JAZZ REVIEWS

TEDESCO JAMS AND JOKES AT BLUE NOTE

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Blue Note, yet another addition to the fast-growing list of Southland jazz clubs, is presenting small groups, most of them led by guitarists, nightly except Sunday.

The room is small, the food Italian, the location—on Ventura Boulevard just east of Laurel Canyon Boulevard—convenient, the music mostly mainstream. Tommy Tedesco, the veteran studio guitarist who books the talent, appears there himself every Wednesday.

Tedesco, as most of his peers know, is not only a versatile and compelling artist, but also a comedian whose stock in trade consists of long, generally witty raps about the life of a studio musician, the art of fooling producers and the anonymity of working session jobs ("I had an identity crisis before it was hip to have one").

Switching between acoustic and electric guitars, Tedesco managed, without verbal self-interruptions, to get through a wide-ranging series of selections that included a soaring samba, a gentle ballad medley, an electric blues solo on "Bags' Groove" and a splendidly chorded acoustic treatment of "Ain't Misbehavin'."

Often he played unaccompanied, but at times he would be joined by the remarkably able left-handed bassist, John Leitham, and by Mat Marucci, an unpretentiously efficient drummer.

For the most part the Blue Note provides low-key music guaranteed not to upset the digestion. Tedesco will remain on hand every Wednesday in June, teamed successively with four fellow-guitarists: Joe Pass next Wednesday, followed by Pat Kelly, Herb Ellis and John Collins. Now and then

Please see JAZZ, Page 9

JAZZ

Continued from Page 6

owner Tom Farmman is up to sit in on drums.

POLISH JAZZ PIANIST AT HOME IN U.S.

By LEONARD FEATHER

Just 10 years ago this month, Polish pianist Adam Makowicz (who opens Tuesday for a three-day run at Catalina's) played his first American job.

Though unknown in the United States, he was a big star back home: The Polish magazine Jazz Forum had already declared him Europe's No. 1 pianist in its readers' poll. He had come to the attention of John Hammond, who helped arrange his first gig at the Cookery in New York.

Makowicz was also helped soon after his arrival by a CBS album produced by Hammond, and by critical acclaim. Though often likened to Art Tatum, he used his phenomenal technique to play everything from the compositions of Scott Joplin to John Coltrane, as well as his own engaging works.

His role as a little fish in the vast American pond presented its problems. There were times when jobs were either scarce or unsuitable, yet his determination to tough it out in the Big Apple never flagged.

"I always wanted to play with the best possible musicians, and New York is where you find them. It's *the* center of jazz; all the world is looking at what goes on here, and I wanted to be a part of the jazz family."

How did he make the adjustment to the pace of New York after living most of his life in Poland? (He was born in Czechoslovakia but moved to Warsaw as a teenager.)

"It's hard to make the comparison now," he says, "because I haven't been back there since 1978, and many things I have almost forgotten. But here I can travel freely, and this is important. The musicians have been very friendly, and I have managed to gradually adjust my life style and be comfortable here.

ELENA SEIBERT

Adam Makowicz: "On the whole, I am quite happy now."

"New York is expensive, but so is Boston or Washington—and, for that matter, London or Stockholm. But somehow we cope. My wife, Irena, graduated from nursing college and is now working at a New York hospital."

Though he has worked most often in nightclubs, Makowicz has broken into the concert circuit, playing the New York Jazz Festival, the Norway Jazz Cruise and other major events around Europe, where he will go on tour again this month.

Because records are the lifeblood of any jazz man in search of steady work, he is happy that, after a few ventures on independent labels, he is now set with RCA's recently launched Novus Co. His first Novus album, "Moonray" (Novus 3003-1-N) was well received and will probably be followed by a George Gershwin album commemorating the 50th anniversary of the composer's death.

Another project he has in mind is a set of his original compositions for piano, bass, drums and string quartet, along the lines of a recent successful venture by the Kronos Quartet. "I like the idea of bringing together the roots and heritage of classical music with the spirit and essence of jazz," he said.

Looking back over the past decade, he admits there have been a few rough spots. "It's getting better now, but two years ago, things were really difficult financially. In part, it was my own fault. I rejected certain jobs because I couldn't stand to work in some club or restaurant where people were talking and paying no attention to the music. And I had become fed up with playing on some outrageously bad pianos. I thought I'd rather suffer a little more economically instead of suffering in soul and spirit by being subjected to the wrong working conditions.

"On the whole, though, I am quite happy now. On some of my European dates this summer, I will play 'Rhapsody in Blue' with symphony orchestras. My American jobs are getting better and easier; I'm really looking forward to working with [bassist] Andy Simpkins and [drummer] Sherman Ferguson at the Catalina.

"I don't feel that living in the middle of Manhattan as I do is a perfect situation by any means, but at least I can say so! It's a free country—I have the right to be wrong—and this, for me, is one of the greatest things of all."

RECORD & CD REVIEWS

Nancy Harrow and Esther Phillips.
■ **KEN FRANCKLING**

ATLANTIC JAZZ: BEBOP
7-81702-1

No company without access to any Charlie Parker or Bud Powell material can put out a representative bebop album; moreover, the two Gillespie cuts are from periods long past his trend-setting prime, a 1952 cut with Bags and a 1971 live rack with the "Giants of Jazz" (Winding, Stitt, Monk, McKibbon, Blakey). Monk also appears playing "Evidence" with Blakey's Messengers; Stitt has a fine "Koko" with John Lewis, and Bags is heard again with Coltrane on "Bebop." There's also a slightly irrelevant "Salt Peanuts" by a Philly Joe Jones group, and a 1964 take on Max Roach, from his session with the pianist Hasaan Ibn Ali. No inferior music here, but no definitive statement of what this vital movement accomplished in the mid-1940s (before Atlantic existed—that's the problem).
■ **LEONARD FEATHER**

REMEMBERING MAXINE

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Precious few singers can claim to have been performing in public before repeal. Maxine Sullivan, who recently died at age 75, could do better. She was singing before prohibition.

Sullivan lived three vocal lives: as a child prodigy in her native Homestead, Pa.; as an adult star worldwide from 1936-57, and as a returnee who, in 1967, emerged from a 10 year retirement.

Music came to Maxine Sullivan very early and quite naturally. Her family on her father's side was quite musical. They were from Coateville, Pa., and in the early years of the century they migrated to Homestead, a very small town outside Pittsburgh.

She was born Marietta Williams, after an aunt Marietta, who sang contralto. An uncle, Harry Williams, played drums in a band led by a man named Lois Deppe. The pianist in that band was Earl Hines.

"My father died in 1914, when I was only three, and I was raised by my mother's family," She said in an interview in Los Angeles last March. "Then in 1922 my uncle Harry came back off the road and decided to start his own band, which he called the Red Hot Peppers.

"When I was growing up, becoming a young lady, I would tag along with the band. I couldn't work the big clubs because my voice wasn't big enough, but by the late '20s or early '30s I was known around Homestead as the local Mildred Bailey or whoever was popular. I was the only singer in town."

After repeal, Sullivan, now in her 20s, was traveling regularly with the band until she was asked to audition at the Benjamin Harrison Literary Club in Pittsburgh. The name was a cover — "Actually the BHL Club had operated all through Prohibition, one of those 'Knock three times, who's there?' places, but after repeal it became a popular sportsmen's club where people would hang out after the legitimate clubs closed at 2 a.m.

One night, while Ina Ray Hutton's band was in town, the Hutton pianist, Gladys Mosier, advised her to come to New York. Sullivan and Diller decided to take an excursion on their Sunday off. "I stayed at a place up on Sugar Hill, and after I called Gladys she came to see me and brought Claude Thornhill with her. He was an important arranger at CBS with lots of connections.

"Well, I auditioned at every gin mill from 155th Street to the Onyx Club on West 52nd. I auditioned for Carl Kress, the guitarist who was a partner in the Onyx. Two days later I went to work there.

Within a week Thornhill had recorded her. But the definitive move was his idea of having her swing an old Scottish folk song. "Loch Lomond" was an immediate sensation, and it did not

Maxine Sullivan

hurt at all that one radio station pulled it off the air, claiming it was irrevernet to treat a respected theme in this manner. The uproar of publicity led to a big spread in Life Magazine. Overnight, Maxine Sullivan was famous, the new heroine of the swing era.

After a long run at the Onyx she was claimed by Hollywood, appearing with Louis Armstrong in "Going Places" and singing the title tune and three other numbers in "St. Louis Blues." Her first stage role was that of Titania in a modernized version of "Midsummer Night's Dream," retitled "Swingin' the Dream." Panned by the critics, it folded after 10 nights and is remembered mainly for having introduced a tune sung by Sullivan, "Darn That Dream."

By now she was married to John Kirby, the bassist who led the band at the Onyx. Together they landed a unique assignment, a CBS radio series called "Flow Gently, Sweet Rhythm." Kirby's sextet played delicate instrumentals, many of them based on classical themes; Sullivan sang folk and pop songs. It just may have been the best live jazz series ever presented in the radio days.

The next decade was one of continuous triumphs. Though the association with Kirby broke up (as did the marriage), she toured with many other bands: one night stands with Benny Carter, vaudeville houses with Glen Gray, swanky hotel jobs such as the Ritz Carlton in Boston.

Sullivan says she never had a chance to settle down and earn steady money until the Ruban Bleu, one of the great East Side supper clubs, hired her and kept her there off and on for six years. The international circuit opened up after her first trip to Britain in 1948. She has been back dozens of times, and has visited Stockholm every year for the last 12 years.

In 1950 she met Cliff Jackson, for many years the house pianist at Cafe Society. Their marriage was long and happy, ending only when Jackson died in 1970.

The last job during her first adult career was at a club in Honolulu. She came home feeling ill, underwent an operation, and took stock of her life. "I had saved money; Paula was just coming out of junior high school, and it seemed to me that after 20 good years I ought to quit while I was ahead."

"I'd had no idea of returning, but a musician friend talked me into doing two weeks in Washington. I thought everyone had forgotten me but I ran into a lot of old friends there, people who'd known me from the Ruban Bleu days. Soon afterward I met Dick Gibson, and wound up doing eight weeks with Bobby Hackett and eight weeks with Dick's new group, which he called the World's Greatest Jazzband."

By 1970 Sullivan realized that she was back working full time. Tours and records with the World's Greatest, clubs and jazz festivals and jazz parties kept her as busy as her telephone: she has no agent and no need for one.

In 1985 she went to Japan for the first time, with Scott Hamilton's Quintet, and made an album there with him. She has done festivals in all parts of the world, and her energy, talent, and passion for her music will be missed. ■

JAZZ REVIEW

6-3-87

VITAL, VALID SOUNDS OF BERK'S ADOPTION AGENCY

By LEONARD FEATHER

It is hard to think of any replacement that would constitute an improvement in the band known as Dick Berk's Adoption Agency, heard Monday at Alfonse's in Toluca Lake.

Why this exceptional unit, with its state-of-the-jazz-art values, has been heard so rarely (and never yet on the jazz festival circuit) is anybody's guess. There is more innovative energy in one set by this group than in a whole evening by one of those chart-topping crossover combos.

The leader, a straight-ahead drummer in his late 40s, is old enough to be the father of some of his sidemen, yet all are experienced pros whose improvisational skills are brilliantly honed. The music they play probably will pass for mainstream in the year 2000. Theirs are contemporary sounds in the most valid and vital sense. Much of their sometimes Art Blakey-like repertoire is original, written by Berk with his pianist, Tad Weed, and others. The Berk/Weed composition "Three for Vinnie" has a fiercely driving quality that makes the word *waltz* seem inadequate, though its pulse is indeed in ¾.

Individually and collectively, the horn section composed of Jeff Bunnell on trumpet, David Pozzi on tenor sax and Mike Fahn on trombone is imposing and exciting. The mere fact that Fahn uses a valve trombone puts him, ipso facto, one step ahead, since this rarely heard instrument gives him a strikingly personal sound, which he embellishes with technique that borders on the incredible.

Fahn's version of the Victor Young "Beautiful Love" was notable for a startling passage that gradually accelerated the tempo, then just as deliberately retarded it. Weed's solo here, as elsewhere, displayed a rich density of harmonic textures.

The young bassist Scott Colley was equally impressive as a rhythm section component and as a soloist capable of fast, nimble chording. There is, in short, not a single weak link in this six-man chain of command.

JAZZ REVIEW

6/5/87

A SUNNY ROSE MURPHY PERFORMS AT CINEGRILL

By LEONARD FEATHER

Credit Rose Murphy with a sunny, ingratiating smile, coupled with the ability to love her audience and be loved in return.

Beyond that, there is little about the veteran entertainer that calls for comment, let alone analysis. Everything remains much as it was decades ago. She still has the almost total inability to complete a chorus of lyrics without a self-interruption such as "che-che-che," a chirp, a giggle, or some other sound effect. In "Time on My Hands," she sang nothing but the title, repeated many times, along with an occasional "tick tock" or "cuckoo" during her Cinegrill engagement at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel through June 13.

Somehow, along the way, these gimmicks have earned her a cult following, even a few hit records. That she has a distinctive personality, in a slightly weird way, is unquestionable; that it is based on musical artistry is highly debatable.

As if proof of the limitations of her talent were needed, Murphy called Dorothy Donegan to the stage at the end of the set. Donegan, a superlative keyboard artist, played the exquisite Billy Strayhorn composition "Lotus Blossom" and within 16 bars demolished everything that had happened during the preceding hour.

Eddie Daniels: Thriving on Challenge

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Eddie Daniels is in a unique situation. He is the first clarinetist to attract widespread attention to this instrument in more than four decades. The last was Buddy De Franco, whom he edged out by two votes in the last *down beat* Reader's Poll.

Given his outgoing personality and his determination to succeed on the instrument that now occupies almost all his time, Daniels seems a likely bet in an area that has produced virtually no new prominent participants since the De Franco days. True, there are other fine musicians such as John Carter, who was a member of Clarinet Summit, and Dick Johnson, who leads the Artie Shaw orchestra; but Daniels' personality, and the power of GRP Records, would seem likely to propel him to heights rarely associated with this instrument.

"I'm an obsessive, compulsive, crazy person," he says. "Last night at Long Beach State University I played a concert to a full house, got two standing ovations, yet I came away thinking of all the things I didn't like about myself. I got home and looked at my clarinet and said to myself, "What went wrong with this, and this, and that?""

If there are faults in Daniels' playing, his listeners have failed to observe them. He has become, in the past year, the Wynton Marsalis of the clarinet. His *Breakthrough* album on GRP, part of it with the 80-piece London Philharmonic, proved this by displaying him to dazzling effect in both classical and jazz settings.

The irony of his present celebrity status is that for years he made a living as a saxophonist, doubling only fitfully on clarinet; in fact, the *Encyclopedia of Jazz in the '70s* compared him not to Benny Goodman or Buddy De Franco, but to Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane.

"The fact is that I always liked clarinet best," said Daniels in his brash, New York-accented voice, during a recent Los Angeles visit. "I began studying at 12, three years after I'd started on saxophone, and it was clarinet that I studied at Juilliard, with Daniel Bonade, one of the great French masters."

As a teenager he played sax and clarinet in the Newport Youth Band. "A lot of good people came out of that band. The drummer was Larry Rosen, who's now the R in GRP Records—my boss, right? I went to get my bachelor's degree in education at Brooklyn College. It wasn't until 1966 that I was graduated from Juilliard with my master's degree."

That he did not become a full time musician immediately was due to parental influence. "When I started hanging out with jazz musicians, they thought that element wasn't healthy for their nice, young Jewish boy. My mother associated it with drugs and that kind of stuff. So I became a school teacher. But now that I've made it as a musician she's unbelievably proud—'My son's the best!' My father came to hear me just before he died a few months ago, at Miami University, and that was a proud moment for us both."

Daniels began his brief teaching career at Westinghouse Vocational High. "That was a real blackboard jungle type of school, all boys, and I had to teach hygiene, which became sex education. They wanted to know about sex, so I would talk about it."

Crossing from sex to sax, Daniels moved into the jazz world, starting on tenor saxophone with the clarinetist Tony Scott. "I tried to play clarinet with him, too, but he said, 'Put that thing away. You sound too much like Buddy De Franco.' Actually, Buddy was my inspiration; he made me turn the corner away from Benny Goodman, and he was always supportive, telling me for years to get out of the studio and play clarinet on the road."

Less supportive was Thad Jones, during Daniels' six years with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra. "I had a ball playing tenor, but while we were taping a live album at the Village Vanguard I picked up the clarinet and snuck in a solo. Thad was very upset about it—but on the strength of that one solo I won the *down beat* New Star award on clarinet! That gave me the chutzpah to keep on doing it even though Thad hated the clarinet."

During the Jones/Lewis incumbency, Daniels made a lucrative transition in the studio world, playing in the band on Dick Cavett's TV show from 1972-4. He kept busy through the next decade, but ultimately came to the decision that took him out of the studios and back to the clarinet on a full time basis.

"What was happening in the studios became very clear to me. A lot of fine players, the cream of the crop who were making their living there, saw the synthesizers taking over, and right now there is literally half the amount of work.

"Now here was a chance for someone like me to come out with an acoustic instrument that hadn't been heard from that much and get the young people interested. It gives them a role model; maybe it will take a few of them away from the electronic revolution and back to this very primitive instrument, this piece of wood with holes in it, this wonderful thing called the clarinet."

Daniels has consistently bridged the gap between the classical and jazz worlds, playing every summer at the Aspen Festival, and with various orchestras such as the Cincinnati Symphony. Most significantly, in March of 1984 he premiered the Jorge Calandrelli work, "Concerto for Jazz Clarinet and Orchestra," with the New American Orchestra at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. He performed it again in 1985 at the Charles Ives Festival, and recorded it, along with compositions by C.P.S. Bach, J.S. Back, Torrie Zito and Daniels, for the *Breakthrough* album.

He has had many honors along the way. Before joining Jones/Lewis, he went to Vienna, where he won a saxophone competition organized by the pianist Friedrich Gulda. He has been an annual winner of the NARAS Most Valuable Player award.

"A lot of good things have happened as a result of the album," he says. "John Dankworth, who fell in love with it, had me play a Pops Series; I've played with the London Symphony quite a few times, playing everything from Mozart to the things in the album.

"I want to stretch the clarinet to its limits, put myself on the hot seat so I have to keep playing better. At the concert last night I played Weber's Concertino for Clarinet, a piece by Prokoviev called Variations on a Hebrew Theme; then the big jazz orchestra came on and I played 'Donna Lee' and a couple of big band charts. Then John Patitucci and I played some bass-and-clarinet duos.

"It was a solid two-and-a-half hour concert in which I had to play *everything*. That's what I want—to be put through the wringer. I want a job where they put you up against a wall and say, 'Put that clarinet in your mouth, go ahead and play Mozart, play every bit of the classical literature, and do it as well as anyone ever did it, or better, and then you gotta play chamber music and jazz. You gotta do it all.

"I love it. It's a challenge. Life is only exciting when you're really challenged." ■

6/7/87

JAZZ

HANCOCK'S JUGGLING ACT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Herbie Hancock wears almost as many hats as he owns keyboards.

His home in West Hollywood contains about 21 electric pianos, synthesizers, clavinets and other members of the keyboard family. "In addition," he says, "I have three lockers away from home stocked with keyboards, because I ran out of space.

"This is an accumulation of 14 years' collecting. I keep acquiring new things because electronic technology moves so fast; there seem to be radical changes every few months."

As swiftly as he moves from one keyboard to another, Hancock crosses the borders between jazz, R&B, funk, fusion and pop; between composing and playing; between acoustics and electronics; between concert halls, movie and recording studios. At 47, he may well be the busiest and most acclaimed musician who remains at least partly active in straight-ahead jazz.

This summer he is dividing his time between two groups. He will spend July touring Europe with a jazz trio (Buster Williams, bass, and Al Foster, drums). In August and September he will play dates in the United States (including the Hollywood Bowl on Aug. 19) and Japan with saxophonist Michael Brecker, bassist Ron Carter and drummer Tony Williams.

"I've been doing jazz almost exclusively for the past two years," he says, "although my next album, which I just finished for CBS, will be a pop LP. But the call for me to do jazz work has been continuous as a result of '`Round Midnight.' "

Hancock's score for that film, in which he also had an acting and playing role, won him an unexpected Oscar for original score. "I was completely shocked when they called my name. I thought Ennio Morricone was going to win, for his music to 'The Mission.' Since the award I've had three major film offers—and not for jazz scores. I think by now people know that I've done other kinds of work."

MARSHA TRABGER / Los Angeles Times

Though his next album will be a pop LP, Herbie Hancock says, "I've been doing jazz almost exclusively for the past two years."

He has, in fact, six movie credits, starting in 1966 with "Blow-Up." In 1972 he scored "The Spook Who Sat by the Door" (of which he says: "It didn't get around—they kinda squashed it"), followed by "Death Wish" in 1975, "A Soldier's Story" in 1984 and, since "'Round Midnight," the Richard Pryor feature "Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling." All these assignments except "'Round Midnight" called for orthodox motion-picture scoring rather than small group jazz.

"When Bertrand Tavernier, the director, asked me to do the 'Round Midnight' score, I had just done a couple of pop albums: 'Future Shock,' which had 'Rockit' on it, and another one called 'Sound System.' I have never minded moving back and forth. I suppose I could make a kind of jazz-based pop music, the way some musicians do, but I choose to keep the two separate. I pursue one objective, and when it reaches a logical conclusion, I pursue another. It's no big hassle for me to make the change; I don't even think about it."

Hancock's success in the pop music area is due in large measure to his quick grasp of the technical essentials involved in electronic music, which he attributes to a childhood concern for things scientific.

"I've always been interested in science. When I went to college, even though I had been playing piano from the age of 7, my first major was engineering. In the back of my mind, I felt I wanted to be a musician—not necessarily a jazz musician. But I thought I'd better be responsible and study something a little more stable. Little did I know that the two could be brought together! But at the end of my second year I had to do what was really in my heart, and I changed my major to music."

Hancock's first flirtation with electronic music began when he was making an album for Warner Bros. called "Crossings." As he recalls it: "My manager and producer, David Rubinson, suggested I use a synthesizer, because it was then a new instrument associated with rock 'n' roll, and maybe that could help with the sales. I said fine, and we got Patrick Gleeson to overdub something for an intro. It came off so fantastically well that I said to him: 'Look, why don't you do something for the whole record?' Right after that, Patrick became a member of my traveling group."

After breaking up that band in 1973, Hancock recorded the breakthrough album "Headhunters," establishing himself solidly in the new electronic age. □

A piquant aspect of the jazz-fusion schism is that most straight-ahead jazz is still performed almost exclusively on acoustic instruments, while jazz/rock, fusion and the other crossover idioms make extensive use of electronics. A major question is suggested: Will synthesizers and other electronic inventions become increasingly a part of the jazz scene?

"I guess that depends on one's definition of jazz," Hancock said. "It gets vaguer all the time. It's entirely possible that I could make a genuine jazz album that was all electronic; by the same token, I could make an R&B or pop album that was all acoustic. Come to think of it, at some point I might like to do both those things. I guess I've taken the easy way out; using just the acoustic instruments in jazz is kind of a minimalist approach.

"Of course, we must take into account the impact of jazz fusion, which already is very heavily electronic. That's one of those gray areas, with varying elements from pop music and from jazz, depending on which artist you are talking about. For instance, Chick Corea's electric stuff still sounds more jazz than pop to me; but there are others in that field who are more pop than jazz."

Proud of his ability to return to jazz as an award-winning composer, Hancock nevertheless finds a certain irony in his victory. "It's funny," he says, "after many years of waiting I got two Grammys, and both of them were for R&B performances—for 'Rockit' in 1983 and 'Sound System' in '84. When I finally got a jazz award, it was [an Oscar] from the Motion Picture Academy!"

He is happy, though, that the award was a dividend paid by what he feels was the first honest effort to portray the jazz life in a motion picture. He has no time for the complainers who object that "'Round Midnight," starring Dexter Gordon as a sax man worn out by drink who goes to Paris, reinforced the image of the alcoholic or drug-drained jazzman.

"It was a realistic picture of a certain aspect of life. It was set around 1960, and reality is reality; you cannot hide from the fact that in those days, things like that were happening. Thank goodness we don't live in those times anymore; look at Wynton and Branford Marsalis and all the other musicians who were not brought up in a drug culture, who have become role models." □

6/8/87

REMEMBERING THE BLUES' BLEAK, EARLY BEGINNINGS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Whether the central figure in "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" resembles the real Ma Rainey (1886-1939) is almost irrelevant. What matters about August Wilson's riveting drama is the extent to which it becomes a metaphor for black life, and specifically the world of Afro-American blues.

The music business 60 years ago functioned in precisely the manner depicted here. Men like Levee, the trumpeter, even famous men like Fats Waller, did indeed sell their songs outright for a pittance. Singers like Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith, both of whom began recording the blues in 1923, were all but unknown to white America and had no control over their own destinies; they were totally indentured to white businessmen.

Social contact was zero: typically, Rainey (brilliantly played by Ann Weldon) remarks that during all the years her manager had handled her, she had been in his home only once, and then to entertain some of his friends.

Many jazzmen of the 1920s were the sons of former slaves. Only the pianist in "Ma Rainey" is able to read, and for this the others resent him. They had acquired so little education, and led such squalid lives, that their only hope seemed to lie in catering to the white man. The only black power, in fact, was the black man's power to generate income for the whites, whether by picking the cotton or singing the blues. As the recording session ends, the musicians cannot accept a check, because a black man may have to run all over town to find someone who will cash his $25.

"Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" is a jarring reminder of frustrations overwhelming enough to drive a black man over the edge into insanity and murder, during a time when whites were lynching blacks at the rate of one every week or so. It reminds us too how fortunate we are that a Louis Armstrong or a Billie Holiday managed to rise above conditions not unlike those under which these musicians lived.

If a Ma Rainey were part of today's music world, she could have her own publishing company, her own lawyers and management office, her retinue of employees, and power over every aspect of her career. Sadly, there are too few Americans of any race who relate to the music of those days, even though both Ann Weldon and Theresa Merritt, who sings during the pre-show and intermission, offer compelling evidence that the classic blues is still among us if you care to seek it out.

THE SONG HAS ENDED

Leonard Feather

VICTOR FELDMAN, the former child prodigy drummer from London who went on to American fame with everyone from Woody Herman to Miles Davis, was found dead on the morning of May 12 at his home in Woodland Hills outside Los Angeles. He was 53.

Feldman had spent the previous evening recording a session in the studio he and his son Trevor had built at his home. On the session were Trevor on drums and John Patitucci on bass. Near the end Feldman apparently was suffering from an asthma attack, but seemed not to be seriously ill.

Feldman never fully recovered from the shock in October 1984 of losing his wife of 24 years, Marilyn. He had been very depressed, but according to one of his three sons, Josh, he had improved lately and was planning several dates, including a booking at Ronnie Scott's in London.

After moving to the US in 1955, Feldman toured with Woody Herman, settled in Los Angeles to freelance, then went on the road with Cannonball Adderley in 1960-61. He later accompanied Peggy Lee, toured the Soviet Union on vibes with Benny Goodman in 1962, and joined Miles Davis in 1963. After gigging and recording with Davis (for whom he composed *Seven Steps to Heaven*), he was offered a permanent job by Miles, but turned it down because he did not want to leave his wife. The job was then taken by Herbie Hancock.

Equally gifted as a pianist, vibraphonist, drummer and percussionist, Feldman had a splendid career as a studio musician but never achieved the recognition he deserved as a jazzman.

Jack Massarik writes: shortly before he died Victor paid a visit to London to see many old friends, including Ronnie Scott, Pete King and Mike Carr. He expressed a desire to play some gigs here but these proved difficult to organise in the time available. He jammed informally at Carr's house warming up with some beautiful solo piano which Carr had the presence of mind to record.

It is a tragedy that one of Britain's finest musicians, having raised his family and established a distinguished career in the highly competitive world of the Hollywood recording studios should have passed away before realising his wish to return full-time to the music he had always loved best.

JIMMY MOSIER, 49, former lead alto saxophonist with the Buddy Rich band, died May 5 in Boston of cancer. He had recently been head of the woodwind department at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Mosier had playled in the Woody Herman and Herb Pomeroy bands.

IRVING ASHBY, the guitarist best known for his membership in the King Cole Trio from 1947-50, died April 22 in Perris, California, not far from Los Angeles, Death was due to a heart attack. Ashby was 56.

Ashby, who studied at New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, first came to prominence in the Lionel Hampton orchestra from 1940-42. Living in Los Angeles, he took part in the film "Stormy Weather," played with Eddie Beal and others, then replaced Oscar Moore with the Nat Cole group. He also toured with Jazz at the Philharmonic and toured as a member of the Oscar Peterson Trio in 1952 when Norman Granz took JATP on its first European trip. He last appeared on records playing duets with John Collins (his successor in the Cole Trio) for the MCA album "Guitar Player."

HENRY (HEINIE) BEAU, the clarinetist and saxophonist who came to prominence in the Red Nichols and Tommy Dorsey bands, died April 19 in Los Angeles of cancer. Born in Wisconsin in 1911, Beau had been a busy freelance studio musician for many years in Los Angeles, working with Sinatra, Peggy Lee, Ted Nash Sr. and Paul Weston among others. He had recently been freelancing with traditionalist groups.

PAUL BUTTERFIELD, the blues singer and harmonica player, well known as leader of the Butterfield Blues Band, died May 4th, in his Hollywood apartment. Toxicological tests are being made to determine the cause of death; Butterfield was known to have had a drug problem. He was 46, and was born in Chicago where he worked with interracial groups on the South Side.

MAXINE SULLIVAN

LEONARD FEATHER

It is hard to imagine a world without Maxine Sullivan; hard, at least, for those of us who considered her a part of our lives for so many years, and her contribution a gentle grace note in the vocal annals.

Her death in April robbed her of several imminent anniversaries: her 76th birthday on May 13th, the 50th anniversary of her first recording (*Gone with the Wind* with Claude Thornhill's Orchestra, June 14, 1937), and of her first hit, *Loch Lomond*, August 6 1937.

Gone With the Wind seemed like an apt swan song for her: at 4ft. 11, and down to barely 80 pounds, she seemed during those last months frail enough to be swept away.

Just weeks before she died, the Hollywood Roosevelt had booked her into the Cinegrill. She had been in town to celebrate her third Grammy nomination (but again the actual award eluded her). On opening night she was clearly shaking off a cold, and was saddled with a rhythm section that seemed to be shaking *her* off. Still, her sound was one of those immutable wonders that had changed very little over a half century. Tilting her head up slightly, stirring the air gently with her left hand, she brought to each song a sense of relaxed confidence that required few changes of melody to lend it her own imprimatur.

A few days later she came over for what turned out to be her last interview. She talked with unusual candor about her three lives: as a child prodigy in her native Homestead, Pa.; as an adult star worldwide from 1936-57, and as a returnee who in 1967 emerged from a 10 year retirement.

"Before I quit," she said, *"I was playing jobs where a lot of young people had never heard of Maxine Sullivan, and the radio had none of my records."*

She was perhaps the only still-active singer who was performing in public not merely during prohibition, but before it. *"My grandmother was always pushing me out front, and I remember singing 'I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles' at the Carnegie Library in Homestead, wearing my high top shoes, in 1918."*

She was born Marietta Williams, after an aunt Marietta who sang contralto. An uncle, Harry Williams, played drums in a band led by Lois Deppe, the band in which Earl Hines played piano.

After Repeal she travelled regularly with her uncle until she was asked to audition at the Benjamin Harrison Literary Club in Pittsburgh, a former speakeasy and sportsmen's hangout.

"I worked from 11pm until unconscious, singing from table to table -- you know, 99 choruses of 'Dinah' or whatever. It paid $14 a week plus tips, and I stayed a year. But Ina Ray Hutton's pianist, Gladys Mosier, had heard me there and advised me to come to New York. I did, looked her up, and she came to visit, bringing with her Claude Thornhill, who was then an important arranger with lots of connections."

"Well, I auditioned at every gin mill from 155th St. to the Onyx on West 52nd, where the guitarist Carl Kress, who was one of the owners, hired me."

Within a week, Thornhill had recorded her; he and Mosier became her managers. It was his idea to have her sing the Scottish folk song *Loch Lomond*, which at that time seemed like a daring innovation; in fact, the uproar of publicity that ensued from its being banned on one radio led to a big spread in Life Magazine. Suddenly Maxine Sullivan was famous.

During her long run at the Onyx she married John Kirby, who led the gossamer-light sextet there. After trips to Hollywood for *Goin' Places* (with Louis Armstrong) and *St Louis Blues* (in which she sang the title tune and three others) she made her stage bow, playing Titania in *Swingin' The Dream.*

My best recollections of that era involve a radio series *Flow Gently Sweet Rhythm*, on which Maxine and the Kirby combo worked together.

"We were on every Sunday afternoon from coast to coast on CBS, and everyone was listening. Aside from late night remotes, there weren't many blacks on radio then, and Kirby's was the only band."

I used to drop in at CBS to catch the show in person; Maxine sang one or two songs I had written and the Kirby band played a chart I wrote for him of Chopin's *Polonaise*.Many of the sextet's works were based on classical themes.

The marriage broke up, but Maxine's next decade was one of continuous triumphs; one night stands with Benny Carter, vaudeville houses with Glen Gray, swanky hotel jobs like the Ritz Carlton in Boston.

Maxine became an international favorite, visiting England for the first time in 1948 and returning many times; during the last 12 years of her life she visited Stockholm regularly.

In 1950 she met the pianist Cliff Jackson; their happy marriage lasted until his death in 1970.

Maxine enjoyed her greatest security at an East Side supper club, the Ruban Bleu, where she remained off and on for six years. But by the mid-1950s she had vanished from the record scene. I told William Avar, who had a small company called Period records, that I wanted to revive *Flow Gently Sweet Rhythm* as an album. Kirby had died, but we used Aaron Bell on bass and all the original Kirby sidemen, plus Maxine. As a result, soon afterward I produced two albums featuring Maxine, teaming her with Dick Hyman (this partnership became a close one intermittently until her death). She did some of the old folk songs and standards, but for the second LP sang lyrics by Andy Razaf. This 1956 album is, I understand, due for reissue, though Period disappeared long ago.

Maxine studied nursing, and for some time worked as a health counselor at schools. She considered herself retired until, lured into a two-week gig in Washington, she gradually returned. With the help of Dick Gibson, whose World's Greatest Jazzband used her often, she was soon in the forefront again and by 1970 realized that she was working full time.

She never took proper care of herself. Seeing her often on Norway jazz cruises and other occasions, I found that her ability to smoke and drink exceeded her interest in eating. She was in no condition to lose weight. Inevitably, she caught pneumonia last year, and her daughter Paula did her best to bring her back to health.

"I've stopped smoking" she told me during that last interview. *"That was easy; I was in hospital anyway. It's a great life; new things keep happening. In 1985 I went to Japan for the first time. I've just about done it all. No, wait a minute -- I've never been to Paris. Anyone out there listening? Call me up!"*

Paris will never know what it missed.

JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

Latin jazz singer Ruben Blades on stage at Playboy Festival.

AZZ REVIEW

PLAYBOY FEST FANS GET IN THEIR LICKS

y LEONARD FEATHER

There were several healthy helpings of genuine jazz Sunday at the Hollywood Bowl. There were also a few episodes of wild audience reaction, hough for the most part they did not coincide with the oments of musical creativity.

The problem that plagues all such celebrations was n evidence again as the Playboy Jazz Festival came to s ninth coda. The frenetic salsa sounds of a band led y the Panamanian singer Ruben Blades evoked ear-panic. Beach balls bounced. Security officers ounced. Conga lines formed. Excitement mounted in irect proportion to the group's rhythmic intensity.

Later on, Kenny G went through precisely the same otions that had worked so well Saturday for the Jeff orber Band: He took his saxophone out into the house, narching around and creating similarly frantic condi-ions. Later it was George Benson's turn; his perennial On Broadway" brought the crowd of 17,827 to its feet.

Happenings like this are to be expected at an event eared to providing the audience with a feel-good xperience, and only secondarily to maintaining

Please see PLAYBOY, Page 4

Los Angeles Times 6-7

JAZZ REVIEWS

WATROUS A WONDER AT WADSWORTH

By LEONARD FEATHER

Sunday evening at the Wadsworth Theater, the New American Orchestra, with Jack Elliott conducting, offered a program of four pieces, two of which were premiere performances.

By now it is an automatic assumption that this large ensemble will do justice to any music placed before it. Perhaps more time is being devoted to rehearsal; certainly the reason cannot lie in the simplicity of the works—on the contrary, they are generally demanding enough to place any group of performers under a strain.

More taxed than anyone was Bill Watrous, the featured soloist in Gordon Goodwin's lengthy "Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra" and in Patrick Williams' shorter, admirably tailored "La Fuerza," already well known as a component of Watrous' recent album.

Watrous seemed a trifle hesitant during the first two minutes of the concerto, an elaborate and sometimes windy work he introduced a few years ago at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. However, the longer he stayed with it, the more impressive he became, as did the composition.

At one point, left entirely on his own, Watrous took a dive from the top of the horn to the ultimate depths, not far from tuba land. Ad-libbing furiously, he indulged in polytones and, by the time the orchestra came back in, seemed to have exhausted every possibility the horn had to offer. He is an exemplary artist who blends total control with a vivid imagination.

Alan Broadbent's "Conversation Piece" was another obviously difficult work, essentially symphonic in nature, with a few jazz touches by Bob Shepherd on soprano saxophone and a remarkably effective drum interlude by Sol Gubin.

"Afterlight," by Richard Peaslee, a theatrical composer, briefly made interesting use of a brass-versus-strings call and response idea. The concertmaster, Endre Granat, distinguished himself, but neither here nor in the Broadbent work was there the sense of exhilaration, the spontaneity that Watrous brought to the looser moments of his two showcases.

An opening set by the Jack Sheldon Sextet, with Plas Johnson on tenor sax, provided the freest music of the evening. Sheldon's trumpet was warm and assured; his vocals were inclined as always toward humor, though he sang "Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me" as if he were going to burst into tears at any moment.

L.A. TIMES JUNE 9

"Compact Jazz: The Sampler."

Various artists. Verve. The multi-faceted joys of jazz, vintage 1955-72, have never been more succinctly displayed than in this 57½-minute set by 16 artists. Vocally, there are Ella and Billie and Sarah and Dinah and the Swingle Singers; instrumentally—Basie, Peterson, Garner, Grappelli, Getz, Corea, Mulligan, Mangione, Bill Evans, Jimmy Smith, Wes Montgomery. Many of us already own "Ipanema," "Mack the Knife," "Misty," etc., but for those about to build a jazz CD library this is an ideal place to start. ✓✓✓

—LEONARD FEATHER

6/9/87

HOMETECH

TURN-ONS AND TURN-OFFS IN CURRENT HOME ENTERTAINMENT RELEASES

✓✓✓✓Excellent ✓✓✓Good
✓✓Fair ✓Poor

VIDEOCASSETTES

"Piano Legends." VAI. $39.95. Footage of 23 jazz pianists, all filmed or videotaped during the last 46 years, is well linked by host Chick Corea's informative narration. Since 13 of the subjects are dead, much of this video will provide glimpses of artists whom most students have never seen: a splendid clip of Bud Powell in Paris, a sadly brief segment of Art Tatum, boogie-woogie pioneer Meade Lux Lewis playing his "Honky Tonk Train" blues, a late shot of Mary Lou Williams (one of the four clips in color), even Duke Ellington taking the A Train as a waltz. An invaluable hour of vital music. Information: (212) 799-7798. ✓✓✓✓

—LEONARD FEATHER

JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

A conga line steps around and above a table of picnickers during Ruben Blades' set at the jazz festival.

PLAYBOY

Continued from Page 1

musical standards. The success of Blades in fact was deserved, since he delivered expertly in his Latin groove. Regrettable, though, is that the programming forced two units to appear so early that most of the crowd hadn't yet arrived.

A quintet from Detroit led by Walter White on trumpet and Rick Margitza on tenor sax, who won the Hennessy talent contest, played a spirited brand of neo-bop with admirable solos by the leaders and by pianist Gary Schunk.

As the fans continued to file in, Mundell Lowe's quartet took over in a mature mainstream mood with fine work by the leader on guitar, George Gaffney on piano, Andy Simpkins on bass and Paul Humphrey on drums.

Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition didn't stop the presses. Because almost everyone in the band doubles (even the leader vacillates between drums and piano), there is no firm group sound. There were some moments of value in a vaguely Middle Eastern piece, with the reed players switching to flute and soprano sax, but the electric guitar distortions and a general shortage of cohesion proved inhibiting factors.

The fans were next provided with a hefty bagful of blues, ballads and R&B, doled out with more largesse than finesse by Etta James. Her gospel number, "Something's Got a Hold on Me," showed what a compelling mood she can stir up when she isn't overacting. During most of her set, the less she screamed, the more she sounded in tune, and vice versa.

Branford Marsalis led his potent quartet through works by McCoy Tyner, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane (an impassioned "Giant Steps") and his own pianist Kenny Kirkland in the best contemporary jazz hour of the whole Sunday marathon.

It was a pleasure to hear George Benson accompanied simply by the organist Lonnie Smith and a drummer, Art Gore. In this setting the guitarist recaptured the splendor of his early days with a blues and an "I Got Rhythm" variation. But Smith and Gore then disappeared, replaced by guitarist Earl Klugh and others as Benson went into his pop vocal bag.

Lionel Hampton, who has never been intimidated by having to follow anyone, quelled the post-Benson uproar by delivering, with his skilled orchestra, a surprisingly effective arrangement of "Mack the Knife," a merengue and several pieces from the standard Hampton repertoire. Comedian Bill Cosby sat in on drums for the first tune.

Hampton played for an hour and a half, but unlike Saturday's crowd, which had walked out in large numbers on Charlie Watts, the audience remained, jumping and shouting until the band had left the stage and Hampton, unfazed, stood out there alone, looking as though he would gladly have stayed on-stage forever.

Los Angeles Times

CALENDAR

Wednesday, June 10, 1987

OWEN FRANKEN

Hampton: "Wait till you hear some of the young guys I have."

HAMPTON IS VIBRANT IN 78TH YEAR

By LEONARD FEATHER

When Lionel Hampton talks, every sentence seems to end with an exclamation point.

His ebullience undimmed, he has chosen this year to mark what is being called his 60th year in music. True, he came to Los Angeles in 1927 and began working his way up as a drummer with local bands, but he had several prior active years in Chicago (with the Chicago Defender Newsboys' Band and other small groups). But whatever anniversary he wants to call it will be fine with his admirers. How does a 78-year-old vibraphonist celebrate 60 years in jazz? One way will come at noon Friday on the steps of City Hall, where, after Mayor Tom Bradley has proclaimed "Lionel Hampton Day," the 60 hands of 30 vibraphonists will hammer out a chorus or more (don't bet against 60 choruses as long as Hampton is in charge) of "Flyin' Home," his anthem since his band recorded it in 1942.

This is part of the buildup to an appearance Sunday at the Hollywood Bowl, on the second day of the ninth annual Playboy Jazz Festival.

"Wait till you hear some of the young guys I have in the band now," Hampton said recently. "Richie Price, my high-note trumpet man—this cat is fantastic. And I have two terrific saxophonists,

Please see HAMPTON, Page 7

Los Angeles Times

HAMPTON

Continued from Page 1

Keith Fiddurant on soprano and Manny Boyd on alto. A lot of these cats are graduates of the Berklee College of Music in Boston."

Hampton's personnel, integrated for many years, is now about half black, half white.

"That seems to be the right balance to get the blend I want," he said, without further explanation.

That none of his sidemen will be products of the Lionel Hampton School of Music is understandable, since the school was officially launched less than four months ago. This is the first conservatory named for a jazz musician, though there is a Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington.

Since Monday, Hampton has been conducting seminars on the campus in Moscow, Ida. The school is part of the University of Idaho.

"We have around 200 students in the school now. They're coming from Utah, Oregon, Canada, all over. We have a faculty of close to 20 teachers, holding classes in piano, other instruments, singing, theory, jazz history, you name it.

"The attendance is going to go way up during the next year. They have some incredible student ensembles. I heard one that sounded great and they told me, 'This is the No. 4 band!' And one time when I was there I heard a marvelous choral group singing my 'Midnight Sun.' Man, these kids really knock me out."

Hampton seems to have his fingers not only on the vibes mallets but in numerous other pies. He has a publishing company and a record company.

An album due out on his Glad-Hamp label (named for his late wife Gladys, a sharp businesswoman who steered him along the road to wealth) will find him in the company of Dexter Gordon, Charles Mingus, Hank Jones, Bucky Pizarelli and other virtuosi. The LP title is "One of a Kind."

