back. Now that's what I call selling records." □

2/11

JAZZ

TO GRANZ, 'CHANGE IS MEANINGLESS'

BY LEONARD FEATHER

When the career of a singular innovator in the music world is cut short by death or retirement, the cliche that we shall never see his/her like again is often mouthed, frequently with some justification.

The artists who have been closely associated with Norman Granz, at concerts or record sessions under his aegis, are almost all mature performers in this category. Reading that Ella Fitzgerald, Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass and the Count Basie orchestra constitute the lineup for his present concert package, due to play the Music Center Pavilion Tuesday through Thursday (and, without Basie, in other cities in the weeks to come), I found it hard to resist asking Granz what contingency plans he might be making to find possible successors for these unique contributors.

"That," said Granz, "is not unlike asking me why I keep using the same people on Pablo Records instead of infusing the catalogue with younger talent. The point is that I'm only concerned about the standard of performance. Unless you can find me a 24-year-old pianist who plays with a big band better than Count Basie, who's 74, I see no reason to change. Change for its own sake, or newness or youth, is meaningless. Why hire some new singer who is obviously not in Ella's class? Why use a 23-year-old pianist when I know he can't play as much as Oscar Peterson, who's 53?

"In any case, you are also talking about my own age as a factor. (Granz is 60.) With a couple of exceptions, you'll find that the people I'm associated with may be around longer than I will. Ella Fitzgerald may well keep going indefinitely like another Sophie Tucker or Alberta Hunter. Joe Pass is only just 50. I don't see any immediate danger of losing the services of the people I like and respect most."

Asked whom he might be interested in adding to the Pablo library outside his own stable of regulars, Granz said, "If I had my druthers, right now, there are only a couple of people I'd want for my label. One is Hubert Laws, another is Freddie Hubbard. They are both great; but they're not exactly newcomers either. Hubert is close to 40 and Freddie will soon be 41. Given my pick of all the available players, I can't think of anyone else I'd want right now."

At the core of Granz's thinking is his firm belief in a brand of primarily improvisational, tonal jazz that has remained basically unchanged for the past 35 years. Some young musicians are still emerging equipped with these values; Jon Faddis, the trumpeter, born in 1953, who re-

LEONARD FEATHER

PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ

Jelly Roll Morton

FERDINAND JOSEPH La MENTHE, born Sept. 20, 1885, in Gulfport, Louisiana, died July 10, 1941, in Los Angeles, acquired the nickname Jelly Roll, assumed the mantle of "inventor of jazz," and for many years, mainly since his death, has been revered by respected critics and some jazzmen as a major force in the music of the early twentieth century.

BETTMAN ARCHIVE

For this reason he is now included in this Piano Giants Of Jazz series. It must be stressed, however, that during Morton's lifetime there was a substantial body of opinion, mainly among musicians (there were very few jazz critics in those days) that maintained an antithetical viewpoint, rating Morton as a braggart whose words far exceeded his accomplishments.

Morton's career as a recording artist began with a series of solo recordings made in 1923–4 in Richmond, Indiana, one of which is excerpted here. The principal source of his reputation, however, was a series of sessions made for Victor in the late 1920s under the name of Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers.

Morton enjoyed considerable financial success in those years and lost little time showing it: he wore a diamond filling in one tooth and behaved as ostentatiously as he talked. During the 1930s his fortunes declined; he stopped recording in October of 1930 and made only a few sessions after that, in 1939 and 1940. These included a valuable series of documentary recordings made under the supervision of Alan Lomax for the Library of Congress folk archives. Lomax expanded Morton's comments into a book, *Mister Jelly Roll*, which has become a bible of jazz traditionalists.

Morton was a Creole, a light-skinned man who, according to James Lincoln Collier in *The Making Of Jazz* [Houghton Mifflin, 1978], "was scornful toward blacks, whom he referred to on occasion as 'niggers,' and said that they were troublemakers.... The blacks with whom he worked perforce were often angry with him for putting on airs."

It was not his racial attitude, however, that cost him the respect of his contemporaries; rather it was his self-overrated musicianship. He was capable of some genuinely poignant statements, such as the wistfully affecting "Mamie's Blues," which he sang and played on a 1939 solo session; but by and large he lacked the technical command to elevate him to gigantesque stature.

Duke Ellington, who rarely said a negative word about any fellow musician, stated in an introduction to the *Encyclopedia Of Jazz*: "Jelly Roll Morton, who was mainly a writer and had more music published than anyone else, played piano like one of those high school teachers in Washington; as a matter of fact, high school teachers played better jazz. Among other things, his rhythm was unsteady." Morton's defenders wrongly attribute this statement to a "feud" between the two men, which did not in fact exist.

Mary Lou Williams, reviewing Morton's record of "Red Hot Pepper" for a blindfold test, said: "Ouch! I didn't recognize this, but it sounds like something from the '20s. The solos were good for that time, I guess, but no beat at all.... What does it lack? Music! [I rate it] no stars."

John Hammond, who made the world aware of Count Basie, Teddy Wilson, and Meade Lux Lewis, had no time for Morton. When Jelly showed up at a session Hammond was producing, John had him ejected from the studio. According to Hammond, "Morton was very important as a composer, but his tremendous ego and his limited technique got in the way of his producing any real music as a pianist."

You may agree with, on the one hand, Ellington, Mary Lou Williams, John Hammond, this writer, and the many others (mostly musicians) who shared our views; or you may concur with Whitney Balliett, Nat Hentoff, Martin Williams, and dozens more who considered Jelly Roll a genius of the keyboard. Fortunately you can find ample evidence on which to make up your own mind, in such albums as the two-volume set on Milestone [47018], which includes "Bucktown Blues," shown here.

There is nothing wrong with the introduction (bars 1–4) except its complete vapidity. The unvarnished inverted triad against the C bass in 1, and the same rhythm of eight eighth-notes with the seventh of the *Db7* in the bass on 2, lead to another C chord, to which the seventh is not added until the final beat of 4.

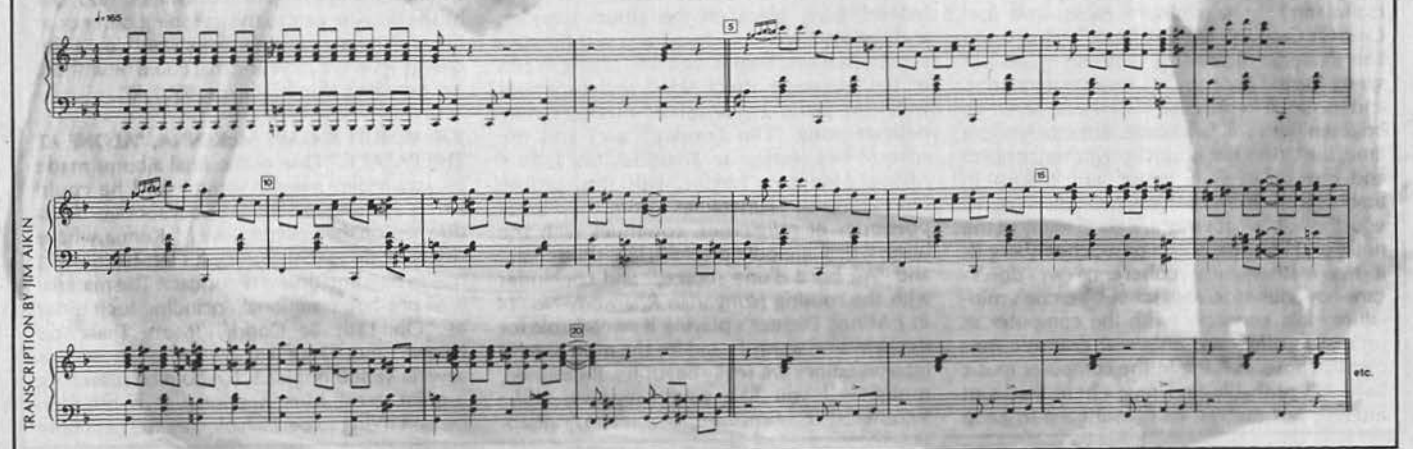
In his statement of the melody, Morton plays an *E* on the third beat of bar 5, and another on the final eighth-note of bar 14, neither of which seems logical; there was no bebop in 1923, and even if there had been, the line would have sounded clumsy; I suspect he meant to play a *D* in bar 5 and an *F* in 14.

Note, too, the *F6* on the second beat of bar 8; no *C7* ever enters to break the monotony, though it would have required a minimum of harmonic imagination to include one at this point.

Similarly, an augmented chord might have helped improve the progress of bar 16, as it would have led logically into the *Bb6* (note, too, the absence in the latter of an *F*, though he did include one in bar 15.)

As for Morton's unsteadiness, notice the slight uncertainty of the grace notes in bar 9, and more particularly the phrasing of the repeat vamp in bars 21–24 at the end of the excerpt. The two eighth-notes sound awkward, partly because the first is accented instead of being given equal weight with the second, and also because the second note is played just a split-second too soon, so that the effect is almost that of two-thirds of a triplet.

It is not easy for me to accept that men like Gunther Schuller, an educator, and composer, and scholar for whose views I have the utmost respect, can have examined Morton as a pianist and not found him wanting. But the verdict, as I said, is up to the reader. I prefer to think of Morton as the composer of "King Porter Stomp," "Wolverine Blues," and other valuable works, and leave it at that.



TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN

2/10

2/10/79

The Many Careers of Carla Bley

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Carla Bley is a tall, blonde-banged, tenacious woman whose involvement with music dates back 20 years, to the jazz avant-garde era when she was an early climber on the Ornette Coleman bandwagon.

She broke in as a composer and pianist with the help of her first husband, Paul Bley. With her second husband, the Austrian-born composer and trumpeter Michael Mantler, she extended into various other areas, in all of which she was self-taught. Together they founded the Jazz Composer's Orchestra Assn. Bley recorded, for JCOA's label, her own grandiose operatic work, "Escalator Over the Hill," the enormous cast for which included Linda Ronstadt, John McLaughlin, Gato Barbieri and Jack Bruce.

With Mantler, whom she credits as the business brains of the couple, she formed the tax-exempt, nonprofit New Music Distribution Service, which now handles more than 150 record labels, most of them produced independently by musicians. The Mantlers also have their own company, WATT Records, and a professionally equipped recording studio in the woods not far from Woodstock, N.Y.

Given all these activities, along with her royalty income from her compositions, Carla Bley can afford occasionally to indulge herself by taking a 10-piece band out on tour, using the profits from her other ventures to subsidize this expensive hobby. (The band will play Tuesday at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall.)

CARLA BLEY
". . . I don't have to keep a style together."

Variety of Sounds

There is no such thing as a single identifiable Bley sound; over the years her music has explored every territory from free jazz to quasi-rock, R&B, blues and other elements, with Bley assuming such roles as organist, pianist, tenor saxophonist and vocalist. (She sang some songs by John Cage on an album for Obscure Records.)

"I don't have to keep a style together," she says. "I can do whatever I like. I'm spoiled that way, because I'm not tied up with a record company that's trying to get me to do something more commercial, so I can follow every whim.

"I've never really concentrated on building a so-called career. I suppose I should. Maybe I will, if it's not too late."

Bley's casual attitude is similarly reflected in her lack of formal education as a composer and arranger. "Sometimes," she admits, "I still wish I had studied. The other night I had a band with eight horns. Now, a real arranger could have done something spectacular with that, but I still use my corny style. I know that more could have been accomplished; I guess I'm what you'd call a good old sloppy.

"The trouble is, I'm like an architect who designs a house but doesn't want to spend time figuring out where to put the couch or what color curtains to have. I just get sort of bored when it comes to the interior decoration of a piece."

For her tour, Bley assembled an intriguing collection of established talents and unknowns. Gary Windo is the British saxophonist with whom she recorded a while back; Karen Mantler, who will play glockenspiel, is her 12-year-old daughter. "Gary Valente, who just joined me, is an incredible new trombonist—it took me half an hour to get tired of hearing him solo."

Enthusiastic though she is about the solo creativity within her ranks, Bley is disenchanted with much contemporary improvisation and was recently quoted as saying: "All I can listen to in jazz now is records that are at least 20 years old."

She stands by her statement, while allowing that she seldom listens to music aside from her own. "But the other day I had to; I was stuck in a traffic jam and my radio was tuned to a jazz station. They were featuring great sax players from the 1950s or '60s—men like Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Archie Shepp, Ornette Coleman, Sonny Rollins—and I couldn't believe how gorgeous each one was, how different from one another, how unique."

Her reaction to some of the sounds around her today is slightly heretical. "In New York now there's a lot of this new wave stuff around: very loud, very negative, and it's a lot of fun; I like to listen to it. It's almost amusing."

Music That Lasts

Surely, I suggested, such music should be taken a little more seriously than that, and should be constructed that way.

"Well, the music that I listen to from 20 years ago that seems so beautiful to me *is* constructed that way, and that's why it has survived.

"I can never get tired of listening to Dizzy Gillespie. On the other hand, a young group, with a young trumpeter playing bebop like Dizzy—that wouldn't be valid. Today's standards are so different."

Bley's own standards seem to fluctuate. "The latest group of pieces I've written are all in 4/4 time, only a couple of pages long, and they all have words, written by me.

"I don't want my music to seem too heavy. If people are made to think they are going to a concert to be educated,

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'CHOPS AT THE CHANDLER'

Class Acts That Last at Jazz Fest

2/14

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Norman Granz, who named a record company after his good friend Pablo Picasso, brought the annual Pablo Jazz Festival to the Chandler Pavilion Monday, its visit this time extended to three days (through tonight).

"Chops at the Chandler" would have been a fitting subtitle, for the term denotes not only the kinds of digital mir-

Illustrated on Page 1.

acles performed by Oscar Peterson and Joe Pass, but also the nonpareil classicism of an Ella Fitzgerald. Artists like these, the Picassos of their world, gain annually in maturity while losing none of their distinction.

The opening salvo brought together a rhythm section composed of Peterson, Pass, John Heard and Louie Bellson. They took off blindingly with "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone" and ended in a speed-of-sound workout on the bop anthem, "Anthropology."

Compared with last year's show, in which Peterson, Pass and Ray Brown were carefully showcased both singly and collectively, the set fell short, partly because the sound on the piano was wrong with the mike on and semi-audible when Peterson removed it. Nor was there enough of either Peterson or Pass playing alone.

The Count Basie orchestra calls for no more change of comment than the band offers change of direction. This is still the best oiled machine in big-band jazz, with a matchless rhythm section composed of the leader, guitarist Freddie Green (heading for his 42nd anniversary with Basie), Butch Miles, a flashy but intelligent drummer, and the excellent bassist John Clayton.

The other soloists are all capable; Sonny Cohn's chorus on "Shiny Stockings" impressed me particularly, as did trombonist Dennis Wilson playing J. J. Johnson's "Lament." Still, the days when this band bred giants like Lester Young, Harry Edison and Marshal Royal will never return.

Ella Fitzgerald hopscotched among the decades with "Make Me Rainbows," "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "Round Midnight," accompanied by the Paul Smith Trio and Basie's horns.

Though she never has been an earthy blues singer, a compelling groove was established on "St. Louis Blues" (a song several years older than Ella) and Billie Holiday's "Fine and Mellow."

Her scatting on "Lady Be Good" negotiated new byways instead of following the old predetermined contours, and was the better for it. But a viable argument might be made for Ella as primarily a ballad singer of unique grace who can bring back "Ghost of a Chance" and make this 47-year-old chestnut seem as meaningful as any Grammy-nominated song of 1979.

For a finale, Basie returned and Ella ad-libbed some lyrics while the band riffed with a belated and welcome looseness.

Norman Granz's philosophy is right, as this elegant evening proved: Fads may come and go, but class will last.

CARLA BLEY

Continued from 8th Page

they'll balk. I'm so bloody sick of art; I just want to be an entertainer. Of course, I think some popular art is fantastic, so I don't mean *all* art."

Despite this hedging on the nature of her work, Bley has earned the respect of most critics, one of whom recently called her "the first lady of the avant-garde." That she can write and perform meaningful music while refusing to be pompous or self-important constitutes a refreshing change. It is a rare event to discover a serious composer without vanity, and with a sense of humor. (One critic observed that she is "a satirist, not a subversive: she's out to tickle tonality, not to overthrow it.") Bearing this in mind, we should consider Carla Bley doubly deserving of our attention.

2/18/79

JAZZ

THE REGROUPING OF THE HEATH BROS.

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Heath brothers have long been an honored presence in jazz. First there were two, bassist Percy and saxophonist Jimmy, working together with Dizzy Gillespie. A younger brother, drummer Albert (Tootie) Heath, joined them on various jobs, and the three men organized their own unit on a semipermanent basis in 1974.

Now, once again, there are two, Albert Heath having quit to form his own group. Guesting on the Dick Cavett show recently, Percy stirred rumors of a family feud by stating that Albert had "rebelled" against his siblings. "It's just a matter of semantics; I love and respect my brother. I just meant that he rebelled against playing our kind of music." Jimmy expands on this: "Tootie was tired of traveling the nightclub circuit; he felt if he could turn his music in the direction of funk, he could earn the first-class treatment that the younger guys are getting."

The Heath family unit might have had a long life had Percy not been corralled into the Modern Jazz Quartet, to which he devoted a heavy slice of his professional life—22 of the 35 years he has been playing bass.

"After all that time," he says, "it wasn't easy to readjust, or even to get established with the new group. Some of the rejections really hurt me: We sent a tape of the three brothers to Atlantic, for whom I'd recorded all those years with the MJQ, and they said they weren't recording that type of thing."

Fortunately, that type of thing—i.e., honest, unfettered jazz with bop roots—caught the ear of Dr. George Butler, head of jazz and progressive music at Columbia Records, where the Heath group is now signed.

"Butler has made little suggestions," says Jimmy. "Like adding singers here, or strings there. But he's the executive producer, while we are the producers of our own albums. I happen to think that strings and voices make everything sound like Muzak. They may add jazz solos, but it's still dentist's office music to me. We don't want to be told that in order for them to sell our music it has to sound like somebody else who sold 2 million."

PHOTO BY TODD GRAY

The Heath brothers—saxophonist Jimmy, bassist Percy—play honest, unfettered jazz with bop roots.

Restrictions are never again likely to impede the music of the brothers, particularly Percy Heath, who, Jimmy says, "was too much in the background all those years with the MJQ. Our group allows him to come out front—and he's getting double exposure as a soloist on bass and cello." Percy's pizzicato cello solos, an added color for him, recall the inspiration of the late Oscar Pettiford, his mentor and the first jazzman to record as a cello artist.

Looking at it in a retrospect of almost five years, Percy now feels that the breakup of the MJQ was "the best thing that could have happened to me. We had done all we set out to do, proving that music of real quality had a place in the concert hall. I'm just as enthusiastic now about the opportunity to play Jimmy's music as I was in 1952 about the music of John Lewis."

The regrouping of the brothers is perhaps even more significant for Jimmy Heath, whose reputation never quite caught up with his talent. He recorded extensively, as tenor and soprano soloist, flutist, composer/arranger, with Miles Davis, J.J. Johnson, Milt Jackson and (since 1959) numerous combos of his own. Some of his works—"Gingerbread Boy," recorded by Davis, and "Gemini," an early hit for Cannonball Adderley—have become jazz standards. Yet he is not as well known as some of the sidemen on his own records: Donald Byrd, Freddie Hubbard, the Adderley brothers.

Physically, Jimmy Heath stands short in the towering shadow of brother Percy; musically, they are equal, interdependent directors of a group that seems headed for success without compromise. "People tell me I sound like an early Coltrane," says Jimmy. "If they'd listen to some of my first recordings they'd know I was playing that same stuff before Trane!

"I ran into a few difficulties that kept me off the scene during the most productive years of jazz in the late '50s, when the group with Miles and Trane was in the forefront; that hurt me, and perhaps forced me to concentrate on composing. If I wasn't on the scene to play, that was all I could do to get my music out there. However, when I am around to play, people always seem to like what they hear. Still, I don't mind being into composing and teaching, because the music itself is more important than being a star."

The Heath repertoire runs from originals by the brothers to standards by Ellington, Strayhorn and Charlie Parker. At a recent nightclub appearance, Percy Heath demonstrated his self-sustaining virtuosity in three astonishing ad-lib choruses on Parker's "Yardbird Suite," after which the band plunged in, with Jimmy on flute, while Percy, who dwarfs the cello, moved to the bass, which fails to dwarf him.

Percy Heath is a purist. He feels he has lived with jazz long enough to know when he can or cannot hear it. "Speaking of manipulation and labeling in music," he said, "we saw recently that Flora Purim was voted jazz singer of the year. How can they insult Sarah Vaughan like that? How can they insult Betty Carter? Etta Jones? Carmen? Ella?

"For that matter, how dare they say that the electronic whatever-it-is that Weather Report is doing now can be called jazz group of the year? What criterion are they using?"

Jimmy Heath extended the point: "Joe Zawinul told us recently that funk is the only way to play. Evidently he forgot about the many other ways he used to play before he started playing funk. That's the only way for *him* to play, maybe—but that isn't what he said."

"I can't forget my roots," said Percy Heath. "I can't abandon the art form, no matter how tempting the offers. I think we are getting help now, at the educational level. John Lewis told me recently that a curriculum is being outlined to teach jazz in grade schools.

"That's one thing all of us in the group would like to do," Jimmy pointed out. "We're all qualified. Stanley Cowell has all kinds of degrees from Oberlin, University of Michigan, Mozarteum Academy in Salzburg. Keith Copeland, our drummer, was a teacher at Berklee College in Boston; Percy is a natural teacher whether he realizes it or not. As for me, I worked for more than 10 years as an instructor for Jazzmobile in New York. Our guitarist, Tony Purrone, and I both taught for a while at a college in Connecticut.

"What we'd like to do is teach in the daytime, talk about our experiences, in schools and colleges; then give a concert in the evening."

"We have to tell people the importance of the blues feeling," said Percy Heath. "When that big repetitious beat supersedes the blues, the improvisation, the gospel, leaving out the true ingredients that made jazz what it is, something essential has been lost. They may stick that word fusion in front and call it fusion-jazz; but to me it has ceased to be jazz at all."

□

ALBUM OF THE WEEK: Paul Desmond (Artists House AH 2). A live session cut at a Toronto club 18 months before Desmond's death. The quartet includes a splendid Canadian guitarist, Ed Bickert. The Mulligan "Line for Lyons," the Brubeck/Desmond "Audrey" and three standards make up this set. Lavishly produced, with a booklet that includes a Desmond solo transcript, this is one of five releases on an important new label. Obtainable for $7 post free from Artists House, 40 W. 37th St., New York, N.Y. 10018. □

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2/21

KCSN CONCERT

Fund Raiser for Northridge Jazz

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"We're all here this evening as volunteers, for the love and for the dignity of jazz," said Richard Pulin, the musician turned disc jockey turned producer.

The facts bore him out. From 6 p.m. Tuesday until 3:30 a.m. Wednesday, an extraordinary procession of jazz celebrities took to the stage of the campus theater at Cal State Northridge, all unpaid, for the benefit of jazz in general and KCSN in particular.

Clearly, KCSN (88.5 on the FM dial) is not your typical small-time college radio station. Now part of the National Public Radio network, it is on the air 24 hours a day with a broad spectrum of news, music of all kinds and, since last June, a regular diet of recorded jazz, weeknights from 7:45 p.m. to 1 a.m., and long sessions after midnight Friday and Saturday.

Tuesday's concert was staged because funds are needed to supplement support from the university and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Despite rain on the roads and "Roots" at home, a fair crowd filtered in and out of the theater all evening.

"We feel KCSN fills a need for pure jazz, without commercials or commercialized fusion music," said Pulin, a former name-band trombonist who serves as the station's host Monday evenings. "More and more people are listening to us, but we need money, among other things, to equip a new van for live remotes. That alone will cost $23,000.

Bird and Dizzy

"I believe in the kinds of jazz we play on this station. I'm 37, and as a kid in New York I came up with the sound of Bird (Charlie Parker) and Dizzy (Gillespie) around me, but also with the bands of the Dorsey brothers."

The Tuesday bash was aired in its entirety, stirring up the unique excitement and energy level that live jazz programming can provide. "We couldn't have done it without the help of the AF of M (American Federation of Musicians)," said Pulin. "Thanks to Local 47, about 80 musicians were allowed to donate their services."

The Northridge campus has long been notable for its jazz activities. Composer Gerald Wilson has been on the faculty

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KCSN CONCERT

Continued from 17th Page

since 1969 as a lecturer on jazz history. Joel Leach, one of the most respected names in jazz education, stomped off Tuesday's festivities with a tightly meshed performance by one of his CSUN student ensembles.

Big-band jazz played a significant part in the concert. The Frank Capp-Nat Pierce Juggernaut was followed by the Bill Berry Big Band and later by Bill Holman's orchestra.

Not all of the concert's contributors were rooted to the swing era. Pulin's own combo, Full Cycle, struck a contemporary though nonelectronic note. Pianist Dave Frishberg, playing and singing a delightful set of his own witty compositions, was so up to date that one of his songs included a reference to the Ayatollah Khomaini. Later starters included singer Jon Hendricks and an interesting octet led by drummer Chuck Flores.

Time-Honored Tradition

In accordance with time-honored tradition at benefits, things went wrong. Still, if a bass player lost his way to the studio or a trumpeter failed to show, the occasional lapses were more than counterbalanced by the surprises. At the end of a poignant performance by trumpeter Bobby Shew of "I Remember Clifford," a tall, handsome woman ran on stage to embrace Shew. She was Mrs. Clifford Brown, to whose late husband this song was dedicated more than 20 years ago. Mrs. Brown's eloquent appeal for pledges was a highlight of the emotional evening.

As Pulin and others have said, public radio is performing a necessary function, as is public television. The sad irony is that both are constantly having to beg for alms, while the financially secure commercial networks stick to their lower-the-quality-and-raise-the-ratings credo.

Los Angeles is fortunate to have even one all-jazz station, KOGO, formerly KBCA (105 FM), still on the air 24 hours a day. A viable alternative such as KCSN is welcome frosting on the cake.

Bellson Orchestra at Marina Bistro

2/24

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Stretching its jazz policy to include big bands, the Marina Bistro currently is presenting Louis Bellson's orchestra in its second visit to the supper club (through tonight, and again Thursday through Saturday).

Bellson can always be counted on for certain immutable and welcome values: his own impeccable drumming—and, not incidentally, a pervasive good humor that communicates to band and audience; a strong acoustic rhythm section with John Heard on bass, Carmen Mosier on rhythm guitar, Ross Tompkins on piano; and a diversified library of music that runs from Basie pressure cookers to Mexicana, Braziliana and touches of jazz/rock.

The problem with any band that has a fluctuating personnel is occasionally evident. Thursday evening, in the sax section, there were signs of untogetherness, though it was nothing that a few nights in each other's company could not cure. Nor is there presently any reed soloist of the stature of Pete Christlieb, seldom heard with Bellson nowadays.

The brass team was stronger, thanks to the presence of Bobby Shew, whose flugelhorn in Bill Holman's pensive "Deliverance" was as lyrical as his lead trumpet on Ellington's "Intimacy of the Blues" was powerful. Of great help, too, were the bold, slashing trumpet of Luis Gasca and Alan Kaplan's trenchant, incisive trombone.

The band's variety of source material is half advantage and half handicap. Some of the many writers represented did not necessarily have this specific ensemble in mind. Not surprisingly, the orchestra came closest to an identifiable "Bellson sound" in the leader's own, long familiar "Carnaby Street," with its bravura horns and its percussion interlude in which everyone picks up cow bells, tambourine or shakers while Mosier emerges from his strumming and plays up a rock-tinged storm.

Bellson would be well advised to play, in its entirety, the suite of which this piece is only one movement, and to contribute more of his own music to the books. As he has shown ever since his days with Duke Ellington, he is one of the most musicianly of drummers, in his writing no less than his playing.

Special credit is due to Tompkins for winning an uphill battle with the Marina Bistro's piano.

JAZZ BRIEFS

SUPER MANN. Herbie Mann. Atlantic SD 19221. Incredible though it seems when you listen to the results, the title cut was created by three producers. The mountains labor and a mouse is born. It is hard to believe that the leader is the same Mann who was a respected, respectable flutist and contributor of uncompromising, valid jazz not too many years ago.

The titles say it all—"Jisco Dazz" (sic), "Rock Freak," etc. The ultimate insult is the use of the title "Django," not to denote the world renowned John Lewis composition by that name but rather a new work written by one of the producers and published, very fittingly, by Pap Music.

—LEONARD FEATHER

CARMEL. Joe Sample. ABC AA-1126. Produced in collaboration with fellow Crusaders Wilton Felder and Stix Hooper, this is a refreshing change from the typical crossover album. Usually strings, horns and voices invade such enterprises like swarms of locusts. Here the total personnel varies from four to six per cut and, except for a brief appearance by flutist Hubert Laws, there are no horns.

The moods swing from near-ragtime in "Cannery Row" to conventional pop on "Sunrise" and melodic charm on "Midnight & Mist" and on the Brazilianesque "More Beautiful Each Day," with two guitars. Playing acoustic piano on all but one of the seven tracks, Sample maintains an estimable level of invention and taste throughout. —L.F.

MY MAMA PINNED A ROSE ON ME. Mary Lou Williams. Pablo 2310-819. This unconventional set by the piano veteran includes 16 cuts on two sides and, according to Williams' liner notes, represents her interpretation of the blues. On the first side she is unaccompanied; bassist Buster Williams is added on the second.

Sprinkled through the album are slow, traditional blues; moderato, harmonically sophisticated music barely related to the blues; a boogie woogie cut; two blues waltzes; two dashes of full-bodied singing by Cynthia Tyson, and even an attempt at a vocal by Mary Lou, on the title tune, best reviewed by the performer herself in a mocking laugh as the number ends.

Though it would have worked out better if variety had been instilled through the inclusion of a full rhythm section here and there, Williams offers eloquent evidence of the many moods she can conjure up almost exclusively within the blues framework. Buster Williams (best known for his four years with Herbie Hancock) takes a couple of limber solos and contributes two compositions. —L. F.

EVERYDAY I HAVE THE BLUES. Joe Turner. Pablo 2310-818. Cut almost four years ago, this belated release might better have been left on the shelf. As the unsigned notes admit, Turner's health is not what it used to be, and on this day he was clearly not feeling well. He sang these same blues classics ("Shake, Rattle and Roll" and "Lucille" among them) in earlier versions, many years ago, that were definitive. Only one tune, "Martin Luther King Southside," is unfamiliar. Lackluster backing is provided by a rhythm section and, once in a while, a below-par Sonny Stitt on saxophone. —L. F.

JOUSTS. Oscar Peterson and the Trumpet Kings. Pablo 2310-817. In 1975, five albums were issued, each presenting Peterson in duologues with a different trumpeter. "Jousts" consists of additional tracks made at those sessions, so that one hears, in sequence, the contrasted sounds of Clark Terry, Roy Eldridge, Dizzy Gillespie, Harry Edison and Jon Faddis.

What was admirable about the original albums—the virtuosity and distinctiveness of the hornmen and Peterson's own incomparable support—remains viable; however, what was wrong remains wrong, namely the absence of bass and drums, which becomes increasingly conspicuous as time goes by.

Although the notes state that "all five men are guests of the house pianist, Oscar Peterson," a hearing of the album reveals that the organ, not piano, is Peterson's accompanying vehicle on the Roy Eldridge tracks, "Crazy Rhythm" and "Summertime." These are the weakest items; Peterson at the organ is no match for Peterson the pianist, and Eldridge has only moments of the old luster. Gillespie, especially in his muted passages, takes the principal honors, though Faddis' startling high-note effects and Gillespie-influenced lines are impressive on "Oakland Blues."

—L. F.

2/25

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GRAMMY: ABOVE AND BEYOND

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Throughout its 21-year life, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences has been the object of praise and vilification, in proportions that may have leaned unfairly toward the vile. Any such organization is a sitting duck for opprobium. I have been as guilty as any other critic of letting loose barrages of complaints when the lists of winners, at least in those categories with which I was concerned, did not turn out right from the standpoint of my personal bias.

From a perspective based on observation of the jazz categories, it would nevertheless seem that the Grammy awards have served their purpose well, bringing kudos to artists who in most cases deserved it, and rarely honoring a mediocre talent.

The number and names of the jazz divisions has fluctuated. There were only two at the beginning in 1958; this switched to three in '61, back to two in '67, up to three again in '71, and, when a jazz vocal category was very belatedly added, four from '76 until now. However, only between 1960 and 1967 was there a category for jazz composers, who are surely at least as important as the writers of "Best Country Song" or "Best Rhythm and Blues Song."

The most frequent complaint about NARAS concerns its alleged tendency to vote for best-sellers rather than for quality. Whatever the facts may reveal in other areas, this certainly is not the case with jazz, principally because this is one of the so-called craft categories, in which the final nominations are decided by a special committee totaling about 30 experts in the seven NARAS branches.

Not until the announcements of these five or six nominations per group can the general membership vote on the winners. This may well have assured not only that such commercial properties as Bob James, Ronnie Laws, Chuck Mangione, Grover Washington and the like have not run off with jazz Grammys, but also that such artists as Oscar Peterson or Thad Jones & Mel Lewis, hardly best-sellers at any time, were winners this year (as was Peterson twice before).

Duke Ellington rightly heads the list of jazz honorees, with 10 Grammys as well as a special Trustees' Award (shared with Billy Strayhorn), and two records in the Hall of Fame (another committee, 90 strong, decides these entries). Ella Fitzgerald has won eight, Count Basie six, Bill Evans five, Stan Getz four. (A couple of these victories occurred in nonjazz categories such as the now happily obsolete Best Performance by an Orchestra for Dancing.)

Other winners, about whose election it would be equally hard to cavil, include Freddie Hubbard, Phil Woods (twice), Woody Herman (three times), Stan Kenton (twice), Wes Montgomery (twice), Miles Davis (twice), and Gil Evans. Louis Armstrong won only once, and then somewhat incongruously for the Best Male Vocal rather than for jazz ("Hello, Dolly!" 1964); but his "West End Blues" has been lodged in the Hall of Fame.

It can be reasonably argued that these names do not represent a cross section of contemporary thought and action in jazz. Surely a category could be added—bearing some such tag as Avant-Garde —in which the talent of the Leroy Jenkinses, Carla Bleys, Cecil Taylors, Air and the Art Ensemble of Chicago might have a shot at recognition.

Only in two divisions have the Grammy awards been notably deficient in parceling out due credit. Jazz composers, as I said, have been acknowledged during less than half of NARAS' lifetime, and have not been recognized at all during the past decade. Even when they had a category, the voters sometimes seemed unable to draw a line between songwriters and the serious composers.

Galt McDermott, incredibly, won a Grammy for writing the trashy "African Waltz" during a year, 1961, that saw the creation of masterpieces by Ellington, Gil Evans, Miles Davis, et al. In 1962, the year of the great jazz sambas, Vince Guaraldi won with a folksy melody called "Cast Your Fate to the Winds."

One wonders why, to this day, such composers as Oliver 'elson, George Russell, Charles Mingus, Keith Jarrett, ıyne Shorter, Joe Zawinul, Horace Silver and Toshiko voshi have gone unrecognized.

The other problem zone has been that of the jazz singers. Totally ignored as a category for 17 of the Academy's 21 years (Ella Fitzgerald managed to sneak in a few times through the back door, in other categories), the jazz singers have been nonpersons for the most part. I remember wondering why men such as Joe Turner or Jimmy Rushing had nowhere to go in the voting. No reasonable answer was offered; meanwhile, pop and R&B singers who may have drawn their inspiration from Rushing and Turner continued to win in categories specially allotted to them.

That Carmen McRae, Joe Williams and Sarah Vaughan have still failed to be honored, while Al Jarreau has won twice in the four years since jazz singers were acknowledged, is a solecism about which I suspect even Al Jarreau must feel uncomfortable. Of course, the "in" singers such as Bill Henderson, Helen Merrill and Betty Carter are even less likely to get the nod.

One aspect of the Academy's operations that deserves credit is the Hall of Fame. Established five years ago to commemorate recordings made before the birth of NARAS, it has produced enlightening results in the proportional representation of the various recording arts.

No less than 11 of the 25 masterpieces elected to the Hall of Fame have been jazz records. There have been eight classical items, only three pop vocals (Gene Austin, Bing Crosby, Nat Cole), two original cast sets and one spoken word album.

This is doubly significant. There was no loading of the committee with jazz experts, yet they chose Billie Holiday (twice), Art Tatum, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Bix Beiderbecke, Frankie Trumbauer, Ellington (twice), Armstrong and Bunny Berigan.

More than four decades of pop records were available for election, yet not a single performance by a woman pop singer, not a solitary pop instrumental, was deemed worthy of inclusion. Even Glenn Miller and Judy Garland have not yet made it into the sanctum.

Surely something has been said here, not only about the ephemeral character of so much popular music, but more valuably about the durability and inherent artistic validity of the great jazz works of this century. For helping to point up this often overlooked verity, NARAS deserves a little more respect than many of us have accorded it over the years. □

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Scrapbook MAR. 1979

LEONARD FEATHER

PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ

Jess Stacy

DUNCAN SCHIEDT COLLECTION

THE NAME Jess Alexandria Stacy is not as familiar as it should be to younger students of jazz. Even in the few history books that discuss him, he is incorrectly assessed. James Lincoln Collier, in his *The Making Of Jazz*, lumps Stacy together with Joe Sullivan, Mel Powell, and Teddy Wilson as one of a "new line of pianists [in the mid-1930s] stemming from Earl Hines."

The fact is, and Stacy more than anyone will insist on it, that although he admired him, Hines was not a major influence. Stacy, in fact, soon developed a style that cannot easily be pigeonholed. He had a unique sense of dynamic contrast, made less use of right-hand chords than Hines, and swung in a harder and more complex style than Wilson.

Stacy rose to prominence during his four years with the Benny Goodman orchestra (1935–39); however, to some degree he was in the shadow of Wilson, who during that period was prominently featured with the Goodman Trio. His Goodman-derived prominence enabled him to win the *Downbeat* and *Metronome* polls as No. 1 pianist for several years in the early 1940s.

Born August 4, 1904, in Bird's Point, Missouri, Stacy was mainly self-taught. He played piano and calliope on riverboats in 1921; when one of the boats reached Davenport, Iowa, Bix Beiderbecke sat in on piano and cornet.

After playing around Wisconsin and Illinois with a territory band led by one Joe Kayser, Stacy found himself stranded in Chicago, where he scuffled for a decade with a variety of groups, often in gangster-controlled dives. He worked with many long-forgotten bands. One of them was led by Maury Stein, and it was during that engagement that he received a call from Benny Goodman in New York.

"I really figured somebody was kidding me," Stacy recalls, "but then he convinced me he really was Benny Goodman. He told me that John Hammond had heard me playing in a joint called the Subway, and had recommended me for a job with Benny."

The job paid $65 a week—fair money for those days, though by the time he left, Stacy had worked his way up to a munificent $170. He says that for a while he felt like an outcast, sitting alongside such established figures as drummer Gene Krupa and trumpeter Bunny Berigan. Not too long afterward, when the orchestra enjoyed its first big success in Los Angeles, Stacy became an integral part of the Goodman story.

Jess cut his first solo recordings in 1936, making the first recorded versions of Bix's "In The Dark" and "Flashes," neither of which had been recorded by Beiderbecke himself. Later in New York he led a series of recording combos that enjoyed in-group popularity.

Stacy played with the Bob Crosby band from 1939–42, rejoined Goodman for a year, then toured with Horace Heidt and Tommy Dorsey before forming a big band of his own, in which his then-wife, singer Lee Wiley, was co-featured. Because of the World War II problems of keeping personnel together, coupled with other difficulties, this venture was short-lived. Stacy rejoined Goodman once more, briefly, in 1946–47, then moved to California.

He spent most of the 1950s in generally unrewarding jobs at bars in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Finally, after tiring of requests for "Clair de Lune" and the like, he worked a dismal weekend in La Crescenta, Calif., and called it quits.

He went to work in the mailroom at the Max Factor Co., remained there until the mandatory retirement age of 65, and has been in total retirement since then, with only three exceptions: in 1974 he was persuaded to resume practicing and played the Newport Jazz Festival (he also recorded for Chiaroscuro); and in 1975 and '76 he played the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee. He lives happily with his wife Pat in a quiet home off Laurel Canyon in Hollywood.

Stacy's most memorable achievement was preserved almost by accident. A recording made at Goodman's 1938 Carnegie Hall concert, released many years later after the discs had been discovered in Benny's closet, featured a long Stacy solo on "Sing Sing Sing." Benny had suddenly given Jess a cue, and he improvised for two minutes, essentially on an *A* minor chord.

Whitney Balliett, in his *Improvising: 16 Jazz Musicians And Their Art* [Oxford University Press], ascribed Debussy-like qualities to the solo, in which, he said, "there were no divisions or seams, and it had a spiraling structure . . . in which each phrase evolved from its predecessor. Seesawing middle-register chords gave way to double-time runs, which gave way to dreaming rests, which gave way to singsong chords, which gave way to oblique runs. A climax would be reached only to recede before a still stronger one. Piling grace upon grace, the solo moved gradually but inexorably up the keyboard, at last ending in a superbly restrained cluster of tintinnabulous single notes."

In selecting the final passage from the solo as the one he would prefer to see reproduced in *CK*, Jess referred to the "Edward MacDowell-like phrase" that begins in bar 9. The sudden jumps of a ninth or an octave have a startling impact in a sequence marked by unpredictable rests (bars 13, 18, 20, 22) and the delay in moving from the *E7* to *Am* in bar 15. Stacy is conservative in putting his technique to full use; the flurry of notes in 25 comes as unexpectedly as almost everything else. Contrary to Balliett's observation, the solo ends primarily with a series of chords rather than single notes.

The left hand's role is insignificant; the passage in bar 19 may have been played with the right hand. Stacy's relaxed sense of time is one of his most admirable characteristics; note the five more-or-less-quarters evenly distributed against four beats in bar 27.

Now the only major figure of his generation who is still around but steadfastly refuses to resume his career, Stacy is happy at home, working out daily on his upright piano, though he feels a need to replace the instrument, which has grown balky on him. "I practice through all the keys, I work on the cycle of fifths," he told me one day in January of 1979. "It's like dope. You can't stop, you're hooked." □

Playboy Jazz Festival Set for Hollywood Bowl 2/27

Playboy will produce a jazz festival for two days in June at the Hollywood Bowl, it was announced Monday at the Playboy Mansion by Hugh Hefner, the magazine's founder, and by George Wein, who is assembling the talent and producing the concerts. Wein has been producer of the Newport Jazz Festival since its inception in 1954 and has organized hundreds of other jazz festivals around the world.

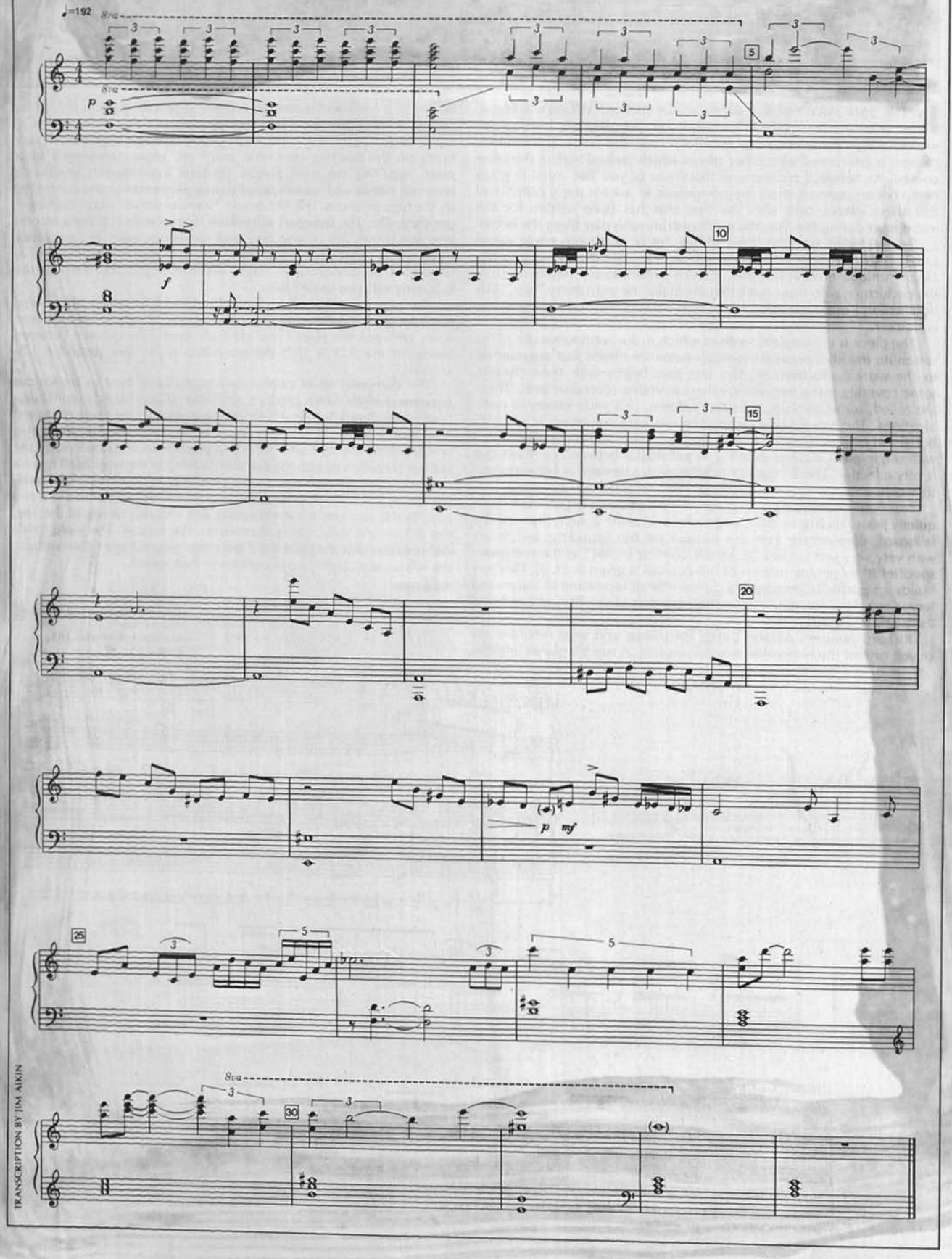
Although some of the talent is not yet signed, a strong lineup already has been set to take part. Benny Goodman, Sarah Vaughan, the Count Basie orchestra and Joe Williams will be heard June 15. Also to be presented that night is a tribute to the late Charles Mingus.

On June 16, Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock will play acoustic piano duets, vibraphonist Lionel Hampton will head an all-star orchestra and Dizzy Gillespie will participate in a jam session along with Freddie Hubbard, Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon and others.

Willie Bobo and Flora Purim also are set for the second evening, and a jazz/rock fusion group will be added to the roster.

During its early years, Playboy magazine was involved regularly with jazz at the editorial level, and ran an annual readers' jazz poll. This will be the first Playboy jazz festival since a 1959 presentation in Chicago.

—LEONARD FEATHER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TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN

Buddy Rich at the Comedy Store

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BY LEONARD FEATHER

Buddy Rich and his troops invaded the Comedy Store on the Sunset Strip Tuesday evening, turning the territory into the Music Store for two sets played to a capacity throng of welcoming civilians.

The metaphor is appropriate, for Rich's 15-piece orchestra brings an almost military precision to its performances of the tightly meshed arrangements. Only three members remain of the band as it was constituted around 1976, but the men, all young enough to be Rich's sons, read the charts with an expertise one has come to expect of every Rich group.

The leader remains in awesome control throughout. Though he rarely takes a solo, he is still the kind of drummer whose underlining of every nuance is a vital force in the establishment of the character of each number.

Regrettably, he plays an entire set before speaking a word. Except for a cursory personnel rundown at the end, there are no credits for soloists, titles, composers or arrangers. Presumably, the idea is to let the sounds speak for themselves, yet this policy does lend a faceless quality to the show.

One recognizable tune was Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring," notable for a smooth, swinging soli chorus by the five saxophonists. Others included a fast, minor jazz waltz, "Willowcrest"; a partially flamenco-style treatment of Chick Corea's "La Fiesta," and the perennial "Channel One Suite" as a closer. This last was a setting for a flatulent display of applause-milking by the tenor saxophonist Steve Marcus, a musician longer on technique than taste.

The horn sections reveal competence but not too much inspiration, though Turk Mauro's baritone sax rose impressively above the perfunctory funk of Bob Minter's "Saturday Night." The band's strongest solo assets are Rich's rhythm section colleagues, the remarkable 23-year-old pianist Barry Keiner and the exceptionally facile Fender bassist Tom Warrington. They were showcased in a trio number, "Love Is Here to Stay," also featuring some tasty, humorous and often delicate brushwork by Rich, the old master painter.

For an encore, Ed Shaughnessy took over the drums and Mel Torme scatted the blues. This was the first in a series of concerts that will be presented at the Comedy Store by Robert Widener and Irvin Arthur.

JAZZ

3/4

LEGRAND DEBUT FOR GRYPHON

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"Le Jazz Grand" by Michel Legrand and Co. (Gryphon G 786) marks an auspicious debut. Gryphon, previously only a production company whose albums were issued on RCA, now is a label unto itself. If the artistic level of the first releases can be maintained, it should be able to keep turning on its own spindle.

Legrand's credentials as a jazz composer have too often been obscured by his many other gifts. In "Le Jazz Grand," on one side, he conducts a 19-piece orchestra in an extended work. The suite "Southern Routes" is based on the sound-track music Legrand wrote for a film "Les Routes du Sud," with Yves Montand (not yet released in the U.S.). As it emerges here, this is no conventional movie score. Fittingly, given the film's Spanish setting, it begins in a somber "Sketches of Spain" vein, with voicings recalling the classic Gil Evans settings for Miles Davis.

The 23-minute work builds into a triple-concerto form with Phil Woods on alto sax, Gerry Mulligan on baritone and the iron-lunged Jon Faddis on trumpet in what must be his most startling recorded performance.

The last several minutes build climactically with their help, but in attempting to establish continuity, Legrand hits on a device that serves instead to inhibit it: Every 13 seconds the soloists stop abruptly while the harpist takes a sweeping four-bar arpeggio. You wind up wishing someone had shot the harp player, innocent though she may be (after all, she was only following orders).

Michel Legrand shows his credentials as a jazz composer in a new album entitled "Le Jazz Grand."

No such problem besets the works on the B side. Played by a seven-man combo with Legrand taking over the piano, they consist of individual frames for Woods, Mulligan and Faddis. In contrast with his high-note hysteria on "Southern Routes," Faddis in "Iberia Nova" here recalls the more lyrical moments of "Gillespiana," a memorable suite introduced by his mentor.

Finally there is "Basquette," a round robin for all three soloists, and Legrand himself. This is a blues, moderato, not deep-fried blues but au point. Splendidly recorded.

Legrand has combined the best of four cultures in this remarkable album: Spanish, French, and, of course, African-American, the root of all jazz. Four stars.

"The Bob Brookmeyer Small Band" (Gryphon G-2-785), recorded live at a Boston nightclub, marks a welcome re-

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(a couple of sensuous sambas have Flora Purim as background singer), and Franks' engaging vocal intimacy, a mixture of Mose Allison, Bob Dorough and Ben Sidran.

His accompaniment is provided by a gathering of jazz eminences, with pianist Kenny Barron everywhere and, here and there, the likes of Ron Carter, Randy Brecker, Dave Sanborn and Dave Liebman. Franks' literate lyrics, printed on the inner sheet, are a joy to read, in contrast with the sophomoric junk that informs so many crossover albums.

On a very different plane David Allyn's "In the Blue of Evening" (Discovery DS 794) exemplifies a brand of classical MOR pop that has all but vanished. Recorded around 1963 but never issued before now, it starts with an advantage in that five of its 10 tracks have orchestral settings written by Johnny Mandel. Allyn's tone has a hollow, subaqueous sound on "Remind Me" and some of the other 1930s and '40s ballads, but for the most part his robust baritone recalls attractively the band-singer era in which he was raised.