Hampton also has extensive real estate holdings. Soon he will make trips to Atlanta, where he plans to build a community of 355 homes on 122 acres he acquired some time back.

"Somebody asked me how did I get 122 acres in Atlanta," he said. "I told them, I got it with money!"

In the 1970s, Hampton developed the Lionel Hampton Houses and the Gladys Hampton Houses in New York, both flourishing communities now.

Meanwhile, though, he still answers the eternal call of the one-night stands: Monday at a ballroom in Hemet, Tuesday at Orange County Performing Arts Center, Wednesday at the Community Center in Oceanside.

He may not be as energetic as his stage personality would indicate, but his facility as an improvising jazzman and his keen ear for young talents on the rise continue to amaze everyone within earshot.

Watching him at work, one visualizes a 60-year panorama, with its special milestones: The night in 1936 Benny Goodman found him and persuaded him to join what became the Goodman Quartet. The Los Angeles date in 1940 when he introduced his own orchestra. The numerous tours of Europe, Japan, Australia, Africa, the Middle East. The many White House appearances for Democratic and Republican presidents (Hampton remains as staunch a Republican as ever).

Obviously, Hampton could afford to opt for luxurious, affluent retirement, but that is simply not his style. As long as the airplanes and his mallets hold up, clearly he will be flying home and flying right back out again.

JAZZ REVIEWS

6/13/87

TRIPLE TREAT—AN UNDERSTATEMENT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Triple Treat, the name of the group that opened Thursday and closes Sunday at the Loa, on Pico Boulevard near Centinela Avenue, sounds like a somewhat boastful title. However, it takes only a brief sampling of this trio's work to establish that, if anything, it may be an understatement.

The personnel in itself is a virtual guarantee of quality. For several years the guitarist Herb Ellis and the bassist Ray Brown were two-thirds of the Oscar Peterson Trio. Their long-shared experience led to a mutual sensitivity that is tantamount to ESP.

The pianist in the current unit is Monty Alexander, the West Indian-born virtuoso who himself displays touches of Peterson flash, though his style is more chameleonic. When he plays an old Nat (King) Cole song such as "Straighten Up and Fly Right," a hint of Cole's keyboard incisiveness may be detected. In his own composition "Renewal" he transcended all barriers, reaching from a melodramatic solo opening to a long trio passage in which he interacted buoyantly with his colleagues.

The talent in Triple Treat is displayed in a repertoire that offers each member a chance to shine. "It Might as Well Be Spring" gave Brown an opportunity to show yet again that as a past master of the instrument in solo and rhythm modes alike, he has, so to speak, both basses covered.

Ellis was in his elegant element playing his own standard ballad, "Detour Ahead." The surprise of the evening was the appearance of John Frigo, who collaborated with Ellis on that song. A veteran Chicago-based musician, Frigo astonished the crowd with some of the most impressive violin jazz this side of Stephane Grappelli, hard swinging on "I'll Remember April," poignant and subtle on "Too Late Now."

Frigo had to return to Chicago today, but those who missed him can take comfort in the knowledge that Friday's music was taped for an album and video.

6/14/87

JAZZ

ELLA REAPS JUST HER REWARDS

By LEONARD FEATHER

This will be a rewarding week for Ella Fitzgerald. Today, she will be at UCLA, where will receive the prestigious A Medal, the university's alent of an honorary degree. sday, she will be at the White e to receive, from President Reagan, the National Medal of Arts, given by the National Endowment for the Arts.

When she is not busy receiving awards, she will also spend part of the coming months singing, which is more than she was able to do while recovering from a heart ailment that felled her last August. Norman Granz, her manager for more than 30 years, is pacing her carefully: There will be two or three concerts a month, including New York's Avery Fisher Hall, June 24; the Montreal Jazz Festival, July 5; the Hollywood Bowl, July 15, and the San Francisco Symphony, July 24.

"I was off for close to nine months," Fitzgerald, 69, said recently, relaxing in a living room decked with trophies, tributes and photographs in her Beverly Hills home. "That's the longest I've *ever* been off, do you realize that? You really count 'em when you're not working.

"The trouble started after a date in Niagara Falls. I could hardly breathe, and my pianist, Paul Smith, had to help me down some stairs. I went to the hospital there, then came back home and the doctor put me in Cedars [Cedars-Sinai Medical Center] and they found out what it was—a heart attack, although I never felt it. I had a five-bypass operation, which they didn't tell me at the time. It's funny—when I came to, I thought I'd been on a boat ride. I was saying to people, 'Boy, that sure was a terrible boat trip!' Now I have my pacemaker and the doctor has helped me get back my strength."

Killing time during the recuperation became an ever more onerous ordeal. "I now know all the soap operas. And I'd spend time thinking of ideas for songs I'd like to do. I think maybe I'll make an album of Stevie Wonder songs—the real pretty ones. That would give me something of an image for today; I like to be up on everything, you know."

When the boredom became intolerable, she received the doctor's permission to try a rehearsal. "It felt so good. This gave me something to think about. I had spent so much time just lying with my legs up, wondering if I'd ever sing again."

PATRICK TWOMEY / Los Angeles Times

Ella Fitzgerald at home with her NAACP and ASCAP awards.

After 49 years as a major name in show business (she recorded her first hit, "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," as vocalist with Chick Webb's band in May, 1938), Fitzgerald remains unimpressed by her own fame. She speaks in wonderment of having received visits, phone calls or flowers from the President, Frank Sinatra, Bill Cosby and Dizzy Gillespie, seemingly unaware that she may be better known worldwide than almost any of them.

When the evidence confronts her, she reacts with almost schoolgirlish embarrassment. "I was sitting in a store the other day and a lady saw me and said, 'Oooh—my dreams have come true! It's my singing lady!' And I looked my worst—I had my sneakers on, and an old skirt. But she stopped and said, 'We love you,' and then another girl came, and soon everybody was asking me for autographs. I said to myself, 'Well, you can't beat this kind of love.'

"I've got about three bags of mail here that I haven't even answered yet—people who wrote me in the hospital. You start thinking, was it all worth it? And I say, yes."

□

The broad span of her success can be attributed in large measure to her uniquely adaptable talent, and to the skill with which Granz has handled her affairs. It was he who steered her away from Tin Pan Alley dog-tunes and produced her classic series of "Songbook" albums devoted to the works of Gershwin, Berlin, Cole Porter, Ellington and others. This in turn led to her association with the late Nelson Riddle, whose arrangements she was able to use in appearances with symphony orchestras.

"The songbooks were a new beginning for me, and I gained more fans; but even at the concerts with symphonies, we still like to include some jazz, because that was where I really began. My education in modern jazz began when I was on the road with Dizzy Gillespie. I learned so much from him. After the one-night stands, he'd take me along to some club uptown where everyone was jamming. That's how I learned my boppin' and everything.

"I was saying to Dizzy just last week, we have so much to be thankful for. We had to ride the buses, and we'd be trying to get the money together to eat—you know, 'How much you got, man?' Yeah, we scuffled; but when you look back on it, you don't regret anything, 'cause it feels like you accomplished something."

The pan-idiomatic character of her repertoire is similarly maintained in her records. Her latest LP, taped just before she fell ill and released last week, is "Easy Living" (Pablo 2310-921), a set of intimate duo performances with her frequent concert teammate, guitarist Joe Pass. But her next album may be a more pop-oriented set. "We have a lot of Nelson Riddle arrangements that we did in clubs but never got around to recording," she says. "I thought it would be nice to do some of these and dedicate the album to Nelson. After that, I'd like to get back to some real jazz, like some of Dizzy's things."

Her records have incredible staying power; many have been reissued on compact discs. "Not long ago," she said, "I was sitting in bed watching TV and someone was doing a miniseries called 'I'll Take Manhattan.' Well, I'm wondering what this story is going to be about, and suddenly I hear the song 'Manhattan,' and I say to myself, 'Why, that sounds like me!' Well, it was the theme of the show—my record!—and when I did a private party soon afterward, someone asked for it. Isn't that amazing? I recorded it in 1956. Now, wherever we go, we have to include 'Manhattan.'"

□

The opportunity to spend more time at home has had its benefits, among them the chance to catch up on her family life. Her granddaughter, Alice, almost 2, has visited a couple of times; she lives in Sitka, Alaska, where her father, Ray Brown Jr., plays drums and leads a small band. (Fitzgerald was married from 1948 to 1952 to bassist Ray Brown.) "Young Ray and his wife have a nice little house there, and I think he's happy. I haven't been there—in fact, Alaska is one of the few places I've never visited.

"There are several places I still want to get to. I've been almost everyplace—Australia, China, Japan, all over Europe—but I still want to go to Africa. One of the countries there has a stamp with my picture on it: Ghana. You know, we used to open up the festival in Beirut, and it was a lot of fun—I'm just so sad when I think that I can't go back."

Staying at home and exercising regularly, coupled with the illness, has produced a startling weight loss; Ella has not appeared this slim since her Chick Webb days. "I felt good this morning," she said, "when my skirt had to be pinned way over. I try my best to eat carefully—no salt; we use substitutes and I'm used to it. I like fish, I like chicken, I like veal, so there's no problem. The doctors found I need more potassium, so I've got gobs of bananas."

The equanimity with which she has faced all her tribulations (among them a serious eye condition that began to trouble her in 1971) is one aspect of a personality that seems extraordinarily resilient. She lives by a few basic truisms, three of which she recalled in summing up her philosophy.

"I remember one time, when I was torching over my ex-husband, Duke Ellington said to me, 'You must remember, it's just like a toothache. It hurts, but when you take the tooth out, the ache will be gone.' Long before that, Chick Webb said, 'Never try to be something that goes up too fast; remember you'll meet the same people coming down.' And a cousin of mine used to tell me, 'If people say something bad about you, and instead of getting mad you just smile, it'll make *them* feel bad, not you.'

"So I keep all these little thoughts in mind. And most of all, I remember what another cousin of mine said. He's a preacher, and after my illness he came out to see me and said, 'You know, Ella, God performed a miracle on you.' And when I found out afterward about the five-bypass operation, I knew He did." □

Los Angeles Times

CALENDAR

Television Listings

Monday, June 15, 1987

Part VI

ROBERT GABRIEL

New Orleans' Olympia Brass Band featuring grand marshal Anderson Stewart, supplies visual focus.

Mixed Bag at Playboy Jazz Festival

By LEONARD FEATHER

The house was sold out a full week in advance. That, of course, tells us nothing about the state of the jazz art; it merely signifies that organizers of the Playboy Jazz Festival know how to do their job, and after nine years at it they have fine-tuned it to the *nth* degree.

Of the 10 main attractions presented Saturday at the Hollywood Bowl, five were artistically satisfying, two were of moderate interest, three were not. Unsurprisingly, two in the last category were the most riotously received. The crowd went berserk when Jeff Lorber's saxophonist, Dave Koz, took his horn up into the bleachers (amply amplified, of course). When Lorber's two soul singers hollered their way through "Back In Love," you looked at your ticket to check whether you had accidentally arrived at the Motown Funk Festival.

Grover Washington Jr. enjoyed similar success on a more legitimate level, but again histrionics superseded aesthetics when two more vapid singers commandeered

Please see FESTIVAL, Page 5

FESTIVAL: A REAL MIXED BAG AT HOLLYWOOD BOWL

Continued from Page 1

the stage. Washington is a key figure in customer-friendly jazz. His saxophonic medium might well be designated as the acoustic excitement synthesizer. Synthetic or not, it stirred the blood of the 18,000 out there, give or take a few malcontents.

Between 3:30 and 6:30 p.m., uninterruptedly splendid jazz was heard: The Count Basie Band, Joe Williams, Stan Getz and Sarah Vaughan did, as flawlessly as ever, what they have done unceasingly for lo these many years.

Despite poor sound balance, the Basie group, led by Frank Foster, got its point across, mostly with old charts such as Ernie Wilkins' "Good Time Blues" (Lynn Seaton bowing his bass and singing a la Slam Stewart) and one or two new items such as "House on Fire," a brisk showcase for Danny House, the young alto saxophonist. The band also supplied backing for the Williams and Vaughan vocals.

Stan Getz now has a quartet that may be his best ever. In Kenny Barron he has a vital, driving pianist who is also a gifted composer (his "Voyage" was a highlight). Rufus Reid's bass came across bold and brilliant, and Victor Lewis on drums offered a solid undercurrent.

Getz's sound is as calmly appealing as ever; his linear concepts are unceasing wonders of melodic creation. He paid tribute to Victor Feldman's memory in the Feldman compositions "Seven Steps to Heaven" and "Falling in Love." Getz will never drive an audience to aisle-dancing hysterics; his appeal is aimed at the mind rather than the feet.

A sextet billed as the Leaders steered an intelligent midway course between hard bop and the avant-garde. The trumpeter Lester Bowie cut a fluent path through his own "Zero." Chico Freeman, on tenor sax, showed how to make the same note produce six different tones. Arthur Blythe's alto sax displayed power and passion, but he lapsed into a saccharine-sound on Ellington's "Sentimental Mood." Kirk Lightsey's energetic piano shared the rhythm credits with Cecil McBee's supple bass and Don Moye's drums.

The opening act, the Hemet High School Band, was a typically efficient bunch, notable for the presence of a large contingent of girls, including five of the six saxophonists. Next, Duke DeJan's Olympia Brass Band from New Orleans marched through the aisles, its appeal strictly visual. This is no doubt how the music sounded before there were microphones, perhaps even before telephones.

The long day ended with the rolling tones of drummer Charlie Watts, whose 32-piece band from England, playing bloated arrangements of swing era standards, gave a satisfactory account of itself, with the trumpeter Jimmy Deuchar, the vibraphonists Bill LeSage and Jim Lawless, and a few other capable soloists. But there are many ways in which a dozen saxes, seven trumpets, five trombones and the rest could have been put to more original use. The best way of all might have been simply to break up this musical hippopotamus into two 16-piece bands and let each perform on a separate night.

Bill Henderson emceed, subbing for Bill Cosby, who, delayed in transit, arrived just in time to announce Watts' closing set.

6/23

Los Angeles Times Tu

JVC FESTIVAL: ALL THAT JAZZ IN ALL THOSE PLACES

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—The JVC Jazz Festival—formerly the Kool Festival, previously the Newport/New York Festival, originally the Newport, R.I., Jazz Festival—continues to spread its wings all over the area: in concert halls around town, on day cruises, and at performing arts centers in Upstate New York and New Jersey.

The relative intimacy of the Newport years is long gone, but the advantages of bigness (mainly a great diversity of talent) outweigh the obvious handicaps. Ironically, some of the old ambiance was best captured at a preview performance, staged through the grace of Mayor Koch at Gracie Mansion, for an audience composed mainly of show-business notables and the media. Strolling around the lawn or sitting on portable chairs, you could recapture some of the informal feeling that pervaded the original event and seemed to be part of its raison d'etre.

The speeches of Koch and producer George Wein having been duly delivered, and the tenor saxophone of Lew Tabackin taking formidable charge, an all-star group took to the makeshift bandstand. Roger Kellaway, Marian McPartland and Jane Jarvis alternated at the piano. Norris Turney and Benny Wallace added their saxes, Milt Hinton's bass provided a vital undercurrent. Except for one weak link, the faltering trumpet of Donald Byrd, these participants seemed to be saying: "This is what it's all about. Here's what you will be hearing through Sunday."

Actually, much of the music planned for this week is neither as spontaneous nor as accessible as that opening salvo. Some of it involves extensive preparation. Typically, Sunday evening at Carnegie Hall, the Modern Jazz Quartet was heard in a unique setting, augmented by the 19-member string ensemble known as the New York Chamber Symphony.

Announced as a world premiere, this ambitious venture did not quite live up to the premise. John Lewis, the group's musical director, had indeed written and scored additional material, but works announced as brand new were in fact extensions of some of his most successful early compositions, culled from 30-year-old records or from the music Lewis wrote for the 1957 Roger Vadim film "No Sun in Venice." The new arrangements, however, involved enough fresh thematic passages to sustain the interest. His wistful "Django" made unpretentiously charming use of the strings. One movement was written in a lilting waltz meter; another found Milt Jackson in full 4/4 flight on vibraphone. A long-familiar piece in adventurous new garb was Lewis' "The Golden Striker." Still another attractive work, "Encounter in Cagnes," turned out to be a revision of an early Lewis blues.

The chamber ensemble concluded with what was apparently the only completely new addition, a 16-minute, three-part suite titled "A Day in Dubrovnik." Again Lewis' singular gift for melody, coupled with an avoidance of writing that would have placed excessive rhythmic demands on the strings, worked out agreeably. Overall, though, the Lewis ability to mine so much that is new out of old sources would justify calling him the Golden Recycler.

After intermission the MJQ played unencumbered, with feature numbers for all four members (Percy Heath on bass and Connie Kay on drums), and with that perfect balance of freedom and strictures that has always been essential to the group's character. The shimmering blues cascades of Lewis' piano in "One Never Knows" and the buoyant Ellingtonian groove on "Rockin' in Rhythm" brought the evening to a long-delayed climax.

In the room known as Weill Hall (formerly Carnegie Recital Hall), Marian McPartland was heard Friday in a solo piano recital that seemed unlikely to be surpassed. Over the years she has burnished a style that blends elegance with a rhythmic finesse.

There are times when one need only glance at a list of songs performed to draw a fairly safe conclusion about the quality of the recital. Taking full advantage of their inherent harmonic beauties and further enriching them with her own imagination, McPartland played Billy Strayhorn's "Isfahan," Benny Carter's "Lonely Woman" with its hauntingly elusive chords, Alec Wilder's "I'll Be Around" and a song Wilder wrote for her, the waltz "Inner Circle."

Her gift for melodic creativity was charmingly displayed in her own "Time and Time Again." Although the accent leaned toward ballads, there were a few excursions that found McPartland whipping up a fine, striding beat, most notably on the very early Harold Arlen song "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea." Here and elsewhere, she showed that like a growing proportion of jazz pianists, she needs no rhythm section for support; her left hand is constantly agile and interactive.

McPartland's impeccable and moving performance left one regretting that this gifted woman so rarely visits the Southland—a situation she has promised to rectify in the near future.

6-27

AN 18-PIECE SAMPLER OF SWING SPIRIT

NEW YORK—The American Jazz Orchestra, an 18-piece ensemble dedicated to the live presentation of swing music that now survives mainly on records, presented a concert Wednesday evening at the Grand Hall of Cooper Union as part of the JVC Jazz Festival.

In a retrospective of the four previous concerts held since its formation last year under the guidance of critic Gary Giddins, the orchestra attempted to be all things to all people, switching its personality from Fletcher Henderson to Ellington to Lunceford to Basie, then from Claude Thornhill to Benny Goodman to Benny Carter.

No one group of musicians can relive all these lives without an occasional identity crisis, yet the various transitions moved almost seamlessly. The soloists tended to duplicate the spirit rather than the letter of the originals, though Dick Katz clearly had learned Ellington's "Sepia Panorama" chorus note for note.

Frank Wess, in addition to playing lead alto sax, was required to become Benny Carter on one tune and Willie Smith on another. Trumpeter Cootie Williams was variously reinvented by Virgil Jones and Marvin Stamm. Doc Cheatham, now 82, came out to sing the Trummy Young vocal on "Margie."

For some, it was pure nostalgia, for others, a history lesson; for most, it represented a listenable genre that has worn better than might have been expected. On the Basie tunes, the rhythm section was loose and happy; on the Lunceford, a trifle lumpy. The best music orchestrally was that of Henderson ("King Porter Stomp"), Eddie Sauter (despite a weak clarinetist, Ken Poplowski, in the Goodman role on "Benny Rides Again"), the perennial beguiling Thornhill theme "Snowfall" and Carter's memorable arrangement of "Sleep."

Because the charts, in strict 4/4 time, called for no tempo cues, the presence of John Lewis as conductor seemed expendable; however, he had clearly done an expert behind-the-scenes job of pulling this disparate package together. The evening was a rear-view window looking out on the creations and limitations of a fast disappearing era.

CAROL BERNSON

Virgil Jones delivers trumpet solo during American Jazz Orchestra performance in N.Y.

JAZZ REVIEW

SHEARING BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—In one of the jazz festival's less conventional ventures, George Shearing plunged through a time warp Monday at Town Hall to play in settings that recalled his formative years in England and his early days in New York. Leading a 1930s Dixieland group and a 1940s bop combo, he was also heard in a set of piano duets with Hank Jones.

The traditional tunes afforded Shearing a chance to summon up his memories of Earl Hines, Bob Zurke and the like as he settled comfortably into the mood of the moment, aided by such veterans as Kenny Davern, George Masso, Slam Stewart and Warren Vache. For the occasion, he had written simple functional charts to bring a neat sense of cohesion to "Jazz Me Blues"; a strange change of tradition for a Jobin standard, which he announced as "Dixiefinado," and even a "Lullabye of Dixieland" disguise of his famous Birdland dedication.

The only fault was Shearing's modesty. Sometimes he would play just an eight-bar solo, of which two bars were swallowed up by applause from the previous soloist. When he did stretch out, as in "Nobody Else But Me" and in his own 1945 composition "Alice in Dixieland," he displayed a rarely heard side of his personality.

The evening's most rewarding moments were furnished by the piano duets. Shearing and Hank Jones meshed joyously on Bud Powell's "Hallucinations" and Charlie Parker's "Conformation," with Shearing shifting gears now and then from be-bop into stride. The variously delicate and driving communication between these masters was a total delight.

The be-bop set, although Shearing fitted just as easily into the contrasted setting, was only sporadically successful. Oddly, it was the captain who let down the team: Dizzy Gillespie was having an off night, missing notes on tunes he has been playing for 40 years. Only during the last two songs did the group come together. Jimmy Heath's tenor sax was expressive and Jimmy Cobb set the right beat on drums, but the phenomenal bassist Eddie Gomez seemed too eager to show off his techniques.

That the Gillespie lapse was only temporary became clear Tuesday at Carnegie Hall when the trumpeter's imminent 70th birthday (Oct. 21) was saluted in the form of a big-band session under his direction. The occasion was an important challenge, one that he was ready and eager to meet, as he directed the ensemble with its powerhouse brass section through arrangements that sounded amazingly modern after four decades of wear and tear: "Emanon," "Night in Tunisia," "Manteca" and the whirlwind, prophetically titled "Things to Come." Only an inept sound system diminished the impact of this admirable band, which will stay together for tours of Europe and Japan.

Typically, Gillespie accorded generous solo time to the four other accompanists—five when Wynton Marsalis joined the team for the finale. It was Jon Faddis who stole the honors. Gifted with power like a dynamo and a mind like a Rhodes scholar, he almost literally blew all the other sidemen away.

Marsalis had already appeared in an opening set devoted to Gillespie tunes and to a running commentary in which he spoke, with expertise and not too much of his normal condescension, about life, art, civilization and Gillespie. His solos were somewhat clinical and the tempos were at times too fast. It was only when he played his own attractive ballad, "The Source," dedicated to Gillespie, that his latent warmth rose to the surface, reminding us that inspiration beats derivation every time.

The recent 99th birthday of Irving Berlin and the death of Fred Astaire provided twin inspirations for a piano recital Tuesday by Dick Hyman at Weill Hall. In a flawlessly performed hour, Hyman took us back to the century's early years in a panorama that included "Grizzly Bear Rag" (the lyric of which he recited in a dryly humorous monotone), "Top Hat," the poignant "Suppertime," which Hyman pointed out sounds more like a Harold Arlen song, and the hilariously anachronistic lyrics to "I'll See You in C-U-B-A," which Hyman sang. Such elegant early Berlin creations as the little-remembered 1920 song "How About Me" were welcomed back to life in this splendidly researched program.

MUSIC CONNECTION 6/15

The Edge of His Feather

I was appalled by Billy Cioffi's attempted character assassination of Leonard Feather in your June 1 issue. As a jazz critic myself (for eight magazines including occasionally the *Music Connection*), I naturally find myself in disagreement with Feather on some subjects, particularly when it concerns fusion and the avant-garde, but I find Cioffi's "pinhead" comments to be unprofessional and inexcusable. Has Cioffi ever heard of the *Encyclopedia of Jazz* (creative music's standard reference book)? Does Cioffi know of Leonard Feather's contributions to bebop in the Forties? Has he heard of Dinah Washington (for whom Feather wrote several hit songs) or George Shearing (who Leonard helped discover)? Perhaps a "pin" would help take the hot air out of Cioffi's overinflated head. In his own words, "Get this guy outta here!"

Scott Yanow
Burbank, CA

Cioffi replies:

I would never deny that Feather has contributed much to both music and music journalism, and for that all of us owe him a debt of gratitude. However, the point I was trying to make (whether you feel it's on top of my cranium or not) was that Feather seems compelled to differentiate between an artist's "jazz" (i.e., "serious") work and his "commercial" or "pop" music. This sort of dogmatism is not only insulting to the artist, it's also ultimately destructive to the very style of music Feather loves. Having broken so much ground in the past, his present tunnel vision is all the more distressing. Feather's taste continues to be excellent, but his focus has become much too limited. Although I stand by my remarks, I appreciate your fury—after all, that's what columns are for. Besides, I've been reading the ol' jazzbo for 20 years and I know he can be pretty caustic himself. I think he can take it.

Feedback

A Light at the End of the Tunnel

Dear *MC:*

Unfortunately I didn't see the supposed "character assassination" of me by a Mr. Billy Cioffi, and am therefore not in a position to answer it. However, I did read Mr. Scott Yanow's noble defense in a subsequent issue, and was most amused by the tortured English of Mr. Cioffi in his rebuttal.

Speaking of me, he said: "Having broken so much ground in the past, his present tunnel vision is all the more distressing." If I interpret his syntax correctly, this means that my present tunnel vision, having broken so much ground in the past, is all the more distressing. Now that, if it were true, would be the neatest trick of the year.

To take just one instrument, over the years I have praised the work of everyone from Hines, Waller, Tatum, and Wilson to Bud Powell, Lennie Tristano, Bill Evans, McCoy Tyner, Herbie Hancock (a recent piece examined him seriously from both the jazz and pop perspective), JoAnne Brackeen, Mulgrew Miller, Michel Petrucciani, Makoto Ozone, and Kenny Kirkland.

If that is tunnel vision, so be it; and if my sister had wheels, she would be an automobile.

Leonard Feather
Sherman Oaks, CA

12

JAZZ

6/21

LEWIS AT MIDSTREAM

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—It has been said of John Lewis that he may be the most rational and imperturbable artist in his field—or, more properly, fields, since he is active in too many areas to be pigeonholed. As jazz musician, composer, teacher and architect of the so-called Third Stream movement in music, he has been in total control at all times of these often interwoven occupations.

This week he will show up in two capacities at New York's JVC Jazz Festival. Tonight at Carnegie Hall, he will direct the Modern Jazz Quartet, augmented at times by the New York Chamber Symphony, in a program that will include "Three Windows," a newly updated work comprising three of the themes he composed for the Roger Vadim film "No Sun in Venice" in 1957.

On Thursday, he will appear in the Great Hall at the Cooper Union as musical director of the American Jazz Orchestra. Organized last year, the 18-man ensemble is a bird of a very different plumage, dedicated to the preservation of great orchestral jazz works of the past six decades. The personnel includes some of New York's heavyweight jazzmen: Britt Woodman, Jimmy Knepper, Eddie Bert, Frank Wess, Dick Katz (sharing the piano chores with Lewis), Ron Carter, Mel Lewis, Lew Tabackin.

"This will be our fifth concert," Lewis says, "and it's a sort of sampler of the four previous ones, in which we presented the music of Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, Claude Thornhill and Jimmie Lunceford. We feel this orchestra is serving an important purpose, bringing live performances of some of the most important big band music. Recently, Benny Carter came in from Los Angeles for a program of his great works, past and present. At this week's concert, Ken Peplowski will play the clarinet part in a concerto dedicated to Benny Goodman written by Bob Brookmeyer."

Although this New York-based project occupies Lewis' time occasionally, it is the MJQ that remains front and center in his concerns today. The group is celebrating what has been called its 35th anniversary, a figure arrived at by ignoring the seven years (1974-81) between its dissolution and reorganization. Formed in 1952 by Lewis with bassist Percy Heath, vibraphonist Milt Jackson and drummer Kenny Clarke, the group has undergone only one personnel change: Clarke left in 1955 and was replaced by the present drummer, Connie Kay.

"The reason we got back together," Lewis recalls, "is that the Japanese people insisted. They kept calling on us for a tour. I was quite happy at home with my wife and children, teaching at City College of New York and going to Monterey every September to serve as musical director of the festival. But the Japanese made us an offer we couldn't refuse, so we played 10 concerts and enjoyed being back together so much that we thought we'd try it maybe a few months each year. Now, of course, we're together on a full-time basis—in fact, we have bookings through April of 1988."

His MJQ schedule has necessitated the abandonment of two other major activities: He dropped out three years ago as Monterey's musical director and is no longer teaching at City College.

The knowledge Lewis has acquired came through a set of conditions somewhat unorthodox for a jazzman—or for a black artist. "My great-great-grandfather settled in New Mexico early in the 19th Century.

"I was born in LaGrange, Ill., but raised in Albuquerque; my father was an optometrist. I can't say I learned much about the black experience in New Mexico; there was a very small black population. But there was an interest in both jazz and classical music. The head of the music department at the University of New Mexico, where I studied music and anthropology, was a Ms. Grace Thompson, who also founded a local symphony orchestra.

"We had wonderful teachers all through school. Life was really rather idyllic, and there was always a sense of the quest for knowledge. Through one teacher I learned about Bach, Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg, Stravinsky. But it was while I was in the Army, in Europe, that I really began to get involved in jazz.

"In Paris, I met Kenny Clarke, who really helped me get started. I also heard Django Reinhardt there and was enormously impressed."

Lewis had been back in civilian life a short while when he joined Dizzy Gillespie's big band, introducing his "Toccata for Trumpet and Orchestra" at Carnegie Hall in 1947. Over the next five years, he continued his studies at the Manhattan School of Music, became an integral part of Miles Davis' short-lived but catalytic "Birth of the Cool" band, sang with a choral group and gave piano lessons. Except for a few months when he toured as Ella Fitzgerald's accompanist, he was active mainly from 1952 as mentor and guiding force behind the MJQ.

Some five years after launching the quartet, Lewis became involved in the Third Stream movement. "The term was coined by my friend Gunther Schuller, a brilliant composer. We both felt that a European music tradition going back thousands of years—the First Stream—could be used along with the jazz tradition—Second Stream—to form a third body of music, taking advantage of both the European roots and such American elements as the blues, swing, energy, tension, improvisation."

This merger of values has played a significant role in most of what Lewis had done, both in large settings and in the Quartet. "I think one reason the MJQ caught on was that so many small groups didn't bother to do anything substantial in the way of arrangements. It was usually just theme, solos, theme—the same routine all the time, which became a bore to me, and our challenge was to change that, to blend composition, arrangement and spontaneity within the body of a single work."

Throughout his personal and professional life Lewis has remained steadfastly a citizen of the world, traveling constantly but maintaining an apartment in New York and a home in the South of France.

"Paris is the one city that lived up, on first impression, to everything I'd expected of it. I love to go back there. And, of course, Yugoslavia is important to me because that's where I met my wife, Mirjana. She's from Zagreb; we spent our honeymoon in Dubrovnik. She's a wonderful classical pianist and harpsichordist."

Not long ago, the Lewises began recording together, playing piano and harpsichord. "We played Bach's 'Goldberg' Variations; Mirjana played them as they were written, and I added to each one my own variations on the variations. It's a two-album project; the first album is already out in Japan."

With a new MJQ album now on the market ("Three Windows," with the New York Chamber Symphony, Atlantic 81761-1), Lewis is busy preparing new material for future tours and sessions.

"I just finished an orchestral piece for the Atlanta Symphony, to be premiered in September. I'm busy now trying to finish an 'Ellington Legacy' idea. The main focus will be on some of his masterpieces from the 1939-41 period, such as 'Ko-Ko,' 'Jack the Bear' and 'Sepia Panorama,' along with some other works mixed in along the way. We'll eventually have more than enough for an album of Ellingtonia."

Lewis looks at the world of music from a unique perspective. He is a traditionalist, in the sense that he treasures the legacies of past achievements in the classical centuries and the jazz decades; at the same time, he remains a restless innovator, constantly trying to bring fresh ideas to long-legitimized concepts. His is a value system that has worked well for him over the past 35 years and seems likely to prove indestructible. □

ROBERT GABRIEL

Pianist-composer John Lewis has been the guiding force of the Modern Jazz Quartet for 35 years.

13

THE *OTHER* MJQ CONQUERS JAPAN

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—David Matthews, a busy and versatile New York-based pianist and arranger, returned here recently from a triumphant tour of Japan—his second in a year—leading his own group.

This in itself is hardly stop-the-presses news. Almost daily, some jazz musician or group returns from a successful tour of Japan, which generally is acknowledged as the world's No. 2—or No. 1?—jazz country. What does seems remarkable about Matthews' trip is that his group is affectionately known as the MJQ, though it bears no relationship to the Modern Jazz Quartet.

The Manhattan Jazz Quintet, to give it its proper name, is remarkable for more than its initials. Organized in Manhattan, by a group of Manhattan-based musicians whom Matthews had come to know, this group has never appeared in Manhattan, nor anywhere else in the United States. It is famous, however, in Japan. Photos, articles and record reviews appear almost monthly in Tokyo's Swing Journal, dedicated to the leader, the sidemen and their various activities.

CAROL BERNSON

David Matthews' Manhattan Jazz Quintet, a studio group that's never appeared live in the U.S., is the hottest band in Japan.

The very existence of this band is due to the initiative of a Japanese journalist and a Japanese record producer. Matthews said this unique bunch of hard boppers came into existence as a unit in an unusual way.

"I've had a deal for several years as a producer for the Japanese King Record Co.," he said. "Most of what I was making for them consisted of fusion sessions. This was going along very well but three years ago Yasuki Nakayama, the editor of Swing Journal, decided that the jazz scene over there had become a bit stagnant.

"He felt something fresh and uncompromising was needed—a less self-conscious and less electronic kind of music that would go back to the bop roots. He communicated these ideas to someone at King Records in Tokyo, who then passed the thought along to me, with the suggestion that I try organizing a band for a straight-ahead swinging record.

"I put this group together, not expecting too much; records like this might expect to sell under 10,000 copies over there. But to everyone's astonishment, we became the hottest band in Japan."

The original members of the Manhattan Jazz Quintet were Matthews, piano and arranger; Lew Soloff, trumpet; George Young, tenor sax; Steve Gadd, drums, and Charnett Moffett, then 17, on bass (since replaced by Eddie Gomez).

Soloff and Young, like Matthews, have solid reputations as studio players. Soloff came to prominence playing with Blood, Sweat & Tears from 1968-73, later working in such name bands as Thad Jones/Mel Lewis and Gil Evans. Young, a Philadelphian, has been prominent in pop circles for more than 20 years and is regarded as a nonpareil all-around woodwind player. He had toured Japan with Dave Grusin and recorded countless pop sessions as well as occasional jazz dates with Red Rodney and others.

"These men are more than studio players," said Matthews. "They're first-rate jazz musicians who love to play this music any time they have a chance."

Gomez and Gadd met six years ago on a Chick Corea session and have gigged together often since then, often alongside such fellow New York reliables as Richard Tee and Cornell Dupree. Gadd, despite a fusion and rock image, has worked in every conceivable setting and is arguably the most adaptable drummer on the contemporary scene. Gomez, born in Puerto Rico and an alumnus of the Newport Youth Band in the late 1950s, worked with Marian McPhartland, Paul Bley and Lee Konitz but is best known for his decade-long association with the late pianist Bill Evans.

Leading a jazz group of this uncompromising kind was a special experience for Matthews. Though he had worked in his early years with a jazz-oriented band that toured Europe in the late 1960s, most of his later credits involved pop and fusion ventures.

Born in 1942 in Sonora, Ky., Matthews earned his music degree at the University of Cincinnati Conservatory. After a stint as arranger for James Brown, he settled in New York in 1974 and had a close association with one of the busiest record producers of the day, Creed Taylor, whose CTI Records was then riding high. He worked on dates with Nina Simone, Ron Carter, George Benson, Art Farmer and Hank Crawford, as well as on sessions for other companies with pop stars from Paul McCartney to Frank Sinatra.

What makes this particular MJQ work so well, at least for the Japanese? Among other virtues, it has benefitted from exceptionally fine sound quality on its compact disc releases (and CDs, of course, were hot in Japan before they invaded this country). Second, it has a well-balanced, expertly performed repertoire of jazz standards and Matthews originals. On the first CD (now available here on ProJazz CDJ 602) were "Summertime," Miles Davis' "Milestones," Sonny Rollins' "Airegin" and "My Favorite Things." The second included Monk's " 'Round Midnight" and five other cuts; on the third were Charlie Parker's "Confirmation," Matthews' "Mood Piece," "Autumn Leaves" and a Brazilian bossa nova.

Nothing exceptionally adventurous, in short, but everything in its place and nothing to offend ears that were tired of synthesizers and electric drums.

The group recorded a live set (CDJ 637) during its first tour of Japan in April of last year, playing longer versions of some numbers from the earlier sets. By this time, thanks to the flood of Swing Journal publicity, the band had become hotter than ever and had won a series of awards.

"In January of 1985," says Matthews, "we won the Swing Journal Gold Disc award with our first album. A year later we won the Best CD prize, which was very important, because by now CDs are outselling LPs by 60 to 40. Next we won in both the LP and CD divisions of their readers' poll; I also won a producer's award for four different albums, including our own 'My Funny Valentine' and the 'Live at Roppongi' set. For a group to win as many awards as we did is unheard of in Japan. I guess we had become such a powerful force that they had to acknowledge us."

Success breeds success: During the quintet's first Japanese tour, it was suggested that Matthews record a jazz trio album. This was done last July in New York, with Michael Moore on bass and Dave Weckl on drums. A month later, the Tokyo Union Big Band, one of Japan's most popular legatees of the swing tradition, recorded "Keeping Count," with Matthews contributing all the arrangements for a set of Basie-related tunes.

By now, the quintet is such a *fait accompli* in Japan that its continuation as a recording unit seems assured. A fourth studio album, "The Sidewinder" (named for a 1965 hit by trumpeter Lee Morgan), has been issued in Japan and will be on the U.S. market soon.

After all this excitement, one might well ask, why has this five-man sensation, named after its home turf, never appeared here?

"Well, you know, we can't get a job until somebody wants us. However, one club in town, Sweet Basil, did offer us a date last year but we weren't all able to get together. When we do play in New York, that will be the place; however, all five of us have our separate commitments, so it may be difficult to work things out."

And what do his fans in Japan say when Matthews tells them that aside from the records and the Japanese tours, this group doesn't really exist?

Matthews smiled. "I'm sure they would be incredulous but to be honest, I've never told them. The question simply hasn't come up." □

SOUND WOES IN CARNEGIE HALL, NOT IN CLUBS

JAZZ FESTIVAL ENDS ON HIGH, LOW NOTES

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—The 10-day JVC Jazz Festival ended Sunday after a typically diverse series of concerts. Despite much first-rate music, there was no shortage of brickbats, many of them aimed at the sound system in Carnegie Hall, where nine of the principal events took place.

This venerable acoustic venue has become an electronic nightmare. Big bands were reduced to a jumbled blur. Many who had paid a $28.50 top price heard every note twice: first live and then a fraction of a second later, amplified.

Although better monitored than some others, the Friday program starring Mel Torme, featuring guest singer Diane Schuur, had to deal with these problems. Torme and Schuur have been reviewed here recently. Lonette McKee, in her Carnegie debut, offered an agreeable version of "How Long Has This Been Going On," which she sang in the movie "'Round Midnight." Tall, very slender, with a Las Vegas theatrical personality, she tackled a pair of Billie Holiday songs, revealed her superficial understanding of jazz in "Cloudburst" and duetted successfully with Torme.

The Mel Lewis big band, heard off and on throughout the evening, battled the sound system until Stan Getz, walking on in the middle of a song, became the Atlas who lifted the entire orchestra on his eloquent horn. Getz stayed on stage to introduce and accompany Schuur.

Fortunately the festival was confined neither to Carnegie Hall nor to concert halls in general. Several nightclubs, taking advantage of the international influx of visiting jazz fans, became part of the multiple celebrations.

Some of the most creative music, as well as the best reproduced sound, was presented by the Toshiko Akiyoshi Orchestra during her three-night stand at the Blue Note, a downtown club that now rivals the Village Vanguard in the consistency of its presentations.

Akiyoshi's compositions and arrangements gave striking evidence of the advances made in orchestral writing, in contrast to the swing era works presented the previous evening in the retrospective by the American Jazz Orchestra. The suspensions and changes of tempo, the use of many keys and shifting themes within the body of a given piece, were beyond the scope of the early bands, with the exception of Duke Ellington's.

Please see N.Y. FESTIVAL, Page 7

Los Angeles Times

N.Y. FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 6

Where the saxophones were once largely confined to that instrument, Akiyoshi makes richly textured use of saxes, piccolos, flutes, clarinets and bass clarinets in a dazzling variety of colors.

Even the blues takes on a fresh character under the guidance of her pen: "Feast in Milano," part of a suite, is a dashing blues in 5/4 time. Reflecting her ethnic heritage, Akiyoshi at one point used the taped sounds of Japanese Noh drummers.

Among the orchestra's gallery of soloists is Lew Tabackin, the stunningly virtuosic flutist who also is to the tenor saxophone in the 1980s what Sonny Rollins was in the 1950s. Akiyoshi herself let loose with some ferocious Bud Powell piano in "March of the Tadpoles," a neo-be-bop line that made vivid use, singly and collectively, of the four trombonists.

Another superb pianist, Roger Kellaway, was heard in a solo recital Saturday at Weill Hall. Kellaway's gifts are so formidable that he seems unsure of which direction to aim. On this occasion he leaned toward New Age music in a series of his own compositions that were at one time or another impressionistic, dissonant, gospel-tinged, evocative and, once in a while, soporific—something one would not have expected of an artist who so often has generated tremendous excitement.

Only in the final five minutes did Kellaway turn to uncompromising jazz for a wildly original version of "Here's That Rainy Day." One could not help wishing that he had changed the program to favor a little more fully that aspect of his talent.

Madonna on stage in Sup...

Swinging Newport All Stars show their jazz class

By IRWIN BLOCK
of The Gazette

REVIEW

Newport Jazz Festival All Stars, at Théâtre St. Denis last night.

A Happy Gang of swing-era musicians blew into town last night and blew away its jazz festival audience with the universally appealing sounds of the Big Band era.

They're called the Newport Jazz Festival All Stars, featuring seven members of the exclusive and much-admired Duke Ellington-Count Basie-Lionel Hampton-Benny Goodman club.

And they had a nearly full house of music lovers, nostalgiac for the goodtime tunes of the 1940s or eager to hear its creators, rocking in their seats, tapping their toes, and warmly applauding every solo.

As for the musicians, they bounced on stage playing *I Want to Be Happy*, glowed at the music and the response to it, and never looked back.

The all-star cast included tenor saxmen Buddy Tate, a 10-year veteran of the Basie orchestra, and Al Cohn, of the second version of Woody Herman's front line, the Four Brothers.

Norris Turney of Ellington's last lineup was on alto sax and clarinet, while Randy Sandke, who played with Goodman's last ensemble, was on trumpet.

The swinging rhythm section had Oliver (OJ) Jackson on drums, Basie alumnus Eddie Jones on bass, and musician-impresario George Wein on piano.

One by one they took their solos, never losing sight of the melodies just about anybody over 30 finds immediately recognizeable and hummable: *Love Me Or Leave Me*, Ellington's Oriental-sounding *The Mooch*, and *Things Ain't What They Used to Be*.

Tate's horn had that big, bluesy, gritty sound, Cohn's was flatter and leaner, while Turney's tone recalled that of Johnny Hodges.

Tate and Turney both played clarinet on *Mood Indigo*, its eery harmony providing a concert highlight.

Another unexpected high point occurred when Los Angeles-based jazz critic Leonard Feather left the CBC-Stereo booth, where he was guest commentator on a live festival broadcast, to take over piano duties on *Jeep's Blues*.

As a finale, in response to a massive standing ovation, the band played *Body and Soul*, tenorman Coleman Hawkins' signature piece, ending the two-hour concert on a decidely tender note.

The all-stars is the brainchild of George Wein, who created the first North American jazz fes... val ... Newport, Rhode Island, i... 195... after the French initiated ... e co... cept.

The group is dedicated to ... eepi... alive the familiar jazz songs ... play... in 4/4 swing time — the mel... dy a... harmonic structure that cam... out ... New Orleans.

And judging from last ... ight ... glowing faces, on and off th... stag... swing is still the much-loved ... ing ... jazz.

• *Festival stories, Pag... C-...*
weekend lineups, Page C...

MONTREAL GAZETTE July 4 '87

15

L.A. TIMES 7/5/87

WEEKLY 'NOON' SESSION COMPLETES 21ST SEASON

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—The ceremony known as "Jazz at Noon" is unlike any other musical gathering. Among other reasons, it is the longest-running weekly event of its kind, having just rounded out its 21st season for a total of 992 Fridays.

"We started these sessions," says Les Lieber, the saxophonist who launched "Jazz at Noon," "because there are a lot of us who felt the need for a friendly, informal place where we could bring together a bunch of jazz-starved people—some to play and others just to listen." One might not expect any musician or layman in this city to feel any frustration; on the surface, the opportunities to perform seem constant and ubiquitous. But these are not your everyday musicians.

With the exception of honorary guest soloists—who have included famous names from Goodman, Hampton and Krupa to Dizzy Gillespie, Roy Eldridge, Stan Getz and Billy Taylor—almost all the participants in "Jazz at Noon" are men and women from other walks of life who moonlight as performers.

On the final Friday of the 1986-87 season, the eight men on the bandstand at Cafe 43, a midtown restaurant where the sessions have been held for the past four years, were expertly held together by the drummer, Dr. Robert Litwak, who is the head of thoracic surgery at Mt. Sinai Hospital. On guitar was a fleetly swinging graphic designer, Pat Del Vecchio; at the piano was Bill Azan, who makes his living as a piano salesman.

Front and center was Les Lieber himself, a veteran magazine writer and public relations executive who for many years has enjoyed a reputation as a near-professional alto saxophonist whose sound and phrasing reveal a strong Benny Carter influence.

As a young man, Lieber was on the verge of taking up music for a living. At one point he assembled a quintet—future Woody Herman arranger Neal Hefti played trumpet in it—and took it on a jaunt to Cuba. But by that time he was enjoying some success as a press agent handling, not coincidentally, Benny Goodman, Harry James and other leading maestros of the day.

"Most of the players who came here this afternoon," Lieber said, "are regulars. Our trumpeter, Art Loman, who has had a very successful career in real estate promotion, has been coming to these sessions almost continuously for 16 years.

"Our trombonist, Father Bill Gannon, has two other lives going for him: He is an Episcopalian minister and a debt collector. Sam Parkins, who's doubling on clarinet and tenor saxophone today, works as a classical record producer at CBS."

Leafing through a list of some 135 participants who have been heard frequently at these gatherings, Lieber singled out a taxi driver who plays alto sax; an attorney and an eye surgeon, both of whom are fluent on baritone sax; a chauffeur who also warms up the fluegelhorn; a Yale law professor who drops in with his trumpet, and Dr. Ron Odrich, a periodontist who is considered one of New York's premier bass clarinetists.

What is remarkable about the "Jazz at Noon" phenomenon is not simply that so many non-pros like

CAROL BERNSON

"Jazz at Noon" band members are from left, Bill Wurtzel on guitar, Sam Parkins on clarinet, group leader Les Lieber on saxophone, Arthur Lohman on trumpet and Father Bill Gannon on trombone.

to play; rather, it is that anyone unfamiliar with the premise, walking in on this group, would assume that this was a collection of seasoned professionals. If last week's gig was typical, and Lieber assured me that it was, the music could have been emanating from one of Dick Gibson's all-star jazz parties in Denver or the Classic Jazz Festival in Los Angeles.

"Ralph Hamperian, the bass player, is the only fellow up there who's a regular working musician," Lieber said. "He's a member of Local 802, and there's a reason. When he started out 21 years ago, in order not to run into difficulties with the union, we worked out a deal whereby they would let us use these men as long as we also hired union musicians."

□

As it turned out, on this occasion two additional pros showed up. Bob Wilber, a saxophonist who in his teens was a student of Sidney Bechet and who evolved over the years into a virtuoso on clarinet and all the saxophones, dropped by to greet Lieber and other old friends. After playing two Benny Goodman specialties on clarinet, he switched horns and hats for an alto solo in which echoes of Johnny Hodges were plainly discernible.

"Wilber is an old hand here," Lieber said, "but this is a special reunion for us. He spends half of every year living in England and we have to grab him when we can."

After Wilber's guest shot, vibraphonist Charles Newmark, a real estate executive, turned over his mallets to Warren Chiasson, a prominent free-lance New York musician who once was a member of the George Shearing Quintet.

The patrons of "Jazz at Noon" include a certain number of the regular jazz crowd who can be found at the clubs, or last week at the festival concerts, but among them are also some of the more conservative fans who either can't keep nightclub hours or simply don't have the evening time to spare. One amiable elderly gentleman, David Cohn, who was introduced to me as a "Jazz at Noon" regular, turned out to be the father of the tenor saxophonist Al Cohn and grandfather of Joe Cohn, Artie Shaw's guitarist. An inveterate jazz fan, he recently turned 90.

That the "Jazz at Noon" jams have continued so long without interference is significant not simply because of the agreement with the musicians' union, but because New York's jazz scene has been victimized by an archaic cabaret law that has kept thousands of musicians out of work.

It has long been impossible for any group of more than three musicians to play in an unlicensed club. This law was passed originally to control speak-easies and, despite occasional revision, until as recently as last December no wind or brass instruments and no drums were allowed. The law was changed as a result of a suit brought in the New York Supreme Court by Local 802, but the City Council relented only to the extent of allowing horns and drums. The maximum number of instruments in clubs without a cabaret license remains at three.

Asked why this could not be [illegible] jazz orchestra. Meanwhile, if you are in New York looking for some of your favorite jazzmen and find they have gone on the road or fled to Europe, you will understand the reason.

This is a great city for non-pros to hang out during "Jazz at Noon," and a unique cynosure throughout Jazz Festival Week, but during the 51 weeks when the festival is not around it's a very different story. Taking into account the fact that the music community has suffered under this law since 1926, it's no wonder so many potentially great artists have opted for a safer career as lawyers or surgeons—or taxi drivers. □

ELLA FITZGERALD
NEW HEART, OLD SOUL

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Ella Fitzgerald, who will appear July 5 at Place des Arts as the closing act of the Festival international de jazz de Montréal, is at once the most honoured and most humble of all the women who raise their voices in song. Although the walls and shelves of her handsome Beverly Hills home are lined with Grammies, poll victories, and awards by the dozen, to her the only celebrities are other people—the Dizzy Gillespies and Bill Cosbys who visited her in the hospital, the Tony Bennetts who come to her home at Christmas. And more than 50 years after she sang her first note with Chick Webb's band, she has a lingering insecurity. "Did I do all right?" she may ask, backstage during a standing ovation in Monterey or Monte Carlo. "Did they really like me?" On a recent sunny afternoon, Ella sat in her living room, looking back on what had been the darkest period of her life, an illness that kept her on the sidelines until shortly before our interview.

LEONARD FEATHER: *How long were you out of action?*
ELLA FITZGERALD: Going on nine months. That's the longest I've ever been off, do you realize that? It started when we played Niagara Falls. The next morning I could hardly breathe, and my pianist, Paul Smith, had to help me down the stairs. I went to the hospital there, then they brought me home and I checked into the hospital here, because my doctor said: "This doesn't make sense." Then I found out what it was.

LF: *A heart attack?*
EF: I never felt it. The doctor said it might have happened in Chicago, the night before Niagara, because while I was there, I had to sing sitting down. Anyhow, they kept me in the hospital here and I had a quintuple bypass, and a pacemaker implanted. It was close to having a new heart. After I came home, one of the stitches came out and I had to go back in the hospital. There were other problems: recently I had a lot of fluid in my leg. So it's been a long, long recuperation.

LF: *How did you manage to kill time?*
EF: Well, I know every single soap opera by heart! But I'd think of different songs I'd like to do and write 'em down. Like, I'd love to do an album of Stevie Wonder songs. And I'd love to use some of the Nelson Riddle arrangements we did in clubs, which were never recorded. But there were times when I wondered if I'd ever sing again. Finally, I got so bored that the doctor said, "Why don't you have some rehearsals?" So we did, and it felt good.

LF: *Have you started going out yet?*
EF: Well, as you know, I did that one concert, my first in all this time, at El Camino College. But Norman Granz, my manager, is pacing things carefully so I'll only do two or three dates a month.

I went to a store the other day, and a lady saw me and said, "Oh, my dreams have come true! It's my favourite singing lady." And someone else was saying, "We love you, Ella." And I looked my worst—I had my sneakers on, and an old skirt. But everybody stopped and began asking for autographs. I said to myself, you can't beat this kind of love. And I have about three bags of mail left to answer, from people who wrote me in the hospital. Sometimes you say to yourself, was it worth it? And of course I say yes.

ILLUSTRATION:
ISRAËL CHARNEY

JAZZ

TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK MONTREAL

By LEONARD FEATHER

MONTREAL—"I have to say," George Wein told his audience at the Theatre St. Denis, "that this is one of the truly great festivals in the world today."

Self-congratulation? An ego trip on the part of the veteran producer who brought us the New York, Newport, Playboy, Nice and scores of other festivals around the world?

On the contrary. Wein, a man who welcomes competition, has nothing to do with the Festival International de Jazz de Montreal. He is here wearing his other hat, simply playing piano and leading his Newport All-Stars, a seven-piece swing band.

His assessment of the 10 days that shook this city is well grounded in fact. No other event has the special advantages one finds here. Imagine, if you can, an area from Vine Street to Highland Avenue and from Hollywood Boulevard to Selma Avenue blocked off to vehicular traffic; tens of thousands of fans milling around in the streets, listening to concerts on sidewalk bandstands or visiting one of several theaters in the area given over to performances by world-class names.

That is the counterpart for what happens here. From noon to midnight daily, close to a thousand musicians have taken part in about 150 indoor paid concerts or free outdoor events.

In New York, you get a series of concerts; here you have a happening. Add to this the bilingual ambiance, the Francophones (as they call themselves) mingling amicably with the Anglophones; toss in a musical cast that involves hundreds of Americans, hundreds of Canadians, dozens more from France, Scandinavia and all over Europe (among them the Soviet pianist Leonid Chizhik), and you have a heady mixture, with only one problem: This time around, the eighth year of the festival, it rained off and on for several days, forcing postponement of many outdoor concerts.

Most of the heavy action took place in the theaters, with the inevitable conflicts of overlap: If you wanted to catch the estimable Canadian pianist Oliver Jones and his quartet, you had to pass up Dave Brubeck with the Montreal Symphony. If you hadn't heard the unique, veiled voice of Helen Merrill lately, you caught her at the Spectrum (a large cabaret-style theater) and missed the Joe Williams show.

DENIS ALIX / Concept 3

Vocalist Bobby McFerrin gets down at Montreal Festival 1987, where about 1,000 musicians took part in about 150 concerts.

Having arrived late (Montreal's first three days are always New York's closing weekend), I missed Dexter Gordon with his "'Round Midnight" group, Gil Evans' band and others; yet it was possible to be exposed in rapid succession to more important attractions, known and unknown, than can normally be found within such a compact, controlled area. (There are eight main concert halls, all within a five-minute bus ride and most within walking distance of one another.)

The Montreal talent roster often duplicated New York's: McCoy Tyner, Ella Fitzgerald, Diane Schuur, Mel Lewis, Wynton Marsalis, John Scofield and others played both cities. Far more, however, were presented in one or the other, and the Canadians were exclusively heard here.

Oliver Jones is a strangely late bloomer. Born here in 1934, he studied with the classical piano teacher Daisy Peterson, Oscar's sister, but resigned himself to a career of Top 40 and pop jobs, accompanying a Jamaican singer and living in Puerto Rico for 16 years. Not until he settled back in Montreal in 1980 was he persuaded that he could make a living playing jazz.

Though stylistically unlike Oscar Peterson, Jones shares his immense capacity for swinging and for harmonic finesse. The group he led could have been called the Trans-Canada Quartet, since he and the phenomenal bassist Michel Donato are Montrealers, while the Getz-like tenor saxophonist Fraser MacPherson and the guitarist Oliver Gannon are Vancouver-based.

Making up for lost time, Jones has toured Europe and Japan, drew warm reviews in New York, but has yet to play Los Angeles. He is certain to be established soon as Canada's greatest gift to jazz since

Peterson [illegible] quartet he led here, at a University of Quebec auditorium, was uniformly impeccable.

The enthusiasm shown for Jones contrasted poignantly with the reaction, in the same hall the previous evening, to Phineas Newborn Jr. Once hailed as second only to Peterson, the Memphis pianist has suffered many years of emotional illness. On this occasion, he was less than a shadow of his early self; it seemed painful for him to reach for a chord, as if he were climbing up a staircase in the dark. Flashes of his old genius were aborted after a few moments; he stumbled through several numbers at a dirge-like pace, rarely even setting a tempo. The audience began walking out. After less than 40 minutes, Newborn called it a night. For anyone who knew and revered him in the 1960s, this was an agonizing experience.

One of the wildest receptions of the week was accorded to Bobby McFerrin, whose vocal gymnastics are as astonishing as ever. But McFerrin now devotes much of his time to such antics as crawling and jumping around, leaping off the stage to mingle with the audience, inviting as many as 30 volunteers out of the house to join him in a sing-along. When he wound up coaching the crowd into a joint vocal on the Mickey Mouse Club song, it became all too clear that his success is driving him down the slippery slope from musical integrity and innovation to the unwonderful world of show business.

Trumpeter Terence Blanchard and alto saxophonist Donald Harrison have backgrounds much like that of Wynton and Branford Marsalis; they too studied with Ellis Marsalis at the latter's school in New Orleans, and later replaced the Marsalises in Art Blakey's band. They now head a quintet with a florid but engaging young pianist, Cyrus Chestnut. Harrison is the man to watch here: He seems to feel instinctively the art of building a long solo forward, upward and outward, to great emotional effect.

[illegible] after a lengthy investigation of "All Blues," Harrison announced: "That was written by Miles Davis when he was a jazz musician." Next came "Softly as in a Morning Sunrise," which again ran to 20 minutes. Too many musicians in this age bracket fail to understand the virtues of succinctness.

Horace Silver's quintet has the same instrumentation but his sidemen, in a vibrant show at the Theatre St. Denis, found more to say in a better-disciplined context. Various instrumental works, some in 5/4 and 3/4, were followed by vocal versions (with Andy Bey singing persuasively) of such old pieces of Silver as "Senor Blues," "Nica's Dream" and "Cape Verdean Blues" (now retitled "Samba Caribbean" with lyrics by Steve Allen).

At the Club Soda, a handsome black singer, Ranee Lee, New York born but long considered one of Montreal's own, has become the city's most talked-about hit with a nightly one-woman show, "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill." Loosely based on the story of Billie Holiday four months before her death in 1959, it is a bit long on dramatic monologues (written by Lanie Robertson), but Lee, in a demanding two-hour show punctuated by 17 songs (in which she achieves the soulful essence without attempting to duplicate the actual timbre of Lady Day) makes it a moving experience, one that deserves exposure in other cities.

French artists (as well as French-Canadians) being special favorites here, it was no surprise that Helen Merrill, whose latest album was a hit in France, earned a standing ovation at the Spectrum in a program of superbly-chosen songs (but does *everyone* have to include "'Round Midnight"?). Nor did it hurt that for her encore she sang "I Love Paris" partly in French.

On a more visual than aural level, the French sensation was Urban Sax, a sort of avant-garde space show from Paris, with dozens of saxophonists and a company numbering about 50, known for wild lighting and costumes, dancers and acrobats. Urban Sax drew an estimated 40,000 to the street area where it performed on July 1, Canada Day (a national holiday). I tried to see it but couldn't get close.

It was much easier to gain access to a matinee by Andre White, a young Canadian pianist whose roots are so clearly in Bud Powell that it came as no surprise to hear him ease into a Powell original, "Reets and I." White's trio seemed to reflect a growing tendency among young jazzmen toward early, carefully guarded roots.

Jim Hall and Ron Carter, the guitar-and-bass duo, provided what may have been the most graceful and sensitive music of the entire week. To Hermeto Pascoal, that strange, multi-instrumental Brazilian albino, whose band roared through its thunderous blues/rock motions, went the dubious honor of providing the most violent contrast to all the values Hall and Carter hold dear.

One evening, as I was threading my way through the almost impenetrable crowd that jammed the Rue St. Denis, I stopped to hear a French-Canadian blues band. The harmonica player seemed to be the leader, and the language seemed to be English, though at that level of distortion and volume it could have been Urdu. But everyone seemed happy, just as those of us examining the subtler sounds had been satisfied throughout this relentlessly eventful week. To producer Alain Simard, who may yet earn a reputation as the George Wein of Canada, I offer *mes felicitations les plus sinceres.* □

Los Angeles Times 7/15/87

PAT SENATORE IN A NEW HOME FOR JAZZ

By LEONARD FEATHER

MARIANNA DIAMOS

Pat Senatore will book performers at Beverly Hills Saloon.

The good news is that Pasquale (Pat) Senatore is back in business—and this time under weatherproof conditions, unlike those he had to deal with at the Oceanside Club that bore his name.

To musicians, Senatore is best known as a bass player who toured the world with Stan Kenton, Les Brown and, for five years, the Tijuana Brass. But the Southland's public may remember him better as the man who, from 1978 until 1983, owned Pasquale's, overlooking the beach at Malibu.

For many visitors, Pasquale's had a mixture of music and ambiance second to none; but the club was doomed. Hardly a month went by without a rock slide or some other disaster on the Pacific Coast Highway. It got to the point where nobody knew whether the room was open, or closed because of inaccessibility.

After almost four years of searching for the right location, Pasquale has taken over as artistic director at Jo Anne Le Bouvier's Beverly Hills Saloon. The policy calls for his own trio or other local groups Mondays through Wednesdays, and name attractions Thursdays through Saturdays. Coming Thursday is clarinetist Eddie Daniels; July 23, musician/comedian Pete Barbutti will open.

"We can get some of the same clientele I built up at Pasquale's," says Senatore. "For instance, there are some affluent people who don't go to the Valley clubs to hear jazz. I hope to book some of the same people who worked for me in Malibu, like Carmen McRae, maybe Pat Metheny, Chick Corea, Jon Hendricks.

"Kenny Rankin is set for a September date. I'm dickering for Michael Brecker, Diane Schuur, and some big bands like Basie and Louis Bellson; also, I hope, my old friend Wayne Shorter. We have the space, plus good sound, and a late-night restaurant menu."

Born in Newark, N.J., Senatore was a childhood friend of saxophonist Shorter. They were together in high school, where Senatore majored in art and music. "I wanted to play bass, but they said I was too small, so I was given a baritone horn. Later I switched to trombone, and finally got to play bass in my senior year."

After a long stretch on the road (interrupted for two years by studies at Juilliard), Senatore settled in Los Angeles in 1960. Waiting for musician's union clearance to play locally, he was night manager for a while at the old Music City record shop, but by the end of that year was on the road with Stan Kenton (his elder son, now a chef at l'Ermitage, is named Kenton).

Senatore learned many lessons from his experience at Pasquale's. "You have to be realistic about the cost and value of talent. I had to put a lot of my savings into that room, and there were times when we were in the black. We had some wonderful sessions with people like Joe Farrell, Michel Petrucciani and Manhattan Transfer. But I learned how important your location can be—and as great as that view was, I'd never want to go back to Pacific Coast Highway, or any other place where a rock slide can close you down. Now we're in a much safer situation.

"I remember one night a jazz fan from Tokyo took a cab direct from the airport to Pasquale's, caught the show, then went to check in at his hotel. I want to capture that same kind of enthusiasm for the Beverly Hills Saloon, whether the customers come from Japan or just around the corner."

INSIDE CALENDAR

FILM: Celebrating L.A.'s last legendary movie palaces. Page 3.

"Alpine Fire" reviewed by Michael Wilmington. Page 7.

RADIO: AM/FM Highlights. Page 11.

TV: Tonight on TV and cable. Page 10.

Pasquale (Pat) Senatore is no longer between a rock slide and a jazz place. Page 7.

8/8/87

PHIL WOODS QUINTET IS IN ITS USUAL FINE FORM

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Phil Woods Quintet is in town for another of its all too brief visits, this time at Catalina's in a three-night run that ends this evening.

Woods is one of the fortunate few who can claim to have a band, as opposed to a bunch of locally recruited assistants. His trumpeter, Tom Harrell, is a veritable babe in the Woods, having joined up only four years ago. Pianist Hal Galper is in his seventh year as a Woods sideman. Bassist Steve Gilmore and drummer Bill Goodwin are founder members, having been on hand when the group was formed in 1975.

What is important is not just that these musicians are thoroughly familiar with one another, but that they have a common sense of direction. Woods has at his command enough technique and imagination to put his alto saxophone through the most frenetic of paces, yet he knows how to rein in his power. Consequently, nothing emerges from his horn sounding either perfunctory or excessively ostentatious.

This characteristic is shared by his colleagues. The unison lines by Woods and Harrell in the statements of themes (some of them written by Harrell or Galper) come as close as is humanly possible to sounding like two minds with a single thought.

When not playing, Harrell offers his by now celebrated impression of a man asleep standing up. His eccentric personality is immediately belied when, either on trumpet or fluegelhorn, he suddenly comes to life, displaying a rare lyricism and a sense of continuity. His solo number, the only standard tune played during the first set, was Ray Noble's "The Touch of Your Lips," to which he brought a haunting quality that matched the tune's harmonic beauty, as did the understated and consistently melodic support by Galper.

For the finale, a number that sounded vaguely like an old Charlie Parker piece, Woods and Harrell crossed swords, playing two lines contrapuntally to dazzling effect. Gilmore and Goodwin, another like-minded couple, provided the kind of rhythmic stimulus that is born of long-term compatibility.

Sad to say, there are in contemporary acoustic jazz very few groups that have managed to retain both a steady personnel and a distinctive identity. Phil Woods and his empathetic friends have brought themselves to the pinnacle among this select minority.

19

7/13/87

JAZZ REVIEW

JOHN CLAYTON TRIO: NATURAL SOUND

By LEONARD FEATHER

Does anyone remember natural sound?

This is a rare and supposedly unpopular phenomenon that existed before the invention of microphones and amplifiers. There are those who are firmly convinced that it is extent; however, Friday and Saturday, when the John Clayton Trio appeared at the Loa in Santa Monica, natural sound came back in all its gentle, undistorted glory.

The Loa (where things are looking up now that the club has finally secured its beer and wine license), the room is intimate enough for the musicians to get along with virtually no artificial sound enhancement, if they so desire. John Clayton, the bassist, so desired; the guitarists John Collins and Al Viola, were minimally amplified but made no use of the house speakers; in effect, the overall sound was that of an acoustic trio.

Both Viola and Collins are veterans whose experience has included many years with Frank Sinatra and the late Nat King Cole respectively. Their fluent excursions on "Manhade Carnaval," "Misty" and a blues revealed not only their prowess at soloing and at accompanying one another, but also a keen sense of interaction. Whether playing finger-style or with picks, in single note lines or chords, they were always completely at ease.

As for Clayton, the nominal leader and very articulate announcer, he is younger by decades than his two colleagues but totally compatible, a bassist of immaculate artistry whose bowed solo on "Nature Boy" was note perfect and deeply moving.

Bassist Ray Brown will return to the Loa on Friday, teamed with the trombonist Bill Watrous.

A veteran critic's view of Montreal jazzfest: It's a special happening

By LEONARD FEATHER
Los Angeles Times

"I have to say," George Wein told his audience at the Théâtre St. Denis, "that this is one of the truly great festivals in the world today."

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From noon to midnight every day, close to a thousand musicians have taken part in about 150 indoor paid concerts or free outdoor events.

Have a happening

In New York, you get a series of concerts; in Montreal, you have a happening. Add to this the bilingual ambiance, the francophones mingling amicably with the anglophones; toss in a musical cast that involves hundreds of Americans, hundreds of Canadians, dozens more from France, Scandinavia and all over Europe (among them the Soviet pianist Leonid Chizhik), and you have a heady mixture, with only one problem: This time around, the eighth year of the festival, it rained off and on for several days, forcing postponement of many outdoor concerts.

Most of the heavy action took place in the theatres, with the inevitable conflicts of overlap: If you wanted to catch the estimable Canadian pianist Oliver Jones and his quartet, you had to pass up Dave Brubeck with the Montreal Symphony. If you hadn't heard the unique, veiled voices of Helen Merrill lately, you caught her at the Spectrum (a large cabaret-style theatre) and missed the Joe Williams show.

Having arrived late (Montreal's first three days are always New York's closing weekend), I missed Dexter Gordon with his *'Round Midnight* group, Gil Evans's band and others; yet it was possible to be exposed in rapid succession to more important attractions, known and unknown, than can normally be found within such a compact, controlled area.

Played both cities

The Montreal talent roster often duplicated New York's: McCoy Tyner, Ella Fitzgerald, Diane Schuur, Mel Lewis, Wynton Marsalis, John Scofield and others played both cities. Far more, however, were presented in one or the other, and the Canadians were exclusively heard here.

Oliver Jones is a strangely late bloomer. Born in Montreal in 1934, he studied piano with Daisy Peterson, Oscar's sister, but resigned himself to a career of Top 40 and pop jobs, accompanying a Jamaican singer and living in Puerto Rico for 16 years. Not until he settled back in Montreal in 1980 was he persuaded that he could make a living

Pianist Oliver Jones: 'A strangely late bloomer.'

for harmonic finesse.

Making up for lost time, Jones has toured Europe and Japan and drew warm reviews in New York. He is certain to be established soon as Canada's greatest gift to jazz since Peterson himself.

The enthusiasm shown for Jones contrasted poignantly with the reaction, in the same hall the previous evening, to Phineas Newborn Jr. Once hailed as second only to Peterson, the Memphis pianist has suffered many years of emotional illness. On this occasion, he was less than a shadow of his early self; it seemed painful for him to reach for a chord, as if he were climbing up a staircase in the dark. Flashes of his old genius were aborted after a few moments; he stumbled through several numbers at a dirge-like pace, rarely even setting a tempo. The audience began walking out. After less than 40 minutes, Newborn called it a night. For anyone who knew and revered him in the 1960s, this was an agonizing experience.

One of the wildest receptions of the week was accorded to Bobby McFerrin, whose vocal gymnastics are as astonishing as ever. But McFerrin now devotes much of his time to such antics as crawling and jumping around, leaping off the stage to mingle with the audience, inviting as many as 30 volunteers out of the house to join him in a sing-along. When he wound up coaching the crowd into a joint vocal on the Mickey Mouse Club song, it became all too clear that his success is driving him down the slippery slope from musical integrity and innovation to the unwonderful world of show business.

Trumpeter Terence Blanchard and alto saxophonist Donald Harrison have backgrounds much like that of Wynton and Branford Marsalis; they too studied with Ellis Marsalis at the latter's school in New Orleans, and later replaced the Marsalises in Art Blakey's band. They now head a quintet with a florid but engaging young pianist, Cyrus Chestnut. Harrison is the man to watch here: He seems to feel instinctively the art of building a long solo forward, upward and outward, to great emotional effect.

After a lengthy investigation of *All Blues*, Harrison announced: "That was written by Miles Davis when he was a jazz musician." Next came *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise*, which again ran to 20

same instrumentation but his sidemen, in a vibrant show at the Théâtre St. Denis, found more to say in a better-disciplined context. Various instrumental works were followed by vocal versions (with Andy Bey singing persuasively) of such old pieces of Silver as *Senor Blues*, *Nica's Dream* and *Cape Verdean Blues* (now retitled *Samba Caribbean* with lyrics by Steve Allen).

At the Club Soda, Ranee Lee, a singer born in New York but long considered one of Montreal's own, became the city's most talked-about hit with a nightly one-woman show, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*. Loosely based on the story of Billie Holiday four months before her death in 1959, it is a bit long on dramatic monologues (written by Lanie Robertson), but Lee, in a demanding two-hour show punctuated by 17 songs (in which she achieved the soulful essence without attempting to duplicate the actual timbre of Lady Day) made it a moving experience.

Special favorites

French artists (as well as French-Canadians) being special favorites in Montreal, it was no surprise that Helen Merrill, whose latest album was a hit in France, earned a standing ovation at the Spectrum in a program of superbly chosen songs (but does everyone have to include *'Round Midnight*?). Nor did it hurt that for her encore she sang *I Love Paris* partly in French.

Jim Hall and Ron Carter, the guitar-and-bass duo, provided what may have been the most graceful and sensitive music of the entire week. To Hermeto Pascoal, that strange, multi-instrumental Brazilian albino, whose band roared through its thunderous blues-rock motions, went the dubious honor of providing the most violent contrast to all the values Hall and Carter hold dear.

One evening, as I was threading my way through the almost impenetrable crowd that jammed St. Denis St., I stopped to hear a French-Canadian blues band. The harmonica player seemed to be the leader, and the language seemed to be English, though at that level of distortion and volume it could have been Urdu. But everyone seemed happy, just as those of us examining the subtler sounds had been satisfied throughout this relentlessly eventful week.

To producers Alain Simard and André Menard, I offer *mes felicita-*

JAZZ REVIEW

FIRST LADY OF SONG IN TOP FORM

By LEONARD FEATHER

Advisory to any concerned friends who could not be at the Hollywood Bowl Wednesday: Not to worry. Ella Fitzgerald is doing just fine, thank you.

In her first major local appearance since a protracted illness (she had a break-in booking last March at El Camino College), the eternal First Lady of Song was in superlative form. She brought passion to "Summertime;" joy to "Manteca," humor to "Mack the Knife," fire and flame to "Cherokee." She displayed her bilingual chops on "Agua de Beber," her scat expertise on "Take the A Train" and her flair for uncovering little-known verses on "Funny Face," a 60-year-old song by the Gershwins.

In a word, she was Ella Fitzgerald, a singer communicating the exuberance, the control, the spirit one often yearns to find in most vocalists a third of her age.

However—and this is a big however—there was something very wrong with the manner in which this concert—widely advertised as the first in the Bowl's summer "Jazz at the Bowl" series—was conceived and executed.

Throughout the 40-minute opening set and much of her post-intermission appearance, which kept her on-stage for almost an hour, Fitzgerald was accompanied not by a jazz group, but by an orchestra, varying in size from 25 to 44, under the baton of Lalo Schifrin. The guitarist Joe Pass, central to so many Fitzgerald concerts over the years, was missing. Such first-rate jazzmen as the trumpeter Bobby Bryant, the trombonist Buster Cooper and the saxophonists Bob Cooper and Harold Land, were busy reading their parts and had so little solo work that one longed for a small group jam along the lines of "Jazz at the Philharmonic" with which Fitzgerald used to work so happily.

Too often the orchestra seemed like excess baggage, especially when the 19 strings sat around unused, looking foolish and expendable. On such songs as "Days of Wine and Roses," "Willow Weep for Me" the tempos and rhythm-heavy arrangements were out of keeping with the poignant spirit of the lyrics. During "St. Louis Blues" it was embarrassing to see the strings sawing away on a tune that cried out for intimacy and simplicity.

How much of this was Schifrin's fault cannot be determined, since the arrangers were not credited, but the whole idea of turning this into a predominately pops concert was at odds with the supposed premise of the evening.

The second half brought partial relief. Schifrin took over at the piano to offer four numbers, one of which was his popular "Mannix" theme—requested, he said, by "Mees Fizzeral." (Later, Ella returned the compliment by thanking "Lalo Schiffman.") An arrangement of "Happy Birthday," which he wrote for the recent Dizzy Gillespie tribute at Wolf Trap, showed that Schifrin can still play attractive jazz piano, but as an arranger he seemed unable to shake the studios out of his system. His attempt to write a Basie type jazz instrumental was too derivative to have much significance, despite a good rhythm section with Frank Capp on drums and John Clayton on bass.

Next, Fitzgerald's own rhythm section (Paul Smith, piano; Keter Betts, bass, and Jeff Hamilton, drums) accompanied her in a couple of pieces that offered surcease. The orchestra redeemed itself, backing her well on "God Bless the Child," which she brought to a great emotional climax. It even managed to swing in "Shiny Stockings."

In short, this was a triumph that rested almost entirely on the 69-year-old shoulders of a magnificent survivor. Fitzgerald received the reaction she deserved—three standing ovations, two encores—and attracted an audience to match, a very healthy 15,153.

GARY FRIEDMAN / Los Angeles Times

Ella Fitzgerald sang up a storm at Hollywood Bowl Wednesday.

L.A. TIMES 7/19/87

JAZZ

THE CREAM OF THE CURRENT CD CROP

By LEONARD FEATHER

The floodgates have opened. The panic is on.

After a two-week absence covering jazz festivals in New York and Montreal, it was a shock to return and find 89 newly arrived compact discs. The rush to amplify the CD jazz market has been doubly beneficial, since virtually all these items are concurrently available on LPs, though in some cases one or two bonus tracks have been added for the CD version.

Classic has become a trivialized adjective, applied to everything from a cola drink to a 10-year-old rock record, but most of these sets justify the term in its original unadulterated sense. What follows is the cream of the classic crop; in addition, it can be strongly recommended that you check out new CDs on Trend (a fine Bob Cooper set with four newly recorded tunes), Musicraft (Artie Shaw with Mel Torme and the Mel-Tones) and Discovery (Bill Henderson's "Live at the Times").

□

"MILES AHEAD." Miles Davis/Gil Evans. Columbia CK 40784. "LIVE MILES." Miles Davis. Columbia CK 40609. "DIG." Miles Davis/Sonny Rollins. Prestige OJCCD-005-2. "COLLECTORS' ITEMS." Miles Davis. Prestige OJCCD 071-2. There was a great temptation to put "Miles Ahead" on a tape loop, relax, and forget about writing a column. This is the perfect union of the respective orchestral and solo artistry of Evans and Davis. Though many composers are involved (Brubeck, Delibes, Ahmad Jamal, J. J. Johnson, Evans), the effect is that of a suite. Davis' work is a masterpiece of lyricism (this was just after he switched from trumpet to fluegelhorn). 5 stars plus.

The other Columbia consists of unissued leftovers from a 1961 concert, one side given over to an extended version of "Concierto de Aranjuez" with Evans, the other to three small group cuts, the best of which is Davis' "Teo," a modal jazz waltz. 4 stars.

The Prestige sets are typical 1950s post-bop, both with Rollins. It wouldn't have hurt, 34 years later, if the "Charlie Chan" who plays second tenor sax on the "Collectors' Items" set had been correctly identified: It was Charlie Parker. 4 stars each.

□

"COMPACT JAZZ." Stan Getz. Verve 831-368-2. Creed Taylor, who recorded more seminal jazz in the 1960s than any other producer, was responsible for these memorable sessions, the first of which (with guitarist Charlie Byrd) triggered the whole bossa nova phenomenon in the United States. Here are the original, definitive versions of "Desafinado," "One Note Samba," "Corcovado," "Girl From Ipanema" and the rest, with a cast that is its own built-in seal of approval: Antonio Carlos Jobim, Luis Bonfa, Joao and Astrud Gilberto, Laurindo Almeida, Gary Burton. If there is room for only one Getz in your collection, this has to be it; moreover, it clocks in at 57½ minutes. 5 stars.

□

"FIRST LIGHT." Freddie Hubbard. Columbia ZK 40687. "CALIFORNIA CONCERT." Columbia ZGK 40690. "FACE TO FACE." Freddie Hubbard/Oscar Peterson. Pablo CD 2310-876-2. "CARAVAN." Art Blakey. Riverside OJCCD 338-2. Another superb Creed Taylor product, "First Light" was cut for his CTI label and won a Grammy in 1972 as best jazz group album. It's a perfect example of the exercise of good taste in rendering an artist more commercial, with strings discreetly used by arranger Don Sebesky. George Benson and Hubert Laws are featured; an extra tune has been added for the CD. 5 stars.

"California Concert" was a spectacularly successful 1971 Hollywood Palladium gig with Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine, Laws, Billy Cobham et al. 4½ stars. Hubbard and Peterson team joyously in the 1982 date that found them backed by Joe Pass, Niels Pedersen and Martin Drew. 5 stars. Hubbard was a Blakey sideman in the 1962 "Caravan," along with Wayne Shorter, Curtis Fuller and Cedar Walton. For the reissue an extra take of Hubbard's "Thermo" has been added. 4 stars.

□

"THE ESSENTIAL COUNT BASIE." Columbia CK 40608. "ME AND YOU." Count Basie. Pablo 2310-891-2. "MOSTLY BLUES . . . AND SOME OTHERS." Count Basie Septet. Pablo 2310-919-2. "SATCH & JOSH . . . AGAIN." Count Basie/Oscar Peterson. Pablo 2310-802-2. In 1939 the Basie band was making history, aided by Les-

ter Young, Jimmy Rushing, Buck Clayton and the Swing Era *Zeitgeist*; thus the CBS set is indispensable. 5 stars. The two 1983 sessions (one with a septet, the other partly big band and part combo) show how much life Basie could generate in his waning days. Both 4 stars. "Satch & Josh" is amiably unpretentious interplay. 4½ stars.

□

"THE SOUND OF SONNY." Sonny Rollins. Riverside OJCCD 029-2. "MOVING OUT." Prestige OJCCD 058-2. Rollins, moving fast toward maturity in the 1950s, already had his weird, waggish way with odd songs like "Toot Toot, Tootsie," but was serious and sensitive on ballads such as "What Is There to Say" and the unaccompanied "It Could Happen to You." The mambo-like "Mangoes" and the closing "Funky Hotel Blues" (not included in the original LP) come off well, with Sonny Clark at the piano. 3 stars. "Moving Out" is enlivened by the addition of a trumpet (Kenny Dorham) and, although taped three years earlier (1954), is more engaging. Thelonious Monk plays on one tune. Composers are not listed. There is only 31½ minutes of music; in fact, both of these sets could have been combined into one CD. 3½ stars.

"SETTIN' THE PACE." John Coltrane. Prestige OJCCD 078-2. "TRANEING IN." John Coltrane with Red Garland Trio. Prestige OJCCD 189-2. "PARIS CONCERT." Pablo 2308-217-2. The first two display the pre-revolutionary Coltrane, playing orthodox changes on regular tunes (he even tried "Soft Lights and Sweet Music"), with Garland's piano, Paul Chambers' bass and Art Taylor on drums. Though never experimental, it offers eloquent evidence of an already influential talent. 3½ stars each. The Pablo concert (1962) shows the catalytic Coltrane in full flower, with McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison and Elvin Jones. It's typical of that time in that the opening tune, "Mr. P.C.," runs 26 minutes. Tighter versions may be available, but there are 4 stars' worth of historic value here.

□

"VIOLINS NO END." Stephane Grappelli/Stuff Smith. Pablo 23210-907-2. "COMPACT JAZZ." Stephane Grappelli. MPS831-370-2. Stuff Smith, a half-forgotten giant of jazz violin (he died in Munich in 1967), plays part of the first disc with Oscar Peterson's Quartet (Herb Ellis, Ray Brown, Jo Jones), the rest in a rare summit meeting with Peterson and Grappelli, in Paris. Smith could outswing any man alive, but the contrasted study in styles is fascinating. 5 stars.

The "Compact" set runs to 15 tunes (58½ minutes), taped in the 1970s in Germany with various groups, one of which includes George Shearing, another Larry Coryell. 4 stars.

□

"THE 1940s—THE SINGERS." Various artists. Columbia CK 40652. "THE 1950s—THE SINGERS." CK 40799. The 16 items in the first group entail such fringe benefits as Teddy Wilson accompanying Mildred Bailey and Billie Holiday; Ben Webster with Slim & Slam; a Cab Calloway band number with the 22-year-old Dizzy Gillespie, and various soloists who preempt what is theoretically a Nat Cole/June Christy duet. Maxine Sullivan, Joe Turner, Jack Teagarden, Jimmy Rushing and Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson illustrate the diversity and nuances of the jazz vocal art. 5 stars.

The '50s set is flawed by expendable cuts with Babs Gonzales, Johnny Mathis, Dolores Hawkins (a minor white singer trying to black-bag it with a blues) and a Red Saunders band number the release of which is no favor to Saunders' 1951 vocalist, Joe Williams. Best cuts: Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, Lee Wiley, Betty Roche with Ellington. 3 stars. □

L.A. TIMES 7/19/87

JOHN HAMMOND—MUSIC WAS HIS FIRST MASTER

By LEONARD FEATHER

There are in all the arts non-performers who, in the final analysis, are at least as important historically as the artists they discovered and the events they precipitated. John Hammond, who died July 10 in his New York apartment, was just such a catalyst.

Hammond was one of nature's rebels. A member of a wealthy, socially prominent family (Vanderbilts and Sloanes on his mother's side, racial prejudice on both sides), he was motivated from an early age by twin drives: racial justice for blacks and the propagation of jazz.

In the early 1930s, these goals were all but impossible in America. John went to Alabama in 1933 to cover, for the Nation, the sensational Scottsboro trial of nine black youths accused of raping two white women. Not long after, he became involved with the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People.

At that time, the record business had hit a Depression rock bottom. Many of Hammond's early experiences involved sessions he produced specially for release in England; by the same token, there were so few outlets for jazz criticism in the United States that Hammond wrote mainly for British publications.

It was in London that we met: I was a teen-age fan just about to become a part of the music scene. John impressed me with his sincerity, and with an enthusiasm that never abated.

His prescience was uncanny. How could the ear that detected potential in Count Basie, Billie Holiday, Teddy Wilson and Aretha Franklin also hear the voice of the future in Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen?

Of course, anyone as opinionated as John was bound to make enemies. Because of his racial attitudes, he was called a Communist, though he believed staunchly in integration while the American Communist Party

JON RANDOLPH

John Hammond in 1975: The propagation of jazz was one of his passions in life.

at that time wanted a separate 49th state for blacks to be gerrymandered out of Deep South territory. Still, when all else failed he would work with the party: When he could not find a sponsor for a black music-history program he wanted to present at Carnegie Hall, he accepted the underwriting of the Marxist publication New Masses. The result was "From Spirituals to Swing," one of the most memorable concerts of this century.

Some white musicians resented his championship of equality. John once told me, with a touch of pride, that the white cornetist Red Nichols had dismissed him as a "nigger lover." Yet it was Hammond who played a central role in putting together the Benny Goodman Orchestra, which at first was all-white, and he recorded Mildred Bailey, Bunny Berigan and many other white artists.

The Goodman venture changed the course of history. Without John's help, Goodman might have given up and returned to the studio life, leaving the Swing Era stillborn.

John was a compulsive listener and a compulsive reader. On the day of my first arrival from England as a visitor to these shores, he was at the dock to meet me, with a stack of magazines and newspapers under his arms, and within hours had taken me to the Apollo Theatre, where we met a failing Bessie Smith (whose final record session he had produced) and went on to the Savoy Ballroom.

Over the years, after many such evenings together, the evidence mounted not only of his love for the music, but of his generosity. There were innumerable unreported instances of his helping out musicians who were down on their luck.

His interest in social, political, racial and musical matters never left him, even though the past few years had dealt him a series of literally crippling blows. He suffered several heart attacks or strokes. Last year, came the deaths of Esme Sarnoff Hammond, his wife since 1949; Benny Goodman, who had been his brother-in-law since 1942, followed soon by Teddy Wilson. □

A visit with John three weeks ago found him haggard, confined to a wheelchair, his once-robust voice reduced almost to a whisper; yet the conversation revealed that he was still involved, helping his associate Mikie Harris to produce an album with a new group, the Mark Kirkostis Quintet.

Harris was there, holding his hand, along with Hammond's stepdaughter, Rosita Sarnoff, on that last day. "He was playing Billie Holiday's record of 'All of Me,'" said Sarnoff. "He went comfortably and gracefully—the record stopped at the exact moment he died." □

JAZZ REVIEW

DAVID SANBORN: A MAN IN COMMAND OF HIS SAX

By LEONARD FEATHER

David Sanborn practices safe sax. Revolutions are not his style. Men like Charlie Parker and John Coltrane were dangerous; they made music that called for a vital creative drive, and for an audience sensitive to their visionary concepts.

Sanborn knows how to bring out other reactions in his listeners, as was made clear by the teeming masses he drew to the Greek Theatre on Wednesday. How about those screaming high notes? Let's hear it for that volcanic, voluminous backup band. If Sanborn's music was wild, his fans were wilder.

His claims that he is not a jazz musician may be based on a fear that he will be compared to some of the artists he says he respects: Wayne Shorter, Phil Woods, Michael Brecker. Here is a man who improvises furiously, uses blues riffs, idolizes Cannonball Adderley—yet he says he is not a jazzman. Sure, and the Pope is not a Catholic.

What kind of jazzman he is, of course, is another matter. His occasionally saccharine sound is at odds with his bravura technical displays, which go straight to the gut rather than to the heart. Still, on such numbers as "Blue Beach," which he wrote with Marcus Miller, he demonstrated the command of the horn that has firmed up his popularity.