Songs such as "That Old Devil Called Love" and the Kern-Hammerstein "All Through the Day" have survived unharmed, but the time for those ingenuous verses on "It's a Pity to Say Goodnight" or "Cocktails for Two" has long since slipped by. Three stars.

Ron Eschete (pronounced Esh-tay), born in Houma, La. (Bayou country), but resident in California during the 1970s, is emerging as a promising new figure in jazz guitar circles. "To Let You Know I Care" (Muse MR 5186), his first album for this label, opens with his wife, Carol, introducing the title tune, a vocalese samba in unison with electric keyboard.

Eschete jumps all over the idiomatic playground, from avant-garde atonalisms through straight-ahead jazz cooking, into a ballad guitar solo ("Heather on the Hill"), winding up with Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee" taken at a hectic clip that demolishes an entire chorus in 22 seconds. His chops are almost, but not entirely, equal to the demands as he runs down the express line with pianist Tom Ranier. The latter distinguishes himself throughout, doubling on soprano sax in "Seven Vials."

It is better to hear a creative artist biting off a little more than he can chew, and succeeding most of the time, than to contemplate a predictable performance by a more skilled soloist playing it safe. Three-and-a-half stars. □

3/7

Bobby Short Returns to the Nightclub World

BY LEONARD FEATHER

After eight straight years of Southland concerts, Bobby Short has returned to the nightclub world that provided his first California showcases. In the late 1940s and early '50s, it was the Haig or the Gala; this week, through Saturday, it's the Plaza Four in Century City.

This milieu enables him to establish an intimate rapport, accepting requests from an audience that can see every flicker of his very mobile eyelashes. It also is a room in which he can open his show with a slow, weltschmerzy song, Billy Strayhorn's "Something to Live For," which he wouldn't dare do next door at the Shubert.

Monday at a late show he was loose, in good voice and good humor and armed with an arsenal of reminders of an era that was at once innocent and sophisticated. A walking encyclopedia of period pop music, he celebrates the 1920s and '30s as if he owned them. Once in a while there is a touch of Fats Waller in his piano. The voice has held up well enough; though one detects a touch of roughness once in a while, his phrasing is impeccable and his diction, in these days of word-garbling, is a particular joy.

The Short set was a long set, packed with his specialties, including "You Fascinate Me So," "The Best Is Yet to Come" and an arcane Vernon Duke song called "In My Old Virginia Home on the River Nile."

To veteran Short watchers who know all the lyrics and every piano introduction, as well as to neophytes, Bobby Short appeals in equal measure as the ne plus ultra of world-wise nightclub entertainment. As for his accompaniment, you might call it peerless, except that his bassist is Beverly Peer. Gene Gammage still mans the drums.

3/9

AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Drummers Pack Room for Roach

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Max Roach is back in town, putting in two five-day weeks (through Sunday, then Wednesday through March 18) at the Lighthouse, the same room where he worked as a member of the house band just a quarter-century ago.

Observing him in action now, it is impossible to think of Roach as anything less than the authoritative drummer whose influence was more powerful than that of any contemporary in the 1940s and '50s. An imposing figure, looking and sounding as vigorous now as then, he opened, as is his custom, with an unaccompanied drum number, "South Africa '76."

Beginning in a relatively conservative fashion, sticks ripping off accents on snares, Roach invested this succinct, carefully developed solo with form, incomparable technique and, during a sudden flourish of cymbals, a flare for the dramatic.

After his combo had played two long pieces, Roach again performed on his own, in a tribute to the veteran swing-era drummer Jo Jones. Played entirely on the high-hat cymbal, it was a gem of rhythmic and tonal finesse.

The quartet has changed hardly at all since last reviewed here in late 1977. Odean Pope has replaced Billy Harper on tenor sax. Like his predecessor, he is a powerful performer who starts at an energy level so high that he is left with no climactic place to go. His solos are probably not quite as long as they seemed.

Trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater, a veteran of eight years with Roach, displayed potent high-register chops in Stanley Cowell's waltz, "Effie." Calvin Hill showed melodic inventiveness on an upright bass that was overamplified, producing a metallic, high-pitched effect that sacrificed quality for quantity of sound.

The Max Roach Quartet still has limitations as a unit, but the leader's contributions alone are worth the Hermosa Beach trip; this could be deduced Wednesday simply by counting the number of drummers in the club.

AT CALTECH

Gillespie's Dizzy Reexamination

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The academic community has become increasingly aware in recent years of Dizzy Gillespie's contribution to American culture. His current Southland tour includes several campus dates: He was at Caltech's Beckman Auditorium Sunday, played UCLA's Royce Hall Tuesday and will be at El Camino College Sunday.

At Caltech, members of the audience unfamiliar with the trumpeter's modus operandi may have had difficulty separating the artistic wheat from the comedic chaff. That Gillespie remains a master of the horn was apparent only from time to time among interludes of rambling introductions, Conga solos, anecdotes, vocals and even a number that found him playing the Jew's harp.

On the credit side were the sinuous melodic lines of "Gee Baby Ain't I Good to You," replete with slanting tones squeezed like toothpaste out of a tube; a lyrical muted solo on his early composition "Tin Tin Deo" and a movement from Lalo Schifrin's "Gillespiana Suite."

Diehard Dizzy-watchers by now have learned to take in good stride the familiar routines (introducing the members of the band to one another) and the jokes ("Alex Haley just found out he was adopted"); but the gradual change in the level and quality of the group surrounding him may not be as easy to accept.

The new guitarist, Ed Cherry, played some convincing old-time country blues, but his other solos, mostly composed of casual, strumming chords, left doubt whether he is any match for his predecessor, Rodney Jones.

The decorative Sheyvonne Wright was unstaged during most of the show, playing percussion, when she was not singing. Her choice of songs, from "Sunshine of My Life" to "Over the Rainbow," seemed inappropriate, and "Lush Life," which she sang sitting down and without much evident involvement, included mistakes in both the words and the melody.

She was very well received; however, what this job will do for her career is one thing, and what her presence lends to a concert by a great master of jazz is something else again. Ben Brown was nimble in his electric bass solo on "Kush." The perennial and expert drummer Mickey Roker anchored a rhythm section that is certainly not Dizzy's best. In short, a little reexamination of his values would be in order for the honored leader at this stage of his illustrious career.

3/16

AT PARISIAN ROOM

Hugh Masekela: A Waiting Game

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Unprofessionalism among musicians takes many forms, and one of the most irritating is unpunctuality. At the Parisian Room Tuesday, where the Hugh Masekela show was due to start at 9:30, his sidemen were still setting up at 10 o'clock and the leader was nowhere to be found.

At 10:20, Red Holloway announced the group. Pianist Don Blackman vamped for a couple of minutes. Finally Hugh Masekela ambled on.

What happened during the next hour was not worth the long wait, and far below the level of the Masekela-Herb Alpert show heard at the Roxy last year. The quintet, sounding like a pickup unit, played only three tunes and part of a fourth. The first two, "Maiden Voyage" and a South African piece, ran 20 minutes each.

Masekela simply is not a very accomplished fluegelhornist in the class of, say, Art Farmer. His phrasing and melodic concept are low on creativity, and although this improved toward the end of the set, it was too little and too late.

One tune had a vocal. Masekela's horn is preferable to his voice. The song was nondescript, harmonically limited.

Rene McLean lifted the performance level with full-bodied tenor sax and a couple of pleasing solos on soprano. He is the son of saxophonist Jackie McLean. Pianist Blackman acquitted himself capably.

The lackluster sound of the quintet is due mainly to Masekela's failure to present any material of particular interest, or to perform it with enthusiasm. Lacking, too, was a meaningful blend

3/11/79

VAN HEUSEN: A LEGEND IN SONGS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

RANCHO MIRAGE—You make your way up Frank Sinatra Drive, turn right at Bob Hope Drive, and a minute later there he is, smiling amiably as he stands in the driveway, shaven head aglow in the desert sunshine—the legendary Jimmy Van Heusen, writer of four Oscar-winning songs ("All The Way," "High Hopes," "Call Me Irresponsible" and "Swingin' on a Star"); winner of 14 Academy Award nominations and the only Emmy given for a song ("Love and Marriage"); writer of possibly more lastingly successful melodies than any other active composer.

Active he still is, as he hastens to tell you in the sandpaper voice that resembles a higher-pitched Louis Armstrong, "I never really left the scene. I've been living here in the Palm Springs area for almost 40 years; a lot of that time, especially the last nine years, I spent palling around with Sinatra.

"I wrote 'Nancy with the Laughing Face' for his daughter in 1944. During the past 10 years he has been recording my songs regularly—three or four things every year. He wanted me to write a song for his wife Barbara, so Mack David and I did it. Then he wanted me to write a song called 'Leonora' for Ambassador Annenberg's wife. Then he wanted me to do a song with Yip Harburg, so we wrote 'Loving Being What It Is'—that's my latest.

"Frank's recorded so many things that he ordered me to write—it's always 'Chester, write me this' or 'Chester, write that.' That's my middle name—I was born Edward Chester Babcock. Got my professional name off a Van Heusen Collar ad."

There is much that is unique about Jimmy Van Heusen: an incredible track record that began with his first published song, "Harlem Hospitality," written for a Cotton Club show in 1932 when he was 19; his association with Bing Crosby, who made 110 recordings of Van Heusen melodies, using his talent in 20 movie scores; his reputation for high living during the years when he did just about anything a very free man could do in the Broadway and Hollywood of the 1940s and '50s. ("What I dig," he once said, "is chicks, booze, music and Sinatra—in that order.")

The gregarious, party-loving Van Heusen also is a highly literate man, whose sardonic manner doesn't quite conceal a serious concern for a broad range of issues. Born in Syracuse, N.Y., to a building contractor who played the cornet, he studied piano from the age of 8, voice and composition at Syracuse U. from 1930-2. He attended a seminary for a while but was expelled, a fact that was conveniently forgotten when, in 1961, he won its first Distinguished Alumnus award.

He began his career at 16 as a local radio announcer, soon launching a program of his own. Moving to Manhattan, he wrote the Cotton Club show, but his mother, frightened at the thought that he was working for a night spot owned by the infamous Owney Madden, told him, "You'd better come home, Chester." He hung in there, however. "My family had money—they sent me enough to make sure I wouldn't starve—but I was proud, and determined to make it on my own.

Jimmy Van Heusen, still actively composing songs after 47 years in the business.

"I had started writing songs when I was 7, and in New York I kept on trying. For a while, during a lean period after the Cotton Club, I had a job running an elevator at the Park Central Hotel. Wrote songs in the goddam elevator, and since I had room service going up, I got plenty of leftovers to eat."

He graduated to piano-playing jobs at Tin Pan Alley publishing houses; his luck changed when, meeting Jimmy Dorsey at Remick Music, he set lyrics to Dorsey's "It's The Dreamer In Me"—one of the few songs for which he wrote the lyrics to someone else's melody rather than vice versa. The Dorsey record was a hit.

He followed it up with a series of hits written with the lyricist Eddie De Lange—"Deep in a Dream," "All This and Heaven Too," "Heaven Can Wait."

In 1939 Van Heusen wrote what would be the first of five musicals for the New York stage, the short-lived "Swingin' The Dream," an updated version of "Midsummer Night's Dream," with De Lange's lyrics. I am among the few around who can recall seeing that delightful show, which folded after 11 days. Too hip for its time, it starred Louis Armstrong as Bottom, Maxine Sullivan as Titania, the Dandridge sisters (Dorothy and Vivien), and had live music by the Benny Goodman Sextet and an Eddie Condon combo. One song has outlived the show by four decades: "Darn That Dream" remains a standard.

Van Heusen's next lyricist was Johnny Burke, probably the best of them all. ("I must say, though," he adds, "that Yipper Harburg is a pretty close second.") Burke & Van Heusen ("Here's That Rainy Day," "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," "It Could Happen To You," "Imagination," "But Beautiful") were followed by Van Heusen & Sammy Cahn ("The Tender Trap," "Love and Marriage," "All The Way") and many other collaborations.

He enjoys the idea of teaming now with Carol Bayer Sager. "She's young, very sharp, very good. I expect to work with her on a Broadway show, and for a TV special, a two-hour musical tribute to me, which is supposed to air this fall."

Sager is one of several contemporary writers whom Van Heusen respects. When the age of rock 'n' roll came in, he says, "I couldn't write like that; also they stopped making musical pictures, so after having written the scores for 65 movies, I concentrated on servicing several artists, such as Sinatra.

"I've seen some fine new writers come along. Jimmy Webb is one of the greatest composers that ever lived—the best, most valid songwriter in the business. I think Barry Manilow is pretty good too. So, I don't dislike it; I just dislike hard rock.

"And don't underestimate the Beatles—'Yesterday' and 'Michelle' are great songs that will last forever, at least as long as mine. However, there's a tremendous dearth of really good lyric writers in the contemporary market—in fact, some are outright illiterate.

"Songs tend to be longer nowadays—the old A-A-B-A song format isn't used as much. I find that refreshing. In the old days, bandleaders were very afraid of anything beyond a 32-bar chorus. A lot of them didn't even like to play Cole Porter, because he used extended forms so much.

"As far as my own music is concerned, it never disappeared—I get four times as much money now from ASCAP, and from record royalties, as I got 20 years ago. I get a fabulous amount of money for 'Imagination,' which I wrote in the early '40s. 'Here's That Rainy Day' gets bigger and bigger—there must be 200 records out on it. It came from a flop show, 'Carnival in Flanders,' but years later I played 'Rainy Day' for Frank to use in a torch song album. When his record came out, everybody started falling in love with it. Dwight Hemion, who will be working on my TV special, said to me, '"Here's That Rainy Day" is the greatest song ever written anywhere in the world.' That was a nice compliment."

One of the reasons for Van Heusen's apparent retreat from center stage was his decision, after 35 years as a celebrated bachelor, to end his single status. "I got married 10 years ago, at the age of 56, for the first time. I fell in love with this dame when I first met her—in 1935. You're too young to remember an act called the Brox Sisters, but my wife Bobbe was one of them. She used to go with Bing Crosby before he married Dixie. She married William Perlberg, the producer, but when that became untenable for her, I took over and got her out of it.

"I've been so happy being married that we're doing a lot of traveling. We have this huge motor home, 35 ft. long, and we go everywhere. I get a driver, and I sit there and drink and watch the scenery."

"What songs have you written," he is asked, "that you are particularly proud of, but that didn't make it commercially?"

"There are several that I love. I remember one I wrote with Johnny Mercer called 'Blue Rain.' Another one that I'd like to see get some belated recognition is "Suddenly It's Spring.' I wrote that for Ginger Rogers, for 'Lady in the Dark,' in 1944."

With honorary college degrees to his credit, campaign songs for Presidents, night club acts for Lena Horne, Sammy Davis Jr., Juliet Prowse, with all the respect and the enormous income accruing from more than 40 years of continuous activity, there might seem to be few mountains left for Jimmy Van Heusen to climb; yet there is one that remains unscaled. "I'd really like to have a big hit show on Broadway. 'Skyscraper,' which I did in 1965, and 'Walking Happy,' in 1966, both with Sammy Cahn, were moderately successful—they ran a little over a year. I love doing Broadway shows. Even if they're flops, they're fun.

"We've got a good book for this project with Carol Bayer Sager, so maybe this will turn out to be the one."

He divides his time nowadays between Rancho Mirage, a modest home in North Hollywood close to Universal City, which he has used as an office for many years, and a place in upstate New York, which he and his wife plan to visit this summer by driving across country in the motor home.

Jimmy Van Heusen, the 202-pound 6-footer, stands beside his diminutive blonde wife at the door of their home in the desert, bidding au revoir to a group of friends. Later he will have dinner with Sinatra.

It wasn't Van Heusen, but another songwriter named Eden Ahbez, who once wrote: "The only thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return." Jimmy Van Heusen learned the secret early in life, and it has served him well. □

NOTE: In last week's column, the rating for Michael Franks' album "Tiger in the Rain" was inadvertently omitted; it was four and a half stars.

3/18

JAZZ

THE EVOLUTION OF JON HENDRICKS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Jon Hendricks' "Evolution of the Blues," a joyful history lesson that spans 200 years of black music, is a hit in Los Angeles, where it opened last November at the Westwood Playhouse. First seen in 1960 at the Monterey Jazz Festival, later in London during Hendricks' long residence there, it resurfaced in 1974 in San Francisco, running just over four years.

To many observers, Hendricks has an ineradicable identity as one third of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, the unique jazz vocal unit for which he set lyrics to jazz melodies, and to ad lib solos transcribed from records. The image lingers on in the form of a trio in the show, with Hendricks' wife Judith in the Annie Ross role, and his son Eric, 24. (Ross has been living in her native England since 1962; Lambert died in a freeway accident in 1966.)

Though it earned him the broadest acceptance, the original L.H. & R. (1958-62) was not much more than a lightning flash amid the storms and sunshine of the complex Hendricks career. As a solo vocalist, he was voted England's No. 1 jazz singer. As a lyricist, he has provided hits for Gerogie Fame ("Yeh Yeh"), Della Reese ("Sermonette"), the Pointer Sisters ("Cloudburst") and others. He has taught jazz history at colleges in the Bay Area, spent a year as a critic for the San Francisco Chronicle, and presently is writing an album for the Swingle Singers, who used to do for Bach and Mozart what Hendricks did for Basie and Bird.

The story of "Evolution" began in 1959, when producer Jimmy Lyons, who had hired Lambert, Hendricks & Ross as singing emcees for the Monterey Jazz Festival, asked Hendricks to put together "something about the blues" for the following year. Hendricks felt well equipped to tell the story.

"My background prepared me, in terms of knowing the relationship between jazz, blues, spiritual, gospel, all of it. I was the ninth child of the Rev. and Mrs. Alexander Brooks Hendricks; my father had been a circuit-riding minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and he obeyed the dictum 'Go ye forth and propagate' by fathering 17 children.

"He was friendly with Rev. Waller, Fats Waller's father. I had two very attractive sisters, so all the bands that came through town—I was born in Newark, Ohio, but we moved to Toledo when I was a kid—made it a point to come by Rev. Hendricks' house, so I met everybody.

" The reason I cannot read music to this day is that Art Tatum, a friend of the family, had me singing with him at a club, and since he couldn't see, he'd say, 'Hey, listen to this,' and he'd run off one of those fast passages and make me sing it back to him. Soon I sang anything I could hear, at any speed. Reading seemed unnecessary."

Singing and playing drums were avocations for many years, Hendricks says. "I studied law at the University of Toledo; I was very socially conscious and hoped to give my services to the NAACP."

A four-year interruption for Army service almost ended Hendricks' life. The story of his military vicissitudes in France would constitute an almost incredible movie: "I resigned from the Army—which, of course, you cannot do. The officers were all white—many of them from the South, with the same sort of racist feelings as the Germans we were fighting. The enlisted men were all black. I don't know how they expected us to fight Nazism with a segregated Army. Anyhow, there was a race riot, and I saluted, gave my serial number and said I quit. With four other men, I went to a place near the Swiss border, where we lived very well on the black market for a year, and I sang with a French band. Eventually, I was court-martialed, sentenced to three years at hard labor, and served 11 months.

"Back home, and back in college, playing drums on the side, I had an encounter that changed my life: Charlie Parker came through town. I sat in with him, scat singing. Bird said 'What do you do?' I told him I was studying law. 'No, man, you're a musician. Come to New York.' I said I didn't know anyone in New York. 'Well,' Bird said, 'you know me.'

"I said, 'Where will I find you?' He told me, 'Just ask anybody.' Two years later I got off the Greyhound bus in New York, called my friend Joe Carroll, the bebop singer, and said 'Where's Bird?' He said, 'At the Apollo Bar, 126th and 7th Avenue.'

"Sure enough, Parker was there and asked me to sit in again. Well, after hearing anyone that could play that beautifully, I decided I must devote my life to his music. The next morning I put my drums in the pawnshop and told everybody I was a singer."

Several years of scuffling in odd day jobs preceded the L.H. & R. success. "On our first album, we re-created Basie songs by multitracking. We sounded like the Moron Tabernacle Choir."

The early 1960s were years of wine and roses; he wrote lyrics for everything from Parker's "Now's the Times" and Miles Davis' "Walkin" to Jobim's bossa nova hit "Desafinado." After the breakup of the trio and a decline in his fortunes, he left England, disillusioned about the prospects at home.

A voluble propagandist for jazz who lets many chips fall, he has strong, almost violent feelings about the present state of jazz.

"I think people in America were deprived of the chance to learn about their cultural heritage—but they wanted to know; the success of 'Roots' proved that. The only thing Alex Haley did wrong was to leave out the music and dancing. 'Evolution of the Blues' is the musical parallel to 'Roots,' telling a vital part of the story.

"I've had some offers to turn it into a TV special, but only from people who want to own it. I'll have a better break in England, where they may let me retain ownership. This show is going to become more important as time goes by, yet the original album, which I made in 1960 for Columbia, was deleted years ago.

"Record companies are being run by people who would-

n't swing if you hung them. Certified public accountants and bookkeepers, people of that ilk, just don't care. Any large corporation should be willing to serve society and take care of our art form, not just think in terms of huge profits.

"There's a lack of morals and ethics within our capitalistic society which poses a threat to us all; we must restore our values, or else the socialistic system is just going to run over us like a steamroller. Every record company should support true jazz.

The nature of jazz has changed radically since the days when Hendricks demonstrated the melodic nature of improvisations by setting lyrics to them. He was asked whether today's fashionable soloists could provide him with suitable material; whether, for example, Grover Washington is as worthy of this kind of transmogrification as was Lester Young.

"Not really. I prefer Scott Hamilton, the young tenor player, who reminds me of Ben Webster. He's marvelous! Plays honest, melodic music, swings, stays within the culture.

"I won't say that there are not any lyrical players today that I could work with. Chuck Mangione is beautiful. Everything he plays, sings. I'd love to write lyrics to some of his things. And Thad Jones wrote a number called 'Us' which is very much in the modern idiom; it has a lot of rock phrases, but melodically it sings, and I'm not having much trouble putting lyrics to it for inclusion in the Swingle Singers album."

The reaction to Hendricks' show offers the most eloquent proof of his argument. "People are coming back to see it again and again—I never do it the same way twice; it has the same improvisational spirit as jazz itself."

When the moment is right, he may leave the cast temporarily, delegating his part to the care of Bill Henderson, a splendid singer and actor who had a small part in the recent "Roots II." "I want to move on, bring 'Evolution' to Broadway and the rest of the world. I'd like it to be the first American cultural work to play Peking."

With the final collapse of the bamboo curtain, that might be just what the fortune cookies hold in store for the poet laureate of jazz. □

FRETS . APRIL '79

Charles Mingus

(1922–1979)

PHOTOS BY VERYL OAKLAND

By Leonard Feather

THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY of jazz, curiously enough, only two bassists have made any significant impact as bandleaders. One was John Kirby, whose sextet was known during his halcyon years (1938–42) as "the biggest little band in America." The other was Charles Mingus.

As a bassist, Kirby was strictly a section player who rarely took solos. His combo was short-lived and he died in 1952 a half-forgotten man. Mingus, in sharp contrast, was a powerful figure on several levels: he was a bassist of commanding technical prowess, whose success encouraged bass players everywhere to take pride in their instrument; a bandleader whose various groups exerted a potent influence on his contemporaries; a composer, many of whose best-remembered works were devised spontaneously at rehearsals; and a catalyst to whom dozens of today's contemporary artists owe much of their understanding of music, as well as their reputations.

When Mingus died on Jan. 5 of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (better known as Lou Gehrig's disease), it seemed like a merciful release. What could have been more unbearable for a bass player than the loss of the use of his hands? Paralysis had been inexorably immobilizing him for more than a year. He had spent the last few months of his life in Cuernavaca, Mexico, vainly seeking medical help.

All of us who knew Mingus, though, remember him best as a restless, brilliant, often angry man who never quite found out how best to channel his energies and talents.

Mingus was born in 1922 in Nogales, Arizona, but his family soon moved to Los Angeles. Living in Watts, he studied solfeggio, took up the trombone, and then took up the cello. Buddy Collette, now a leading Hollywood studio saxophonist, who became his closest friend, recalled at the Mingus memorial service: "I met him when we were both 13. He had a shoeshine box and would use it to pick up a little money. I had a band of youngsters that played for my friends' parents. I told him, 'Why don't you switch from cello to bass? Then maybe you can join my band.'

"Mingus was a man of action. The next day he persuaded his father to get him a bass, and within a week he was playing a job with me.

"I talked about him to everyone I met, including Red Callender, a fine bassist who soon became his teacher."

Red Callender says: "I was only 20—four years older than Mingus—and I knew nothing about teaching, but Mingus was fascinated by the fact that I was playing melodies on the bass, something he had never heard before, and he insisted on studying with me." (It is remarkable that this occurred a year or two before Jimmy Blanton, a 17-year-old prodigy, revolutionized bass concepts with his melodic solos in the Duke Ellington orchestra.)

Encouraged by Callender, Mingus practiced up to 12 hours a day. Soon he was equipped for some of the best touring jobs with black bands: Louis Armstrong took him on the road from 1941 to 1943; and Lionel Hampton, during Mingus' two years with Hamp's orchestra, introduced him as soloist and composer on a release called *Mingus Fingus* [now out of print].

During 1950–51 Mingus toured as the only black member of the Red Norvo Trio. He was very fond of the vibraphone veteran, but it is believed that during that time some of the problems of segregation and racism made him increasingly militant. Even

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Few authorities are as highly respected in their fields as Leonard Feather is in jazz. A leading critic and composer since the early '30s, he is universally acclaimed for his Encyclopedia Of Jazz *series, the standard references on everything relating to jazz. His weekly newspaper column on jazz is syndicated to more than 350 papers around the world, and he writes a regular jazz column for* **FRETS***'s sister magazine,* Contemporary Keyboard.

as a youth studying with Callender, he had often stopped playing to talk with his teacher about the pervasive racial injustice in Los Angeles. In fact, he was a prime mover in the elimination of the separate local musicians' union for blacks, which in 1953 finally became incorporated into the white union.

Not long after his Norvo stint, Mingus settled in New York and became active as a creative leader and composer. His first group of the mid-1950s leaned toward European music in its experiments with atonality and the avant garde. Finding it difficult to maintain simultaneous roles as rhythm section component and bassist, he occasionally worked with a second bassist (one combo in San Francisco was led by Red Callender; one of Mingus' own New York groups featured bassist Henry Grimes).

Soon he moved along to a style that returned to his roots. He created music of bold, fire-breathing energy, evoking the music of the Pentecostal and Holiness churches, New Orleans-oriented collective improvisation, and the ensemble sounds of Duke Ellington, whose music remained a perennial influence and in whose band he worked briefly. Mingus' relationship with Ellington ended on an angry note, however; he attacked another sideman and Duke had to fire him.

The late 1950s and early '60s were years of frequent though chaotic accomplishment. Mingus devised superb settings for Eric Dolphy, Booker Ervin, Roland Kirk, and dozens of other jazz giants of the day.

Nat Hentoff once described the tension of rehearsal scenes when Mingus was in a foul mood: "At those times, Mingus' bass begins to mutter like a thunderbolt on the way. This huge cauldron of emotions at the center of a band can be taxing to a sideman; but if the latter has his own center of emotional and musical gravity, he can survive—and grow."

During the '60s Mingus grew literally to immense physical proportions; towering and bulky, he looked as though the bass was the only logical instrument for him to deal with. He was a man of immense appetites, who would go without food for long periods and then consume a whole chicken; a man whose sexual exploits occupied a disproportionately large part of his autobiography, *Beneath The Underdog*, [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971] which he wrote in the early 1960s but was unable to publish until 1971. By that time his self-indulgence had led to failing health and he had been in semi-retirement for several years.

During 1972, not long after he had returned to action, I was in Europe on a tour in which his combo was featured. The huge sound he had once extracted from the bass was missing; his playing was no longer quite as imposing, nor did he solo very frequently. It seemed that his peak creative years had passed. Yet it was fascinating to hear him night after night, for one never knew when the old spark might suddenly be rekindled for a few moments.

"Mingus' intensity killed him," Red Callender said recently. "He never did find out how to relax." Though he got into many scrapes with musicians, landlords, club owners, and police, the basic reality is that Mingus became thin-skinned because he was black-skinned. It took him as long as 30 years to succeed in bringing some of his ideas to a recording studio. He wrote in his book, "Had I been born in a different country or had I been born white, I am sure I would have expressed my ideas long ago."

Mingus nevertheless was able to translate many of his concepts into action through a unique series of albums spanning the last 20 years of his life. Some of his best known compositions, such as "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat" (written as a eulogy to Lester Young, the tenor saxophonist) and "Better Git It In Your Soul," a rousing gospel-jazz song, were recorded in several versions.

He was able to successfully reconcile the essentially subsidiary part of a bassist with the dominant role of a bandleader. (There were a few albums in which his instrumental virtuosity came to the forefront, most memorably a set called *Money Jungle* [United Artists, now out of print] by a trio composed of Duke Ellington, drummer Max Roach, and Mingus.) When the final illness began to show its symptoms in late 1977, he met the challenge; first by continuing to play despite painful physical odds, and later simply by working on plans for an album of his compositions to be sung by Joni Mitchell, a project on which he spent time during his last days in New York.

"About seven weeks before he died," Buddy Collette said, "I went to see him in Cuernavaca. It was a painful thing to see those great hands paralyzed. And by that time he could barely even speak. He was anxious to come back to Los Angeles and see his old friends. When I told him I had to leave, he said, 'Don't go, Buddy; take me with you.'

"Ironically, his wife and son, who were there with him, had planned to bring him to Los Angeles on January 14, which turned out to be the very day the memorial services were held for him."

Mingus left several siblings, some ex-wives, and grieving admirers around the world. But perhaps most important of all, he left a legacy of recordings offering eloquent testimony to a complex, difficult, sensitive artist, a master of the bass and an innovative force in jazz whose influence still endures. ☐

Recommended listening: *Me, Myself An Eye*, Atlantic, SD 8803; *Cumbia & Jazz Fusion*, Atlantic, SD 8801; *Mingus Ah Um*, Columbia, CS 8171; *Better Git It In Your Soul*, Columbia, CG 30628.

3/23

Curson Offers Trumpet Rooted in Tradition

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The trumpet of Ted Curson, who opened Wednesday and closes tonight at Donte's, is clearly rooted in the traditions of Gillespie, Davis and the late Clifford Brown. Substantial roots, indeed.

The quintet he is leading at the club is of the "instant band" variety, consisting of a familiar front line (himself and the baritone saxophonist Neick Brignola) with a locally assembled rhythm section. Their arrangements are of the kind that require a minimum of rehearsal; nevertheless, on opening night, the group captured an engaging and spirited sense of cohesion.

Curson's compositions are often inspired by the men who are a part of his past. "Reava's Waltz" was a fast blues dedicated to Charles Mingus, in whose band he played.

"Tears for Eric" evoked memories of Eric Dolphy, who worked alongside Curson in the Mingus combo. On this tune Curson switched from trumpet to fluegelhorn, achieving a mellow blend with Brignola, who doubled on soprano sax.

A rhythm team composed of Ted Saunders on piano, Kevin Brandon on bass and Dick Berk on drums provided blistering support on the up-tempos, with exemplary solos by all hands.

Curson and his associates, lodged for the most part in a hard bop groove, make scarcely any attempt at innovation, but within their established parameters, thanks to the maturity and facility of Brignola and the leader, they achieved results not normally to be expected from a pickup band.

CALENDAR

POP RECORDS

3/25

BENSON: A BALANCE OF PULP, PURITY

BY LEONARD FEATHER

LIVING INSIDE YOUR LOVE. George Benson. Warner Bros. 2BSK 3277.

George Benson

Four sides, a dozen cuts, half of them with vocals. The opening title track has as a main ingredient Earl Klugh, not only as composer but as guitar soloist. This is not unlike starting an Oscar Peterson album with a cut featuring Ramsey Lewis.

Diligent research will reveal some moments of insight scattered through the album. Despite the churnings of an uninspired double rhythm section, Benson is close to his best in "Nassau Day" (which, by the way, is more rock than reggae) and in three Benson originals: "You're Never Too Far From Me," "Welcome Into My World," and "Before You Go." "Love Is a Hurtin' Thing" offers a few snatches of unison vocalese and guitar in the now-familiar style.

All this having been said, it remains to be admitted that an excess of sales-oriented pulp lowers the level of this latest attempt by a fine artist to balance musical integrity and commercial viability. The nondescript lyrics of "Hey Girl," the dumb ditty that is "Soulful Strut," the cocktail keyboard contributions by Ronnie Foster and Jorge Dalto are unworthy of a Benson album. Both the title song and "Love Ballad" have such a bland, 1960s Burt Bacharach sound that you expect Dionne Warwick to step in any minute and take over.

Claus Ogerman's writing (he scored nine cuts) is up to his usual standard; the introduction to "Hurtin' Thing" is particularly beautiful.

Possibly this will be Benson's biggest seller since "Breezin' "; certainly a tremendous effort went into the production, by Tommy Li Puma. This does not mean, of course, that the album is destined to go down in history as memorable music. As for Benson's vocals, they are pleasant, though it is very difficult to resuscitate "Unchained Melody," which serves as the closing track. There is, in fact, nothing in this set to match the caliber of "This Masquerade" as a song likely to advance his vocal career. □

AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

3/24

Abercrombie Rides a New Wave

BY LEONARD FEATHER

John Abercrombie, the guitarist, and his three colleagues, who opened Tuesday at the Lighthouse, have two characteristics in common: All were students at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, and all are exemplary practitioners of a new and challenging musical genre.

A typical set opens in laid-back, waterfall music style: Four painters limning a work of art in pastel colors. Suddenly the rhythm breaks loose, energy as a propulsive means but never an end in itself. Gradually the listener realizes that this is a heavily disguised "Stella by Starlight."

Richie Beirach tears off several piano choruses, his swirling waves of sound built on complex chordal structures, his technique bold and liberating yet combined with a sensible use of space.

Abercrombie's electric guitar, plenty of treble on his amplifier, has a tone that is clear and biting yet mellow. And the sound of George Mraz, the double-Czech master of the bass, is similarly distinctive as he ties himself into rhythmic clinches in his solo. Peter Donald, his drum outings brief and intelligent, knows how to follow this group through its byways of suspended, resumed and altered tempos and meters.

Most of the quartet's music is original and has been recorded on a new ECM album. "Nightlake" is Beirach's intricate work; "Backward Glance" and "Arcade" are Abercrombie's. On the latter, he switches to the electric mandolin, a small, four-stringed instrument with a mincing, tentative sound that contrasts effectively with that of the guitar.

The Abercrombie group, together off and on for a year, typifies the new wave of combos that offer a stimulating alternative both to the bebop of yesteryear and to the rhythmic and sonic excesses of saxophone-dominated free jazz. The music is neither atonal nor modal, but rather polytonal, appealing to the mind and to the intelligent, attentive ear.

The Lighthouse, having enjoyed a far better than normal Tuesday, seems likely to be packed by the time word gets around. Abercrombie closes Sunday.

3/25

JAZZ

LEWIS, JONES BREAK UP, BUT THE BAND PLAYS ON

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Big jazz orchestras having long remained on the endangered species list, the rumor that one remaining specimen has broken up is bound to cause much viewing with alarm. First, then, the good news: The Thad Jones/Mel Lewis orchestra, winner of countless magazine polls since 1972, is still in existence.

The alliance between Thad Jones, the former Basie trumpeter and arranger, and Mel Lewis, the ex-Kenton drummer, began in late 1965, and endured for 13 years. Now for the other side of the news: Thad Jones is living in Copenhagen, where he has a job conducting the Danish Radio orchestra. The band he helped to launch now operates under a new banner: Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra.

In New York, preparing to record an album in the new digital process for Telarc Records, Lewis elaborated on the events that led to the breakup:

"For the past two years Thad had been running off to Denmark. The first time it was for six months. I know he didn't mean to hurt the band; he needed the money. But the band was everybody's living, and he was knocking us out of it. This led to a long series of arguments.

"Last winter, while he was over there working, I scuffled and the guys in the band scuffled. He came back for the Christmas holidays, spoke to our agent, Willard Alexander, and OK'd all the bookings that had been set up. I thought our problems were over; then one day he called me and said, 'I'm gonna have to leave the band.' I talked him out of it—at least I thought I had. He had tried to quit two or three times before.

"Thad is a very complex, very inside man, and there are problems that have nothing to do with the band; but when we had all these college dates set and suddenly he told us he was going back to Denmark, it was a crisis, especially after we'd gotten into trouble with promoters through cancellations when he left us the year before."

To save face and satisfy the promoters, the band recruited Buddy De Franco as guest soloist on the recent tour. A legendary clarinetist, popular at college clinics, De Franco proved to be a satisfactory substitute. ("We wanted to get another trumpeter," says Lewis, "but Clark Terry couldn't make it, neither could Dizzy or any other horn player as heavy as Thad.")

Questions concerning Jones were countered with the explanation that he was absent "for medical reasons." There was a measure of truth to this, since Jones suffered a mouth injury in Belgrade last November and was unable to play for a considerable time. Lewis who has heard no word from Jones since early January, says he will not attempt to replace him.

A potential hazard posed by Thad Jones' departure is in his role as composer and arranger. This, however, is partially deceptive. Although in the early years Jones contributed unceasingly and creatively in the establishment of the orchestra's library, lately he had brought in little or no new material, according to Lewis.

"We now have two of our greatest alumni, Bob Brookmeyer and Jerry Dodgion, writing for us, and my old friend Bill Holman will probably be adding his talents." (Holman and Lewis were coleaders of a West Coast combo in the 1950s.)

During the past couple of years Jones and Lewis both had complained about the difficulty of attracting qualified black sidemen. "That had nothing to do with his leaving," says Lewis, "but the situation still exists. Right now there are three black cats in the band."

The original Jones/Lewis orchestra consisted largely of New York-based performers who lived double lives as studio musicians and jazzmen. But the more regularly the band worked the harder it became to hold on to certain key men.

There are several reasons for terminating membership in a traveling jazz orchestra: economics, geography and the need to stretch out as a soloist. By 1978 the last remaining original sidemen, saxophonists Pepper Adams and Jerry Dodgion, were out. But Mel Lewis minimizes the trouble: "I've got a young band of real heavyweights. Not only that, I can assure the public that the band I'm recording this week is the band they're going to hear."

Among the Jones/Lewis accomplishments were a triumphant visit to the Soviet Union in 1972; several European tours, three Japanese tours, many college concerts and occasional television shows at home (Lewis says two more have been taped, one with Sarah Vaughan, for release this fall).

With Jones' leaves of absence and various major defections, the band slipped a little in popularity and last year, for the first time, yielded its annual Down Beat poll victory to the West Coast band of Toshiko Akiyoshi and Lew Tabackin.

Will Thad Jones ever rejoin Mel Lewis? The drummer is reluctant to rule out the possibility.

"It was a long relationship, and for years it was a happy and productive one. I think Thad just grew tired of the responsibility. Aside from the accident to his mouth, he has had other problems. He was in the hospital with an ulcer. If ever he feels like coming back with us, perhaps as a writer, or a featured soloist later on when he has his chops back, believe me, he'd be more than welcome. In fact, I have a feeling that maybe this is what he wants to happen."

Thad Jones' side of the story will have to wait until he either returns home or picks up a long-distance phone call. It should be said, though, that there is a weird irony in the ability of a Copenhagen radio station to lure away, with Danish currency, an American artist of such singular talent, while in his own country live jazz on the radio scarcely exists.

The Jones/Lewis team made a unique and lasting impact on a shrinking big band scene. How it will fare under a single leadership we shall soon find out, but Mel Lewis' optimism sounds persuasive. One can only hope the band is good for another 13 years, and that Jones will follow Dexter Gordon, Phil Wood and the others who found that expatriation can't go on forever. □

4/2

Teddy Edwards Band at Jazz Safari in Long Beach

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Jazz Safari in Long Beach celebrated its first anniversary over the weekend by bringing in Teddy Edwards, the veteran Southland tenor saxophonist, with a 16-piece orchestra including a string section.

Ever since the dawn of the big band era, when Artie Shaw incorporated a string quartet into a short-lived band, orchestra leaders have been attempting to resolve the incompatibility of strings and the art of making music swing. Like so many of its predecessors, the Edwards effort is a noble venture that misses the mark.

Using four violins, viola and cello, Edwards has written a series of original works that steer clear of any complexity in the string writing; yet when the section could be heard (often it was barely audible due to inadequate miking), the phrasing was stiff and awkward.

The problem was most noticeable at faster tempos. When they were confined to long notes, the strings sounded pleasant as a backdrop for Edwards' lithe, full-toned horn. A couple of solos, by Jimbo Ross on viola and Brenton Banks on violin, came off effectively.

There is no saxophone section. Completing the band are five brass players, sounding thin but boasting good soloists in trumpeter Bobby Bryant and trombonists Benny Powell; and a rhythm contingent with club owner Al Williams on percussion, and exuberant pianist Jack Wilson.

A pretty and promising vocalist, Renalda Douglas, sang a couple of Edwards' songs. If his talents were to be listed in order the saxophone would rank first, followed by composing, then arranging, with lyric writing a distant fourth.

One vocal number, "Get Down," with its R&B beat suggested the band may have commercial possibilities, given a good balance in a recording studio.

Edwards deserves credit for trying the near-impossible. Perhaps he will yet discover a way of proving that those put-upon string players are not the eternal misfits of the jazz world.

APRIL '79

LEONARD FEATHER

PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ

Les McCann

DURING THE LATE 1950s, at a point in jazz history when "hard bop" was the dominant movement and avant-garde experiments were just around the corner, there was a minor counterrevolution sparked by a small group of musicians who felt that we were losing sight of the roots.

Among those who tried to remind the jazz world of its simpler, down-to-earth foundations were pianist-composer Horace Silver, whose works such as "The Preacher" reflected the influence of the black churches on the course of jazz; and, a little later, Les McCann.

Leslie Coleman McCann was more deeply entrenched in these fundamentals than Horace Silver, who was born and raised in Connecticut. Les was from Lexington, Kentucky, where he was born Sept. 23, 1935. "Almost all my relatives sang in the church choir," he once told me. "Very early on, I acquired a love for the music of the gospel field that I heard back home.

"I didn't study formally except for six lessons. My music teacher charged 35¢ a lesson, but after the sixth lesson she died."

McCann played tuba in high school, tried out drums briefly, then entered the Navy, and at the age of 20 won a talent contest as a singer. After his discharge he went back to school, then moved to Los Angeles, where he landed his first job of any consequence as accompanist for a singer, Gene McDaniels. That was in 1959; in April of the following year, after being discovered by Dick Bock of Pacific Jazz Records, he cut his first album, *Les McCann Plays The Truth.*

During those days Les was leading a trio (Leroy Vinnegar on bass and Ron Jefferson on drums) at small coffee houses such as The Bit and The Renaissance on Sunset Strip. One evening at the latter club he was alternating with Miles Davis, who, after hearing Les play a set, hurried over and asked him: "Why didn't you play when I was on the stand? You're great!"

McCann's music at that point had crystallized into an exuberant mixture of modern jazz, blues, and gospel, with titles that indicated his general direction: his compositions on that first album included "A Little 3/4 For God & Co." and "Fish This Week But Next Week Chitlins." It was a happy, rather simplistic style, yet inventive, honest, and exciting.

Within two years his reputation was international. He played a jazz festival at Antibes, France, where he came close to stealing the show from Ray Charles and Count Basie.

For a while McCann was a controversial figure. One or two critics dismissed his work as "homogenized funk," calling it contrived and trivial, yet others found it fascinating and pointed out that he was also capable of playing a most affecting ballad when the mood took him.

Aside from the Baptist church, Les named Erroll Garner, Oscar Peterson, Dwike Mitchell, and Ray Bryant as his main influences. In the late 1960s and early '70s he broadened his scope, enjoying acclaim as a singer, and scoring a tremendous success in a joint appearance with saxophonist Eddie Harris at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Recorded live at that event, an album, *Swiss Movement,* was released on Atlantic [SD 1537] containing a typical McCann blues called "You Got It In Your Soulness," from which the introduction and the first 12-bar chorus have been excerpted here.

During the decade since that first major hit, McCann has moved away somewhat, though never entirely, from the style that established him. Soon after the Harris collaboration he began experimenting with electronics and recording on electric keyboards, including Clavinet, ARP synthesizer, and other members of the keyboard family.

McCann's activities are so multifarious that space prevents a complete listing. Some are outside our scope; for example, he is a superb photographer, many of whose works have been given public showings. Since 1971 Les and his wife have been working annually as volunteer teachers to a group of children in a small agrarian community near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

McCann's personality is accurately mirrored in his music. He is an affable, outgoing man completely devoid of affectations, warm-hearted, with a sharp sense of ironic humor.

The *Swiss Movement* album was doubly significant for McCann. Taped during a time in his career when he had been cast in a variety of generally more elaborate contexts for his studio recordings, it offered a literal and figurative breath of fresh air in the ambiance of the festival; he and Harris established themselves as dual leaders of a cooking quintet.

The most popular track to emerge from the album was "Compared To What," Les's vocal cut, in which he sang a socially cutting commentary on civilization written by his old friend and ex-employer Gene McDaniels. The balance of the album consisted of four long instrumentals, of which "You've Got It In Your Soulness" best represented a return to the down-home groove so closely identified with him in his early years.

The introduction is a four-bar repeated statement. Moving steadily downward from the *Db* to the tonic, it consists mainly of a series of three-note phrases—each comprising an eighth, quarter, and eighth tied over into the third and fourth beats. What makes this phrase noteworthy is that the eighth and quarter notes are played each time in a staccato manner that might have been considered corny not too many years before; but this on-the-beat precision now carried with it the ring of old-time authenticity.

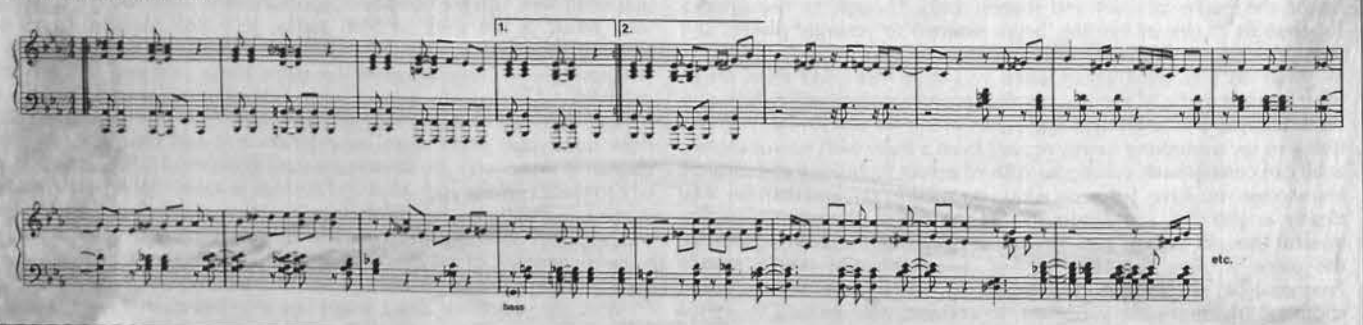
The chorus itself starts with two phrases that gravitate, in typical church-gospel-blues fashion, toward the tonic, and then sails upward through the blues scale—in jaunty eighth-notes—before adding a touch of relative sophistication with the use of a *G9#5* followed by *C9.* During the last four bars Les employs a device common to this type of funky blues playing, keeping the tonic going with the little finger while the rest of the right hand moves around under it to create a melodic line hovering around the tonic, flat third, fourth, and dominant.

Note, too, that part of the tension established is due to the close cooperation of McCann's rhythm section, with his old collaborator Leroy Vinnegar on bass, and Donald Dean on drums. Evidently this 12-bar pattern was a prescribed theme, since Les repeats it almost note for note during the next chorus; the only difference of any consequence is that the up-the-blues-scale in bars 5 and 6 continues a little further, ending on a *Gb.*

After Harris's saxophone solo and Benny Bailey's trumpet passage, McCann establishes a tremendous blues groove, with a wild climax consisting of an endlessly repeated sixteenth-note tremolo on the tonic while typical blues chords move around above it.

McCann was—and, at times, still is—a master of the art of simplicity. *Swiss Movement,* not just the cut under discussion but the entire album, attests to his very special talent in a field for which he was singularly well equipped.

TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN



JAZZ REVIEWS 3/31

Ohio State Big-Band Jazz Ensemble

The Ohio State University Jazz Ensemble is one of three big bands on that Columbus campus where students earn degrees in jazz performance or composition. The 20 youths, now touring Nevada and California, played Donte's Wednesday night.

There is a sad irony in the excellence of today's best college bands. They rehearse endlessly to achieve levels of blend, dynamic shading, intonation and interpretation that would be the envy of the few remaining professional big bands. After playing without pay, they graduate into a world where paying jobs calling for this caliber of musicianship are all but unavailable.

With its four five-piece sections (trumpets, trombones, saxes, rhythm), the Ohio band, conducted by Tom Battenberg, stays within the boundaries of orthodox jazz. The rhythm team achieved a loose, swinging beat. Only one number used a moderate rock pulse.

Much of the music, arranged by the pianist, John Emche, showcases the orchestra's exceptional team spirit and finesse. His original, "The Adventures of Cap'n Wake-Up," with its shifting meters, tempos and moods, was the title tune of the band's award-winning albums (best recording by a college band). Emche's piano, on a blues tune, was fluent and funky.

In general, the ad-libbing is below the level of the teamwork. Some of the Ohioans have to learn how to relax, use more space and fewer notes; however, Randy Mather on tenor sax, his warm style and sound showing a study of the pre-Coltrane days, indicated in "Willow Weep for Me" that a successful career may await him. This ingenious arrangement opened with bassist Terry Douds playing the melody, backed by the trombones.

It's too bad some kind of subsidy cannot be arranged so that the values represented by these talented youths may be maintained in the cold, commercial adult world. Failing that, they should just stay in college and refuse to graduate until the start of the next big band era.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Dexter Gordon at Concerts by the Sea

One of the less pleasant tasks that sometimes confront a reviewer is that of listening to an artist he has long admired giving a performance upon which it is impossible to pass favorable judgment. Such was the case Thursday when Dexter Gordon, a long-respected giant of the tenor sax, opened at Concerts by the Sea.

Arriving more than 45 minutes late while a packed room waited, Gordon ambled on stage, walking and talking slowly. After mumbling something about a wrong turn on the freeway, he launched into a lackluster performance of "Green Dolphin Street." If this had taken place in a recording studio he would have said, "OK, that was a warm-up; now let's try for a take," and would have kept trying until he got it right.

Gordon's vibrato was thick and unsteady, his train of thought lacking in its normal fluency. Moreover, there was a surprise for fans of the brilliant George Cables who had seen the pianist's name outside. Howard Rumsey had billed Cables in good faith, but Gordon had replaced him with Dwolo Coker.

Finally there was a fast blues, with good bass work by Rufus Reid and the predictable drum solo of Eddie Gladden. By now Gordon had inched a little closer to his prime form, but there was still little evidence of the creativity that earned him a recent poll victory as jazz man of the year. Let's just ascribe it to jet lag and hope he is over it by now. He closes Sunday.

—L.F.

JAZZ 4/1

Tony Williams

TONY WILLIAMS IN FAST COMPANY

BY LEONARD FEATHER

In the spring of 1963 Miles Davis heard a drummer, newly arrived in New York from Boston and then working with the saxophonist Jackie McLean. Davis hired him soon afterward. This came as a shock to the drummer, whose name was Tony Williams and whose age was 17.

It was the beginning of an association that lasted almost six years. After leaving Davis, Tony Williams formed the first two editions of his own group, Lifetime. The original combo included a young guitarist just in from England, John McLaughlin. After hearing Lifetime at Count Basie's Bar in Harlem, Miles Davis recorded "In a Silent Way" with McLaughlin, Williams, Herbie Hancock and Joe Zawinul.

Williams' career during the past decade has been erratic, due to problems of management and possibly temperament. He disbanded the last Lifetime in 1976, is now organizing a new combo, and in the meanwhile is represented by his first album in three years.

"This like nothing else I've done," he says of the new LP, "Joy of Flying" (Columbia JC 35705), in which the star-rich personnel varies from cut to cut. "I wanted to show my musical scope, and to do it I brought together people who would not ordinarily play with each other.