His only attempt to play a standard tune was a version of "God Bless the Child" so over-melodramatized as to become laughable, though Billie Holiday would not have thought it funny.

Sanborn is to his genre of music what Jackie Collins is to literature. Both sell in the millions; both have the common touch. Still, despite his tendency to overblow, there are times when his skill and mastery of the style is impressive; one can well understand why he has become a major influence among alto players.

Don Alias on percussion and Sonny Emery on drums, excellent musicians both, had long individual workouts late in the evening, but the show stealing sideman was Hiram Bullock, the guitarist.

At one point Bullock sat on the stage, picked a few bars of "Bluesette," jumped up, whirled around, indulged in wild distortions that sounded like an impression of a train wreck, and wound up with "Don't Get Around Much Any More." Toward the end of the show he leaped off the stage, ran all the way up to the top of the house with his guitar, dashed back, jumped back on stage and turned a somersault.

Opening for Sanborn were the Nylons, a vocal quartet from Toronto who worked mainly a cappella, though sometimes what sounded like a taped percussion background was heard. They have a fine blend, a powerful bass singer, and entertaining personalities. It was a little odd, though, to watch them, immaculate in their gleaming white suits, singing a song about working on the chain gang.

PLAYBOY JAZZ FESTIVAL

Leonard Feather

After nine years on the job, the organizers and operators of the Playboy Jazz Festival (principally **George Wein, Darlene Chan** and the Playboy promotional staff) have shown that they know how to do it. That, of course, tells us nothing about the state of the jazz art. True, the Hollywood Bowl was sold out well over a week in advance for a total of just under 36,000 admissions. One wonders whether a more straightahead jazz policy might have done any effective harm to the take. Without **Jeff Lorber** on the Saturday, without **Kenny G** on the Sunday, perhaps the festival would have been sold out only two days in advance, which would not have cost Playboy a penny.

Of the ten main attractions presented between 2:30 and 11 p.m. the first day, five were artistically satisfying, two were of moderate interest, three were not. Not surprisingly, two in the last category were the most riotously received. The crowd went berserk when Jeff Lorber's saxophonist, **Dave Koz,** took his horn up into the bleachers (amply amplified, of course). Lorber's two soul singers, **Karyn White** and **Michael Jeffries,** hollered their way through *Back in Love,* you looked at your ticket to check whether you had accidentally arrived at the Motown Funk Festival.

Between 3:30pm and 6.30pm uninterruptedly splendid jazz was heard: the **Count Basie Band, Joe Williams, Stan Getz** and **Sarah Vaughan** did, as flawlessly as ever what they have done unceasingly for so many years.

Despite poor sound balance, the Basie band, led by **Frank Foster,** got its point across, mostly with old charts such as **Ernie Wilkins'** *Good Time Blues* (**Lynn Seaton** bowing his bass and singing a la **Slam Stewart**) and one or two new items such as *House on Fire,* a brisk showcase for **Donny House,** the young alto saxophonist. The band also supplied backing for the Vaughan and Williams vocals. **Jerry Eastman** the new guitarist, is doing an efficient job of filling the chair left empty by **Freddie Green.**

Stan Getz now has a foursome that may be his best ever. In **Kenny Barron** he has a vital, driving pianist who is also a gifted composer (his *Voyage* was a highlight). **Rufus Reid's** bass came across bold and brilliant, and **Victor Lewis** on drums offered a solid undercurrent. Getz's sound is as calmly appealing as ever; his linear concepts are unceasing wonders of melodic creation. He paid tribute to **Victors Feldman's** memory in the Feldman compositions *Seven Steps to Heaven* and *Falling In Love.* Getz will never drive the audience to aisle-dancing hysterics; his appeal is aimed at the mind rather than the feet.

PLAYBOY

"The Leaders" at the Playboy Jazz Festival:Kirk Lightsey, Cecil McBee, Lester Bowie, Chico Freeman, Arthur Blythe. Not seen - drummer Don Moye.

A sextet billed as **The Leaders** steered an intelligent midway course between hard bop and the avant garde. The trumpeter **Lester Bowie** cut a fluent path through his own *Zero,* **Chico Freeman** on tenor showed how to make the same note produce six different sounds. **Arthur Blythe's** alto sax displayed power and passion, but lapsed into a saccharine sound on **Ellington's** *Sentimental Mood.* **Kirk Lightsey's** energetic piano shared the rhythm credits with **Cecil McBee's** supple bass and **Don Moye's** drums.

The rolling tones of **Charlie Watts,** whose 32 piece band from England playing bloated arrangement of swing era standards, gave a satisfactory account of itself, with the trumpeter **Jimmy Deuchar,** the vibes of **Bill Le Sage** and **Jim Lawless,** and a few other good soloists; but there are many ways in which a dozen saxes, seven trumpets, five trombones and the rest could have been put to more original use. The best way of all might have been simply to break up this musical hippopotamus into two 16 piece bands and let each perform on a separate night.

Because many in the crowd had been on hand for six or seven hours, there was a notable falling off as hundreds, perhaps thousands, drifted away in the course of the Watts performance.

As the fans continued to file in for Sunday's concert the **Mundell Lowe Quartet** took over in a mature mainstream mood, with fine work by the leader on guitar, **George Gaffney** on piano, **Andy Simpkins** on bass and **Paul Humphrey** on drums.

Branford Marsalis led his potent quartet through works by **McCoy Tyner, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane** (an impassioned *Giant Steps*) and his own pianist **Kenny Kirkland,** in the best contemporary jazz hour of the whole Sunday marathon.

It was a pleasure to hear **George Benson** accompanied simply by the organist **Lonnie Smith** and a drummer, **Art Gore.** In this setting, the guitarist recaptured the splendor of his early days with a blues and as *I Got Rhythm* variation. But Smith and Gore then disappeared, replaced by **Earl Klugh** and several others, as Benson went into his pop vocal bag.

Lionel Hampton, who has never been intimidated by having to follow anyone, quelled post-Benson uproar by delivering, with his skilled big band, a surprisingly effective arrangement of *Mack the Knife,* a merengue, and several pieced from the standard Hampton bag of tricks, Emcee **Bill Cosby,** America's most popular television star, sat in on drums for the first tune.

Hampton played for an hour and a half, but unlike Saturday's crowd, which had walked out in large numbers on Charlie Watts, the audience remained, jumping and shouting until the band had left and Hampton, unfazed, stood out there alone, looking as though he would gladly have stayed on stage forever.

The Playboy festivals have an immensely difficult job on their hands, trying to please everybody and at the same time attempting to fill this enormous venue. Despite all our critical complaints over the years, it must be admitted that their efforts have been consistently valuable for the jazz community of Southern California.

Los Angeles Times 7/24/87

ENERGETIC CAMPBELL AT THE BILTMORE

By LEONARD FEATHER

At the Grand Avenue Bar of the Biltmore Hotel Wednesday, the early evening session (5 to 9 p.m.) was placed in the fast-moving hands of Kerry Campbell, an alto saxophonist from Detroit who settled in the Southland a couple of years ago.

Campbell has enough going for him to guarantee a measure of success. He is in his late 20s, very personable and he moves around, in the course of a long and busy solo, persuasively enough to incite his listeners to mid-chorus applause.

Although he names Charlie Parker as his idol, Campbell plays with a degree of overt energy that Parker never displayed and, in fact, did not need. One set began with the kind of blistering attack on a tune (ironically, it was entitled "Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise") that could better have been reserved for the closing number.

Part of the problem could be blamed on the room's slightly woozy sound system, but most of the trouble lay in the percussion department. The more furiously Mike Baker played, the greater the multi-noted explosions from Campbell's horn, resulting in an excess of excesses. The situation simmered down a little in "All Blues" and belatedly achieved a consistently good groove on "Round Midnight," with Campbell relatively relaxed and Johnny Hammond Smith contributing some Erroll Garnerish piano chords. Completing the group was Dannell Lambert, a discreet and steady bassist.

Given less intrusive support, and allowing motion to take second place to emotion, Campbell could yet reach the heights already attained by, say, Frank Morgan. Creatively, he already starts where Kenny G leaves off. Campbell will be back at the Grand Avenue Bar every Wednesday in August.

Footnote: The Biltmore's Rendezvous Court offers some charming, harmonically sophisticated piano and Bobby Short-style vocals by Dini Clarke.

7/25 Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

PETE BARBUTTI: SERVING UP BARBS WITH A BEAT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Warning: Pete Barbutti may be hazardous to your health. Excessive laughter may induce shortness of breath, and we all know where that can lead.

However, Thursday evening at LeBouvier's Beverly Hills Saloon Barbutti managed to keep an audience in a state of virtually continuous risibility for well over an hour, with no reported ill effects.

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Barbutti exemplifies a certain brand of zany humor that is endemic to musicians, though its appeal is universal. The laughter will continue resounding through tonight.

A MUSEUM OF MEMORABILIA

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEWARK, N.J.—Would you care to see Miles Davis' first trumpet? Bobby Hackett's cornet? Eddie Condon's guitar? Do you want to see what Down Beat had to say about Charlie Parker in 1947? Or find an early photograph of Mary Lou Williams? Would you like to inspect the arrangements used by Muggsy Spanier's big band?

These are just a few of the almost limitless options open to anyone who plans a visit to the Institute of Jazz Studies, the world's foremost reference-library-cum-museum for students, musicians and inquisitive laymen.

The institute owes its existence to the late Marshall Stearns, who was a professor of medieval literature at Hunter College but, unlike most professors of medieval literature, had a profound knowledge of jazz and began collecting books, records and odd memorabilia at his home in Greenwich Village. This became an official organization in 1952, with a group of critics, collectors and devotees helping to organize the files.

In 1966, a year before Stearns' death, the institute arranged for Rutgers University to become its permanent home. Today, its rapidly swelling reference materials can be found in Bradley Hall, a building near Rutgers' Newark campus.

A recent visit to the institute found Dan Morgenstern, its director since 1976, busy compiling new facts and figures. Edward Berger, co-author of the two-volume work "Benny Carter: A Life in American Music" (Scarecrow Press, 1982), is his assistant; a librarian, Vincent Pelote, and a secretary complete the staff. "But we have several students who come in now and then to help out," said Morgenstern, a respected critic who came to prominence as editor of Down Beat in the 1960s.

"Right now, our record collection runs to about 75,000," he added, "but that's not counting thousands more that have to be sorted and indexed. As you see, we have a 78 rpm record player; a cleaner that takes the grit out of records and really cleans up the sound, and a player piano complete with old piano rolls by people like Fats Waller.

"Our files are becoming more extensive daily. We have thousands of magazines, domestic and foreign; some were in such precarious condition that we had them transferred to microfilm. Then there are our photo files, and the jazz books—well over 3,000 at last count."

The IJS, which has always been a nonprofit foundation, has relied on grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities to keep going. One of its most ambitious ventures has been an oral history of jazz. Interviews, all at least five hours long, have been conducted with 120 musicians, many of them pioneers who have since passed on: Count Basie, Charles Mingus, Jo Jones and Teddy Wilson were among the subjects. "We've had any number of authors and doctoral candidates, as well as film and TV producers, at the institute to examine transcripts of these interviews," said Morgenstern.

According to Berger, the institute attracts a constant flow of inquiries, many by telephone, as well as in-person visitors who have heard about the IJS and traveled many miles to dig up material for a biography or educational project.

"We've had visitors from Sibe-

ED BERGER

Director Dan Morgenstern (holding Miles Davis' trumpet) and secretary Jeanette Gayle check out some of the holdings at Rutgers' Institute of Jazz Studies.

"The Coltrane Legacy." VAI. $39.95. Black-and-white footage shows John Coltrane playing tenor or soprano sax with Miles Davis in 1959 and with various small groups of his own in the early 1960s. There are two versions of his own "Impressions," as well as his devastating assault on "My Favorite Things," in which Eric Dolphy's flute sounds oddly tentative to 1987 ears. Coltrane's slow, pensive mood in "Alabama" shows him to best advantage. The 61 minutes are interwoven with comments by his sidemen, filmed in color. Elvin Jones, the drummer and main speaker, talks of his boss as "energetic yet calm, peaceful, spiritual . . . greater than life." Information: (212) 799-7798.

—LEONARD FEATHER

7/25 Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

PETE BARBUTTI: SERVING UP BARBS WITH A BEAT

By LEONARD FEATHER

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ria," Berger said, "who brought some Soviet jazz LPs with them. The president of the University of Lagos Jazz Club is due here from Nigeria soon.

"Here's a typical bunch of requests: A writer from West Germany wants to look up material for a biography he's doing on Bill Evans. A bass student is checking out facts for a dissertation on the evolution of the bass. Two people were here to find out biographical information for a Grove's Dictionary of Jazz that's coming out late in 1988."

While we were talking the phone rang. Morgenstern picked it up, talked for a while, then told us: "That was Roy Eldridge. He received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and they want a letter showing what he's done with the funds. Like most musicians, Roy doesn't like to deal with bureaucracy, so he comes to us for help."

"One of the oddest calls we've received," Berger said, "was from a doctor who needed information on music—I guess he meant lyrics—dealing with mental illness. But much of what we get here consists of high school students working on a paper. We've had a lot of graduate students from Europe. Some scholars stay here all day for periods ranging from days to weeks, seeking out everything from an introductory overview of jazz all the way up to the most esoteric topics."

That the IJS is a museum as well as a library becomes evident with a glance at some of the more arcane artifacts: an original Edison record player, a Pathe hill-and-dale phonograph ("We had them reconditioned so they really work," Morgenstern said), and a collection of the weird instruments played by the late Rahsaan Roland Kirk.

"Look at this," said Berger. "A set of issues of Music Dial. That's a magazine that was published by a group of black musicians from 1943 to 1945."

"These are so rare," Morgenstern added, "that even the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem doesn't have them."

The good work of the IJS transcends its own physical boundaries. Often it will help faculty and students at Rutgers and other colleges and universities in research and in the preparation of classroom materials. Since 1979, the institute has hosted a weekly jazz program called "Jazz From the Archives," on WBGO-FM, the Newark associate of National Public Radio.

The IJS decided some years ago to take a plunge into the perilous world of book publishing. In association with Scarecrow Press in Metuchen, N.J., it has produced the Benny Carter work by Berger and his late father, as well as "Art Tatum: A Guide to His Recorded Music," by Arnold Laubich, and "Erroll Garner: The Most Happy Piano," by James M. Doran, comprising interviews with Garner's friends and family and a complex discography.

The institute publishes the Annual Review of Jazz Studies, which it claims is the only scholarly jazz periodical in the English language (and, it might be added, probably in any language). The essays in the review offer a reminder of how much deeper certain scholars are ready to probe beyond the often superficial level of the popular jazz magazines.

Morgenstern typifies this admirable breed. When not busy with the institute, he occupies his time writing many of the most valuable album notes to be found in the LP annals (he has won several Grammies for his efforts); he is a former officer and present trustee of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, and has to his credit a book called "Jazz People," now regrettably hard to find.

"Don't forget," he said, "the institute is open weekdays, but it's by appointment only. Or tell people they can call us at (201) 648-5595. They can't see our photo files that way, but at least we can tell them what year it was that Jelly Roll Morton wrote 'King Porter Stomp.'" □

7/26/87

JAZZ

DR. BILLY TAYLOR NEVER RESTS

By LEONARD FEATHER

It is almost indisputable that Dr. Billy Taylor is the world's foremost spokesman for jazz. "Spokesman," in fact, is too limiting a term.

Since his arrival in New York after graduating from Virginia State College, he has evolved from his original role as pianist to other, often overlapping activities as composer, arranger, conductor, radio host, author ("Jazz Piano: A Jazz History"), actor (he played Jelly Roll Morton in a CBS program, "You Are There"), magazine writer (for Down Beat, Keyboard, Saturday Review), commercial voice-over (for everything from cars to beers to soups), teacher and lecturer (this week he is in residence at the University of Massachusetts), and his most significant role in terms of audience size, that of regular host to jazz and pop artists about once a month since 1981 on the CBS "Sunday Morning" program. His profile of Quincy Jones won an Emmy in 1983.

The "Dr." is not an honorific title; though he does have honorary doctorates from six other colleges, he earned a combined master's degree and doctorate from University of Massachusetts in 1975.

Nobody with all these credits can be expected to sit still, but even by his own standards, 1987 so far has been, as he puts it, "a fantastically busy year." Last month, he was one of a group of American composers and educators who met in the Soviet Union for 10 days with their U.S.S.R. counterparts. The object: to lay the groundwork for more cultural exchanges, not only of musicians and composers but of musicologists.

"This *glasnost* thing, as far as we were concerned, worked very well," he said in a phone interview between recent college commitments. "Both sides were interested in getting some activity started as soon as possible; consequently, negotiations we thought would take a couple of days to hammer out were completed in two or three hours.

"They're going to send over four or five musicologists to attend a national convention here in October, and they agreed to host at least three U.S. musicians a year on an educational basis—for example, Clark Terry and David Baker, who are well known also as clinicians and historians. They are very much aware of specific people like this. And these plans are in addition to tours by various American and Soviet groups that are being set up on a separate basis."

Pianist Billy Taylor, on his many-faceted career: "I didn't want to have a career that was strictly dependent on record sales."

Taylor was in Moscow to speak rather than to play; however, after arriving in Leningrad he found himself at a keyboard, as part of what he calls a happening.

"They have some unofficial musicians—people who don't have the approval of the state, but who are nevertheless active. This was in a small hall way on the outskirts of Leningrad, and it seemed as if they had put the session together specially for us. These guys were terrific!

"One keyboard player, a very young-looking guy, Sergey Kuryokhin, had an impromptu session with a percussionist; he played acoustic piano but also had a couple of electric hookups and used a DX7. These guys were improvising all kinds of stuff, mixing classical music, jazz, rock, you name it. I was surprised about the DX7, because one problem they have over there is getting their hands on instruments."

When Taylor played, he was joined by Oliver Lake, the composer and saxophonist best known as a member of the World Saxophone Quartet. "Oliver had come alone; in fact, in Moscow he had played alone and opened up one session with a long cadenza that completely wiped everybody out."

During the Leningrad session a bass player told Taylor that he was there in the hope of playing with him. "I told him I had to leave at the crack of dawn to return to Moscow, so I couldn't stay. But the next day he was on the train bound for Moscow. He told me he had a gig with a sax player named Guttman, who was leaving for the States, and I ought to come by and hear him."

Taylor found the place, which he had heard was the only jazz club in Moscow. "I was also told by the club owner that I was the first American to play there; and it was on the Moscow television."

□

Prior to the Soviet trip, Taylor took a trio on a five-city tour of Uruguay, Argentina and Chile, as part of a jazz festival that also involved the Modern Jazz Quartet, Betty Carter and others.

"This was something new for them, although we met a lot of people who were quite knowledgeable. They're going to try to make it an annual event."

Another item on the Taylor agenda this year was a series of concerts involving his trio and several symphony orchestras, usually playing his own compositions. Among his best-known works is "Peaceful Warrior," dedicated to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and originally commissioned by the Atlanta Symphony. Other symphonies have performed his six-movement suite, "Make a Joyful Noise," a jazz worship service, and his Suite for Jazz Piano and Orchestra.

In between symphony gigs in Honolulu, New Haven, Norfolk and Omaha, Taylor managed to find time for a jazz-and-dance project. "Rod Rodgers has a dance company, and we talked about the fact that dancers really don't get to improvise much, the way jazz musicians do; we wanted to work out something where there could be some improvisation between the dancers and the musicians. He choreographed some Ellington pieces that I had arranged, and a few of my originals. We did this during Black History Month. One performance was given at the Apollo Theatre, where we had a special show for the Harlem School of the Arts."

In case he might find himself with five minutes to spare, Taylor has continued to fill such gaps with appearances in the media of which he has long been a part, radio and TV. He was the first black musician to be appointed director of the orchestra on a series ("The Subject Is Jazz," for NBC in 1958, with a young trumpeter named Doc Severinsen as one of his sidemen), the first black man to host a daily show on a major New York radio station, WNEW, and over the years has been music director on "That Was the Week That Was" and "The David Frost Show," and host or featured artist on everything from "Salute to Duke" and "Bravo Access" to "Captain Kangaroo."

Asked how he could possibly continue on "Sunday Morning," he said: "Somehow I work it into the schedule and do it about once a month. We did a piece on Benny Carter recently; I'm now working on a Dave Brubeck profile, and I've been assigned a couple of others.

"All these things like television and radio are the outgrowth of a decision I made a long time ago. I just decided that since I had had such rotten luck on records, I didn't want to have a career that was strictly dependent on record sales, as mine was in those days. [Taylor has made about 35 albums, but most are no longer available.]

"So I just gravitated toward radio and TV and documented all my activities that way. It's worked for me; it's kept me busy."

That, it's safe to assume, is the understatement of the year. □

A SENTIMENTAL DORSEY JOURNEY

By LEONARD FEATHER

8/15

The Hollywood Paladium opened on Halloween Eve of 1940, with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and his vocalists (Frank Sinatra, Connie Haines, the Pied Pipers). Last January, the night was more or less re-created for "Sentimental Swing: The Music of Tommy Dorsey," a lengthy KCET special (which will be interrupted by three eight-minute pledge breaks) airing at 8 tonight on Channel 28.

For anyone willing to accept nonjudgmentally the nostalgic values inherent in this presentation, "Sentimental Swing" will be a delight from intro to coda.

Produced by Jim Washburn and directed by Kip Walton, this is a slick show aimed at the kind of audience and age bracket that should make the pledge breaks very profitable. However, the only actual Dorsey alumni on hand are Buddy Morrow and Buddy Rich. The former, who played a trombone in the Dorsey band almost a half century ago, leads an orchestra of stunning mediocrity and is a less than flawless instrumentalist.

This was Buddy Rich's final TV appearance. He sat in with the band for a couple of numbers that succeeded splendidly in bringing it to life, and sang two tunes. When he changes places with Mel Torme, it is clear that Torme is more adept at the drums than Rich was as a singer.

Using a script by Dave Pettito, Torme as host reminisces agreeably (when Dorsey recorded "Song of India" Torme was 11). He also sings several numbers (most notably two Sy Oliver charts), and duets with Maureen McGovern, a superior Lena Horne-type cabaret singer who is not too well served by the orchestra's support. Jack Jones, hailed by Torme as "the greatest pure singer around today," is backed at one point by the L.A. Voices, a well-blended quintet that could have upgraded the show by doing more on its own.

The 1940s ambiance is well captured with shots of the dancers and by the use of some 22 songs associated with the band. Everybody joins in for what can be regarded as a grand finale or a dumb anticlimax, depending on your view of a ditty called "I'll Take Tallulah," which the Dorsey band played in the 1942 movie "Ship Ahoy."

Much is made of Dorsey's legendary stature as a bandleader, and indeed the facts do bear this out on some of his original records. But such pieces as "Marie" come off here with too little of their pristine vigor. Nostalgia, as Simone Signoret once remarked, ain't what it used to be.

"Sentimental Swing" also airs next Saturday at 4:05 p.m. on Channel 28, at 8 p.m. on Channel 15 and at 10:15 p.m. on Channel 50.

7/28

BARBARA MORRISON SINGS AT DONTE'S

By LEONARD FEATHER

Any vocalist working without preparation—which was apparently the case with Barbara Morrison at the International Assn. of Jazz Appreciation's monthly session Sunday at Donte's—operates under a handicap. However, Morrison brought with her a few sheets of music which enabled her to do more than simply go through the usual tired ritual of overworked standard tunes.

Her opening song, for example, was a relatively little known but lyrically sophisticated and musically attractive piece called "What Do You See in Her," for which pianist Art Hillery and his men provided a light bossa-nova beat.

Let us, in fact, praise Morrison for what she does not do. She doesn't belt, she avoids cliches, she has no truck with pseudo-soul or any currently fashionable trend. She is quite simply a jazz-oriented singer who applies a pleasing sound, visual charm and a contagious enthusiasm to such songs as "I Was Doing All Right" (one of George Gershwin's last compositions).

Toward the end of the set, in response to a request, she sang the blues. Clearly she has the roots and the feeling, but her choice of verses was a mishmash of lines from half a dozen sources that made no sense in terms of continuity. This number left room for a spirited alto saxophone solo by Curtis Peagler, who also played in an opening instrumental set with Hillery, bassist Stan Gilbert and drummer Johnny Kirkwood.

The event was a fund-raiser for the jazz appreciation group's worthy objective of presenting jazz appreciation classes in elementary and high schools, several of which have been lined up for the fall.

JAZZ

Despite filing for bankruptcy, the **Count Basie Orchestra** is in no danger of disbanding and has bookings through April, 1988, according to Aaron Woodward, the band's manager. Questions about the band's future have been circulating since Woodward—who is Basie's adopted son—last month filed a petition for reorganization under Chapter 11. It was disclosed that the orchestra was in debt to the Internal Revenue Service to the tune of $330,000. But Woodward said the IRS is the band's "only creditor," and said the band has European and Latin American tour dates set for this fall and winter.

NEWTON GROWS

James Newton, the composer and flutist who led a quartet Friday through Sunday at Catalina's in Hollywood, has come a long way since he was first reviewed here six years ago. In those days he was still playing "Autumn Leaves" and "Bags' Groove." Today he has his sights set on more complex objectives.

The first set Friday began with Newton's "Oblong," which he described as a blues, though it took no time at all to whirl away into many outward-bound variations. Rather than stay on the blues highway it veered onto the shoulders, ultimately achieving liftoff in a 21st-Century flight of fancy.

The next three compositions were arranged almost as a round—a Newton piece dedicated to Charles Mingus, a Mingus piece dedicated to Duke Ellington and an Ellington piece dedicated to nobody. In the first of these, pianist Kei Akagi embarked on a long, unaccompanied solo that began with lush, impressionistic chords, then edged into a swashbuckling atonal brand of free jazz before the bassist and drummer joined in to coax him back into a loping 4-4. It was an extraordinary performance, leaving no doubt that Akagi is a name to watch for.

For a while, Newton seemed more laid-back than usual; perhaps because of a recalcitrant sound system, his tone lacked its usual strength and confidence. But on "Black and Tan Fantasy," the arrangement achieved a delightful mixture of ancient and modern (Ellington wrote it in 1927), with Akagi playing old-timey triplets and Newton throwing in growls, leading to the traditional Chopin quote at the end.

More intense was the brooding "Virgin Jungle," a much later Ellington work, with Newton meeting the challenge of this more demanding piece and Akagi again mincing no notes.

Scott Colley revealed in his two solos that he is one of the best and brightest of the younger bass players. Sun Ship Pheus, a reliable section drummer, had a long and dramatic solo workout on "Virgin Jungle." Man for man, this is the most versatile and intriguing group Newton has yet fielded.

—L. F.

7/28

"Spontaneous Innovations." Bobby McFerrin. HBO/Cannon. $29.95. McFerrin was in fine form at the Aquarius in Hollywood in February, 1986. Using his voice variously as a scat vehicle, a bass line, and on a hilarious operatic duet in which he sings the baritone and soprano parts, he runs the vocal gamut almost unaided; however, the audience joins in here and there, and Wayne Shorter adds his soprano sax for "Wa[illegible]." Because of the tight camera work and good sound, McFerrin comes across even better as a video attraction than in person or on records. Information: (800) 327-4767. ★★½ —L.F.

"Jazz on a Summer's Day." Sony. $29.95. This is Bert Stern's exquisitely photographed memento of the sounds, crowds, streets, children, waters, birds and boats (during the America's Cup race) at Newport's 1958 jazz festival. All this and Jimmy Giuffre, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Stitt, Anita O'Day, George Shearing, Dinah Washington, Gerry Mulligan, Big Maybelle, Chico Hamilton, Eric Dolphy, Louis Armstrong duetting with Jack Teagarden, and, climaxing the power and glory of these 77 magical minutes, Mahalia Jackson singing the Lord's Prayer. This classic slice of American history is utterly indispensable. Information: (800) 847-416[illegible]

7/28 ONARD FEATHER

8/11/87

Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEWS

DUDLEY MOORE: PLAYING FOR PLEASURE

By LEONARD FEATHER

The occasional appearances of Dudley Moore as a musician offer a needed reminder of several mildly significant points, all of which surfaced during his two-night stint (Saturday and Sunday) at the Loa in Santa Monica.

First, it becomes immediately evident that music is no casual plaything for him, any more than it was when he earned a full-time living in the bands of John Dankworth and others in England. Moore's confident style and assured technique reflect an uninterrupted dedication to what has long since become a secondary profession.

Second, it is manifest that he plays for pleasure. When any top-echelon movie star works with a jazz trio in a relatively small nightclub, obviously he is motivated less by the sound of rustling dollar bills than by the reaction of an enthusiastic audience.

The applause was thoroughly earned as he wove his way through a series of standard songs, interrupted here and there by the predictably witty announcements and, once, by a comedy vocal.

As he has long made clear, Moore has an ongoing passion for the sound of the late Erroll Garner. His long strings of octave chords, the easygoing two-beat swing he brings to his medium tempos, leave no doubt that this was his special source of inspiration. With Garner gone more than 10 years, and with very few pianists offering more than occasional tributes, Moore's affection for him is not only welcome but logical, since humor was a central element in the Garner personality.

Moore is, however, by no means limited to secondhand artistry. His "Ruby" reflected a genuine affection for the ballad mood, which he established first with simple single-note lines, never straying far from the melody. His George Gershwin medley was well diversified, with a jaunty two-beat "Summertime," an unconventionally sedate "Lady Be Good" and Ray Brown easing into "Porgy" with a bowed bass solo.

Responding readily to a crowd reluctant to let him go, Moore announced a Beethoven sonata but proceeded to tear into a hilarious sendup of the "River Kwai March," complete with a dozen false endings. In response to cries of "Moore! Moore!" he removed tongue from cheek to offer, as a second encore, "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone."

Frank Severino's dependable drumming completed the trio, which, in a show of effort unusual for such a brief gig, obviously had taken the trouble to rehearse.

Incidentally, Moore has a pretty powerful following: Frank Sinatra dropped by to catch the second show Sunday after this reviewer had left.

26

CALENDAR

IRV LETOFSKY, Sunday Editor

Benny Carter: swinging septuagenarian. Page 5.

3 ART
BY WILLIAM WILSON
Some actresses could play their look-alikes in paintings.

4 A QUESTION OF RACE?
BY CONNIE JOHNSON
Why do black balladeers do so well while whites don't?

5 JAZZ
BY LEONARD FEATHER
At nearly 80, Benny Carter is still way ahead of the rest.

24 OUTTAKES

32 ROBERT BENTON
BY RODERICK MANN
The director goes to movies so he can steal scenes.

44 STAGE
BY ROBERT KOEHLER and JANICE ARKATOV
Is theater sexist? Well, yes and no.

54 DANCE
BY HARLOW ROBINSON
The Bolshoi's "Golden Age" comes to the Pavilion.

60 POP MUSIC
DENNIS McDOUGAL
Popping Off: It's OK to use hit tunes to sell merchandise.

Madonna: some girl. Page 61.

61 POP RECORDS
New LPs from Madonna, Def Leppard, Duane Eddy, others.

70 FACES
BY DENNIS HUNT
Ice T puts the rap on notions of violence.

84 POP EYE
BY PATRICK GOLDSTEIN
A British magazine's not-so-flattering look at the Boss.

92 FEIFFER

98 BENTO
BY LINDA BURUM
Japanese food for taking out, eating out or delivered.

99 RESTAURANTS
BY RUTH REICHL
Some antsy moments at catered Hollywood Bowl picnics.

103 LETTERS

LISTINGS OF EVENTS

Art	Page 96
Children	50
Comedy	75
Dance	56
Family Attractions	38
Jazz	58
Lectures	59
Movies	28
Museums	97
Music	56
Out of Town	73
Parental Film Guide	27
Performance Art	56
Pop Music	72
Radio Highlights	92
Stage	41

Listings for Calendar are accepted without charge if all information, including phone numbers, is received in writing 10 days before publication. Mail to Calendar Listings, Los Angeles Times, Times Mirror Square, Los Angeles 90053.

Listings are compiled by the following: ART by Zan Dubin; ATTRACTIONS by Beverley Scott; MOVIES by Sue Martin; POP MUSIC, OUT OF TOWN and COMEDY by Jon Matsumoto; JAZZ by Zan Stewart; STAGE and FOR CHILDREN by Lynne Heffley; MUSIC, DANCE and PERFORMANCE ART by Sandra James; LECTURES by Mitchell Rossi; RADIO by Frank Torrez.

The wheelchair symbol ♿ represents accessibility and facilities for the handicapped.

ADVERTISING SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

RADIO TODAY

KKGO

KKGO-FM, 105.1, plays jazz 24 hours a day, seven days a week, a format it has maintained for more than 28 years under the direction of owner Saul Levine. The station plays all forms of jazz, from traditional to contemporary.

As the official radio station of the Playboy Jazz Festival, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Jazz at the Bowl Series, the Queen Mary Jazz Festival and numerous local jazz events, KKGO broadcasts directly from the concert sites.

Other live-remote broadcasts from local venues have included "Jazz Tonight at the Biltmore Hotel," "Live from Bon Appetit" and "Live from the Vine Street Bar & Grill."

Special Sunday programming includes "The Jazz Show" with David Sanborn, "Big Band Jazz" with Ray Anthony and "Latin Jazz" with Enrique Soto, plus "The Leonard Feather Show," featuring this top jazz journalist.

Station promotions vary from ticket giveaways for jazz concerts to all-expense-paid vacations for two to such places as Fiji and, most recently, a French-themed promotion entitled "Jazz Paris."

KKGO broadcasts live from the 1987 Playboy Jazz Festival. Seated from left are KKGO Operations Manage Jeff Gehringer, Bill Cosby, saxophonist Teddy Edwards and KKGO disc jockeys Chuck Niles and Rodge Layng.

Los Angeles Times 8/27

JAZZ REVIEW

JANE HARVEY'S JOYFUL SONG CYCLE

By LEONARD FEATHER

In the worlds of standard popular music and vocal jazz, both of which Jane Harvey inhabits, repertoire can be half the battle. In fact, as she made inescapably clear Tuesday in the first night of her two-night stand at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, it can carry the night.

To jaded listeners tired of the same endless litany of standards, Harvey's song cycle was a joy in itself. Even when familiar tunes were used, they were attached in some ingenious manner to one or two others. Typically, Cy Coleman's "It's a Nice Face" led to the Gershwins' "They Can't Take That Away From Me," which in turn segued to "That Face" by Lew Spence. "Some Other Time" by Leonard Bernstein crossed over into Harold Arlen's "This Time the Dream's on Me," and Arlen's "Buds Won't Bud" served as a verse for "But Not for Me."

The most valuable factor in Harvey's selection of material, however, was the extent to which she leaned on Stephen Sondheim. Material from "Follies" and other shows, obscure tunes from a show that died in Philadelphia, all came under her sensitive scrutiny. These works, drawn from her forthcoming album, offered a dazzling reminder of the degree to which Sondheim's contribution has dominated the classic-pop scene in the last 20 years.

Harvey makes up with a latent intensity what she sometimes may lack in overt strength, though there were moments when her light-textured, little-girl quality was transformed to reveal surprising power. Emotionally, particularly in the medley of "In Buddy's Eyes" by Sondheim and "My Buddy" (Walter Donaldson, 1922), her gentle passion worked wonders with a receptive audience.

HAMILTON RETURNS WITH QUARTET OF YOUNG FACES

By LEONARD FEATHER

It was in his native Los Angeles that the drummer and composer Chico Hamilton launched his first jazz group, an innovative unit featuring cello and flute.

Absent from the Southland since 1978, he returned Friday, fronting a quartet of young musicians at Catalina's. Because of his reputation as a seeker of fresh talents, possibly more was expected of him than transpired.

The only side man of more than passing interest was Cary De Nigres, the guitarist. Though he follows in the wake of such Hamilton guitarists as Jim Hall, Gabor Szabo and Larry Coryell, De Nigres essentially is a product of the Lee Ritenour-Larry Carlton school, owing less to tradition than to current trends. His suspenseful closing cadenza on "Angel Eyes" compensated for what preceded it, a comedy slow motion routine in which Hamilton lifted his drumsticks and waited forever before hitting anything.

Hamilton's performance was an odd mixture of showmanship, admirable Jo Jones swing and intrusive overstatement. His solo with mallets in an original waltz displayed the finesse for which he has long been respected, but too often he was hobbled by silly devices. During one tune the quartet played a single note, staccato, then waited a few seconds and hit one again; this went on beyond the point of endurance.

Eric Person, on soprano and alto sax, fell short on intonation, tone quality and creativity. Given Hamilton's track record—his prior reed men included Buddy Collette, Paul Horn, Eric Dolphy and Charles Lloyd, among others—this was a major disappointment.

Reggie Washington's cavernous electric bass acted out its role effectively on one of the more rock-oriented originals.

Hamilton needs a personal group sound and an original artistic direction such as he had in earlier years, with exceptional musicians to express these concepts. Aside from De Nigres, none of these assets could be observed in this overgimmicky group.

JAZZ AND POP REVIEWS

GREAT AMERICAN CONCERT AT BOWL

By LEONARD FEATHER

Aaron Copland co-billed with Calloway? Morton Gould on the same program as "Minnie the Moocher"? Erich Kunzel conducting for Cab? What's going on here?

What went on during the startling series of non sequiturs Saturday at the Hollywood Bowl was the fifth annual Great American Concert, as odd a mixture of quasi-classical, pablum pop and pseudo-jazz as ever came down the musical pike. "Went up the pike" might be a better way to put it, since the evening ended with a spectacular display of fireworks (accompanied by three Sousa marches) that enabled its creator, the master pyrotechnician Gene Evans, to steal the honors from everyone.

In these days when we read so much about ends that allegedly justify means, the point was handily demonstrated: Whatever its artistic shortfall, the event drew a capacity crowd of 17,763.

The patriotic theme, expressed in several of the works performed, shared credit with the "Hi-De-Ho" veteran for its success; however, not much happened until Sportin' Life himself hit the stage after intermission, dazzling from his white hair down to the white tails and white shoes.

Although he will be 80 years old on Christmas day, neither age nor nostalgia could alone have been responsible for the ovation Calloway drew. It could have been the grace of his dancing—well, perhaps it's not quite dancing, but his movements were obviously irresistible. Of course, there is the unique sound of his voice—well, maybe the long high notes fell a bit short of the mark, but who else can scat with such titillating, semi-Hebraic charm? And who could balk at a "Porgy and Bess" medley, or "St. James' Infirmary" or "Stormy Weather"? At this point in his career, resistance to Calloway is all but un-American, and this was a very American evening.

It began blandly with Kunzel conducting the Philharmonic in Morton Gould's variations on "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" and Copland's variations on a Shaker tune from the ballet "Appalachian Spring" paired with "John Henry," billed as a "Railroad Ballad."

Boyde Hood, a cornetist from the orchestra's brass section, offered a correct but lifeless reading of Offenbach's "American Eagle Waltz," composed in 1876 and recently rediscovered. The selection from Richard Rodgers' scores for the film and TV documentary series "Victory at Sea" provided the orchestra with a much more attractive vehicle to which they devoted appropriate effort.

The program then went downhill fast with the triple trivia of a march medley. There is nothing more piquant (or is it poignant?) than a symphony orchestra trying to play jazz, as was made clear when the medley ended with "South Rampart Street Parade." (You were expecting maybe John Coltrane's "Giant Steps"?)

For those who came prepared simply to have a good time—whether for a picnic or "Porgy and Bess" or the pyrotechnics—it was, for the most part (and sweeping aside musical nit-picking), a fun evening. Let's face it, that's all that was intended.

Los Angeles Times 8/4/87

JAZZ REVIEWS

BILL BERRY FARES WELL AT WADSWORTH

By LEONARD FEATHER

The music of cornetist Bill Berry and his L.A. Big Band was the fare at the monthly free concert, partly sponsored by KKGO (which aired the second half of the program) at the Wadsworth Theater on Sunday.

Though its members live other lives and rarely come together as a group, this remains one of the most compelling and vital of all the many Southland jazz ensembles. It was worth sitting in the sticky, non-air-conditioned Wadsworth just to hear Marshal Royal bring his quasi-Johnny Hodges alto sax beauty to "Blood Count," his blustering beat to "Big Fat Alice's Blues."

Rich as the orchestra is in individuals—Frank Szabo playing powerful lead trumpet, Buster Cooper and Vince Prudente on trombones, and all five saxophonists—the essence of this band since its formation in 1971 has been its superbly authentic Ellington orientation. Because of this, there is a slight identity problem, but one that could easily be remedied.

Of the 20 tunes played, 13 were by Ellington or Billy Strayhorn. Three of the other seven were comedy vocals by Jack Sheldon (who also sang Ellington's "Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me"). One wonders why Berry doesn't go the whole hog and make this the definitive West Coast repository of the Ellington lode.

There would be no sacrifice of variety. Although many of the arrangements are Ellington's own, some are by Bob Ojeda, Nat Pierce and others, while "Things Ain't What they Used to Be" is a loose and happy head arrangement.

As for the non-Ellington pieces, regardless of their quality, somehow they seemed interruptive. To jump from "Warm Valley" to "America the Beautiful" or from "I Got It Bad" to "Cherokee" is not the most logical of moves.

Berry would be the first to grant that the music of his alma mater belongs to the ages. Let's hope that next time around he makes it official. It just may be the best idea for this best of all local bands.

JAZZ REVIEW 8/24

JOHNSON IN RIP-ROARING FORM IN FOUR-MAN SHOW

By LEONARD FEATHER

J. J. Johnson, active mainly as a studio composer in recent years, made a rare playing appearance Saturday at the Loa, where the capacity house accorded him the very warm welcome he deserved.

As a young trombonist in the bebop era, Johnson managed to adapt this technically demanding horn to the values that had been established by Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. Since then he has won more polls that the Southland has had earthquakes, and during this rip-roaring show it seemed as though he was about to start one of his own.

During the opening "Autumn Leaves" and the Parker standard "Confirmation," Johnson left no doubt that his always formidable chops are unimpaired. Bop trombone can reach a savage degree of intensity, as he made clear by ripping notes out in powerful, perfectly constructed lines.

Announcing that he plans to move back to his native Indianapolis, Johnson played an original composition named for a question he has had to answer too often of late: "Why Indianapolis? Why Not?" This began with a long, simmering solo introduction until the rhythm section exploded behind him.

This was by no means a one-man show. Seldom have four such mature artists expressed themselves so eloquently. Gene Harris, best known as a deeply rooted blues pianist, underwent a startling change of personality on the Johnson piece as he eased into an almost Tyner-like modal mode.

Ray Brown, whom Johnson called the Loa's head honcho and who leads the club's regular rhythm section, played a 10-minute unaccompanied solo on "Manha de Carnaval" that most classical bass players would have had difficulty reading, let alone improvising.

Mickey Roker was the soul of delicacy and rhythmic subtlety as he concentrated on the brushes in his "Soft Winds" solo.

After three numbers by his cohorts, Johnson returned to the bandstand in an improbable loan from the Dixielanders to show that even "The Saints," when you come right down to it, is just a set of chords like any other song and true grist for a bebopper's mill.

The meeting of these four minds was a flawless exercise in a brand of music that defies time: acoustic, mainstream, bop—call it what you will—it enables the participants to display both the freedom and the spontaneous creativity that has always characterized small group jazz at its best.

LACY ATK[illegible]

Pianist McCoy Tyner opens tonight at Vine St. Bar & Gril[illegible]

CHANGES PUT TYNER IN HARMONY WITH HIS WORK

By LEONARD FEATHER

Only a resentful rival could confuse McCoy Tyner's vigorous, lusty approach to the keyboard with a destructive intent. "There is a false rumor," Tyner said, "that I destroy pianos. I don't do that. The only ones I destroy are the bad ones."

After emerging from a lengthy stint with John Coltrane (1960-65), Tyner became, during the 1970s, the most influential pianist of his generation. For many years he has toured with his own group; tonight he opens at the Vine St. Bar & Grill with his regular trio lineup (Louis Hayes on drums, Avery Sharpe on bass).

Distilling elements from Africa, Brazil, the Middle East and the Orient, he has gone through many changes and feels that today he has reached a new level of achievement. "I'm satisfied with my work now," he said. "I think I'm playing with more maturity, and more rhythmically. I'm still basically a very rhythmic person."

Curiously, he points to his first solo album, "Inception" on Impulse, as his personal favorite, though he has advanced immeasurably in the 25 years since then. Today, his pulsing, often modal patterns, his rising and falling waves of coloristic creativity, are in their own class; he has become almost a one-man idiom.