"I have George Benson and Jan Hammer playing some funk; Brian Auger and Ronnie Montrose on a rock 'n' roll track recorded live in Tokyo; Tom Scott and Stanley Clarke playing their own compositions, with Herbie Hancock on keyboards and synthesizer; and finally Cecil Taylor in some esoteric free jazz.

"The results show that all these diverse styles can work together for a successful album, and that I not only can play with them all, but add something to each. I'm not just there as a backup drummer; I have my own vocabular too."

The association with Cecil Taylor is not new. The 46 year-old pianist, hailed in the late 1950s as a harbinger c the jazz avant-garde, used Williams on some jobs in th early 1960s. "Miles wasn't working all the time," Willian says, "so I gigged a lot with Cecil and with Eric Dolph We met again last June when both of us played at the White House Jazz Festival, and the thought came to me that after all these years Cecil and I had never recorded together."

Aside from the Taylor number, most of the album suggests a jazz/rock or jazz/funk fusion; however, Williams bridles at the use of the term. "I have *never* had a fusion band. My groups have been called that, but this is due to the misconceptions of writers."

No matter how his present associations may be characterized, Williams during the past few years has flitted in and out of the straight-ahead jazz area in which he paid his early dues. He has been heard on records with such mainstreamers as Hank Jones and Sonny Rollins, and most significantly was a bulwark of the VSOP Quintet on its album and tours.

Speaking of that unit, which was a reunion of the mid-1960s acoustic Miles Davis Quintet with Freddie Hubbard in Davis' place, Williams says: "The original group, with Miles, sounded fresh to everybody; it was new to Miles and Herbie and all of us. But although I wouldn't say it isn't timeless music, I really didn't feel comfortable playing with the same kind of group 10 years later. It sounded kind of dated to me.

"Although it was nice to do it for a little while, I feel most at home in an electric situation. It would make no sense, for example, to organize a group like VSOP for myself, with trumpet and saxophone and rhythm. You can't recapture the freshness of something that was created so long ago."

Williams' attitude was not reflected in his very compelling performances with VSOP and the other acoustic groups in which he has played in recent years. It is simply that he is part of a generation that regards acoustic music as yesterday's music. As the various groupings on his new album indicate, his taste is as broad as his range of associations. He admires such intermittent colleagues as Hancock, Hammer and Stanley Clarke, as well as Bruce Springsteen, the Ramones, and Earth, Wind & Fire. He enjoyed playing with Weather Report on the "Mr. Gone" album.

Concerning the new Lifetime with which he is now rehearsing, he says: "We will have an exciting new approach, though I can't exactly explain the difference in words. I have a bass player who can play acoustic real well —that walking type of bass.

"It will be a representation of all the experiences I've had with the other Lifetimes, and with everything that's happened to me over the years."

Williams, it seems to me, was boxing himself in too much with the earlier editions of Lifetime, leaving too little room for the swinging freedom that characterized his early days with Miles Davis.

Though he claims to have put his Davis days behind him, his friendship with the mentor in whose quintet he gained worldwide acceptance has been maintained.

He can't explain why Davis has been in total retirement and near-seclusion for the past four years, but says: "I was up to see him at his house a few months ago and he looked very good, very healthy. He has made a huge contribution, so if he feels tired and just wants to rest, that's his privilege."

It is to be hoped that the new Tony Williams combo will live up to his promise by embodying more of his overall experience in music. At 33, he has spent more than half of his life as a professional musician. He is still growing and groping, as the answer to my final question indicated.

Asked what he plans to be doing 10 years from today, he replied:

"I want to be playing the drums; however, I would also like to be scoring, on commission, writing ballets and movie music. I'm studying orchestration right now. I realize you can never stop learning, and as long as I can bear that in mind, I'll continue to be optimistic about the future."

ALBUM OF THE WEEK: "The Astaire Story." Fred Astaire (DRG DARC 3-1102). Too long unavailable, this unique three-volume set finds its central figure represented as tap dancer, songwriter ("I'm Building Up to an Awful Letdown," "Not My Girl"), pianist ("Not My Girl"), and narrator (affectionate reminiscences of his early years); but most of the time, on 34 of the 40 cuts, he sings.

Astaire's voice has an innocent charm that compensates for its lack of strength or timbre. The songs, from his shows and films, are mostly by Berlin, Gershwin, Kern and Porter. He knows exactly how they should be handled; best of all, he is backed by a Norman Granz "Jazz at the Philharmonic" group: Charlie Shavers, Flip Phillips, Oscar Peterson, Barney Kessel, Alvin Stoller and Ray Brown.

On the final side are two previously unissued instrumentals by his sextet. Recorded in 1952 but unmarred by time, this can be obtained from DRG Records, a small company that specializes in show tunes and sound tracks, 200 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019. □

DUKE UNIV. CRHONICLE Maril 4 1979

MAJOR SPEAKERS SPECIAL EVENTS

Jazz Up Your Spring

with
Three Days of Music
and
Celebration

Thursday
April 5

The Wild World of Jazz

Dixieland, Brazilian & Modern
The New Red Elephant
Minas
Group Sax all in the C.I.
9-12 pm

Plus Jazz Workshop
with
The James Drew Trio
Baldwin Auditorium
7-8 pm

Wednesday
April 4

Leonard Feather

well known Jazz historian
"The Sight and Sound of Jazz"
with Films
And Original Recordings
of Famous Artists
8 pm Gross Chem Auditorium

Friday
April 6

Spring Fest

crafts, music, beer
and a cookout

Main Quad
10 am - 7 pm

DUKE UNION

jazz BILLBOARD 4/14

HUBERT LAWS—Land Of Passion, Columbia JC35708. Produced by Hubert Laws. Unneeded vocals clutter up and add nothing to the six tracks in this LP which are in the fusion vein. But a superb brass section helps overcome the orchestra flaws. A disappointing album by one of the most gifted flute players who is capable of much more impressive vinyl. **Best cuts:** "Your Heartbeats," "Forever."

ALAN BROADBENT—Palette, Granite GR7901. Produced by Leonard Feather. Composer/arranger Broadbent has made his mark on the Coast writing for numerous bandleaders including Woody Herman. This LP showcases the full spectrum of his orchestral colors as six of the eight cuts are his own tunes plus single works by Charlie Parker and Stevie Wonder. The mood is relaxed and the utilization of four strings adds a softness to the reeds. Broadbent plays acoustic and electric keyboards as well as handling all the charts. **Best cuts:** "Ah-Leu-Cha," "Summer Soft," "Sunrise Song."

ANDRE CECCARELLI—Ceccarelli, Inner City JC1507. Pro-

4/13

Kenny Burrell's Guitar Balladry

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Kenny Burrell, the long-respected composer, jazz scholar (he is teaching a course on Duke Ellington at UCLA) and guitar virtuoso, opened Tuesday for a six-night run at the Parisian Room.

Heard in recent years with a spartan background comprising simply upright bass and drums, Burrell has the advantage, for this engagement, of a pianist, Art Hillary, who lends the additional backbone that can do nothing but good for a rhythm section.

The opening tune, "Make Someone Happy," brought into sharp focus Burrell's propensity for weaving long, flowing single note lines, deftly interspersed with sumptuous chordal passages, and occasional flashes of octave runs in the manner of Wes Montgomery.

In "Old Folks," which he began unaccompanied before Hillary made it a duo, the inherent beauty of the song was fully captured. Burrell is a master of guitar balladry.

Sherman Ferguson supplied exotic drum rhythms and bassist Larry Gales hummed along with his bowing, evoking memories of Slam Stewart in "St. Thomas," a West Indian theme popularized by Sonny Rollins. Driven by the propulsive beat, Burrell worked up a great, throbbing sense of tension.

Unfortunately, after these three tunes it was virtually all over. Ernie Andrews, who in his less cautious moments is given to overselling both vocally and visually, occupied the stage for about a half hour, singing six numbers. Though he did yield the floor now and then for Burrell to play a couple of fiery solos, and despite the favorable reaction to Andrews, the allocation of show time still seemed disproportionate.

One wonders whether Burrell, who at one time had aspirations of his own as a singer, has ever considered reviving that phase of his career. It would certainly render him self-sufficient.

The show closes Sunday.

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MOVIE REVIEW

Bits, Pieces of Jazz Out of the Past

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The show at the Picfair, billed as a jazz festival, is a variously fascinating and frustrating experience.

Almost four hours long, this is a collection of movie shorts, soundies and other miscellanea, each item ranging from 3 to 30 minutes. The show could have been trimmed to three hours by cutting out numerous pop singers and bands.

The program is presented in random sequence, sometimes without identification of the performers. The older items, though of intermittent musical interest, incorporate every demeaning cliche situation and stereotype inflicted on black artists in Hollywood's darkest days.

Louis Armstrong is seen in a pseudo-jungle setting, singing "Shine." A later shot finds him repeating the song in a different but no less foolish context. He is also heard in two versions of "When It's Sleepy Time Down South," one with and one without his use of the word "darkies."

Once accustomed to these egregious story lines, the viewer will find enough half-buried gems to justify the visit. Lena Horne, gorgeous at 25, sings with Teddy Wilson's band in a simulated Cafe Society setting. Fats Waller sings and mugs delightfully in several shorts, while his piano genius is all but ignored.

The 1929 Bessie Smith "St. Louis Blues" is a classic, as is an equally ancient Duke Ellington item, "Black and Tan." But the finest music, and the best recorded, is heard in a half-hour color film made by the Goodyear Tire Co., presumably for TV but never aired, with the Ellington band of 1962 (Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves, Cat Anderson, Bill Berry and Lawrence Brown among the soloists).

Other rewarding moments are provided by Nat (King) Cole, Jack Teagarden and Louis Jordan. Still, this show is the tip of the iceberg. Somewhere in the film and television vaults are hundreds of hours of priceless material; there are even brief clips available somewhere of Charlie Parker and Art Tatum.

Until a thorough research job can be completed, programs such as the Picfair's provide a tantalizing glimpse of a potential treasure trove.

The show is being held over for a second week, through next Tuesday.

4/8

SPLENDID EXPATRIATE: A TOAST TO MELBA LISTON

BY LEONARD FEATHER

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—Melba Liston is tall, beautiful, black, has a smile radiant enough to light up the first six rows, and plays the trombone like an angel.

It took months of cajoling before the producers of the second annual Women's Jazz Festival could persuade her to take a few days' leave from her job as a music teacher in Kingston, Jamaica, to brush up on the horn she had scarcely touched, come to this city, her birthplace, and face an American audience for the first time in five years.

As the first female horn player ever to make a real impact in jazz, Liston once was the toast of the big band world. Raised in Los Angeles, she played and composed for Gerald Wilson as a teen-ager; later she worked with Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie and Quincy Jones, conducted for Billie Holiday, and briefly led her own all-female combo in New York.

Still, growing up black, and a woman, in a profession dominated by white males, eventually took its toll. "By the 1960s I was really lost," she says in the gentle Jamaican accent she has picked up. "I just took any job that came along: assembly-line writing for Motown, arranging for Eddie Fisher—bless his heart, I don't want to say anything bad about him; he just didn't keep very good time.

"When things were slow, I'd take a day job doing clerical work. Eventually I became physically ill, and somehow my feet were affected. The doctor described it as 'extreme emotional exhaustion.' That's why I still walk with this cane.

"My good friend Randy Weston, the pianist—I'd written and conducted several albums for him—sent for me to go to New York and do some work for him, then asked me to go along first on a business trip he had to make to Jamaica.

"It was just what I needed: warm and pretty, a relief from my tension. Through Randy I met some government officials who asked if I'd be interested in starting a new department at the Jamaica School of Music. Since I began working in Kingston in March, 1974, I've made only short visits back home."

The school, she found, was entirely directed toward classical music; her students knew nothing about jazz. The faculty's prejudices were not unlike those found in most American colleges until not too long ago.

"At first my classes were held in a bungalow at the University of the West Indies but not under the university's sponsorship. I thought this was because they didn't have room for my new department at the school, but then one teacher blurted out the truth at a staff meeting: 'I think you ought to know, Miss Liston, that they decided, before you arrived here, they didn't want that "noise" over here on their sacred grounds.'"

It was an uphill fight all the way, but gradually the staff learned at least to tolerate her. "The attitude hasn't changed all that much," she says, "but my department is firmly established now as a place for the average musician to go. Before, they weren't even allowed there; it was an elitist place for upper-middle-class people, with a country club atmosphere."

Liston teaches theory and ear training to an interracial class of 20 to 30, and leads the student ensemble, for which she composes and arranges. "I write a little above their natural level, but below where I'd really like to be. It's hard to do anything truly creative when you have to keep it so simple."

During her teaching years she has done almost no playing. "I saw no way that I could get in shape to make this gig, but I began practicing in the orchestra at school and summoned up enough discipline to know what I can and can't do with my chops."

Melba Liston, the acclaimed horn player, left the U.S. and settled in Jamaica.

Liston's expatriation differs vastly from that of America's jazzmen in Europe, for there is no Jamaican jazz community, no local combo or band of her peers to work with. I asked whether she didn't miss her old associations.

"I honestly do. In fact, I'm planning to leave at the end of the school year in June, but I won't be able to come home for a while because I've been working with the National Theater Company, doing the music for a Jamaican version of 'The Mikado.' It doesn't adjust too well to reggae, but it's fun, it's different. There'll be only five or six pieces in the pit band."

After the Mikado, will it be New York or a return home to Los Angeles?

"I can't be sure. I still don't have any real goal, any firm sense of direction."

There was no evidence of this uncertainty when she took to the stage here accompanied by a splendid rhythm section composed of Marian McPartland at the piano, Carol Kaye on bass and a spirited young drummer named Barbara Merjan, she cruised at an easy tempo through Miles Davis' "Donna Lee," drew mid-solo applause with her soulful treatment of the old Mary Lou Williams blues "What's Your Story Morning Glory?" evoked memories of her Gillespie days with Dizzy's "Night in Tunisia" and closed with a heartfelt reading of Duke Ellington's "Come Sunday."

Afterward, I commented that the chance to play in a small, inspiring context like this must make her homesick for other such opportunities.

"I'll tell you the truth," she said, the Jamaican brogue surfacing again. "My happiest moments were not soloing but playing in a section.

"There were moments, both with Dizzy's big band on those State Department tours and with Quincy's orchestra in Paris in 1960, when we trombonists were so proud of having the best section in the band. Sometimes we'd decide we wanted to alter a phrase here, a little nuance there, and suddenly, as if by telepathy, we'd all make that little change simultaneously.

"That kind of team spirit is something a lot of young musicians don't ever get to feel. I'm sure happy I had those early years."

Those years laid the groundwork for goals Melba Liston should now be able to acheive on home territory. Given the fast growing openings for jazz educators, and the affirmative action that can work doubly for her as a black and a woman, it would seem that the United States must be ready at long last to accord this brilliant and charming woman a secure place in her native sun.

□

ANOTHER WORLD, Stan Getz—Columbia JG 35513. Perhaps the most famous of all the Woody Herman alumni, Getz (class of '49) takes a couple of giant steps in this unorthodox two-record set. The title piece finds him tinkering with an Echoplex, unaccompanied. Although the tonal and melodic characteristics long identified with him are sacrificed, the price he pays is partially counterbalanced by the intelligence with which he employs the device.

On the rest of the LP, he plays tenor sax in his accustomed acoustic style, with his small combo setting, except that his pianist-composer, Andy Laverne, leaps around from acoustic to electric keyboard and various synthesizers. Bassist Mike Richmond composed four original pieces, of which "Anna" is the best suited to Getz's personal brand of eloquence. On three cuts there are bows to Brazil in the rhythmic samba touches, an effective link to Getz's bossa nova successes.

DUAL NATURE. Lew Tabackin. Inner City 1028. A neatly contrasted set in which Tabackin's classically disciplined yet hard-blowing flute is heard on the A side while his tenor sax, as vigorous as Sonny Rollins', yet strongly personal, dominates the B side. "Yellow Is Mellow," written by Tabackin's wife Toshiko Akiyoshi, receives a relaxed, colorful reading on alto flute. Splendid accompaniment by pianist Don Friedman, bassist Bob Daugherty and drummer Shelly Manne, who lends a misterioso touch to "Out of this World" by playing something called a waterphone. Tabackin may well be the fastest-rising virtuoso on the reeds-and-flute scene today. □ —L.F.

tension scene, with everything at a very fast pace, while my experience in Oslo has been that of a very serious, concentrated attitude.

"There are no external diversions; no outsiders are allowed in the studios. For the way I feel and play nowadays, these are perfect working conditions. Eicher is the ideal producer; he is totally immersed in the musical values. We are never pushed in any commercial direction."

Five years ago, Abercrombie's kind of music was virtually underground, as was the ECM label itself, but now the records are gaining wider U.S. recognition as a result of distribution through Warner Brothers. Abercrombie's current group, which, in addition to Mraz, includes the innovative pianist Richie Beirach and drummer Peter Donald, presently has an album on the jazz trade charts. ("Arcade," ECM 1-1133.)

Most of the Oslo-style works are products of small groups, but Abercrombie foresees a trend that will find the music expanding onto a fuller orchestral palette. "Keith Jarrett has already shown the way by writing and recording orchestral pieces; so has Eberhard Weber, who achieves special effects by overdubbing several cellos, then putting his bass solo lines on top of them. A lot more people are using string sections, taking fuller advantage of the studio's marvelous facilities."

Abercrombie underwent a broad range of experiences before reaching the ECM plateau. Born in 1944 in Port Chester, N.Y., he studied at Berklee College in Boston, played blues with Johnny Hammond Smith, fusion music with Chico Hamilton, Jeremy Steig and Gil Evans, then spent two years with Gato Barbieri and a year with Billy Cobham.

The surest sign that music taped in Oslo is conquering the world is the acceptance of this new breed in Japan, a country with possibly the most broad-minded and receptive audiences of all.

"We just came back from a 10-day Japanese tour," Abercrombie said, "with three ECM groups: mine, Pat Metheny's and one featuring the Brazilian guitarist Egberto Gismonti. We all were received very well, even though it was the first time any of us had been in Japan and ECM hadn't had that much exposure there."

The Oslo movement, though not by any means homogeneous, is in some respects a counterrevolution against rock and concerns itself only secondarily with the kind of high-energy, free music associated with the avant-garde. Primarily, it is an alternative music for people who react with their minds and hearts rather than their feet. That it has gained so much ground during its few years as a perceptible force is an encouraging sign of a return to idealism on the contemporary music scene. □

AT CONCERTS BY SEA

Shaw Displays Maturity in Jazz

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Since his last appearance in town, Woody Shaw has received some of the honors that had long been due him. His LP "Rosewood" was voted album of the year, and he is now a consistent poll winner as the No. 1 jazz trumpeter.

At Concerts by the Sea, where he opened Thursday and closes Sunday, Shaw is displaying his maturity, mainly using the fluegelhorn, in a style that pays respect to the traditions of Art Farmer, Clifford Brown and the early Miles Davis.

His lyricism was particularly in evidence on the opening tune, "But Not for Me." Though this ancient standard was stretched to an unconscionable 20 minutes, there were rewarding contributions by the leader, by pianist Onaje Allan Gumbs and by tenor saxophonist Carter Jefferson.

The jam session atmosphere gave way to a sense of cohesion in Shaw's own "Rosewood," the title number of the album, for which a quasisamba beat provided plenty of energy. Stafford James, an extraordinarily powerful and melodic soloist, demonstrated how much the upright bass can contribute to a pure jazz combo.

"Stepping Stones," another album title tune, has an odd, hiccuping melodic line played by Shaw on trumpet with Jefferson on soprano sax. The drum solo by Victor Lewis was our hint that this would be the final tune of the set, except for the group's usual sign-off "Theme for Maxine," an attractive waltz.

Woody Shaw, a professional musician for half his years, is at his improvisational peak. All he needs is more careful crafting of the group as such. How can the interest be sustained, either on or off the bandstand, by having everyone blow on the chord changes of a 50-year-old Gershwin song for 20 minutes? The three tunes (plus sign-off) during this hour-long set could well have been replaced by six carefully organized pieces, with a more effective ratio of arrangement to ad libbing.

Cables' Jazz Trio at Pasquale's 4/24

Rumors to the contrary, the Pacific Coast Highway has not fallen into the ocean; neither has Pasquale's, the intimate seaside rendezvous. Although the road is closed about four miles south, the club is accessible, among other routes, via Malibu Canyon, and continues to offer some of the Southland's finest jazz, along with an unbeatable view.

Over the weekend George Cables' trio was on hand. Always a galvanizing performer, Cables, who recently left Dexter Gordon's quartet, has developed into one of the most astonishing pianists in jazz today.

His sets were bolstered by the sympathetic support of the room's owner, bassist Pat Senatore, and drummer Peter Erskine, who is on leave from Weather Report. Although his records have revealed his superior talent as a composer, Cables during two sets Saturday evening confined himself to standard tunes, to all of which he brought his formidable technique and, when the song required it, great emotional impact.

Several tunes began and ended unaccompanied while Senatore and Erskine looked on in awe. "I Remember Clifford" was Cables' tour de force, a breathtaking revitalization of a fail-safe song.

Almost as successful were an up-tempo blues, a slow, wistful "Body and Soul," and a couple of cheerful bossa novas.

In an apt wordplay, Senatore summed up his club's situation: "We have no rock problems here; it's all strictly jazz." Assuredly it is worth a slight detour, if necessary, to reach this room where Cables is on hand. He will return Friday and Saturday with saxophonist Bob Cooper. Meanwhile the club, dark Mondays and Tuesdays, will present Raynaldo Clark's fusion sextet Wednesday and Thursday. The Sunday matinee will be given over to Baya, a Latin jazz combo.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ 4/15

THE OSLO-STYLE: RETURN TO IDEALS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz often has been subject to geographical definitions such as New Orleans, Chicago-style, West Coast and the like. Now comes the most improbable of all: Oslo style.

The music emanating from Oslo has one pervasive characteristic: It was recorded during the last few years at the Talent Studio in the Norwegian capital, under the supervision of a much-respected producer named Manfred Eicher, and was released on the ECM Records label. The musicians are by no means all indigenous to Norway; they come to the studio from the United States, South America and various European countries.

The elements of Oslo style were developed by artists, most of them in their early or middle 30s, who have forged a new blend of intellectual, esoteric, sometimes mystical qualities that set it apart from any other current movement.

A typical representative is John Abercrombie, a composer who plays acoustic and electric guitars and electric mandolin.

"The music on our albums," says Abercrombie, "has a very melodic, lyrical nature without being tied down to the old simple forms. We employ the basics of music—melody, harmony and rhythm—but we bring them together in a very loose, open context. We may play disguised versions of standard songs, but we extend and twist them, do all sorts of weird things to them, sometimes not actually stating the theme until the end of the performance."

Abercrombie's use of "weird" does an injustice to his music. He is closer to the target with "lyrical," for many of the Oslo products can be traced back stylistically to the earlier Miles Davis groups, with either Bill Evans or Herbie Hancock at the piano, or to Evans' own trio.

Much of the Oslo-style music does not swing in the traditional jazz sense; though there is an intermittent pulse, it is a cerebral genre involving many changes of mood, meter, tempo and odd numbers of bars. It is sometimes polytonal, superimposing one key on another.

"Our chords and structures are much more complex than

Please Turn to Page 78

LEONARD FEATHER

Continued from Page 77

they used to be," says Abercrombie, "but the feeling is still that of improvising over chords in our own original material." In other words, this music is to be distinguished from the atonal, formless "free jazz" that has tended to dominate many developments in the past decade.

Can the intellectual sounds hatched in Norway be defined as jazz at all, or would this be an arbitrary definition?

"There are a lot of forces at work, some of them classical. Ralph Towner, with whom I recorded 'Sargasso Sea,' a two-guitar album, writes pieces that strike me as a combination of Bill Evans-influenced jazz and little classical guitar works such as Julian Bream might play. I hear the same strong modern classical nature in Garbarek."

This reference is to Jan Garbarek, a Norwegian-born saxophonist, among whose sources of inspiration are Americans Keith Jarrett and George Russell. Garbarek, though seldom seen and little known in the United States, recently was the winner in four categories (musician of the year, best combo, tenor and soprano sax) in an annual poll conducted by Jazz Forum, the Europe-based magazine of the International Jazz Federation.

Speaking of Garbarek led to a discussion of the most remarkable aspect of Oslo style: its essentially international character. Others prominent in the movement are George Mraz, a Czech bass virtuoso now playing with Abercrombie's quartet; Eberhard Weber, a phenomenal German bassist; Kenny Wheeler, a Canadian-born, London-based trumpeter, and various Scandinavians and Americans.

Although Abercrombie has toured extensively with Jack de Johnette, a former Miles Davis drummer, the Oslo developments are predominantly the work of white musicians. Asked whether he saw any reason for this, Abercrombie replied: "I really don't know. Basically the influences here are European, but I think it's more a matter of chance than anything else.

"We did one album with Colin Walcott, the guitarist, that was practically a United Nations meeting—musicians from Brazil, America, Africa, India. So it's hard to pin it down and say what it is other than completely international. Little by little, all the cultures are being merged."

Abercrombie attributes much of his musical development to the encouragement of his producer, Manfred Eicher, a quondam bass player with the Berlin Philharmonic, who formed ECM in 1970. "It's been a stimulating experience, recording in Oslo. Until I began there, I had been doing mostly American studio work involving jazz/rock and fusion groups. That was always a very hectic, high-

talent that once bordered on genius. Four stars.

Though they are not the leaders, pianists are a central element in the other new Contemporaries: the singularly vital George Cables in saxophonist Art Pepper's NO LIMIT (S 7369), Cedar Walton in Ray Brown's SOMETHING FOR LESTER (S 7641) and Hilton Ruiz on saxophonist Chico Freeman's BEYOND THE RAIN (S 7640).

□

Other keyboards, other sounds: AFFINITY (Warner Brothers BSK 3293) brings us Bill Evans in tandem with the harmonica master Toots Thielemans. The improbable partnership works well enough, though Larry Schneider's tenor sax on a couple of numbers makes a harsh contrast. Excessive echo on the harmonica mars such ballad tracks as "Noelle's Theme," Evans is listed as playing "acoustic and electric keyboards." Did he agree to this billing? Three stars.

TATUM-HAMPTON-RICH . . . AGAIN! (Pablo 2310-775) is another instance of long-buried treasure suddenly surfacing. Art Tatum, who recorded almost endlessly for Norman Granz in 1955, gets along surprisingly well with Lionel Hampton, but Buddy Rich might have been more at ease had a bass player been added. Although there are other (and in some cases better) versions of Tatum playing these same standard songs, anything bearing his name is worth at least four stars. Other recent releases of interest:

PRIME TIME. Louie Bellson. Concord Jazz CJ-64. A change of pace for Bellson, whose big band yields here to a small combo with plenty of stretchout room for Blue Mitchell's trumpet, Pete Christlieb's tenor and Ross Tompkins' piano. The first side is pleasant but rather conventional, with a ballad medley and a long workout on "Cotton Tail." Far more interesting is the B side, for which rhythm guitarist Bob Bain and percussionist Emil Richards were added, and the material is mostly Brazilianesque (Bellson's "Let Me Dream," Mitchell's "Collaborations") or calypso (Dizzy Gillespie's catchy "And Then She Stopped"). Bassist John Williams rounds out the cohesive rhythm section.

CHICAGO JAZZ. Ray Linn. Trend TR 515. Don't be misled; the brand of music dished up here is more often associated nowadays with New York and Los Angeles. Linn, however, is Chicago-born and wears a fittingly menacing Chicago expression (and hat) on the cover photo. Ironically, he was one of the first West Coast residents to idolize Dizzy Gilespie, but here his sources are clearly Beiderbecke (one tune is "Bix's Bugle") and Armstrong.

Recorded direct to disc, this will appeal mainly to members of the Southern California Hot Jazz Society; however, it is played with enough bravura to qualify as more than a nostalgia trip. The tunes are mostly grandpa's favorites: "Royal Garden Blues," "Poor Butterfly" and "Ain't Misbehavin'." Curiously, two of of Linn's colleagues, trombonist Bob Havens and clarinetist Henry Cuesta, work for Lawrence Welk, but there's more gin than champagne to this vintage. Three stars.

REMO PALMIER. Concord Jazz CJ-76. This carefully planned album may at last bring Palmier, who for decades was bottled up in the Arthur Godfrey radio show, a measure of recognition he deserves as a consummate jazz guitarist. His sound is as gentle, his phrasing as even as his disposiston. The selection of sidemen was splendid (Lou Levy on piano and occasionally organ, with Ray Brown and Jake Hanna); his choice of material avoids cliche standards, yet includes works by Mandel and Mancini, Miles and Quincy, Herbie Hancock and one by Palmier himself. As a classy finishing touch, there are liner notes by John Lewis. Four-and-a-half stars. □

JAZZ AND POP MUSIC REVIEWS

O. C. Smith at Lainie's Room

O. C. Smith, too seldom gracing the local scene these days, is at Lainie's Room at the Playboy Club through May 5.

The completely identifiable tone quality that has always been central to his personality—a "honey baritone," as it has sometimes been called—remains unchanged. Tied in with his unique sound is a loose, easy way of handling both a song and an audience.

However, something new has just been added. Smith now uses a synthesizer, played by Roland Haynes, along with a regular rhythm section composed of Kirk Lightsey at the piano, Ron Rozzelle on drums and Valda Hannick on electric bass.

The instrumentation works well for certain string ensemble effects, and for the tunes that require a disco beat. The question is whether this particular sound and rhythmic pulse should be continuously emphasized. There was too little variation in tempos (generally on the slow side) or in mood from one song to the next.

John Guerin's composition "Pretending" stood out among several unfamiliar pieces, but for the most part Smith's material was locked into a soul-blues-rhythm-and-blues groove that cried out for a change of pace.

"Ev'ry Day," a swinging blues used only as an encore, could better have been inserted midway through the set, along with one or two other upbeat items. "Being Green," backed by a light, slow 4/4 beat, also provided a welcome contrast late in the set.

More than a decade has passed since Smith's big record hit, "Little Green Apples," on which he now passes the microphone around so that members of the audience may take over for him. It's all good fun, delivered with Smith's perennial professionalism.

His likable manner is a pleasure as always, but a little less of the accent on entertainment and more attention to a carefully balanced set of first-rate songs would help things along even more.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Michael Franks at Royce Hall

Laid-back, a fashionable phrase that seems to have supplanted "relaxed" in the pop music argot, is a perfect term to sum up Michael Franks.

Everything about him was laid-back Sunday evening at Royce Hall, from the timbre of his voice—soft and fuzzy—to the length of the concert, a mere 90 minutes without intermission or warmup act.

Franks is one of the few contemporary bards who can fashion compositions with a broad popular appeal while retaining a rare level of harmonic sophistication. His lyrics, almost as charming as the melodies with which he links them, range from unpretentious simplicity (without puerility) to sensitive imagery.

These characteristics were displayed before an audience that burst into recognitive applause as soon as he sang the first line of a recorded song or played a familiar intro on the guitar.

Franks' "Tiger in the Rain" album is in the ascendancy on the jazz as well as the pop charts, thanks to his own phrasing and rhythmic sensitivity, and the nature of his accompanying unit. Playing the title tune, as well as "When It's Over" and the sardonic message song "Sanpaku" among others, his five musicians switched back and forth between straight jazz and a Latin (usually Brazilian) beat.

Franks allotted generous time to the versatile John Payne, who soloed on soprano, alto and tenor saxes and flute. Often an instrumental solo, instead of leading to a vocal reprise, would close out a number.

Richard Eisenstein, though somewhat heavy-handed at the piano, made effective use of the electric keyboard. The congas of Carlos Cordova were overamplified, but the rhythm section on the whole provided Franks with the same vigorous jazz-oriented support heard on his recordings.

What is the elusive quality of Michael Franks that has enabled his subtle artistry to gain a beachhead in the pop market? Certainly it is not his personality; he never smiled. He moved no more than 6 square inches in any given song. Whatever the reason, he has mined a vein in public awareness; instead of questioning it, perhaps we should simply be thankful, for his achievement may lead others to similar artistic aspirations.

—L.F.

4/22

JAZZ

GRAND PIANO—IT'S THE REAL THING

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Nobody is quite sure who was responsible for coining the term "acoustic keyboard," but I would dearly like to meet him some night in a dark alley.

The expression is, of course, a back-formation from "electric keyboard." There are those who view the latter as an invention whose time was overdue, more portable and easier to tinker around with than the standard instrument. At the other extreme, its opponents curse it as an idiot bastard son, usually short an octave or two of the requisite 88 keys, and reducing the personality of all its players to a common denominator.

Though a good argument can be made for either side, it is beyond dispute that there is something uniquely grand about the grand piano, and that "acoustic keyboard" is an offensively condescending phrase. Such virtuosi as McCoy Tyner, Keith Jarrett and Oscar Peterson employ the piano almost exclusively; many jazz pianists regard the electric instrument as a dainty double, to be used only for special effects on certain occasions.

In any event, the majestic sound of the piano proper seems to be enjoying a resurgence, if recent records are a yardstick. The arrival of a package of albums on Contemporary Records marks a double renaissance, since it indicates a return to full-scale activity of the company itself.

Contemporary was founded 30 years ago by Lester Koenig, a man of such integrity that every album he released could be depended on for something of artistic worth. After his sudden death in November, 1977, the company, in limbo for a while, has gradually returned to action under the guidance of his son John, 28. The younger Koenig, a classical cellist, has been working for the company off and on for several years and is credited as coproducer on four of five new releases.

Pianists (grand) are heard on all five; two of them are leaders. HAMPTON HAWES AT THE PIANO (Contemporary S 7637) is a memento of the close relationship between Hawes, who died earlier the same year, and Lester Koenig. Although he had recorded for other labels and had toyed briefly with electronics and quasi-funk ideas, this occasion was a return home for Hawes in every sense.

His sound has a personal quality that he attributed (in a conversation with Koenig reproduced as the album's liner notes) to unorthodox fingering. His technique no less astounding than his empathy with bassist Ray Brown and drummer Shelly Manne. Hawes was an enlightened composer ("Soul Sign Eight" and the minor-mode "Morning") and a sublimator of such unlikely themes as "Killing Me Softly" and "When I Grow Too Old to Dream."

The most enchanting cut is "Blue in Green," in which he captures the serene nocturnal glow of Miles Davis' timeless composition. Whatever the secret of Hawes' individuality, he has taken it with him. This flawless set reminds us how deeply he is missed. Five stars.

An even grander piano sound was elicited from the keyboard when Phineas Newborn Jr. recorded HARLEM BLUES (Contemporary S 7634), the title tune of which is a captivating gospel jump for joy. Four pop standards and jazz pieces by Horace Silver and Ray Brown make up the balance of the set.

Newborn at his peak (mainly the 1960s) was almost in a class with Peterson and Tatum. Long stretches of the Newborn grandeur illuminate these belatedly issued 1969 cuts, but occasional uncertainties and fluffs reduce the impact. Still, since this ill-starred artist, plagued by emotional problems, has contributed little significant work during the 1970s, these sides offer valuable new testimony to a

4/28

AT CONCERTS BY THE SEA

Esther Phillips in a Balancing Act

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Esther Phillips is a successful pop vocalist, a unique jazz and blues singer, a superb artist and a no-less-adept entertainer. In recent years the balancing of these potentially conflicting elements has become an increasingly tricky proposition.

At Concerts by the Sea, where she opened Thursday for a four-day run, she is accompanied by a five-piece group, different in personnel from the last combo she brought to town, and somewhat less inspired.

Aside from her usual opening theme, "What a Difference a Day Makes," her hour-long set included only five complete songs, all of them familiar. Three were from her last album, all well-enough suited to her style, though short on any lyrical wit or melodic adventure.

The Lennon-McCartney song "And I Love Him," preceded by a rapport-establishing rap, continues to serve her well, embellished now by even more sensuous grunts and groans, breathy rhythmic tricks and hesitations than in the past.

As always, the 30-year-old Dinah Washington standard, "Long John," was a comedy triumph rather than a true blues. Purists might object to this, but judged simply in terms of the intent, it is a masterpiece, even if the comedienne in Esther sometimes tends to overshadow the singer. As usual, this was the song on which she took over at the piano for a stomping solo.

It would be rewarding to hear once again the Esther Phillips whose repertoire consisted of "Please Send Me Someone to Love," "Confessin' the Blues" and even "Release Me." (Perhaps nobody is writing songs like that anymore, but is this any reason for nobody to be singing them?) Still, with that pungently personal sound of hers, she could sing a set of nursery rhymes and still hold the audience spellbound.

JAZZ AND POP MUSIC REVIEWS

Duke Ellington Salutes at UCLA, Donte's

Stevie Wonder playing Duke's "C Jam Blues" at an Ellington tribute?

You better believe it. Incongruous though it seemed, Wonder's surprise appearance, at 12:45 a.m., brought Friday evening's concert at Royce Hall to a rocking, deafening climax. His set was very short, consisting simply of the blues, on which he played harmonica, and a vocal number, presumably original, not one sentence of which I could understand.

He received a standing ovation; however, the musical high points of the evening had occurred earlier. Presented by Kenny Burrell and the Jazz Heritage Foundation, the event was one of several instigated by the resourceful guitarist commemorating Ellington's birthday Sunday. Others were a photo exhibit and a film show, both at UCLA.

The concert began with a long jam session set by Burrell and a six-piece group, dipping into the Ducal songbook. This would have come off twice as well if it had been half as long, with fewer singers (there were five) and fewer slow tunes. Snooky Young, usually an anonymous sideman on "The Tonight Show," distinguished himself with the clarity and elegant ease of his trumpet work.

Lil Greenwood made a welcome return with "Walkin' and Singin' the Blues," her big number with Duke's band in 1960. The other singers paid their homage with varying degrees of success; however, if future generations are to understand the real Ellington essence, they will not do so just by listening to songs about flamingos or satin dolls. The Duke's creative medium was the full orchestra; thus the focal point of the evening was the primarily instrumental set by Bill Berry's L.A. Big Band.

Berry, who played two similar shows Sunday evening at Donte's, has brought loving care to re-creating the blends and textures woven by his former employer. Works like "Harlem Airshaft" and the elegiac "Star-Crossed Lovers" came close to the nub of what Ellington was all about. Even more remarkable were the transcriptions of a segment of the "Harlem" suite, and the 1933 "Daybreak Express," a piece so demanding that nobody had tried to play it, not even the Duke himself, since the original recording.

The Donte's night had one unforgettable moment. Alto saxophonist Marshal Royal, who had played heroically throughout, suddenly took off during "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," jabbing and slashing, playing wild tremolos and behaving like a man possessed. It was one of those magical moments that happen quite rarely in jazz, and Duke Ellington would have loved it madly.

—LEONARD FEATHER

4/29

JAZZ ALBUM REVIEWS

UP IN DUKE'S WORKSHOP. Duke Ellington. Pablo 2310-815.
SUITE THURSDAY/CONTROVERSIAL SUITE/HARLEM SUITE. Duke Ellington. ENCORE (Columbia Special Products) P 14359.
UNKNOWN SESSION. Duke Ellington. Columbia JC 35342.
ODE TO DUKE ELLINGTON. Dollar Brand. Inner City IC 6049.

The Pablo release consists of unissued material left over from what Ellington used to call "the stockpile," made between 1969 and 1972. The full orchestra is heard on most tracks. There are several odd conflicts between the personnel listings, and dates, and the solo credits in the liner notes. "Black Butterfly," for instance, is given a 1971 date and personnel, though it clearly features Johnny Hodges, who died in 1970. Too many of the cuts are obviously last-minute arrangements, based for the most part on the blues, and there are arrangements by Jimmy Hillard and Wild Bill Davis. Still, enough genuine Ellington emerges to justify this belated release.

See Leonard Feather's article on Page 3.

The three-suite album is a reissue. "Suite Thursday" (1960) is Duke's series of John Steinbeck impressions; "Controversial Suite" (1951), too little known, is a tongue-in-cheek look at jazz history, even dipping into Dixieland at times; "Harlem Suite," which Ellington premiered at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1951, is one of his timeless masterpieces.

The "Unknown Session" is a recently discovered recording made in Hollywood in 1960 by Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, Harry Carney and Lawrence Brown with the rhythm section. Several of the tunes ("Mood Indigo," "All Too Soon") had been recorded before in superior big band versions.

In his intelligently planned program, Dollar Brand blends Duke's works with his own, and with traditional themes of his South African homeland. Splendid grand piano sound, unaccompanied, brings out this sensitive artist's rhythmic and dramatic strength.

—LEONARD FEATHER

May 1979

LEONARD FEATHER

PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ

Joe Sample

DURING A CAREER that has stretched across a quarter of a century, Joseph Leslie Sample has lived in several musical worlds while savoring the best that each could offer.

Though he first became nationally known as a member of the Jazz Crusaders in the 1960s, he has gained extensive experience in the fields of R&B and soul music, in the studios as a busy and dependable Hollywood freelancer, and most recently as a leader of his own recording groups. His latest album, *Carmel* [ABC, 1126], is composed of seven original Sample compositions, aimed at the contemporary market but conceived and performed in exceptionally good taste.

Born Feb. 1, 1939, in Houston, Texas, Sample in his early teens formed what was to become a career-long association with three musicians whose lives would run parallel with his own: Stix Hooper, the drummer and leader of the group; Wilton Felder, the tenor saxophonist (later well known as a bass guitar virtuoso), and trombonist Wayne Henderson.

Along with flutist Hubert Laws and a bass player, this combo played locally from 1954, under a succession of names: the Modern Jazz Sextet, the Nite Hawks, and in 1960 as the Jazz Crusaders (this last after Laws had left and the others had moved to Los Angeles).

On the West Coast, Sample and his colleagues began a series of recordings for Pacific Jazz. In addition, Joe gigged with combos led by vibes player Roy Ayers, saxophonist Curtis Amy, and drummer Philly Joe Jones, and accompanied such singers as Johnny Hartman and Bill Henderson.

Listing his pianistic influences for *The Encyclopedia Of Jazz In The Sixties*, he named Oscar Peterson, Phineas Newborn Jr., Fats Waller, and Art Tatum—a somewhat more conservative set of choices than might have been expected for someone whose roots, at least during that period, seemed to derive from Bud Powell and the other early beboppers.

Though the Crusaders enjoyed moderate success, from around 1967 Sample began to put in more and more time as a regular Motown session musician, recording with Diana Ross and the Jackson 5. His other outside activities included record dates with Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez, and a rich mixture of other singers, from every area of pop music and jazz.

As a jazz group member, he was heard with the Harold Land/Bobby Hutcherson Quintet as well as with Quincy Jones and Oliver Nelson. During 1973 he visited Venezuela as a member of the Tom Scott Quartet, a combo that provided the nucleus for what was to become known as the L.A. Express, with which he recorded several times.

During the past few years the Crusaders (the "Jazz" tag was dropped some time ago) have been less consistently active as the members have become involved in other lucrative endeavors. Wayne Henderson split from the group to become a successful producer of pop and fusion albums. Felder, Hooper, and Sample, doing business as Crusader Productions Inc., have produced big-selling LPs with B.B. King and others. [*Ed. Note: A feature interview with Sample is now scheduled for our July '79 issue.*]

The sample of Sample offered on this page stems from a Crusaders date recorded Jan. 15, 1966. This cut, Miles Davis's "Milestones," was reissued recently on *Jazz: The '60s—Volume II* [Pacific Jazz (dist. by United Artists), PJ-LA895-H].

Basically this is not part of the piece but a long vamp or mood-setting introduction. The meter here is ambiguous; Jim Aikin hears it as 20 bars played moderato, though it seems to me that it might well be construed as a 40-bar passage played at the frantic tempo that is established more definitely when the horns move in to play the theme. In other words, the first two notes in bar 1 may be quarters, and the final flurry of sixteenths, if you listen to Stix Hooper's background beat, may sound more like eighths.

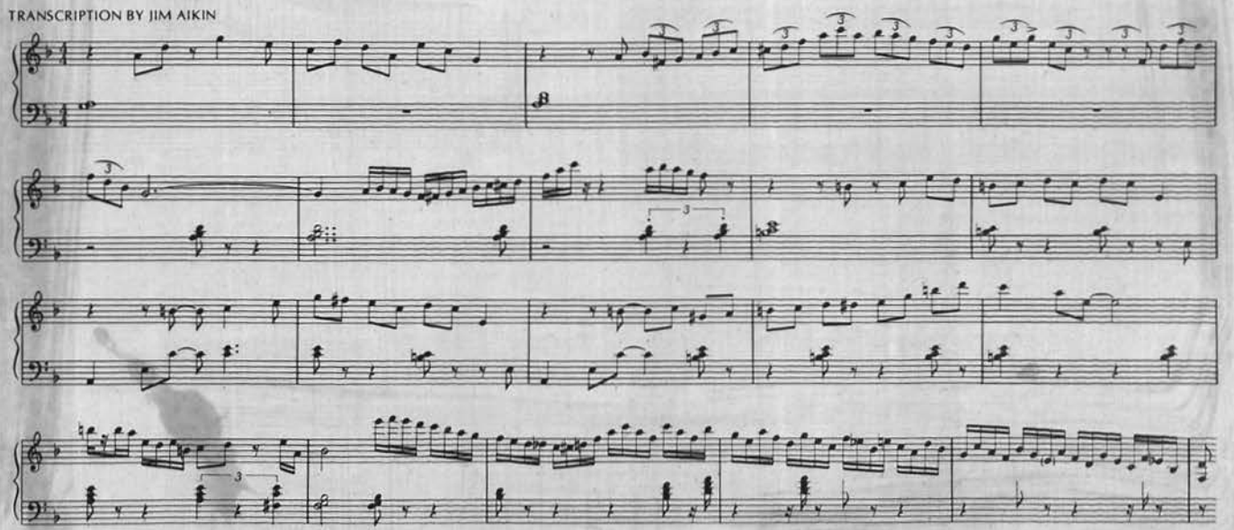
The left hand is negligible, comprising mainly a few syncopation-punctuations to establish and reestablish the *G* minor and *A* minor mood.

Note the gradual build-up of tension as the phrases move from the eighths and quarters of bars 1–2 to the triplets in 3–5, and then, after Sample pauses as if gathering steam, the predominantly sixteenth-note-dominated 7 and 8. His sense of symmetry, not easy to establish spontaneously at this tempo, may be observed when 9–10 are subjected to a neat variation in 11–12 and, in effect, are extended during 13–15.

The last four bars, leading furiously into the band's entry, make notable use of a series of three-note, downward moving phrases employed in a 3-against-4 manner. Nor are they merely diatonically descending triads; after the groups that begin with *C*, *Bb*, *A*, and *G* respectively, instead of the *F-D-Bb* triad you might expect, Sample substitutes an *Eb* for the *D*, which enables him to start the next group of three notes on an *E*-natural while maintaining the downward momentum. This is repeated in the *Eb* near the end of bar 20.

Although this solo is quite short, it says enough about Sample in 27 seconds to leave you with a powerful impression of the degree to which he has mastered the art of improvisation and the sound of surprise. Although I would never presume to equate quantity with quality, it is not unimpressive that in the last five and a half seconds Joe's right hand plays 56 successive notes—and makes every one of them meaningful.

TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN



Lorez Alexandria at Parisian Room 5/4

Lorez Alexandria is back at the Parisian Room, where her occasional return over the past 10 years has been as predictable and welcome as the sunrise.

By now she is doubtless tired of being called underrated. Without attaining the wealth or fame of a superstar, she has worked with some regularity, returned to records recently and continues to sing with an honesty that enables her to keep the self-respect she has always guarded.

Her sound is strong, affectionately warm and mellow on such songs as "Where Is the Love," from "Oliver," and "What I Did for Love," from "A Chorus Line." The vibrato is well controlled, the phrasing jazz-rooted as ever.

The old June Christy hit, "Something Cool," with its quaintly fey lyric, was an improbable but effective vehicle. The faster numbers were mostly overworked standards on which her tendency to lag a bar or two behind the musicians became a little excessive at times.

Accompanying Alexandria are Bill Henderson, piano; John Heard, bass, and Doug Sides, drums. They also function as the rhythm section for the quintet fronted by Harold Land and Oscar Brashear.

Land's tenor saxophone blended well with Brashear's fluegelhorn on "Rapture," an attractive Land composition with a simple but engaging melodic line. "Blue Silver," by Blue Mitchell, and the old "Night Has a Thousand Eyes" were accorded a roll-off-the-knife treatment, but Heard's supple bass sound was outstanding, and upstanding.

The group would gain a welcome extra color if Land were to double on flute, as he has from time to time in the past. The show closes Sunday. Next week: Carmen McRae.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Large photo shows Ellington with manager Irving Mills in 1933. Inset shows Mills today at home in Beverly Hills.

IRVING MILLS: THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED DUKE ELLINGTON

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The Brill Building on Broadway is a distant memory; nowadays Irving Mills makes his office in his home. When he moved a few weeks ago to a new penthouse in Beverly Hills, the four of his seven children who live in town were on hand to make the going smooth. Mills' family always has been tightly knit; the patriarch, now an 85-year-old widower, never lacks for attention from his descendants, among whom are 14 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

Mills' millions were acquired during a career that began in 1913, when he became a song-plugger. In 1919, he started his own publishing firm. After selling Mills Music for $5 million in 1965, he promptly started another company.

For all his credits as plugger, publisher, singer, impresario and record producer, Mills' ticket to posterity is a single achievement: He discovered Duke Ellington and guided him through the crucial years of his ascent to fame.

Anyone who can make such a boast is likely to remember events in a manner that may seem self-serving, yet a cross-check with Ellington's autobiography, "Music Is My Mistress" (Doubleday, 1973), confirms in essence everything Mills now recalls from a perspective of more than a half-century.

Silver-haired, dapper, alert as ever, Mills returned time and again, during a long, rambling conversation, to the fascinating rhetorical question, the classic what-if of the Mills-Ellington partnership. What if his path and Ellington's had never crossed? Would there still be, as there have been this weekend, tributes, concerts and radio salutes all over the world, commemorating Ellington's birth 80 years ago today?

Duke himself was a strong believer in the fortuity of being in the right place with the right people at the right time. The Irving Mills encounter was a profitable case in point.

"I had started to produce records of songs I was publishing," Mills said, "including several sessions for what was then called the race catalogue. I set up Fletcher Henderson, a great composer, to play piano and lead the band for Alberta Hunter and other singers. I wanted to build the best possible black recording band around Fletcher, but he was unreliable. He'd hire different men for each session, or he'd show up late, or the arrangement wouldn't be ready.

"There was so much trouble that I started looking for someone more dependable. Making my usual rounds of the cafes and dance halls, I dropped in at the Kentucky Club, at 49th and Broadway, one night in 1926.

"I got there in the early part of the evening and didn't leave until closing time. Duke Ellington and his Washingtonians were only six men strong. I fell in love not only with Duke but with everyone in the group.

"The next day I had him come to my office, explained my difficulties with Fletcher and asked if he could assure me of retaining the same musicians I had heard so the record companies would know this was an organized unit and I could count on having the music ready. He agreed to everything."

Not long after that discussion, Ellington, who had made a few obscure records, mostly of pop-oriented material, returned to the studios under Mills' auspices for the first "Duke Ellington and his Kentucky Club Orchestra" session. Free to write whatever he liked, and obliged by recording deadlines to keep up a steady flow of new material, Ellington created works that would be a part of his repertoire for the rest of his life: "Creole Love Call," "Black and Tan Fantasy" and others, many of which he recorded (for contractual reasons) in a bewildering variety of versions under several pseudonyms: "The Jungle Band," "The Harlem Footwarmers," "The Whoopee Makers."

"The going was tough," Mills says. "My publishing company wasn't big enough to back a band. But then I was able to make a deal with the Cotton Club, the mob-owned Harlem night spot.

"I sold them on the idea of using an elaborate production, and of hiring Duke's band, augmented to 11 men." (Mills could have suggested another significant what-if of the Ellington career: the Cotton Club job had been offered to cornetist Joe (King) Oliver, who turned it down because the money was inadequate.)

"I took Duke and his men to a tailor and had each fitted with two uniforms. When I got the bill, I found that Duke, who was very aware of himself as a ladies' man, had ordered not two but four suits. Neither of us could afford it, but at that point everything was a gamble.