His achievements over the years have been reflected in a series of accolades, such as the Down Beat "Jazzman of the Year" award in 1975, '76 and '77, and the readers' poll pick as No. 1 pianist annually from 1974 to 1980. His group also won four times in the Down Beat Critics' Poll. On records he won two "Album of the Year" prizes, though his relationship with the recording industry has been somewhat erratic.

"I started recording for Impulse, where I'd made all the albums with Coltrane," Tyner said. "Then I went with Blue Note, where I respected Alfred Lion as a producer with a real feeling for jazz. The best relationship of all, was with Milestone in the 1970s, where Orrin Keepnews, another great producer, gave me complete freedom." One of Tyner's best products during that period was "Four X Four," a two-record set with such guest soloists as Freddie Hubbard, Bobby Hutcherson, John Abercrombie and Arthur Blythe.

A less agreeable relationship was his incumbency at CBS in the early 1980s. Not surprisingly, he went through the "little fish in a big pond" experience. "Bruce Lundvall, who invited me over there, left soon afterward. Bruce had a great roster of jazz musicians, but when he left I soon found out that if you don't have a spokesman in the executive department, you're in trouble.

"They concentrated on Wynton Marsalis, working hard with him—and the heck with Miles Davis and everyone else; that's why Miles left and went with Warner Bros. That was a strange situation, so I left CBS and haven't been under contract to anyone since then, though I have been recording for Denon and other labels."

Tyner has occasionally worked with synthesizers and electric keyboards, but has reservations: "For coloration and background, electric instruments can be interesting, but I would never give up the acoustic piano."

Over the years Tyner has flexed his compositional muscles with larger ensembles, sometimes involving a string section. One of his best-remembered LPs along these lines is "Fly With the Wind" on Milestone, for which he composed and arranged almost all the music.

"Actually," he says, "I have a big band right now, at least occasionally. It's 14 strong, with tuba, French horn, three trumpets and four reeds; I do most of the writing. The orchestra made its debut in my hometown, Philadelphia, and we've had some wonderful reviews, but right now I only put it together three times a year to play at Fat Tuesday's in New York."

Tyner would like nothing more than to give the orchestra wider exposure, either through a short tour ("I wouldn't want the financial burden of keeping it together permanently") or an occasional concert at one of the jazz festivals. He expects to record the orchestra soon.

His ambitions do not end there. Incorporating the orchestra, he'd like to write a musical show. "It would be a jazz musical, like some of the things Duke Ellington did. There has been some interest expressed in this idea, especially in Europe. I'd like to write most of the lyrics myself, too—I did some lyrics for one of the CBS albums.

"It will be a hard job—it might take a whole year to put it all together—but I like to think of it as another challenge that has to be dealt with. You know, you have to keep moving on."

8/16/87

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

By LEONARD FEATHER

"AT HOME." Janis Siegel. Atlantic 81748. Siegel reveals here what her Manhattan Transfer membership has never quite concealed: that she has the individual prerequisites for a solo album.

Marvin Gaye's "Trouble Man" is a blockbuster of a tension builder. A great minor key mood, bits of vocal overdubbing, Mitchell Forman on synthesizer and David Sanborn on alto sax add up to a powerful opener. Bob Dorough's "Small Day Tomorrow" and the old Helen Humes blues "Million Dollar Secret" (the latter with Branford Marsalis on tenor) reveal two other, and wholly different, aspects of Siegel's personality.

"Black Coffee," though overproduced, has its moments. "From Vienna With Love," a ballad credited to Friedrich Gulda and Jon Hendricks, makes effective use of a cello.

That's five good cuts out of nine. Counterbalancing them are "Bob White" and "Rhythm in My Nursery Rhymes," two 50-year-old songs, proving that yesterday's pop trivia are today's sad camp. "Night Trane" is a forgettable original. As for "Malibu," Siegel has done Benny Carter a disservice by fitting his beautiful melody with an indifferent lyric and a clumsy new title, "The Cruel Master of My Dreams." 3½ stars.

□

"DREAM." Susannah McCorkle. Pausa 7208. Forget those well-meaning reviews that compare McCorkle to Billie Holiday, whom she does not remotely resemble. She sounds like Susannah McCorkle, which is all that's needed. Two cuts here, Paul Simon's "Train in the Distance" and the Leiber-Stoller "Longings for a Simpler Time," are mini-masterpieces: superb melodies, poignant lyrics, sung by a woman who knows it all. "All of Me," with its vocalese adapted by the late King Pleasure and based on an Illinois Jacquet tenor sax solo, deserves special mention, as do an old Apollo Theater-type song called "Just for a Thrill" by Lil Armstrong, Cole Porter's "At Long Last Love" and Jobim's "Triste" sung in Portuguese and English. Splendid backing by a rhythm section, augmented by either Gene Bertoncini on guitar or Frank Wess on tenor sax. To all these virtues add McCorkle's warmth, spirit and versatility. Eureka! A 5-star album.

□

"FOUR FOR ALL." Sphere. Verve CD 831674-2. This adventurous acoustic quartet has branched out from a Thelonious Monk repertoire (only one of his songs is heard here) to a program largely drawn from the pens of its members: two tunes each by pianist Kenny Barron and bassist Buster Williams, one by saxophonist Charlie Rouse. Barron's "Baiana" typifies the group's collective mind set and broad range of moods—gentle, contemplative, quirky, jaunty. Williams' "Air Dance" and Ellington's "Melancholia" are heard on the CD version only. 4½ stars.

□

"QUARTET WEST." Charlie Haden. Verve 831 673. The bassist's new unit brings his old Ornette Coleman teammate, drummer Billy Higgins, together with Ernie Watts on saxes and Alan Broadbent, whose piano commands much of the attention; he swings unpretentiously and knows the value of space. Watts, on the other hand, tends to overexert himself. He is most at ease, switching from tenor to alto, in Strayhorn's "Passion Flower," one of two cuts omitted from the LP version. Haden has one solo bass cut that doesn't quite justify its 7½ minutes. Originals by Coleman, Pat Metheny, Haden and Charlie Parker help round out a commendable collection, closer to the mainstream than has been Haden's custom. 4 stars.

□

"THE PRESIDENT PLAYS." Lester Young/Oscar Peterson Trio. Verve 831 670. Exemplifying the advantages of CD over LP, the compact-disc version (61½ minutes) includes four cuts not on the album, actually five in effect, since there are two takes of "It Takes Two To Tango," an oddity in that Lester Young sings. He showed no more respect for lyrics, or for any other convention, than he had for the sound of the tenor sax when he revolutionized it in the Swing Era. This extremely casual series (apparently all 13 tunes were recorded in the same afternoon) sounds more like a rehearsal at times, yet the solos by Young, Peterson, Barney Kessel and the backing by Ray Brown and drummer J.C. Heard are virtually a definition of small group swing. 4 stars.

□

"LIFE FLIGHT." Freddie Hubbard. Blue Note 85139. In this Janus-faced album, Side 1 is another "Let's get Freddie to do something commercial" venture. He has been that route (and abandoned it) several times before, but on this occasion, with George Benson and Stanley Turrentine as guests, it comes off inoffensively. Side 2, with the trumpeter leading a straight-ahead quintet in two of his own works, achieves a splendid level of Hubbard heat in the title tune; after the placebo of Side 1, it's potent medicine. 3½ stars.

□

"MARIAN McPARTLAND PLAYS THE MUSIC OF BILLY STRAYHORN." Concord 326. Overshadowed by Duke Ellington, Strayhorn's genius has been inadequately recognized. In this quartet tribute (Jerry Dodgion, alto sax; Steve La Spina, bass; Joey Baron, drums), McPartland brings out the exquisite melodic grace of "After All," "Lush Life," "Isfahan" and others. Though she submerges her personality to Strayhorn's, the result is a triumph for all involved. A neat pace-changer is the tongue-in-chops version of "Take the A Train," for which Dodgion wrote a bop variant; in fact, the tune itself is heard only during the final chorus. 4½ stars.

□

"NOW YOU KNOW." Makoto Ozone. Columbia 40676. Using a group that varies from cut to cut and from two to five pieces, Ozone is more at ease in a relaxed love song such as "You Are in Love" than on the other tunes (all Ozone originals), in which the rather thin sounds of Steve Kujala's flute or John Abercrombie's guitar are added. Kujala, however, comes to life eloquently in the duo number "Passage." It is curious how far Ozone has moved from his earlier Oscar Peterson direction; nowadays he's closer to Bill Evans. 3 stars.

□

CATALINA BAR & GRILL—AN ISLAND FOR JAZZ BUFFS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Not many jazz club owners are glamorous. Few, in fact, are women. As for Romanian women who share a name with a local offshore island, the count is down to one. That's Catalina.

Yes, there *is* a Catalina—a tall, slender woman whose customers often express surprise that her club is not on an island, and that the name belongs to a real person.

"I was born in Bucharest," she said the other day, relaxing after a busy session on the phone dealing with food and drink supplies for her club, Catalina's Bar & Grill, 1640 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood.

"My maiden name was Catalina Catalui. I always liked music, but it wasn't easy to find jazz in Romania, although I did go to a Louis Armstrong concert there. We had Dizzy Gillespie too, and Woody Herman, but I didn't really learn about the whole scene until I came over here."

Emigrating was not easy. The man who is now Catalina's husband, Bob Popescu, defected in 1969, acquired his U.S. citizenship, then returned to Bucharest in 1975 to marry her. This enabled her to leave the country the following year as the wife of an American.

"We had our own business here in Los Angeles, a catering lunch truck. Later I worked for five years or so at Bullock's Wilshire; I was involved with food service and fine wines. Then we saw this restaurant on Cahuenga Boulevard, which looked so pretty, even though the location wasn't too great."

Using their experience with catering, Catalina and her husband opened the room as a restaurant in August of last year. Then several friends—among them Dennis Smith, the former KKGO disc jockey—pointed out that they were only a few doors up the street from Shelly's Manne Hole, the most popular jazz club of the 1960s.

LORI SHEPLER / Los Angeles Times

Catalina Popescu: "It wasn't easy to find jazz in Romania. . . ."

"We started thinking about doing something extra, using music [The Russian-American Jazz Connection will perform at the club tonight; the Pete Christleib Quartet, Thursday; and the Lew Tabackin Trio, Friday-Sunday]. It began modestly with just a piano bar, but then we decided to go into a regular band type of presentation.

"Buddy Collette was our first attraction, on Oct. 23, 1986. He's still a good friend. Slowly we found out about all the problems in booking talent: How to find musicians' phone numbers, whether to deal with them or their agents, and how to get people who haven't played in Los Angeles for a long time."

Catalina soon found a workable policy, alternating between local talent, for whom a door charge as low as $3 might be assessed, and major out-of-town names, whose price mandated a door tab up to $20.

"Our capacity is only 150 to 175 including the bar, but when we charged $20 for Dizzy Gillespie it was a profitable weekend. Benny Carter and Horace Silver were very successful. Our biggest week was with Ahmad Jamal, from every point of view—he has an audience that is very hungry for his music; also he's not only a great musician but a great human being. He'll be coming back in the winter."

A hurdle Catalina is trying to face is the reluctance of customers to accept the fact that this is a restaurant. "People think of a jazz room as some place they come to after having dinner elsewhere. It makes no sense, because they can come here and enjoy the entire evening and probably pay a lot less money. Our name is still Catalina's Bar & Grill."

An open secret in the success of the room has been her friendly relationship with the musicians. "We like to invite them to drop by if they're in town on a visit to see what the place is like. We've reached the point where a lot of musicians consider it a hangout room and drop by here to see their friends without even knowing who's performing.

"Bud Shank liked it so well that he told me this is the only room he will work in Los Angeles. Of course, it was costly to do what was needed to make musicians feel this way: an expensive new piano, a new sound system, a larger stage. But it all seems to be working out. Some months we lose or break even, other times we make a profit. I'm very happy to be this far ahead after less than a year."

Did she know, back in Bucharest, about the existence of an island bearing her name?

"I'd never heard of it in my life. But when I arrived, Bob was already settled in Los Angeles, and the first thing he did after I got here was hire a boat and take me for a trip—out to Catalina."

31

JAZZ REVIEWS

UNRECOGNIZABLE NIGHT AT THE BOWL

By LEONARD FEATHER

The jazz audience is substantial. That much was made clear when 17,572 of the faithful flocked to Hollywood Bowl on Wednesday. It is also less than infinitely sophisticated or knowledgeable, a fact that Herbie Hancock and Wynton Marsalis seemed not to take into account.

Marsalis, who has become one of the most publicized musicians of the past decade, was the principal culprit. Not that he played with less-than-admirable control, even occasionally with emotion; moreover, his group had a bonus in Charlie Rouse, of Thelonious Monk fame, on tenor sax.

Rouse, 63, was responsible for some of the most rewarding moments. A fluent, inventive product of the hard bop school, he seemed totally at ease alongside these products of a younger generation.

Nothing was announced, except at the very end, by which time it meant little for Marsalis to tell us what we had been listening to 15, 30 or 45 minutes earlier. Since none of his own compositions have yet become a standard, and since the other works (by his pianist Marcus Roberts and by Monk) were unfamiliar to most, it was not surprising that he suffered a substantial number of walkouts.

Marsalis needs to play at least a couple of standards. Even the closing tune, which began with a long muted trumpet solo, was unrecognizable as "Cherokee" until, toward the end, Roberts played a few bars of the melody. Marsalis then said the tune was made famous by Charlie Parker, who in fact never made a record called "Cherokee." It was made famous by Charlie Barnet.

This was not a night for well-informed announcements. Earlier, Hancock had opened with "Limehouse Blues" after telling us he had no idea who wrote it. (Composed by Philip Braham in 1922, it has been a jazz standard ever since.) But Hancock's variations, and his support of Ron Carter on bass and Tony Williams on drums, turned the pop antique into a vital new work.

After asking the audience if it would rather hear "Maiden Voyage" or "Dolphin Dance," Hancock embarked on a long, clever mix of preparation and improvisation that made almost no use of those themes. After Carter's "Loose Change" and Williams' "Sister Cheryl," Hancock said: "Now, for some Irving Berlin." If any Berlin work was played, it remained fiendishly well disguised. Perhaps Hancock thought Berlin composed Cole Porter's "Just One of Those Things," which the trio did play a few minutes later.

Hancock's chops are in fine shape; it is clear that his jazz and fusion bags are not mutually exclusive. Still, when intermission came, you were somehow left wondering: Is that all there is to a Hancock set?

John McLaughlin opened the evening with a modest series of Flamenco-oriented duo performances in which his guitar interacted well with Jonas Hellborg's double-necked bass.

8/28/87

HOMETECH

TURN-ONS AND TURN-OFFS IN CURRENT HOME ENTERTAINMENT RELEASES

"The Jazz Life: Art Blakey."

Sony. $29.95. This edition of Blakey's Jazz Messengers shows that 1981 was a vintage year. Wynton Marsalis, then 19, was his musical director, boldly assertive on the original tunes (no titles or composers are named), warmly affecting on "My Ship." Branford Marsalis, then playing alto sax, and Charles Pierce on tenor rounded out the front line in this intensely engaging 60-minute session, climaxed by the indomitable leader in a solo explosion. Admirable sound and inventive camera work, all live at Seventh Avenue South in New York. Information: (212) 757-4990.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Los Angeles Times Aug. 23 (syndicated)

JAZZ

ELLINGTONIA GAINING STATURE, STATUE

By LEONARD FEATHER

Thirteen years have gone by since Edward Kennedy Ellington died, yet his figure today looms larger than ever on the world music scene. Not only jazz groups but also pop artists are using Ellington medleys as staples of their repertoire.

Ellington left such a vast recorded legacy that new gems are constantly being discovered. This week five compact discs, under the umbrella title "Duke Ellington: The Private Collection," containing more than five hours of previously unreleased material, were issued by LMR records.

RCA has transferred to CD (6287-RB) one of the greatest Ellington albums of all, "And His Mother Called Him Bill," a set of compositions by Billy Strayhorn, recorded by Ellington shortly after the death in 1967 of his perennial associate composer.

In fact, along with the Ellington boom, there is a corollary surge of posthumous interest in Strayhorn. In addition to the RCA album, two new sets of Strayhorn's music have just been released: one by pianist Marian McPartland on Concord CJ 326 (reviewed here last week), and another by fluegelhornist Art Farmer, "Something to Live For" (Contemporary C14029).

Ellington is even on the best-seller charts, probably for the first time ever. "Digital Duke," recorded by an all-star band with Branford Marsalis, Eddie Daniels, Clark Terry, Louis Bellson and others, directed by Mercer Ellington for GRP Records, has been on the jazz lists for seven weeks and at last report had reached the No. 3 slot.

Duke Ellington: standing tall on the charts and with proposed Central Park sculpture.

Most remarkably, Ellington in the near future will be standing tall not only in the charts but quite visibly in New York's Central Park, where a 20-foot-tall statue of him, crafted by L.A. sculptor Robert Graham (perhaps best known locally for his Olympic Gateway commission in 1984), will be placed at 110th Street and Fifth Avenue. The statue will show Ellington, on a platform atop three columns, in a typical pose, standing at the keyboard, his right hand raised to conduct, his left hand playing.

Ellington will thus become the first jazz artist ever to be commemorated in this manner in the city where he leaped to fame almost 60 years ago. "It's all part of a logical pattern," says Mercer Ellington, who now leads the latest incarnation of the Ellington band. "Pop is taking his place alongside Gershwin and the other giants, partly because a whole new generation is becoming conscious of his music. There are millions of young adults, 20 to 30, who were just kids when he died, and their growing awareness is contributing to the new wave of interest.

"I've seen the evidence at first-hand. When we begin to play 'Sophisticated Lady,' people of all ages recognize it and start applauding. A couple of nights ago, we played at a theater in Milburn, N.J., to a sold-out house and there was a standing ovation for the orchestra."

The Ellington statue project stems from the vision of Bobby Short, the singer and pianist, thanks to whose dedication the Duke Ellington [illegible] came into being.

"I've been an Ellington fan almost all my life," Short said recently in an telephone interview from his summer home in the South of France. "I met him when I was 11, at his manager's office, when I was the boy-prodigy pianist. He played me the score for his new Cotton Club show, and I was thrilled beyond belief.

"Years later, I moved to California and lived with Harold Brown, the brother of Duke's trombonist Lawrence Brown, so I became a part of the Ellington family. I knew Strayhorn well, and I was crazy about Ivie Anderson, Duke's singer, and mingled with the whole band.

"It occurred to me some years ago that right here on the Riviera we have a bust of Sidney Bechet in Juan les Pins, and in Nice, at the Jardins de Cimiez where the jazz festival takes place every year, they unveiled a bust of Louis Armstrong in 1974, with Princess Grace attending the ceremony—she worked with Louis in 'High Society.'

"It just didn't seem right that we have nothing like this for Duke in our own country. I went to my attorney and arranged to form a nonprofit memorial fund. A friend in California recommended Robert Graham as the best representational sculptor around and a great fan of Ellington."

Everyone involved with the Ellington project thinks big; among [illegible]aham, who informed [illegible]e statue (to be sculpt-[illegible]ze) will cost over

CALENDAR

IRV LETOFSKY,

Siedah Garrett: big break. Page 74.

3 POETRY
BY NANCY SHIFFRIN
Southland poets making high art out of pop culture.

4 RESTAURANTS
BY MAX JACOBSON
A look at some of the upscale chain restaurants.

17 OUTTAKES

18 FILM 'DEVELOPMENT'
BY ANNA McDONNELL
Women who work in the murky world of development.

20 STAR PRODUCERS
BY JENNIFER FOOTE
Female reps of Hollywood superstar women have the clout.

22 ROOM AT THE BOTTOM

38 CRITIC'S NOTES
BY SHEILA BENSON
New movies with social comment.

44 STAGE
BY DAN SULLIVAN
A view of three summer shows in understudy city.

56 MUSIC/DANCE
BY RANDY LEWIS
Merchandising is a big seller and revenue generator.

Duke Ellington: enduring. Page 62.

62 JAZZ
BY LEONARD FEATHER
Ellingtonia is still going strong.

64 POP MUSIC
BY ROBERT HILBURN
Songwriter Dave Alvin: Who figured he could sing?

"We're already a third of the way there, what with individual contributions and a fund-raiser we held in New York," Short said. "On my birthday, Sept. 15, I'll be bringing my trio out West for another big fund-raiser at the Beverly Wilshire."

This gala cabaret and supper party, chaired by Quincy Jones and Joe Smith, will not exactly aim at hoi polloi; the price will be $250 a head and, given the room's capacity of 600, Short hopes to be close to the halfway mark by the time he heads back to New York, where he will take part in yet another fund-raiser Oct. 19 at Avery Fisher Hall, with Jessye Norman and the Amherst Saxophone Quartet.

That Ellington's likeness will be prominently on view as a reminder of his contribution to the arts in this century is welcome news; still, valuable though these tributes are, the most important reminder of all is the music itself. Following are the details about the previously mentioned albums:

□

"STUDIO SESSIONS: CHICAGO, 1956." LMR CD 83000 (40 West 57th St., New York 10019). One need only listen to the first couple of cuts to be reminded that Ellington's was the greatest jazz orchestra ever, particularly during the years 1939-1970. The clarity of sound is amazing on this pre-stereo

volume. Of the 15 tunes, only six are familiar ("Jump for Joy," "Satin Doll"), but even these are heard in versions totally different from those previously released. Of the others, six are variations on the blues form, which Ellington used endlessly. "Do Not Disturb" is an unknown ballad that could have become a standard had Duke introduced it instead of leaving it, along with so many other masterpieces, on the shelf. 5 stars.

□

"DANCE SESSIONS: CALIFORNIA, 1958." LMR CD 83001. Taped at a dance date the band played at Travis Air Force Base, this too has its incandescent moments, but time is wasted on arrangements written by outsiders ("Stomping at the Savoy," "One O'Clock Jump") and expendable vocals; somebody even sings "Autumn Leaves" in French. Moreover, Johnny Hodges and Cat Anderson had taken the night off. If you can't afford all five sets, this is the first one to skip. 3½ stars.

□

"STUDIO SESSIONS: NEW YORK, 1962." LMR 83002. Again there are two unctuous vocals, but in a sense this is the most fascinating set of all, since all but a couple of the instrumental tracks are unknown. The full band is heard on only eight of the 16 numbers; the brass section is absent on the rest, but Ellington's incomparable sax team is in full flower, and Paul Gonsalves' tenor, toward whom these sessions were heavily tilted, is magnificently framed at all tempos, from "Take It Slow" (with the composer, Strayhorn, at the piano) to the thunderbolt-paced "E.S.P." 4½ stars.

□

"STUDIO SESSIONS: NEW YORK, 1963." LMR CD 83003. Only four full band items out of 16, listing heavily toward Ray Nance's superbly stylized cornet. Again there are new treatments of very early works, plus several unfamiliar pieces, along with the original version of Strayhorn's "Isfahan" played by Johnny Hodges. No vocals. 4 stars.

□

"THE SUITES." LMR CD 83004. "The Degas Suite" consists of a dozen fragments from a score written by Ellington for a 1968 film that was abandoned when funds ran out. Played by 10 members of the orchestra, this shows how skillfully Ellington adapted himself to the medium, inspired by the drawings and paintings of Degas (Ellington gave up a career in painting to become a musician). The rest of this CD comprises fascinating bits and pieces from Duke's score for a ballet, "The River," not intended for release in this form although, as annotator Stanley Dance points out, they offer enlightening glimpses of the composer's sketchbook, blueprints on which the ballet was eventually built. By now (1970), Ellington was experimenting with sounds he had seldom used, such as flute, xylophone and timpani. 5 stars. □

PASS AT LE BOUVIER'S

Is everybody down and out in Beverly Hills?

If not, how does one explain that the presence Friday at Le Bouvier's Beverly Hills Saloon of Joe Pass, who has packed the great concert halls of the world, attracted half a house?

It was not the happiest of occasions for the guitarist, playing the first evening of a two-night stand. Still suffering from jet lag after arriving from Germany, hampered by sound problems (particularly toward the end of the set when he was joined by Pat Senatore on bass and John Nolan on drums), Pass nevertheless was not far from optimum form.

His perfect transitions from chordal rungs to fleet single note lines from deft finger work to plectrum passages and back, were displayed in a casually chosen set of standards and blues, interspersed with Brazilian songs by Milton Nascimento and Ivan Lins.

One devastating interlude was

9/31

an informal blues-with-a-bridge theme flight at such a frantic pa and with such dazzling celeri that Pass, possessor of a dry sen of humor, followed it with a coup of anecdotes about the mechanics of playing fast.

Speed, of course, has never been his main objective. Such ballads as "I'm Glad There Is You" furnished reminders of his striking harmonic imagination.

As Pass closed with another no-notes-barred foray, this time on Sonny Rollins' "Oleo," it was possible to infer that he was not unhappy about bringing the performance to a close. Given the circumstances, he could hardly be blamed.

—LEONARD FEATHER

with a receptive audience.

9/1

"Great Original Performances 1927-1934." Fats Waller. BBC. Originally recorded for RCA (12 cuts) and CBS (four), this collection has been subjected to a process whereby, we are told, an engineer has found a system that converts early 78s to high-quality (simulated) stereo. Well, maybe. Anyhow, on the best cuts it doesn't matter, since two are piano solos, two self-accompanied vocals and two pipe-organ solos. Waller's originality was time-proof. The small groups surrounding him were uneven; it is odd to hear violins sawing away alongside Waller, Benny Goodman and Muggsy Spanier in the band of Ted ("Is Everybody Happy?") Lewis. Also heard from, briefly: Jack Teagarden, Coleman Hawkins, Red Allen.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Thursday, August 27, 1987

JANE HARVEY'S JOYFUL SONG CYCLE

JAZZ REVIEW

By LEONARD FEATHER

In the worlds of standard popular music and vocal jazz, both of which Jane Harvey inhabits, repertoire can be half the battle. In fact, as she made inescapably clear Tuesday in the first night of her two-night stand at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, it can carry the night.

To jaded listeners tired of the same endless litany of standards, Harvey's song cycle was a joy in itself. Even when familiar tunes were used, they were attached in some ingenious manner to one or two others. Typically, Cy Coleman's "It's a Nice Face" led to the Gershwins' "They Can't Take That Away From Me," which in turn segued to "That Face" by Lew Spence. "Some Other Time" by Leonard Bernstein crossed over into Harold Arlen's "This Time the Dream's on Me," and Arlen's "Buds Won't Bud" served as a verse for "But Not for Me."

The most valuable factor in Harvey's selection of material, however, was the extent to which she leaned on Stephen Sondheim. Material from "Follies" and other shows, obscure tunes from a show that died in Philadelphia, all came under her sensitive scrutiny. These works, drawn from her forthcoming album, offered a dazzling reminder of the degree to which Sondheim's contribution has dominated the classic-pop scene in the last 20 years.

Harvey makes up with a latent intensity what she sometimes may lack in overt strength, though there were moments when her light-textured, little-girl quality was transformed to reveal surprising power. Emotionally, particularly in the medley of "In Buddy's Eyes" by Sondheim and "My Buddy" (Walter Donaldson, 1922), her gentle passion worked wonders with a receptive audience.

JAZZ TIMES SEPT. 87

Remembering John Hammond

By LEONARD FEATHER

Photo by Lewis K. McMillan, Jr.

It is not easy to write objectively about John Hammond, who died July 10 in his New York apartment. He had been my friend longer than anyone else—since about 1933, when I was a teenaged fan just about to embark on a career in music, and John was already active on several fronts: producing records specially for release in England, writing for British publications such as *Gramophone* and *Melody Maker*, and fighting racism and anti-Semitism through word and deed.

His accomplishments were so significant that two entire phases of jazz history might never have evolved without his activism. Had he not helped Benny Goodman organize an orchestra, Benny might well have given up and returned to the life of a studio musician, and the swing phenomenon might have died before it was born. Had he not spent years tracking down Meade Lux Lewis, who had made an obscure record called "Honky Tonk Train Blues," the boogie-woogie piano trend, which became a national novelty in the late 1930s and produced some unforgettable recordings by Lewis, Pete Johnson, Albert Ammons and others, might also have gone unnoticed.

If John Hammond had to be summed up in two words, they would be enthusiasm and dedication. He studied at Hotchkiss for four years and at Yale for two, went to Julliard and became an accomplished violist. But by then he had discovered segregation and jazz. At 21 he persuaded Columbia Records to let him produce, without fee, a Fletcher Henderson band session. (Much of what he did in the early days paid nothing. When he ran a brief series of radio shows on WEVD he paid famous musicians—Art Tatum, Benny Carter, Chu Berry, Charlie Barnet—$10 out of his own pocket for each broadcast. The series was dropped abruptly when John and the black musicians who had been ordered to use the freight elevator picketed the station.)

To defy segregation in any form in those days was to be branded as a radical. John was called a communist, despite his differences with the separatist party line; he was called a "nigger lover." He went south to report on the notorious trial of the nine black Scottsboro boys for the *Nation* and the *New Republic*.

When I arrived in New York on my first visit from England, John was at the dock to meet me; within hours he had wisked me off to the Apollo (where I met a failing Bessie Smith) and the Savoy, where we heard Teddy Hill's band with Roy Eldridge and Chu Berry.

His careers as civil rights worker and record producer (along with a certain amount of newspaper and magazine writing through the late 1950s) never conflicted and often converged. He seemed to take special pleasure in bringing black and white musicians together, and undoubtedly encouraged a perhaps reluctant Benny Goodman when Teddy Wilson (and later Lionel Hampton) broke the color bar in jazz.

He had strong reservations about Duke Ellington, whom he felt was becoming too sophisticated in his music. This led to a series of bitter exchanges between John and me in print; my defense of Duke led to a five year gap during which John and I did not speak. In 1949 my wife and John's wife Esme brought the four of us together, the differences were resolved and we became closer friends than ever.

John's ear was uncanny. I still marvel that the ears that detected potential in Basie, Holiday, Teddy Wilson, Charlie Christian and countless other jazz artists. He could also hear the voice of the future in Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

He was not often behind the times, though his Army service kept him from being in on the birth of bebop, and for a while he opposed it bitterly. In one strange statement he called it "a collection of nauseating cliches, repeated ad infinitum." But later he recorded, among other boppers, the Bud Powell-influenced jazz piano of Friedrich Gulda, and he became an admirer of Dizzy Gillespie.

John was the kind of person who invariably knew the right people for the right situation at the right time. When a shoe salesman from New Jersey, Barney Josephson, wanted to start a new, interracial night club, John became the unpaid talent consultant who brought Billie Holiday, Teddy Wilson, Frankie Newton and the boogie-woogie pianists in o Cafe Society. Josephson's club on Sheridan Square was the first in which black and white New Yorkers could mingle unselfconsciously both as performers and customers.

When, over dinner one night in 1954, we discussed the lack of an American reference book on jazz, John told me about a publisher he knew. A couple of days later I was with him at the publisher's office, and plans were soon drawn up for what became *the Encyclopedia of Jazz*.

He had two sons, John Hammond the folk singer and Jason Hammond, by his first wife, and acquired a stepdaughter, Rosita Sarnoff, when he married Esme in 1949. Esme was a dedicated jazz fan; they shared many uplifting hours together listening to music. When Esme died last year we learned, posthumously, that she had received a tainted blood transfusion a few years earlier and had contracted AIDS. The loss of Esme, and, not long after, of Benny Goodman (who had married John's sister Alice in 1942) and Teddy Wilson, came at a time when he could not easily sustain such blows. He had already suffered several heart attacks or strokes. Yet he kept working, even though in the past few months he had been confined to a wheelchair and had to do all his business by telephone—or through his faithful associate, Mikie Harris.

He worked long and hard, mainly for Columbia records, though there were interludes spent with other companies—Keynote, Majestic, Mercury and Vanguard. After he reached the mandatory retirement age at 65 he remained with Columbia on an independent producer basis.

He was still working until the end. When my wife and I dropped in to see him in late June he told us about a New Age group, the Mark Kirkostis Quintet, which Mikie would produce for him.

John had always looked incredibly young; he never lost the crew cut, the cheerful look, the boisterous voice—except on that visit, when he talked hesitantly, almost in a whisper, and looked wan. But he remained mentally as alert as ever.

On the final day, just a couple of weeks after a visit I sensed would be the last, he was with Mikie and Rosita. "He was playing Billie Holiday's record of 'All of Me,'" Rosita told me later. "He went very comfortably. The record stopped at the exact moment John died." ■

LIFE IS A FESTIVAL

Photos by Mitchell Seidel

JVC and a Detour

By LEONARD FEATHER

For the past three summers Montreal has been a part of my Eastern festival schedule. (Its first three days overlap with the final weekend in New York.) True, many of the JVC Jazz Festival New York events are unique and valuable, but for a blend of music and ambiance, the French-Canadian city is, to borrow one of their adjectives, nonpareil.

Of the New York concerts that were not repeated in Montreal, the **American Jazz Orchestra's** evening at Cooper Union was of particular interest. This retrospective of the previous four concerts found the AJO switching personalities from Fletcher Henderson to Ellington to Lunceford to Basie, and from Thornhill to Benny Goodman to Benny Carter. The transitions moved smoothly; most soloists duplicated the spirit rather than the letter of the originals.

Frank Wess, in addition to playing lead alto, had to be **Benny Carter** on one tune and **Willie Smith** on another. **Cootie Williams** was variously represented by Virgil Jones and **Marvin Stamm.** The rhythm section did better on the Basie and Ellington pieces than on the Lunceford. Some of this music is timeless, some has dated.

How much it has dated was made doubly vivid by a visit to the Blue Note, the next night, to catch the **Toshiko Akiyoshi** ensemble illustrating everything that has happened to orchestral jazz in the past 50 years: broadened textures (flutes, piccolos etc.), use of such meters as 5/4, suspensions and changes of tempo, extended charts, varying keys and themes within the body of a work. Lew Tabackin was phenomenal both on flute and tenor. This is the ultimate in contemporary big band jazz.

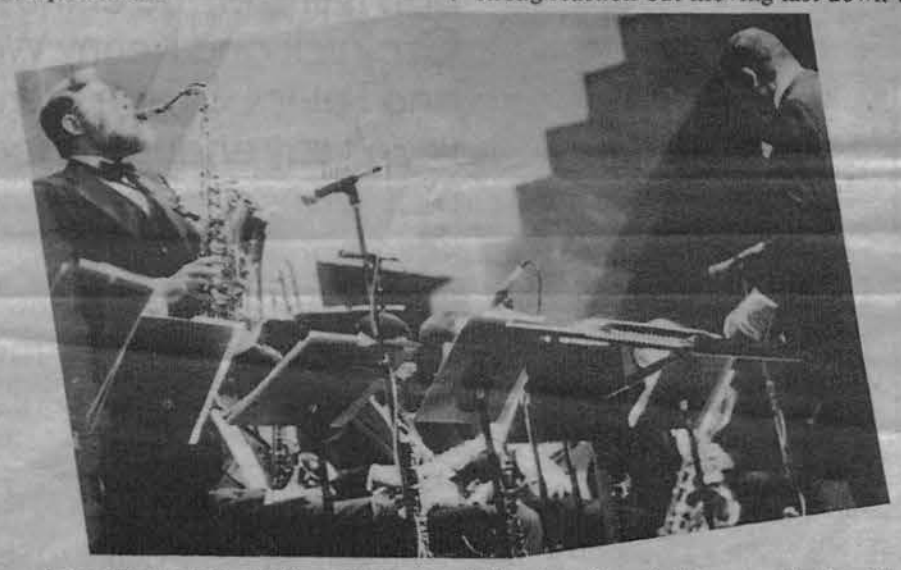
John Lewis, who had conducted the AJO (unnecessarily, it seemed, since all the music was in an unchanging 4/4), had his own evening, at Carnegie Hall, the first half with a 19 member string ensemble, the New York Chamber Symphony. Some of the works announced as new were in fact elaborations of old tunes such as "The Golden Striker" and "Django." The writing was skilfull but the results proved that the MJQ functions better with four men than with 23. In fact, the second half of the concert, with the quartet hitting a splendid groove on "Rockin' in Rhythm," proved the point handily.

George Shearing's Town Hall concert found him in unaccustomed company: first, a Dixieland group (he even changed a Jobim standard to "Dixiefinado"), which was good fun; then in tandem with Hank Jones for a superb series of piano duets, and finally in a slightly weak bebop groove for which **Dizzy Gillespie** seemed out of sorts, though **Jimmy Heath's** tenor and Shearing's own work compensated.

That Dizzy's lapse was only temporary became clear in his own Carnegie evening. Fronting a big band, he proved that such Birks work as "Emanon," "Night in Tunisia" and "Manteca" have stood the time test amazingly well. Diz, in much better form, closed with a wild workout for the entire trumpet section: **Wynton Marsalis** (sitting in for just this tune), **Glenn Drewes, Virgil Jones,** and **Earl Gardner,** plus **Jon Faddis,** whose brilliant, buoyant blasting totally stole the show from everyone. Marsalis had offered an earlier and slightly emotionless set of Gillespie tunes, coming to life only when he played a warmly affecting Marsalis original, "The Source."

The miserable sound system at Carnegie Hall came close to ruining this and other concerts. Ironically, next door at Weill Hall (formerly known as Carnegie Recital Hall), the piano solo concerts, notably those by Dick Hyman and Marian McPartland, came off splendidly with no amplification.

Hank Jones



Lew Tabackin, left, solos as John Lewis, right, conducts the American Jazz Orchestra in performance at the 1987 JVC Jazz Festival—New York.

On to Montreal:

Imagine the whole Times Square area blocked off to traffic; tens of thousands of fans milling around, listening to free concerts on sidewalk stages, or visiting one of several theatres given over for 10 days to jazz by world-class names. That is the counterpart to what happens in Montreal. Moreover, whereas some of the so-called New York concerts involved running uptown, downtown, crosstown, even out to arts centers an hour's commute away, Montreal's 150 concerts (round the clock from noon to 1 a.m.) are bunched into two areas, none more than a few blocks apart.

George Wein himself, appearing at the Theatre St. Denis with his Newport All Stars (Norris Turney, Buddy Tate, et al Cohn), generously told the audience: "This is one of the truly great festivals in the world today." Alain Simard, who produces it, must have been delighted; Wein has no connection with Montreal and was simply visiting as a pianist/leader.

The Montreal action involved even more frustrating overlaps than New York. If you wanted to catch Helen Merrill you had to miss Joe Williams; in order to hear the extraordinary Canadian pianist **Oliver Jones,** you passed up **Dave Brubeck** with the Montreal Symphony.

Highlights: **Terence Blanchard/Donald Harrison,** eloquent but prolix (does every tune have to last 20 minutes?), **Horace Silver** with a new, vital group, plus **Andy Bey's** vocals on early pieces of Silver; **Oliver Jones** leading a stunning quartet with **Fraser McPherson** on tenor, **Oliver Gannon** on guitar and **Michel Donato** on bass (this group should tour the U.S.), **Bobby McFerrin** drawing a riotously strong reaction but moving fast down the slippery slope to show-biz with his elongated audience participation gimmicks; inumerable Canadian combos, many at the outdoor concerts (I particularly liked the Bud Powell piano of **Andre White**); and too many others to enumerate (the rough count was 1000 musicians).

Sole disappointment: **Phineas Newborn Jr.**. After 20 years, it was a shock to hear him, a bare shadow of his old self, seemingly half-aware of what was happening, moving at a dirge-like pace through a few standards, with all the grace of a man climbing upstairs in the dark. The audience began walking out after the second tune and Newborn cut the concert short after 38 minutes. Sad, very sad indeed. His emotional illness has clearly taken its toll, though I was told he still has evenings of brilliance.

Finally, **Ranee Lee,** a Montreal resident (but New York born), in a presentation called "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill", at the Club Soda, was impressive both as singer (conveying the soul without trying to copy the sound) and as dramatic monologist, in an overlong but often moving narration.

All this and, as they say, much, much more, from **Dexter Gordon** (the night before I arrived) to Ella Fitzgerald (the night after I had to leave, very reluctantly, for Los Angeles).

Los Angeles Times AUG. 29

ERIC BOBO: A BEAT FOR HIS FATHER

By LEONARD FEATHER

Eric Bobo turned 20 on Thursday. The official celebration will take place Sunday at 6 p.m. when his six-man group takes to the stand at Birdland West in Long Beach, where he will be working the next several weekends.

Bobo's life has been busy, turbulent and challenging since, only weeks after his 16th birthday, he inherited leadership of the band led by his father, the late William Coriea, a.k.a. Willie Bobo, long a giant of Latin jazz.

"I promised myself that I'd keep on playing my dad's music for a year," young Bobo says. "But at the end of that year I was still in high school, struggling with grades, dealing with the pressures of getting older men in the band to accept me as leader. So I gave it up. I reorganized the group last summer, using two men from the old band and three younger cats.

"I had on-the-job training from the age of 5, when my dad would bring me on stage now and then at the Roxy, the Chandler Pavilion, Donte's. By my early teens I was working with him quite often; meanwhile I learned by listening to him—not only playing but talking. He'd play me all these fantastic records from his collection until late at night, and tell me about his experiences. We had a great rapport, and I'm so glad I was able to hear all those stories from him before he passed."

Willie Bobo, who could not read or write music, instilled in his son the importance of learning. Eric began studying at age 8; soon, he could play traps and all percussion, studied classical guitar and piano for a while, and boned up on theory and history.

Thurman Green, the trombonist who had long been Willie Bobo's musical director, was supportive of the heir to the Latin beat, but Eric soon found "it was too early. I was too inexperienced and scared stiff."

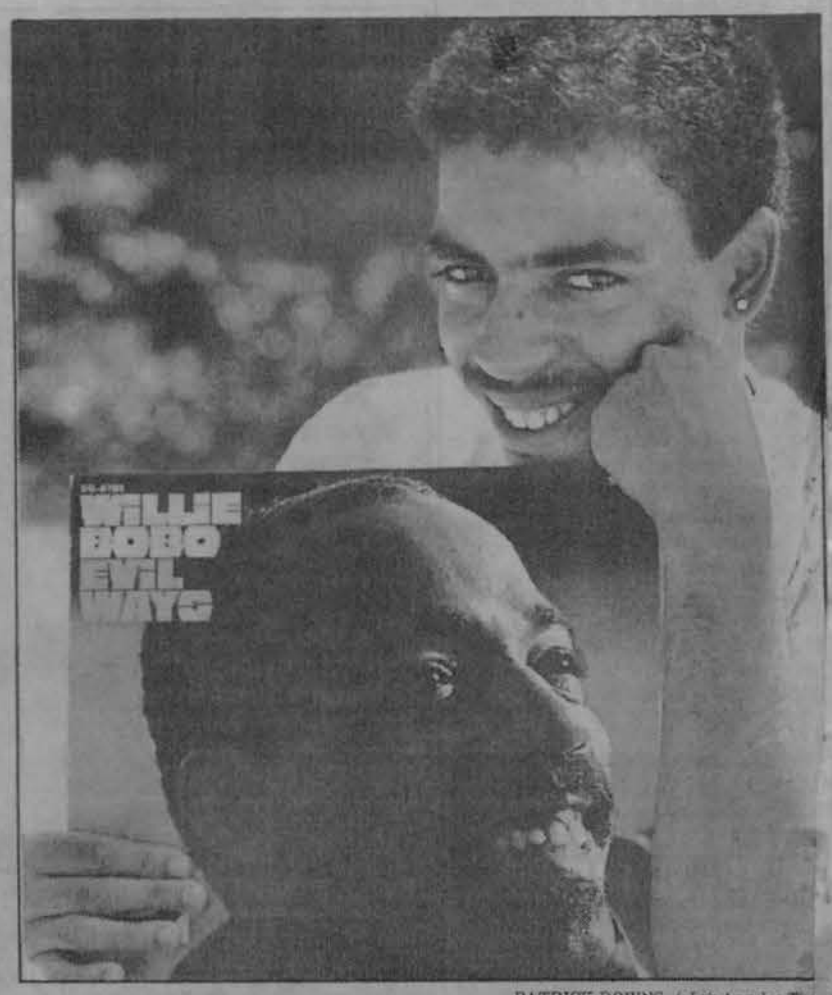
By the time he reorganized, Bobo had entered Cal State L.A. His experience there, playing both in the jazz band and the symphony orchestra, equipped him better for the responsibilities of leadership. He now writes many of the band's arrangements.

"We still play a medley of my dad's hits—things like 'Spanish Grease,' 'Evil Ways' and 'Fried Neck Bones.' The one number we won't do is 'Dindi,' which of course was his great vocal hit. That one is sacred, and we're not going to destroy his memory by trying to re-create it."

Eric Bobo (who still retains the legal name Coriea) tries as his father did to avoid the salsa stereotype. "We like to play things such as Miles Davis' 'Milestones,' John Coltrane's 'Impressions,' adding that Latin flavor to get just the right blend," he says.