"The Cotton Club venture paid off, partly because I was able to arrange air time. Radio was still the big new thing in 1927, and it was very unusual for a black band to broadcast regularly.

"Duke never talked much about his ambitions. He was happy with the love I showed for him, the effort I put into building him. He followed along the lines I'd suggested, accumulating a library of his own music which I published, stressing the phrase 'From the pen of Duke Ellington.'

"Duke was not a good reader of music, and not a great arranger as far as writing things down, but he had a rare knack of teaching the individual sections what he wanted. In all the years we were together, I never got a single copy of any of his pieces—I had to have them transcribed off the records."

Ellington, like all black artists, was listed by record companies on what was called "the black bulletin." In 1928, when his band joined with a large, string-bedecked white orchestra for a "Blackbirds Medley" record date arranged by Mills, the impresario was called on the carpet. "The head of Victor told me, 'Mills, you're in a lot of trouble; you should know better than to record black and white together. How are we gonna release this record?' I told them that since the subject had come up, I didn't want Duke's followers to have to go to Harlem to buy his records; in the future I wanted him listed on the white bulletin. After an angry meeting, they grudgingly agreed to this."

It was ironic that the orchestra found itself reaching new peaks of achievement during the depths of the Depression. Asked how this affected Duke, Mills said: "He

Please Turn to Page 4

Dollar Brand

ELLINGTON'S SOUTH AFRICAN PROTEGE

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Adolf Johannes Brand, known professionally as Dollar Brand (and, since his conversion to Islam, as Abdullah Ibrahim), offers an eloquent instance of an artist whose music is inseparable from his social views and actions.

For him there can be no apartheid, in society, nationality or music. When he met Duke Ellington, who encouraged him to visit the United States in 1965, the Cape Town-born pianist-composer found in the American maestro a kindred spirit.

"It was like meeting the wise old man in the village. There was nothing to talk about, just an immediate rapport. Actually, we discussed many things other than music. From Ellington I learned over the years some of the basic values in life, which in turn are reflected in his music and in mine, such things as how to conduct oneself in one's immediate society or in a global community.

"We in South Africa never saw this, never thought of this, as simply American music—it was Ellington! He represented a melting pot of so many experiences. Although the Ellington sound was personal and distinctive, his scope was immense. Rather than allow himself to be caught up in one form, he transcended them all and expressed himself in every way, from musical impressions of Shakespeare to Afro-Mozart.

"Ellington sometimes said that he didn't want to be typecast as a jazz musician, and that is just the way I feel. The moment you label yourself, you're restricting yourself.

"My first source of inspiration was Kippi Moetketsi. He played alto sax and clarinet and was a fantastically schooled, brilliant musician. I was fortunate to work with him as a young man."

Before the Ellington encounter, Brand established himself in his homeland, where he led his own group, The Jazz Epistles, and throughout Europe, traveling there extensively in the early 1960s.

"The first American music I ever heard came to me via the records of Louis Jordan, who was very popular in Cape Town, but I wouldn't say we were influenced by Americans; there were so many parallel developments. There is a hard-core, basic musical literature that is common to both countries. Africa is the fountainhead."

Brand's first real exposure to Ellington, other than broadcasts of recordings, developed when he found a friend two blocks from home who had a sizeable collection of old 78s. "We would go over every Sunday at 9 in the morning, and he and his wife would cook, and we'd sit and listen to Duke for hours. He had everything the band ever recorded."

"Did Ellington have some special message that you had not found in African music?" I asked.

"Nothing. It wasn't a question of finding anything new, but rather of an analogous expression. It was like a scientist working in Los Angeles, and another working in Tokyo independently, and they come up with the same conclusions. That was the affinity I felt I had for Ellington.

"It was the same with Thelonious Monk, and later with Ornette Coleman and others. Albert Ayler, the American avant-garde saxophonist, reminded me of a Cape Town dance band."

Despite Ellington's encouragement (at one time an album billed as "Duke Ellington Presents the Dollar Brand Trio" was issued on Reprise), Brand went through years of frustration, of searching and confusion, for which the situation in his homeland was largely responsible.

"It's almost impossible for a black man to earn a living there as a musician. It's illegal for blacks and whites to play together; you have to have a permit to play for Indian people, for whites—you're mainly restricted to your own community. Music has always helped to bring people closer together, yet in South Africa in the 1960s things seemed to be going from bad to worse."

In 1968 Brand and his wife left South Africa for good, and not long afterward he had the rare privilege of playing with the orchestra of his idol. "Duke was in Hollywood writing a film score and his band was back East. He asked me to play in his chair. Six nights. The experience was so incredible, I could scarcely play! It was one thing to hear the band on records or in person, but to be right inside that marvelous sound—and without any piano parts to guide me—that was an honor I'll never forget.

"I think we haven't really discovered the depths of Ellington; he's probably the major force of this century. I've been putting together a band of European and South African musicians for a European tour this summer, and I realized that a new young crop of players has come up without experiencing this tradition.

"I told them to go out and listen to records like Duke's 'Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue,' and they said they had never known anything like it. They managed to get hold of copies of actual manuscripts and stayed up all night practicing. The notes were there, but they couldn't quite get that sound. That's something nobody will ever be able to duplicate."

By this time, Ibrahim had undergone his religious conversion, of which he said, "I didn't embrace Islam. Islam embraced me. I wanted to find a universal truth. Music was part of the reason, because in Islam the music is naturally integrated; you don't just feel the Koran, you sing it, in remembrance of Allah. I had gone through a bad period, partly in New York, of living negatively. Then I stopped smoking, stopped drinking, found an inner peace.

"There is nothing really I want or need for myself now, because Allah has blessed me; so my main concern is for others, for the liberation of my people, the establishment of justice. Music is just a means toward the end."

Abdullah Ibrahim has become closely involved with the African National Congress, which he calls "The oldest liberation movement. Our chief, the late Albert Luthuli, received a Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent opposition to segregation."

Brand/Ibrahim now leads a double life. As a pianist-composer he tours the world—Los Angeles last month, currently Australia, this summer the European jaunt leading an orchestra in his own arrangements. He has made a wide variety of records—with Max Roach, with Archie Shepp, with Gato Barbieri—for American, Japanese and European companies. His wife, the singer Bea Benjamin, now known as Sathima, is recording an album of Ellington songs.

As an impassioned participant in the struggle for freedom at home, he hopes to return under conditions that will make life worth living for him and millions of others.

"The last time I went back two or three years ago, that was the end of it for me. My wife's 17-year-old sister was shot. A lot of my own students disappeared. I saw atrocities that I find hard to talk about.

"It's going to be difficult for us to go back, but we still haven't lost faith. Some day we'll make it."

□

MONUMENTS. Jackie McLean. RCA AFL 1-3230. Et tu, Jackie!? Long respected as a practitioner and teacher of Afro-American music, this able alto saxophonist evidently has been persuaded that a pot of gold can be found at the end of a rainbow whose primary colors are moronic lyrics, dumb songs and a disco beat. The title of one number, "Doctor Jackyll and Mister Funk," says it all. If that isn't enough, another title underlines it: "On the Slick Side." This depressing disc is a monument to nothing but Mammon. No stars. □

MARIAN MCPARTLAND

Profile of a Protean Pianist

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz," produced by the South Carolina Educational Radio Network for broadcast on National Public Radio, is the latest and liveliest venture in the career of the protean pianist/composer/educator.

The series is heard locally Wednesdays at 3 p.m. on KCSN-FM(88.5), Thursdays at 11 a.m. on KCRW-FM(89.9), Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. on KLON-FM(88.1) and Saturdays at 9 p.m. on KPCS-FM(89.3).

Launched last month, the series of hour-long shows is at once entertaining and informative. Each week McPartland's guest is a fellow pianist. They engage in spontaneous discussions concerning the art of piano jazz. The guest plays several solo numbers, but for at least one of the tunes on each show McPartland joins in for a spirited ad lib, two-piano duet.

The format is so loose that at times the conversation tends to become a little too esoteric for the nonmusician; however, for the most part McPartland keeps everything on a light note while maintaining the sense that this is at least in part an instructional series.

This week's guest is Teddy Wilson. Taped for future use are the following: next week, Mary Lou Williams; May 20, Ellis Larkins; May 27, Bill Evans; June 3, Chick Corea; June 10, Tommy Flanagan; June 17, Joanne Brackeen; June 24, Cy Coleman.

The guests to date have included Billy Taylor, whose own experience as a radio personality and educator made for a successful exchange of ideas; Barbara Carroll, who discussed with McPartland the problems of the woman's role in an art form dominated by men; Dick Hyman, who both musically and verbally was the most adaptable of speakers; and Bobby Short, the cabaret singer-pianist.

DEBUT—The Bonnie Janofsky-Roz Cron Big Band played its first date at Variety Arts Sunday.
Times photo by Larry Davis

AT VARIETY ARTS

Debut for Ladies and All That Jazz

BY LEONARD FEATHER

How and where do you find 17 women talented enough to tackle a library of jazz arrangements and interpret them in the best tradition of the big band era?

It isn't easy, which explains why there's no other orchestra in the country like the Bonnie Janofsky-Roz Cron Big Band, which had its coming-out party Sunday at the Variety Arts Theater.

Janofsky, 25, is a highly proficient drummer, whose father once played sax with Tommy Dorsey. Coleader Cron is a veteran of the sax section in the legendary Sweetheart of Rhythm, with whom she toured in the 1940s. The band's age span is broad: Louise Berk, whose lyrical trumpet dominated "Feelings," is only 20. She was married Saturday to drummer Dick Berk, but postponed her honeymoon to make this gig.

What makes the years irrelevant is the unifying force of a team spirit that has sustained these women through several trying months of talent searching and rehearsals.

The mainstream arrangements are played with verve and precision: Bill Holman's "Told You So," with flute by Barbara Watts; Neal Hefti's "Cute," and Sam Nestico's "Doin' Basie's Thing," as well as several pop numbers. Best of the latter were "Never Can Say Goodbye," showcasing Cron's melodic alto, and "I Write the Songs," in which Betty O'Hara, on valve trombone, proved herself by far the band's most mature, storytelling improviser. The tune was arranged by Janofsky, more of whose writing is needed to supply a touch of originality.

Kay Blanchard brought some of that old-time warmth to her tenor sax in "All My Life." Ruth Kissane and Louise Berk engaged in a modestly effective trumpet battle on a rock chart, "Make Me Smile."

The other soloists were on a lower level, possibly due to a shortage of work opportunities. Judging by the standing ovation that greeted the band Sunday, these eager and enthusiastic musicians, who hope to play at the next Women's Jazz Festival in Kansas City, should not have to face that problem much longer.

AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Horace Silver: Still a Durable Service

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Dropping in on Horace Silver is like visiting a cousin who has been a good friend as long as you can remember. You hope that time will have been kind to him, that the merits you always found in him have not been diminished by the years.

So it was with this listener when the latest edition of the Silver Quintet opened at the Lighthouse. Although Silver has experimented on his last several albums, writing lyrics, adding a vocal group or woodwinds or a brass section, his in-person jobs retain the same instrumental five-pieces-of-Silver format that has served him since 1956: trumpet, tenor, bass (occasionally doubling on fender) and drums, with Silver still opting for the grand piano. Things are what they used to be—happily.

If the present personnel is not his greatest ever, one has only to consider the competition Silver set for himself with such earlier sidemen as Lee Morgan or Blue Mitchell on trumpet, Hank Mobley or Junior Cook on sax. Still, Barry Ries' trumpet and fluegelhorn uphold the tradition well enough, especially when Ries and Larry Schneider outline a typical composition by the leader, who continues to make exceptionally intelligent use of the basic two-horn harmony at his disposal.

The set began with a genial Silver theme, "Friends," equipped with a bossa nova beat supplied by drummer Harold White. Later came a three-part segment, entitled "The Soul and Its Expression," from a larger work in progress.

At the piano, with his stabbing, driving style, Silver remains untarnished. Whether soloing or comping for the horns, he is distinctive; never a risk taker but safe and solid within his long-prescribed confines. Sometimes you may wish he didn't use so many quotations from obscure sources, but then again, some are so abstruse that you won't realize they are not part of a totally original creation.

A bassist who rejoices in the name of Todd Coolman rounded out the combo with a strong sound and a knowledge of how to prevent a 'ong bass solo from lapsing into boredom.

The set ended with Silver's first hit, "Senor Blues." There was an odd paradox in his thanking the audience for its role in establishing him by its acceptance of this imperishable minor blues waltz; the fact is that many of those present at the Lighthouse were not born when the record came out. Silver continues through Sunday.

kinds of songs they created. There was another healthy period, in the early '60s, when Antonio Carlos Jobim's songs dominated. I think of Jobim as a kind of Brazilian Cole Porter."

A good case could be made out for Franks as a North American Jobim.

While earnestly believing in what he is doing, he is not too sanguine about the prospects for the return of bygone values.

"Sometimes I think the audience for music is a lot hipper than the music industry is willing to concede. It's much easier for the big companies to put out certain items in the supermarket that they know are the staples of today's mass diet—the homogenized, processed foods. These are things they know everybody wants. It's quite another matter for them to assume, as I do, that a substantial body of people may be willing to lay out bread for something that requires a little more care and imagination.

"I get depressed when I see some of the musicians I've admired going over the edge in their desperate success trip. I don't want to go that route; in any case, I still make my living as a songwriter, so on my own records I just want to do things according to my beliefs."

Three of the "Art of Tea" songs proved lucky for Franks: "Monkey See-Monkey Do" was recorded by Ringo Starr, Melissa Manchester and Patti Labelle; Dee Dee Bridgewater cut her own treatment of "Nightmoves," and the double entendres of "Popsicle Toes" led to a version by Manhattan Transfer. This song also was a personal hit as a Franks single and that led to some typically sophomoric p.r. follow-ups: "I found myself in Pittsburgh, passing out thousands of Popsicles to kids, out of a rented Good Humor truck. I think we got to No. 29 on the singles chart. Everybody at the company freaked out, because they really hadn't known what to make of me and probably hadn't expected anything to happen."

Something indeed happened from that point on: The new album shows signs of selling as many as all its predecessors combined. Franks has just returned from his second tour of Japan, indicating that something in the way he moves, or fails to move, must have an appeal that transcends an understanding of his lyrics. He is set for a Carnegie Hall appearance during next month's Newport Jazz Festival.

Despite these and other such developments, Franks still finds it hard to believe that he is accepted as a singer. "One thing would really convince me," he says. "If I can get to make an album of other people's songs, then I'll really know I've made it." □

Milt Jackson in a Jam-Session Bag

5/17

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Milt Jackson, a.k.a. Bags, is at the Parisian Room this week with his quartet. More accurately, he is there with three musicians simply hired for the occasion. As has been his custom since the breakup of the Modern Jazz Quartet almost five years ago, the perennial award-winning vibraphonist picks up a different accompanying unit as he moves from job to job.

Two of the three sidemen, bassist Allan Jackson and drummer Kenny Dixon, are regulars at the club. The third is Ron Eschete, a guitarist who has recently come to prominence in the Southland. The use of guitar instead of piano lent a more relaxed character to the combo; this was effective on certain tunes, though at times one missed the dynamic impact of the keyboard.

Bags was not helped by the P.A. system. Neither of the mikes on his keyboard seemed to be picking up more than minimally. On the other hand, the standup mike, which he used only for a closing announcement, was in working order, yet he did not sing at all (he has a new album featuring his vocals), presumably because of lack of rehearsal.

The prevailing jam-session atmosphere was sustained by tunes familiar to all hands: "Summertime," "Blue Bossa," "Nica's Dream" and a couple of blues. Milt Jackson covered all this familiar territory with his customary finesse.

Eschete offered new vivid, unexpected chords as punctuation marks in long, declarative melodic sentences. His sound is attractive and his technique remarkable. Keep an eye on him.

Sharing the bill is Reynaldo Rey, who seems to have become the club's resident comedian. Coming next week: Harry (Sweets) Edison and Eddie (Lockjaw) Davis.

JAZZ

FRANKS FIGHTS AGAINST CURRENT

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Consider the case of Michael Franks, and be thankful. Here is a singer/songwriter (or songwriter/singer, the billing he would prefer) who writes lyrics that are by turn funny, wry, insightful, suggestive, evocative; who creates melodies that have translated into Brazilian, pop and jazz treatments; whose songs have been hits for him on a series of records by other artists, and who now has four finely crafted albums of his own to his credit.

Franks' in-person style swims against the current current. He moves hardly at all while working, sings in a gentle, laidback style, uses amplification only moderately. Yet he has turned up on the pop charts in a crassly commercialized marketplace. His latest, "Tiger in the Rain" (Warner Bros. BSK 3294), shows signs of becoming the biggest. Its title was inspired by a Rousseau painting ("Tropical Storm With a Tiger") reproduced on the cover.

A mild-mannered Virgo (La Jolla, Calif., 9/18/44), Franks attributes his success as a performer more to luck than talent. "I never wanted to go on the road. The Warner people really had to twist my arm. The first time, I remember wearing a tennis hat and pulling it over my eyes. Then Warners were turned off and said maybe I shouldn't go on the road after all. It's taken me three years to feel however comfortable I'm feeling now." As he says this, you have the feeling he means not very.

Franks came up gradually, supplementing his meager income by teaching part time at UCLA. "I gave a class in songwriters of the 1960s; it was an interesting challenge for me, but I felt I was flying by the seat of my pants, extemporizing statements I really wasn't too sure of. I wasn't destined to be a teacher and I was delighted to get out of it."

The escape coincided with the opportunity, in 1975, to make his first major album, which is where the aforementioned luck came in. "I ran into Tommy Lipuma, who as my producer gave me total freedom. He said, 'What would your dream rhythm section be?' I asked for Joe Sample on piano, Larry Carlton on guitar, John Guerin on drums and Wilton Felder on bass. I also wanted Michael Brecker and Dave Sanborn on saxophones. Tommy called me back within an hour and said, 'They're all set; see you Friday.'

"All this was before the George Benson phenomenon happened for Tommy, and we were sort of in the basement at Warners; but after Benson clicked, Tommy's prestige shot up and that moved everything ahead for us, in terms of treatment." (Lipuma was the producer, with Al Schmitt, of Benson's first megahit LP, "Breezin'.")

Franks cut the tracks for "The Art of Tea" in a total of 12 hours, singing live with almost no overdubbing. This set the pattern for the subsequent albums, including the new one, which boasts an impressive roster of associates: such jazzmen as Kenny Barron, Ron Carter and Bucky Pizzarelli are on some tracks. A good friend and admirer, Flora Purim, is a backup vocalist on three cuts.

Franks' melodic orientation and lack of pretention, both as composer and performer, reflect the strong impact of the 1960s Brazilian pop movement. (Two songs in his second LP, "Sleeping Gypsy," were recorded in Rio.)

"There have been times in the history of popular music," he says, "when the hit songs were beautiful compositions, when it was easier for a Gershwin, a Berlin, a Cole Porter to succeed. Their era was more accommodating to the

JAZZ AND POP MUSIC REVIEWS

Experimentation at the Playhouse

Fed up with fusion music? Bored with be-bop? You might do worse than check out one of Lee Kaplan's Sunday evening experimental sessions in the Century City Playhouse, a minuscule theater on Pico Blvd. west of Beverly Glen.

Sunday a small crowd of loyalists heard the Vinny Golia Wind Quartet, playing improvisations loosely strung together by the leader's written themes.

The guidelines of conventional musical—chords, tempo, meter, tonal centers—were generally absent, leaving the listener to swim around unaided in these deep acoustic waters.

At any given time one, two, three or all four men might be playing freely, merging their contrasted stylistic concepts with Golia switching from flute to baritone sax, piccolo, bass clarinet and alto flute. Since the group included no rhythm instruments, his contributions on the lower-voiced horns were more effective, lending a much-needed bottom to the overall sound. As a writer, he seems limited, making little attempt at structure or dynamic contrast.

Cornetist Bobby Bradford and clarinetist John Carter share the Texas background of Ornette Coleman, with whom they played in the 1960s. Bradford, with his pure tone and skillful use of mutes, came closer to jazz than the others in this unclassifiable concert. Carter veered intriguingly from legitimate runs to freakish fragmented phrases and split tones.

Trombonist Glenn Ferris, who has played with Don Ellis, Frank Zappa and Billy Cobham, worked his way from swaggering downward glides to explosive plunger-mute effects, but at times the heat in the nonair-conditioned room took a toll on his ability to execute perfectly.

To admit that this avant-garde evening was inconsistent, and perhaps inaccessible for some ears, is not to deny that it offered a worthwhile challenge to performers and audience alike. Next Sunday Kaplan himself will take part, on synthesizer, in an electronic recital featuring the Joe Doppler Quintet and bassist Roberto Miranda.

—LEONARD FEATHER

their parts. They all fit right in and they're available when I need them.

"Then when I have some special festival gigs to play, the people at George Wein's office help me to put together the all-star band."

This year's summit-meeting personnel, set for dates at the Playboy Jazz Festival June 16 at the Hollywood Bowl as well as jobs at the Newport and other festivals, is a potent alliance in which members of earlier Hampton bands (Jerome Richardson, Arnett Cobb, Jimmy Cleveland, Marshal Royal) mingle with Basie, Herman and Kenton alumni.

The list of Hampton band graduates is among the most honored in jazz. Since he left Benny Goodman in 1940 to launch his first orchestra, Quincy Jones, Mingus, Clifford Brown, Fats Navarro, Dexter Gordon, Illinois Jacquet, Dinah Washington, Joe Williams and scores of others hardly less eminent have passed through the Hampton ranks.

Intermingled with his band ventures over the past decade have been various reunion concerts (the final gathering of the original Goodman Quartet, with Teddy Wilson and the late Gene Krupa, took place at Carnegie Hall in 1973). Meanwhile Hampton's sociopolitical awareness was growing. He had become an active campaigner for Nixon and Rockefeller. The latter, with Gladys Hampton, helped in the organization of the Lionel Hampton Community Development Corp.

"Thanks to my dear friend, the late governor," Lionel says, "we now have the Hampton Houses, a development on 131st St. in the heart of Harlem. It consists of a 39-story building and two eight-story buildings, accommodating 355 families.

"This was a $19-million project, and it was very dear to my heart, as it provided suitable housing where these facilities were badly needed. We're now planning two more buildings, to house 210 families, which we'll call the Gladys Hampton Houses.

"In addition to the living quarters, we want to have a museum, a prayer parlor, a club room and eventually a conservatory of music and the arts, providing courses in music, business administration, radio and television.

"I want this to be a humanitarian undertaking. There is money to be made here, but I'll arrange for the income from all these projects to go into the Lionel and Gladys Hampton Fund, to provide scholarships to needy people."

He would like some day to expand the housing efforts to the West Coast. During a recent visit to Los Angeles, Hampton visited Mayor Bradley to discuss this: "Black people need some housing here too, and I'm hoping to do something similar to what was done in New York."

("I have discussed this matter with Lionel Hampton," Mayor Bradley tells me. "However, the federal funding that would be needed is not presently available. Lionel is keeping in touch and we hope the project is still a possibility.")

Hampton's ability to keep his fingers in so many pies is an achievement he attributes to judicious delegation of authority. "I've got a real good team around me; people who know all the facts and figures, and I play my part, just like I do in music. Whenever it's not going right, when there's sour notes in there—well, I take the notes out so I can make pleasant harmony."

Clearly all the objectives at which Lionel Hampton aims are desirable. Some of his dreams already are reality; others seem capable of attainment. Whatever the outcome, no cause on which he has taken a stand will ever fail for lack of effort on the part of the indomitable Vibes President.

□

SUNSTROKE, Charlie Shoemake—Muse MR 5193. Nothing spectacular here, but a well-paced set by the former George Shearing vibraphonist, who visited New York to record in the stimulating company of Dave Schnitter, tenor sax; Kenny Barron, piano; Cecil McBee, bass, and Al Foster, drums. Material ranges from Jobim to Gillespie to Shoemake originals, closing with a mellow treatment of the pop standard, "We'll Be Together Again." Four stars.

—L.F.

I'M OLD FASHIONED, Sadao Watanabe. Inner City IC 6015. The title song seems to carry an implicit subtitle: "Because I play bebop." Yet Watanabe, a frequent visitor to the United States (he studied at Berklee in Boston), sounds far from dated in his alto sax excursions (on which he resembles Phil Woods) and on flute (the pleasantly modal original "Episode"). This was cut in Japan with a trio of visiting U.S. diplomats: Hank Jones, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. The credits read "Liner Notes by Shohichi Yui." Two hitches here: his name is misspelled, and there are no liner notes. Three-and-a-half stars.

—L.F

FUTURE TALK, Urszula Dudziak—Inner City 1066. With her husband Michal Urbaniak again present as producer and soloist on electric violin, the Polish revolutionary of vocalese addresses us once more in her extraterrestrial, wordless language. Among the six other participants is a third Pole-winner, Zbigniew Namyslovski, whose alto sax soars over the Urbaniak composition, "Roxanna."

On three tracks we hear only Dudziak, unaccompanied, one voice emerging from the left speaker while another vocal, rhythmic onslaught reaches us from the right. If these were performed without overdubbing, as the album states, then either Ms. Dudziak has a double larynx or this is the electronic miracle of the year. Whichever, it's startling and fascinating.

The rhythm becomes too heavy on one or two cuts, but the overall impact is on a level with the high standards Dudziak and Urbaniak have maintained during their five years in this country. Four-and-a-half stars.

—L. F.

5/20

Beat goes on for Lionel Hampton, jazzman, humanist.

JAZZ

HAMPTON MEDLEY MORE THAN MUSIC

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Lionel Hampton, sometimes known as the Vibes President of the United States, has always presented a dynamic image to the public. His audiences continue to see the same deeply involved figure, hunching over the vibraphone or drums, grunting vague notes, turning dramatically to direct his musicians in a wild, ride-out chorus of "Flying Home," reaching for the ceiling in a frantic finale.

Few know that behind the facade is one of the world's wealthiest musicians, a socially and politically concerned citizen, a philanthropist and an ardent Republican who numbered the late Vice President Nelson Rockefeller among his closest associates.

Hampton today can casually toss off a remark such as "I almost bought a radio station out here in Los Angeles, but there was a difference of a couple of hundred thousand dollars in our ideas about the cost and I was advised not to take it. I plan sooner or later to buy one and get into a position where I can work with other stations on programming more jazz."

The need for more radio exposure of the music that has dominated his life is a subject of lasting concern to Hampton. He is conscious of the tendency among black-oriented stations to concentrate on rhythm and blues or soul music while neglecting jazz.

"Recently I did a seminar at Howard University, where I was awarded a doctor's degree." (This was his sixth honorary doctorate.) "They have their own radio and TV station, and I talked to them about putting on a series of programs giving the true history of black music. The youngsters there don't know what happened in jazz, even as recently as the 1940s or '50s.

"People have to be awakened. You know, right now there's enough stations owned by blacks so they could have a network and start to push the real great black music, jazz, so that all the young people become aware of it."

Though Hampton at 66 has enough security to enable him to retire and relax, such verbs are not in his vocabulary. His late wife Gladys, an extremely shrewd business woman, not only ensured his being financially set for life but also was a key figure in promoting his involvement with the extramusical activities that now take up much of his time.

Incredibly, Hampton has survived 40 years on the road without losing an iota of his zest, whether the agenda calls for a business meeting about a major real estate deal, a concert tour of Europe or the Far East, or a new and complex recording project. Last year, not long after major surgery, he plunged into a whirlwind of record sessions under his supervision, taping some 16 albums for a label called Who's Who in Jazz. The series was most remarkable for the fact that whether the central figure was Woody Herman, Earl Hines, Gerry Mulligan, Buddy Rich or Charles Mingus, Lionel adapted his style and sat in with them all. ("It was Mingus' last playing session," he recalls.) Unfortunately there was distribution problems and the records currently are hard to find, but this will not prevent Hampton from plunging in at a moment's notice and starting another equally exhausting endeavor.

Lately the bandleading side of his traveling life has been intriguingly subdivided. "I've been very fortunate," he says. "When I want to take my regular band out, I've got a team I can draw on in New York: a guy who knows the first trumpet book, trombonists and sax players who know

JUNE 1979

LEONARD FEATHER
PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ
Roger Kellaway

LIKE DICK HYMAN, an earlier subject in this series, Roger Kellaway has a variety of talents that has been literally bewildering to the general public. (Perhaps it is more than a coincidence that he and Hyman have enjoyed a rare sense of compatibility in their annual two-keyboard duets at Dick Gibson's Colorado Springs Jazz Party.)

He is probably best known as the writer of the TV theme for *All In The Family.* As a composer he has been more correctly represented by a ballet, commissioned by George Balanchine and the New York City Ballet Company, by his film scores, or by the invariably attractive works written for a quartet featuring the classical 'cellist Edgar Lustgarten.

Even those aspects barely skim the surface of his talent. Kellaway's jazz piano experience has taken him from dixieland to the avant-garde, with rest stops at every way station, among which he counts stride in the Fats Waller tradition.

Born November 1, 1939, in Waban, Massachusetts, he studied classical piano from the age of seven. Majoring in composition and minoring in piano at the New England Conservatory, he also took up bass and put in some professional time as a bassist with trumpeters Jimmy McPartland and Ralph Marterie.

Moving to New York in the early 1960s, Kellaway played in the combos of saxophonist Al Cohn and Zoot Sims, trumpeter Clark Terry and trombonist Bob Brookmeyer, and in the house band at Eddie Condon's.

After his migration to Los Angeles in 1966, he soon expanded his scope to include big band work (nine months with Don Ellis) and conducting (musical director for Bobby Darin, 1967–69). In 1973 his classical work *Esque,* for trombone and double bass, was recorded; Kellaway appeared with his 'Cello Quartet at the Ojai Festival, and played on sessions with baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan and Tom Scott. The following year found him on tour for several months with singer Joni Mitchell and Tom Scott's L.A. Express combo throughout the U.S., Canada, and England.

Since the mid-1970s there has been more diversification than ever. In addition to writing some arrangements for an album by the Supersax group (*Supersax Plays Bird With Strings* [Capitol, ST-11371]), he conducted and arranged an album for singer Carmen McRae, recorded some original classical compositions for piano and tuba, and made a new 'Cello Quartet album for the direct-to-disc label Discwasher Records [1407 N. Providence Rd., Columbia, MO 65201]. "This time," he says, "we went back to the good old bebop days; I wrote a sort of bop suite, in six movements, every one of which was based on a familiar chord pattern."

There have also been several new motion picture scores, all of them coincidentally in the horror film genre: *The Mafu Cage, The Dark,* and most recently *The Silent Scream,* for which Kellaway was off to London to start work at presstime.

A significant phase of his career encompassed the late 1960s, when he was associated off and on with Tom Scott on saxes, John Guerin on drums, and Chuck Domanico on bass. Together they recorded Kellaway's "Portrait," from which part of his solo is reproduced here. (It was recently reissued in the album *Jazz: The '60s, Volume II* [Pacific Jazz (dist. by United Artists), PJ-LA895-H]).

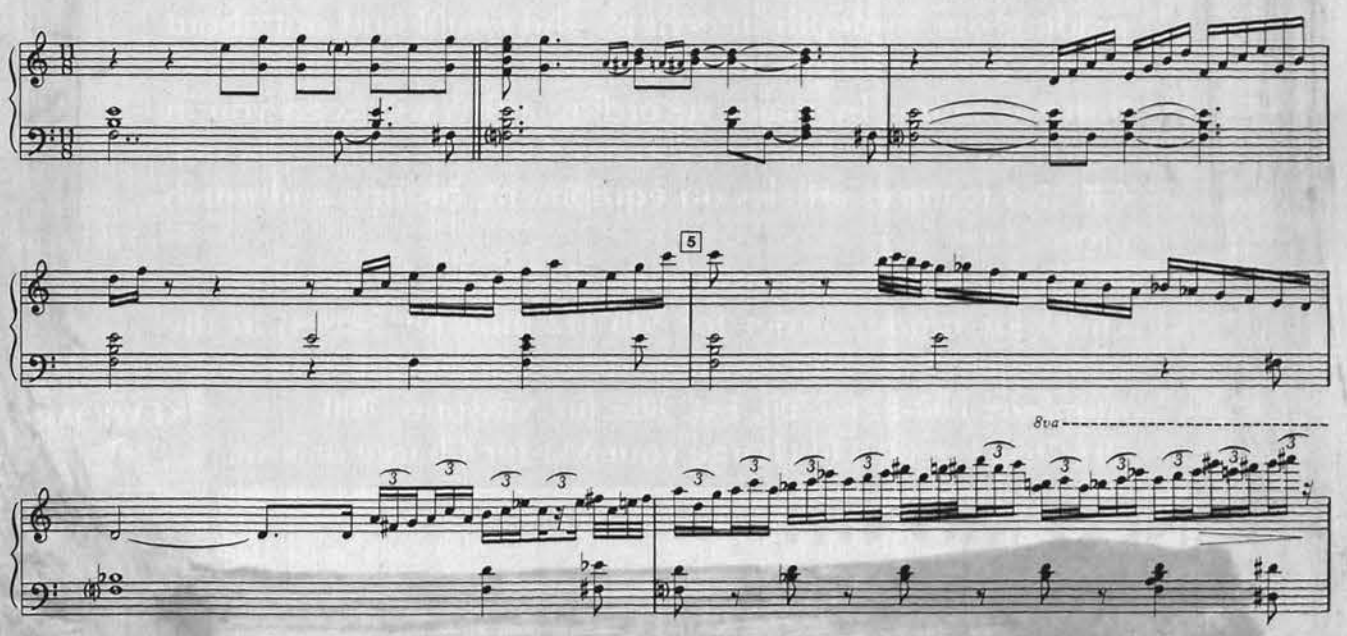
The work is in 11/8, subdivided 2–2–2–2–3. Though the unusual meter tends to disguise it, this is basically a blues in *G.* Kellaway's solo is picked up beginning with the second of his three piano choruses.

Although it offers an illuminating glimpse of his technical dexterity, the chops are never employed for a mere display of bravura. Before or after a long series of sixteenth-notes, he will return to his jazz roots by way of a few funky thirds with grace notes (bars 2, 8–9) or tremolos (14, 24).

The most startling passage occurs at bar 16 and continues through the end of 17. Here Kellaway plays a series of ten downward-moving groups of four notes, descending a whole tone at a time. I had to listen to this on a 16⅔ turntable in order fully to appreciate the brilliance of this line and the accuracy of his time sense.

Kellaway's penchant for humor surfaces every once in a while, as witness the tongue-in-cheek down-and-up three-note groupings in bars 21–22. His left-hand work, often employing chords rather than bebop punctuations, rounds out the performance admirably. This virtuosic solo reminds us that even in 1967, and in 11/8 at that, Roger Kellaway could outswing most of his contemporaries.

TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN



5/20

History of America going to pot

Reefer Madness: The History of Marijuana in America
by Larry Sloman (Bobbs-Merrill: $12.95; illustrated)

Pot literature grows in direct proportion to marijuana use. Which was cause, which effect? Some 25 million Americans have tried pot, helping it grow into a $5-billion-a-year industry. The writers get a very small slice of that pie.

Larry Sloman, although he does pass up a joint on page 273, leaves no doubt concerning his partiality. A contributor to the magazine, High Times, he makes no pretense that this is an objective study. There is a full

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

chapter dealing with the benign effects of pot on a glaucoma sufferer, but no chapter on, say, the fast-rising use of the drug among high school children and its effect on their work.

Nevertheless, this is a generally informative and quite thoroughly researched social history. The first half deals with the "grass roots," starting in 1629, when hemp was a major crop in the United States, and tracing the developments through the incredible ignorance displayed by doctors at the Marijuana Tax Act hearings in 1937, the year pot became illegal on the federal level.

If it had done nothing else, "Reefer Madness" would have been valuable as a reminder of the Neanderthal mentality that underlay most of the opposition to pot in the days when the late Harry J. Anslinger, the federal narcotics commissioner, was a sort of Joe McCarthy of grass.

One Anslinger quote should suffice: "A more terrible enemy to society than a mad dog . . . is the marijuana weed, within whose leaves and flowers lurks a poison that turns man into a wild beast . . ." To anyone who has known dozens of smokers, not one of whom has become either a mad dog or a wild beast, Anslinger's ravings may seem to have been counterproductive, since the facts so clearly disprove them.

Sloman's investigations leave little doubt that pot today stands just about where alcohol was in 1930. Ironically, Anslinger, prior to his narcotics commission appointment, had served as assistant commissioner of Prohibition. If this book's assumptions are right, history will prove him to have struck out twice.

Feather is The Times jazz critic.

5/23

Trumpeter Blue Mitchell Succumbs to Cancer at 49

Richard (Blue) Mitchell, 49, the internationally known trumpeter and composer, died Monday at his Los Angeles home after a six-month battle with cancer.

Born in Miami in 1930, Mitchell worked with local groups before moving to New York, where he free-lanced, then toured with the Earl Bostic band.

He first attained prominence in jazz as a member of the Horace Silver Quintet, touring with the pianist from 1958 to 1964. Later he led a group of his own with a similar personnel, but with Chick Corea at the piano.

Based in Los Angeles, Mitchell subsequently traveled with Ray Charles from 1969 to '71, and with British blues star John Mayall from 1971 to 1973. From 1974 he was a free-lance musician, mainly teamed in a quintet with saxophonist Harold Land. Mitchell also played in the big bands of Louis Bellson, Bill Berry and Bill Holman, and with the Jack Sheldon combo.

Admired for his pure, personal tone and eloquent improvisational style, Mitchell was featured on dozens of albums. Survivors included his wife, Thelma, a sister Cora Lee King, and two brothers, Rufus and John.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at Crenshaw Christian Center, 9550 Crenshaw. A subsequent service will be held in New York City, and burial will be in Miami.

A memorial benefit to defray Mitchell's medical expenses will be held June 10 at the Musician's Union Headquarters on Vine St., with Sarah Vaughan, Chick Corea, Horace Silver, Freddie Hubbard, Cat Anderson, Bill Berry, Jimmy Smith and others.

—LEONARD FEATHER

AT DONTE'S

Pizzi, Leviev: Another Odd Couple

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Ray Pizzi and Milcho Leviev, heard last week at Donte's, are an odd couple indeed: the former an Italian-American with an explosive personality on various wind instruments, the latter a pianist from Bulgaria whose technique and artistry are carefully and brilliantly reined.

The bassoon, Pizzi's specialty, was used engagingly on his own "Song for Grandpa." He may be the world's greatest jazz bassoonist, a distinction perhaps as notable as that of the world's smallest giant. Pizzi also plays flute (heavy breathing and gasping in the Roland Kirk manner), soprano and tenor saxes (huffing and puffing in a querulous style that shows a reluctance to relax). His slogan, should he decide to adopt one, ought to be "Take it easy, Pizzi." He needs to learn the art of knowing what to leave out.

As a composer, Pizzi has a variety of commendable works to his credit, notably the loping 5/4 "Buzzard's Bay."

Leviev is in complete control, darting in and out of tempo as he welds classical, funk, bebop and blues influences into a congruent whole. "Soup of the Day," a 12-tone blues with a Monk-like flavor, displayed Leviev's compositional talent.

Completing the quartet are the drummer-composer Gary Denton and a first-rate bassist, Jim Lacefield, who soloed to equal effect both plucking and with a bow.

Also on the Donte's schedule recently was Lenny Breau, an astonishingly versatile guitarist. Switching from a bop tune or a Spanish-flavored original work to McCoy Tyner's "Visions," he will sublimate the latter with a technique that enables him to keep a bass line moving with the thumb and forefinger while creating an independent melody with the other fingers.

Born to French-Canadian parents, with whose country-and-western combo he toured as a child, Breau is no less at ease playing tunes he has recorded with his friend Chet Atkins. Alternating between solo recitals and trio sets (with Harvey Newmark on bass and Ted Hawk on drums), he keeps the audience silent and spellbound, a rare feat at Donte's. He'll be back there Tuesday and every Tuesday in June.

RUMSEY'S 30 YEARS WITH ALL THAT JAZZ

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Most nightclub operators, particularly those in California, are crying the blues, complaining that the gas shortage is ruining business. Only one man among them can put on a happy face despite all obstacles. He is Howard Rumsey, who on Tuesday celebrates his 30th anniversary in the business.

Since 1972 Rumsey has run his own room, Concerts by the Sea, a comfortable mini-theater on the pier in Redondo Beach. For the previous 22½ years he guided the musical policy at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach.

Rumsey runs a tight ship. His efficiency contrasts oddly with his drawling speech, ready laugh and old-time hipster personality. Patrons know they can expect superior music, carefully monitored sound and lighting, and a general air of efficiency. Musicians like and respect Rumsey because, as a musician himself, he understands their problems.

"I took up bass while I was studying at L.A. City College," he says. "I met Stan Kenton in 1938 when I was about to go on a tour with Vido Musso."

That was the beginning of 10 years on the road for Rumsey, most notably as a member for two years of the original Kenton orchestra.

Tiring of travel, he decided the time had come to settle in (and for) Southern California and the good life. One night he wandered toward Hermosa Beach. "I had some memories of the beach area, because they had always had ballrooms there before the war, and I had played at a dime-a-dance place there."

Rumsey suffered from the you-can't-go-home again syndrome on finding that by 1949 the ballroom had disappeared; the only place in town that had anything going for it was an old resort with Polynesian decor, catering to merchant seamen, known as the Lighthouse. There was no music, but at least the room had a bandstand.

"The place had done a fabulous 24-hour-a-day business during the war, but those days were gone forever, and John Levine, the owner, was pacing up and down in an empty room.

"I asked him, 'How about putting on a Sunday jam session?'

" 'Kid, are you gonna try to tell me what to do with this place? Everybody else has.'

"I talked some more. Finally he said, 'OK, let's try it out.' The next Sunday I put together a fine combo, opened the front door—there was no P.A. system, but we kept the music loud enough to roar out into the street—and within an hour Levine had more people in the room than he'd seen in a month. That was Sunday afternoon, May 29, 1949."

It was a classic case of all the elements converging: The right place at the right time for the right people. Soon the policy expanded from Sundays to weekends. Tuesdays through Thursdays Rumsey just spun records from his collection and talked —"a deejay without a radio," as he put it.

"It took us two years to turn the club around from merchant seamen's hangout to a jazz-conducive atmosphere. Then we went full-scale with the first Lighthouse All Stars group, which I formed in 1951, on a six-nights-a-week basis."

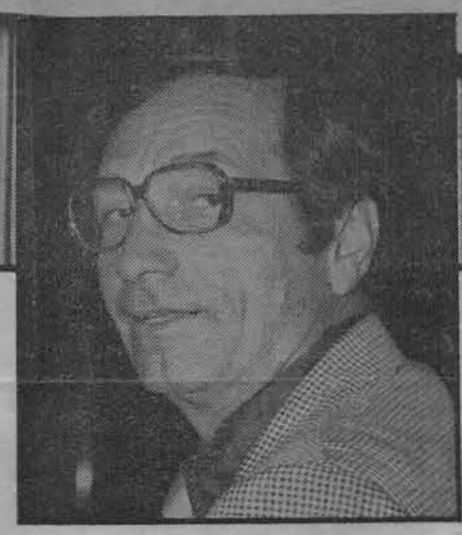
Recording for Contemporary and Liberty, thereby creating their own built-in free radio plugs, the All Stars at one time or another were Shorty Rogers, Jimmy Giuffre, Bob Cooper, Victor Feldman, Hampton Hawes, and such drummers as Shelly Manne (1953), Max Roach ('53-54) and Stan Levy ('54-60). "We were a pretty stable group," Ramsey says. "Bob Cooper, the saxophonist, turned down a staff job at NBC and stayed with me 10 years. Frank Rosolino stayed five."

Having gone as far as he could with the permanent house-band concept, Rumsey took the Lighthouse into its second cycle. The All Stars were cut back to five nights a week so that "guest groups" could be installed on Sundays. These were mostly out-of-town big name combos, or singers.

Before long the guest-group tail was wagging the house-band dog; such names as Cannonball Adderley, Art Blakey, Wes Montgomery, the Three Sounds and Mose Allison were expanded during the early 1960s to several nights a week. Rumsey limited his own combo to Mondays and Tuesdays. Eventually the Lighthouse All Stars were phased out; Rumsey put his bass in mothballs. ("The last time I can remember playing was in 1968, when Red Mitchell was late for a gig with Dizzy Gillespie and Diz talked me into sitting in. He called three tunes that I knew, and I had the time of my life.")

Always a modest, funky room (its present owner, Rudy Onderwyzer, takes pride in billing it as "the world's oldest jazz club and waterfront dive"), the Lighthouse made up in musical memories what it lacked in pretentious decor. "When Max Roach came in from New York to take over Shelly Manne's chair," Rumsey recalls, "he drove up with Charles Mingus and Miles Davis in the car with him.

"Miles was just starting to play again after a long sabbatical back home in St. Louis. He hung around for a while, stayed at my home for a week, and did a couple of guest shots at the club. One of them was recorded, but the stuff was never released; I just heard Contemporary is finally going to put it out.



Howard Rumsey, above, spans 30 years in the biz. Top, members of the Lighthouse All Stars (ca. 1959), from left, Frank Rosolino, Stan Levey, Bob Cooper, Rumsey and Victor Feldman.

"Mingus never played bass for me, but he sat in several times as intermission pianist. As for Max, he set the whole town on fire. Out of his stint I developed long-lasting friendships: Dizzy, Sarah Vaughan, Charlie Parker. The night Bird came in to see and sit in with Max, he was playing a saxophone that was in terrible condition. After an hour of frustration he went outside down the alley and heard someone playing a tenor sax in another club.

"It was a brand new horn. He asked if he could play it. When the cat said yes, Charlie jumped on the stand and we all left the Lighthouse and listened to him while he blew for two fantastic hours."

Another visitor during the Roach era was the enigmatic Thelonious Monk. "He was trying to be very incognito, sitting quietly at the end of the bar. Then his name was announced. He walked to the piano, played 'Round Midnight,' got up, took a bow, walked right out the front door, and I never saw him again."

Occasionally Rumsey squeezed big bands onto the stand, starting with Gerald Wilson's. Such experiments reinforced his conviction that the club was too small and that a more capacious setting was needed.

John Levine died in 1970. Rumsey helped Levine's son to keep the Lighthouse going, but, as he says, "I still dreamed about an ideal club. Then one day I was shown this dank, concrete basement at Redondo Pier, with pillars every 20 feet. It didn't look promising, but I figured out a way to design the room, and on Aug. 22, 1972, Concerts by the Sea opened its doors." (The Lighthouse operated for a few months under the younger Levine before Rudy Onderwyzer, who had directed operations at Shelly's Manne Hole for 12 years, took over).

Rumsey's unquenchable optimism has kept him afloat through the hardest of times. When business is slow, he will console himself by taking pleasure in the music he hears. When he recently found it advisable to cut down the six-night operation to four nights a week, he told friends that he now has more time to fly. ("Actually I don't own a plane, but I've been flying one for 15 years") or go sailing ("Joyce and I have our sailboat, but my whole life still revolves around music").

Three decades in the nightclub business have not diminished his enthusiasm for his life style. "The most important thing I've learned is that the management or the owner must avoid, at all costs, interfering with the music. If you leave the artists alone to do their own thing, the sounds can come alive and express their natural strength, but if someone comes between the music and the audience, it withers and dies like a fragile flower.

"The other evening, here at Concerts, we had Ray Brown playing bass with Milt Jackson, and Carmen McRae sat in. What a marvelous night! I live for moments like that.

"The kind of life I have is so much greater than the average person's—I'm close to a creative thing that's exciting and beautiful to behold. You get the feeling that if the whole world could experience it, there'd be a lot less trouble. I guess that's why, after 30 years, I'm still so hung up on it." □

AT DISNEYLAND

Jazz in All Its Musical Glory

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The image at Disneyland has always been a curious mix of reverence for the past (New Orleans Square is just one of the countless turn-of-the-century artifacts) and visions of the future, best exemplified by Tomorrowland.

This ambivalence is carried over into the musical policy. For the annual Memorial Day "Disneyland and all that Jazz" celebration, a mighty effort was undertaken contrasting aspects of an art form as typically American as the park itself.

Quantitatively, it was a blockbuster. Between noon and midnight Saturday or Sunday you could throw a lollipop in any direction and have a good chance of hitting a college or high school band, a big-name combo or a rock group; or, depending on your timing, it might land in the simulated Mississippi during a showing of Disneyland's floating pride and joy, the "Rolling River Revue."

In the park's tradition, this spectacle depended even more on a visual impact than on the music. Ranged along one riverbank, fans submitted gladly to the hard sell of Pete Fountain via fireworks, dancers aboard the floats, and a dazzling light-up-the-sky finale as the "Mark Twain" came sailing by.

Fountain's 10-piece band from New Orleans laced its songs with enough candied-yam flavor to make it palatable to the purists, with the leader's clarinet adequately replicating the dual traditions of the New Orleans and swing eras. But the breathtaking solos by Fountain's guitarist, Lloyd Ellis, leapt out in stark relief, like splashes of De Kooning against a Grant Wood canvas.

Confined to a Brief Set

Teddy Buckner, singing and playing his "Rusty Old Horn" specialty, was confined to a brief set. Arnetia Walker, no match for the Clara Wards of yesteryear, was the centerpiece in an overblown gospel production number.

At Tomorrowland, Terrace Tom Ranier, on electric keyboard and tenor sax, led a cheerfully proficient rock combo. Later, on that stage, Mongo Santamaria blended Cuban, Afro jazz and other Latin elements in a style better suited to dancing than continuous listening. Alternating with him was the popular rock group Seawind, some of whose songs have religious overtones.

On Tomorrowland's Space Stage the Maynard Ferguson band started its sets with pomp, circumstance and billowing smoke signals before coursing through a series of decibelligerent numbers, full of the trumpeter's piercing sound and the band's unremitting fury.

It was a relief to repair to the Plaza Gardens, where Woody Herman's young band remained true to the jazz verities. Even the quasi-rock version of Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" is intelligently scored and performed. On this stage, earlier, Toshiko Akiyoshi and her husband, Lew Tabackin, took their orchestra through an inspired set of her compositions before a fascinated audience, many of them squatting on the floor and staying over for two or three sets.

'5/4, Isn't It?'

During this group's exotic "Kogun" a listener who appeared to be all of 9 years old turned to his neighbor and said, "This is in 5/4, isn't it, Dad?" Assuring him that it was, the father beamed at having produced a member of an upcoming, keen-eared generation.

Older listeners, who wouldn't know a 5/4 from a waltz, sat in the Golden Horseshoe listening to the stolid Dixieland and inert rhythm section of Ray Linn, whose trumpet was worthy of better company.

Disneyland deserves tremendous credit for offering, to a happy captive audience at no extra cost, music which many of these listeners, saturated with AM radio pop pap, would seldom get to hear. The recording industry moguls should be taken on a tour of the park, to show them what can happen when youth is exposed to jazz.

AT SANTA MONICA CIVIC

Metheny Four Takes a Fresh Tack

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Pat Metheny has risen rapidly of late to a position of dominance as a guitarist who has found a fresh direction for the instrument.

Tuesday evening he brought his group to Santa Monica Civic, and although the turnout was far short of capacity, the reaction was indicative of his great communicative power.

Metheny and his sidemen are all in their mid-20s. This is reflected in the consistent rhythmic flow of the quartet, indicating the jazz and rock input (as well as classical sources) without conveying any sense of artificial fusion. The music, in short, comes to you prefused.

The short recital (90 minutes plus an encore, without intermission) consisted of original works by the leader and his keyboard soloist Lyle Mays. "San Lorenzo" and "Phase Dance" were from the group's album; some were brand new; all were well structured and made intelligent use of dynamic contrast. A carefully planned crescendo by Dan Gottlieb's drums and Mark Egan's bass would lead to a subdued electric keyboard passage by Mays. The latter, a Woody Herman alumnus, is Metheny's equal in technical skill and stylistic versatility.

The evening's only problem lay in the sound. Metheny's use of too much reverb produced a diffuse, muddy tone. When he switched to his 12-stringed guitar there was a series of false starts and stops, due this time to trouble with Egan's amplification. Both Egan and Metheny need a crisper quality in order to focus on their message, some of which was lost in the electronic transmission.