"Right now, I'm more at ease than I've ever been. I'm really happy about the direction the band is taking, and I kind of think my father would be, too."

Please see ERIC BOBO, Page 6



PATRICK DOWNS / Los Angeles Tim

Jazz percussionist Eric Bobo with an album by his deceased fathe

JAZZ

NEW CHANT REVIVES OLD ARTISTRY IN ANDERSON

By LEONARD FEATHER

The number of today's chanteuses still practicing the art of singing pure, straight-from-the-roots jazz has dwindled down to a precious few. Among them, the woman most likely to be overlooked is Ernestine Anderson.

She is not often mentioned in the same breath with Ella Fitzgerald and Carmen McRae, though she belongs in their elite company. Her career has been a roller-coaster ride: up in the '50s, touring with Lionel Hampton's band and making her first hit record, ironically, on an album recorded with a Swedish band. Then down in the '60s, with scarcer jobs, a couple of mark-time years in Britain, followed by disillusionment, near suicidal depression and a series of day jobs. The fickle public had all but forgotten the winner of the 1959 Down Beat critics' poll.

Then she discovered chanting.

"It was in 1969," she said, during a recent engagement at Catalina's in Hollywood, "that I was introduced to the Nichiren Buddhist religion and to its chant, *Nam Myoho Renge Kyo*. Before long, everything began to turn around for me."

Essentially, she was just chanting for a chance—an opportunity to be heard. Gradually, things turned around—a call from Benny Carter for some recordings, a few dates at some of the better clubs and, in 1976, a recording contract with Concord Jazz records. Her Concord albums, released overseas, have led to extensive tours in Europe and Japan.

"I must have spent thousands of hours chanting *Nam Myoho Renge Kyo*," she says, "and it worked for me just as it has for Herbie Hancock and so many others. The chant means, roughly, devotion to the mystic laws of the universe. I have a good life now, good relationships, and things have just been getting better all the time."

A twin, who at one time was married to a twin—trumpeter Art Farmer—Anderson was born in Houston and moved with her family, at 16, to Seattle, where she now lives with her 89-year-old mother and 91-year-old father.

What sort of musical education was available to a young black girl growing up in Texas? Anderson was fortunate. She had a solid background in religious music; her grandmothers both sang in a Baptist choir, her father sang bass in a gospel quartet and Ernestine herself sang in a church group. She listened to Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker on the radio, but along with the be-bop indoctrination, she was imbued with a feeling for the blues—"My parents loved B. B. King and Dinah Washington."

Along with these influences there were the big bands that passed through Houston—Basie, Lunceford, Eckstine—preparing her for the jazz, pop and blues demands encountered when she worked with Lionel Hampton, Johnny Otis and, most recently, the Capp-Pierce Juggernaut band, with whom she recorded live at the Alleycat Bistro in Los Angeles for a forthcoming album.

Part of the joy of working stems from a travel schedule that would wear out a less resilient soul. "Would you believe this? A couple of months ago I went to Europe three times—to Holland, then back home to Seattle; to Finland, then home again, and to Germany, then back to Seattle a third time—all in a single month.

"It's worth it! In Europe they still have live radio, and I was on the air with this wonderful 60-piece orchestra in Holland, with strings, a great arranger, a fine conductor. It's a fantastic experience. Over here, I never get to do it on radio or TV."

Japan, where she has traveled yearly, was the scene of another rare experience a few weeks ago. "They had a jazz festival at a resort town, Madaro, up in the mountains, with Dizzy Gillespie and an amazing big band that he put together for a tour. I got to sing in a finale with the band and James Moody and Branford Marsalis. I sang with Mal Waldron's trio, Ellis Marsalis' trio and one night with Dizzy and a small group.

"I'm going to Monterey next month for the festival, but most of the big festivals now are in Europe or Japan. Next month I'm going back to Japan with the Concord Jazz All-Stars."

Transcending the language barrier, Anderson has turned one of her recordings into a virtual Espe-

9/1

JUST THE FACTS ON PETE KELLY

GARY FRIEDMAN / Los Angeles Times

Dick Cathcart, with horn in both pictures, was trumpeter for former Army buddy, Jack Webb, at left in bottom photo, in "Pete Kelly's Blues."

By LEONARD FEATHER

Trivia question: Who played the trumpet in the 1955 movie "Pete Kelly's Blues?"

The answer is not Jack Webb, who played the central character; it was Dick Cathcart of Woodland Hills who made the sounds that emerged from Webb's horn.

Cathcart and other original members of the movie band, Pete Kelly's Big 7, will perform Friday at the Embassy Theatre, co-presented by the Los Angeles Festival and the L. A. Classic Jazz Festival.

Cathcart and Webb go back a long way.

"Our relationship began when I was in the Army and met Jack when we were stationed at Gardner Field," Cathcart, 62, recalls. "This was during World War II, and even back then he was a great jazz fan who dreamed about making a movie some day with this character Pete Kelly."

Webb's idol was Bix Beiderbecke, but Cathcart hadn't heard the cornetist's recordings until, years later, Webb (then immersed in "Dragnet") invited Cathcart to his Hollywood home and played some Bix recordings for him.

Cathcart's involvement with traditional jazz began late. Born in Michigan City, Ind., he worked with big bands both before his Army service (Ray McKinley, Alvino Rey) and after (Bob Crosby, various radio bands, and staff work at MGM).

"A friend insisted on taking me to the Hangover on Vine Street to hear Red Nichols, and I wound up sitting in with him. I'd never played in that kind of a band, but it felt like going home," Cathcart says.

Jobs with Ben Pollack's small group and others prepared him for the next encounter with Webb. "He told me he'd never given up on that Pete Kelly idea, and we started doing it as a radio series in 1951. I continued to do a lot of studio jobs, but in '55 I took a leave of absence to work with him on the movie. That was a very successful venture, but then in 1958 we did a television series, and it lasted only 13 weeks."

Cathcart recalls that Webb gave him the cornet he had used on-screen in the movie. Aside from the acquisition of the horn, he managed to derive plenty of mileage out of his dual identity. Under the Pete Kelly pseudonym, he recorded for Capitol during the radio days, for RCA when the movie was made (with Webb doing the between-tracks narration for a Pete Kelly album), and for Warner Brothers around the time of the TV series.

After the various ventures with Webb came six years on the Lawrence Welk show ("He was really a jazz fan—we got to do a small band number on most of the shows"). But when he left Welk, Cathcart decided he had had it with performing.

What does a trumpet player do for a living when he quits playing the horn? Well, if his wife happens to be one of the Lennon Sisters (Peggy) and they are on the road with a show, he can be their musical coordinator. "That was around '69-'70; after that I did some odds and ends, but for quite a few years, I was out of music entirely."

Then in 1982 came a call from Sacramento to play the annual Dixieland Festival there. "I said I hadn't taken my horn out of its case in almost 14 years, but somehow I was talked into it, and I started woodshedding.

"When you begin again, it's doubly horrendous because it's worse than being a novice. You know what you're *supposed* to be able to do, but you can't do it. Well, somehow I got it together in time to play Sacramento, and as people found out I was playing again I got calls from Billy May and other old friends who hired me."

When the clarinetist Heinie Beau died recently, Cathcart took over his Sunday afternoon gigs at the Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica, still using Beau's name; in fact, he will direct a tribute to Beau Sunday at the Airport Marriott as part of the Classic Jazz Festival. Then there's also Pete Kelly's Big 7.

The turnover in the Pete Kelly band has been remarkably modest. At the Embassy Friday, Cathcart will have the identical rhythm section heard with him during the 1951 radio era: Ray Sherman, piano; George van Eps, guitar; Morty Corb, bass, and Nick Fatool, drums. The tenor sax veteran Eddie Miller, who joined him for the 1955 TV venture, also will be on hand, with clarinetist Mahlon Clark and trombonist Bob Havens completing the band. The concert will be aired live on KCRW (89.9 FM).

"I'm glad I started again," Cathcart says. "I'm going to keep on doing it as long as I'm having fun—isn't that what it's all about?"

9/8

HOME TECH

TURN-ONS AND TURN-OFFS IN CURRENT HOME ENTERTAINMENT RELEASES

"The Monterey Jazz Festival: Featuring Mel Torme, Woody Herman and Joe Williams." Sony. $29.95. Monterey used to be one of the great festivals, years ago, but its present paucity of fresh ideas is illustrated here. Despite some fine moments with Mel Torme and Joe Williams, too little is new or exciting. The Herman band must surely have played something more interesting than his duet with a cliche-ridden Japanese clarinetist, just as Williams probably sang some slow blues but is represented here mainly by several sound-alike up tempos. Sadly, this 1983 tape is far below the level of a superb earlier Monterey documentary that for unknown reasons was never released. Information: (212) 757-4990.

—LEONARD FEATHER

IRIS SCHNEIDER / Los Angeles Times

Singer Ernestine Anderson credits a Buddhist chant for turning around her life, career.

ranto blues hit. "Never Make Your Move Too Soon," the title number of an album she recorded seven years ago, is a tart, teasing tune with an elongated blues melody to which she has attached a rambling rap addressed to a cynical male—"A dude with a champagne taste and a Budweiser pocketbook," as she says in the monologue.

Living in Seattle (she moved back there some 10 years ago) has been a mixed blessing, though she has nothing but affection for the city. "It's clean, it's beautiful; we have a rain forest; you can drink the water; we have two 24-hour jazz radio stations nearby: one in Tacoma, the other in Bellevue.

"Musically, not enough is happening. We have only one jazz club, and there's definitely a need for another. We have a great jazz audience that's supportive of every function. But I don't work there often—I'm playing the club, Jazz Alley, next month, and I do the odd concert and a lot of benefits."

A few years ago, she was one of four partners who invested in her own club. "We called it Ernestine's. That was a mistake; if I ever get another club, I won't put my name on it, because I don't need the kind of publicity that happens if a place goes under.

"As a result of being a club owner myself, I now have a healthy respect for club owners. I can see from their point of view all the problems they face. It's 24-hour job, believe me, and you're constantly putting money into it, trying to buy the best talent. We had to give up after about two years—I needed to get back into more singing and traveling."

Cruising through a typical set of blues, sultry torch songs and up-tempo cookers, Anderson conveys a hypnotic and sensual presence that belies her 58 years, her three children and nine grandchildren.

Perhaps it can all be attributed to the right mixture of genes, social background and a strong dose of *Nam Myoho Renge Kyo*.

"Yes, I really do think chanting has kept me young. I don't worry about staying on the road, because I have that energy, that vital life force. It's a good feeling and I hope it won't ever leave me." □

9/4/87

Jazz trumpeter Miles Davis performs at Hollywood Bowl.

DAVIS & GORDON

TWO JAZZ THRONES ARE ROCKING

By LEONARD FEATHER

"The thrones are rocking to their fall—it is the twilight of the kings!"

So said early 20th-Century poet Annie Johnson Flint, anticipating with amazing prescience what happened Wednesday at Hollywood Bowl, when two respected musicians were heard in circumstances that left this longtime admirer frustrated and aggrieved.

In the case of Miles Davis it was less a matter of his ability than of the conditions in which he chooses to present himself.

But the matter of Dexter Gordon was something else again: Here was a once formidable talent no longer in command of the values that established him as the foremost tenor saxophonist of the bebop era.

Gordon's surroundings were in no way responsible. On the contrary, the four men who worked with him were stunningly effective. Cedar Walton at the piano, Buster Williams on bass and Billy Higgins on drums opened the program with a trio number that cooked from intro to coda. Then Bobby Hutcherson—no more eloquent vibraphonist can be found on

Please see JAZZ, Page 11

ANACLETO RAPPING / Los Angeles Times

Saxophonist Dexter Gordon during his Bowl appearance.

Los Angeles Times

JAZZ

Continued from Page 1

today's jazz scene—added a fourth element of virtuosity, playing one of his earliest and most engaging compositions, a blithe waltz entitled "Little B's Poem."

Gordon did not come on until 30 minutes into the concert. Although he remained on stage for 40 minutes, his total playing time was some 12 or 14 minutes in the course of three tunes, all from the score of " 'Round Midnight," the movie that earned him an Academy Award nomination as best actor.

It was common knowledge that Gordon had not worked for two or three years before he made the film, but his on-screen playing at least achieved a measure of the old spirit from time to time. Today little is left; shaky intonation, a dull sound probably produced by a very hard reed and a general lack of continuity and inspiration added up to a performance that brought to mind the waning days of other careers, particularly the latter day work of the great Coleman Hawkins.

Gordon, who talked very slowly and possibly was having trouble breathing, left enough space between his opening and closing solos to allow plenty of room for long workouts by the other men. In the closing "Rhythmaning," Hutcherson and Walton took flight with magnificent ease and Higgins covered himself with glory in a sensitive solo using the brushes.

Davis offered what has become, since his return to the scene in 1981, a predictable pattern, with fleeting moments of great beauty separated by long passages of great noise. The contest between his six men and the group backing Gordon was fascinating—sensitivity gave way to density, finesse yielded to volume, integrity to intensity.

Davis, wandering from trumpet to keyboard, played one or two brief, affecting, muted passages. His saxophonist, Kenny Garrett, is full of sound and fury. A guitarist named Foley played some whining blues. Michael Jackson's "Human Nature" was strictly pop music in contrast to the funk that prevailed during most of the hour.

The sheer, shattering, shockwave monotony became so wearing that by about 10:30 (the show ran until almost 11) the customers were walking out in droves. Would they have waited, say, if Davis had teamed up with Walton, Hutcherson, Higgins and Williams to play " 'Round Midnight"? It is hard to believe that he is not still capable of that sort of mastery, which he gave us for so many magical years.

9/6/87

JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

"What does contemporary mean? What does fusion mean? What is jazz?' asks Chick Corea, who plays in various musical idioms.

JAZZ

YOU MAY CATEGORIZE IT, BUT COREA DISPUTES IT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Chick Corea left his Los Angeles home last week with two contrasting projects on his schedule: a strictly acoustic two-piano summit meeting in Zurich with the classical and jazz pianist Friedrich Gulda, followed by a tour of Brazil, Argentina and Chile with the group known as his Elektric Band.

It's all in the game for Corea, who during a 25-year career has touched every base: sideman with Latin bands (Willie Bobo, Mongo Santamaria), electric keyboard expert on several Miles Davis albums, leader of his own abstract group Circle, followed by the Return to Forever band that moved from Brazilian-flavored jazz to high-decibel rock.

There have been countless other ventures, in jazz and classical music and various other idioms, but Corea today as always is leery of being categorized.

"The idea of playing with Gulda is fun," he said. "Actually, not long ago, when Gulda was doing concerts with Joe Zawinul, I ran into him in Munich and he asked me to join them. We played every kind of duet—me and Gulda, Joe and Gulda, me and Joe—as well as some trio things, and it was on nationwide German TV." (In 1984, Corea and Gulda recorded Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra.)

The group had gone ahead and was planning to meet him for the first leg of the 2½-week tour.

Corea's sidemen in the Elektric Band came to him with powerful credentials. John Patitucci, who plays every kind of electric and acoustic bass, has achieved more at 27 than most bassists can in a lifetime. Dave Weckl, at one time one of New York's hottest studio drummers, brings just the right mix of sonic richness and percussive nuances.

"We began as a trio in April of '85, but in 1986 we did a whole year with a quartet, adding this brilliant guitarist, Frank Gambale, who's 28. But I felt a certain lyrical and melodic element was missing, and we just added Eric Marienthal, a very lyrical blower from Sacramento. His saxophone makes me feel comfortable both in the writing and playing departments. I'm going to be able to write for the next record with a known quantity." (The quintet's first recording, "Light Years," is on GRP Records GRD 9546 and is selling briskly.)

This quintet marks one of the most potentially successful ventures in the eclectic wanderings of Corea, of whom it has been said that he doesn't just think big, he thinks broad. Moreover, he does not predicate his actions in terms of any specific musical nomenclature.

"For a long time," he pointed out, "the word *jazz* itself carried a negative connotation. The record companies tended to equate it with a limited marketing possibility. Well, some of us wanted to be promoted like a good commercial product along with the Pepsi-Colas and Colgate toothpastes of the world, so we avoided the word *jazz*. Today, though, this has changed; the word has become more respectable than it was when I had Return to Forever."

In recent months, the jazz sales charts in the trade magazine Billboard have been subdivided, with separate listings for what is called "Contemporary Jazz" and "Jazz," the former devoted to fusion, electric, often pop-oriented music and the latter to standard acoustic sounds. Corea finds this no less confusing.

"What does contemporary mean? According to the dictionary it means happening now. So this means that Twisted Sister's latest record is contemporary music! And what does fusion mean? I mean, Wynton Marsalis' music is fusion, isn't it? He's using old, traditional orchestration but he fuses this element with a new kind of piece, or he may employ a very classic tone on a strictly 1980s work, which is another sort of fusion."

A few months ago, Corea played several concerts with vibraphonist Gary Burton (who plays an amplified instrument, the vibraphone, but is considered a part of the acoustic, non-fusion jazz scene). "One of our gigs," Corea recalls, "was in Glasgow, where the Modern Jazz Quartet was on the bill.

"Man, what a classic bunch the four of them are! Now there you go with two more wild terms. They use *modern* but this is essentially the same kind of music they established in 1952. And they call it *jazz* but it's mostly written music. They played this beautiful suite of John Lewis', and even Percy Heath's little bass figures and ostinatos were written out, so is that jazz?"

"My feeling is that we should eliminate any word that has an association with time, such as modern or contemporary. I remember, years ago, contemporary used to mean 'tending toward the avant-garde'; now it means almost the opposite, 'leaning to pop'!

"Let's face it, when we're dealing with terminology we don't have a real set of standard dictionary definitions. It's all right to use a term like *electric jazz* for the group I have now, or *acoustic jazz*, because that has a clear significance, but beyond that point I draw the line."

Because of his use of various keyboards and synthesizers, and Patitucci's similar adaptability on various electric and acoustic basses, the Corea quintet is one of the most chameleonic in its field. He may call it *electric jazz*, may even spell it with a *K* (for kopyright reasons?), but it doesn't stop there.

"I don't want to pursue this false concept of two different worlds. In fact, I'm planning to incorporate the acoustic piano into my electric band.

"I'll tell you something that wasn't broadly publicized, because it's not our main focus, but we did a tour earlier this year with a trio, acoustically—just myself, John and Dave, playing some dates in Italy."

Why would he want to do that when the three of them were known as the Elektric Band?

"Sometimes," said Corea, "there are very practical reasons for accepting offers that won't accommodate an electric group. The difference is simple—it's 10,000 pounds of gear and a crew of 15!" □

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*—Leonard Feather, Jazz Critic, Los Angeles Times**

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**Leonard Feather is a jazz critic for the Los Angeles Times, Washington Post News Service and author of "The Jazz Years—Earwitness to an Era."*

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9/13/87

JAZZ

GREAT DATE FOR CALLENDER

By LEONARD FEATHER

George (Red) Callender speaks gently and carries a big bass—when he is not hauling a tuba.

Due to be honored today at the Los Angeles Jazz Society's fifth annual Jazz Tribute and Awards Concert (the Hyatt Regency, 5 p.m.), Callender has long been known as a musician for all occasions, yet performers with a strong jazz association tend to lose their other images.

Callender has worked with hundreds of jazz giants (Armstrong, Tatum, Ellington, Hampton, Kenton, Shearing, Gillespie, Parker and Goodman come to mind). Less well-known is the fact that he has also made polka albums with Lawrence Welk, played on innumerable sound tracks (from "New Orleans" to "The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings") and spent many years playing many kinds of music on TV shows starring Carol Burnett, Danny Kaye, Jonathan Winters and Flip Wilson.

Among his many compositions have been the pop song "Primrose Lane," a hit in 1958, and "Pastel," best known through Erroll Garner's recording. He has worked as an A&R man, writing and arranging for blues dates with Percy Mayfield, Jesse Belvin and Linda Hopkins; wrote an autobiography, "Unfinished Dream," published last year in England, and was one of the first black musicians to break down the segregation in the Hollywood studios in the 1950s.

Callender owes his red hair (graying now), his freckles and light brown eyes to ancestors who left Scotland in the 18th Century and settled in the Caribbean.

After 50 years in the big time (he made his first recording session at 19 with Louis Armstrong in 1937), Callender has earned the right, and the resources, to choose his jobs carefully, confining himself to those he finds most stimulating. Last week, he was back in Los Angeles after a doubly felicitous tour of Europe.

"I've played with some great artists in my day," he said, "but I never had an experience like this. The tour began with the 'Satchmo Legacy' group—Freddie Hubbard leading a band that re-created some of the early Louis Armstrong Hot Five records, although we wound up playing some of Freddie's own music too.

"Freddie had a slight identity problem at first with the Armstrong pieces, but he soon overcame it. Everyone in this group—Curtis Fuller on trombone, Alvin Batiste on clarinet, Kirk Lightsey on piano, Al Casey on guitar and Alan Dawson on drums—was so amazing.

"Freddie was the youngest guy at 49 and Al Casey the oldest at 71—he played with Fats Waller in the '30s. There was no conflict of styles; we all jelled beautifully. In the middle of each show I'd switch to tuba, playing Ellington things.

"For 10 days, I shuttled back and forth between this band and the Jimmy & Jeannie Cheatham Blues Band from San Diego. They had Clora Bryant on trumpet and Jimmy Noone Jr. on clarinet."

Great experiences and great ovations abounded, along with pleasant chance encounters. In Stockholm, an old friend, expatriate bassist Red Mitchell, showed up and the two Reds played an impromptu recital with Mitchell on piano.

"We wound up doing two albums in London with the Satchmo group," Callender said. "Mike Hennessey, the British writer who had the idea for the tour, saw to it that I was provided with a fine bass. The London visit was the highlight of the whole tour."

The Callenders live in a rambling home in Saugus, 35 miles from Los Angeles. The commuting, which takes place almost daily, does not bother Red; he is relieved to have a stable home. In 1971, he and his wife, then a flight instructor, were living in Sylmar. One morning they awakened at 6 to find their house collapsing; they were at the epicenter of the earthquake.

Callender has survived problems that were psychological rather than physical. Living in Los Angeles from 1936, he soon found out how racism could restrict his career. All the best studio jobs went to the members of the white Local 47 of the American Federation of Musicians; musicians in the all-black Local 767 were confined largely to nightclubs, where their scale was far below that paid to whites.

Eventually, with the help of a few black and white activists, the two locals were merged; meanwhile, Callender found a good friend in the late composer-conductor Jerry Fielding, who ignored the color line in giving him a job on the "Life of Riley" TV series. "From then on, everything blossomed for me," Callender says. (Fielding, though, ran into problems with right-wingers who equated liberalism with communism; he received hate mail, was summoned before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, took the Fifth Amendment and was blacklisted for several years.)

LORI SHEPLER / Los Angeles Times

Tuba player/bassist George (Red) Callendar will be honored at the L.A. Jazz Society's annual Jazz Tribute and Awards Concert.

Working in the studios in those days had its overtones of tension. "I'm sure there was a lot of resentment among white musicians who thought we were taking 'their' jobs. But on the other hand, there were people like Fielding who really extended themselves."

Callender credits much of his success in the studios to his ability to double on tuba. "The first important job I had, with Louis Armstrong, was offered to me because I could double. At least one-third of my studio career was due to this; often I'd get calls for both instruments, or for tuba only.

"I came up toward the end of the brass-bass era. Some of the very early big bands like Ellington and Fletcher Henderson used tuba instead of string bass; Paul Whiteman had both. Some of the other bands, like Isham Jones and Coon-Sanders, had tubas, and I was fascinated to hear them.

"In fact, I had a natural affinity for the bass horn, and studied it at the Bordentown School band in New Jersey. During summer vacation I got my first gigs, riding up and down the Jersey Shore in a beat-up old bus as tuba player with Banjo Bernie's Band. I was 13. That same year I bought a string bass [illegible] sisted on taking lessons from him. "I charged him $2 a lesson, and afterward we'd go out together and buy ice cream. He practiced endlessly and said he wanted to be the world's greatest bass player. That was Charles Mingus.

Callender's own major source of inspiration, a little later, was Jimmy Blanton, the young revolutionary who came to town with the Duke Ellington Orchestra. "I was working with the drummer Lee Young, Lester Young's brother, at Billy Berg's on Vine Street, when Blanton came in and borrowed my bass for a jam session. Lionel Hampton and Charlie Christian were playing too, and I'd never heard such music in my life."

Despite a wealth of such memories, Callender remains steadfastly future-oriented. Asked why he had titled his book "Unfinished Dream," he said: "It's not that I'm frustrated about anything. To this day, I'm learning about music. Basically, that's why I'm still playing. I want to be a better musician—that's the dream." □

9/28/87

JAZZ REVIEW

PETERSON'S CLOSE TO PERFECTION

By LEONARD FEATHER

Oscar Peterson, who appeared Saturday at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, is a one-man definition of jazz. As much as any living artist on any instrument, he symbolizes the values that long ago established this music as the unique improvisatory, rhythmically created art form it has been from the start.

Like Art Tatum, with whom he was so often compared in his early years, Peterson can take a long familiar pop song or jazz standard and invest it with a fresh and totally personal character. This was apparent from the opening strains of "The More I See You," a 1945 movie song that would have no particular character or value in lesser hands.

Typically, he will play an opening chorus out of tempo, then move into a steady beat such as the contagious, loping moderato he brought to "Make Someone Happy." At times his ornamentations became excessive. During "Lush Life," the rococo interstices between phrases seemed almost longer than the melody itself.

After a few solo numbers Peterson introduced his current bassist, a fellow Toronto musician named David Young, whose sound is clear and whose rhythmic support was strong, though his solos seldom achieved the inventive spirit of some of his predecessors.

Peterson's talent as a composer was well represented. His "Love Ballade" is a work of sheer classical beauty. "Gentle Waltz" lived up to its title, and "Sushi" swung lightly from introduction to coda.

After intermission a surprise materialized in the person of Harry (Sweets) Edison. The veteran trumpeter, substituting for Joe

Please see OSCAR, Page 5

SON

and none of the complexity that had occasionally marked the first hour.

Edison too epitomizes jazz in all its innovative splendor. Playing muted more often than open horn, he brought to "Wave" and "Mean to Me" the mixture of down home cooking and humor (often involving quotes from unlikely sources) that has long been his trademark.

The audience responded with an ovation so powerful that after the trio had left the stage Peterson, reappeared to seal off the show with a wistful unaccompanied "Body and Soul." It was the perfect wind down to an evening not too far short of overall perfection.

41

MEL MELCON

Carmen McRae sings and Modern Jazz Quartet bass player Percy Heath casts glance at pianist John Lewis at Bowl on Wednesday night.

JAZZ REVIEW

FOUR BOWL ACTS END CONCERT SERIES

By LEONARD FEATHER

It's all over at Hollywood Bowl, at least for the jazz segment of the local populace. The final "Jazz at the Bowl" concert of the season Wednesday night produced the only disappointing turnout in what has been a successful series. Only 10,709 of the faithful showed up despite a program that offered four attractions.

The trouble was that none of the four is a blockbuster box-office draw, though Bobby McFerrin seems a sure bet to become one. The singer was reviewed here not long ago at the Montreal Jazz Festival. Essentially, this was the same show with his familiar bag of mostly wordless tricks: bass and percussion sound effects, underwater noises, Donald Duck distortions, operatic and folk song satire and, inevitably, enough sing-along to keep the audience happy.

An amazing performer who moves with a dancer's grace, McFerrin is becoming more of a crowd pleaser and less of a musical artist as his popularity shoots up and his creative values edge down.

Also reviewed here recently at Carnegie Hall was the Modern Jazz Quartet. This was your typical MJQ run-through of mostly long-familiar material, played with impeccable professionalism. Someone seemed to have lighted a fire under John Lewis, whose piano has rarely been as swingingly incisive.

Carmen McRae was her customary, sometimes hard-edged yet occasionally gentle and soothing self. Her take-it-or-leave-it jazz contralto has been sui generis for decades, as has her proclivity for using songs that have meaning for her simply because her idol, Billie Holiday, recorded them long ago—such songs as "Getting Some Fun Out of Life."

There was compensation, however, in the rhythmic delights of "No More Blues," the tenderness of "Love Dance" and the predictable yet still compelling story of "Guess Who I Saw Today," which she assured us she was the first to sing. (Take that, Nancy Wilson.)

McRae's set was so short—a little more than 30 minutes—that she never even got around to playing the piano. Her accompaniment, with Eric Gunnison at the keyboard, reflected her usual good taste in the selection of a sideman.

The opening set promised more than it delivered. On paper the L.A. Jazz Legends looked like a failure-proof group, yet these respected veterans came unprepared to conquer.

With Harry Edison's trumpet joined by the saxophones of Red Holloway and Teddy Edwards, some fresh and exciting ideas, and at least a couple of well-planned compositions, could have been organized. Instead, the men acted as if this were just another set at Donte's.

Except for the last couple of numbers, when they joined up for a few blues riffs, the seven men were never on stage playing together; each number was a solo showcase, ranging from pleasant (pianist Jimmy Rowles in "Grooveyard") to desultory (Edwards in a lackluster "Lady Be Good"). Holloway managed to get some spirit into his blues piece, but the little heat he engendered was not enough to keep the flame from flickering out.

THE BLUES OF BIG BAND LEADER HERMAN

United Press International

Ailing Woody Herman as he appeared in Boston last year.

By LEONARD FEATHER

The crisis that erupted over the weekend with a report of Woody Herman's imminent eviction from his home (a situation that was resolved Tuesday) was many years in the making. More than 20 years have gone by since the big band leader unwittingly fell into a financial abyss that has only deepened with the decades, because of interest and penalties on the tax money he owes.

The last publicly released figure for Herman's indebtedness to the Internal Revenue Service was about $1.6 million. It is unknown, however, how much, if any, of that has been whittled away over the years.

Much of Herman's story has been well known in music circles since he told it to Gene Lees for use in his Jazzletter, a widely read monthly publication written and circulated by Lees, the critic and songwriter.

Following is an excerpt from Jazzletter, dated June, 1984: "Woody's manager for years was a corpulent diabetic ex-Marine . . . named Abe Turchin . . . we all loved Abe and said he had a heart of gold. And we all knew he gambled. But after all, it was his money. Or was it? For two years during the late 1960s, Abe gambled away the money Woody thought had been paid to the government for his income taxes. When the government stepped in, it was discovered that Abe hadn't filed withholding on the musicians, either.

"And Woody was held responsible for all of it. He came close to going to prison. And he has been

Please see HERMAN, Page 6

HERMAN

Continued from Page 1

paying those taxes ever since. He told Artie Shaw a year or two ago, 'I'll be on the road the rest of my life.' "

Herman's daughter, Ingrid Herman Reese, told much the same story. "The only inaccuracies," she says, "were that his name was Turchen, not Turchin, and there were three years, not two, for which taxes were not paid—1964, 1965 and 1966."

Turchen apparently died about three years ago. He is still listed in the Sioux City, Iowa, phone directory. A woman at his number who refused to identify herself said Wednesday that Turchen was "not responsible" for Herman's troubles. She said Turchen was dead. "Woody Herman knew what was going on," said the woman, who claimed she was Turchen's sister-in-law. "It's a big lie. Goodby.")

That Herman may have been victimized by careless management, does not, in the government's eyes, reduce his responsibility for the back taxes, however.

"His employees' money was not forwarded to us," said IRS spokesperson Lowell Langers. "It wasn't just a simple question of his own personal taxes."

So the IRS seized his four-bedroom, three-bath Hollywood Hills home and sold it for $99,800 in 1985 to satisfy some of that debt, Langers said.

Herman's family claims the house is now worth about $400,000. According to county records, Herman bought the house from actor Humphrey Bogart in 1946 for $56,000.

During his 1984 interview, critic Lees asked Herman how he had the courage to keep on in the light of his difficulties. Herman's answer was: "Two reasons. The first is my love of music. The second is that I have an overwhelming need to make a living."

Speaking of his debt to the IRS, he said: "It gets bigger. My lawyer is trying to get a settlement for once and for all, and I am hoping he will."

A figure behind the scenes is the prominent Washington lawyer Leonard Garment, who as a young man had played saxophone and worked briefly in the Woody Herman orchestra. Garment told this reporter Monday: "There are good lawyers working on this case and we are trying to have something worked out." Garment has been in direct contact with Ingrid Herman Reese.

Woody Herman's world today is short on finances and health but infinitely long on friendships. Ironically, the news about his latest trauma and the outpouring of sympathy it evoked, coupled with offers of assistance, brought about the first notable improvement in his condition and spirits. He was able to talk on the telephone to Frank Sinatra, and to express his gratitude to KKGO (the radio station whose owner, Saul Levine offered to pay off the overdue rental debt of four months for $4,600) and others who had rallied to his side.

The station has already set up an account for an Oct. 23 Woody Herman Tribute at the Wadsworth Theatre. The account has substantially increased with almost $4,000 in contributions from listeners, said Jeff Gehringer, operations manager at the station.

Though Herman by 1980 had had the IRS problem hanging over him more than a decade, he remained stubbornly philosophical, convinced that somehow things would work out and that his duty was to concentrate on his music. He was encouraged in this belief when plans were confirmed for the band to drop anchor at a "Woody Herman Room," adjacent to the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Orleans.

"We'll be spending 36 weeks a year at the same place," he said. "And I'll decide who replaces us when we're on the road. It will not only make my life easier, but it will do the same for the young men in the band."

The dream location took not much more than a year to turn into a nightmare. By late 1982, business at the room was in a slump and the hotel owners decided to abandon the project. Almost at the same time Charlotte Herman, the former dancer whom Woody Herman had married 46 years earlier, died after a long illness at the Hollywood hillside home the couple had bought from Bogart—the same home from which Herman was almost evicted Tuesday.

Soon it was back to the old routine for the so-called "Road Father," though he would no longer make his own way between one night stands; two years earlier he had fallen asleep at the wheel, incurring injuries that necessitated months of recovery.

Despite all these problems, there were bright interludes during the next four years. The orchestra by now was recording regularly for Concord Jazz, traveled successfully at home and abroad and last year celebrated, a little in advance, Herman's 50th anniversary as a band leader.

Contrary to popular belief, the orchestra has not disbanded. At times the classical clarinetist Richard Stoltzman has played as a guest soloist; saxophonist Frank Tiberi, a 20-year veteran of the Herman Herd, normally leads it now.

Clearly Woody Herman's difficulties are not yet over; but neither is his life in the only true home he has known for four decades, and neither is the life of the Thundering Herd that has been, for countless future stars, the ultimate finishing school of American music.

Times intern Jane Lieberman contributed to this story.

9/28/87

JAZZ REVIEW

AN UP, DOWN BENSON AT UNIVERSAL

By LEONARD FEATHER

It was the best of nights, it was the worst of nights. At a George Benson concert, the emotions are as mixed as the music he purveys.

Friday at the Universal Amphitheater Benson made his customary convincing first impression. Here is a guitarist who has it all: Rapid-fire Charlie Christian runs, bursts of seductive chording and a crisp sound that managed at times to rise above the hubbub behind him.

Benson now has a nine-piece band, directed by Randy Waldman. Only three members play horns, but combined with the sound and fury of two keyboards, two percussion, electric bass and a second guitar, they can concert a guitar specialty into a contest between soloist and accompanists.

In due course Benson put down his guitar and segued into what became primarily a vocal evening. Singing "Love Is Here Tonight,"

Please see BENSON, Page 8

10/3/87

JAZZ REVIEW

BILL HENDERSON GETS VOCAL

By LEONARD FEATHER

When his time is not taken up by movie and TV acting assignments, Bill Henderson remains capable of reminding his audiences that he is one of the few totally qualified male jazz singers still extant.

Thursday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, despite an attendance diminished by the earthquake, he rose above the circumstances to offer the best selected, most persuasively performed set this observer has heard in many years of Henderson-watching.

His timbre still has that oddly grainy quality that has always been a trademark, along with a strange, attractive vibrato that may recall the late Johnny Mercer.

Henderson's phrasing is virtually his own copyright. He tends to space certain words as if the syllables were separated by commas, even semicolons; yet everything winds up as a perfectly constructed sentence. This was particularly evident during "Señor Blues," in which the ominous minor theme by Horace Silver took on a character reminiscent of the original instrumental version.

His repertoire is by no means limited to jazz material. At the first show he cut a wide swath from Truman Capote and Harold Arlen ("A Sleepin' Bee") and Elton John ("Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word") to Jimmie Davis, a one-time governor of Louisiana who wrote "You Are My Sunshine" as his campaign song. It is doubtful that Davis' version was within hollering distance of Henderson's, which swung its way from gospel waltz to swinging four-beat, and from a ringing fortissimo to an almost whispered ending.

Central to his success were the arrangements, and the sensitivity with which they were performed, by Joe Parnello at the piano, with Roberto Miranda on bass and Ted Hawk on drums. It takes a little ingenuity to wind up a vocal performance not with the last notes sung, but with a gentle bass riff followed by a brief piano finale, which was the way things went on "I Wish You Love."

Henderson even incorporated the credits to his sidemen into a signoff blues. One can only hope that his dramatic gigs will not prevent him from keeping his vocal prowess in evidence on the jazz front. He closes at Vine St. tonight.

Los Angeles Times Sept. 27 1987 (syndicated)

MARISSA ROTH

Soprano saxophonist Jane Ira Bloom's first Columbia LP has brought her a nationwide audience.

JAZZ

BLOOM FINDS HER 'VOICE'

By LEONARD FEATHER

Jane Ira Bloom first made her way onto the jazz scene when, newly graduated from Yale Music School, she bought a ticket to the Women's Jazz Festival in Kansas City and sat in during a jam session.

That was in 1977. Those who heard her then (this reporter included) were immediately impressed. Time has borne out that first impression. Today, she is a Columbia recording artist (her first album for the label, "Modern Drama," is finally bringing her to a nationwide audience), and her writing credits include compositions for dance, theater and film.

What is most remarkable about Bloom is that her medium of expression is that ugly duckling of the reed family, the soprano sax, which she plays exclusively.

For many years, hardly anyone in jazz bothered with this horn. It was hard to play in tune. It tended to sound shrill. Even Sidney Bechet used it only as half of his arsenal (he also played clarinet). John Coltrane was known for his tenor saxophone work and continued to double when he took up the soprano.

"I feel the soprano sax is my personal voice," said Bloom, a 5-foot blonde whose sense of personal direction is as firm and assured as her brilliant performances. "I started out on alto, but for years I studied with a teacher, Joe Viola, who had a special feeling for the soprano, so I guess I picked it up from him.

"People ask me why I took up the saxophone, and I have the same answer Sonny Rollins gives: It was shiny. I was in the third grade when I saw one, and I just liked the look of it."

Born Jan. 12, 1955, in Newton, Mass., just outside Boston, Bloom lost no time building an all-around education. "I started writing music from the git-go, when I was really young, learning all about chord changes and improvising. When I got to college, I learned a lot of things an improviser can do besides chord changes—other musical parameters.

"My father's summer-camp business put me through college. They don't really have performance majors at Yale—you major in theory, history and composition—but I did my formative playing while I was there, at clubs in New Haven."

Yale, Bloom says, is not a place she went to with any idea of becoming a great musician. "I was interested in the world of ideas, of creativity."

She disagrees with the concept (expressed in an anecdote in the notes for her LP) that formal training can have a harmful effect on spontaneity and imagination: "Studying pushes your ideas further. A lot of the younger musicians now have come from college backgrounds. Not only that, I think a little philosophy or art history can enlighten any musician."

Bloom's influences, most of them detectable in her recorded work, were Rollins ("I met him when I was very young, and that made a big impression"), Eric Dolphy, Charlie Parker and "long periods of listening to Ornette Coleman. I didn't listen to an awful lot of John Coltrane until maybe later in high school."

The sexism that has often played a deleterious role in the careers of women musicians does not affect Bloom. As leader of her own group, she does not have to answer to males. "I've always found in any case that the people I work with relate well to me, musically and personally. They are responsive and never insensitive. I've been lucky that way."

An aspect of her "Modern Drama" album that is bound to stimulate comment is her ingenious use of electronics. On one tune, "Rapture of the Flat," a hilarious send-up of '50s sounds complete with doo-wop triplets, she becomes a one-woman reed section.

"At various points in the record I'm using a delay, a harmonizer—at my spontaneous control—and I turn them on and off at my whim with foot pedals. There's also a gizmo that my old bassist friend Kent McLagan devised.

"Kent is not only a great bassist but a mechanical engineer. He designed a velocity sensor, which measures the speed at which I move my body and translates it into changing the timbre of the saxophone, so you get a kind of silvery flourish and various other effects, depending on how fast I move physically."

"Visual music" may seem like an oxymoron, but in Bloom's case it becomes reality. Unless a video is made of "Modern Drama," the results can be heard but not seen in such tunes as "The Race" (dedicated to Shirley Muldowney, former world champion top fuel drag racer), "Cagney," the Latin-flavored "Overstars" and the startlingly lifelike "NFL," a title that led her to explain: "I'm an athletic person, a football fan by osmosis, through my father and my husband." (She is married to actor Joe Grifasi. The interview took place when she visited Los Angeles while he was shooting a film with Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin.)

Bloom's relationship with poetry in motion has extended to the scores she has performed for the Pilobolus Dance Theatre, the Yale Repertory Theatre and the former ARTS cable channel. She plans to enlarge her compositional scope, an objective that has been helped by the recent award of a composition/performance grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Helpful, too, is her familiarity with the men who interpreted her music for the new LP. "This isn't a pickup band at all. Fred Hersch, the pianist, was on an album I made for Enja in 1983. David Friedman, who plays vibes, marimba and percussion, has worked with me off and on since 1979. Ratzo Harris, the bassist, is another longtime associate, and Tom Rainey, the drummer, joined me in 1984." A central figure on two Latin-oriented tracks is percussionist Isidro Bobadilla, who began working with Bloom last year.

Many jazz artists who move from minor to major labels are under pressure to find a fast route to the commercial market. Bloom credits her executive producer, George Butler of CBS, with giving her a completely free hand. "I was the producer, and he felt confident in my determination to do what I thought was right. I'm so impassioned about what I'm trying to accomplish that I can't imagine having anyone tell me what direction to take.

"I tried to make every aspect of this record as tasteful and innovative and exciting as I could make it, from the music to the mixing to the cover art. I really put my all into it."

The evidence bears out her claims. Thanks to her dedication as a writer and her creative mastery as a soloist, Bloom may well be in the running next year when Grammy time rolls around. □

L.A. TIMES 9/20/87

9/20

JAZZ

A FESTIVE FAMILY REUNION

By LEONARD FEATHER

DENVER—Jazz festivals during the past decade have become a round-the-world, almost round-the-clock phenomenon. The summer season just ended has seen scores of them come and go, some boasting of the great number of musicians (sometimes as many as 1,000) and many claiming to represent a total picture of the jazz scene, from traditional to avant-garde.

There is, however, one event that manages, without any such impressive claims or figures, to maintain a personal character, on a more intimate level, that has made it the favorite venue for its participants. This is the annual jazz party staged here by Maddie and Dick Gibson, which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary with a three-day bash.

Not a single organized band played here. In fact, starting at noon Saturday, every 45 minutes during some 32 hours spread over three days, a different group appeared, drawn from a pool of 70 world-class musicians.

The joy of the party lies in its diversity. Dick Gibson is both a gourmet and a master chef, who may serve up, at any time during this 40-course banquet, anything from a quiet guitar duet by Joe Pass and Herb Ellis to a roaring set by a 17-piece orchestra, selected from the pool by the bassist John Clayton and using his arrangements.

The social and musical values overlap now more intimately than ever, because most of the participants are multiple repeaters. Of the 70 players, 37 brought their wives. Pianist Ralph Sutton, bassist Major

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

By LEONARD FEATHER

"DIANE SCHUUR & THE COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA." GRP GR 1039. *Power* is the key word here; the power of Schuur's not-always-mellow tones, and the power of the press hype that has attempted to establish her as *the* new jazz singer for the 1990s.

The lady does indeed have the makings of a first-class addition to the ranks, as is best evidenced on such ballads as "Travelin' Light" and "We'll Be Together Again." She does well with "You Can Have It," a song by Morgan Ames (who co-produced the album) and Frank Foster, who leads the band. Aretha Franklin's "Climbing Higher Mountains," a gospel-tinged piece, carries conviction, but she should never have tried "Every Day." The comparison with earlier versions is too obvious.

Schuur's problem is a tendency to overstate, as in the synthetic growls on "Travelin' Blues" and the anxiety attack a half-minute before the end of "I Just Found Out About Love." The less hard she tries, the better the results.

The CD version contains two extras, "Until I Met You" and "I Loves You Porgy." The notes by John S. Wilson are inaccurate (it is not true that Helen Humes never sang the blues with Basie) and uninformative. Who wrote the arrangements? Who played those trumpet, tenor and trombone solos?

Commercially, this will be a big record. The band kicks consistently. (The session was taped just three days before the death of guitarist Freddie Green.)

There is irony to the inclusion of Carmen Bradford in Schuur's long list of "thank you" credits. Bradford, who has been this orchestra's regular vocalist since before Basie died, has yet to record an album with the band. 3 stars.

□

"TIME WAS." Bud Powell Trio. RCA Bluebird 6367-2-RB CD. Powell (1924-66) was the star-crossed pianist on whose experiences the movie "'Round Midnight" was partly based. He was to be-bop piano what Charlie Parker was to the alto sax: the first inspired innovator. His best years are represented on other labels, mainly Blue Note. As the honest notes by Doug Ramsey concede, he was not at his peak during these 1956-57 dates for RCA ("Some of the tracks have the detachment of a lounge performer"), but there are several cuts in which Powell's energy and conviction return, mainly the original tunes, the be-bop standards ("Shaw Nuff," "Swedish Pastry") and George Shearing's "She" (Powell and Shearing were mutual admirers). Fine backing by George Duvivier on bass and Art Taylor on drums. 3 stars.

□

"VERSES." Wallace Roney. Muse MR 5335. A former Art Blakey sideman (who isn't?), the

Holley and drummer Bert Dahlander played at the first party, held in Aspen in 1963.

This reporter, having attending the last 17 events, has seen the jazzmen grow gray, plump, bald, unmarried and remarried, but not one has lost the creative power that brought him here originally. Of the 221 musicians hired by the Gibsons, 40 have died, but widowed friends like Mrs. Zoot Sims and Mrs. Trummy Young still attend.

Two first-time invitees this year were also the youngest players: Howard Alden, 28, a fast-rising guitarist who brought luminous new beauty to the old Billie Holiday hit "Some Other Spring," and James Morrison, an Australian who recently moved from Sydney to New York, who astonished everyone, playing multiphonics on the trombone, then alternating phrases on trumpet and trombone. Beyond doubt, he is tomorrow's jazz superstar.

At 24, Morrison is young enough to be the great-grandson of Doc Cheatham, who has preserved his trumpet technique and lyricism well into his 83rd year. Cheatham's perennial party piece is also his vocal specialty, "Manhattan," to which he sang four choruses of lyrics, two of which he says were added by Milton Berle.

Two other Cheathams, unrelated to Doc, were on hand as surprise guests. Jeannie Cheatham, the blues singer and pianist from San Diego, with her husband Jimmy, who plays bass trombone, sustained the blues mood that has been an underlying motif during much of the party.

Playing determined, rolling piano, a striking figure in her cherry red gown, Jeannie Cheatham sang "Cherry Red" and some of her own home-brewed blues with an ad hoc band that included three Angelenos—Snooky Young on trumpet, Red Holloway and Plas Johnson on saxes—and three Easterners, among them Kenny Davern, who was in Pee Wee Russell heaven on clarinet.

These men backed and filled and stomped and riffed, distilling enough dirty, greasy, nasty, funky blues to take us back to Kansas City with their speak-easy beat. The 45-minute blues rampage climaxed as musicians and crowd sang along with the Cheathams in their best-known song, "Meet Me With Your Black Drawers On."

The blues reared its head again, or rather its four hands, when Jay (Hootie) McShann and Ralph Sutton dug in deep for a two-piano outing that drew one of the party's most impassioned ovations. They were among 11 pianists invited this year, enabling Gibson to do what jazz promoters normally lack the manpower to do: McShann, Monty Alexander, Gene Harris and Ross Tompkins, Roland Hanna and Paul Smith all soloed at the keyboard seriatim.

Another unlikely encounter was a saxophone battle royal involving Al Cohn, Buddy Tate, Scott Hamilton, Bob Cooper, Bud Shank and Red Holloway. A Sunday evening highlight found eight trombonists on board for an exchange of blues views. Harry (Sweets) Edison of Los Angeles and Joe Newman of New York were reunited, reviving "Shiny Stockings" as they did it in the Count Basie band. (There were 14 Basie alumni at this year's party.)

Comedy relief is always an occasional presence. George Chisholm, a nonpareil British trombonist who flies in every year, interspersed his solos with anecdotes about his London recording date with Fats Waller. Marty Grosz, son of the artist George Grosz, also invoked Waller, imitating his vocals and accompanying himself on acoustic guitar in an oddly antiquated interlude.

Dixieland tunes are fading at Gibson's. For every "South Rampart Street Parade," there was a "Speak Low," "Nuages" or the jazz waltz "Bluesette," or a standard by Miles Davis or Lester Young, or Spike Robinson lending his lustrous Getz-like sound to the ballad "Never Let Me Go."

New music written for the occasion provided sublime moments Sunday and Monday when John Clayton's all-star orchestra showcased such soloists as Phil Woods, who played alto sax in Clayton's emotionally charged "Goodbye, Mr. Evans." Like James Morrison, Clayton emerged from the party covered with the stardust of future glory.

The Gibson audiences are unique. To many who have been starved for jazz—this may be almost their only exposure to it all year—not a note can be missed. Moreover, they do not react simply to the overt crowd-pleasing stompers. Sunday night, which is traditionally black-tie night for musicians and audience, many of them sat at their tables uninterruptedly from 8:30 p.m. until around 3 in the morning, when pianist Ross Tompkins drew an ovation simply by offering as a finale his version of "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square."

The relationship between the Gibsons and their cast of characters also is unlike any other. How often do you find a group of hirelings rounding up donations for a gift to their employer? The jazzmen, and a few other party regulars, all contributed to what will become an autographed silver platter congratulating Maddie and Dick on the silver anniversary.

Gibson even contributes personally to the onstage action. Traditionally, every year, toward the end of the last evening, he applies his stentorian baritone to a repertoire that seems to consist of just two songs: "I Ain't Got Nobody" and "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out." He may not be another Jay McShann, but he is better by far than a couple of jazzmen who insisted on trying out their vocal chops earlier in the weekend.

The party drew a capacity crowd of 600. This year's fee was $250. Since Dick Gibson estimated his overhead at around $150,000, he hopes at best to break even. If he does, it will be a first. His best year to date, he said, was 1981, when he lost only $200.

Gibson's initiative has spawned dozens of such parties around the country and overseas, creating work and good times for a widening circle of mainstreamers in a world under electronic siege.

Larry Burdick, a businessman who used to live in this area, said: "I've been coming in for this affair from Maui every year since 1979. I'm thinking of starting a Maui jazz party." His reaction was by no means unique. For what the Gibsons have wrought, the jazz world can never be excessive in its gratitude. □

JAZZ REVIEW

GRAPPELLI GOING ON 80 AND PREDICTABLY STRONG

By LEONARD FEATHER

WEDNESDAY SEP 1 6 1987

The only difference between this year's Stephane Grappelli concert at the Beverly Theatre and last year's or 1985's, is that he is now more than halfway through his 80th year.

Perhaps the voice was a little weaker Monday evening, but the technical finesse when he played remained unimpaired; he seemed to swing Django Reinhardt's "Daphne" more vigorously at 79 than he did at 78.

In general, though, almost nothing had changed. *Toujours les memes chansons; toujours le meme trio.* Yet if the repertoire and personnel remained unaltered, the impact is slightly impaired by overfamiliarity.

The guitarist Marc Fosset still strums his way along ingeniously and continues to save his slightly weird humming-and-singing routine for the second half. Jon Burr, a New York bassist, still plays "Blue Monk" as his specialty. Grappelli still moves over the piano toward the end of the show for a rambling, rhapsodic medley.

One is inclined to search for answers to irrelevant questions: Did Grappelli play sitting down last year? Wasn't it a better attendance last time? Yes to both. Such trivia aside, you have to remind yourself that this man has been playing nonpareil jazz violin since the days when there were only two other full-time jazz violinists in the world: Joe Venuti and Eddie South.

Still, might it not be advisable, granting the natural inclusion of Gershwin, Kern and Ellington, to throw in an occasional work by, say, Tadd Dameron or Charlie Parker? Even "Giant Steps"? It seems improbable that Grappelli's ears could not meet the harmonic challenge of John Coltrane's tune. By now "Chattanooga Choo Choo" with the train effects on guitar has worn a little thin.

You may also long for the days when the group carried two guitarists. The trio offers no tonal diversity; a second guitar could function in effect as a percussive undercurrent. After all, the Hot Club Quintet that vaulted Grappelli to fame had *three* guitars.

None of this matters, of course, when the master is on his own, as he was for two or three magic minutes when he ended "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" with a series of wonderful, whimsical cadenzas. Let us be thankful that this one remaining legend is still on the road, yet hopeful that he will expand his arsenal of standards to offer a little variety in what has become a somewhat too predictable routine.

CA6-33

45

models that still younger generations of jazz-loving trumpet players will follow." His muted solo on Bill Evans' "Blue in Green" and his infectious explorations on a blues called "Float" show where he is heading. The rhythm team of Mulgrew Miller on piano, Tony Williams on drums and 20-year-old bassist Charnet Moffett is supportive and inventive. Gary Thomas on tenor sax completes the group. 3 stars.

□

"ARTIST'S CHOICE." Gary Burton RCA Bluebird 6280-2-RB. Burton was years ahead of his time in bringing real meaning to the term *fusion*. Using everything from a one-man band (on "Norwegian Wood" he plays piano and bass marimba as well as vibes) to a 10-piece ensemble playing segments from Carla Bley's "A Genuine Tong Funeral," he touches every idiomatic base: Brazilian ("Chega de Saudade"), country-Western (a Chet Atkins-produced session with songs by Bob Wills and Bob Dylan), through every kind of chamber jazz from melodic to abstract. Much of the diversity, all achieved within the parameters of the vibist's distinctive but chameleonic personality, can be credited to the writing by Burton, Bley, the exemplary bassist Steve Swallow and Burton's former Berklee College of Music schoolmate, Michael Gibbs. Recorded between 1963 and 1968, these works are as timely as tomorrow. 5 stars.

□

MARSALIS STANDARD TIME." Wynton Marsalis. Columbia FC 40461. Marsalis twists the time around on "April in Paris," tries a little tenderness on "Goodbye," turns bassist Bob Hurst loose on "A Foggy Day" and presents his pianist Marcus Roberts, who senses the beauty of the melody on "Memories of You." Except for two Marsalis originals (a personalized blues and a delicate, muted "In the Afterglow") the trumpeter's mature approach to old pop songs is the focus. Incredibly, the verbose notes by Stanley Crouch manage to plow through some 2,000 words without once mentioning George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Juan Tizol, Ray Noble, Eubie Blake or Hoagy Carmichael. These men merely composed the melodies without which there would have been no standard time. 4 stars.

□

"BILLY ECKSTINE SINGS WITH BENNY CARTER." EmArcy 832-011-2. No, Benny Carter doesn't sing, the misleading title means that Carter's alto sax is prominent throughout and, in fact, is as much responsible for the CD's success as Eckstine. The alarming width of the singer's vibrato, as evidenced on occasional TV appearances in recent years, is relatively well controlled here. Though the years do show, there's enough of the old warmth in that burnished baritone to bring nostalgic pleasure to those who knew him as one of the vocal royalty of the 1940s and '50s. He has no trouble dealing with the rangy "Memories of You" and swings buoyantly in "World on a String." Helen Merrill appears as guest vocalist only on the first and last cuts (more would have been welcome). Bobby Tucker, Eckstine's eternal pianist, anchors a splendid rhythm section. 3½ stars.

□

"THEORY OF ART." Art Blakey. RCA Bluebird 6286-2-RB. These late-'50s sessions were cut four years before Blakey's most famous alumnus, Wynton Marsalis, was born. Blakey at this time had a weak pianist and bassist, but the robust alto sax of Jackie McLean and the rock-ribbed Johnny Griffin tenor are reasons enough to check this out. On the two final cuts (issued for the first time on this CD), the band grows from six to nine pieces. Wynton Kelly has replaced the narcoleptic pianist and Lee Morgan's trumpet is in cheerful ascendancy on "Social Call." 4 stars.

□

"CLAP HANDS, HERE COMES CHARLIE." Charlie Barnet. RCA Bluebird 6273-2-RB. Barnet's was the only white band to play the Apollo and other black theaters regularly. The best of these 21 tunes make the reason clear: On "The Duke's Idea," "The Count's Idea," "The Gal From Joe's," "Rockin' in Rhythm" and, of course "Cherokee," the band outswung anyone except Basie, Lunceford and Ellington. Lena Horne, the Barnet vocalist for several months, sings "You're My Thrill." Arrangements by Barnet, Horace Henderson, Andy Gibson and several head routines kept the fire burning. On the copy received, four pages are missing from the notes, eliminating details for the first five tracks and even the annotator's name (Ira Gitler). 4 stars. □

10/4/87

JAZZ

POPPING IN ON GRANT GEISSMAN

By LEONARD FEATHER

What manner of man is Grant Geissman? A jazz musician? A pop composer who dreams up TV music for animated cartoon shows to delight the Saturday morning kid crowd? Prominent Beatles freak who has spent half his life collecting memorabilia about the Fab Four?

He is indeed all of these and more. Though the 34-year-old guitarist from San Jose has had an album, "Portraits" (TBA 224), on the contemporary jazz charts for the past couple of months, he has an impressively mixed bag of previous achievements to his credit: hundreds of jingles; gigs and recordings with David Benoit, Dan Siegel, Carl Anderson and Air Supply; tours of Japan and Europe during a four-year stint with Chuck Mangione (he played the celebrated solo on "Feels So Good"), and a growing series of credits as a composer.

He owes his life in music to five influential forces: his grandfather and the Beatles.

"My grandfather had a lifetime fascination with the banjo," Geissman said. "Following a Sunday dinner at my grandparents' house, he'd get out his banjo, I'd bring my guitar, and we'd to through the old song books, singing and playing.

"When I was young, I listened to records by Kenny Burrell, Howard Roberts, Wes Montgomery and other people, like B. B. King. But the reason I began playing at all was the Beatles. That whole British invasion thing intrigued me. I always loved pop music; it was through my teachers that I was steered into a jazz direction."

During his senior high school year, Geissman studied with a San Francisco teacher, Jerry Hahn, who took him ahead "by leaps and bounds. Until I met him, I had never heard of Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Dizzy Gillespie. In high school, my jazz orientation had been strictly toward big bands, but Jerry opened my mind up to ways of playing that I never knew existed."

MARISSA ROTH / Los Angeles Times

Guitarist Grant Geissman says his grandfather and the Beatles influenced his music career.

His jazz education was expanded when, as a student at Cal State Northridge, he came into contact with composer Gerald Wilson, who was teaching a jazz class there, and with Louis Bellson, who lived nearby and often dropped in with arrangements for the students. Geissman wound up playing dates with the Wilson and Bellson orchestras.

One day in 1976, he received a call from Mangione. "It was just for one gig in Santa Monica, but then Chuck asked if I could finish up a tour with him, which meant I had to cut classes for a week. Well, he asked me to join the band and I decided to quit school. I had done my senior recital on classical guitar and had less than a year to go, so I figured this was too good an opportunity to miss."

The years with Mangione established Geissman firmly as a soloist to be reckoned with. "Chuck was really on a roll at that time and it was a great experience. However, it also tended to typecast me. You know the attitude—'He's great for what he does, as a jazz player, but we wouldn't want to call him for a jingle.' That can become a stigma, and it took a year or two to overcome it until people would finally decide 'Sure, he's a jazz player, but also a rock and pop and jingle player and anything else that's needed.' It's important to let it be known that you can do everything."

During the post-Mangione years, Geissman has never been a permanent member of any one band, though he has worked off and on with such Los Angeles-based bands as the David Benoit combo, the back-up group for singer Carl Anderson and, during the last year of Victor Feldman's life, the Feldman Generation Band.

Establishing oneself as a recording group leader, even granting the proliferation of record companies competing in today's market, is far from easy. Geissman made his first LP, "Good Stuff," for Concord Jazz in 1978. It's still on the market. After a five-year lull he made "Put Away Childish Toys" for Pausa. It was his contract with TBA, which led to "Drinking From the Money River" in 1986 and "Passport" this year, that put him on the map.

The word *guitar* has become so generic that it is necessary to add a few specific subdivisions. In most of the nine tracks on "Passport," he played classical guitar, but some acoustic rhythm guitar parts were added, along with guitar synthesizer effects for color. On the two Sting numbers, "Love Is the Seventh Wave" and "Walking on the Moon," and on Geissman's own ingenious 14-bar theme "L.A. Blues," the guitar is electric.

Despite his increasingly active life in other areas of music, Geissman retains a passionate attachment to the childhood source of his original inspiration. He is, in fact, one of the music world's most obsessive collectors of Beatles memorabilia.

"When I was a senior in high school, I began going to swap meets to exchange Beatles items. I still haven't given up. I have hundreds of books about the Beatles; I own one of the limited edition of 2,000 copies of George Harrison's autobiography, signed by him and bound in leather. I got that from England, but most of my collection was obtained here: Beatles lunch pails, sneakers, Christmas ornaments, a Beatles game called 'Flip Your Wig,' Beatles talcum powder and nylons."

Geissman today is a busy man. At any given time he may be writing music for one of the major animation studios, playing a solo job at the Baked Potato, recording for a jingle or a television series or leading his own six-piece group.

If he cannot be found for a gig around Thanksgiving, the reason is simple: He will be happily wrapped up in the agenda at the Bonaventure Hotel, where, for the sixth straight year, he will attend the annual Beatlefest.

There is another slightly improbable aspect to the Geissman story: His original compositions on the "Passport" album are credited to a publishing company billed as General Confusion Music.

"There's a logical reason," he says. "When I was with Chuck's band, he gave everybody nicknames and mine was Gen. Grant. I simply added the *confusion* because that seems to be the ongoing state of my life." □

THOMPSON'S SOUNDS COME FROM PAST IN LOA OPENING

10/10

By LEONARD FEATHER

The pianist and former organist known as "Sir" Charles Thompson can claim legendary associations: He played with Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins, and, on his first record date as a leader, his sidemen included Charlie Parker and Dexter Gordon.

Thursday evening Thompson opened at the Loa in Santa Monica as a soloist, backed by Larry Gales on bass and Kenny Dennis on drums. What was offered during his first show was essentially a slice of that era relived, in terms of both performance and repertoire. The latter consisted entirely of compositions ranging in age from 40 to 60 years.

Thompson's center of gravity is slightly pre-bop, with flashes of Count Basie (he recently subbed for two weeks in the Basie orchestra) added to bursts of Earl Hines exuberance and occasional hints of Teddy Wilson elegance.

It was during a salute to Wilson that his harmonic feeling came into focus. "Some Other Spring," a perennially attractive melody written by Wilson's wife, enabled Thompson to move beyond the shackles of convention that bound him during his rather literal interpretations of "Star Dust" and "Mood Indigo." He would be well advised to find some more (and perhaps fresher) works, in which he can stress the inherent chordal value.

Larry Gales has been praised here often as a bassist of ability and agility, in solo and supportive roles alike; however, the rhythm section as a whole seemed to need more impetus than was usually in evidence on this occasion.

The trio closes Sunday.

46

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"Live From Monterey: Sarah Vaughan." Sony. $29.95. The incomparable Vaughan sound decorates seven songs, backed by the Mike Wofford Trio. At times her magnificence is unencumbered; other moments—smacking a kiss in the middle of "Send In the Clowns," interrupting herself during "If You Could See Me Now"—are simply mood-breakers. The camera takes us through Cannery Row and other local vistas while Vaughan scats "Autumn Leaves." Midway through the 54 minutes, Joe Williams, backed by Clark Terry and a small jam band, sings a slow blues and Ellington's "Come Sunday" in his unaffected and totally personal manner. Information: (212) 757-4990. vvv

—LEONARD FEATHER

Los Angeles Times 10/7/87

THE FRINGE: MORE OF A MISS THAN A HIT

JAZZ

No Names, No Bands, No Originality

By LEONARD FEATHER

From the point of view of the jazz community, this most American of the arts was barely on the fringe of the Fringe Festival.

It was a tribute to Samuel Brown, the veteran teacher at Jefferson High School whose students included many celebrated jazz men, none of whom took part in the festival. In another venture, Harold Land, the tenor saxophonist, was set to lead a group at Cal Tech but exercised his option to withdraw in favor of another, longer booking. His place was taken by Harold Land Jr., his pianist son, leading a quintet with the trumpeter Oscar Brashear.

The fact is that not one world class name was hired; not one outstanding organized combo such as those of Wynton Marsalis, Art Blakey, Chick Corea, Phil Woods or any of the scores of others who could have represented the many phases of small group jazz today. Nor was there a solitary big band, nor any of the countless vocal luminaries who currently light up the scene. Not one composer was invited to write original music to be performed during the month of festivities.

This sort of Cinderella treatment was common in jazz three or four decades ago, but many of us were under the impression that the music had come out of the shadows. Evidently neither the festival director Aaron Paley nor anyone advising him was aware of this.

It would have been simple to go to one of the major record companies for advice, support and talent. Many of them would gladly have cooperated by making it possible for one of the dozens of groups on their labels to take part. Alternately, advice could have been sought from the Los Angeles Jazz Society, the National Academy of Jazz, the International Assn. of Jazz Appreciation, the Jazz Heritage Society and other such groups, all based locally and eager to advance the cause of the music.

The ultimate irony is that if a comparable arts festival were held in Japan or France or Sweden, jazz could be sure of substantial and appropriate representation. It is sad indeed to reflect that the days of the profit-without-honor syndrome are not yet over.

Playing acoustic and electric bass, sometimes overdubbing as on the sinister opening track "Mizzom," young Charnett is best represented when swinging in straight 4/4 time, as he does here in the company of Michael Brecker and Kenny Drew Jr. (the latter another second-generation jazzman) on "Swing Bass," and particularly on "Softly As In a Morning Sunrise," in which he hits the ground running and never stops.

Guitarist Stanley Jordan joins up for "The Dance," one of the six Moffett originals. The West Indian flavor is appealing, as is the church-like geniality of "One Left Over," a duo number with Drew on synthesizers.

Moffett's agility both with a bow and pizzicato are well showcased in the closing cut, "For You," though the repetitious, slapping percussion effects are a detriment. "Mona Lisa" suffers from too much mushy, pseudo-orchestral synth work. The title tune has a heavy rockish backbeat that seems a little out of place. In general, however, this marks an auspicious debut for a youngster who, at 16, was already making a name for himself with Wynton Marsalis. 4 stars.

□

"MIDNIGHT BLUE." Lionel Hampton/Dexter Gordon. Glad-Hamp GHS1027 (1995 Broadway, New York City 10023). Six of these eight pieces were recorded with a septet in which Gordon (doubling on tenor and soprano saxes), Hank Jones on piano, Bucky Pizzarelli on guitar and Hampton on vibes are all effectively displayed. "Blues for Gates," despite its title, is a 32-bar minor theme at a fast clip, with a strong build-up toward the end by Gordon on soprano and Candido on conga drums.

The two maverick tracks are the brief opener, "Midnight Blues," which evidently was recorded many years ago, since the featured soloist is the tenor saxophonist Coleman Hawkins, who died in 1969, and "Hamp Celebrates Dexter," the closing piece. This is actually a second version of the preceding tune, "Seven Come Eleven," except that a Gordon solo was written out by Ernie Wilkins for unison saxophones. Though not consistently rewarding, this is a generally worthwhile example of Hampton in typically ebullient form and of Gordon in better days. 3½ stars. —DON SNOWDEN

JAZZ ALBUM REVIEWS

Herbie Nichols Gets Belated Recognition

By LEONARD FEATHER

"THE COMPLETE BLUE NOTE RECORDINGS OF HERBIE NICHOLS." Mosaic MR5-118 (197 Strawberry Hill Ave., Stanford, Conn. 06902).

This five-record set, which includes 24 previously unissued items, offers a masterfully assembled reminder of a regrettably ignored artist.

Herbie Nichols (1919-1963) was an extraordinarily gifted composer/pianist whose chaotic career was marked by bad luck, indifferent jobs and only occasional recognition—mainly by the late Alfred Lion, who produced these 1955-56 sessions. Though friendly with Thelonious Monk, whose influence can be detected occasionally here, he was relegated to assignments accompanying singers, or to playing with Snub Mosley, Milt Larkins and various rhythm and blues bands.

A man of exceptional intelligence and a diverse artistry (several of his poems are included in the 24-page booklet accompanying the album), Nichols developed a technique that enabled him to express ideas different from those of his contemporaries. With the exception of George Gershwin's "Mine," everything in this set is an original Nichols composition. He is accompanied by Al McKibbon or Teddy Kotick on bass, and by Art Blakey or Max Roach on drums.

Some of the titles give a hint of the man's scope, his adventurous mind and his humor: "Cro-Magnon Nights," "2300 Skiddoo," "Riff Primitif," "Blue Chopsticks," "Lady Sings the Blues." This last became his only well-known piece; Billie Holiday set lyrics to it and recorded it.

Michael Cuscuna, who produced the reissue, wrote some of the notes, though there are several pieces by Nichols himself (his original liner commentaries as well as a magazine article) and lengthy explanations by the trombonist Roswell Rudd, a close friend and admirer, dealing with every aspect of Nichols' work: dynamics, melody, rhythm, harmony, form, improvisation.

The booklet, profusely illustrated, is an extremely valuable adjunct and will help the neophyte listener toward a better appreciation of Nichols' genius. Cuscuna deserves special credit for putting this package together.

Intrigued by the entire world of music but particularly by Ellington, Tatum, Villa-Lobos and Bartok, Nichols brought to his work a rare and fascinating spirituality. Mosaic Records, again in the forefront as a purveyor of supposedly "uncommercial" but invariably valuable music, has printed this album in a limited edition of 7,500 copies. It rates an unqualified 5 stars.

□

"NET MAN," Charnett Moffett. Blue Note 46993. Barely out of his teens, Moffett is the latest addition to a gifted family, some of whose members show up here and there in the album: father Charles Sr. on drums, brothers Charles Jr. on tenor sax and Codaryl (Cody) Moffett on percussion.

JAZZ

THE NEGLECTED LEGACY OF KENTON

By LEONARD FEATHER

Despite the affection in which he was held by virtually everyone who worked for him and the relatively recent time frame of his contribution (he was active as a bandleader from 1941 until 1978, the year before he died), Stan Kenton's image seems to have faded, while that of Duke Ellington, who died five years earlier, seems today stronger than ever.

What are the reasons for this disparity?

Several explanations come to mind. Although both men were active in the same four areas—as composer, arranger, bandleader, pianist—there was a vital difference. Many of Ellington's instrumental works became pop-song hits and are constantly being played. Kenton, although words were once set to several of his pieces for an album, simply never had a hit song; his music remained primarily instrumental. Thus the volume of Ellington air play, either by the band itself or by innumerable singers, far outweighs the occasional reminder of Kenton's works.

Stan Kenton in 1971; the late bandleader's impact on jazz has been weakened since his death.

Second, and perhaps no less important, is the absence of an authorized Kenton ghost band; he decreed in his will that no such entity should be allowed. Meanwhile, Mercer Ellington continues to be heard, leading a band that includes several members who were with Duke in the early 1970s; in fact, the recent "Digital Duke" on GRP records has been on the jazz charts for several months.

Still another explanation lies in the roller-coaster nature of Kenton's career on records, due partly to Capitol Records' conversion to a pop-rock direction that left him on the sidelines. Four years ago, Gene Norman, of the Hollywood-based GNP-Crescendo Records, took over the rights to Kenton's Capitol LPs and to those recorded for Kenton's own label, Creative World. According to Norman, 68 Kenton albums are now available, though only two have appeared so far on CDs. Ellington is represented by a dozen CDs, some offering material never previously issued.

More relevant than any of these reasons is the jagged course that Kenton took during his 37 years in front of a band. In the early days, Kenton's own writing, with a personal sax-section sound, gave the band its character. Then came Pete Rugolo, who was to Kenton as Billy Strayhorn was to Ellington. But Rugolo left early, in 1949, and the Kenton library for the rest of his career was drawn from dozens of sources, some verging on the classical (William Russo, Robert Graettinger), others closer to the Woody Herman concept (Shorty Rogers, Gerry Mulligan, Bill Holman), as well as Johnny Richards, Willie Maiden, Hank Levy and too many more to enumerate.

It wasn't just the style of the band that kept changing from tune to tune; the size, personnel and objectives underwent a series of major transformations. There was the big, ambitious, string-laden orchestra of the "Innovations" years (early 1950s); the more swinging band of the mid-1950s, which for some of us was the best Kenton group of them all; the oddly enlarged band in the early 1960s using a section of "mellophoniums" (a short-lived experiment); the elaborate Neophonic Orchestra that lasted for a few seasons in Los Angeles and, of course, the various ventures with Latin or Afro-Cuban rhythms.

Because of these fluctuations, it is impossible to get a handle on exactly whom and what the Kenton orchestra represented. Meanwhile, the Ellington career from start to finish reflected the writing talent of one man—or, from 1939 on, of Duke and Billy Strayhorn, who was in effect his compositional twin. During that entire time (essentially 1927 to 1974), the band underwent relatively few changes in personnel; in 1970, Duke was able to frame works for Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Cootie Williams and others just as he had decades earlier.

Yet there is much in the Kenton legacy that sounds, in retrospect, more valuable than it seemed originally. Rugolo's "Interlude" is a work of lasting charm; "Collaboration" by Rugolo and Kenton has a brashly distinctive character. Even "The Peanut Vendor," mainly a head arrangement with a few Rugolo ideas added, is as invigorating now as when the band recorded it 40 years ago.

All this came to mind while attending a recent celebration staged in Kenton's honor at the Sportsmen's Lodge in Studio City. Among the 730 present were numerous Kenton alumni, non-Kenton celebrities (Henry Mancini, Dudley Moore) and a healthy contingent of Kenton camp followers, along with members of the bandleader's family.

In general, it was a warm, touching evening, thanks mainly to the role played by Milt Bernhardt. A trombonist with the early Kenton orchestra, he is now a travel agent and, for nonprofit kicks, president of the Big Band Academy of America, under whose aegis the event took place.

Although various phases of the Kenton career were represented by the USC Studio Jazz Ensemble, conducted by Thom Mason, it was Bernhardt's introductions of the band's graduates that kept things moving. They were laced with a dry humor of which Kenton surely would have approved.

Bernhardt reminisced about the days of the screaming, chops-defying brass team ("Bellevue kept an open bed for the trumpet section").

There was a roll call of the departed (Vido Musso, Shelly Manne, Kai Winding, Frank Rosolino, Art Pepper—he forgot Ed Safranski and Ernie Royal). Toward the end, Bernhardt quoted from a Kenton speech in which the maestro's zest for life, his quest for change and his ability to ignite musicians and audiences came sharply into focus.

Undoubtedly, under the Kenton imprimatur, a substantial body of durable music was created. Why has its impact not been stronger and lasted longer?

There is one final explanation: It relates to Kenton's following. Whereas Ellington from the start appealed to all audiences, from Harlem to the White House, Kenton (despite the occasional black sideman) was essentially a white phenomenon in terms of the musicians and the audience he attracted.

Kenton's defensive attitude about white musicians, and particularly an angry telegram published in Down Beat complaining about the alleged excess of black winners in a critics' poll, may have tarnished his reputation to the point where it was difficult to judge, objectively, a music that deserved to be assessed on merit.

He was not a giant as composers and arrangers go, but he does deserve to be remembered as a man whose determination brought to the forefront a long succession of talented soloists and arrangers, all of whom have nothing but fond recollections of him. That, surely, should be the essence of the Kenton legacy. □

RECOMMENDED KENTON RECORDINGS

"The Kenton Era" (Creative World ST 1030). With a spoken introduction and closing narration by Kenton, this four-LP set is an excellent retrospective of the band's phases from 1941 to 1955.

"Contemporary Concepts" (Creative World 1003). The so-called "Bill Holman phase" finds the band in its best mainstream groove, with Holman charts and with solos by Sam Noto, Carl Fontana, Lennie Niehaus, Bill Perkins, et al.

"Live at Redlands University" (Creative World ST 1015; also on compact disc STD 1015). A two-record set with originals by Dee Barton, Willie Maiden, Hank Levy and others. □

CALENDAR

LETTERS

STAN & DUKE

Leonard Feather neglected to make one point in his comparison of Stan Kenton and Duke Ellington ("The Neglected Legacy of Ken-

-ton," Oct. 11).

It is something Feather himself has stressed continuously for many years: Duke Ellington was a genius. Kenton was a tall bandleader.

JEAN BURROWS
Pasadena

Feather's column on Stan Kenton was the finest objective piece I've ever seen on this subject.

However, why didn't he mention that there are several Kenton scholarships at various colleges around the country?

Since Feather is among the names of critics who fall all over themselves deifying the Duke, I think Kenton needs all the posthumous good PR he can get.

HEATHER GILBERT
Sunland

10/13/87

RECONSTRUCTING THE TIMES

BILLIE HOLIDAY MAKE-BELIEVE

LACY ATKINS / Los Angeles Times

S. Epatha Merkerson, above, plays Billie Holiday, inset, in "Lady Day."

It's Not the Real Thing but 'Lady Day' Has a Way About Her

By DAN SULLIVAN,
Times Theater Critic

S. Epatha Merkerson has a strong easy-to-read face, a graceful figure and an open way about her, and she sings jazz like an artist. It was a pleasure to hear her and see her Sunday night at the Hollywood Playhouse, where she's appearing in "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill."

But she isn't Billie Holiday, not in a million years.

Now it's clear that the point of the show isn't to clone an actual Holiday performance, but to give a sense of what the lady went through—with drugs, with men, with hostile white hotel managers—until she packed it in at age 44. If you want the real Billie Holiday, you've got to get out her records.

I do want the real one, and I find the records as painful and revealing as anything in this show, besides bringing us Holiday's incomparable sound.

KCET Channel 28 carried a documentary on the singer's life a couple of Sundays back. The black-and-white clips from her last TV session, with Gerry Mulligan and Lester Young, were harrowing. She looked like a figure from "The Trojan Women," a queen in ashes.

But still a queen. "Don't Explain" (which Merkerson sings at a moment in the show where Billie has clearly lost it) wasn't just a great Billie Holiday record. It was her motto as an artist. Don't explain; don't beg. Unlike the great French cabaret singers, Holiday worked to keep the pain *out* of her voice, knowing that it would be there anyway.

It's her control that really raises the hackles, especially when the voice gets down to a sliver, as on that TV clip. Not only does she decline to play for the listener's sympathy, she scorns it. At

Please see 'LADY DAY,' Page 6

Merkerson Captures the Essence of the Music; Robertson Authentically Reconstructs the Era

By LEONARD FEATHER

To most who see "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill," Billie Holiday (whom nobody under 40 is likely to have heard alive and flourishing) is less reality than cult figure, more symbol of black creativity and racial oppression than a well-remembered living legend.

Nevertheless, as those who knew her will confirm, Lanie Robertson's script has reconstructed the era with remarkable authenticity, and S. Epatha Merkerson captures, both in the lengthy narration and her songs, more of the essence than one would have had a right to expect from someone of a later generation. The trio of Danny Holgate, who wrote the arrangements, also has the genuine ring of the 1950s.

Merkerson, like Ranee Lee (who played this role so successfully in Montreal last summer), reflects the spirit rather than the letter of Holiday's style and sound. Only in "Strange Fruit" does she falter, for that sound demands a sense of its time and context, which almost nobody else has successfully addressed.

Robertson took a few liberties with

Please see HOLIDAY, Page 7

'LADY DAY'

Continued from Page 1

the same time, she is yearning to be asked to the party—on her terms. "Tain't nobody's business if I do.

It's hard to imagine so stiff-backed an artist getting chatty with an audience, which is the convention in Lanie Robertson's "Lady Day" script. We are at Emerson's Bar & Grill, a Philadelphia dive where Billie is making one of her periodic comebacks.

She's so happy to be singing in a club again, even in Philadelphia (she can't get a cabaret card in New York), that she tells the audience her life story, some of which Robertson has lifted verbatim from her ghost-written autobiography "Lady Sings the Blues."

Merkerson is appealingly healthy here, suggesting the young Billie Holiday, before the scars had really set. It's touching how she tries to make a funny story out of a disturbing memory, such as the morning that she woke up locked in her dead grandmother's arms.

But as the show goes on, she gets spookier, hearing dead lovers and the ghostly sliding-shut of prison doors, a crude effect that doesn't help her distress become one particle more *real*. It's also not clear why her all-powerful pianist (Danny Holgate)—standing for all those musicians who did wrong by the real Billie—doesn't ring down the curtain once it's clear that she has gone 'round the bend.

Merkerson handles Billie's songs tastefully but not gingerly. The attempt isn't to imitate Holliday, but to suggest her strategy with a song, whether up-tempo ("What a Little Moonlight Can Do") or dolorous ("Strange Fruit"). And Merkerson makes it clear that she's a big girl, able to put her own stamp on a musical moment.

But her interpretations have got to suffer, next to Billie's voice and persona. As with so many *tributes* to great pop artists, this one slightly smacks of exploitation: a desire to cash in on somebody else's achievement. For my money, the best way to pay tribute to Lady Day is to pick up one of her records—and to go see Sarah Vaughan, live.

"Lady Day" was staged by Andre Ernotte and has a good barroom set by William Barclay, although the headless mannequins seem an affectation.

Performances are at 8 p.m. Tuesdays-Fridays; at 7 and 10 p.m. Saturdays, and at 3 and 8 p.m. Sundays. Tickets $20-$22.50. 1445 N. Las Palmas Ave., Hollywood. (213) 466-1767.

HOLIDAY

Continued from Page 1

the facts. The anecdotes dealing with Holiday's months in the Artie Shaw Orchestra are pure fiction: She was not prevented from sitting on the bandstand, as this reporter can recall from in-person viewing. The long-preserved story concerning the death of Bessie Smith (that she was refused admittance by a white hospital) is revived, though Smith's biographer calls it a myth. Still, every word uttered by Merkerson has the ring of truth, the feeling of what could happen in America in those days of lynching and pandemic segregation. Robertson's drama puts across its message with a chilling honesty, and in Merkerson he found the ideal messenger.

FLUTET AT DONTE'S: JAM SESSION OF LIMITATIONS

By LEONARD FEATHER

A band name such as the Flutet suggests an organized group. However, on the evidence presented Monday at Donte's, it would appear that this is simply a collection of five musicians, co-led by flutists Sam Most and Fernando Gelbard, in a loose and typically casual jam session. Most has been playing jazz flute since those two words sounded like a contradiction in terms. He is still one of the most competent exponents of an instrument that does not always seem to lend itself to this kind of setting.

The problem mainly was the absence of a contrasting horn. Gelbard, an Argentine promoter who has produced a number of albums, is a man of obvious limitations as a flutist. At times he would offer hesitant counterpoints to Most's exposition of the theme; as a soloist his lack of assurance, both in ideals and intonation, was made doubly conspicuous by the juxtaposition of a performer as experienced and skillful as Most.

The leaders were supported by a capable rhythm section, with the assertive piano of Frank Collett, steady and unobtrusive drumming by Carl Burnett, and most notably John Giannelli, another of those nimble bass players who have proliferated in recent years. His solos were the high points of the set.

For variety, on "Easy Living," Most switched to tenor saxophone, which he played with an odd, smoky sound. During the group's closing theme he erupted suddenly into an amusing tongue-in-cheek scat vocal.

The quintet's limitations were not helped by its repertoire, which never moved beyond the predictable litany of worn-thin standards, from "I Love You" to "Autumn Leaves." If Most and Gelbard want to keep a unit together, they could use some serious woodshedding on fresh, challenging material.

JAZZ REVIEW

NEW FRANKS DROWNS IN LARGE SEA OF WATTS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Time was, back in the late 1970s, when Michael Franks was composing his imaginative melodies and writing reasonably sophisticated lyrics, backed at times by an easy Latin beat, sometimes using a section of flutes or strings or horns, that he acquired a vast following on records and an intelligent audience.

Any of those early fans who visited the Universal Amphitheatre on Saturday or Sunday must have gone home with a bad case of shattered illusions. Where was the finesse, the subtlety of yesteryear? For the most part it was gone with the windstorm. During much of his very long and enthusiastically received set, Franks seemed to have sold his soul for a mess of wattage.

A powerful six-piece band with only one horn—Bill Evans, the former Miles Davis saxophonist—succeeded in rendering many of Franks' words indecipherable. Though he sang songs from several of his early albums such as "The Art Of Tea" and "Tiger In The Rain" he managed, in effect, to self-destruct. Universal City became Ear Plug City.

A few numbers were dealt with more decorously, notably "Rainy Night In Tokyo" (with Evans switching to flute) and the attractive "The Lady Wants To Know." There were also moments when his keyboard player added her voice and even sang soulfully on her own; but it was not enough to compensate for the almost endless workout on "Monkey See, Monkey Do," with its dreary instrumental interludes, among them a long and a distorted bass guitar solo.

Franks' unprepossessing manner and appearance didn't help. Looking pseudo-hip in his limp undershirt and 1950s short haircut, he made no attempt to rise above the din or even to display any visual charm.

The evening was stolen in the opening set by Stanley Jordan, who all but tap dances on his guitar. This astonishing musician, whose technique enables him to keep a bass line and chords going with his left hand while he unleashes floods of melody by tapping the strings with his right, has long since shown that his revolutionary approach is no mere gimmick.

Concentrating mainly on standards ("Willow Weep For Me," Parker's "Now's The Time"), Jordan was a constant source of inspiration. His version of "Eleanor Rigby" leaned as he put it, to "rock inflections and classical pretensions."

Most incredible of all was an elaborate introduction to "Autumn Leaves" that became a full-fledged fugue that would have challenged the chops of two ordinary guitarists.

Jordan's only problem was a tendency to reach volume levels that were at times piercingly loud; but compared to what happened after intermission it was aural balm.

50

L.A. TIMES 10/18/87

JAZZ

A HORN ALBUM—AT LAST

By LEONARD FEATHER

Note: All records reviewed here are CDs unless otherwise identified. If any cuts are not included in the LP versions, it will be so noted.

"I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU." Shirley Horn Live at Vine Street (Verve 833-235-2). At last, the great lady from D.C. has her own CD—in fact, her first major-label album in 20 years, thanks to record producers who can't see beyond their cash registers. It is ironic that after all those years based in Washington (and after numerous appearances in New York) she had to go to Hollywood to land this superlative live date.

Not since Nat King Cole has such an exemplary pianist become a singer of commensurate talent. The lyrics and music are often understated and never over-arranged (backing consists simply of her regular bassist and drummer, Charles Ables and Steve Williams). Her sound is gentle and all but effortless, her mix of vocal and pianistic artistry infallible.

Several tunes are familiar without having been overworked: "Something Happens to Me" and "The Eagle and Me." The Italian song "Estate" (Summer) is almost a recitative, with English lyrics by Joel Siegel, who wrote the literate liner notes. "I Got It Bad" includes some seldom-heard extra lyrics.

At the piano, Horn is an ideal self-accompanist and a distinctive soloist. "Isn't It Romantic" is an instrumental track. (The CD includes an extra instrumental, the extended version of "Quiet Nights," and an additional vocal, "I Wish I Didn't Love You So.")

Shirley Horn need no longer be called a cult artist or a legend. Without question she is the singer of the year, and arguably the pianist too. 5 stars.

□

"BRAZILIAN ROMANCE." Sarah Vaughan. CBS ZK 42519. The three key figures are Vaughan, who is in glorious voice throughout; Sergio Mendes, who produced the album and revived "So Many Stars," a radiant song he wrote with the Bergmans; and Dori Caymmi, who composed five of the other songs and is heard prominently on guitar.

Swooping down or soaring up with equal ease, Vaughan retains the inherent beauty of these Brazilian melodies while bringing to them her own immutably wondrous personality. Oddly, in Milton Nascimento's "Love and Passion" the composer shares the vocal with her, in Portuguese, yet their voices are so similar that you could swear Vaughan was singing bilingually. 5 stars.

□

"CLARE FISCHER PLAYS BY AND WITH HIMSELF." Discovery DSDC 934. Playing one or more of three pianos, using speed-up trickery and multitracking, Fischer avoids the impression of gimmickry in this cerebral yet often emotional set. Included are abstract originals, a complex fugue, a moody blues and the occasional standard (Arlen, Evans, a Strayhorn medley and Gerry Mulligan's "Jeru" in a keyboard transcription of the original Miles Davis version). "Counterall" turns out to be "All the Things You Are" disguised in a contrapuntal mosaic. 4 stars.