Nevertheless, this provocative, intellectually stimulating combo is unlike almost any that preceded it, though the feeling at times recalls the Gary Burton group in which Metheny spent some formative years. With a quartet album on the jazz charts for the past 10 months and a new release on the pop lists in recent weeks, Metheny is headed for a secure place as the most powerful new influence in contemporary guitar.

JAZZ

TELEVISION AND THE UNSUNG ART

BY LEONARD FEATHER

For some time now, I have been receiving correspondence from Joel Dorham, who bills himself as "Former Chairman, Ad Hoc Committee to Promote Jazz on Television." He doesn't say who the present chairman is, or whether the committee still exists; but he makes some points to which we all ought to address ourselves.

Dorham, brother of the late Kenny Dorham, a leading trumpeter of the bebop era, is right in claiming that miserably inadequate time is devoted to jazz on TV. He has expressed his indignation by sending letters to President Carter, to the network presidents, to Rep. William Clay, sub-committee chairman on communications, who read some of Dorham's complaints into the Congressional Record, and to U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, among others.

All well and good. I am completely in favor of any expression of dissatisfaction with the media's treatment of jazz. If there is a loud enough outcry, perhaps a few more people will be piqued into examining the music about which all this brouhaha is being stirred up; thus a few more potential listeners may be created and possibly retained for jazz, which in turn could lead to slightly better ratings for the few jazz programs that are aired.

It is necessary, however, to be realistic about the networks' stance. Realism compels any open-minded observer to acknowledge that jazz is not the only art form of which relatively little is seen. The same argument could be made with respect to the networks' handling of opera, ballet, classical music, sculpture, or any of the arts for adequate treatment of which we have to turn mainly to public television, or perhaps a local network station at some impossible hour on Sunday morning.

Is there "a conspiracy to silence and suppress" opera and ballet and classical music? I have never heard this complaint made by anyone, yet this is precisely the implicit basis of Dorham's theory. He hints ominously that because "disco seems to be alive and well on network television and radio," we must consider that "some control of the television media may be necessary . . ."

This threat sounds like the first step toward totalitarianism. I would rather have the networks free to continue their egregious errors of omission than be shackled by authoritarian control.

Moreover, Dorham has been somewhat less than meticulous in his mustering of facts. He says, and I quote him verbatim, "there has never been a regular jazz program," and uses this point to explain why "there are no figures . . . to show an audience response for regularly scheduled jazz programs."

To take just a few at random, commercial and non-commercial, there was the Freddie Robbins series, in New York; there was the pioneering series launched by Eddie Condon, in the late 1940s and early '50s; there was Art Ford's Jazz Party, which enjoyed a long run; there was a set of 13 shows in 1958 on which I served as a consultant, "The Subject Is Jazz," the first educational venture of its kind, with guests ranging from Duke Ellington to Cannonball Adderley. This was produced by NBC's educational wing (since disbanded) at KNBC.

Father Norman O'Connor hosted a well-remembered series in Boston around the same time. In Chicago, "Sound State" in the mid-1970s used enough jazz to constitute a virtual series. Ralph Gleason's "Jazz Casual" in San Francisco is still talked about in the Bay Area, where his programs included many of the giants, among them John Coltrane. George Shearing had his own weekly TV show in Los Angeles in the 1960s with jazz guests.

In 1971 I was hired to produce a series at NBC's Burbank studios. Entitled "The Jazz Show," with Billy Eckstine as host, it ran for two seasons on a monthly basis.

Some of these presentations had fairly long and successful runs, usually because they were local, modestly budgeted and attracted a small but loyal audience. Others were short-lived for the reason many critics are reluctant to admit: the networks, far from being involved in any conspiracy, are so hopelessly profit and ratings-oriented that they will put anything on if it attracts enough millions of viewers. Conversely, when it has been shown (as apparently it has) that jazz programs, except for occasional specials, do not justify the investment made in them, the financial wizards of the networks shun the idiom just as fearfully as they avoid a regular opera or classical or ballet series.

Let us deal next with the implication by Joel Dorham that this is primarily a racial problem. I know, as well as most of us whites can ever know, about the racism that has held back so many brilliant jazz artists. (I battled in vain for Duke Ellington as host of "Music '55," a jazz-oriented series on CBS with which I was involved, but eventually Stan Kenton was hired and I had no way of proving that Ellington was bypassed for racial reasons.) But stop and think: how often do you see Stan Getz, Chick Corea, Joe Pass, Woody Herman, Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin, Phil Woods or Gary Burton on a mass-audience program? And isn't it true that as many white as black musicians lost a chance for exposure when such groups as the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, Weather Report and others were passed over?

Clearly the issue transcends race; if all the great black jazz musicians, pulling a Godfrey Cambridge in reverse, suddenly turned white, they would still be out of luck on TV.

The only jazz artists during the past decade who have gained exposure are Buddy Rich, whose frequent appearances on "Tonight" are due to his talent as a personality, his long friendship with Johnny Carson, the fact that Carson is an amateur drummer, and, let us not forget, the intrinsic value of Rich's work when he sits in with Doc Severinsen; Marian McPartland, who seems to have a good relationship with the powers that run the "Today" show; and the late Erroll Garner, who appeared relatively often because his music was very accessible and his manager exceptionally enterprising. I suppose one could add Dizzy Gillespie, Joe Williams and Pete Fountain, all of whom have made good mileage out of their Carson visits.

It is sadly ironic that many jazz stars in the U.S. had to go to Europe or Japan, even the Soviet Union, to find a station willing and eager to build a TV special show around

Please Turn to Page 84

Thu. June 21

A 'Conspiracy' Against Jazz?

By Leonard Feather
Los Angeles Times

Hollywood

For some time now, I have been receiving correspondence from Joel Dorham, who bills himself as "Former Chairman, Ad Hoc Committee to Promote Jazz on Television." He doesn't say who the present chairman is, or whether the committee still exists; but he makes some points to which we all ought to address ourselves.

Dorham (brother of the late Kenny Dorham, a leading trumpeter of the be-bop era) is right in claiming that miserably inadequate time is devoted to jazz on television. He has expressed his indignation by sending letters to President Carter, to the network presidents; to Congressman William Clay, chairman of the subcommittee on communications, who read some of Dorham's complaints into the Congressional Record, and to U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, among others.

All well and good. I am completely in favor of any expression of dissatisfaction with the media's treatment of jazz. If there is a loud enough outcry, perhaps a few more people will be piqued into examining the music about which all this brouhaha is being stirred up; thus a few more potential listeners may be created and possibly retained for jazz, which in turn could lead to slightly better ratings for the few jazz programs that are aired.

It is necessary, however, to be realistic about the networks' stance. Realism compels any open-minded observer to acknowledge that jazz is not the only art form of which relatively little is seen. The same argument could be made with respect to the networks' handling of opera, ballet, classical music, sculpture, or any of the arts adequate treatment of which we have to turn mainly to public television, or perhaps a local net-

ohn Coltrane (left) appeared on Ralph leason's 'Jazz Casual,' while Duke Ellington ight) was a guest on the 1958 series 'The bject Is Jazz'

Buddy Rich is one of the only jazz performers to gain television exposure during the past decade

work station at some impossible hour on Sunday morning.

Is there "a conspiracy to silence and suppress" opera and ballet and classical music? I have never heard this complaint made by anyone, yet this is precisely the implicit basis of Dorham's theory. He hints ominously that because "disco seems to be alive and well on network television and radio," we must consider that "some control of the television media may be necessary . . ."

This threat sounds like the first step toward totalitarianism. I would rather have the networks free to continue their egregious errors of omission than be shackled by authoritarian control.

Moreover, Dorham has been somewhat less than meticulous in his mustering of facts . He says, and I quote him verbatim, "there has never been a regular jazz program," and uses this point to explain why "there are no figures . . . to show an audience response for regularly scheduled jazz programs."

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The central fact that most of us are reluctant to face is very plain and basic: when real jazz pulls the big numbers, the networks will jump on the bandwagon as readily as they do for "Mork and Mindy" or "Hee-Haw."

Westways
June 1979 One Dollar

Growing Up to the Beat

By Leonard Feather
Illustrations by Anthony Cox

I WAS RECENTLY REMINDED traumatically that nobody else now living has been engaged as long as I in the pursuit of writing about jazz. My byline was first visible in the British *Melody Maker* in 1933: in fact, it still appears there, which I suppose is some kind of world record in itself.

As a teenager in London, I was first exposed to the magic sound of what was then an alien culture via an Armstrong record of *West End Blues*, and a subsequent idolatrous encounter with Satchmo himself. Jazz at that point in history was not being formally taught. The idea that someday there would be a Berklee College of Music in Boston, where jazz was the main element in the acquisition of a degree, was unthinkable. My piano teacher helped me struggle with Grieg and Chopin, but the only way to study the mechanics of jazz was by hanging around the Duke and Louis, and later Benny Carter, whose visit to London in 1936 to write for the BBC Dance Orchestra was a pivotal event in my life. It was with Carter, today the Southland's most respected saxophonist/composer/arranger, that I enjoyed my baptism as a record producer.

Around that time, after five days of anticipatory excitement aboard the *Normandie*, I made the first of several Transatlantic voyages to inspect at firsthand this singularly American art form.

From my fourteen-dollar-a-week room at New York's President Hotel I made pilgrimages to the Ubangi Club, 131st Street at Seventh Avenue, where the latest edition of the Ubangi Club Follies had as its grand finale "Reefer Smokers' Ball," featuring Billy Daniels with Erskine Hawkins and his Bama State Collegians; then to the Savoy Ballroom, "the home of Happy Feet," where a band led by Chick Webb, the hunchbacked wizard of the drums, with his seventeen-year-old vocalist, Ella Fitzgerald, swung relentlessly. Admission at the Savoy was fifty cents, and wine averaged thirty-five cents (no hard liquor). Most of the few white patrons gathered around the bandstand to listen, while the Harlem patrons danced.

The immediacy of these live uptown sounds provided the needed opportunity to study at close range what made the music tick, and to develop personally as a writer and arranger.

Along with the Harlem excitement, I found the downtown scene already ablaze in those not-so-long-after-Depression years, when the Fifty-second Street clubs ushered in a miniature swing era. In tiny shoebox-shaped rooms just west of Fifth Avenue, you could catch Louis Prima at the Famous Door, Eddie Condon at the Onyx, Wingy Manone at the Hickory House and Teddy Wilson at the Three Deuces. "To think," I wrote in the *Melody Maker*, "that an Englishman must travel 3,000 miles to discover the true spirit of jazz. . . ."

At these small bistros you simply drank and listened. At the Roseland Ballroom, where I found the orchestra of the pioneer composer Fletcher Henderson (who would soon provide the arrangements that helped establish Benny Goodman as King of Swing), dancing was the objective; jazz, more often than not, served a utilitarian function.

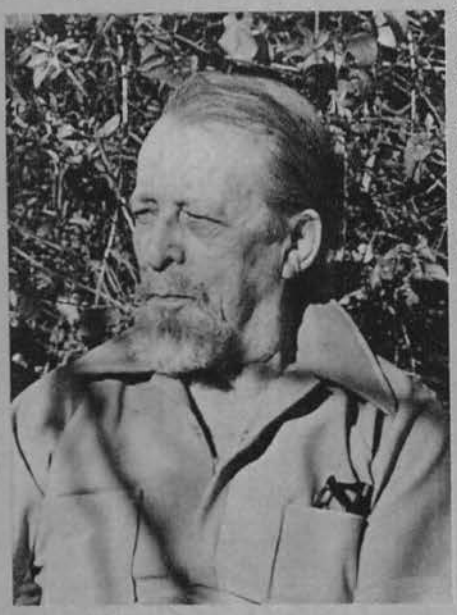
In fact, it took very little time in America to realize that the music I had been studying as a serious art was a largely unhonored domestic prophet. Men I had assumed to be giants of the music community were working, I learned, for union scale of thirty-five dollars a week at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom. Even some of the white musicians, though at least they could secure jobs in hotel bands, or with radio staff orchestras (the kind of work then totally off limits to blacks), nevertheless found it difficult to gain access to a concert hall; Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall debut was the rare exception.

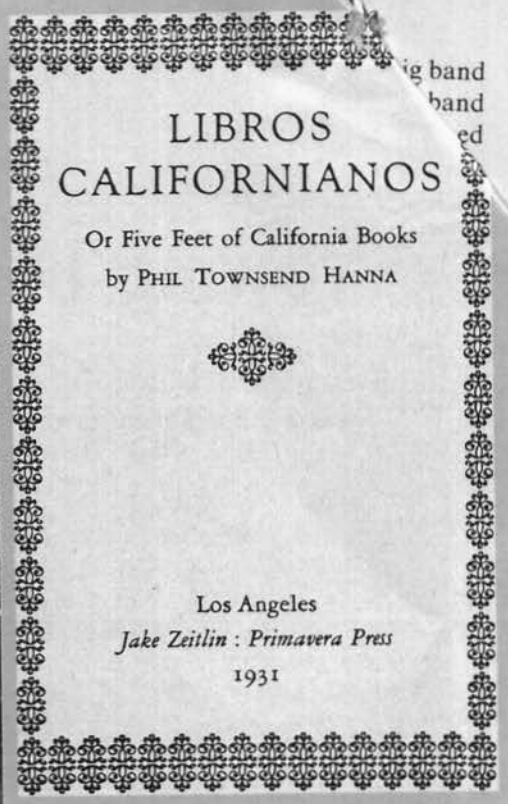
When Duke Ellington recorded an early song of mine, this provided the needed encouragement; within a year I had settled in New York, embarking on a career that took many shapes: reporter, critic, disc jockey (off and on for forty years now), record producer/talent discoverer, concert promoter, composer, lecturer.

The critic's primary duty, it seemed to me, was the guidance of his readers' tastes. When the revolutionary new talents of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker came along in the early 1940s, I espoused their cause fanatically, using them on record sessions, presenting them at Carnegie and writing about them in the very few publications that acknowledged jazz. In those days *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, even *The New Yorker* pretended the music did not exist.

With the help of a Belgian lawyer-jazz fan, Robert Goffin, and of Arnold Gingrich, an aficionado who fortunately was the editor of *Esquire*, I became involved with that magazine's assault against the press blackout on

Civil War memento featuring patriotic songs (BMI Archives); Carl's library is a treasure house of rare books





local Mexican kindergarten. Instead of erasers, the children had little penknives, with which they scraped their errors from the paper.

One day, a Mexican kid, a year or two older than little Carl, approached him in the schoolyard and accused him in Spanish, "You and your father stole Texas!" Giving Carl scant time to digest this novel information, the boy stabbed at the Yanqui in patriotic frenzy. When Carl raised his right arm to protect himself, his forearm was slashed deeply in two places. The scars are prominent today.

His naturally outraged mother resolved that her child would never again be physically endangered in a school and, an ex-schoolteacher herself, decided to instruct him at home. "She taught me to read within four months, about as well as I do now, and," smiling deprecatingly, "with no more comprehension than I do now. I proceeded to read all the books in the house—thirty-six volumes of Balzac, the novels of Paul de Kock, every word of the *International Encyclopedia*, even my father's mining journals. I became a maniac for reading." It's a habit he's never lost, one that has fed his imagination.

Haverlin was more than a youngster whose mind was crammed with information—"The Walking Encyclopedia,"as he was sometimes called by his peers. He became, by necessity, a superb athlete. Because he had neighbors in Mexico who spoke French, Spanish, Portuguese, while both parents spoke English, and his father, German-born, spoke German as well, eight-year-old Carl's speech had become a lingual smorgasbord. In order that he might become expert in his native tongue, his mother reluctantly relinquished Carl's instruction and sent him to Saint Louis to live with an uncle and attend school there. The neighborhood, nearly 100 percent Irish except for his uncle's family, was known as Shanty Town. Haverlin was physically, as well as mentally, agile. Being a minority of one among the Irish kids, after school his classmates would wait for him to run the gauntlet, their heavy schoolbags poised to clout him over the head. Little Carl, however, would hurdle the nearest iron fence and, racing for dear life, easily outrun them to the safety of his uncle's house. The nickname "The Walking Encyclopedia," was soon replaced by "The Mexican Athlete."

This training by necessity later helped him vastly in athletics when he moved to Los Angeles, living with his mother and sister while his father still worked in Mexico. Haverlin, attending Manual Arts High School, became a member of the eight-man mile relay team which, racing against a team of adults, including stars from the University of Southern California track team and the Los Angeles Athletic Club, set a world's record which lasted more than thirty years! He also did some running over wooden hurdles instead of iron fences and, taking up javelin throwing, became the Southern California interscholastic javelin champion.

Active in school entertainment activities, the nimble, athletic Haverlin was invited to join the famous Ruth Saint Denis–Ted Shawn—and later—the Marion Morgan dance troupes. He left high school a couple of weeks before graduation to tour with Saint

Continued on page 71

CENTER PHOTOGRAPH BY AMANDA BLANCO

GROWING UP TO THE BEAT

Continued from page 33

Another good friend of jazz in the right place at the right time was Charles Champlin, the reformed trumpeter and unregenerate fan who, soon after his appointment as *Los Angeles Times* arts editor, decided that regular jazz coverage was needed. As my main gig since 1966, this responsibility has to be taken seriously, for nowadays, with the print media devoted overwhelmingly to the propagation of rock, jazz is crying out for space.

One of the unavoidable perils in dealing with a form as variegated as jazz has now become is the impossibility of covering the entire field or of pleasing every faction. The Dixielanders feel their good-time jazz is neglected; some avant-gardists believe they receive inadequate attention. Jazz today takes a dozen shapes, from traditional New Orleans and blues to swing through bebop to modal, atonal, semi-classical, Latin; moreover, the proliferation of records makes impossible demands on one's time. There are not enough hours in any man's day to listen to every record or attend every club; the process of selectivity has become a more serious problem every year.

In deciding which artists deserve exposure in the press, I have a special advantage, having had the good fortune to hear all but the very earliest developments when they were going through their birth pangs. Newcomers to criticism are obliged to reach backward and bone up on Art Tatum or Charlie Parker after having been brought up in the age of Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman. As a result of hearing jazz evolve from the phase when it was little more than a struggling folk music, I have gained a helpful sense of perspective.

After decades of constant listening, I am still finding excitement in some new and challenging soloist or composer, and in trying to advance the careers of anyone whose potential impresses me.

In recent years it has been a particular pleasure to encourage the development of Toshiko Akiyoshi, who in 1972 composed all the music for a big band library and, with her flutist husband Lew Tabackin as co-leader, formed her own Hollywood-based orchestra to play it.

Akiyoshi, who studied jazz in Japan and later at Berklee in Boston, is the first woman in jazz history to assemble a permanent band for the interpretation of her own music, and the first jazz musician to earn worldwide acclaim who is neither white nor black. The Akiyoshi/Tabackin band was Number One in the last *Down Beat* plebiscite, indicating that she may well become the Ellington of the 1980s.

Jazz has spawned an illustrious legacy; many of the masterpieces recorded in the 1920s by Ellington, Armstrong, violinist Joe Venuti and cornetist Bix Beiderbecke are completely valid by today's standards. But we must admire and respect the past without living in it. Jazz/rock, "fusion music," electronic sounds cannot be dismissed as ephemeral fads but must be weighed for their intrinsic value.

Today I find in a classically influenced piano recital by Keith Jarrett, in a trumpet solo by Freddie Hubbard, in the electronic vocal effects by the Polish singer Urszula Dudziak, the same kind of exciting challenge that attracted me a half century ago when Louis Armstrong's *West End Blues* turned me on to America's one indigenous art form.

From the bordellos of New Orleans, the street parades of Memphis, the black ghettos all over America, and from the schoolroom where I was ejected from class for practicing "that rubbish," jazz has finally emerged to enjoy acceptance as the true classical music of this century.

Watching the impossible dream attained, ten years ago, when Duke Ellington, celebrating his seventieth birthday at the White House, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom; or last year, when Jimmy Carter, hosting a White House Jazz Festival, spoke eloquently about the contribution of jazz to our culture—observing such events, and having played a small role in chronicling them and helping them come about, has been and always will be for me a richly fulfilling experience. W

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Beat goes on for Lionel Hampton, jazzman, humanist.

JAZZ

HAMPTON MEDLEY MORE THAN MUSIC

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Lionel Hampton, sometimes known as the Vibes President of the United States, has always presented a dynamic image to the public. His audiences continue to see the same deeply involved figure, hunching over the vibraphone or drums, grunting vague notes, turning dramatically to direct his musicians in a wild, ride-out chorus of "Flying Home," reaching for the ceiling in a frantic finale.

Few know that behind the facade is one of the world's wealthiest musicians, a socially and politically concerned citizen, a philanthropist and an ardent Republican who numbered the late Vice President Nelson Rockefeller among his closest associates.

Hampton today can casually toss off a remark such as "I almost bought a radio station out here in Los Angeles, but there was a difference of a couple of hundred thousand dollars in our ideas about the cost and I was advised not to take it. I plan sooner or later to buy one and get into a position where I can work with other stations on programming more jazz."

The need for more radio exposure of the music that has dominated his life is a subject of lasting concern to Hampton. He is conscious of the tendency among black-oriented stations to concentrate on rhythm and blues or soul music while neglecting jazz.

"Recently I did a seminar at Howard University, where I was awarded a doctor's degree." (This was his sixth honorary doctorate.) "They have their own radio and TV station, and I talked to them about putting on a series of programs giving the true history of black music. The youngsters there don't know what happened in jazz, even as recently as the 1940s or '50s.

"People have to be awakened. You know, right now there's enough stations owned by blacks so they could have a network and start to push the real great black music, jazz, so that all the young people become aware of it."

Though Hampton at 66 has enough security to enable him to retire and relax, such verbs are not in his vocabulary. His late wife Gladys, an extremely shrewd business woman, not only ensured his being financially set for life but also was a key figure in promoting his involvement with the extramusical activities that now take up much of his time.

Incredibly, Hampton has survived 40 years on the road without losing an iota of his zest, whether the agenda calls for a business meeting about a major real estate deal, a concert tour of Europe or the Far East, or a new and complex recording project. Last year, not long after major surgery, he plunged into a whirlwind of record sessions under his supervision, taping some 16 albums for a label called Who's Who in Jazz. The series was most remarkable for the fact that whether the central figure was Woody Herman, Earl Hines, Gerry Mulligan, Buddy Rich or Charles Mingus, Lionel adapted his style and sat in with them all. ("It was Mingus' last playing session," he recalls.) Unfortunately there was distribution problems and the records currently are hard to find, but this will not prevent Hampton from plunging in at a moment's notice and starting another equally exhausting endeavor.

Lately the bandleading side of his traveling life has been intriguingly subdivided. "I've been very fortunate," he says. "When I want to take my regular band out, I've got a team I can draw on in New York: a guy who knows the first trumpet book, trombonists and sax players who know their parts. They all fit right in and they're available when I need them.

"Then when I have some special festival gigs to play, the people at George Wein's office help me to put together the all-star band."

This year's summit-meeting personnel, set for dates at the Playboy Jazz Festival June 16 at the Hollywood Bowl as well as jobs at the Newport and other festivals, is a potent alliance in which members of earlier Hampton bands (Jerome Richardson, Arnett Cobb, Jimmy Cleveland, Marshal Royal) mingle with Basie, Herman and Kenton alumni.

The list of Hampton band graduates is among the most honored in jazz. Since he left Benny Goodman in 1940 to launch his first orchestra, Quincy Jones, Mingus, Clifford Brown, Fats Navarro, Dexter Gordon, Illinois Jacquet, Dinah Washington, Joe Williams and scores of others hardly less eminent have passed through the Hampton ranks.

Intermingled with his band ventures over the past decade have been various reunion concerts (the final gathering of the original Goodman Quartet, with Teddy Wilson and the late Gene Krupa, took place at Carnegie Hall in 1973). Meanwhile Hampton's sociopolitical awareness was growing. He had become an active campaigner for Nixon and Rockefeller. The latter, with Gladys Hampton, helped in the organization of the Lionel Hampton Community Development Corp.

"Thanks to my dear friend, the late governor," Lionel says, "we now have the Hampton Houses, a development on 131st St. in the heart of Harlem. It consists of a 39-story building and two eight-story buildings, accommodating 355 families.

"This was a $19-million project, and it was very dear to my heart, as it provided suitable housing where these facilities were badly needed. We're now planning two more buildings, to house 210 families, which we'll call the Gladys Hampton Houses.

"In addition to the living quarters, we want to have a museum, a prayer parlor, a club room and eventually a conservatory of music and the arts, providing courses in music, business administration, radio and television.

"I want this to be a humanitarian undertaking. There is money to be made here, but I'll arrange for the income from all these projects to go into the Lionel and Gladys Hampton Fund, to provide scholarships to needy people."

He would like some day to expand the housing efforts to the West Coast. During a recent visit to Los Angeles, Hampton visited Mayor Bradley to discuss this: "Black people need some housing here too, and I'm hoping to do something similar to what was done in New York."

("I have discussed this matter with Lionel Hampton," Mayor Bradley tells me. "However, the federal funding that would be needed is not presently available. Lionel is keeping in touch and we hope the project is still a possibility.")

Hampton's ability to keep his fingers in so many pies is an achievement he attributes to judicious delegation of authority. "I've got a real good team around me, people who know all the facts and figures, and I play my part, just like I do in music. Whenever it's not going right, when there's sour notes in there—well, I take the notes out so I can make pleasant harmony."

Clearly all the objectives at which Lionel Hampton aims are desirable. Some of his dreams already are reality; others seem capable of attainment. Whatever the outcome, no cause on which he has taken a stand will ever fail for lack of effort on the part of the indomitable Vibes President.

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to the furtherance of jazz. In my case it led to interests outside the music, to the vice-presidency of the Hollywood NAACP two years after I moved west in 1960, and to such non-musical projects as an extensive survey of discrimination in the entire motion picture industry and its unions, which I undertook for a short-lived Huntington Hartford magazine.

Of course, aggressive espousal of the black man's rights did not invariably earn me friends. Stan Kenton, who once sent an angry telegram to *Down Beat* implying that too many black musicians had won that magazine's poll, and that white musicians were now a "minority group," was furious when I wrote an open letter in *Down Beat* attacking his posture.

Southern California in the 1960s was an increasingly fertile soil for a music that was breaking barriers everywhere. Perhaps it was destiny rather than coincidence that Shelly's Manne Hole, the first modern jazz club to be launched by a prominent musician, opened its doors on the night of my taking up residence in North Hollywood.

There were new developments when the Music Center opened and Stan Kenton founded the short-lived but productive Los Angeles Neophonic Orchestra, whose classical-jazz fusion concerts at the Chandler Pavilion offered a unique proving ground for the work of numerous guest conductors and soloists, black and white. Radio provided jazz with more exposure than in almost any other city; KBCA (now KKGO) was already on the air twenty-four hours a day. At UCLA Paul Tanner, a trombonist and jazz educator, started in 1958 what has become the world's largest history-of-jazz course, instructing more than a thousand students daily. Gerald Wilson, the composer and bandleader, a Jimmie Lunceford and Count Basie alumnus, has been teaching jazz history at Cal State Northridge.

My own career as a pedagogue had begun in 1941 at New York's New School where, with Robert Goffin, I had given what was probably the first regular series of jazz classes; in California I have extended the concept by using some of my treasured library of classic jazz films to illustrate classes on several campuses.

Continued on page 70

From left, Benny Carter, Louis Armstrong and Leonard Feather, at a series of 1941 lectures given at the New School for Social Research

The Leonard Feather Story

BY HOWARD LUCRAFT

Confab in 1951 between (l to r) Duke Ellington, Leonard Feather, Nat Cole and Johnny Hodges.

What the *Encyclopedias don't tell you...*

In 1935, a teenaged jazz enthusiast wrote a letter to the editor of Britain's *Melody Maker:* "Why is no jazz written in three-four time?" he questioned. The response: "Asking for a jazz waltz is like asking for a blue piece of red chalk."

Within a few years, Benny Carter had recorded "Waltzing the Blues" . . . in three-four. And today, more than 45 years later, that teenager-plus could boast—if he were the type—of an official biography that reads "author, lecturer, lyricist, disc jockey, TV producer and script writer, liner sleeve note writer, talent scout, concert and record producer (more than 200 dates)." To this must be added composer (over 350 recorded compositions) and sometime pianist.

Impressive? Yes, very.

So just how did a Limey become one of the world's leading authorities on *our* music?

"Family legend is that I was into music at a very early age," he says. "They tell me I could identify record labels before I could read—by their colors and shapes."

Born September 13, 1914 in Brondesbury, a northwest London suburb, Leonard Feather was raised "just off of Finchly Road," in Hampstead, not too far from the Bull and Bush pub of musical fame. Neither his father nor mother was musical—"they both played some very amateur piano." Leonard started taking piano lessons at age 14 when he entered St. Paul's School.

Leonard explains that St. Paul's was not a Church of England (Episcopalian) school. "In any case, I came from a very middle-of-the-road Jewish family. Although they did take me to all the usual things—I had a Bar Mitzvah—I was never the least bit interested in religion."

It was at St. Paul's School that Leonard was introduced to jazz. "A school friend took me to a local record shop and made me listen to Louis Armstrong's 'West End Blues.' That was it! From then on, I started buying all the Armstrong and early Ellington things. I used to go down to Levy's Record Shop in the East End of London and buy the imports for four shillings and sixpence [then about $1].

"In those days in England, it wasn't customary to go to college. But even though my father—who owned a chain of clothing stores with a couple of his brothers—had lost a lot of money in the Depression, he did what quite a few parents did in those days: he sent me abroad to broaden my knowledge of the world.

"I was a movie fan and my father thought that movies were what I wanted to do. They fixed me up to live with a family in Paris, and I got a job with a film trade magazine, *Cinematographie de Francaise* [sort of equivalent to Hollywood's *Daily Variety*]." After that, Leonard did a similar stint with a family in Berlin, where he arrived the year before Hitler. "I was with a magazine in Berlin called *Film Kurier* and I think the man I was working for was a Nazi. But he wasn't a very overt Nazi and he tolerated me. Anyway, I was too young to be scared."

Returning to England, Leonard got a "very obscure" job with the British Lion Film organization "through some friends of my father," started to collect jazz records avidly and wrote that first controversial letter to Britain's *Melody Maker.*

A subsequent missive to the magazine queried, "Why aren't there more female jazz fans?" which "led to my meeting the editor, Percy Brooks, who asked if I'd like to write an article for him. A short time later, I was writing fairly regularly for the *Melody Maker* at two guineas [then $11] an article.

"I really wasn't interested in my job at the film studio. I was an assistant assistant director, which meant I was a gofer—'Leonard gofer some tea, Leonard gofer some more film,' etc. It was all very frustrating. So in 1935 I went to the boss and told him I was very fed up with his job. He offered me a weekly raise of five shillings [$1.25]. I thought this was adding insult to injury, told him what he could do with the raise and quit. By now, I was making more money on the side anyway.

"I decided to take off on my first trip to America. I had saved some money and my family helped. Also, the *Melody Maker* paid me a little for a series of articles on New York jazz... It was in the summer of '35. Even taking five or six days to cross the Atlantic on the *Normandie* was quite something then. John Hammond, who I had met in England, met me at the pier in New York. I went to the Savoy Ballroom and the Apollo, and I saw all the legendary people on 52nd Street—people who had just been names on a record label to me came to life." He also arranged to become the London correspondent for *The New Amsterdam News.* For the next four years, he would shuttle between the two countries and acquire invaluable experience.

Leonard did a well-read *Melody Maker* series called, "11 Days in New York," which ran to five or six feature articles. "I really managed to milk that little visit."

Back in England, he heard that Benny Carter was playing trumpet in Paris with Willy Lewis' black international band. "Because of the musicians' union ban then, American instrumentalists were barred from working in England and vice-versa," explains Leonard. "I felt it was a shame that Benny couldn't come to England as a player... but he could come over as an arranger.

"So I wrote to Benny and called Henry Hall, a rather snooty leading bandleader in England. I guess it was the aggressiveness of youth; I didn't really know either one of them." Anyway, Benny came to work for Hall and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Dance Orchestra. Practically everything they played was arranged by Carter.

"Then somehow I persuaded Vocalian [a new jazz label] to record Benny and got permission from the musicians' union for him to make the date." It was the first record that the young Mr. Feather ever produced. On it, Benny recorded a tenor solo—before he had played only alto, clarinet and trumpet—on his own beautiful tune, "Nightfall." Ted Heath was in Benny's trombone section. Later Benny had a young Scottish trombonist, George Chisholm, who was quite a discovery. "The best British jazz musicians then were either Scottish or Jewish," says Feather.

Leonard proceeded to produce more records, including one in Holland featuring an international Benny Carter band with guest Coleman Hawkins; "Olde English Folke Songs" in jazz—"a gimmick to record some jazz"; sessions with clarinetist Danny Polo and Una Mae Carlisle; plus Fats Waller's English date for HMV (EMI). He also "made several good records for British Decca with George Shearing and one terrible one on which I played piano and George played accordion. You remember that? I hope not, it was a dumb record."

From *down beat* to *Esquire*

In 1938, Leonard flew to Chicago to talk with the managing editors of *down beat* about the possibility of a job as New York editor. Then he went on a holiday to France. "I started wandering around and saw Django Reinhart and Stephane Grappelly [that was long before Stephane changed the terminal 'y' to an 'i']. From France, I went to Stockholm to see my friend Nils Hellstrom, the editor of Sweden's jazz magazine, *Estrad.* I left Nils and went for a vacation to Helsingborg in the south of Sweden. I arrived the day the Soviet-German pact was signed.

"Suddenly, there was war! The whole North Sea was shut and I thought I was stuck in Sweden for the duration. But by a stroke of luck, I learned of one last boat going to New York and managed to get passage. "It took 11 days to reach New York and, of course, nobody expected me there. I couldn't get back to England, I couldn't telephone my family or even send a letter to tell them where I was."

Feather disembarked in New York as a visitor. He became a permanent resident ("I think publisher Al Brackman was my sponsor") and, in 1948, a United States citizen.

Shortly after his arrival, he got the *down beat* job. "I really scuffled at first. I was living in one room for five dollrs a week on West 90th Street... At that time, I also met jazz writer/professor Barry Ulanov, and we worked together on a very good, short-lived magazine called *Swing."*

In December, 1939, Leonard produced an RCA Bluebird record with The Sextet of the Rhythm Club of London. All the musicians—Danny Polo, Pete Brown, Albert Harris—were of British descent or had lived in England. "The British idea was just a gimmick, but in those days it was hard to sell people on a straight-ahead jazz date," Leonard explains. The next month, he produced a second date for Bluebird with Hot Lips Page—the first recording of Feather's "Evil Man Blues." "I sat in and played piano, even though I wasn't in the union then. But we had just enough money for trumpet [Hot Lips], bass and guitar [the late Teddy Bunn]." Another notable Feather session of this period included Benny Carter, Roy Eldridge and Coleman Hawkins. That disc has been reissued many times by Commodore.

Though Leonard's ongoing *down beat* job "didn't pay very well," he was doing many extra jobs—a recording here, a freelance article there. "It wasn't easy, but in those days you could get a 10-cent breakfast and even a steak lunch on 52nd Street for 55 cents. It really didn't take too much to live. And, as a writer, I could go into most of the clubs free."

Leonard got married (the first time) in

1941 to a very pretty Brooklyn girl, Carol, who loved jazz ("that's all we had in common"). Together they wrote a blues, "Born on Friday," which Cleo Laine revived as the title song for one of her best-selling albums.

Things became a little slow for a jazz critic so he went to work as an assistant to press agent Ivan Black. Leonard worked on the Cafe Society (uptown and downtown) account for 15 dollars a week. "It was a lovely job," he reminisces. "I was able to hang around at the clubs where all these marvelous people were working, like Teddy Wilson and Lena Horne. I brought in other accounts to the Ivan Black agency—Charlie Barnet, Harry James and various other bands.

Thus began that unbelievable period in his career when Leonard operated simultaneously as publicist, critic, arranger, composer and instrumentalist.

"During that early period, I started doing a little arranging in a half-arse way. With the help of a friend who knew a little more about voicing than I did, I struggled through one chart for Basie. I went to the Woodside Hotel in New York, where he had arrangers come with charts for the band, and stood in a long line with people like Don Redman and Andy Gibson.

Coleman Hawkins' All-Star bop group recording for RCA Records. (L to R) Hawkins, Leonard Feather, Budd Johnson and J.J. Johnson.

"Basie would run down each number. Finally he came to me, played my arrangement and actually approved of it. I got paid, 50 dollars, and he recorded my number a week later. It's called 'My Wandering Man,' and is under a pseudonym on the label—'Williams,' that's me."

Leonard did one or two other charts for Basie that weren't recorded. He also did small combo writing for various groups, many for his own sessions and a couple for Benny Carter when Benny had that little band with Dizzy and Jimmy Hamilton.

"I did some arrangements for John Kirby, too," Leonard remembers. "That was really the extent of my knowledge then. I knew what to do with trumpet, alto and clarinet. When I got beyond that, I was a little confused. I never really concentrated enough on arranging, but I had a working knowledge to put to use when necessary. It was the same with my clarinet playing. I studied with Jimmy Hamilton for the best part of a year, but I got lazy and didn't practice enough. Then Jimmy got the job with Duke Ellington."

By 1943, Leonard was also working for Duke Ellington, plus Lionel Hampton and various other bands as well as the Cafe Society publicity gig.

"I was working for Duke Ellington in a variety of capacities, including publicity. I worked on the Carnegie Hall concert. It was an exciting experience. I really got to know the whole Ellington family, not only the actual family, but people that were close to him like Strayhorn."

One outcome of that association was a book Feather wrote with Strayhorn for Robbins Music called *Duke Ellington Piano Method for Blues*. They wrote it in Leonard's apartment on 71st Street. "We just sat around and picked out whatever Ellington records happened to be based on the blues. Billy transcribed some, I transcribed others and we put the text together. It was a very happy collaboration."

Then, through Robert Goffin, Leonard met Arnold Gingrich, the editor of *Esquire* magazine and a great jazz fan. The three of them cooked up the idea for a jazz department to include a regular Feather feature article plus a poll with an integrated board of experts selecting their favorite artists. A series of *Esquire*-sponsored concerts was also part of the plan—a very important part because in those days, no national publications paid serious attention to jazz.

The first of four *Esquire* Award Winners concerts was held at the end of 1943. Except for that one, each produced all-star record sessions which Feather put together. Leonard recalls: "The first concert had to be a benefit for the Navy League in order to secure the Metropolitan Opera House in New York for a jazz concert. The record was supposed to come out on Decca, but [agent] Joe Glaser, who handled most of the artists, didn't get the clearances. Thirty years later, I got a bootleg copy of the disc from Japan.

"It was an incredible concert—Art Tatum, Billie Holiday *and* Mildred Bailey, Red Norvo *and* Lionel Hampton, Louis Armstrong, Jack Teagarden, Barney Bigard, Al Casey, Oscar Pettiford, Sid Catlett, Roy Eldridge and Coleman Hawkins."

In Los Angeles for the second *Esquire* concert, Leonard met his current wife, Jane, at a dinner at Peggy Lee's. Jane had worked as a singer and been on 52nd Street, but Leonard didn't know her those days in New York.

"I remember I took Jane out for the first date to hear Gerald Wilson's Orchestra at a place called Shepp's Playhouse. She then came to New York, where we were married on May 18, 1945. We've had a most happy marriage ever since. Red Norvo was our best man... He's always been one of my very best friends."

Fats Waller recording in London August 1938—(L to R) Ian Shepherd (drums), Leonard Feather (producer), Len Harrison (bass), Fats, Dave Wilkins (trumpet—blurred), Alan Ferguson (guitar) and George Chisholm (trombone).

The Moldy Figs vs. the Beboppers

Overlapping his *Esquire* association, Leonard went to work for *Metronome* magazine early in 1943. Barry Ulanov and he ran it as co-editors and together became the standard-bearers for the then "new" jazz. Leonard did features on Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie; Barry wrote about Lennie Tristano.

This was when the "moldy figs versus the beboppers" feud was going on. All of the little jazz magazines were printing articles attacking Bird and Dizzy and the modern cats. According to Feather: "To them, even Roy Eldridge was a 'modern' musician.' Their idea of real jazz was Bunk Johnson.

"In retrospect, I think everybody was wrong. I overreacted and was too anxious to put down the moldy figs, instead of limiting myself to writing about the people I admired. They were especially wrong in their really vicious attacks on anything that wasn't jazz by their standards.

"*Metronome* was the only magazine at that time that really went all out championing the 'new' jazz. Not enough people today know the important role that Barry Ulanov played. *down beat* was a little slow; some of Charlie Parker's greatest records only got two-star ratings in *down beat.*"

According to Leonard, "The controversy raged for two years before any of the "right wing" jazz critics began to say, 'Well, maybe there *is* something in this music.' All these people who had been putting Bird, Dizzy and me down finally wound up producing bop records. Like George Avakian, who was one of the most outrageously outspoken people." Others who went the same route include Atlantic's Nesuhi Ertegun and Leonard's great friend John Hammond.

Leonard is amazed that the anti-modern jazz critics of the late '40s even put down the *Esquire* concerts, claiming they weren't "really representative of jazz." The concerts presented people like Art Tatum, Roy Eldridge and Oscar Pettiford. "If you read some of those anti-bop magazines today," Feather suggests, "you'd be astonished at the ignorance displayed by some people who are now respected producers or critics."

Because of this vitriolitic opposition to the "new" jazz, Leonard started his now famous "Blindfold Test." "I knew a lot of leading musicians thought the way I did and felt that it would come out if I played the record without any preconceived notice of who it was. The very first 'Blindfold Test,' which appeared in *Metronome* in 1946, was by Mary Lou Williams. She made quite a devastating attack on Jelly Roll Morton who was the darling of many of those [anti-bop] critics. I have always thought Jelly Roll was overrated. The 'Blindfold Test' further infuriated the critics who had attacked me and bop because it showed that musicians they respected agreed with me."

Throughout this period, Feather was producing records right and left starting with the first dates for Dinah Washington ("December 1943—she was 19") and Sarah Vaughan "New Year's Eve, 1944—she was 20").

"It was initially very difficult to persuade a record company to record Dinah and Sarah," Leonard reveals. "In those days, they were only interested in Lionel Hampton and Billy Eckstine's bands. To record companies, Dinah and Sarah were just the bands' girl singers."

Leonard, who has always thought that women are discriminated against, also did several all-female jazz sessions with Vivian Garry, Mary Lou Williams, and the Beryl Booker Trio. The sides came out on an album called "Girls in Jazz."

"I think I made some very good records then, and am very proud of some of them—Continental, Savoy, etc., but most importantly, those I made for RCA from 1945 until the record ban in 1948. I did lots and lots of record dates for RCA, some in New York and some in Los Angeles, including sessions with Coleman Hawkins, Art Tatum, Erroll Garner and Andre Previn's first record for a major label. He was 16."

He also did several dates with Louis Armstrong; one was with Bobby Hackett and another with the *Esquire* group. "These were good sessions," Feather observes. "I did them because I felt Louis should not be restricted to that dreadful big band he had, with the two singers. Joe Glaser [Armstrong's manager and agent] didn't stop me, although he didn't especially encourage me."

For Aladdin he recorded Lester Young and the great blues singer, Cousin Joe. "There was also Helen Humes. In fact, there were so many record dates in the '40s that I couldn't possibly list them all.

"Some of the best were the quickest and easiest to make, such as Dinah's and Sarah's. For Sarah's date, I got Dizzy and Georgie Auld. I wrote two of the charts; Dizzy wrote two. Dizzy brought in a vocal version of his 'Night in Tunisia' called 'Interlude.' I really found out then what an incompetent reader I was on piano. I couldn't read the 'Night in Tunisia' changes and Dizzy had to play piano on that. I was mortified. Very embarrassing."

Leonard's piano playing isn't ever going to frighten Oscar Peterson, but Feather comping can be heard on records with Louis Armstrong, B.B. King and many others. He led his own group, The Night Blooming Jazzmen, and played some piano on two albums of his own compositions for Mainstream Records.

Feather fondly recalls a great blues program on a Saturday afternoon at one memorable Montery Jazz Festival "when I was exhorted by Johnny Otis to go on stage and play behind Jimmy Rushing and other singers." Leonard also played piano at the 1978 George Wein festival in Nice—with both Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson and Illinois Jacquet. He joked afterwards: "My chops weren't too good. But perhaps they never have been!"

When Leonard vacationed in London early in 1947, George Shearing was playing accordion with the Frank Weir band. Later that year, George and his wife, Trixie, arrived in New York to become U.S. residents under Feather's sponsorship.

Shearing had been winning the piano poll every year in Britain's *Melody Maker*, but in New York "It was very difficult to get any interest in George at first," recalls Leonard. "One club owner said that it didn't look right to have a blind pianist. Other people just said, 'Who's George Shearing?' "

Finally, he got an off-night at the Hickory House and then into the Three Deuces at scale ($66 a week), where he stayed for several months. He worked solo at first, then with various drummers and bass players (including Oscar Pettiford and John Levy). "All this happened late in 1948. The first half of the year, just after he arrived from England, he had very little work. It was rough . . . At the very end of '48, he got a job at the Clique Club, which later became Birdland. He had Buddy de Franco on clarinet, John Levy on bass, and Denzil Best on drums.

"I sold Albert Marx of Discovery Records on making a date with George. Then we found out that Buddy de Franco was under contract to Capitol, so we couldn't use him. Well, I had used the instrumentation of piano, vibes, guitar, bass and drums several times, first with the Slam Stewart Quintet that I put together for Continental Records in 1945 and later for the Mary Lou Williams all-women group. Funnily enough, Chuck Wayne was on the Slam Stewart date and Margie Hyams was on the Mary Lou Williams session. So when we couldn't use Buddy, I said to George, 'Why don't we try for a quintet sound with Chuck Wayne and Margie Hyams?'

"George knew he had an MGM Records contract coming up, and he wanted to save his big guns and keep the quintet voicing for MGM. So, for the Discovery dates I wrote four originals and persuaded George to do a couple of tracks on accordion."

Three weeks later (January 1949), Shearing recorded his "September in the Rain" hit for MGM. The first place he worked with the quintet was Cafe Society in April of 1949.

"George did a lot more with the instrumentation than I because he got that particular voicing," Feather admits. "He really invented the George Shearing sound. I only supplied the instrumentation which turned out to be a lucky accident because Buddy de Franco couldn't make that session."

Leonard Feather produced all of Shearing's records at MGM for the first two years including, of course, the hits "September in the Rain," "Little White Lies," "East of the Sun, " and "Jumping with Symphony Sid." Later, throughout the '50s, Feather went on to do a lot of other things for MGM, like starting a label called Metrojazz. As a producer, he usually received a flat fee. In the case of "September in the Rain," however, he "made some money"—Leonard got a one-percent producer's royalty and George received four percent.

"Eventually," Feather admits, "I got very bored with the quintet and tried to get George to do something with horns. We did an experiment at his house one day. I got Teddy Edwards [tenor], Dave Wells [bass trumpet] and Al McKibbon [bass] together with George on accordion. I wrote a few charts and we made several tapes. It was nice and George liked it, but he never did anything with it. George always thought why mess with a good thing? But I always thought he could have a more aggressive group occasionally, say, for a jazz festival.

On Duke—The Real Relationship

In November 1949, Leonard and his wife Jane were crossing a street in New York when they were knocked down by a driverless car that had rolled down the hill. Jane was in the hospital for two months, Leonard for three, and it was a year before they were completely ambulatory again.

A dressing room joke in 1944 shared by (l to r) Woody Herman, Leonard Feather

"What helped me through that tremendously expensive hospital stay was a hit record," Feather recollects. I had written a number called 'Baby Get Lost' for Dinah Washington. While in the hospital, I read in *Billboard* that it was the number one rhythm-and-blues song in the country. Eventually, it was covered on Decca by Billie Holiday. I wrote it under a pseudonym and don't think Billie ever did know it was mine.

"After I got over the accident, Duke Ellington came up to the house and arranged for me to go back to work for him. That was late 1950.

"Shortly after that, we started Mercer Records. Mercer wanted to call the company Feather Records. The best things we did were the Ellington-Strayhorn piano duets, but we also did some fine dates with groups out of the Ellington Orchestra. That was when Duke had Willie Smith and Louis Bellson. We did a couple of Al Hibbler sessions and Oscar Pettiford's first date on cello. He did 'Perdido,' which was the nearest thing we had to a hit on Mercer Records. Duke played piano on that date. Duke was under contract to Columbia but he bent the law a bit and made several Mercer Record dates.

"It was really a big thrill working with Duke on those records. Actually, we made eight additional Ellington-Strayhorn duets with some male singer Duke insisted on recording, but they never were released. The tapes were eventually destroyed in a fire and lost forever.

"The Mercer Record Company finally folded because of distribution problems. We were distibuted by Prestige, who were much more interested in pushing their own records rather than ours under sub-distribution.

"Also we were caught in the middle of the switchover from 78 to 45 and 33-1/3. We put out a few 10-inch LPs, but no 12-inch. We had no really big sellers and ran out of money. But it was fun while it lasted."

What was Leonard Feather's *real* relationship with Duke Ellington?

"I was about as close to Duke as one could get. But, yes, I had a strange relationship with him. I guess most people did—a love/hate relationship.

"When I started working for Duke again in 1950, I was involved in most of his activities—his music company, Tempo, Mercer Records, etc.—so I saw a great deal of him. He was very friendly, but you could only get so close. It was often very hard to tell what was really on his mind... how much he actually meant of what he was saying. He was a very inaccessible man in some ways. But I felt as close to him during that period as I reasonably could hope to.

"I actually got much closer to Duke's son Mercer, who is a very warm and likable person. I felt sorry for Mercer that his father blew hot and cold about him. It was a strange relationship. You can read about it in Mercer's book.

"But Duke was my idol from the very beginning. I still think he's the greatest. Right after I first started buying records in England—even though Louis Armstrong had been the first one—I was buying all the Ellington records including the imported RCA Victors. Ellington is the greatest creative figure in jazz history in terms of writing and leading a great orchestra. Louis Armstrong was the most important as an individual instrumentalist. But that's something else."

Charlie Parker?

"Of course I would place Parker right up there with Armstrong. I'd place Dizzy Gillespie up there, too."

Duke Ellington inexplicably doesn't even mention Feather in his book *Music*

Is My Mistress. According to Leonard, "Latterly Duke took umbrage at a couple of things I wrote about his music. He was terribly sensitive to criticism and just didn't think there should be any criticism of him at all.

"I would have been in Duke's book if I had been more political and deferred to him and not written about a couple of things he did that were unkind to say the least—his treatment of certain people and certain events... There were very strange sides to Duke Ellington. He could be quite unfeeling. Yet, on the other hand, he could be extremely kind and generous. And often was. He did remain friendly and I was invited to his 70th birthday party at the White House. That was a great thrill. Two of the three most exciting evenings of my life were connected with Ellington: the first Carnegie Hall concert and the 70th birthday party. The third exciting evening, the first *Esquire* concert, Duke wasn't involved in.

"I telephoned him at the hospital on his birthday only about three weeks before he died. I was one of the few people able to get through to him. His sister Ruth put me on the phone and we chatted for awhile. I think basically he knew I was still his friend and admirer and there was still a closeness, even though things maybe were not quite the same as they had been."

As a writer, Leonard has always maintained complete integrity. He's always been scrupulously honest in his criticisms—maybe more so with his close friends, many of whom have gotten very bad reviews when they deserved it. However, most appreciate Leonard's combination of honesty and warmth.

But you can't be a major jazz critic for four decades without a few disliking you.

Once a young new jazz writer, Lee Underwood, said he'd like to do a piece on Leonard Feather. "Fine," said Leonard. "Let's do the interview live right on my KBCA Sunday afternoon jazz radio show."

Seemingly from the start of the questioning, Underwood started a line of attack claiming that Feather only admires older jazz and puts down new artists. The phones lit up at KBCA. All the callers rallied to Feather's support. He always played the newer things on KBCA. He'd frequently interview the new players. He's written in support of today's jazz (as he did in the bebop days of the '40s).

The point is that Feather will not give a great artist a good review for a poor or "dollar-sign" performance. To some young critics, a star can never do wrong. But as much as Leonard admires Miles Davis and Donald Byrd, for example, he won't praise "their money-making rock-oriented albums."

Also, there are musicians who state: "If you're a chick, you'll always get a good review from Leonard Feather." Leonard responds that he has always felt women in jazz needed special support. His syndicated rave reviews have certainly contributed to the success of the Toshiko/Tabackin Orchestra. But, "Toshiko Akiyoshi is a fantastic woman," Feather declares. "She's one of a handful of composers in the Duke Ellington mold."

What are Leonard Feather's directions and goals in his reviews?

"I try to describe the music in words... which is pretty hard because you have to avoid getting technical. I really admire Whitney Balliett because he manages to verbalize things that are almost impossible to put into general words—to give an idea of the sound, the kind of effect the singer or instrumentalist or band has on you. I don't think anybody else has achieved Whitney's level of brilliance in that respect. I don't really try to achieve what Whitney does because that kind of writing is not second nature to me at all.

Leonard Feather with Stan Kenton at Concerts By The Sea, Redondo Beach, 1974.

Civil Rights and the Stan Kenton Feud

"I have developed my own way along natural lines. In recent years, I've tried not to accentuate the negative which I had a tendency to do in my more impetuous youth. Then, I would find great joy in putting something down if it was bad. Now, I'd rather find something better to devote my space to.

"Once I sit down at the typewriter, I write fairly fluently and fast. I never studied writing. I never went to journalism school.

"I don't only write about jazz. I have other writing interests. One is civil rights." British-born Feather has fought all his life against racial discrimination. "Coming from England I was utterly appalled," he recalls. "Until I saw it [discrimination] first hand, I didn't realize how horrible it was.

"In 1944, I did an article, 'If I Were A Negro,' which reads quite well all these years later. And I once wrote a long article for *Entertainment World* on discrimination in the motion picture industry. The first American publication I wrote for was *The New Amsterdam News*, the black New York newspaper. I have also written for *Ebony, Jet,* and *Negro Digest."*

Leonard's stand against racism instigated one historic feud—with Stan Kenton.

In 1955, Stan was driving his Porsche to a date with his wife at the time, singer Ann Richards. Ann started to read him the "New Star" winners in the *down beat* Critics' Poll. Because of the preponderance of black "New Star" winners, Stan stopped the car at the next Western Union office and sent a wire to *down beat:* "There is a new minority group—white jazz musicians."

This telegram incensed Feather. He wrote an article praising Dizzy and the greats and castigating Kenton for his "pro-white" comment.

"It was a strongly worded piece," Feather acknowledges. "It was very hostile, I admit. But I felt hostile."

Leonard continues the story. "Five years later, in 1960 when Jane and I had gone to live permanently in Los Angeles—I liked the atmosphere and the climate—Ann [Richards] called and asked me over to the Kenton home in Beverly Hills. She wanted to bring Stan and me together. Stan had been solicitous of black people, like David Baker, she said. Ann was very nice, but she really believed that I had done Stan a great wrong. Anyway, this meeting with Stan really cleared the air, although Stan was not convinced that he was wrong and I was right."

Reflecting on Kenton's right-wing attitudes and affiliations (he campaigned for Goldwater), Leonard opines: "I believe Stan is a product of his background." Coming from a relatively poor environment, Kenton has always had the "rugged individualist" approach to life: "Every American has the opportunities and must make it on his own," was always the Kenton outlook and philosophy.

"After jazz and civil rights, my third literary interest is the English language," Feather avers. "I wrote reviews of both Edward Newman's books for the *Los Angeles Times—Speaking Freely* and the followup one. And I did a magazine article on the horrors committed in the English language. I even interviewed S.I. Hayakawa. I've always been interested in semantics. I'm always careful about my writing... spelling, punctuation, grammar. I get very bugged when I hear dangling participles, especially by people I like to respect. Use of the English language has really deteriorated."

The *Encyclopedia of Jazz*—Bible of the Business

Civil rights and the English languages notwithstanding the name of Leonard Feather is known to jazzophiles internationally mostly because of his regular jazz articles—his weekly, syndicated *Los Angeles Times* piece runs in more than 350 other newspapers throughout the world—and the *Encyclopedia of Jazz* series.

How did the series come about?

"Well, in 1954, John Hammond and his wife Esme came to visit us at our apartment on Riverside Drive in New York. The subject came up: 'Why has there been no reference work on jazz in the United States?' There had been an encyclopedia of jazz in Denmark, but not too many people in American read Danish!

"John—who always knows the right person for the right occasion—said: 'I have this publisher friend. I'll talk to him about it.' It was Horizon Press. John was a vice-president.

"When I went to see Ben Raeburn at Horizon, after a long discussion he remarked: 'Well, I guess there hasn't been a book of this kind because there has been no need for it.'

"He was persuaded to change his mind, probably because of John Hammond, and we made a contract to put together a book of alphabetical biographies. *Encyclopedia of Jazz* seemed somehow pretentious, but that was what it was called. It came out in November 1955."

The new Feather *Encyclopedia* got a couple of television plugs. One was on the "$64,000 Question," where they gave the book away to a contestant. From that one Friday night TV show, the publisher had such a flood of orders that by Monday morning they knew the *Encyclopedia* was a hit. "It sold extremely well and was very valuable to me in terms of identification," Leonard states. He followed that with two *Encyclopedia Year Books* that didn't do as well.

The revised *Encyclopedia of Jazz* came out in 1960. It contained updates on all the 1955 entries plus additional biographies. In 1966, came *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties.* Finally, there's *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Seventies.* This was published in January 1977 with Ira Gitler credited as full collaborator. (He had worked on all the previous encyclopedias.)

Other well-known Feather books are *The Pleasures of Jazz* (Horizon), *The Book of Jazz—From Then Till Now* (Dell), *Jazz* (Peterson Publishing) and *From Satchmo to Miles* (Stein & Day), which features two of the most moving jazz character pieces ever written—about Billie Holiday and Prez (Lester Young).

When my musician colleagues and I heard the first Charlie Parker bop records in the late '40s, we didn't know what had hit the jazz world—and us! But we were saved when, in 1949, Robbins Music published Feather's *Inside Bebop,* possibly the most definitive exposition ever of an extemporized musical style. "It's been reissued as *'Inside Jazz,'* " Feather informs.

Leonard's *Laughter from the Hip* evokes laughter from the author. "It's my all-time flop, yet it's one of my favorite books. My other venture into comedy was with Steve Allen. I edited and did some writing on his *Bigger Than a Breadbox."*

Jazz record producers fall over themselves to get Leonard Feather to write album liner notes. He must have done thousands. In 1964 he won the Grammy award of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences for his notes to the "The Ellington Era" LP.

In between his writing, the energetic Feather has found time for numerous overseas jazz jaunts. In 1954, he toured Europe with his own concert group "Jazz Club U.S.A." "I had a radio series of the same name beamed worldwide via the Voice of America. Billie Holiday, Red Norvo, Beryl Booker and Buddy de Franco starred in this package. It was Billie's only overseas tour. She was overwhelmed by the love she received from the European audiences."

Leonard was in Moscow for Benny Goodman's historical premiere in 1962. His other overseas coverage of jazz events has included Belgrade, Berlin, Budapest, Montreux, Nice, Vienna and Carribean jazz cruises. "One of the cruises," Feather declared, "ended up with one of the wildest jam sessions ever—in Havana!"

Also, Leonard has consistently promulgated jazz on the airwaves. In 1940, he started "Platterbrains," a radio quiz show. It ran on several stations and wound up on ABC network from 1953 to 1957.

Around 1952, Leonard had "a really strange" live music radio show on WMGM, which emanated from various New York clubs. The clubs were so close together that while one group was playing its last number at the first club, Leonard would *walk* over to the second club just in time to say: "Hello, this is Leonard Feather, I'm now at The Three Dueces," or whatever, and then start off the second group. He did the show from The Hickory House, The Onyx, The Three Deuces and similar spots. "I had to walk fast and sometimes run," he laughs. "But that's how much live music there was then in clubs close together."

On TV, critic Feather has made appearances with Steve Allen, Mike Douglas and others. He's written and produced jazz TV shows in New York and Los Angeles.

Leonard advises: "For the network TV series, 'Music 55,' I wanted Duke Ellington as emcee. CBS wouldn't agree to Duke. They used Stan Kenton with a New York studio band."

A Los Angeles jazz TV program written by Feather and hosted by Billy Eckstine was nominated for an Emmy award. The Leonard Feather weekly record program, "Feather's Nest," ran on two Los Angeles stations—KNOB (ten years) and KBCA (seven years). In 1977 he launched a jazz show on KUSC, the otherwise all-classical station.

Yet another facet of Feather is his involvement in jazz education. "With Robert Goffin I gave the first-ever jazz history course—in 1941 and 1942 at the New School for Research in New York." From 1973 to 1977, he has given jazz courses at various California colleges. For these classes and at other campuses throughout the U.S. and Canada, Feather points out: "My lectures are illustrated with live music, records and my own rare films of Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, the Nat [King] Cole Trio and other pioneers."

The Future?

What of the future for Leonard Geoffrey Feather?

"I've been talking to an agent about doing a book of memoirs, reminiscences on different people, which I may or may not do.

"Someone else has approached me about doing a book on the Swing Era. I may do this with Arnold Shaw because we both have the same idea to stress the bands neglected in previous Swing Era books—most of the black bands ... Jimmie Lunceford, Andy Kirk, Benny Carter, etc. These were musically superior to some of the more publicized white bands. I never could see Glenn Miller, even in the original days. He's been the most overblown figure in the history of this music, even though he's on the periphery of jazz. But all this nostalgia? Why can't we have the same nostalgia about Jimmie Lunceford whose band inspired Glenn Miller in many respects. Lunceford had one of the greatest bands of all.

While the future Feather will continue creating with words, he'll also continue creating with musical notes. His compositional credits started way back in 1937 when Benny Carter recorded Feather's "Mighty Like the Blues."

His best-known instrumental work probably is "I Remember Bird," a tribute to the late Charlie Parker. It has been recorded by Cannonball Adderley, Louis Bellson, Sonny Stitt, Phil Woods and many more. Yusef Lateef introduced his "Twelve Tone Blues," the first jazz work of its kind. Ella Fitzgerald, George Shearing and Sarah Vaughan all recorded Leonard's song "Signing Off." And he wrote the lyrics to the Benny Golson standard "Whisper Not."

Among the Feather blues song hits can be counted "How Blue Can You Get" (one of B.B. King's biggest) and the three Feather numbers that launched the record career of Dinah Washington—"Evil Gal Blues," "Salty Papa," and "Blow Top Blues." The popular "Evil Gal Blues" is a feature of the "Aretha Franklin Greatest Hits" LP.

"Yes, I have a very strong desire to get back into extensive recording," Leonard insists. "I enjoy assembling groups and writing the music. The 'Guitar Player' album—a cross section of guitar players and styles—is one of the best I've done. I was lucky to get permission to use all the people—like Joe Pass and B.B. King."

Leonard also recently produced an LP with his very attractive vocalist daughter Lorraine and pianist Joanne Grauer. After a long stint as singer-dancer on a road show of "Jesus Christ Superstar," Lorraine came to Los Angeles to launch a solo career. Already she's garnered critical acclaim for solo vocal engagements at the Hong Kong Bar (Century Plaza Hotel), Donte's and the Parisian Room. She recently recorded another album for the Concord label, "Sweet Lorraine" (see this month's *RFJ* "Record Reviews").

"Lorraine certainly started out in life with the right musical and vocal influence," Leonard avers. "Billie Holiday was her godmother."

Leonard thinks that currently there is more interest in jazz in Japan than in the United States and elsewhere. "I am astonished at the enthusiasm and understanding in Japan. The Japanese magazine *Swing Journal* never fails to amaze me—450 pages every month. When Benny Carter went to Japan, he said that the reception was so tremendous one would have thought he was Louis Armstrong. There's even a 'Club Benny Carter' in Tokyo.

"But things are certainly better for jazz in the United States than in my youth. Who would have dreamed that Duke Ellington would celebrate his 70th birthday in the White House and receive the Congressional Medal of Honor from the President of the United States? Even if that President was Nixon, it was still a great honor. I would never have dared to dream in my youth that jazz bands would be sent abroad by the State Department as ambassadors of good will."

And Leonard Feather would never have dared to dream in his youth that in 1979, at the White House lawn jazz party, Jimmy Carter, President of the United States, would shake his hand and say: "I'm very happy to meet you, Mr. Feather. You're a very famous man."

English-born Howard Lucraft is a composer, bandleader, guitarist and critic who has known Leonard Feather since the mid-1930s.

INTERVISTA CON IL CRITICO INGLESE LEONARD FEATHER

Lo scienziato del jazz

Piccola discussione sui criteri di una enciclopedia che non ha uguali - L'evoluzione dai tempi di Gillespie e Monk ai musicisti di oggi - La questione dei « sopravvalutati »

Los Angeles, febbraio.

Mi riceve con la consueta cortesia inglese, Leonard Feather, l'eminenza grigia del jazz americano, autore di un'opera, unica nel suo genere, consultata da milioni di persone in tutto il mondo l'*Enciclopedia del jazz*.

Sono molti anni che non lo vedo e mi sembra ringiovanito. Il salotto è ricco di cose diverse dall'ordinario: decorazioni ai muri con motivi musicali, grande foto di Duke Ellington, manifesti internazionali di festivals del jazz. Così che il *feeling* della musica non emana solo dal pianoforte nero da concerto messo davanti all'ampia finestra che dà nel giardino. Tutto appare come deve essere: senza età. Ovvero: moderno, stilizzato.

L'interessarsi tutta la vita di musica, particolarmente di musica giovane come il jazz, ha infettato in Feather l'elisir di lunga vita. Anche la sua residenza è l'ultimo grido del tipo di domicilio hollywoodiano. Un misto di casa-appartamento, privatezza e compagnia: si chiama appropriatamente Townhouse (casa di città) e consiste in una vera e propria villa a due piani, più un altro rialzato, unita però da una parte e dall'altra, ma con muri *soundproof* (isolamento dal suono, così che si può suonare, cantare, fare qualsiasi rumore senza che i vicini vengano disturbati), ad altre *town-house* analoghe. Tutte queste allegre villette danno tutt'intorno nel comune patio-giardino, piscina e vari luoghi di ricreazione; contrariamente agli appartamenti, non possono essere affittate ma solo acquistate, così da formare tutt'insieme un condominio.

Alla prima domanda « Come riassumerebbe, Feather, gli ultimi dieci anni di jazz USA e quali ne sono i musicisti più importanti e le loro caratteristiche », il critico chiede tempo per rispondere, e di procedere oltre. Lo concedo, ma ci troviamo così impelagati nelle successive domande, che la prima rimane a gambe all'aria, senza replica.

— Qual è stato il miglioramento nel jazz di questi ultimi anni rispetto al jazz moderno creato più di trent'anni fa da Gillespie, Parker, Monk e gli altri?

« Non credo che miglioramento sia la parola giusta — replica Feather —. Evoluzione sì. Basta pensare al jazz *avant-garde*, al jazz atonale. Lennie Tristano, morto in questi giorni, è stato il primo a suonare il jazz atonale. Nel '49 lui ha inciso un disco in cui è impossibile trovare alcuna tonalità. Da questo è nata l'evoluzione che ha portato a un Cecil Taylor e a un Ornette Coleman. Nei recenti dieci anni il jazz ha sperimentato varie fusioni tra differenti forme e stili: combinazioni di jazz col rock, col folk. Il che non significa necessariamente un incremento. Per molti musicisti-jazz, è diventato negli ultimi anni sempre più importante il conseguire un successo commerciale. Ecco, questa è una significativa caratteristica del jazz degli ultimi dieci anni. I musicisti di oggi sono divenuti consapevoli di potere, con la loro musica, guadagnare cifre favolose. Il che non ha molto a che vedere con l'arte ».

— Negli ultimi due numeri del *Los Angeles Times*, Mr. Feather, lei ha elencato, nel primo, le dieci figure preminenti della storia del jazz. Ed io sono d'accordo. Nel secondo, le dieci figure di musicisti più *overrated* (sopravvalutate, che non meritano la fama a loro attribuita); e anche in questi sono d'accordo.

« Davvero? », commenta con piacevole sorpresa Feather.

— Un momento. Questi miei consensi sono solo una

mossaccia segreta, e contengono altro. Se ci sono almeno altrettanti musici *overrated* di quanti ne esistano meritevoli d'elogio, perchè allora un'enciclopedia del jazz?

La domanda non gli piace poichè investe la sua intera esistenza; ma Feather non lo dimostra. « La risposta è nel fatto che un'enciclopedia è appunto un'enciclopedia: cioè uno studio che deve tenere presenti *tutti* i vari aspetti di un tema, in questo caso il jazz, senza riguardo alle proprie opinioni personali. Cioè, vi devo elencare tutti i musicisti non soltanto che io prediligo, ma anche quelli che altri, ugualmente qualificati, preferiscono. Il che può includere taluni artisti che io, come mio giudizio, non penso che siano così importanti. Tuttavia non ho posto nel mio libro musicisti che, al momento, avessi pensato che fossero figure minori ».

— Ma nell'enciclopedia ci sono migliaia di nomi. Non è possibile che siano tutti grandi.

« E perchè no? Non devi essere totalmente grande per appartenere ad un'enciclopedia; inoltre, in quasi un secolo di jazz, con tutte le miriadi di note e di dischi prodotti, non mi sembra che parlare di qualche migliaio di buoni musicisti jazz sia esagerato ».

Gradatamente che Leonard Feather parla, sento lo scienziato prevalere in lui, più di ogni altra sua attitudine o istinto: incluso quello critico. Come scienziato tutta la musica jazz gli interessa, tutti i musicisti jazz gli dicono qualcosa poichè nutrono appunto il segmento scientifico-storico che c'è nell'arte. Come ogni altro scienziato, Leonard Feather è un puro cui sta a cuore soprattutto la sua ricerca e il suo laboratorio; le conseguenze di questi sulla massa lo lasciano quasi indifferente.

« Nel libro — dice — ho cercato di accentuare gli aspetti positivi. Inoltre, in molti casi riferisco su un artista anche i pareri negativi. Il che m'è sembrato una cosa molto assennata da fare. Mezzrow, per esempio, per me è un minore. Ma il critico Panassiè non la pensa come me. Ed anche Mezzrow ha scritto un libro sul jazz. Ed ha inciso molti dischi usando ottimi musicisti. Questo solo gli darebbe diritto ad un posto nell'enciclopedia. La stessa ragione per cui vi ho messo Paul Whiteman che, come musicista jazz, è limitato ».

— Che ne pensa delle fusioni recenti tra jazz e rock?

« Se è il musicista rock ad usare parte del linguaggio jazz, bene. Se è il jazzista ad esprimersi in lingua rock, male ».

— Incluso Miles Davis?

« Certo. Posso garantirle che i L.P. di Miles, fatti con Gil Evans (*Milestone, Sketch of Spain, Porgy and Bess*) verranno suonati per sempre e rimarranno capolavori; molto più delle incisioni di Davis del '72, '73, '74, cioè gli anni che includono *Bitches Brew*, in cui Davis flirta con i mezzi espressivi del rock ».

— Che ne dice degli scrittori e musicisti jazz in Italia?

« Sono amico di Arrigo Polillo. Ho appena finito di leggere il suo recente libro sul jazz di oggi. Posso leggere ma non parlare italiano. E ricevo il suo giornale. A volte ho anche scritto per *Musica Jazz* qualche pezzo ».

— Jazzisti italiani d'interesse?

« Basso, Valdambrini, Sellani ».

Ma la risposta, indiretta, alla prima domanda, verrà più tardi: non da Feather, bensì da Norman Granz, altro luminare del soggetto, il più grande impresario-jazz d'America, e pertanto del mondo. In un'intervista condotta dallo stesso Leonard Feather, in occasione del recente « Pablo Jazz Festival » (12-13-14 febbraio, al Music Center di Los Angeles, organizzato da Granz, con Ella Fitzgerald, Count Basie, Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass), il grosso appaltatore della musica ha dichiarato a proposito delle figure moderne del jazz negli ultimi dieci anni: « Ci sono solo due giovani jazzisti che vorrei aggiungere alla Pablo (Pablo è il nome della sua compagnia di dischi). E sono Hubert Laws e Freddie Hubbard. Tutto qui. Se scorro la *chart*-jazz dei primi dieci *best-seller* di oggi, ecco le mie reazioni. Bob James è un meraviglioso arrangiatore, ma si ripete. Chuck Mangione è un Alpert aggiornato che suona meglio la tromba; ma non il jazz come lo intendo io. Al Jarreau? Dovrebbe solo inginocchiarsi davanti ad Ella. Ha imparato tutto da lei. Grover Washington è un ottimo sax-tenore. Ma non s'avvicina certo ad Eddie (Lockjaw) Davis di Count Basie, Ronnie Laws? Mai sentito. " Weather Report? ". Sinceramente non riesco a capire che diavolo vuol dire Joe Zawinul, *leader* di questo gruppo. Chick Corea *non* è un buon pianista anche se è un buon compositore. Comunque vorrei mettere nello stesso concerto, come sfida, lui e Herbie Hancock da una parte, Count Basie e Oscar Peterson dall'altra. E vedere un po' chi la vincerebbe ».

William Donati

Pat Metheny is finding commercial success in jazz by developing an individual personality in his music.

those days, the guitar had been shoved into the background in jazz. Miles and John Coltrane and Cannonball, all the groups I admired, didn't use one. So when Coryell arrived, he revealed a new flexibility and made the opening statement for the next guitar generation.

"A couple of years after that, McLaughlin hit the scene. I liked what he had done with Miles, but with that first Mahavishnu orchestra the instrument took off; before long there were a million guitar records and everybody was imitating him."

At the time, however, Metheny was not deeply touched by all this; he was too busy studying the chord pattern of Coltrane's "Giant Steps" and following the developments in hard bop. "I wasn't into the fusion thing, and although at 17 I'd been playing guitar for three years, I almost didn't feel like a guitar player—in fact, I still don't; and I almost never listen to guitarists. The horn players were a powerful influence on me from the start."

Nevertheless, he developed so fast that wherever he studied, he wound up as a teacher: first at Down Beat magazine's National Stage Band Camp, then at the University of Miami, and finally at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he joined the faculty at Gary Burton's request. At 19, he was the youngest instructor in Berklee's history. Not long afterward he joined the Burton Quintet, remaining for three years, and playing on three of Burton's ECM albums as a sideman.

The next logical step was his album debut as a leader. "Bright Size Life" was a trio set with his close friend from Miami, bassist Jaco Pastorius, and drummer Bob Moses. A second album was "Watercolors," on which he played 12-string guitar with pianist Lyle Mays, a brilliant youngster just graduated from North Texas State University. This LP brought him two steps closer to the acclaim he is now enjoying; there was extensive radio play and the album remained on the jazz charts for 30 weeks.

Soon Metheny was able to form his own regular group, with Mays and drummer Dan Gottlieb, both born in 1953, and bassist Mark Egan, two years their senior. The critics built a bandwagon: Metheny's free approach to improvisation was likened to that of Ornette Coleman, the saxophonist father of the avant-garde, while Mays was often compared to Keith Jarrett.

Metheny doesn't care much about such evaluations, having distilled what he correctly believes is an individual personality both for himself and for the quartet.

"The beauty of jazz," he says, "lies in developing your own voice, your own personal mode of expression. The objective on which I've concentrated, and I think with a certain degree of success, is the finding of my own sound and style, my own kinds of tunes for the group, and my own format for developing as an improviser.

"I feel very strongly that there is not going to be any major breakthrough in contemporary music unless the performers have an extreme awareness of tradition, of where they are coming from. I'm sorry to say that most players of my age, even some who are older, and of course many who are younger, just don't have a grip on the foundations; consequently, we're going to keep on hearing those monotonous one-chord vamps until they learn.

"I always encourage people, when they ask me questions at gigs, to study the whole background of bebop and jazz improvising, because without that harmonic knowledge, they can only go so far. I'm a great believer in taking one step backward to make two forward."

The steps forward are gaining in length and frequency. For the past two years Metheny has been on tour 300 days annually; during 1978 he visited Europe four times—twice as part of the quartet's touring schedule and twice to record for ECM. The group just returned from a Japanese trip that was received with the kind of enthusiasm most jazzmen have learned to expect from Oriental audiences.

Metheny is a symbol of new values in music that transcend the usual categories of jazz, rock, classical or particularly fusion. His group, though very dynamic at times, is too subtle to qualify as just another jazz/rock unit. He understands the value of tension and release, the intelligent use of contrasting colors; he takes himself seriously, yet conveys in his performances the joy of communication.

One need not go out on too much of a limb to predict that Metheny will be to the 1980s what McLaughlin was to the '70s, Wes Montgomery to the '60s or even Charlie Christian, grandsire of the electric guitar, to the world he dominated during his tragically brief reign almost four decades ago. □

□

FIVE O'CLOCK BELLS. Lenny Breau. Adelphi AD 5006. Breau is the legendary guitarist from Canada who uses acoustic and Spanish flamenco effects even when playing electric. This remarkable solo set, his first in many years, reveals his mixture of influences as he plays five original works, two standards, and an astonishing sublimation of the McCoy Tyner composition "Visions." Admired by George Benson and every other guitarist who has heard him (and in most cases jammed with him), Breau turns this album into a coming-out party for a greatly under-appreciated talent. Obtainable from Box 208, Silver Spring, Md. 20907.

—L.F.

Services Saturday for Veteran Jazz Drummer

Services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at the Bethel Church of Christ, 1302 E. Adams, for Alton Redd, 75, the veteran jazz drummer who died last Thursday.

Born in Baton Rouge, La., Redd came to Los Angeles in 1918. He led his own orchestra, played with the Les Hite band during the 1930s, toured Europe with Kid Ory and spent a long stint at Disneyland during the 1960s, first under Harvey Brooks and then as leader.

Redd leaves a wife; a daughter, saxophonist Vi Redd; a son, drummer Buddy Redd; six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. In accordance with New Orleans tradition, a band will play at the services.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ 6/17

METHENY: A MAN AND HIS FORMAT

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Not since John McLaughlin became Mahavishnu and formed a band by that name in 1971 has there been a guitarist as original, as much of a potential trend-setter as Pat Metheny. At 24, he has made several discoveries that have been vital in his forging of a new style: first and foremost, you don't have to imitate McLaughlin or George Benson or anyone else; second, your skill need not be measured in direct proportion to the number of notes you play; third, you need not go down the obvious jazz/rock path in order to find commercial success.

With his jeans and mop-head of black hair, Metheny would not look out of place onstage with a hard-rock group. When he plays, though, and particularly when he analyzes his own work and ambitions, it becomes evident that he owes no allegiance to any particular school. In fact, it is only a matter of time before he will be a school of his own; critics will write of young guitarists as Metheny-style.

Despite the sometimes ethereal, often impressionistic character of his sound and of his quartet, Metheny has had a firm grounding in the fundamentals of jazz.

Born in the small town of Lee's Summit, Mo., Aug. 12, 1954, the son of a trumpet player, he attributes his broad range of interests to his heritage and early background. "My family was into band music, but all through school I played with a trumpeter who sounded like Art Farmer or Miles Davis, and a fine bebop drummer, as well as a sax player named Herman Bell—he's about 65, 70, I guess, by now—who'd hire me for a gig and beat off some fast, harmonically demanding tune like 'The Song Is You.'

"I'm glad I had that kind of experience, and so did all the members of my group. If we had to play a stone bebop gig, we could do it, even though our own music is quite far removed from that. The fact that we have that knowledge makes a lot of ideas available to us that wouldn't be otherwise."

Metheny was 14 when he heard guitarist Larry Coryell in a Kansas City concert by the Gary Burton Quartet. "In

JAZZ REVIEW 6/18

Playboy Festival at the Bowl

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Myth No. 1: Only fusion music and jazz/rock will draw a crowd to a large auditorium.

Myth No. 2: Los Angeles is simply not a jazz city.

If only for destroying those long-held illusions, the Playboy Jazz Festival earned itself a niche in history. At the Hollywood Bowl, where six years ago a jazz festival thudded into a $50,000 loss, a totally responsive audience of 13,500 flocked to the Bowl Friday. The Saturday show drew the first capacity house (17,200) in the history of the Bowl's erratic relationship with jazz.

Hugh Hefner took his pipe out of his mouth long enough to offer an instant analysis: "We combined two vital elements—George Wein's long experience as a producer, and Playboy's promotional and advertising campaign, with support from the mayor, the City Council, everyone at the community level. I expect this to become an annual event."

The ambiance matched the music. Astonishingly, when Joni Mitchell's Charles Mingus tribute, well performed and received, segued (via the revolving stage) into Benny Goodman's set, instead of the anticlimax that might have ensued, this was the climactic point of the entire evening.

It couldn't have been nostalgia; most of his listeners had never seen the veteran clarinetist before. The sometimes lethargic Goodman, who just turned 70, created with an

Please Turn to Page 9, Col. 1

STILL THE KING—Benny Goodman, left, with a combo including guitarist John Pisano, again led an energetic, swinging set during the Playboy Jazz Festival Friday evening at the Bowl.

Times photo by Tony Barnard

SOLOING—Joni Mitchell, left, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie were among highlights at Playboy festival.

Times photos by Tony Barnard

Playboy Festival at Hollywood Bowl

Continued from First Page

unspectacular ad hoc combo a brand of energetic, swinging music that recalled his pristine years. I have rarely heard him more inspired, even during the Charlie Christian era.

The evening had begun on just the right note, with the Young Tuxedo Brass Band strutting around the Amphitheater to color the scene. After sundown the celebratory mood was heightened by the brisk sale of green glow-in-the-dark necklaces, and by an audience as broad in tastes as in age.

In one of Friday's more memorable moments, Sue Mingus, the bassist's widow, introduced a band of his alumni "to preserve the spirit of his music," as she put it. This group's revival of "Porkpie Hat," the Mingus dedication to the late Lester Young, was followed by Joni Mitchell's own lyricized version.

Joe Williams, 18 years away from the Basie band, proved in his latest reunion that he and the Count are still less than a heartbeat apart. Waymon Reed, a Basie alumnus, now Sarah Vaughan's husband, rejoined the band's trumpet section to accompany Vaughan, along with her new rhythm section sparked by Mike Wofford at the piano.

The Saturday marathon show (3-11 p.m.) had a more contemporary orientation. Weather Report's declamations, probably audible well into Ventura County, swung thunderously on "Birdland." The group lacks some of the character of the days when it had an additional percussionist. The bassist Jaco Pastorius, in a phenomenal solo, lent new respectibility to the word distortion.

Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock at their grand pianos had the unenviable job of following Messrs. Zawinul and Shorter; for both, it was a case of "Fingers, don't fail me now." The fingers came through.

The mainly Brazilian band of Flora Purim and Airto and the Afro-Cuban distillations of Willie Bobo were heard back to back. Purim and her group, augmented by percussionists borrowed from Caldera and Chicago, turned "Five Hundred Miles High" into a fiendishly rhythmic orgy. Bobo's spirited set was weakened by the addition of a mediocre soul singer, Errol Knowles.

Bill Cosby, a discreet emcee, allowed himself only two indulgences: He sat in on percussion with Bobo, and went through the motions of a vibes duet with Lionel Hampton.

The Hampton orchestra, mainly local pros assembled for the occasion, cruised through simple blues charts that were, for them, a piece of cake. Most of the excitement was generated by Hamp's unique presence.

The festival ended lamely with one of those meaningless all-star jam sessions. Men like Dizzy Gillespie and Gerry Mulligan were wasted on one or two tunes. Dexter Gordon lumbered awkwardly through "Body and Soul." Stan Getz came off smelling like a rose by choosing an unusual song, "No More," and playing it exquisitely. Jam-session concept finales should be banned at the federal level, but the impact of these two nights was so tremendous, the organization and general performance level of the festival so high, that you could forgive it for ending with a whimper.

6/19

31,000 Drawn to Playboy Jazz Festival

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"If you didn't know this event was taking place, you had to be dead."

Nat Pierce, who played piano with Lionel Hampton at Friday and Saturday's Playboy Jazz Festival, summed it up with that cogent observation. Seldom, if ever, had a happening of this kind been accorded such saturation publicity and advertising. If you had not read about it in the papers or heard it plugged on the radio, you turned on TV and watched a rehearsal during the 6 o'clock news, or even saw Benny Goodman jamming with the Tuxedo Jazz Band and receiving, at City Hall, a plaque from Councilman Ernani Bernardi, who once played alto sax in Goodman's band.

Producer George Wein explained the results in a backstage dialogue late Saturday at the Hollywood Bowl:

Question—How did this festival manage to draw almost 31,000 people in two days?

Answer—We had a good marriage between my programming concepts and Playboy's promotion. The Playboy image has become part of Americana; people relate to it. Moreover, parents nowadays influence children, and vice versa, which enables you to present a very diversified program and find everyone receptive to a wide span of idioms.

Q. But then how do you explain the failure of your 1973 festival here, which used precisely that approach?

A. People will accept anything as long as it has direct relation to jazz, but at that time I missed the boat completely by mixing in soul artists like Stevie Wonder and Gladys Knight, who didn't appeal to the pure jazz audience. Besides, in '73 we spread ourselves too thin, with a whole week of concerts not only at the Bowl but at Santa Monica Civic.

One question that remained unanswered, though it was asked by many fans, concerns Wein's failure to include the Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin ensemble. Ironicallly, this orchestra was named by Nat Hentoff, in Playboy's own festival program, as "the most spirited and accomplished big band of this decade."

Wein's only response has been enigmatic: "The band didn't fit into our schedule." Yet the Count Basie orchestra, which can be seen anyway at Disneyland any night through Thursday, was heard, while the award-winning, Southland-based Akiyoshi and Tabackin were bypassed.

This glaring error of omission presumably will be corrected next year. By and large, however, Wein kept a commendable balance between mainstream and contemporary sounds, while avoiding the fulsome crossover groups that dominate the best-seller charts.

With club owners crying the blues about gas shortages, the festival came along at the right moment. Just as the shift from Newport to New York in 1972 had a salutary effect on the number and viability of New York City's jazz rooms, the Playboy success here may produce results affecting the entire image of jazz on the Southland horizon.

AT DISNEYLAND

A Royal Birthday for Count Basie

BY LEONARD FEATHER

According to ancient custom, ceremonial birthdays are observed for royalty weeks or months away from the actual date of birth. Since this rule may be applied to a king, a queen or even a count, Disneyland Monday evening arranged for Mr. Basie (born Aug. 21, 1904) a memorable series of festivities.

Count Basie

At the park's Hungry Bear restaurant, a private gathering of old friends, among them dozens of past and present band members, gathered to pay tribute to a colleague who made his way from the Reno Club in Kansas City (where the combined salary for his entire orchestra was less than $200 a week) to such venues as Disneyland, where he has been a regular visitor for 16 years.

As the Mark Twain went sailing along the river past the open-air restaurant, a brass band on board struck up "Moten Swing," a tune Basie first played in Benny Moten's Orchestra a half-century ago. After dinner, the talk was brief and affectionate, never maudlin. Singer Kathy Griggs, the evening's lovely and gracious hostess, introduced such speakers as Sammy Davis Jr., Quincy Jones, Nat Pierce (who gave the count a Basie doll, complete with the nautical cap), the mayor of Anaheim and other citation presenters.

Repairing to the Plaza Gardens, the celebrants were entertained by a typical Disneyland fireworks display, leading to the audio fireworks of the Basie band. Interruptions made it a short and easy set: A vocal group sang timely lyrics fitted to Basie hits with a birthday theme; Ed McMahon spoke with brevity and warmth; a cake was wheeled in. Two small creatures, rumored to be human beings but posing as mice, presented the maestro with a solid-gold Mickey Mouse watch.

Finally Basie, a man of so few words that his autobiography is expected to be filled with blank pages, acknowledged that this was one of the memorable nights of his career, and that there is no greater pleasure than being surrounded by one's friends of a lifetime.

The set continued with Joe Williams ("My No. One son," Basie calls him) rejoining his ex-boss yet again, and ended with Sammy Davis Jr. intoning "April in Paris" at the top of his chops.

As Bill Basie said, "When Aug. 21 really comes around, what am I going to do to beat this?"

LEONARD FEATHER
PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ
Hampton Hawes

"I WAS BORN WITH SIX fingers on each hand on November 13, 1928," wrote Hampton Hawes in his autobiography, *Raise Up Off Me*, co-authored by Don Asher and published in 1975 [now out of print].

Hamp did not grow up to become the world's only twelve-fingered pianist. The extra digits, which he says were more like stubs, were snipped off with a nylon string on his third day of life at General Hospital in Los Angeles.

The career of Hampton Hawes was distinguished enough to earn him the admiration of a thousand pianists around the world, yet chaotic enough to fall far short of its potential. It ended in his death on May 22, 1977.

The son of a clergyman, Hamp was a loner as a child; as he recalled it, "I think I must have first turned to the piano out of boredom and loneliness. We were a reserved and undemonstrative family. The only time my mother kept me close was when she was at the piano.... Her hands moved so beautifully, and it was like I was playing."

First he listened to spirituals, trying to recreate their sounds at the keyboard; by the age of nine he was inspired by Fats Waller and Earl Hines. With their records as a form of teaching, he learned fast; in fact, on the night he graduated from Polytechnic High, he threw his cap and gown in the back of the car and hurried to a night club, where he was working with Big Jay McNeely's rhythm and blues band. Not long afterward, along with trumpeter Howard McGhee, he found himself alongside Charlie Parker, whose alto sax was turning around the thinking of pianists as well as horn players.

By the time he was out of his teens, Hawes had worked what there was of the bebop circuit in Southern California, playing for such saxophone giants as Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray. During a fallow period he decided to spend a while in New York, where he sat in at the legendary Minton's in Harlem; but soon he was on the road with another sax star, Wild Bill Moore.

Hawes was very young when Charlie Parker invited him to share a joint. Not too much time elapsed before he was persuaded by a pimp to try out heroin, an event that was to play havoc with much of his adult life. "It was the times and the environment that strung most of us out," he wrote. "You try it, it feels good, and there you go.... The casualty list in the '50s...started to look like the Korean war was being fought at the corner of Central and 45th."

VERYL OAKLAND

Controlling his habit, he worked with trumpeter Shorty Rogers, bassist Howard Rumsey, and other combos until the Army took him in 1952. During his two years in the service he was introduced, in Yokohama, to a youthful pianist who he was told could play bebop like Bud Powell. This turned out to be Toshiko Akiyoshi; a couple of years later she left for the U.S.

Back home in Los Angeles, Hawes began a long off-and-on association with the great bassist Red Mitchell. He worked with Stan Getz, was written up in *Time* magazine for an album he made with guitarist Jim Hall, and was voted New Star pianist of the year in the 1956 *Down Beat* critics' poll. But by now he was showing up late or missing dates. He applied to be committed to the Public Health Service Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, but stayed only briefly. His troubles came to a climax when he was arrested in 1958 and given a ten-year sentence.

Headed by Lester Koenig, head of Contemporary Records, and some of Hawes' other admirers, a group of concerned citizens wrote to President Kennedy asking for a pardon. In August of 1963 Kennedy personally offered executive clemency. Within a week Hamp was playing in a Sunset Strip club where I heard him playing with almost as much command as ever.

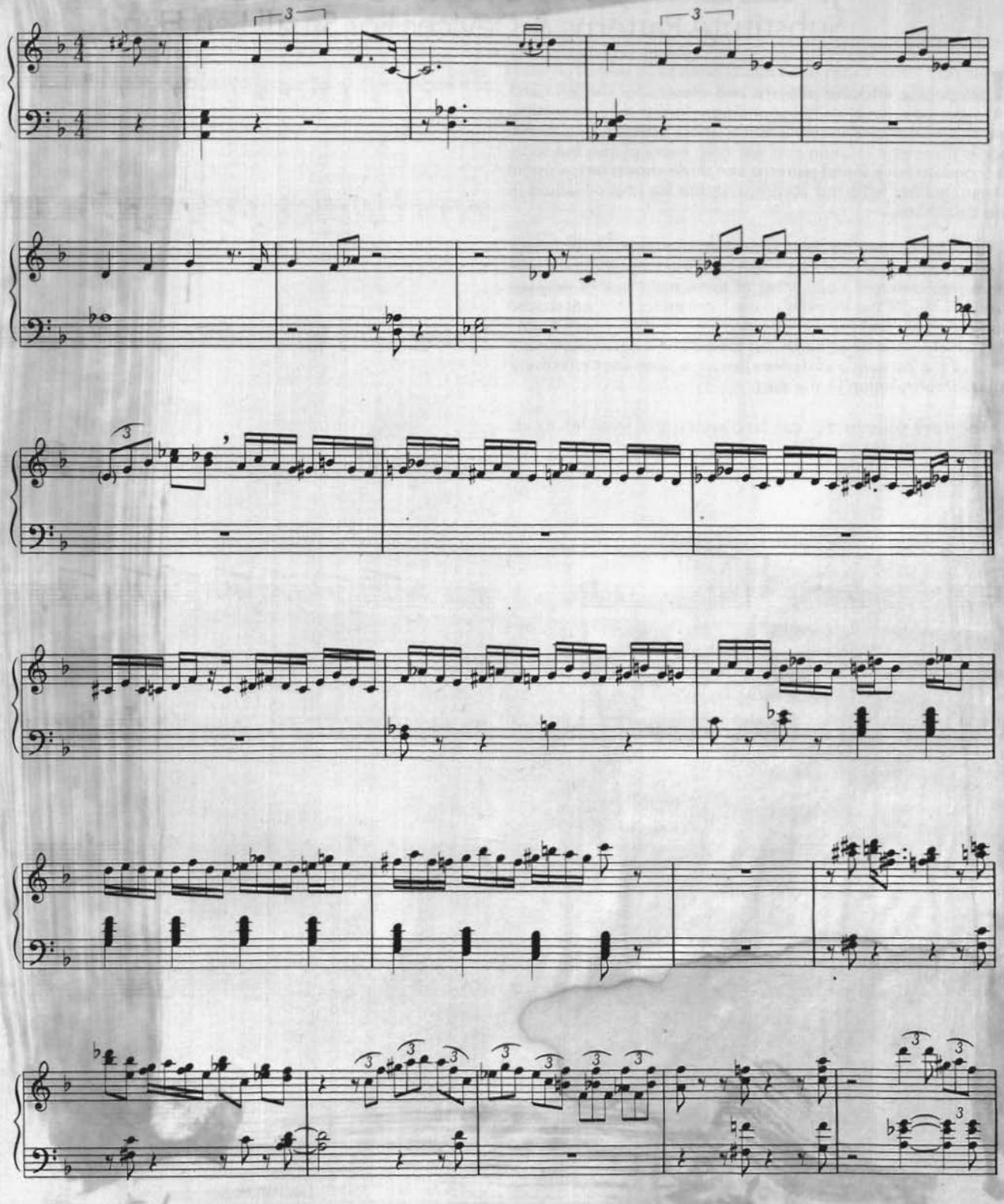
The last decade of his life was divided between reunions with old associates (Red Mitchell, saxophonist Harold Land), a round-the-world tour with his wife picking up engagements wherever he went, and frequent jazz festival appearances. During much of 1974 he was co-featured in a trio with bassist Carol Kaye; later he made records and concert dates with folk singer Joan Baez.

During the 1970s Hamp's style underwent some changes. He experimented with modality, with electric keyboards; he drew away from the old bebop image. Still, until the end, when he suffered a fatal stroke, his best work was an outgrowth of his original 1940s–'50s style, as the excerpt from "Searchin'" shows (this is on the *I'm All Smiles* album [Contemporary (8481 Melrose Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90069), S-7631]).

This is a bright-tempo 12-bar blues; the passage shown starts around 1:55 from the start of the track. The first four bars are a slight variation of what Hamp had established earlier as the theme; however, I suspect that the *C*, *F*, and *B*♭ in bar 1 should be thought of as the quarter-note triplets, the *A* as a note intended for the third beat, the next *F* and middle *C* staying where they are. Hamp's sense of time was so oblique that one can only surmise what he had in mind; even though the transcription is technically correct, it represents, I believe, a slight delay in the placement of the second, third, and fourth notes. (In an interview with Lester Koenig, Hamp attributed his personal style and phrasing to his unorthodox, self-taught fingering.)

Similarly, the long series of sixteenth-notes that begins at bar 10 and overlaps into the first five bars of the next chorus might be interpreted as triplet sixteenths followed by eighths, though they come out sounding almost like even sixteenths. More relevantly, Hamp takes them gracefully down a chromatic stairway, the groups beginning respectively with *A*, *G*♯, *G*, *F*♯, etc.; then, when the new chorus begins, he reverses the procedure, building the tension superbly by putting the hitherto almost inactive left hand to work on a series of clusters (or possible sevenths with various additions) as he goes along. The two-and-a-half bars during which this takes place are so suspenseful that at bar 18 he takes a breather, while Red Mitchell and drummer Donal Bailey keep the pulse going.

Grace notes, thirds, and a typically funky alternation of octave tonic jumps against moving middle notes (bar 22) mark the conclusion of this passage, which, however, represents only two superb choruses in a cut that runs almost 10½ minutes. I strongly recommend this album as an illustration of a remarkable talent that is greatly missed.



TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN

courtesy of Joachim E. Berendt: "Jazz Calendar"

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WE REMEMBER BILLIE

by Leonard Feather

Among my souvenirs:

A letter on lined, prison stationery, handwritten in pencil, datelined July 19, 1947, Box A, Alderson, W. Va.:

Dear Leonard

Yours received and what a pleasant surprise letters means so much. How is Jane I am so glad she liked the picture New Orleans Joe Glaser was supposed to have it sent here but I havent heard from him lately oh yes I know hes a busy man but he has my money and I wrote three letters asking for some. I can only spend ten dollars a month but I can use that green stuff even here

Leonard if its not asking too much before you leave please call Joe Glaser and see what he intends to do about some good publicity for me Ive had so much bad stuff written about me and I do think he should do something so that people wont forget me after all a year is a long time for ones public to wait But I do have you and Jane (smile) and Bobby Tucker has been so faithful he writes every week

Well dear there is not much else to write only I am getting fat isnt that awful write soon

As ever
Billie Holiday

Of course, nobody ever forgot her. At the time of the letter Billie had been in prison only a few weeks, but she was released early, in February of 1948, and soon afterward gave a triumphant welcome back concert at Carnegie Hall. She did not look fat; only filled out and healthier.

There is a tendency, in writing about Lady, to sound like an amateur psychiatrist. It did seem to me that when she told interviewers that her main desire was to have a home, a happy marriage and all the normal appurtenances of the good life, she was sincere. Circumstances—her environment, the men she chose, the fair weather friends—made that impossible.

Another inclination on the part of critics is to claim that despite (or even because of) her intolerable grief, she sang as well in the later years as she ever had. Billie knew better than anyone how wishful this was. The evidence is all too clear on the last few albums, compared to those made during the golden years when her sound was bold, firm, the vibrato under control, the material often fresh instead of tired reruns of old hits.

Traveling with her all over Western Europe during three and a half weeks of January and February of 1954, I heard Lady every night; the great period was nearing its end, but on most evenings she was in prime form, inspired by the milling fans, the flowers in her dressing room, the deference with which she was treated.

Europe could have been the solution for Billie. She went back there a couple of times, briefly; postcards from Milan and London were my last correspondence from her, dated Nov. 1958 and Feb. 1959. After she returned I wrote to Max Jones, her friend at the *Melody Maker*, suggesting that the only hope for her was to get some work that would keep her away from the United States for a while. He was unable to find anyone interested in helping; not even a record session. Shortly afterward Lady played her disastrous final engagement, at a theatre in the Village, and a week later was hospitalized for the last time.

During the 20 years since her death, the name of Billie Holiday has somehow been converted from a vital voice on recordings to a legend in print and a fiction on screen. The typical jazz fan today is more likely to have seen the film "Lady Sings the Blues" than to have seen or even heard the stunningly beautiful original Lady. To those of us who knew her well, this is a source of deep regret. As Harry "Sweets" Edison put it recently:

"People who saw that film got the wrong impression. I was on the soundtrack myself, but I didn't even go to see it. It wasn't the true story, and Diana Ross wasn't the right actress for the role. People who judge Lady by that movie just won't understand what she was all about.

"When I first saw her in Chicago in 1936, the impression she made was indescribable. She had something of her own; she was an original all the way, and beyond that she was so beautiful—tall and graceful and dignified.

"I was with the Basie band when she joined and spent most of 1937 on the road with us. She and Prez became friends the very first night, and they were in-

ELLINGTON BAND FIVE YEARS LATER

BY LEONARD FEATHER

BERMUDA—This island, the last stop on the SS Rotterdam's week-long jazz festival cruise, has played an odd, coincidental role in the bandleading life of Mercer Ellington.

Just over five years ago, honoring a commitment made by the Duke ("With me or without me, my band will be there"), Mercer flew almost directly from his father's funeral to play for an IBM convention here in Hamilton. It was his maiden flight as skipper of what has since been billed as "The Duke Ellington Orchestra, conducted by Mercer Ellington."

This week finds him stopping off at Bermuda in a different role, leading his orchestra aboard the ship. It is his third such voyage. The passengers, lured also by such names as Dizzy Gillespie, Teddy Wilson, Wild Bill Davis and Chris Connor, are reacting enthusiastically.

On our second night out Mercer played a concert in the ship's theater. With two exceptions, only Duke Ellington compositions were played, but somehow it all seemed different.

"Take the A Train," instead of being used as an opening theme was a vocal feature by Anita Moore. (She and five of the present sidemen were in the band before Duke died.) "Caravan" now is the framework for a piccolo solo; "Lucky So and So" has taken on a disco coloration, and "Mood Indigo" waits until the final chorus before achieving the distant, eerie sound of three horns intoning the theme. It is as though Mercer has shuffled the deck but is using the same cards.

Two nights later when the band played for dancing and Mercer reached into the sheaf of manuscripts to pull out "Stomping at the Savoy," "Star Dust" and "The Way We Were," the ballroom floor soon filled. If you complained that this was hardly typical Duke, his son could remind you that even in the earliest days Ellington played pop standards, making the compromises that are essential to the life of a concert orchestra doubling as dance band.

The giants, of course, are gone; they either predeceased Ellington (Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves), or have since died (Harry Carney), gone into retirment (Cootie Williams) or quit the band (Russell Procope). In 1974, interviewed in Bermuda (I had stopped off here during the first jazz cruise), Mercer told me: "I want a band Pop would be proud of. We're going to beef up the personnel, and the music of Ellington will live on like any of the classics, like the works of Debussy or Schoenberg."

Today he says confidently: "We play the music better than the old band did in its last three or four years." (True, at times, in the sense that Duke Ellington, beset by ill health and personnel turnover, lost control and let his orchestra fall apart.) "We have a more youthful band now. The younger men enable us to stay within our budget; they are able to live on the road more easily—our average hop is six or seven hours on the bus between one night stands—but most important, they are deeply into Ellingtonia, and learn a lot from our older cats.

"These kids are fascinated by Ellington; when we go back to pieces like 'The River,' his ballet music, or 'The Liberian Suite,' they are astonished at how far he was ahead of his time.

"We use tapes to get our musicians indoctrinated. We have seven tape machines, we have early Ellington concerts, and the band tapes itself from night to night so we can compare and criticize, on the bus, listening to how a certain piece sounded when Pop's band played it and how we played it on the gig last night."

Mercer takes pains to insure that the entire jazz legacy is absorbed by his younger men (and woman: the clarinet solos are by Lisa Pollard, a tenor sax player in her mid-20s). If they really want to get the feeling, he tells them, they must listen to Fletcher Henderson and all the other great bands that came up in Duke's era.

Mercer Ellington with daughter Gaye aboard the SS Rotterdam for jazz cruise.

One 1974 promise still unfulfilled: "I've resumed writing," Mercer said then. "I have a lot of ideas that I want to express, and for the first time since I joined the band I have a chance to get my own music played."

The intention was honest, but Mercer could not then be aware of the problems that awaited him. Juggling frequent changes in personnel, worrying about the logistics the great expense of dispersing the band and reconvening it in New York after a layoff, the bothersome bookkeeping, the IRS complications involving his father, the writing of his biography of Duke ("Duke Ellington in Person") took such a toll on his time that he has contributed only four pieces, two of them rewrites and two new works.

The years have been traumatic in his private life: a marriage ended, a new one begun and, after a 30-year lull, fatherhood again. Paul Ellington (named for Paul Gonsalves) was born eight months ago in Copenhagen, where Mercer has taken up residence and where his wife is an SAS executive. Mercer's pretty daughter Gaye, now 30 plus, a talented painter like her grandfather, is among us on the cruise.

When the band plays new arrangements, such as Charles Mingus' "Self Portrait" (the last piece Mingus wrote) or an original by the trumpeter Barry Lee Hall, there are mixed reactions among older listeners; in Europe, and on American college dates, new material and extended concert works are welcomed. Onzy Matthews, an arranger and pianist who subbed during Duke's final illness, is assuming a larger role as writer and librarian, resurrecting hard-to-find old Ellington charts.

If the band has suffered from this identity crisis, Mercer seems now to have forged a reasonable alliance of what his listeners are led to expect by the name of Duke Ellington on the music stands and what they hope to hear in the way of attempts to break away from the Ducal mold.

That Duke's shadow will never quite remove itself becomes apparent when the orchestra's future plans are discussed. Manny Fox, a businessman who has taken a profound interest, last week enabled the band to make its first record album in four years. Fox is also setting up plans for a movie version sometime in 1970 of Duke's book, "Music Is My Mistress" (the film will bear the same title), and, probably next January, an as yet untitled Broadway musical.

"The show will be along the lines of a revue, doing with Duke's music what 'Ain't Misbehavin' ' has done with Fats Waller's," Mercer Ellington says. "We're talking to directors like Michael Bennett, who did 'A Chorus Line,' and Jerome Robbins. My elder daughter Mercedes, the dancer, is working on some ideas. It has to be the same kind of entertaining show as, say, 'No, No, Nanette,' in which the songs are so familiar they don't have to be learned. People will enjoy it not for any big star names, but just because they're listening to 'Satin Doll' and 'Sophisticated Lady.' "

The motion picture (in which, as in the Broadway show, Mercer plans to use his orchestra) presents far less surmountable problems. "Who can possibly play Ellington? Everyone is looking for a black actor, of course, but ironically, I know of only one man who had something of the same kind of personality, and he's not here: Charles Laughton. Rather than a star who has his own image I feel we should find somebody who can method-act the role, who can really *become* Pop. It's not easy."

It was time for another set. Mulgrew Miller, the band's best pianist since Duke, chugged his way through "Happy Go Lucky Local." J. J. Wiggins played an electric bass on "Sophisticated Lady." Only 18 years old when he joined the band immediately after Duke's death, he exemplifies the commanding virtuosity that has arisen during the post-Ducal generation.

"Cotton Tail" was next, the famous sax solo chorus weak in comparison with the wondrous togetherness of Duke's perennial 1940s-'60s reed team, none of whose members remains. "Creole Love Call" showed the Ellington continuum in admirable form, with Anita Moore's vocalese echoes of the melody not too far removed from the original version that has survived a half century.

Then came the dance tunes; with Moore singing "Misty," and finally, the audience clapped along on two and four with Mercer's best-known work, "Things Ain't What They Used to Be."

They ain't indeed; but what they are indicates that a valid, ongoing legend is being sustained to the best of Mercer Ellington's ability.

On this night, five years after Mercer's first nerve-racking takeover of a band that had dominated jazz since his infancy, the time seemed right to speculate again on things to come. How will it be five, 10 or 20 years from now? Will it be possible or desirable to change the name and simply become Mercer Ellington and his Orchestra?

"What I'd like to do is change the name in such a way that whether I have the band, or Edward (Mercer's grown son, who played guitar in the band for four years), or Paul (the infant son), it won't ever require the necessity of a change of title. I would like it to become known simply as the Ellington Orchestra.

"The album we just made will be released under the title 'Ellington '79.' What we have to do in order to establish this name, of course, is produce a hit record. Not easy, I know; the last thing we had that was anywhere close to a big number was 'Satin Doll' in 1952." (This observation seems to overlook a significant point: Duke Ellington never relied on record sales.)

One cannot but sympathize with Mercer for the situation in which he now finds himself, wearing a mantle that is at the same time a burden. Somehow, though, it seems that he is managing, more and more as time goes by, to maintain the delicate balance between demands for the echo of yesteryear, in textures and tunes, and the need for fresh approaches and new material.

When some older fans, irked by a change of direction, insist "That's not Ellington!" he can always remind the complainant that Duke himself faced the same sort of opposition. For 40 years there was always a critic somewhere lamenting that the senior Ellington was moving in directions of which the critic did not approve. Like his father before him, Mercer may well turn out to have the last laugh. □

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separable. She loved Jimmy Rushing, the other singer with the band. It didn't bother Lady that she never got to sing duets with Jimmy or make records with Basie; during that period she was recording regularly under her own name, as well as on Teddy Wilson's dates.

"To me, that was the greatest period of all. Her voice was so clear, so distinctive, and she had such assurance. In later years I got to make a number of her sessions, and I was as fascinated by the experience as I was when I did a record date with Art Tatum—that's how much I was in awe of her.

"We were friends until the end. She wouldn't do the 'Lady in Satin' album until I got to New York. That was in March of '59. A few days later, Prez died, and three months afterward Lady left us."

Just as Lady formed close ties with musicians such as Prez and Sweets, her allegiances with fellow-singers were even more intimate.

Carmen McRae recalls: "I first heard her on records, but we met very soon afterward when Irene Wilson, Teddy's wife, introduced me to her.

"Billie at that time was just about to join Artie Shaw's orchestra, which was a big deal in those days. I followed her career through the years and she always had that fabulous sound, and that beautiful face; but to me, the greatest years of all were in the middle and late '40s, starting around the time she did *Lover Man.*

"I once did an album by that title, using all songs associated with Lady. It was made out of admiration and respect, and although I never consciously imitate her, have to admit that once in a while some phrase, a little melodic twist associated with her, will sneak in when I'm singing.

"She was my idol then, she's my idol now, and I guess she always will be."

At this tribute concert, the incomparable sound and sight of Billie herself will dominate the evening as she appears onscreen. The performers appearing in person are all contemporaries of Billie's or, in the case of those who arrived on the scene a little later, artists who relate to the era and values she represented.

Carmen, Sweets, Teddy, all of them, all of us who had the unique privilege of knowing her and of hearing a small club on 52nd Street reduced to pindrop silence by the magic of her presence, remember Billie Holiday with love.

Leonard Feather is a dean of jazz criticism, creator of the *Encyclopedia Of Jazz* series, and writes for the *Los Angeles Times* and numerous other publications.

JAZZ

VAUGHAN LP: FROM BRAZIL WITH LOVE

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Summer may have arrived, but it's raining records and I have no soundproof umbrella. During my recent 12-day absence from home and the week that has elapsed since then, 42 new jazz albums arrived in the mail. Plus a dozen reissues.

How to deal with this onslaught? The best way, it seems, is to cast aside those likely to have nothing new or exciting to say and concentrate first on the true innovators.

Indispensable to any collection is Sarah Vaughan's "I LOVE BRAZIL!" (Pablo Today 2312-101). After too many records made with minimal preparation and overfamiliar material, Vaughan was recorded at a studio in Rio in late 1977, surrounded by some of Brazil's most distinguished and distinctive instrumentalists (strings, flutes, guitars, percussion), and composers doubling as players. Even Antonio Carlos Jobim joins in, playing keyboard on his own "Triste"; Milton Nascimento, in "Courage," is on hand with guitar and vocal assistance.

The LP is a twofold mind jogger. In addition to pointing up Vaughan's qualities as a supreme interpreter when the songs are worthy of her, it reminds us how many of the most valuable popular melodies of the past decade or two have emanated from Brazil.

Marcos Valle's "If You Went Away," Dorival Caymmi's "Roses and Roses," Oscar Neves' "I Live to Love You," all fitted out with appropriate lyrics by Ray Gilbert, are among the 10 delights of this five-star collection, which should help to reinforce Vaughan's reputation and perhaps even her sales. Much credit is due to Durval Ferreira, who not only served as creative director but also wrote "The Day It Rained," one of the finest songs in the collection; and to producer Aloysio de Oliveira.

Woody Shaw's "WOODY III" (Columbia JC 35977) establishes its protagonist firmly not only as the premier trumpeter for the 1980s, but also as a resourceful composer and, on the A side, as arranger for the 11-piece ensemble that interprets his three-movement suite.

Shaw actually plays cornet or fluegelhorn on these sides, but the difference is a quibble. Other influences may be heard—Freddie Hubbard, Gillespie, Clifford Brown, Miles—but Shaw by now has truly found his own voice and his own pen. He is surrounded by men worthy of the propinquity: Rene McLean and Carter Jefferson on saxophones, Onaje Allan Cumbs on piano, and a brass section in which, at some points, the bass trombonist lends the band a tubalike depth.

That this is Shaw's best effort to date reflects credit not only on him but on producer Michael Cuscuna, who clearly agrees with this artist's determination to maintain his self-respect rather than fall into any Donald Byrd commercial chasms. Five stars.

Sarah Vaughan

Other hornmen on hand: Art Farmer's fluegel in "TO DUKE WITH LOVE" (Inner City IC 6014) cruises gently through such seldom-played Ellingtonia as "Star Crossed Lovers" and "Brown Skin Gal in the Calico Gown," as well as the more expectable "It Don't Mean a Thing" and "Love You Madly." Splendid support by Cedar Walton, piano, Sam Jones on bass and Billy Higgins on drums. Four stars.

"CLOSE ENCOUNTER" (Inner City IC 3026), by the Franco Ambrosetti Quintet, features this peripatetic Swiss-born trumpeter (all right, fluegelhornist) in a brisk workout with a boldly assertive American saxophonist, Bennie Wallace. The rhythm contingent comprises a leading Swiss pianist George Gruntz, Bob Moses on drums and Mike Richmond on bass. Four of the five works originated within the group, or within the family: "Napoleon Blown Apart" (surely a candidate for title of the year) was written by Franco's father, saxophonist Flavio Ambrosetti. Three-and-a-half stars.

The above-named Mike Richmond joins with two fellow members of Stan Getz's 1977 rhythm section (Andy Laverne, piano, and Billy Hart, drums) on "DREAM WAVES" (Inner City IC 1065), his first album as a leader.

SWING SHIFT

Jazz Walk of Fame on N.Y.'s 52nd St.

BY LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—If Shirley Temple's name can be implanted on Hollywood Blvd., why not Billie Holiday's on 52nd St.?

That was the underlying implication Tuesday afternoon when New York's immortal "Swing Street," a jungle of skyscrapers today but a treasury of small jazz clubs in the 1930s and '40s, was the scene of an unprecedented ceremony.

The block of 52nd St. between 5th and 6th Aves. was jammed with hundreds of fans to see, engraved on the sidewalk, five granite plaques bearing the names of Lester "Prez" Young (after whom these new "Prez Awards" are named), Billie Holiday, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker and Coleman Hawkins. The signs at the street corners on 5th and 6th Aves. now bear the permanent legend "Swing Street."

The idea was born in 1971 when, reviewing Arnold Shaw's book "52nd Street," I suggested that the area where so much durable music had been distilled deserved this form of sidewalk commemoration.

It took seven years, and the eventual cooperation of everyone from the mayor to the Jazzmobile office, Bruce Lundvall and other CBS executives to turn the dream into reality by assembling a committee to nominate musicians for this jazz walk of fame.

A dozen were named last year, among them the five whose plaques were unveiled Tuesday. This year, of the six additional winners announced, Red Norvo and Slam Stewart were on hand to accept certificates (their plaques will be installed within the next 12 months, as soon as permission is obtained from the owners of the adjacent buildings). Stewart also accepted for the late Erroll Garner, Fats Waller and Oscar Pettiford were represented by their sons, and Ben Webster's award went to 81-year-old Andy Kirk, in whose band Webster played in 1931.

Everything went off smoothly at the ceremony. Drummer Max Roach, acting as host, commented on the media's neglect of jazz and of the role of 52nd St. in achieving "unity with diversity."

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, long a dedicated jazz student, shared the emceeing; Mayor Ed Koch and other officials spoke briefly.

"This was a logical idea," said Dr. George Butler of CBS. "People come from all over the world and wonder why they can't find any statue or other symbol recognizing these artists who gave us real American classical music."

In keeping with the pristine Swing Street ambiance, live music was provided, with a truck from which an orchestra directed by Ernie Wilkins played "52nd Street Theme" and other fittingly evocative tunes.

Old hands spent some of their time pointing out which building had replaced what club. "Wasn't this the Onyx?

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Continued from 26th Page

And over there was the Famous Door—No, that was the Three Deuces. And the Hickory House was down the street near 7th Ave."

They are all long gone, of course, along with too many of the innovators who gave this block a reputation second only to Harlem's. If the awards to Stuff Smith and Art Tatum came too late, at least future generations will be reminded of them, and five others still among us—Roy Eldridge, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, Sarah Vaughan and Kenny Clarke—will see their names on Swing Street very soon. (They were all 1978 honorees.)

As Red Norvo said, "When I played on this street in 1935, I wouldn't have believed anyone who told me that something like this could ever possibly happen. And a bystander summed it all up tersely: "Better late than never."

This has been a decade of mind-boggling bassists, among whom Richmond surely is the most astonishingly agile since Stanley Clarke (or Jaco Pastorius; take your pick). Four originals apiece by Richmond and Laverne, mostly free-form works of variable intensity, with a fine example of Richmond's steady pulsing in "Sabra." Four stars.

Bassoon and accordion? This sounds like a marriage made in purgatory, yet with Ray Pizzi and Frank Marocco in these respective roles, Chick Corea's "Windows" takes on an intriguing new coloration in "FRANK MAROCCO—JAZZ ACCORDION" (Discovery DS 797). Playing an electric instrument from which he manages to extract a sound as distant as possible from the wheeze-box of yore, Marocco is paired with Pizzi on soprano sax for most of the other cuts.

The album would have come off better had Marocco used a drummer and a regular bass player. Instead, he pushes the left-hand buttons for bass effects. Sometimes, as in "Round Midnight," "Joy Spring" and "Giant Steps," it comes off; on others (Corea's "What Was") the beat is uneasy. Three stars.

For the record, Art Van Damme, the accordionist and quintet leader whose annual Down Beat poll victories during the 1950s were always a mystery to me, is back with "BLUE WORLD" (Pausa PR 7027), playing the same old vanilla music. Creatively, this is the equivalent of a group of nice suburban matrons sitting around making small talk. No surprise in the tunes or treatments, no energy in the rhythm, no salvation even in the presence of guitarist Joe Pass, of whom too little is heard. One star.

A reissue project that can only be dealt with collectively is the takeover by CBS Records of the Commodore catalog built by veteran producer Milt Gabler in the 1930s and '40s. Gabler, who was the world's first independent jazz record maker, has seen his masterworks shunted around from one company to another; now at last the label itself has been reinstated.

The first 10 releases are "Eddie Condon: Windy City Seven and Jam Session at Commodore" (Commodore XFL 14427), free-wheeling Dixieland but also including Jack Teagarden's empyrean trombone solo on "Diane"; Billie Holiday's "Fine and Mellow" (14428), with "Strange Fruit," "Yesterdays" and other 1939 and 1944 cuts; Coleman Hawkins (14936), two sessions I produced, on which I therefore can't pass judgment; "Lester Young Kansas City Five and Six" (14937), with Prez's clarinet on one date, and the first-ever recorded electric guitar solos, by Eddie Durham; Ben Webster and Don Byas (14938); Wild Bill Davison, "That's a Plenty" (14939), with Pee Wee Russell and Eddie Condon; Jack Teagarden and Max Kaminsky (14940), one of the lesser LPs; Bud Freeman (14941), with Jess Stacy and George Wettling; Jelly Roll Morton's "New Orleans Memories" including two previously unissued tunes (14942); and the Joe Bushkin and Mel Powell groups in "The World Is Waiting" (14943), of minor interest except for the splendid Powell combo session, on which Benny Goodman produced one of his most memorable solos, "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise."

These are all monophonic, of course, but the sound was generally good for its day. My only complaint is that on each album one or more of the tunes (sometimes almost every tune) is presented in two adjacent takes. Since the alternate version often does not vary conspicuously from the first-take choice, this either makes for repetitive listening or for mandatory needle-hopping. It would have been far preferable to place all the first choices on one side and the alternates on another.

"Special Treatment" (Warner Bros. BSK 3324) introduces Jakob Magnusson, who was twice voted "Best Keyboardist in Iceland," an honor comparable, I suppose, to best figure skater in Ecuador. Now a Southern California resident, the Reykjavik refugee offers a pleasant-enough fusion set, with very brief guest appearances by Tom Scott, Ernie Watts and other "Ode to Abe" ends, believe it or not, in a Dixieland fusion groove. Two-and-a-half stars. □

AT PAULEY PAVILION

Good Times With Preservation Hall

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Judged as entertainment, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, heard Tuesday at Pauley Pavilion, UCLA, must be credited for creating a rare spirit of good fun. The clap-alongs, the standing ovations, the line that marched behind the men during the "Saints" finale attested to the popularity of a group that has been similarly greeted around the world since its preserver-in-chief, Allan Jaffe, founded the New Orleans gathering place for which the band is named.

Judged as history, the ensemble has a special appeal. Here is the oldest jazz genre whose members are still around to show us how it used to be. Clearly, the five senior men were applauded partly for survival, and for the historically vital forces they represent.

Nevertheless, since this was a presentation of the UCLA Committee on Fine Arts Productions, a musical evaluation is unavoidable. On that basis, as heard by anyone with a trained musical ear, it was an evening for clenched teeth.

Immense Strides

Jass has made immense strides since its birth as a primitive form. Did the principal musicians in this band lose their way? Or did they always suffer from unsteady tempos, dragging drums, a hesitant lead trumpeter, harmonic clashes between the banjo player and the painist?

Attempting to salvage all this, clarinetist Willie Humphrey displayed good chops and a measure of creativity; he also sang and danced, establishing himself as the best 78-year-old dancing clarinetist in town.

After hitting a few high spots with some buoyant blues, and a couple of cheerful ensemble jams on "Tiger Rag" and "Panama," the band reached its nadir of unmusicality with a fumbling boogie-woogie piano solo by Sing Miller, followed by the deliberately but painfully dirgelike "Just a Closer Walk With Thee."

Two Mavericks

In the band are two mavericks, both white, relatively young (in their 40s) and not from New Orleans. They are Allan Jaffe, whose tuba playing is less important than the work he has created for New Orleans veterans over the past 20 years, and Frank Demond, whose trombone is still back in the Kid Ory era.

The big, overwhelmingly white crowd, enjoying every moment, clapped on the first and third beats during "The Saints," a gaffe of which Duke Ellington once observed, "This is considered aggressive." Let's call it an aggressively happy reaction to a program of, ah, good-time sounds.

7/6

AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Phil Woods and the Joys of Sax

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Phil Woods makes it easy on the listener, who needs only to sit back and luxuriate in his firm, bold sound, to bask in the beauty of his sublimation, melodic and harmonic, of such works as an old ballad called "You Leave Me Breathless."

The title of that song might be appropriate to characterize the reaction of fellow musicians to Woods' excursions on his alto saxophone. At the Lighthouse, where he is making his first local appearance in almost a year, he offered new evidence that the mature conviction of his style does not depend on prevailing winds of fashion.

His combo consists of four musicians who have been working as a unit since February, 1974. They are pianist Mike Melillo, bassist Steve Gilmore, Bill Goodwin on drums and Woods. The band that stays together plays together, as the togetherness of this group proved in the opening number, Tadd Dameron's "The Scene Is Clean," its theme played in neatly organized parallel lines by Woods and Melillo.

Although much of the Woods repertoire consists of original and attractive pieces written by Melillo or the leader, the opening performance Wednesday consisted of standards, among them Horace Silver's "Strolling," which Woods ended with a quote from Percy Grainger's "Country Garden," an old Charlie Parker device. The set wound up with the familiar extended treatment of Cole Porter's "All Through the Night."

Gilmore plays his upright bass with a restrained but clear sound and consistent ingenuity. Melillo, though given to Monkish mannerisms once in a while, is a pianist of rare dexterity whose left hand contributes intense punctuations while the right spins out brilliant, fast-moving lines.

As for Woods, he remains quite simply one of the complete masters of the horn, a post-bopper who molded a personal style years ago and continues to hone and perfect it.

This exceptional group will be on hand through Sunday.

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7/14/79

Terry Gibbs at the Marina Bistro

The Marina Bistro, due soon to round out its first year as a jazz room, is reverberating to the sounds of bebop, a musical genre once considered radical. Vibraphonist Terry Gibbs is leading a sextet whose members are well steeped in the idiom. Because this is not an organized group, the material and performance are predictable. Gibbs is the decathalon runner of bop; every uptempo chorus is a high hurdle which he negotiates like a champion.

In his more relaxed mements he displays a melodic ingenuity that is obscured in the lightning runs of his wilder excursions, yet it was in John Coltrane's "Giant Steps" that his brilliance was most successfully showcased. Gibbs slashed through a dozen choruses like a knife through butter, his mallets keeping pace with his restless mind. Pianist Lon Levy also was equal to the tune's demands. Trumpeter Conte Candoli, aroused out of his bebop conventionality, stumbled a little but generally seemed to enjoy this escape from the too-familiar ritual of overplayed standards. Bob Cooper, whose bristling, big-toned tenor sax was most effective on "Broadway," sat this one out.

The set closed to the cooking beat of a fast blues, with bassist Ed Gaston and drummer John Dentz anchoring a spirited rhythm team. Gibbs closes Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

LA Times 6/24/79

JAZZ IN BRIEF

BY LEONARD FEATHER

FLUTE TALK. Sam Most with Joe Farrell. Xanadu 173. These flute dialogues make sense. The styles contrast well; Most, who was probably the first great jazz flutist, has a cleaner, more staccato sound, while Farrell is less boppish and swings less easily. The unhelpful liner notes neglect to point out that Most takes the first solo on every tune except "Samba to Remember You By." He also plays alto flute on "When You Wish Upon a Star" and on "Leaves." The former is by Most only; the latter is an unaccompanied dual improvisation, a brief and fairly successful experimental track. Five of the eight cuts are Most originals; he is an unpretentiously effective composer. The rhythm section, particularly Bob Magnusson on bass, helps sustain the interest. Note for audiophiles: all you need to obtain this set as a Direct to Disc album is pay $15.50 instead of $7.98, and get 11 minutes less music (six tunes instead of eight). What kind of sense does this make?

OPUS 3, NO. 1. Moacir Santos. Discovery DS 795. No bossa nova here; nevertheless the undulating rhythms have a flavor that is for the most part unmistakably Brazilian in this unassuming collection. The tunes have adequate English lyrics, but Santos' melodies are the thing, and he is a melodist of romantic yet rhythmic inclinations. Seven of these cuts were made in 1968 but never before issued. Of the other three, using a slightly larger combo, "Adriana" is outstanding, its theme outlined in vocalese by Deborah Tompkins and elaborated on by Santos with his Mulliganesque baritone sax. Santos also sings on a few tunes in an untrained but affecting voice.

WE COULD MAKE SUCH BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER. Jimmy Rowles. Xanadu 157. If you are about to buy your first LP by Rowles, an elegant, eminent piano stylist, don't make this the one. His superb musicianship gives way too often to his sense of humor, as well as to a casual, almost throwaway air, especially on his tongue in cheek "Stars and Stripes Forever" and on the overlong "I Can't Get Started." Good support by bassist George Mraz, but he should have been given more to support. Rowles' previous Xanadu session, with Al Cohn (138), is more representative of his high standards.

ART PEPPER TODAY. GALAXY GXY 5119. The alto sax veteran's first album under his Galaxy contract, this is a no-nonsense blowing date with a minimum of preparation. Four of the six cuts are Pepper originals, though "Miss Who?" is clearly just another workout on the chords of "Sweet Georgia Brown." "Patricia" has an attractive melodic line, "Chris's Blues' is a simple blues riff, and "Mambo Koyama" is strengthened by the addition of Kenneth Nash on congas. Pepper remains one of the most potent and eloquent spokesmen for the bop era in the Charlie Parker tradition.

A LITTLE NEW YORK MIDTOWN MUSIC. Nat Adderley. Galaxy GXY 5120. Three reunions: with Johnny Griffin, whose robust tenor was heard on Adderley's first combo date in the late 1950s; with Victor Feldman, the admirable pianist who toured with Cannonball and Nat in 1960-'61; and with the drummer Roy McCurdy, an Adderley sideman from 1965 until Cannonball's death. Brother Nat's muted horn has a welcome mid-'60s Miles Davis sound. The tunes, among them originals by Nat, Feldman and bassist Ron Carter, are generally vigorous vehicles for this ad hoc group.

IN MOTION. Heath Brothers. Columbia JC 35816. This chain is no weaker than any of its five strong links: Jimmy Heath on tenor and soprano saxes, flute, and writer of most of the music; his brother Percy on bass and "baby bass" (which sounds like a pizzicato cello), the hiply intellectual pianist Stanley Cowell, the refreshingly rhythmic guitarist Tony Purrone, and the recent addition, Keith Copeland, on drums. Highlights are Billy Strayhorn's "Passion Flower" and "The Voice of the Saxophone," from Jimmy Heath's Afro-American Suite of Evolution. The group is aided by a nine-piece brass section used discreetly, for occasional punctuations, but essentially it's another commendable combo album.

Carmelo's: A New Jazz Room in Valley

BY LEONARD FEATHER

As if to confirm the impression that local excitement stirred up by the Playboy Festival would have a ripple effect on the local music scene, a new club has just completed its first successful week as a jazz room.

Actually, Carmelo's, at 4449 Van Nuys Blvd. near Ventura Blvd. in Sherman Oaks, is just where it has been for a dozen years, but previously only as an Italian restaurant. Now, Carmelo Piscitello, urged on by his drummer brother Chuck, has added music, with a five-days-a-week policy that may soon expand (there are jazz brunches on Sunday).

Two visits confirmed that despite its limited capacity (about 100), the room is well equipped to cater to the jazz community in the Valley.

Ross Tompkins, pianist with "The Tonight Show" band, led his trio last Thursday with John B. Williams on bass and Jake Hanna on drums. An incisive soloist whose roots encompass everyone from Art Tatum to McCoy Tyner, Tompkins is at his best lending baroque personal touches to "Django" or illuminating the rich harmonic lines of "Ill Wind."

His repertoire extends to such contemporary pieces as "Sunflower," the composer of which—Freddie Hubbard—dropped in one evening to jam with Conte Candoli.

Friday and Saturday found Shelly Manne, drummer and former boniface, in charge. Though no longer leading a regular group, Manne is always able to magnetize the area's more dependable musicians. With Monty Budwig on bass and the admirable, impressionistic piano of Alan Broadbent (replaced later by the capable but less experimental Bill Mays), Manne took his trio through an agreeable set of standards. Broadbent's chording on "What's New" was ornate and intelligently variegated.

The immediate future for Carmelo's looks bright: Karen Hernandez will be at the keyboard tonight; guitarist Lenny Breau is set for Friday and Saturday, and the eminent pianist George Cables has two nights coming up.

All that is needed to complete the pleasant mood at Carmelo's is an adjustment of the dim lights that tend to flicker distractingly off and on. The sound system and piano are first rate, and that in itself is some kind of nightclub surprise

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5 New Prez Plaques Honor 'Swing Street' Artists

By C. GERALD FRASER

Granite, brass-framed sidewalk plaques honoring four great American musicans and one singer, all winners of the Prez award — Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Billie Holiday — were unveiled yesterday on 52d Street to honor both the musicians and the historic block now officially called "Swing Street."

In the second annual award ceremonies, six other musicians were named as Prez recipients: Errol Garner and Thomas Fats Waller, pianists; Oscar Pettiford, bassist, and Ben Webster, saxophonist, all of whom are dead; and Kenneth Red Norvo, vibraharpist, and Leroy Slam Stewart, bassist; both of whom were on hand to accept their awards.

This granite plaque honors the late saxophone player.

The musicians were honored not only for their talents, but also for the roles they played in performing on 52d Street — a music focal point in the 1930's and 40's. The street itself was honored by its new designation, "celebrating," Henry Geldzahler, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs, said, "the existence of a street that doesn't exist anymore."

In all, 18 plaques, named for Lester (Prez) Young, have been awarded over the two years. Five have been placed in the sidewalk in front of CBS headquarters. Robert Altshuler, vice president for public affairs of CBS Record Group, said yesterday that when CBS obtained the cooperation of other property owners on the street, the remaining 13 plaques would be placed in the "Swing Street" sidewalk.

The idea of a "Jazz Walk" on 52d Street came from a suggestion by Leonard Feather, the jazz critic and writer, which was reinforced by Arnold Shaw in his book "The Street That Never Slept."

The New York Times/Neal Boenzi

Slam Stewart, left, and Red Norvo reminiscing about 52d Street during yesterday's ceremony honoring jazz stars.

Yesterday's ceremonies, which were watched by a couple of hundred noontime pedestrians as well as jazz personalities, performers and their relatives and friends, were led by Mayor Koch, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Max Roach. The Jazzmobile/CETA band, led by Ernie Wilkins, played.

The Mayor said his recent split-second jam session with Gerry Mulligan and Benny Goodman — the Mayor held an alto saxophone and squeezed out a squeak for television photographers — gave him a "right to be here," noted that New York has had all the jazz greats of yesterday and today and will have those of tomorrow.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the Los Angeles Lakers center, said his interest in the music came from his father, who was a musician, and he had grown up knowing many prominent jazz personalities. And Max Roach, the drummer whose career flowered on 52d Street, said that he had gotten his musical start in church, and that he went on to preach on the theme of "unity in diversity."

Mr. Roach said that men and women of various musical styles, personalities and races, as well as audiences of different races, all flocked to 52d Street when musicians brought, "quote, bebop, unquote; I hate that name," he said, to "The Street."

Mr. Roach said that jazz was "a reflection of America's democratic principles." Talented musicians, he said, are all able to make their individual contributions in a musical performance. "European music is imperialistic," he said, each musician confined to doing what he is told.

Urszula Dudziak

Polanski ("Knife in the Water," "Rosemary's Baby"). Urbaniak played in Komeda's quintet, then formed his own group in 1964 with Urszula; they were married three years later.

America seemed to be within their grasp when, as best soloist at the Montreux Jazz Festival, he won the prize, a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston. "But our Polish band was working steadily at a club in Warsaw, so instead of taking the scholarship we toured Europe for a couple of years and really made it big. I felt now we were strong enough to go to the States."

They arrived technically as students, but Urbaniak, impatient to make a professional start, went to New York instead of Boston and, with the help of the ubiquitous John Hammond, two albums were released. One, "Newborn Light," displayed Dudziak's astonishing vocal electric-pyrotechnics accompanied by the Polish pianist Adam Makovich; the other, "Fusion," introduced Urbaniak's custom made violin.

Slowly the Urbaniaks moved from the *succes d'estime* status of their first releases to develop a mounting curiosity on the part of musicologists and fans, who had never before heard anything quite like them. (Although there are now nine Urbaniak LPs and four by Dudziak, they invariably perform on each other's albums.)

In his traditional-jazz days, Urbaniak played the saxophone, but the call of the amplified fiddle relegated the horn to a minor role. "Then I decided," he says, "that some-day I would think up an electric saxophone so I could bend the notes, make all kinds of special effects, and really fly with it. As it happened, we were at a music fair in Chicago when one musician brought me a prototype of an instrument called the lyricon.

"I started to blow on it, made strange glissandos and vibratos, and found this was like a supersaxophone: The range is three octaves, but you can shift up or down one octave at either end so it has total capacity of five octaves."

Urbaniak believes in the power of auto-suggestion. The lyricon, he claims, can be made to resemble almost any instrument—"Not just by twiddling dials, but by thinking. If you think like an oboe player and set up something that is not far away from oboe, you'll sound very oboelike. I can sound like French horn too, by a little bit of redialing and thinking. This is the most advanced electronic instrument; it sounds less electric than any of the others."

Urszula Dudziak's special effects are even more startling than her husband's. Asked to give the layman some understanding of the use of electronics in her amazingly wide-ranging improvisations, she tried to explain: "I have a unit which has a tape loop, so the sound I put into it can go around and repeat itself; but I can regulate the speed and time the distance between my original note and the echo.

"In addition, I use a harmonizer, singing one note but producing others that are harmonics to it. The second note is slightly delayed, but the gap is so short that it sounds like unison or harmony. I have a numbered dial so that I can control the intervals between the notes."

Such technicalities are better listened to and enjoyed than analyzed. On her new album, "Future Talk" (Inner City 1066), there are four vocal solo tracks. Reviewing them, I observed that "If they were performed without overdubbing, either Ms. Dudziak has a double larynx or this is the electronic miracle of the year." The latter is the case. For further proof, check out one of the Urbaniaks in-person performances, for which they employ no prerecorded tapes. "A lot of people tell us, after our concerts," Dudziak said, "that they can't believe it's all just me, my one voice, and the tapes and harmonizer."

How does she manage to develop effects that are unlike any achieved by others who have experimented along comparable lines? (Herbie Hancock, for instance, used something called a "Vocoder" to disguise his voice electronically, but the results were unmusical and trivial.) "I think it was mostly luck and guesswork," she says. "When I first got an electronic unit, I never did read the instructions.

"After a while, I learned, just by plugging into the amplifier or microphone, using all the knobs, and just listening to what came out. It was the same with the echo; it wasn't meant to be used the way I use it—it's supposed to be just to enlarge the sound, but when I started to play with the speed of the tape, I found a whole new world opening up."

This seems to be the story of so many discoveries: An audacious leap into the dark, not fortified by too much knowledge, eventually can shed new light. This is also known as doing wrong right. The groans, wild shrieks, rhythmic fusillades, guttural noises, weird blends and touches of rare beauty that constitute a typical Dudziak vocal can no longer be classified as mere experiments; they are the tangible results of experimentation.

The Urbaniaks have carried their message to Western Europe but have yet to visit Japan, and are still hoping to return some day, for a visit, to their native country.

"People know about us at home," said Urbaniak, "because our records are played on Polish radio; but they can't buy them, except on the black market. So on radio they will announce that at 11 p.m. they are going to play a record of ours, and 'You can record it.' "

Because Dudziak's style transcends the need for language as a tool, for the most part she sings wordlessly, in the vocalese that has become an Esperanto of jazz. Almost all the Poles' material, too, is composed by them or by members of their group, but there is one notable exception. In the album "Midnight Rain" (Arista 4132), Dudziak brings her fluent English to bear on "Lover," "Misty," "Bluesette" and her own title tune. She also sings a 21st-century scat version of Dizzy's "Night in Tunisia" that must have sent Gillespie into shock.

"Is there any chance," I asked, "that just for a novelty you may some day sing in Polish?"

Looking at the small bundle in her arms, Urszula Dudziak said: "Only to Kasia." □

7/10/79

JAZZ REVIEW

Shelby Flint: Juggling Act at Donte's

Shelby Flint, heard last Thursday at Donte's, seems to have a lot going for her. Blonde, wide-eyed and very pretty, she laughs and smiles infectiously between songs; she writes her own material, accompanies herself at the electric keyboard and, as far as it was possible to tell, is a technically flawless performer with a pure sound and wide range.

The qualification has to be added because the sound-system problem came close to ruining her act. Like many contemporary singers, she chooses to employ a bottom-heavy, rhythm-oriented accompaniment. In addition to a second electric keyboard player there were a drummer, two additional percussionists (one of each sex), a Fender bass player and a saxophonist.

Given so many elements to juggle, it is incumbent on the artist, or the club, or some competent third party, to maintain a delicate balance between voice and setting. This simply was not done. As a result, after a while one had to give up on trying to understand the lyrics. Only in one or two brief low-level passages, particularly in a song inspired by Hawaii, did Flint come across with the impact of which she is obviously capable.

The saxophonist, Jerry Peterson, played soprano on most tunes in a querulous style; on one number he turned to the baritone. Surprisingly, he was most effective on a piece that found him blowing alto and tenor simultaneously. The spirit of Roland Kirk lives on.

It would be informative to hear Shelby Flint sing her songs accompanied only by herself, or this group under properly controlled conditions. She'd better spend plenty of time on the sound check before going back to work at Donte's Thursday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

7/8

JAZZ

THE URBANIAKS DO WRONG RIGHT

BY LEONARD FEATHER

It was less like a formal interview than a family party as the three generations of Urbaniaks arrived: the mother, 70, who came to the United States from Warsaw last Christmas; her son, Michal Urbaniak, master of the electronic violin; the daughter-in-law, Urszula Dudziak, who has brought the human voice into the space age, using echoes, tapes and synthesizers, and the granddaughter, Kasia, who has accompanied her parents on most of their gigs since her birth last July 10.

Their travels as a close-knit family unit reconfirm that Michal and Urszula have planted firm American roots, musically and socially, since their arrival in New York almost five years ago.

They have become a part of the culture of their adopted country, the first representative of Poland ever to make an international impact on contemporary music. It has not happened by chance, for Urbaniak knew by the time he was 16 that a career in the United States was his destiny.

"I made my first trip here as a teen-ager, in 1962," he says, "playing with a traditional group called the Wreckers. It was like a dream. All I remember is limousines, tuxedos, marvelous music, a lot of drinks, parties and fantastic times.

"It was clear to me that I would have to return, but with something strong of my own to offer. The United States is a country for winners, and I got ready to be a winner before I came back.

"Some of the preparation took the form of correspondence with Dr. Robert Moog. He put me in touch with a laboratory in New Jersey through which I obtained a custom-made electronic violin. Nobody else had anything like it.

"So I came to America prepared with something different. I found things very much changed. New York was much dirtier, and I didn't see those tuxedos any more, but what I did find was exactly what I needed: stimulation, competition, toughness and challenge."

Dudziak was less sanguine about the new experience. "I was under Michal's influence all the time. He would tell me constantly, 'It's an incredible country; everything is the best,' but when I arrived it was a shock—overwhelming. We had lived for two years in Switzerland, in the low Alps, with a beautiful little house in the forest; and we lived for a time in Norway, where nature is so quiet and beautiful. And I was taken from all this into the heart of Manhattan!"

For a while, it was a scene from "The Out-of-Towners." Dudziak saw a man shot half a block from her home. During the first three months, they were the victims of four robberies: his violin, her jewelry, their car. She recalls: "I got scared and sick—developed arthritis and was almost paralyzed. The doctor told me maybe it's psychological. Then, after a while, I got used to the life."

Michal Urbaniak

The Urbaniaks had met in 1960 through their friend, the late Krzysztof (Christopher) Komeda, the jazz pianist and film-music composer best known for his work with Roman

7/12

IN LAS VEGAS

McRae Tribute to Billie Holiday

BY LEONARD FEATHER

LAS VEGAS—The concert held Sunday at the Desert Inn, billed as "Carmen McRae's Tribute to Billy Holiday," was a triumph for its star, as well as for Monk Montgomery, president of the Las Vegas Jazz Society, who has been working indomitably to bring an awareness of jazz to this fun-and-entertainment-slanted town.

It will have been 20 years next week since Billie Holiday died. This seems to be the season for commemoration: The Newport Jazz Festival recently presented a "We Remember Billie" tribute, also with McRae as a main contributor. Still another event will be held in honor of Lady Day, with McRae and four other women singers, Aug. 12 and 13 at the Hollywood Bowl.

This does not mean that McRae is an imitator. Holiday was a friend and a source of inspiration, but in McRae's uptempos there are elements of planned humor and occasional touches of scatting which Billie never used, not to mention other differences.

Greg Morris was master of ceremonies for Sunday's performance, which included some of the most cherished songs in the Holiday repertoire: "No More," "Some Other Spring" and "Good Morning Heartache." Dismissing the rhythm section (her pianist is Marshall Otwell), McRae accompanied herself at the piano for two numbers, then brought the trio back to close her set with the heart-wrenching "Strange Fruit," written for Holiday 40 years ago. Singing it as though Billie were leaning over her and telling her, "Do me justice, baby," McRae gave one of the most stunning performances of her life.

Staged before a near-capacity audience at the unlikely hour of 1 p.m., the entire recital was charged with emotion. Dan Morgenstern, director of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University, introduced a series of magnificent films of Holiday herself—at her most glamorous in 1950, singing "God Bless the Child," and in two late television clips, one of which (from the great CBS "Sound of Jazz" show in 1957) found her in the company of saxophonist Ben Webster, Lester Young, Gerry Mulligan and Coleman Hawkins. Watching Billie's reaction to their solos was a touching experience.

The third film clip, made a year before Holiday's death, was a bittersweet contrast: Remnants of the vocal power remain, but her face was ravaged and haggard, her life clearly in shreds.

To round out the show, Montgomery had the inspired idea of presenting Garvin Bushell, the 76-year-old clarinetist who once played alongside Holiday's guitarist father in the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. An adroit soloist in a style that reflected Benny Goodman with a touch of the late Edmond Hall, Bushell led a quartet that included a pianist named Ronnie de Phillips, whose composition "Finger Painting" was revealed as a work of Ellingtonian delicacy.

It is encouraging to find that jazz, once prominent in the days of such long-gone lounges as the Blue Room of the Tropicana, is enjoying something of a renaissance here. This concert, the second successful event of its kind at the Desert Inn, will be followed by others. For information, contact the Las Vegas Jazz Society, 3459 Nakona Lane, Las Vegas, Nev. 89109.

Larry Ridley at Rutgers and countless others. Often such classes are given as part of the black-studies program and are likely to deal with the subject as much from a sociological and racial point of view as from the musical standpoint. Tanner's position is unequivocal:

"I'm well aware, and tell my students constantly, that all the real pioneers of jazz were black, and that without them we positively would not be where we are today. I also stress that every major change has been effected by *American* black musicians. Any jazz that went to Africa was taken there by American or European players. It can be called a social phenomenon rather than a racial music.

"Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka), who was one of my students, thinks that you have to be black to play jazz, a position that is very foolish and does a tremendous disservice to black musicians who aren't in jazz. Black classical composers, for example, have had a terrible time. So did black players who were classically trained, until recently when men like Hubert Laws came along.

"The father of another of my students, Lew Alcindor (Kareem Abdul-Jabbar), graduated from Juilliard on trombone, but he was a victim of this 'You are black, so you're involved with jazz' syndrome. He couldn't possibly get a job in a symphony, which was what he was qualified for, so he became a cop.

"This same 'black equals jazz, jazz equals black' thing also throws out Goodman and Beiderbecke, Venuti and Getz and all those talented people. But I've had absolutely no trouble with students, black or white, in their understanding of all this. Jazz is first and foremost music, and I have this strong tendency to approach it from a standpoint that is essentially musical.

"Because I'm musically oriented, I do get into technicalities now and then. Very often in the midterm exam I ask the class to write out the chord progression of the blues in any key that I specify, and believe me, the whole football team can write it."

A potential problem for Tanner, as for any jazz teacher, is the exposure of American youth to massive doses of rock, pop and soul. Tanner demolishes this form of radio-radiation by showing that the jazz, rock and fusion worlds have more shared characteristics than is generally realized. "The electric guitar is an element that goes all the way back to Charlie Christian. The blues, too, is a common denominator. If you can show that the idioms borrowed from each other and have these mutual roots, the students will have no trouble identifying with jazz."

In part because of the early morning hours involved, Tanner does not depend on celebrity guest speakers, yet to his constant suprise he finds them calling him or simply showing up. "One day, while I was busy explaining a Duke Ellington record, I looked down, and there was Herbie Hancock. I'd never met him, so I walked over, introduced myself and said 'How about coming up and playing?' He played superbly for two hours, in a class that was supposed to run 50 minutes. Last year, Jon Hendricks called up and invited himself over. Stan Kenton every now and then would contact me and say, 'I haven't talked to your class in a long time.' So we have this voluntary support, but there is no budget for guests."

The constant evolution of the art form has compelled Tanner to revise and reprint his "Study of Jazz" four times, with new additions to allow for the growing roles played by the avant-garde, fusion music and free jazz. He explains all this to his students without attempting to either indoctrinate or dissuade them against such developments, though he grants that "I do have a tough time when it gets to the Ayler Brothers and people like that."

By "tough time," does he mean identifying it as jazz, or identifying it as valid?

"Both. I have difficulty keeping the students from finding out that I don't care at all for it; I would rather let them hear it and decide for themselves. I give them aspects to look for such as time sense, tone, creativity, musicianship, but in the final analysis they're going to have to make up their own minds."

Each of Tanner's courses is good for four units of academic credit. "That's as much credit as you get in any class, and the interesting thing is that these are not required courses, and still they're packed in there. Right now there's a line over at the campus applying to get into my summer classes."

The students attracted to his classes (at least half, incidentally, are female) keep getting brighter all the time. "I'm on the committee that decides which music majors can come to UCLA, and the first thing we look at is the grade-point average they earned in high school. Usually it's very high; if not, we reject them. Nowadays they're so intelligent, and ask so many questions, that you're kept on your mettle; if you don't have things pretty well thought out, you're in trouble."

Notwithstanding the generally high level of intelligence, Tanner draws his share of those who, at test time, come up with some curious answers on tests. Many are based, he believes, on the assumption that any reply, no matter how absurd, is better than leaving a blank space.

One question involving Jelly Roll Morton referred to his real name, Ferdinand La Menthe. Q: Who was Ferdinand La Menthe? A: Creme De Menthe's brother.

Q: Who was Scott Joplin? A: Janis Joplin's father.

Q: What is the difference between the bass violin and the tuba? A: One is bowed and the other is blowed.

Q: What was the influence of the 33 1/3 record on improvisation? A: Improvisation was slowed down.

Q: Who was Jack (Papa) Laine? A: Mama Laine's husband.

"But the question I remember best," Tanner says, "was asked in class one day. One kid said: 'Prof. Tanner, did they have groupies in the Swing Era?' I said, 'Yes, your mama.' " □

JAZZ 7/15

A HISTORY CLASS WITH A BEAT

BY LEONARD FEATHER

PHOTO BY JUDD GUNDERSON

There's a waiting list of students who want to get into Paul Tanner's jazz classes at UCLA.

He has not appeared in the "Guinness Book of World Records," but Paul Tanner may yet make it. His claim: The history of jazz classes he gives at UCLA are the largest in the world (averaging 1,600 students weekly) and the longest lasting. Over the past 15 years the enrollments have passed 65,000. There is a continuous waiting list.

Four days a week, at 9, 10 and 11 a.m., Tanner alternates between two courses: Jazz Up to World War II and Jazz After World War II. He uses tapes, records, his trombone, the piano, the blackboard, films and many books, among them his own, "A Study of Jazz," the most widely known classroom textbook in its field.

Tall, lean and equable-mannered, Tanner might have seemed like an improbable candidate as one of the academic community's most active jazz didacts. He came to some prominence as a member of the Glenn Miller Orchestra from 1938-42, but was not primarily known as a jazz soloist in this or the other bands with which he toured (Charlie Spivak, Les Brown, Tex Beneke).

His other credits are also in nonjazz areas, as a symphony player under Ormandy, Stokowski, Previn and both Mehtas, as a movie studio musician and as staff member at ABC for 16 years after he settled in California in 1951.

"I was never a potential Jack Teagarden or a J. J. Johnson, but that wouldn't stop me from sitting and listening to some giant soloist with my mouth open and my ears open. I had always been deeply interested in jazz and I've studied —not just read, but really studied—just about everything that's been written on it."

Born in Skunk Hollow, Ky., Tanner from the age of 6 was raised in Wilmington, Del., where, as he likes to say, "I spent 11 years in a reform school," a statement during the making of which you have to watch for his tongue in his cheek. The truth is that his father was the head of a military reform school. Young Tanner studied piano, then took up trombone at 13.

After his 17 years on the road with name bands, and choosing Southern California as his home, he decided to resume his education. He was about to graduate from UCLA magna cum laude with his MA when a job opened up for him on the faculty.

Over the next few years the idea of adding a jazz history class, which he tried first in the UCLA extension program, slowly became a reality. "It took three years of red tape to get it started. You have to write up a resume, using all the four-syllable words you can think of, then give it to the curriculum committee; then it goes to another department and so forth. Finally I got started on a full-time basis around 1964."

Why are jazz classes generally so popular? "In the first place, it's not like standing up there teaching dry history. I've got very hot, exciting material, and once you establish good rapport with the students, others are going to hear about it and break their backs to get into the course, because they have to take a lot of dull ones."

An interesting aspect of Tanner's acceptance is his background in what some might see as the white musical establishment. Most of the prominent musicians who have become full-time jazz educators in recent years are black: Mary Lou Williams, successfully continuing at Duke University; Nathan Davis at the University of Pittsburgh,

IT FEELS SO GOOD—Chuck Mangione brings his sound to the Universal Amphitheater.

Times photo by Bob Chamberlin

Young Man With a Fluegelhorn

BY LEONARD FEATHER

It feels so good that it fills the house, wherever he may go. Last year Chuck Mangione proved his might at the Hollywood Bowl; now it is the Universal Amphitheater, where he opened Tuesday for no fewer than six days, during which time he is a cinch to sell a record number of Mangione T-shirts. (The entire week is virtually sold out.)

There they were, the Mangione combo stage right, the added nine-piece brass team stage left, illustrating the compositional formula that has served him so well. Analyzed musically, it is basic enough: plenty of long notes, linked by brief groups of short notes, selected from the diatonic scale ("Feels So Good," "Bellavia" and others) or the chromatic scale ("Chase the Clouds Away"). Add a throbbing basso ostinato (repeated figure) affixed to a Latin pulse, with either the leader's fluegel or Chris Vadala's flute illustrating the melodic recipe. Serves 5,300.

Of course, there has to be more to it. Mangione has the knack of using these ingredients in a manner that is melodically irresistible, and of arranging them with textural skill. Moreover, his improvised solos display considerably more freedom, though with only a hint of the subtle bop nuances he employed years ago as a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers.

Vadala is a capable flutist, but on sax he only came to life during the final "Children of Sanchez" medley. The latter also served to introduce bassist Charles Meeks, a remarkably idiosyncratic soloist, as a singer. Meeks' firm, confident tenor and well-controlled vibrato indicated that he may soon be launched on a new career of his own.

James Bradley Jr., extracted an impressive range of tonalities from his drum equipment. Grant Geissman, a duo personality on acoustic and electric guitars,

Please Turn to Page 19, Col. 1

MANGIONE

Continued from 17th Page

employed the latter in a potboiler tune called "Maui Waui" but hit his peak in an acoustic solo on "Chase the Clouds Away." He is rapidly evolving into one of the most inventive all-around plectrum performers.

The brass section, spending much of the evening admiring the view, was employed barely enough to show the leader's skill in using it. Through it all Mangione doubled on electric keyboard, conducted like a rhythmic Pinocchio, and toward the end, removing his trademark hat, jumped up and down as if on a pogo stick.

Chuck Mangione has been accused of playing simple, even simplistic music, and perhaps this is true; but he can never be called unmusicianly. Given his present tremendous success, perhaps he can afford to broaden his scope now and then with a piece in a more complex idiom. He could symbolize this gesture by wearing a different hat.

AT PARISIAN ROOM

Hutcherson: The Jazzed-Up Vibe

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Bobby Hutcherson is the fastest human being on four mallets—or two, depending on his mood.

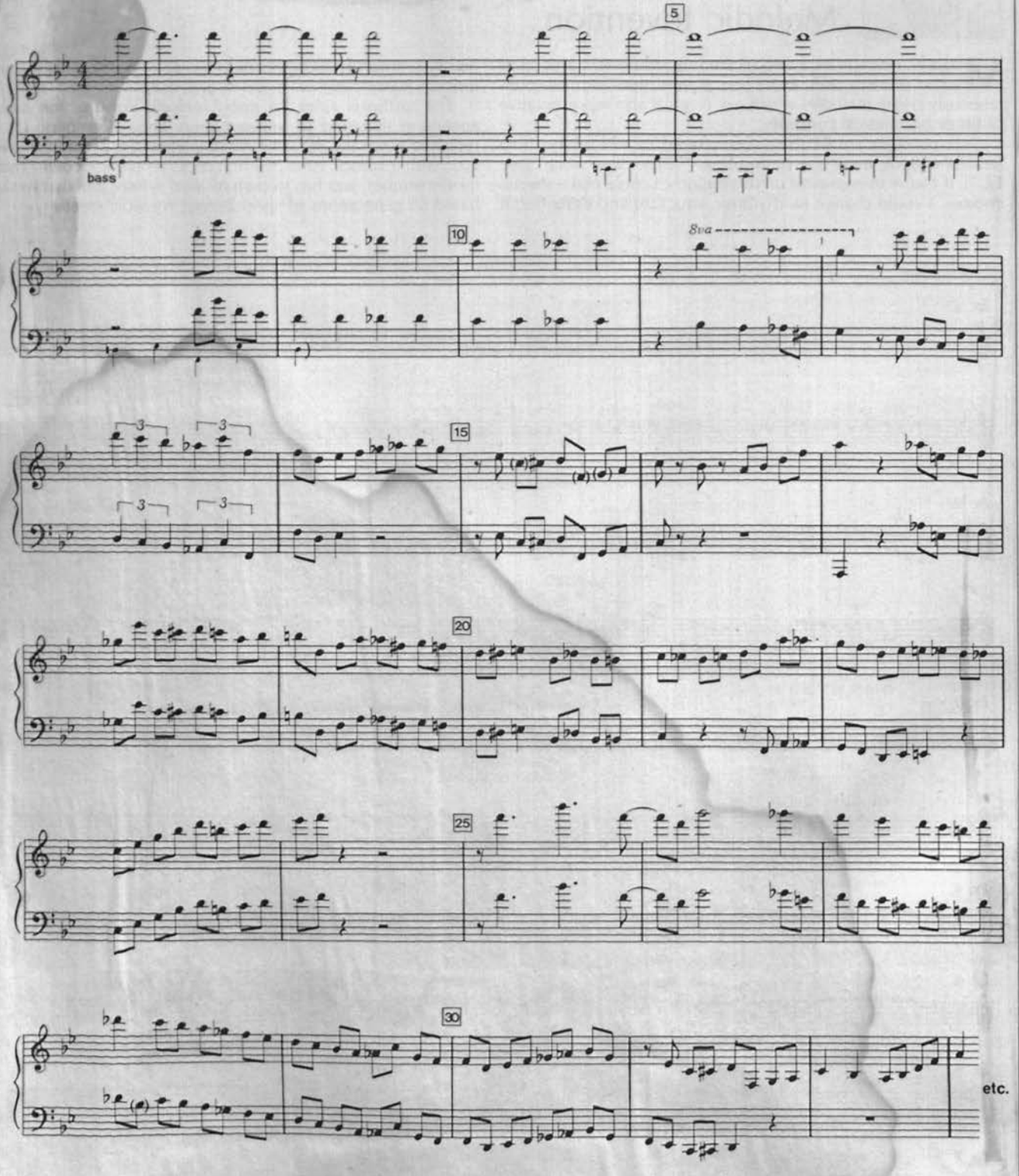
At the Parisian Room this week, the music he is making with his vibraphone and quartet is as notable for what it is *not* as for what it is. He steers clear of pop, fusion, crossover, rock and other temptations, preferring to stay with the unsullied jazz that is his natural heritage.

Although speed is his most startling characteristic, he is the foremost vibist of the day on other levels: creative, harmonic, intellectual. His original composition ("Highway One") and those written by his splendid bassist James Leary ("Hold My Hand") are often reminiscent of the McCoy Tyner approach to contemporary music.

As the set wore on, Hutcherson moved into other, more accessible areas, dealing effervescently with the blues, "Centerpiece," and the old standard "Star Eyes." Most remarkable of all was a long, unaccompanied improvisation, played with four mallets, that achieved a hollow, eerie effect through masterful use of dynamics and of refreshingly unpredictable intervals.

After several minutes of this ad-libbing, the rhythm section (Leary, drummer Doug Sides and pianist Mike Gibson) joined in while Hutcherson ran off with "Salt Peanuts" as if the law were after him.

One misses the flute, the brass section and other perquisites granted to Hutcherson in his albums, yet what he accomplishes even with this numerically limited nightclub group (and with inadequate miking at that) is enough to sustain his reputation as the envy of all his contemporaries. He closes Sunday.



TRANSCRIPTION BY JIM AIKIN

LEONARD FEATHER
PIANO GIANTS OF JAZZ
Phineas Newborn Jr.

THE CASE OF Phineas Newborn Jr. is unique in the annals of modern music. He is, almost beyond dispute, one of the most accomplished pianists in the history of the instrument's development in jazz, yet for a variety of reasons he has been ignored or underestimated and his career has been in limbo for long periods.

Newborn was born in 1931 in Whiteville, Tennessee, but was raised from infancy in Memphis. His father was a well-known drummer and bandleader; at some points during their careers father and son worked together, although Newborn Sr.'s style and attitude were clearly those of another generation. Phineas Jr.'s brother Calvin, an able guitarist, also was part of the family combo.

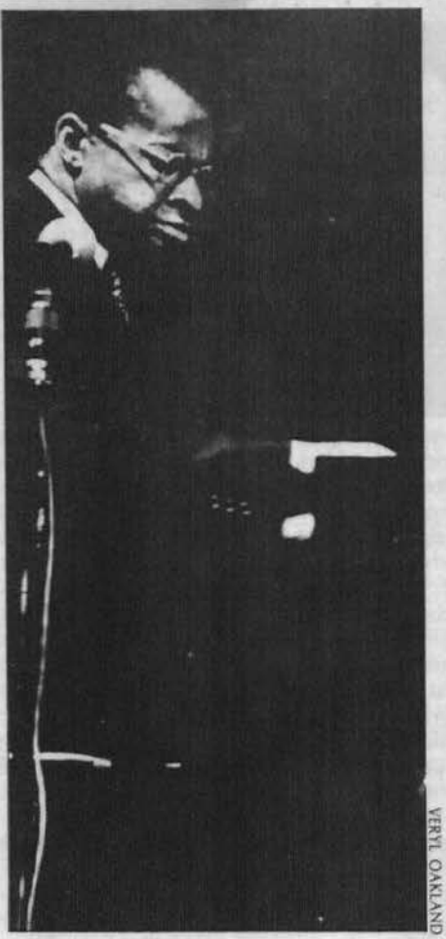
Young Phineas's studies were extensive. Working with a variety of teachers, he was soon versed not only in piano, theory, and arranging, but also in baritone horn, mellophone, and trumpet, all of which he played in the high school band.

By the time he had spent a couple of years at Tennessee State U., in 1950–51, Phineas also had had professional experience with combos, including two stints with the Lionel Hampton orchestra. He served in the Army from 1953–5, then spent ten months as a sideman with his father before forming his own quartet.

My own first encounter with him is one I shall always remember. The unquenchably enthusiastic jazz talent scout John Hammond called me in New York one afternoon in 1955 to tell me about a new pianist about whom Count Basie (another of John's discoveries) had been raving to everyone. Hammond persuaded me to accompany him on a trip to Philadelphia, where Newborn was playing a Sunday matinee at Pep's Club. Even on an inferior piano with a mediocre accompaniment, Phineas managed in one incredible set to justify Basie's reaction.

After four years of playing clubs, concerts, and festivals in the United States and Europe with his quartet, Newborn settled in Los Angeles, where he entered a period of relative inactivity, working in local clubs now and then. During this time, however, he began an association that was the most valuable of his recording career, taking part in a series of superlative albums for the Contemporary label [8481 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069].

The first of these was *A World Of Piano!* [S 7600], from which the "Oleo" excerpt opposite was extracted. This was



VERYL OAKLAND

followed, later in the 1960s, by *The Great Jazz Piano Of Phineas Newborn Jr.* [S7611], *The Newborn Touch* [S7615], *Please Send Me Someone To Love* [S 7622], and *Harlem Blues* [S 7634]. They are all cited here because each contains masterful examples of Newborn's ability to harness meaningfully his incredible technique and inspiration.

In 1961 I went out on a limb, observing, "Bearing in mind that Bernard Peiffer is French and Oscar Peterson is Canadian, it would not be extravagant to claim that Phineas has no equal among American jazz pianists, from any standpoint, technical or esthetic." Elsewhere, in a *Down Beat* review, I called him "the greatest living jazz pianist."

Such unqualified superlatives were hazardous at a time when Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, Erroll Garner, and many others were flourishing; yet in retrospect my euphoria is understandable. For evidence, listen to any or all of the above albums.

In person, that proof sadly is no longer available, for Newborn over the years suffered long stretches of emotional illness and was off the scene intermittently, making comebacks in which his control and technical mastery fell beneath the peak it had reached in the mid-1960s. In 1975 and '76 he cut two more albums, released on Atlantic and Pablo. There were moments of greatness, to be sure, but he had leveled off and I noticed occasional uncertainty in his fingering.

This is not to imply that the genius of Newborn is lost to us forever; his ups and downs have been so unpredictable that one can still hope for a resurgence of the command he once demonstrated.

The "Oleo" sample (this is the second chorus on the record) shows an aspect of which I was much enamored, his ability to run parallel lines, usually in two-octave unison, and sometimes at chops-defying tempos. During the first 7½ bars he plays with the utmost simplicity, letting Sam Jones's bass walk while he himself repeats the *F*, like a diver ready to take a leap from the top board.

He plunges during bar 8, climbing down a brief chromatic stairway in quarter notes for a couple of bars; then he's off and cooking in an incredible *tour de force* that lasts almost uninterruptedly for the rest of the 32-bar "I Got Rhythm"-type chorus. The bridge (17–24) is phenomenal, and it's interesting to note that he ends with a two-eighths phrase (*E*♭ and *F*) that constitute what was once known as "a bebop" and, in fact, became a symbol of the bop era.

Though it is impossible to be sure at this breakneck tempo, I suspect that bar 25 actually starts, after the eighth rest, with an *F* quarter followed by a *D* eighth (not notated here), as this would not only match the following phrase rhythmically but actually corresponds with the rhythm pattern of the "Oleo" theme itself.

Newborn was no mere gymnast. For a more deeply felt emotional mood, hear the exquisite, very slow "New Blues" (on *The Great Jazz Piano*). For a ballad, try "Lush Life" in the same album as "Oleo." For a gentle jazz waltz listen to "For Carl," also in the "Oleo" set. These and many others will convince you that we owe some of the most durable jazz piano of every kind to this small man with the hesitant personality, the Clark Kent who needed only a keyboard to turn him into Superman.

7/22

JAZZ ALBUMS

UP FRONT WITH THE BACK-SCRATCHERS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

What's in a contract? Not much, if you can believe the credits on a growing number of recent albums. The you-scratch-my-back-I'll-scratch-yours technique finds so many prominent artists guest-starring on one another's LPs that their supposed exclusivity becomes a joke.

Stanley Clarke's new two-LP release, "I Wanna Play for You" (Nemperor KZ2 5680), may break the record for this kind of interaction. No fewer than 15 participants are listed as appearing through the courtesy of some other company, but several of them are heard so briefly that the all-star concept is rendered almost meaningless.

Stan Getz is heard on only one item, playing brief solos and some obbligato work behind Clarke's pedestrian singing. Freddie Hubbard comes in and cuts out on a track called "Together Again." Dee Dee Bridgewater's involvement is limited to background vocals on a single song. Lee Ritenour makes a cameo appearance. And so forth.

Airto, Jeff Beck, George Duke and Tom Scott also contribute, but what does it all add up to? A grab-bag album, with not enough funk to appeal to the funk audience and similar insufficiencies for the appreciators of disco, jazz, rock, pop and fusion. Clarke's virtuosity on the upright bass is heard in a very brief "Blues for Mingus." Elsewhere, he contributes on synthesizer and electric bass guitar, but the overall effect is that of an album totally without any focal point or idiomatic direction. Two stars.

Freddie Hubbard's admirers are much better served in his own new album, "The Love Connection" (Columbia JC 36015). Unlike Clarke's disparate set, this has an affirmative style, determined not only by the leader's horn but by the sumptuous string writing of Claus Ogerman. The title song is contagious; Hubbard's pretty "Brigitte" introduces a straight jazz piano solo by Chick Corea.

The back-scratching ritual pays off this time: Al Jarreau, on whose last album Hubbard guested, is heard here singing his own lyrics to Hubbard's wistful melody "Little Sunflower." The uncredited flute soloist is Joe Farrell, whose tenor sax lights up "Lazy Afternoon," a languid and durable 1954 ballad. Completing the set is Ogerman's "This Dream," a stately tune with a pensive interlude by Corea.

Hubbard today is back on an even keel, playing music he believes in. Four-and-a-half stars.

Another horn man of distinction, Thad Jones, appears with his ex-partner Mel Lewis on "Umo" (RCA AFL-1-3423), but the emptor deserves a caveat: This is not the Jones/Lewis orchestra but a band called Umo consisting of 17 Finns.

These are mostly retreads of old Jones works such as "Tiptoe," "Little Pixie" and Jerome Richardson's "Groove Merchant." Thad does play on six of the eight tracks, and the Finnish soloists have done their far-from-home work; however, they are not served by optimum recording quality. The orchestra deals with these charts competently enough to make you proud if you happen to be a Finn. However, on a blindfold-test basis I doubt that anyone would mistake this for the American band. Three stars.

Bobby Hutcherson's "Conception: The Gift of Love" (Columbia JC 35814) brings together all the elements necessary (and very rarely combined in these times of fusion confusion) to produce a perfect jazz album. Hutcherson's talent as a non-pareil vibraphonist is fortified by the compositional gifts of Cedar Walton, who produced this set; of Hutcherson himself, and of the sidemen who contributed such pieces as the sambalike "Remember to Smile," by bassist James Leary; "Dreamin'," by drummer Eddie Marshall, and the sensuous, rippling "Dark Side Light Side," by George Cables, the group's brilliant pianist.

Cables is a classically trained soloist who, without going directly through the bebop era, has grasped its essentials. He is a disciplined player whose phrases connect sensibly, whose technique is limitless but never abused. The blend of Hutcheron, Cables and Hubert Laws' flute lends a delightful combo sound to such tunes as Leary's "Hold My Hand."

Here and there are touches of big-band sweetening, as in Cables' "Quiet Fire," but essentially this is the product of a small group of emphatic musicians whose creative impulses move instinctively in the same direction. Whatever your predilections in jazz, it is hard to imagine that anyone will contest my five-star rating.

Eddie Harris, who a year or two ago gave up the responsibilities of quartet leadership, has become a one-man band via overdubs. The result is "Playing With Myself," (RCA AFL 1-3402). On the title cut, a quaint, plaintive old-time funky tune, his grand piano and tenor sax are self-sufficient. "Freedom Jazz Dance" is his own most ingenious composition, but the use of an electric sax attachment produced a bassoonlike sound that doesn't fit the song.

On such tracks as "Plain Old Rhythm" and "What" (based respectively on "I Got Rhythm" and Miles Davis' "So What,") the absence of a bassist and drummer is conspicuous. Other devices, such as the multiple-sax sound on "Intransit" and the trumpet played with a saxophone mouthpiece on "I Heard That," are of some curiosity value, but the overall feel of the album is that of a set of preliminary tracks awaiting the arrival of a rhythm section to make them complete.

Harris is a creative artist who dares to be different, but some of his prior experiments have been more successful. Two stars.

Della Reese, restricted for many years to pop material and settings, surfaces belatedly and agreeably as a jazz singer in "One of a Kind" (Jazz a la Carte Volume 3). Supported by a sextet playing live at a club, she seems at ease with "Close to You" (backed by the agile Bob Magnusson on bass), "Every Time We Say Goodbye" (Kenny Burrell on guitar), a blues (Lou Levy on piano) and others. Typo of the month: "Mack the Knife" is credited to Kurt Vile. Three stars. □

7/23

Angeline Butler at F. Scott's Cabaret

BY LEONARD FEATHER
Times Staff Writer

Angeline Butler, presented Friday and Saturday at F. Scott's Cabaret in Venice, is a woman of extensive knowledge, travel and experience. She has toured as a Shakespearean actress, as Mary Magdalene in "Jesus Christ Superstar," and has sung in concerts with Johnny Carson; she has directed several shows.

Her appearance in Venice consisted of four segments—devoted to Eubie Blake, Josephine Baker, Cole Porter and herself. In the course of the long performance she vacillated between images as pop singer, narrator, operatic soprano, comedienne and gospel shouter.

Ms. Butler's principal advantages are her powerful, wide-ranging voice, the warm emotionalism she exudes and her versatility. This last facet, however, works against her when she tries too hard to prove too much in a single show.

The Eubie Blake tribute, with her reminiscences about early black Broadway theater, was charming, though she seemed a little nervous at first; the lyrics were fumbled a bit on "Memories of You" and she twice mispronounced ecstasy as "estasy."

The Baker songs, such as "J'ai Deux Amours" and "La Vie en Rose," were well enough done, in adequate French, but her narration became so subjective that the emotions finally were more Butler than Baker. Similarly, the Cole Porter segment got off the track and became more William Shakespeare than Porter.

After her last costume change, taking over at the piano, she sang and played "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" like the Baptist minister's daughter she is. What Angeline Butler's act needs is substantial editing, less name-dropping of countries she has visited, fewer impressions, and more Angeline Butler.

CONCERTS BY THE SEA

Roomful of Happy Herbie Mann Fans

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Herbie Mann's two-night booking at Concerts by the Sea Tuesday and Wednesday marked his first local appearance in seven years. The veteran flutist has been through so many switches of allegiance, embracing jazz, pop, rock, bossa nova, reggae, disco and Middle Eastern sounds, that it was impossible to know what to expect.

Apparently deciding there's no need to align himself with any one of these directions, Mann now leads a six-piece group (plus singer Linda Sharrock) that dodges in and out of several areas. Among the components in an hour-long set were a Milton Nascimento tune, with well-chorded backing by Carlos Melendez on a solid-body electric guitar; a number dedicated to Charles Mingus and Duke Ellington, with Mann in a mellow mood on alto flute; a perfunctory rerun of "Watermelon Man"; "Superman" with echo effects on flute and voice; and "Just the Way You Are," a flute-guitar duet with swinging, well-coordinated work by the leader.

Claudio Roditi, trumpeter who also plays fluegelhorn and keyboards, is an unpretentiously fluent soloist. Sharrock's voice was used wordlessly in the ensembles, except when she sang a forgettable tune of her own.

The set's low spot was a series of percussion effects by Raphael Cruz, played more for comedy and a cheap hand than for musicianship. The best moments came with a surprising return to the tenor sax by Mann, who played this instrument many years ago and picked it up again last year. His "Jumpin' the Blues," in which he reflected a Lester Young influence, offered a refreshing reminder of his straight jazz roots.

Never pretending to make music for the ages, Mann clearly is satisfied to fill the room and keep its inhabitants happy, without any heavy aesthetic commitment. On that level he succeeded.

Kenny Burrell takes over at Concerts by the Sea tonight through Sunday

7/27

AT GREEK THEATER

George Benson's Impact Is Intact

BY LEONARD FEATHER

In recent years several jazz musicians have reached a peak of superstardom dazzling enough to blind them to any sense of artistic direction. George Benson, a happy exception to that rule, has managed to keep his cool and, at least to a greater extent than might have been thought possible, his musical integrity.

At the Greek Theater Wednesday his show—and despite his occasional use of the Los Angeles Ballet it was unmistakably Benson's evening—displayed the same qualities he revealed three years ago when "Breezin'" earned him a place on the charts and the concert circuit.

Certainly it would be wrong to put the jazz imprimatur on everything he plays. Surrounded by enough amplification to lower all the lights within a mile of Griffith Park, he weakened several numbers through the use of vapid, quasi-disco arrangements for the large orchestra, an often-leaden six-man rhythm section, punishing sounds from a synthesizer running wild and other excesses. Nevertheless, from the opening "Nature Boy" to his final and finest vocal, "On Broadway," Benson's personal impact remained undamaged by these commercial accouterments.

The unison guitar and vocalese effects were employed skillfully in "Love Is a Hurting Thing" and "This Masquerade." Several times he let loose with a rhythmically flawless, speed-of-sound ad-lib guitar solo.

Phil Upchurch, whose guitar is usually higher pitched while Benson's is mellow, had a couple of stimulating spots of his own. Benson's vocal power and emotional conviction were best displayed on "The Greatest Love of All" and wasted on the fulsome "Unchained Melody." He sings this song as though he believes in it, but he can't get me to.

There is still something missing. In fact, the statement in the souvenir program that "his musical horizons have broadened immensely . . . His roots remain deep in the jazz idiom . . . The Benson musical experience is now all encompassing." His truth turned upside down. For instance, Benson last summer played basic jazz superbly, backed only by a simple acoustic three-man rhythm section, during a concert at the White House. If this was good enough for President Carter, why can't it be good enough, at least as an occasional change of pace, for his regular audiences?

Accompanying him were Randy Waldman and Greg Phillinganes on keyboards, Stanley Banks on bass, Tony Lewis on drums, Dave Levine on percussion, and Upchurch. The show continues through Sunday.

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THE MAIL

Feather-more

My thanks to *Radio Free Jazz* and Howard Lucraft for his cover feature ["The Leonard Feather Story"] in the June issue. It was remarkably accurate, though there were a few minor errors that occurred between interview and publication.

The award given Duke Ellington on his 70th birthday was the Congressional Medal of Freedom. The Edwin Newman books I reviewed for the *L.A. Times* were *Strictly Speaking* and *A Civil Tongue*. On page 19, the third party in the photo with Woody Herman and me was Red Norvo. Also, I erred in giving the date of the first *Esquire* concert at the Met; it was January 18, 1944.

Leonard Feather
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

The Leonard Feather epic is a well-deserved, well-written tribute to a gentleman who has done much to keep jazz and jazz musicians alive and working. Howard Lucraft is to be commended for a superb summation of a most involved jazz personality.

Since the story is written as a chronological history, I searched for some mention of a brief, but important, portion of Feather history having to deal with his relationship to the Davis-Lieber Publicity Office. Rather astonishingly, Leonard let his memory slip on this point and dove-tailed his working for Ivan Black at that period into a summation of his publicity efforts.

In my possession is a recording of two numbers played by the Davis-Lieber staff of 100 years ago—oh well, 39 years ago to be precise—introducing such instrumentalists and writers as Leslie Lieber on saxophone, Hal Davis on accordion, Anne Marie Ewing (writer of Little Gate) on guitar and Leonard Feather on piano and clarinet. I hold the clarinet side as prima facie effortless documentation and blackmail. Blackmail, because Leonard did not play clarinet very well.

Indeed, Leonard received $15 weekly for his effort, plus a cut on the bands he brought into the office. Among them was a black female band called "International Sweethearts of Rhythm." Although our paths have not crossed for a few years, Leonard might also recall that wife Jane went with my partner Les Lieber to Cuba as a vocalist with Les' band under the aegis of the pre-World War II Rockefeller Be Good to South America and the Caribbean program. Les, with his usual audacity, talked Rockefeller into sending a jazz band south to make friends for America. Rockefeller was a bum credit risk; he took a long time before the band was paid.

Leonard arrived in Moscow during the Benny Goodman Russian trip; at the beginning, to be specific. He stayed with us for three days or so, but did not go on the tour outside of Moscow. His observations anent the proceedings led to some difference of opinion which we aired in *down beat*. My viewpoint, perhaps biased, was that the trip was a howling success from the American vantage point. Leonard, perhaps correctly, took aim from the observations of some of the musicians in the group.

"The Leonard Feather Story" is an interesting example of how *Radio Free Jazz* covers people and subjects not covered in any other publication. It brought back many memories of the old days—and the continuity which has led jazz to survive.

Hal Davis
President
Hal Davis & Associates
New York, N.Y.

7/29

JAZZ

MANGIONE ON THE DIZZYING HEIGHTS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"Magione's efforts should be encouraged strongly, he's got a hell of a lot to say. His romantic bittersweet melody 'Legacy' is lovely . . . Mangione's mellow fluegelhorn reverberates beautifully."
—a record review, 1972

"Mangione's soporific formula should be all too familiar by now . . . Chuck's style is a study in commercial sameness. Mangione's horn playing . . . is generally uninspired . . . (the) tunes run together like melting ice cream in a banana split."
—Record review, 1977

The two quotations are excerpted not to indicate contrasts of critical opinion. Of course, they deal with different albums: with the early "Together" on Mercury, which was rated four stars, and the much later "Main Squeeze" on A&M, dismissed with two stars. More significantly, however, they show what happens to an artist before and after he attains an extraordinary plateau of mass acceptance.

Chuck Mangione today is playing and composing in much the same manner that first brought him to public attention with his "Friends and Love" PBS-TV special and album. What has changed is the size of his audiences and income, with "Feels So Good" (released September, 1977; album sales to date more than 2 million) as a climactic point.

What bothers Charles Frank Mangione is not that some writers have soured on him, but rather that they assume he can grind out one hit record after another on the basis of a predetermined formula.

"It amazes me," he said, "that people presume you can actually formulate success. I don't have any special way to devise a melody. It just happens. It may evolve while I'm playing the piano, or my horn, or while I'm on a plane trip. I keep a sketchbook to jot down fragments of ideas."

PHOTO BY MARY FRAMPTON

Chuck Mangione

When it is suggested that the popularity of his music may be due to the basing of so many of his melodies primarily on the eight tones of the diatonic scale, Mangione is surprised. "Do I do that? I never thought about it. When I was a student at the Eastman School in Rochester, N.Y., they used to teach us to write in the style of Bach; but when Bach was composing his music I'm sure he had no rule book. We can teach people styles by analyzing, but that's after the fact. I never thought about a song, or music, in terms of a scale or any other pattern."

Nevertheless, Mangione is able to explain why he brings certain elements to his music. "First of all, I grew up in an era when people knew a whole catalog of great standard songs. I always wanted that melodic essence to be a part of anything I might do; consequently, after one of my concerts, people can go away impressed not just by the musicians' solo capabilities; they can also take a song home with them. And by now we have evolved a recognizable style, so that whether it's 'Chase the Clouds Away' or 'Children of Sanchez' or 'Feels So Good,' you can tell who it is."

Rhythmically, the Mangione phenomenon has often been called Latin, though again Mangione denies any deliberate plan. "Just think of the music that was most important to me as a young person: Dizzy Gillespie's band when he had Chano Pozo playing Afro Cuban rhythms; the album Miles Davis made with Gil Evans, 'Sketches of Spain,' and later some of the Stan Getz things. Naturally, these were influences; but so, as much as anything else, was watching 'The Cisco Kid' on television."

Whatever its characteristics, the Mangione sound has grown over the years into a large library of music that retains and is enlarging its appeal. In fact, he says, "There are people at our concerts who are just discovering us, who thought 'Feels So Good' was the first record we ever made; but hearing us play an entire evening, with no opening act, they are exposed to some of our earlier things and they'll go back and discover all those other albums."

He is proud that the combo, unchanged in personnel since January of 1977, is not just a unit assembled for occasional concert tours. "To have this kind of group attracting so many young people all over the world has really made a contribution to instrumental music, I think. It's inspiring to see them out there getting off on a bunch of honkers like us, because for a while it looked as though the brass and reed players were dying out. Now we have kids coming to hear us who are themselves studying a horn, as opposed to the time when everybody was a guitarist. I feel good about that."

Mangione's success has enabled him to expand into such areas as motion pictures and television. "I'm convinced," he says, "that music will be the next big thing to happen on TV. We've had some unusual opportunities since the original PBS concert. Last year we did an hour and a half special from Wolf Trap. Merv Griffin fell in love with 'Land of Make Believe' and gave us 12 minutes on his show. Perhaps television eventually will lose its fear of length."

One producer told Mangione that he wanted three tunes, and that the group could do 10 minutes. Assuming this meant 10 minutes for each tune, Mangione soon learned

that in typical TV style this would be his entire time allotment for the three—about the same length as the recorded version of "Feels So Good," his biggest hit. He points out that the shortened treatment of this song did not become a gold single because his audiences, sufficiently interested to want the original full-length concept, preferred to buy the album.

"A single is to an album like an hors d'oeuvre is to the main course. Television still thinks of music as an hors d'oeuvre; what's more, the medium overlooks the importance of sound quality. The shows are done so fast you feel you're playing in the dark. The sound board is often antiquated. In recording, the number of mikes you put on the drummer alone is more than television gives you for the entire group. Still, I think this is all going to change because of popular demand. As for the complaint that music is not a visual medium, if people didn't want to watch us, why would they turn out in such vast numbers for our concerts?"

If Mangione is bullish on TV, he is somewhat disillusioned about his motion picture experience. He wrote the music for "Children of Sanchez" under extraordinary conditions: "I went to see five and a half hours of rough footage—several alternate beginnings, several endings—and the director, with no finished picture to show me, said he needed the music within three weeks.

"We went into the studio and gave him 23½ hours of music, not knowing how long any scene would be. We really lived in that studio 24 hours a day and nearly went crazy trying to get it all done."

"Were you satisfied with the way your music was selected and used?"

"No. I never want to get into that kind of situation again. Not only did they leave a lot of good stuff out, they also put music in different places, and in a different manner, than was initially discussed. Another great disappointment was that I wrote lyrics for the main theme that could have been very effective, but very little use was made of them."

As so often happens, the "Sanchez" album contrasts substantially with what was heard in the movie, and was more satisfying to Mangione. But as far as other such assignments are concerned, he says that none of the invitations to write more music for films has attracted him. "I'm not one of those guys who write music to go with accidents or car chases. I know a lot of people who do that very well, but I don't think it's for me."

Being on the road constantly, or composing in preparation for an LP (he is presently working on a new quartet album), he has little opportunity to survey the rest of the contemporary scene. Asked about other fluegel and trumpet masters, he acknowledged that he has not heard either Freddie Hubbard or Woody Shaw live in person in a long while. Asked who has impressed him lately, he responded quickly:

"Dizzy has impressed me! He's playing better than ever." (Gillespie, a friend of the Mangione family in Rochester, N.Y. since Chuck was in his teens, presented him with one of his upswept horns and recommended him for a job with Art Blakey.) "also I'm always delighted to listen to Art Farmer; his sound on fluegel is so beautiful, and he's a very melodic player."

If his contacts with fellow pros are rare, Mangione keeps his finger on the youth pulse through collaborations with school bands. "Recently in Berkeley we chose musicians from four high schools to make up a 70 piece orchestra. I added our quartet, then passed out some of the same music we play with symphonies. We then did a performance on a sink-or-swim-together basis.

"Some of the kids would say, 'Only nine hours' rehearsal? How are we gonna do that?' But it's a great test for them; they learn about endurance, about reading ability, about playing in tune. They learn what it's like to be a professional musician.

"Kids need to find out how it feels to work under those conditions. They also need courses in the day to day experience of living our kind of life—checking into hotels, getting on planes every day, doing the sound check, playing the three-hour concert, rushing off to the next gig. They need instruction, too, in management, music publishing, the whole business end. I was a recording artist at 19, and there is so much I wish I'd known then about things like reading contracts. It doesn't affect your creative ability to be a good business person."

At 38, Mangione can look back on many achievements in which he takes pride. "I think we've broken the ice for music in a lot of ways. It freaks me out that we can play our stuff and have people quiet and respectful.

"As far as the evaluation of our work is concerned, people may say it's not this or that, or not hip or whatever—well, I never pretended to be a Zen master or anything. That's why we have the Dizzy Gillespies, the Oscar Petersons, the people we look to for inspiration.

"On the other hand, I really enjoy being who I am, making the music that comes out of me. If I can make it possible for people to move on to something more complex, if I can hear the fans say that through me they heard about Dizzy and went to hear him—well, that's one of my greatest pleasures in life." □

JAZZ IN BRIEF

BY LEONARD FEATHER

"MOSTLY FATS." Canadian Brass. RCA XRL 1-3212. Ingenious, if contrived. The brass quintet (two trumpets, French horn, trombone, tuba) sticks to the arrangements of songs by Waller, Jelly Roll Morton, et al. There are no improvised jazz solos; also there's no rhythm section, though some of the music swings, thanks to the charts and to a fast-moving tuba. "Handful of Keys" replaces Fats' walking bass with a walking brass as counterpoint to the melody. Phrasing of the Brass is off here and there, indicating these are primarily classical musicians. Worth investigating strictly as a novelty.

"DREAMER." Caldera. Capitol ST 11952. Caldera is mainly an ensemble and rhythm effort, not notable for any great solo emotion or individuality. Its identity is determined by Eduardo del Barrio (composer, keyboards, synthesizer) and Jorge Strunz (guitars, writer of two pieces), who are coproducers; and to a lesser degree by Steve Tavaglione (saxes, flutes, associate producer). "Dreamchild" is a melody that sticks to the ears and "Brujeria," with its percussive input, to the feet. This well-organized group supplies, if not imperishable sounds for the ages, at least agreeable music for the moment.

8/3

Wilson, Kellaway: Piano Contrasts

The Lighthouse this week is conducting a piano marathon with a dozen keyboard artists, spread over the six nights through Sunday.

Thursday's incumbents, Jack Wilson and Roger Kellaway, offered a provocative study in contrasts. Wilson's opening set was marked by the ingenious interplay of electric and acoustic pianos. In addition to switching back and forth, he occasionally played both at once; during the Natalie Cole hit "La Costa," he devised attractive parallel lines in harmony, electric with the left hand, Yamaha grand with the right.

Wilson's selections were well-diversified: A Latinesque original work, "Autumn Sunset," with Shearing-like chordal interludes, led to a scurrying Ornette Coleman blues, "Tears Inside." Despite an inclination to start certain pieces with rather ornate solo introductions, Wilson soon gets into a cooking jazz or bossa beat, with expert help from a sensitive drummer, Lawrence Marable, and a surprisingly nimble bassist, Paul Gormley.

The Roger Kellaway performance also began with musing out-of-tempo passages before the rhythm section joined in, but here the resemblance ended. He is given to jagged, angular lines, wild tremolos, touches of humor and quirky dissonances, all products of a spectacular technique.

It is difficult to decide whether Kellaway's forte is his original material, such as the delightful waltz "Bangor," or the standards, such as "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face" or "If I Were a Bell." The latter began with an exquisite blues-inflected solo before the big-toned bassist Chuck Domanico and drummer John Guerin joined in; by the third chorus, the windmills of the pianist's mind were spinning at the speed of sound.

Kellaway, who made no use of the electric keyboard, could easily establish himself as a concert recitalist in a class with Oscar Peterson were he not so involved with his career as a composer for movies and TV. The opportunity to hear him in a club was a rare and energizing experience.

Coming tonight: Joanne Grauer and Mike Melvoin. Closing out the piano week Sunday: Bill Mays and Lloyd Glenn.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ 8/5

PHOTO BY MARIANNA DIAMOS

Composer-pianist Claude Bolling in rehearsal with Angel Romero, foreground

BOLLING: CLASSY IMPORT

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Claude Bolling, who wrote the music for "California Suite," is so French that at the end of an interview with him you want to stand up, salute and sing a chorus of "La Marseillaise."

The Maurice Chevalier accent is there, along with the tendency, when English words fail him, to lapse into a phrase in his native tongue. Yet this Cannes-born, Nice- and Paris-trained composer and pianist, who made his professional debut as a teenager playing for the American Armed Forces in Nice, has devoted almost all his career to the art of American jazz.

Ironically, his reason for being in the United States is related less to his jazz associations than to what is being billed as "the classical-jazz connection." Today at the Hollywood Bowl he will join forces with the renowned classical and jazz flutist Hubert Laws for a concert that will include his "Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano," another suite that will feature classical guitarist Angel Romero, and excerpts from the "California Suite" score.

For many jazz musicians, an involvement with the classical world simply means a return to the scene of their first musical experience. Bolling, however, insists, "I'm not a classical musician at all. This whole thing happened by accident. I met Jean-Pierre Rampal, the great French flutist, because we had friends in common, and he said, 'Oh, I would like you to write me something, because I love jazz but don't play it. Write for me something classical and you play jazz behind me.'

"I said, 'Why not?' No, that isn't true. I said, '*Bien sur!*' Rampal is a great man and I never imagined to have an opportunity in my life to write for such a person."

Bolling tried out one or two movements, elicited Rampal's approval and thereupon completed "Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano," the recording of which was released in the United States in late 1975. Its success opened up a new area not only for Bolling but also for Rampal, who last year shared the Hollywood Bowl stage in concert with Laws.

"Rampal and I were not trying to prove anything; this was not supposed to be a Third Stream composition," Bolling says. "I have to write in neoclassical form, with very little experience as a classical musician. On the other hand, Rampal has no feeling for improvisation in the jazz sense;

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CLASSY IMPORT

Continued from Page 65

he does not need this. Some little ornamentations he can do well, but he is not like Hubert, who is a full classical musician and also a jazzman. Young musicians have this facility more and more nowadays."

The "Suite" made enough of a splash on this side of the Atlantic to catch the attention of director Herbert Ross. "He wanted the same kind of musical mood for his film, and probably with Rampal. We were supposed to record it in Paris, but the Musicians' Union here didn't want that because the film was 100% American. So that's how I came to meet Hubert and all the other fine musicians on the "California Suite" sound track: Bud Shank, Tommy Tedesco, Shelly Manne, Chuck Domanico."

The flute-piano work has had a slightly checkered career. Two years ago Bolling and Rampal played it at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, later at Carnegie Hall. "The reaction at Carnegie was mixed; the public of Rampal was not expecting this kind of music. But we also played it very successfully at a New York nightclub, the Bottom Line."

Asked whether he found it easy to persuade the jazz audiences to appreciate a classical work, or vice versa, Bolling said: "Here it is generally no problem. In France, as Rampal has said, it is terrible; many people are so conservative. If we should play this suite at the Theatre des Champs Elysees, they would shout and complain. We did it with good reaction only in two or three small festivals in the French countryside, where the crowds were younger and more broad-minded."

For all their success, Bolling's classical capers cannot take precedence over his activities in jazz, swing and writing for the screen. His credits include 40 movie scores (mostly in France), numerous television writing chores, and a wild melange of albums: boogie-woogie piano, stride piano and four LPs as leader and composer-arranger for his Show Biz Band, an Ellington/Basie-inspired group.

"Actually my first love was Dixieland and swing. I recorded in Paris with visiting Americans: Mezz Mezzrow, Roy Eldridge, Rex Stewart, Sidney Bechet, Bill Coleman, Lionel Hampton, Kenny Clarke, Cat Anderson.

"After my Dixieland phase I was fascinated by the music of Duke Ellington, and when I had a possibility to lead a big band, I wrote in that tradition. My main piano influences are Ellington, Art Tatum, Earl Hines; also Teddy Wilson, Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll, Fats and James P. Johnson."

"Any new ones? Younger men?"

"No time to follow all that is happening."

Following his early jazz years, Bolling in the 1950s and '60s concentrated on studio work, writing or conducting for Sacha Distel, Juliette Greco, Charles Trenet, Henri Salvador, Brigitte Bardot and Liza Minnelli.

His chance encounter with the classical world has been carried through onto a series of records. In addition to the Rampal venture he has recorded with Pinchas Zuckerman, the violinist, and with Alexandre Lagoya, the guitarist. A suite he wrote and performed with the latter will be included in the Hollywood Bowl program, with Angel Romero, Spanish-born but U.S.-raised, as guitarist.

If Bolling were your typical imported composer, he might be expected to use "California Suite" and the Hollywood Bowl publicity to smooth the way for a new life as a part of the American scene. On this visit he has brought his wife and two sons with him, but for purely vacationing reasons. He has no intention of following up his advantages here.

"I now have so many writing commissions in France that even if I stopped playing entirely, I would still have enough work to keep me busy for 10 years. I am writing pieces on commission for classical trumpet, for cello, for chamber orchestra. In fact, I even have my work with me; I'm writing between rehearsals.

"I have also plans for writing films for very important French directors. Film writing is my main activity, so now I travel as little as possible."

Does he still have time to play jazz piano? "I must if I have to . . . how you say . . . keep my chops."

In the course of the conversation, Bolling casually let it drop that while working on "California Suite" he had to fly back to France for one day, play a gig in Toulouse with his Show Biz Band, then hurry back to Hollywood.

If Bolling had a theme song, it could well be the Josephine Baker favorite: "J'ai Deux Amours." At present, neither of his two loves seems to be in any danger of obliteration. □

AT CARMELO'S 8/6

Saxophonist Cole Leads Quintet

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Carmelo's, the Sherman Oaks restaurant where the owners recently stirred in jazz with the linguini, is taking off as the in gathering place for Valley jazz fans. Friday the room was packed as Richie Cole, a blazing alto sax windjammer from the East Coast, brought in an exciting quintet, formed recently after he settled in the Southland.

Cole seems destined for a dominant role as a third-generation bebopper; he studied with Phil Woods, who in turn was an authoritative disciple of Charlie Parker. Equipped with a virile, penetrating sound, a sure ear for chord changes and melodic creativity, Cole deals as easily with an old standard ("The Way You Look Tonight") as with a tune by Parker ("Confirmation") or a deeply felt blues.

The group sound is established through tight teamwork in which major parts are played by an exceptional guitarist, Bruce Forman, and the intense, driving bassist Bob Magnusson. Completing the combo are Scott Morris on drums and John Novello at the piano.

Cole leavened his artistry with enough humor to keep the attention of an audience that included Brenda Vaccaro, Marty Feldman, Roscoe Lee Browne and a good portion of the local jazz pros.

Also on the month's bill at Carmelo's are Don Menza, Friday-Saturday; Bill Henderson, Aug. 15-16; Jimmy Witherspoon, Aug. 17-18.

The Valley has been further brightened by the permanent installation of pianist Frank Collett's trio at Stevie G's. Hidden in a shopping center off Ventura Blvd. at Laurel Canyon, this secluded rendezvous, with its fireplace and intimate ambiance, has music Thursdays through Sundays.

Collett deals expertly with a pleasant if unadventurous program of pop and jazz material. Halfway through he yields the spotlight to Judy French, a lounge-type singer doing lounge-type songs ("Chicago"). As at Carmelo's, the music is aided in large measure by the presence of a virtuoso of the upright bass, John Glannelli. The drums are unpretentiously manned by Joey Baron.

LONG BEACH FESTIVAL

Jazz Bash Aboard the Queen Mary

BY LEONARD FEATHER

The concept of a floating jazz festival has been around for several years, usually taking the form of a high-budget, week-long cruise from New York to the West Indies.

The Long Beach Jazz Festival, of which the second annual incarnation was staged over the weekend, is a modest enterprise. Its budget is low, the talent on deck is almost exclusively local, and the ship goes nowhere. Nevertheless, some jubilant sounds rang through the Grand Salon of the Queen Mary, and were duplicated when the same artists performed in an outdoor area on land, an anchor's throw from her majesty's bow.

Most of the participants have been reviewed here during Southland club appearances in the not-too-distant past: singers Lorez Alexandria, Ernie Andrews and Jimmy Witherspoon; also Shelly Manne, the Teddy Edwards Orchestra, Kenny Burrell and others. The only non-Los Angeles group was Bruce Cameron's combo out of San Diego.

Cameron, a trumpeter who presumably has drawn inspiration from Freddie Hubbard and Woody Shaw, sounds more impressive on his record album than in person. Most of the jazz-rock pieces came across as adequate music for dancing, but hardly of concert caliber. The group's most valuable asset, a personable young singer named Charlotte Steele, arrived late and only got to do "With All My Love," the album's catchy title song.

Eddie Harris, on the other hand, was more effective here, backed by a live rhythm section, than on his latest LP, for which he supplied his own accompaniment by overdubbing. Harris, basically a fine tenor saxophonist, did indulge in a few multiple sound and synthesizer effects on his horn. He also played piano and sang, to the delight of the crowd, but was most satisfactorily showcased when simply playing melodies such as "Just Friends" and "Lover Man" in his natural, unaugmented style. His guitarist, Ron Muldrow, and bassist Larry Gaoes also were in top form.

Gloria Lynne demonstrated that a mature jazz singer, given the rhythm team she deserves, is fail-safe. Her pianist, Ron Kalina, doubled on harmonica. Francoise Vaz on guitar, Harvey Newmark on bass and Ted Hawke on drums turned in an exuberant performance while Lynne showed her jazz-gospel-pop chops.

Producer and drummer Al Williams subbed for the ailing Cal Tjader, who is recuperating from a heart attack. According to Williams, the festival drew about 4,000 fans, far below the 6,000 or so he had hoped for. Perhaps the $12.50 tab was too tough for a show comprising familiar talents; or possibly Williams might consider a movable feast on some liner that can really take off.

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'72/ 8/12

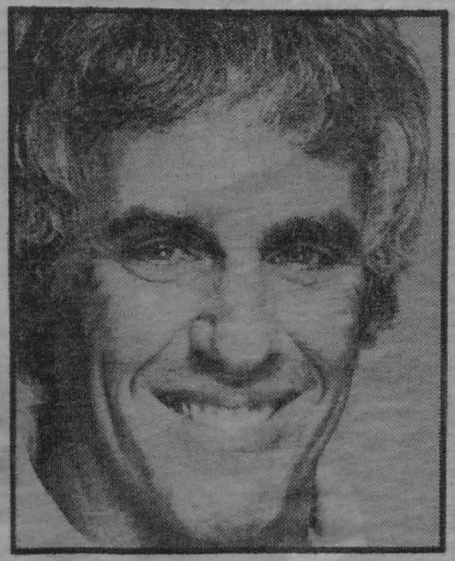
BACHARACH: NO RAINDROPS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Burt Bacharach. The very name is a synonym for pop-music success in the 1960s. As hit follows hit through the decade, he becomes the man who has everything. Two Oscars, three Grammy awards; an unending succession of hit songs, with lyrics by Hal David, recorded most often by Dionne Warwick, produced by the Bacharach-David team; no less than 39 of them on the charts during a 10-year span. As if that were not enough, and assuming that what the world needs now is love, add Angie Dickinson as Mrs. Bacharach.

Then, not all at once but gradually over a few years, it all falls apart. The partnership with Warwick ends; she sues Bacharach and David. He writes the score for a picture, "Lost Horizon." The movie bombs, in a big way. The Bacharach-David partnership ends. So does the Bacharach-Bacharach team as he and Dickinson split. His name fades out of the charts.

It all sounds like material for a movie for which Bacharach might some day write the score. What matters now, however, is that this man of unquenchable talent has picked himself up, ended his dry spell, and presently is as busy and future-directed as he has been since the glory days.



Burt Bacharach

Burt Bacharach, whom most women of my acquaintance still find devastatingly good looking, sits back and reviews the traumatic events of his recent years, speaking with particular enthusiasm about his latest album, "Woman" (A&M SP 3709). Though there are three vocal cuts, with lyrics by the respective singers (Carly Simon, Sally Stevens and Libby Titus), essentially this is an orchestral set with Burt conducting the Houston Symphony. The result is a deftly conceived and superbly executed illustration of his undimmed gifts as a classically trained composer.

"I'm especially proud that we cut the entire album live, in one four-hour session, at Jones Hall in Houston. I don't think there's anything else out there at the moment that's quite like this. We've cut down one piece, 'New York Lady,' for release as a single."

The idea for the album was born a year earlier when he conducted the symphony in a mixture of old and new material. "We've been living in a plastic world, where the strings come in three weeks later and wear headphones to hear what's been recorded; the brass and woodwinds do the same thing four weeks after the rhythm tracks were made, and they're not even playing in tune. What's wrong with having everybody playing at once, interacting, responding to one another? It was an exciting, Russian-roulette premise. In four hours, what happens if a cable blows? Well, we took that chance, and it worked."

The Houston project is one of several new ventures that have made this a year for Bacharach not just of promises, promises, but of results, results. He has several new song-writing partners. One is Michael McDonald, lead singer with the Doobie Brothers. Through McDonald, he was recently reunited with Dusty Springfield, raising speculation that the man who provided her with "Look of Love" among other hits may work on producing a new album with her.

He has been writing with Paul Anka, under conditions he finds unusually stimulating to the creative juices. This summer, for the first time in years, he decided not to go out on tour, with Anthony Newley or anyone else; nor would he hang around Del Mar watching his horses (asked how many he owns, Burt replied: "Too many"); nor would he fall into the easy Palm Springs life of tennis and lying in the sun to which he has succumbed in the past.

Instead, he rented a house in Jackson Hole, Wy., where he has been working in solitude except for the times when Paul Anka has flown there in his jet.

"Paul usually writes both lyrics *and* music, but he has shown tremendous energy and enthusiasm for working with me. We finished nine songs in three days, and several of them, I think, are terrific.

"It's been great in Jackson Hole. No jockeys come knocking at my door. I work 11, 12 hours a day. With my isolation comes a certain loneliness, a self-enforced ritual of not getting close to the people in the community, of eating dinner alone every night. I'm getting discipline back into my bloodstream."

Along with the songwriting ventures, he has a new film chore lined up. "After 'Lost Horizon' I just stopped writing for a year; when you invest so much energy and the film is a disaster, it's discouraging even when you get a hit recording out of it." ("Living Together, Growing Together," a big single for the Fifth Dimension, was from the score.) The new film, tentatively titled "I Love You, I Love You Not," was

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THE BOOK REVIEW

SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 1979 ★

A tongue-in-cheek slice of England's high-society life

Gossip 1920-1970 by Andrew Barrow (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan: $16.95)

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

"On May 10, 1940, German invasions of Holland, Luxembourg and Belgium had begun, causing many Whitsun house parties in England to be canceled at the last moment."

"In a last-minute effort to avert war, Neville Chamberlain flew to see Hitler at his mountain-top retreat. It was reported that whisky and sandwiches were provided on the outgoing journey and chicken and claret on the return flight."

These two items are prototypes of the style and substance of "Gossip 1920-1970," in which the author has juxtaposed the world-shaking and the trivial in a chronological cross-section of English society life. Despite (or because of?) its fragmentation, "Gossip" makes fascinating reading.

The book comprises several thousand unrelated paragraphs, each from one to six lines long, drawn from newspapers, magazines and biographies of the period, and dealing mainly with the headline-hunters of high society and politics rather than those of the art, literary and show business worlds. The latter groups are mentioned only when their lives impinge on those of the former.

Barrow's style is highly idiosyncratic and tongue-in-cheek. Many items are prefaced by cliches: "Headlines blazed the news . . ." or "It was noted that . . ." Some are classic British stiff-upper-lipisms:

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Slice of English society life

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"On November 7, a bomb descended upon the palatial home of Mr. Chips Cannon in Belgrave Square . . . interrupting a dinner party attended by Hector Bolitho and Raymond Mortimer. Surrounded by dust and smoke, the suave host rang the bell and asked his butler, Lambert, to bring more drinks."

Lady Diana Cooper is one of many whom we find running as a thread, from page 3, where as the smashing bride of Duff Cooper she appears at a 1920 Devonshire House charity ball, to page 263, when four constables raid the 75-year-old matriarch's home in 1968 on a tip that some grass has been hidden in a hatbox in her bedroom (false, it turns out).

The Mitford sisters, of course, are ubiquitous: Diana, who married Sir Oswald Mosely, founder of the British League of Fascists, and Unity, the dear friend and admirer of Hitler who, when war broke out, "entered the English garden in Munich and shot herself with a small pistol . . . Hitler informed the authorities that he would be responsible for the cost of whatever treatment was possible." But their more liberal sister, Jessica, rates only two brief mentions.

Accommodations to the Nazis are traced through the activities of the Cliveden Set, and the friendly visit of Hitler by the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. ("After the royal guests had departed, the Fuehrer remarked to his interpreter, 'She would have made a good Queen.'")

But this is as much a survey of places, of empire and society in turmoil, as about individuals and politics. We observe the rich and famous as their stately mansions are torn down; by the final years, their Rolls-Royces and yachts and champagne are more endemic to the new pop aristocracy of the Rolling Stones and David Frost than to the fading plutocracy of the days before World War II.

The spirit of the people is best exemplified by Barrow's constant references to Sir Winston Churchill. When Rudolf Hess' parachute landed in Scotland on his supposed peace mission, we learn, "Churchill was said to be astounded by this bizarre turn of events, but did not alter his plans to go and watch a Marx Brothers film."

"Gossip" contains enough material to keep the New Yorker's "There'll Always Be an England" section supplied for several years.

British-born Feather writes for The Times about music and other subjects.