□

"EVERY NIGHT." Joe Williams Live at Vine Street. Verve 833-236-2. Did he ever let you down? There are several hidden-plus-factors, such as the revised version of "Every Day" (now including Miles Davis' "All Blues" waltz), Williams' own title tune and several excellent solos by his sidemen: Henry Johnson, guitar; Bob Badgley, bass, and Gerryck King, drums. The set opens and closes with tributes to Williams' original idol, Joe Turner ("Shake, Rattle & Roll," "Roll 'Em Pete"). Benard Ighner's "Same Ol' Story" has a contemporary groove and beat; "Sometimes I'm Happy" is set up with a genial scat chorus. No, he never lets you down. 4½ stars.

ROBERT GABRIEL

Pianist-singer Shirley Horn: distinctive soloist.

□

"ANY TIME, ANY SEASON," Sam Most. Innovation JCCD 0012. Playing flute, alto flute and bass flute, Most makes his way through eight true-to-the-melody readings of pop standards, plus the title tune which he co-wrote with producer Fernando Gelbard. The prominent presence of Frank Collett at the piano is of value throughout. Most is hemmed in by the string arrangements overdubbed in England; a freer improvisational showcase would have been welcome but it's an agreeable collection. 3 stars.

□

DIANNE REEVES. Blue Note 46906. This primarily pop set offers a Janus-faced look at a woman who once seemed likely to become the next great jazz singer. Thanks to producer George Duke, on the first side we have accessible songs and smart charts, but nothing soul-shaking. Side Two opens with "Never Said" ("Chan's Song" from "'Round Midnight"), with Herbie Hancock as pianist, composer and arranger, a smooth sound and well-crafted vocal overdubs by Reeves. "Yesterdays" brings in Freddie Hubbard on fluegelhorn, Billy Childs as arranger and pianist, and Stanley Clarke on bass. Reeves is in fine form on "I Got It Bad" until, toward the end, she overacts and overscats and drags the whole thing down. (She should listen to Shirley Horn's version.) "That's All" is taken at a double tempo, with fine work by Childs but with a reading by Reeves that is utterly at odds with the intent of this originally lovely ballad. 2½ stars.

□

"IN THE MOOD." Sound track: Ralph Burns Big Band. Atlantic 7-81788-2-N. Writing this track did not impose a hardship on Burns, the Woody Herman arranger of the 1940s who became an Emmy and Oscar-winning composer. The tracks that are not taken more or less directly from the old records of "Don't Be That Way," "Take the A Train" and the title tune are workmanlike, unoriginal examples of Swing Era writing, with a few good, mostly short solo spots by Abe Most, Bill Watrous, Oscar Brashear and others. "Jack the Wonder Dog," played by Most on clarinet and Tom Ranier on piano, is unabashedly borrowed from a Benny Goodman-Mel Powell classic version of "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise." 2½ stars.

□

"SWINGIN' TILL THE GIRLS COME HOME." Lambert, Hendricks & Bavan. RCA/Bluebird 6282-2-RB. Yolande Bavan, the Sri Lanka-born actress and (secondarily) singer, replaced Annie Ross in this trio in 1962-63 when these live sessions were taped at Basin Street East, the Village Gate and the Newport Festival. Though she was not another Ross (witness the out-of-tune endings on "April in Paris" and "Doodlin'"), she did have a sense of the feeling represented by Hendricks' "lyricizations" of themes from such sources as Basie, Coltrane and Hancock. The ingenious material is inconsistently performed and there's a glut of scatting, but when Hendricks is front and center, as in "Gimme That Wine" and "Cloudburst," it's good fun. A few tunes have solos by Clark Terry, Coleman Hawkins and Thad Jones. 3 stars.

10/23/87

JAZZ REVIEW

LEA AT PERINO'S: RARE TREAT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Ever since she recorded her first album in 1955, Barbara Lea has been compared to the late Lee Wiley, whose career passed its peak around 1950. Wednesday in the Oak Room at Perino's, she left no doubt that her gift for understatement, her ability to invest a song with a subliminal jazz flavor while avoiding the trap of bending it out of shape, led to the comparison. Even more reminiscent of Wiley is Lea's hauntingly poignant vibrato.

A trim woman with short red hair and an often hidden reserve of strength, she is the quintessential East Side New York cabaret singer who draws, as Wiley did, on the songs of Willard Robison, Hoagy Carmichael, Irving Berlin and their contemporaries.

She can sing "I Got Rhythm" as if she were unaware that it is not supposed to be a ballad; nor is it customary to whistle, as she did, an ad-lib solo in the second chorus. Her investigation of lost times ("Harlem on My Mind") and obscure songs by famous writers (Ellington's "Brown Betty") is tempered by the occasional latter-day work such as Dave Frishberg's "Dear Bix." Next, she observed, "Since we are not in Vegas, I guess we can do another Frishberg tune," and moved on to "You Are There."

"She Didn't Say Yes" (Kern and Harbach, 1931) is packed with *naughty* lyrics, some of which Lea momentarily forgot. As for "Begin the Beguine," one is tempted to point to the line that goes "No, don't let them begin the beguine" and second that motion. A song called "Without Rhyme Or Reason" lived up to its title.

These, however, were minor flaws in Lea's subtly shaded, superbly polished, intelligently phrased investigation of a long gone time, when song writers dared to use such a term as *ad libitum* (and rhymed it with "equilibrium").

It has taken 31 years for Lea to land her first Los Angeles night-club engagement. Happily this is no fly-by-night job; she will be around Thursdays through Saturdays until Nov. 7. This Saturday, and again Oct. 31, her capable pianist, Tom Garvin, will be replaced by the eminent Jimmy Rowles.

51

JAZZ 10/25/87 1

CONVENTION SOUNDS A BATTLE CRY FOR UNITY

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—The recent sixth annual Jazz Times Magazine Convention was akin to a physical checkup—except that each of the 600 registered participants was at once a doctor and a patient. By the end of the convention, they had learned a great deal about one another's economic and artistic health.

The theme this year, detailed in an opening session by Jazz Times publisher Ira Sabin, was "Jazz and the Media: Past, Present and Future." Musicians, radio and TV programmers, managers, producers, record company executives, promotion men and women took part in lively, sometimes contentious panel discussions held here at the Rooseveit Hotel.

Billy Taylor, the keynote speaker, had some cogent comments on the relations between jazz and the media, particularly TV and radio. As a pianist, activist and TV personality (on CBS' "Sunday Morning" for almost six years), he has seen the problem from many sides.

"Those of us in the field," he said, "know what is important, but this convention is about getting the message *beyond* the field—whether it's the print media, the electronic media, whatever; it's about getting people to experience the kinds of things that get us excited—the passion of a particular style or group or artist.

"I've been fortunate that on 'Sunday Morning' my jazz subjects are given the same care and attention as any political or social pre-

Keynote speaker Billy Taylor: "On too many shows, jazz segments are emasculated and it's assumed they are of limited concern."

had a roller-coaster life in both radio and TV. "Radio brought jazz into the mainstream of American consciousness in the 1920s and '30s; there were many live programs by people like Fats Waller and Art Tatum, as well as regular shows by Ellington and the other great bands. But as radio grew into a giant industry, everyone found ways to get around the FCC stipulation that programs must be in the public interest. Most jazz was relegated to less desirable times.

"When TV came along, people were saying 'How many ways can you photograph a jazz combo in a smoke-filled room?' Yet in the early years there were some excellent regular TV series on major stations, even on NBC and CBS. But TV too became economically powerful, and again jazz was

Please Turn to Page 78

3

I believe it.

"How in the world can you create any magazine, or any other media outlet, when you don't have a coherent audience at which to aim? The traddies don't want to go to a concert if it smacks of be-bop, people don't want to know about fusion, and on and on. . . .

"As a performer, I've found that we are dealing with a bunch of small enclosed boxes. The older, traditionalist fans in the suburbs have plenty of money, but they will spend it only on what they consider *the truth*.

"We all have certain preferences. It's no secret that I prefer the older forms of jazz, but it doesn't take any quantum leap of the imagination for me to sit and listen to, say, the World Saxophone Quartet, and decide what they are setting out to do and whether they are doing it well. When I was writing for the New York Post, I went out to review Sun Ra, and actually enjoyed it.

"There are overall musical considerations that transcend questions of style, period, personal taste. Before we put pen to paper, we have to recognize that we are not simply fans who like this music and don't like that."

But, as Neal Tesser commented, "Jazz has moved into so many different areas in its short history that we can't expect everyone to cover them all."

If no agreements were reached at the end of this or any other argument, at least enough opinions were aired to provide a useful experience.

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PLEA MADE: Joe Williams was this year's guest of honor. An hourlong give-and-take, during which he fielded questions about his life and times, was among the most relaxed and least businesslike events of the four-day convention. Williams talked eloquently about Frank Sinatra ("He has given us an immense volume of gorgeous work; he was a monster in his time"), Nat King Cole ("He opened the doors for black male vocalists") and sound systems ("Amplification has ruined jazz. We need a return to proper acoustic sound").

□

FUTURE PLANS: Next year, the convention will be held in Los Angeles. This, in itself, will be a valuable development. The Southland scene presently boasts twice as many jazz clubs as New York, as well as many talented artists of whom the parochial East Coast critics seem unaware.

Jazz, as Sudhalter said, is a fragmented community, but events like these conventions, which bring the jazz world a little closer to an understanding of one another's views and problems, are of central importance in the quest for a better mutual understanding of both the art and business of music. □

52

CONVENTION

Continued from 76th Page

pushed aside."

Frank Radice, the executive producer of "Showbiz Today" for Cable News Network, said: "The jazz community needs to build a publicity machine. At CNN, I get calls every 15 minutes from some rock 'n' roll publicist or record company; they send us such a barrage of information that I can't get away from them. That's the way it's got to work for jazz." (He did not mention that most jazz artists cannot afford a high-powered public relations representative.)

Two other points were made during a "Jazz on TV" panel. First, the "jazz-isn't-visual" theory can be dealt with, as so many pop artists already deal with it, by intelligently incorporating such elements as dancing into a presentation. Second, there should be jazz videos—developed, Taylor pointed out, along their own lines," as opposed to copying Michael Jackson's bag." Videos devoted to pure jazz are still all but nonexistent. As Radice observed: "I cannot afford to send out my camera crews to make them, so if an artist comes to me with a pre-taped video, I can combine it with an interview and give jazz some real exposure."

A panel discussion on "Jazz in Print Today" was enlivened by the presence of Dick Sudhalter, who has had parallel careers as a cornetist, author and journalist. In a bitingly critical analysis, he observed: "It's alarming that we've had a great number of books about jazz, with no coherent literary standard. [Albert Murray's] recent book on Count Basie, for example, didn't begin to penetrate its subject; the author did not deliver his mandate by getting beneath the surface of this pivotal figure in jazz history. The Buck Clayton biography was similarly superficial; his co-author seemed unwilling to push him onto a discussion of any depth."

Gary Giddins, jazz writer for the Village Voice, demurred: "The Basie book is masterful; the author had no mandate. Basie wanted to present himself as he felt he should be seen, and the writer obliged him."

There was general agreement among the panelists that jazz magazines and newspapers need a more scholarly approach and more probing feature stories than can be found in the U.S. press. Neal Tesser, the jazz critic for USA Today, delivered a devastating attack on Down Beat magazine ("a complete mess"), once a vital force in the jazz world but now subject to frequent changes of editorial control. He found it ironic that "the country that lost World War II has a jazz magazine that is far more comprehensive than anything we have." (Swing Journal of Tokyo runs to 350 pages a month, Down Beat to 64. Jazz Times, 72 pages this month, is normally much smaller.)

Stuart Troup of Newsday blamed economics: "We live in a capitalistic society, and it's debatable whether there's an audience for the kind of magazine we want." Peter Levinson, a press agent who deals with jazz clients, added: "Nothing will happen until some foundation says 'Let's give a serious jazz magazine a chance, and let's fund it for three years and see what happens.'"

Sudhalter reached the nub of the matter with an impassioned outburst: "I've been hearing a lot of talk at this convention about selling the music, the jazz audience, the jazz community. I'd like to ask: *What* music? *What* community? *What* audience? This is the most balkanized, fragmented, vocally partisan series of small fiefdoms that I've ever seen in my life! There are people from some of those Balkan countries who say that democracy is chaos, and sometimes

LACY ATKINS / Los Angeles Times

Disc Jockey Chuck Niles: "I was a big fish in a small pond, but I wanted to find a bigger pond."

NILES' TASTE JAZZES UP RADIO WAVES

By LEONARD FEATHER

"I played my first gig on saxophone," said Chuck Niles, "when I was 14, at a hotel which actually was a house of ill repute. The war was in its early days and we were right outside the gate of Westover Air Force Base."

To any Los Angeles resident who has listened to jazz on the radio, Chuck Niles is known not as a sax player, but as the city's perennially eloquent voice. When he is not on the air he may be at some worthwhile benefit or tribute, such as the KKGO-sponsored Woody Herman dedication tonight at the Wadsworth Theatre, which he will emcee in his familiar burnished baritone.

Back home in Springfield, Mass., Niles studied clarinet, then alto and tenor sax, playing in school bands. Though he was still involved in music, after emerging from Navy service in 1946 he went to American International College and graduated with a degree in psychology.

"But then I really started playing. There was a band that did a lot of college dances around Massachusetts, and I was sorta serious about playing."

In 1950, just out of college, he became interested in radio and went to work doing a morning show on WTXL in Springfield. From that point on his careers as radio personality and musician ran parallel, until he gave up public performing in the mid-1960s (but he still has three horns at home).

His first trip to California was, to say the least, uneventful. "I stayed for about a minute-and-a-half and couldn't get arrested; so I went to Florida in my car. Stopped at a gas station, and the guy pumping gas turned out to be a former bass player. He told me there might be an opening at a Daytona Beach radio station, and there was. I stayed there about a year, made a couple of trips to New York, but mostly worked around Florida—a gig reporting sports every night on Channel 12, a radio show in West Palm Beach. I was a big fish in a small pond, but I wanted to find a bigger pond."

A second Southland venture proved luckier. Niles landed a job as the afternoon movie host on Channel 9, and worked part time at KFOX in Long Beach. While there he met Jim Gosa (now a KKGO colleague) and the legendary "Sleepy" Stein.

"Sleepy asked if I'd like to be involved with this new jazz station he was starting, KNOB. I said yes, even though there was no money. I had been doing some movie work, a few acting jobs, so I could afford to do it."

The KNOB job lasted (with time out for summer stock acting assignments) until 1965, when the station changed hands and gave up on jazz. Meanwhile, KBCA (now known as KKGO) had become the dominant jazz outlet. Niles went to work there and, with a few absences, has been at the microphone there ever since.

He has been a constant activist for live jazz on the air. In the early 1970s, he began presenting Sunday concerts at the Museum of Science and Industry. Since January, 1984, he has been hosting jazz recitals at the Wadsworth Theatre. They are now heard on the first Sunday of every month. On Nov. 1, the incumbent group will be the New American Orchestra. Additionally, Niles presents live music every Tuesday from 8 to 8:30 p.m. at the Biltmore Hotel's Grand Avenue Bar.

"My hours on the station now are from 6 to 9 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. I keep busy, and in my spare time for the past three years I've been working on a screenplay about Central Avenue. It's a great story with a lot of human interest as well as music."

Niles is respected by listeners for his impeccable taste in music and for his obviously thorough knowledge of the subject. He is admired no less for his public service work.

Niles shrugs off compliments with a grin. "I don't want to pass myself off as a goody-goody or too altruistic," he says, "but I will say this: I believe in what I'm doing."

JAZZ TIMES Nov. '87

From the Publisher

Leonard Feather and Ira Gitler, two long-time, valued contributors to *JazzTimes*, are among the most respected writers in jazz. Both have told me that the most often-asked question to them during their travels in the '80s has been "When is there going to be a new Encyclopedia of Jazz?"

In the past there have been new editions every ten years. With the resurgence of jazz in the public consciousness, there has been a reissue explosion on LP and, particularly now, CD, and much new recording. Many new players have emerged as jazz continues to grow internationally. New careers need to be reported, just as the biographies of the established players must be updated.

More than ten years have passed since The Encyclopedia of *Jazz in the Seventies*, by Feather and Gitler, was published. It was the last to be issued and as valuable as all the previous editions in the *Encyclopedia of Jazz* series begun by Feather in 1955.

Several publishers have shown interest in a new Encyclopedia but they alone cannot subsidize a book of this magnitude. The enormity of such an undertaking, and the change in the economic structure over a thirty year span, dictate that a project of this nature must be funded through a private foundation or governmental agency connected to the arts.

Gitler has for several years tried to obtain a grant from the federal agencies that deal with these matters but has met with no success.

The Encyclopedia of Jazz is a book that is important to all segments of the world jazz community. The organizations which fund the arts must find a way to help bring to fruition an *Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Eighties* before the Nineties begin.

Ira Sabin

Eastwood Gives 'Bird' Wings

Legendary Saxophonist Charlie Parker Is Subject of a Movie

By LEONARD FEATHER

"The first time I heard Charlie Parker," says Clint Eastwood, "I was overwhelmed. Living in the Bay Area, I had been following the big resurgence of traditional jazz—Lu Watters, Bob Scobey, Kid Ory and all that—but hearing Bird, even though I couldn't understand him at first, really turned me around."

Eastwood is leaning against a dilapidated Ford parked outside a brownstone house on West 52nd Street, near Fifth Avenue—the fabled block whose small, shoebox-shaped nightclubs have played host to half the great names in jazz history.

This is, of course, not the original 52nd Street, but a strikingly real reconstruction on the lot at the Burbank Studios. Shooting began here last week on "Bird," the long-awaited motion picture about the legendary saxophonist Charlie Parker, that Eastwood, who once played piano in Oakland for beer and tips, is producing and directing.

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"Bird," by Eastwood's own admission, is a labor of love and is being shot on a modest budget.

"This is a small, very personal story," he says. "It's funny—Americans have two original art forms—jazz and the Western movie. When you go to other countries you realize these are the two things that have the most influence around the world."

Eastwood's background in and around jazz has long been an open secret. "My mother was a great Fats Waller fan," he said, between takes. "By the time I was 15 or so I had learned enough to play at the Omar Club on Broadway in Oakland, where the laws were real loose and they'd let me play for free meals. At school the only instrument available was a fluegelhorn, which wasn't considered so hip in those days, but I did play horn a bit; however, mostly I concentrated on ragtime and blues piano." (Eastwood can be heard at the piano, along with Mike Lang and Pete Jolly, as part of a three-keyboard boogie-woogie number on the sound-track album of "City Heat.")

He remembers vividly his first exposure to Bird. "That was an incredible Jazz at the Philharmonic concert—Lester Young, my first reed idol, was also there, as well as Coleman Hawkins, Flip Phillips, Howard McGhee, Hank Jones. Later on, I was exposed to people like Dave Brubeck, and then, while I was in the Army at Ft. Ord, I'd go to hear Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker."

Courtesy of Chan Parker

Courtesy of Chan Parker

Above, legendary sax man Charlie and Chan Parker in '51. Chan is a consultant to "Bird" film. Left, Parker at recording session in '53.

MARSHA TRAGER / Los Angeles Times

Producer-director Clint Eastwood on the Burbank set with Forest Whitaker, who plays the title role, and Diane Venora, who bears a strong resemblance to Chan Parker and plays her in the film.

It was at Ft. Ord that Eastwood met Lennie Niehaus, an ex-Kenton alto sax player. Their friendship eventually led to jobs for Niehaus, who wrote the music for a series of Eastwood films: "Tightrope," "City Heat," "Pale Rider," "Heartbreak Ridge." When the "Bird" project got under way, Niehaus took his sax out of mothballs in order to teach Forest Whitaker, who plays the title role.

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The script, by Joel Oliansky, concentrates mainly on Parker's last years, and on his relationship with Chan, the last woman in his short and star-crossed life (he died in 1955 at 34). Diane Venora, a 1977 drama major from the Juilliard School who had a small role in "Cotton Club," is playing Chan.

Red Rodney, the white trumpeter who toured with Parker, has worked on the sound track, served as a consultant and will be enacted in the movie by Michael Zelnicker. Dizzy Gillespie, who with Parker pioneered the be-bop revolution of the 1940s and whom Bird once called "the other half of my heartbeat," will be played by Sam Wright.

The quest for authenticity in "Bird" has been remarkable. Eastwood sent for the real Chan (known as Chan Parker during the years she spent with Bird) to leave her home outside Paris and serve as a consultant. She spent many hours in consultation with Venora, whose strong resemblance to the youthful Chan is coupled with a fierce dedication. Chan devoted a no-less-protracted session to filling in Whitaker on Bird's personality.

Parker's chaotic life involved at least one legal marriage, back in his Kansas City teen-age years; involvements with several other women; a son now in his 40s, and a daughter by Chan whose death in infancy was one of the many traumas of his later years. Some years after Parker's death, Chan married another alto saxophonist, Phil Woods, who at one time was hailed as the next Charlie Parker. After their breakup she settled in France.

Parker died at 34 of a seizure he suffered while visiting the East Side home of a jazz patron, the Baroness Nica de Koenigswarter. (The New York Daily News ran a headline: "Bop King Dies in Heiress' Flat.") He had been destroying himself for years through drugs, drink and pills, but there were periods when, after straightening out, he was a relatively normal and consistently amiable human being.

Despite the tragic end, there was much in Bird's career that will provide light relief. Part of the story is a Jewish wedding he played as a favor to Rodney; later there was the famous trip south, with Rodney as a sideman forced to pacify the rednecks by pretending he was black (no Southerner would tolerate an integrated band), trying to prove it by calling himself "Albino Red" and singing the

Please Turn to Page 44

Eastwood Brings Jazz Great 'Bird' to Screen

Director Clint draws on own musical roots

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Hollywood

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Two doors down is a bar and restaurant. A menu posted outside offers Lobster Thermidor for $2. Across the street is an open-air newsstand offering the latest magazines: Click, Yank, Look.

This is, of course, not the original 52nd Street, but a strikingly real reconstruction on the lot at the Burbank Studios. Shooting began recently on "Bird," the long-awaited motion picture about the legendary

BY THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Forest Whitaker, as Charlie Parker, and Diane Venora, his companion Chan, rehearse a scene with director Clint Eastwood

Eastwood Gives 'Bird' Wings

2

Continued from 5th Page

blues.

Although most of the action is concentrated in those later years, there will be some brief early scenes showing Parker's evolution as a youngster in Kansas City, spurned at first for his supposed incompetence, later idolized by his peers. The problem of finding a youthful counterpart to play a 16-year-old Bird at the Reno Club in Kansas City was neatly resolved when Whitaker told Eastwood: "I have a 16-year-old brother who looks just like me. Why don't you use him?" Accordingly, Damon Whitaker was hired to play the embryonic Bird.

The inevitable question arises: Why another movie about a junkie jazz artist? Eastwood, who is well aware of the negative side of "Lady Sings the Blues" and even "'Round Midnight," replies: "The central fact is that he revolutionized the way everyone plays the saxophone. I'm interested in what made the man tick in his relationships, and what made him so amazingly inventive.

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MARSHA THAEDER / Los Angeles Times

Forest Whitaker, who plays Charlie Parker in "Bird," is studying sax: "Of course, you won't hear me in the movie, but at least it will look right."

Rodney told me that when Bird caught him using, he was furious, even threatened to beat him up. He told him, 'You can't do this! It doesn't make you play better!' So maybe there is a message. I won't say I'm making an anti-drug film, but if it turns out that way it won't break my heart."

Forest Whitaker, 26, an earnest young man from Longview, Tex., seems to be an apt choice to play Parker. Though a little taller and heavier, he has the same malleable features. As Eastwood puts it, "He has a sort of pathos quality along with an ingratiating smile." Moreover, his musical background equips him for a deep understanding of the role.

"I studied opera at USC Music Conservatory," Whitaker says, "and even though I went to drama school soon after, I have never lost my interest in music. I played trumpet for a while; my father listened to records by Bird and all the great people.

"Because I can read music, and understand the structure and fingering of the various horns, I've been getting along fine studying with Lennie Niehaus. I can play 'Lover Man' and some of the other things off Bird's records. Of course, you won't hear me in the movie, but at least it will look right."

What will be heard in the film should be effective. In an engineering coup, Parker's solos have been isolated on the original records, and other musicians such as Red Rodney, Jon Faddis, Ray Brown and Monty Alexander have been brought in to update the sound quality. Charles McPherson, the Bird-inspired alto soloist from San Diego, also has done some recording.

For Whitaker, among whose credits are "Platoon," "The Color of Money" and "Stakeout," portraying Parker will be challenging.

"I listen to Bird's music most of the time," he says. "I'm trying to find out some of the keys to his heart, to let his music become a part of me. Here's a man who was a genius, who influenced the whole spectrum of music, at a time when it was hard for a black man to gain the acceptance he deserved.

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MARCIA REID

Producer/director Clint Eastwood, left, and Red Rodney at recording session for "Bird" sound track.

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Clint Eastwood Bringing Charlie Parker to Screen

BY LEONARD FEATHER

After many years of rumors, the long awaited film based on the life of Charlie Parker is a reality, thanks to the initiative of Clint Eastwood. Shooting was scheduled to begin October 12th.

Eastwood, a longtime jazz fan, took over the rights to a script that was once reported to have been set for use as a Richard Pryor vehicle. Instead, the role of Bird will be played by Forrest Whittaker, best known for his parts in "Platoon" and "The Color Of Money."

Lennie Niehaus, who played alto in the 1950s Stan Kenton Orchestra but who has been active in recent years as a composer/arranger, is in charge of the music. At press time some pre-recording had been done, with Charles McPherson playing alto; however, it was expected that the rights would be acquired to use some of Parker's actual recordings.

Red Rodney is also a consultant and will be portrayed in the movie. Buddy Jones, a bassist who lives in the Bay area not far from Eastwood (who is mayor of Carmel), also has been consulted.

Eastwood has been to France to meet with Chan Parker, the last woman in Bird's life; her role in the story will be of major importance. According to Dizzy Gillespie, who has seen the script and will also be portrayed, the prospects are good for this to emerge as an authentic and valuable production.

Eastwood's jazz involvement goes back forty years. "The first time I saw Bird," he told me, "was at a Jazz at the Philharmonic concert in Oakland in 1946. Lester Young was there too, as well as Coleman Hawkins, Howard McGhee and Hank Jones. I also saw Bird at Bop City in San Francisco and at Billy Berg's in Hollywood." ■

He'll Make Our Day

JAZZ TIMES Nov. '87

saxophonist Charlie Parker, which Eastwood, who once played piano in Oakland for beer and tips, is producing and directing.

"Bird," by Eastwood's own admission, is a labor of love and is being shot on a modest budget.

"This is a small, very personal story," he says. "You always hope, going in, that something like this will make money over the long haul. It's funny, Americans have two original art forms — jazz and the western movie. When you go to other countries you realize these are the two things that have the most influence around the world."

Eastwood's background in and around jazz has long been an open secret. "My mother was a great Fats Waller fan," he says, relaxing during a lull between takes. "By the time I was 15 or so I had learned enough to play at the Omar Club on Broadway in Oakland, where the laws were real loose and they'd let me play for free meals. At school the only instrument available was a fluegelhorn, which wasn't considered so hip in those days, but I did play horn a bit; however, mostly I concentrated on ragtime and blues piano" (Eastwood can be heard at the piano, along with Mike Lang and Pete Jolly, as part of a three-keyboard boogie-woogie number on the sound-track album of "City Heat").

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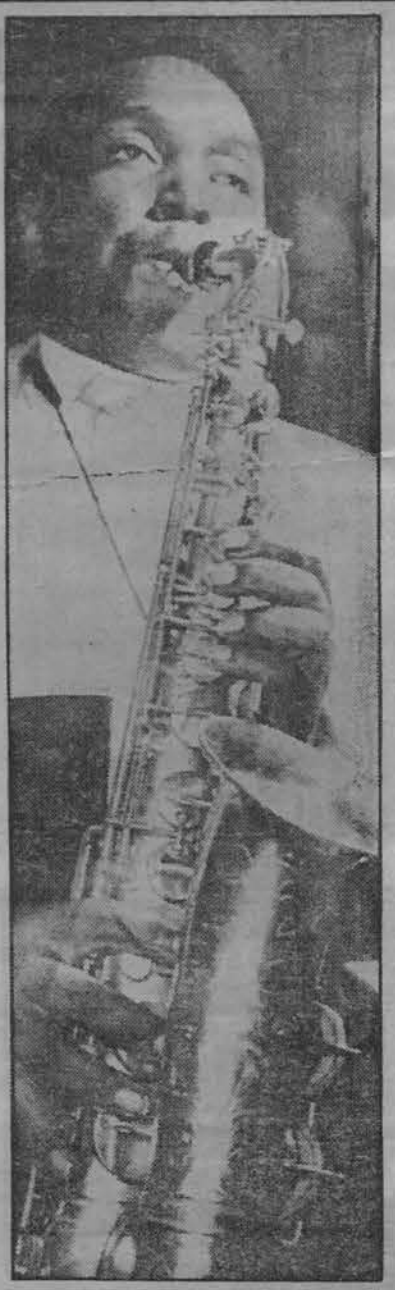

'The central fact is that [Charlie Parker, shown above in 1949,] revolutionized the way everyone plays the saxophone; I'm interested in what made the man tick in his relationships, and what made him so amazingly inventive'

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The inevitable question arises: Why another movie about a junkie jazz artist? Eastwood, who is well aware of the negative side of "Lady Sings the Blues" and even " 'Round Midnight," replies: "The central fact is that he revolutionized the way everyone plays the saxophone. I'm interested in what made the man tick in his relationships, and what made him so amazingly inventive.

"Not only that; Bird was a do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do person. Red Rodney told me that when Bird caught him using (drugs), he was furious, even threatened to beat him up. He told him, 'You can't do this! It doesn't make you play better!' So maybe there is a message. I won't say I'm making an anti-drug film, but if it turns out that way it won't break my heart."

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"He was a remarkable individual who seemed able to adapt himself to deal with any type of person. There was a certain duality about him that I have to capture.

"Yeah, he was a heroin addict, but what matters is that he created so much magnificent and unprecedented music. It was amazing that he and Dizzy could play together in such perfect sync, even though their lives were so very different. I just hope this movie will show how much artists like Bird and Dizzy and Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell contributed.

"I hope people will grasp the magnitude of what went into their innovations." ■

Los Angeles Times

WOODY: A Leader Who Outlasted His Time

Continued from Page 1

their time, it seems now, surviving despite terrible management, the disruptions of war and then of peace, the rise of the vocalists, the evolution of other styles (bop and beyond), the decline of the clubs and dance halls where the bands played, the punishing hand of time itself.

Woody Herman was a miracle of survival. And although he kept going, as we all came to know, because he was an honest man trying to pay off undeserved debts to a tone-deaf Uncle Sam, what you had to believe was that he was really out there on the road, playing high school gyms in towns that didn't even have a movie house any more, because there wasn't anything else quite as satisfying as making music.

He said, with a touch of bitterness, that keeping a big band was a costly hobby, a folly in which (as Dylan Thomas once remarked of his life) lack of money rolls in.

When I last saw him, at Donte's a few years ago, Herman was already in his late 60s, a surprisingly small, trim man with what you were tempted to call muscular cheeks and lips, from blowing the clarinet so high and hard for so long.

Some of the sidemen on that gig could have been not just his children but his grandchildren. They played with the old-time driving spirit that always marked the Herman band, but they also had a technical virtuosity and a sure command of their instruments that made it hard to believe what you were hearing.

From the beginning, Woody made uncommon demands on his sidemen: the don't-stop-for-nothin' tempos and the high, precise and wailing brass sections, the reeds galloping as one were central to the Herd signature. I thought that night that if you could measure it somehow, you could prove that the young musicians were breaking the B-flat equivalents of the four-minute mile.

As you remember the bands, you think of Goodman and the bright, crisp precision he gave you, lit by his own rippling solos; or of Basie and that matchless and driving rhythm section, punctuated by his wonderful waste-not, one-finger piano inserts. Ellington meant those bluesy tone colorings and arrangements that seemed to take shape as they went along. And then there was Woody, crying, "Charge!" and dashing hellbent for the future.

He was not alone in pushing at the limits, if any, of the big band sound, and as somebody has already remarked, he had a gift for recruiting the arrangers and the players who were ready and willing for his journeys into unexplored country. But what Woody held onto for dear life was the beat. Ballad-slow or breakneck fast, the beat was steady and you always knew where it was.

Jazz music is propulsion and Herman and his herds never forgot it.

The big bands, in a sense, live on. The ghost bands play the old charts, for nostalgists. New bands try for new sounds, but there's no steady money in it, and for the most part the bands exist only intermittently, labors of love for musicians who make their bread reading other charts.

It's always a temptation to blow "Taps" for the end of an era, but this time maybe we better pick up the horn. You look around for the other survivors, any other still-living, still-playing bandleaders from that majestic half-century of American popular music.

But there doesn't seem to be anybody else in the darkened club. The chairs are upended on the tables and there's a crumpled piece of paper on the bandstand, a request from the party in the corner for "Four Brothers."

HERMAN

Continued from Page 1

Edison, Nat Adderley, Al Dailey and Byron Stripling all contributed to the legend.

His relationship with the sidemen was not that of the typical maestro. "We never felt we were working for him," said Nat Pierce, the pianist and composer who performed with Herman off and on for many years. "We were working *with* him."

Difficult though it is to select highlights in a career so rich in historic moments, certain episodes come to mind. In 1945-46 there was his sponsored radio series, a rare honor for any jazz group. In 1946, too, there was the commissioned work from Igor Stravinsky, "Ebony Concerto," with Stravinsky conducting the recording. In 1952-54 his attempt to direct his own company (Mars), though short-lived, produced some exceptional records.

The band went through a so-called "funk phase" in the 1950s and '60s, recording works by Horace Silver and Charles Mingus. In 1976 the Herman Herd celebrated its 40th anniversary with a Carnegie Hall concert that brought Getz, Burns and other graduates back into the fold, just as his 50th-anniversary celebration at the Hollywood Bowl last year pitted the regular band against an all-star alumni orchestra.

Herman's death did not mark, as some will no doubt claim, the end of an era. In a sense, the era he symbolized ended with the demise of the swing bands. Like a handful of others, he was a survivor. To the cries that the big bands were dead, he issued, through his long succession of Young Thundering Herds, a defiant denial.

That he was forced, through a combination of bad management, bad luck and ill health, to spend his last days so pathetically is hard for those of us who knew him to accept. Though clearly there should have been a more peaceful and appropriate finale to his life's work, we will continue to think of him as we knew him: saluting the thousands at Newport or Monterey, proudly introducing this or that new trumpeter or pianist or singer, acknowledging the standing ovations from coast to coast and country to country, singing that wild out-chorus to "Caldonia" while the brass section went berserk. That is the Woody Herman we all expect to remember.

11/14/87

JAZZ REVIEW

Shaughnessy-Led Quintet Beats the Odds

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Room Upstairs, at Le Cafe in Sherman Oaks, is almost certainly the least capacious jazz club in town. This would not seem to qualify it as the ideal location for a five-piece band led by a drummer, yet Ed Shaughnessy's quintet manages to beat the odds.

Shaughnessy is best known as a commanding and dynamic big-band drummer, and, although the sound in this intimate setting occasionally came close to overstepping the threshold of pain, more often than not he functioned as a powerful yet cohesive member of a flawless rhythm section.

He also knows when restraint is called for. Playing the Jerome Kern standard "Dearly Beloved," he switched from sticks to brushes during John Leitham's bass solo, then traded discrete eight bar solos with the horn players, Tom Peterson on tenor sax and Bruce Paulson on trombone.

The tenor-and-trombone front line blends comfortably, with most of the tunes introduced in unison or occasionally harmonized. Peterson, who composes much of the group's material, demonstrated in his otherworldly tune "Another Time, Another Place" how much can be achieved with two-part harmony. Both men are vital, driving soloists; both are also capable of laid-back moments, as they showed in Horace Silver's beguiling work "Peace."

Man for man, this is about as strong a band individually as collectively. The pianist Tom Ranier was all over the keyboard, his ideas never letting up. Fast, funky and fierce by turn, he has developed impressively over the years.

Leitham may be the world's fastest left-handed bass player. His section work is solid; his solos are consistently meaningful. Like so many of today's younger masters of the upright bass he is technically adroit enough to play with guitar-like fluency.

Given these solo advantages, coupled with a library that rejects cliche standard tunes in favor of fresh material by Peterson, Randy Aldcroft and others, Shaughnessy can claim one of the most vigorously rewarding acoustic jazz groups now on the Southland horizon.

56

Woody Herman—Elegy for a Swing Giant

Tragic Coda to a Life That Spanned Half a Century of Musical Achievement

By LEONARD FEATHER

It seems cruelly unjust that the last months of Woody Herman—who died Thursday—should have been spent enveloped in tragedy. His was a life marked by so much joy of achievement. The outpouring of sympathy, the outflow of funds to help him in that final crush of physical and economic disaster, reflected a deep love of the man that crossed all lines of age, sex, race or musical preference; but none of the noble gestures could erase the memory of an anticlimactic end to a triumphant career that spanned more than half a century.

Essentially, there were three main stages in the evolution of the Herman orchestra: the early Band That Played the Blues, the poll-winning Second Herd that presented a modernized face with overtones of be-bop, and the Four Brothers band through whose ranks passed such saxophonists as Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Jimmy Giuffre, Serge Chaloff and Gene Ammons.

These accomplishments, commemorated on records that are still being reissued, took place during the orchestra's first decade. But Herman by the late 1940s was enough of a world-class figure to continue dominating the scene, while the personnel and size of his groups fluctuated.

Herman himself, though not a virtuoso musician, somehow lent a fittingly feverish touch with his short, shrill clarinet solos, or brought a Johnny Hodges-like languor to his occasional alto sax ballads. Keeping up with the times, he took up the soprano sax when that instrument became a symbol of the post-Coltrane era.

Woody Herman

Herman's efforts to keep abreast of developments in music found their outlet in many ways: in the arrangements he commissioned by John Coltrane and Chick Corea; in the extended concert pieces contributed by such promising young writers as Alan Broadbent, and in the original jazz works by still newer writers like John Fedchock. But he never forgot, and never neglected, the works that helped establish his worldwide fame, the Ralph Burns and Neal Hefti pieces that remained in his book until the end.

It is too seldom recognized that Herman's ranks at one time or another included a long line of black musicians. Ernie Royal, Oscar Pettiford, Gene Ammons, Milt Jackson, Sweets

Please see HERMAN, Page 10

By CHARLES CHAMPLIN,
Times Arts Editor

If you weren't there, it is easy enough to think of the Big Band Era as a single homogeneous mass of sound. Put it on the track of a movie, with a trumpet section, a sax section and a sock-cymbal (a. k. a. the hi-hat) chu-chooshing the choirs along and you've got the '30s, the '40s, the '50s.

But if you were there, with your ear to a small radio, straining to catch late remotes from the Log Cabin at Armonk, N.Y., the volume turned down to the threshold of audibility so you wouldn't get warnings from the living room, it wasn't like that at all.

Even the sweet bands, the dance bands, of which Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians was the role model, had their mildly distinctive styles (each, if you were into swing, more boring than the other).

But the big swing bands were another matter. Each of the great bands had its own signature. You may not have heard the tune or the arrangement before, but you didn't need more than a couple of bars to know it was the Duke, the Count, or Stan or Artie or Benny or Tommy or Harry. Or Woody.

There were other names, other bands that had shorter nights of glory: Bunny Berigan, Fletcher Henderson, Charlie Barnet, Erskine Hawkins, Buddy Rich, the great instrumentalists whose own presence mattered more than their surroundings. That shining number would include Earl Hines and the immortal Louis Armstrong.

The greatest of the swing bands outlasted

Please see WOODY, Page 10

JAZZ & VIBES NOV. '87

BOOK REPORT

photo by Keith Sipes

Leonard Feather

certainly made him the best-informed of writers on the panorama of jazz as a whole. Because he so seldom makes a mistake with *facts*, it is hard to understand why he credits Nat Cole with [illegible] as a jazz

groups is convincingly demonstrated on records made about 1933, 1934, 1937, 1938 and with Bechet in 1945-47, not to mention the Schola Cantorum date of 1956.

Orleans jazz, of which he had a deeper understanding than the revivalists. His success in organizing *uncommercial* jazz

Two meritorious themes that run through this incident-packed book are Feather's persistent opposition to racism and sexism, the latter as it affected women in jazz. On these subjects, the chapters in Part Three *(Prejudices)* are especially revealing and instructive. So is one headed *Business* in Part Four, where Billy Moore explains how and why America lost one of its best big-band arrangers.

Like all jazz autobiographies, this one tends to fall off toward the end. Although Feather's attitude throughout has been positive, always optimistic, he seems to have been daunted by the New Thing and, now, New Age Music. In an interesting Coda, he observes: "The jazz world is now populated by a substantial body of writers who were obliged to learn about the music's history backwards." The results of this truth are all too apparent. He also divides the jazz community into three groups: "the merchants, the observers and the musicians." A pragmatist might well conclude that the merchants and their radio stooges are now in control, and that New Age heralds a slong age.

There are 16 pages of photographs, a chapter in which fourteen of the author's songs are reproduced, and an index. Several pieces of memorabilia illustrate the text.

■ **STANLEY DANCE**

THE JAZZ YEARS: EARWITNESS TO AN ERA

Leonard Feather (310 pp., Da Capo Press, New York, $25.00, pb. $10.95).

Leonard Feather's career in jazz, as chronicled here, is unique in its dedication, industry and length. I doubt very much whether anyone else has spent so much time listening to and writing about the music in all its variety all over the globe, on land and sea. Probably, too, no one else has achieved a comparable level of financial security by jazz journalism, normally a notably ill-paid pursuit. This is where industry and energy must be recognized and credited. Apart from the many books for which he has been responsible, and a regular feature in the Sunday *Los Angeles Times*, his byline appears in numerous publications here and abroad.

His experiences and encounters with most of the music's great men have

establishing *Sweet Lorraine* as a jazz standard, for Jimmie Noone and Earl Hines did that in 1928. It had also been recorded by Sidney Bechet, Wingy Manone, Artie Shaw, Red McKenzie, Toots Mondello, Teddy Wilson, Art Tatum and Joe Venuti, among others, before Cole's version gave it greater impetus.

Feather's prodigious written output never by any means exhausted his talent and energy. As the book makes clear, he produced a great many records and wrote many songs, some of his blues enjoying considerable commercial success. These were not just labors of love, not examples of a hobbyist indulging his taste, but of a fully professional approach to gaining a livelihood in a highly competitive arena. The jealousies and enmities of the [illegible] that he was often obliged to adopt pseudonyms, some of which are interestingly disclosed here.

Generally speaking, the tone of the book is mellow, as befits the author's age. The battles of yesterday — and there were plenty — are referred to generously on the whole. The references to old adversaries like Hugues Panassié and myself, for example, are surprisingly kind, but some bitterness surfaces in the chapter dealing with "modly figs," where Nesuhi Ertegun and the late Ralph Gleason are quoted. Savageries were undoubtedly committed by both sides — indeed by three sides, because a third party still exists which likes neither figs nor boppers. But Feather and Barry Ulanov, who were the most influential critic-advocates of bop, can afford to be magnanimous now, for in effect they won the battle. Yet in history's longer perspective, I believe theirs may ultimately be seen to have been a Pyrrhic victory.

The chapter on Mezz Mezzrow throws new light on that strange character, but, as usual in this country, is unjust about his accomplishments. Although he made no claim to virtuosity on his instrument, he had a good concept of its role in New

WYNTON MARSALIS

photo: Elena Carminati

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THE JAZZ YEARS: Earwitness to an Era
by **Leonard Feather**
310 pp., ill., hard cover, $11.95

This memoir allows its readers to appreciate the author of The Encyclopedia of Jazz not only as an extraordinary jazz writer but also as a musician. Because of his experiences as a composer of songs and as producer of many jazz recordings, **Feather** writes authoritatively about music; not as a distanced observer, but as a particpant. In The Jazz Years, **Feather** has avoided relying heavily on his previously published works; rather, he provides a sweeping narrative of the jazz world from 1935 to the present.

In addition to providing anecdotal material about the many musicians with whom he has associated over the decades, **Feather** raises three crucial issues in chapters titled "The Moldy Figs." "Race," amd "Business." **Feather** laments the amount of energy and ink wasted by jazz writers who have felt bound to denounce innovative musicians and styles of performance. It is at once entertaining and puzzling to read **Feather's** excerpts from these now-historical wars of the pen and it is difficult for readers under the age of 35 to imagine anyone seriously arguing that "swing" and "bop" are not genuine forms of jazz. **Feather** diplomatically suggests that writers should channel their efforts toward advancing the cause of musicians they believe in, rather than denouncing those they oppose.

But the jazz critics have not been the only ones unable to get along. Race relation issues have gone hand in hand with jazz music since its beginning. In the world of entertainment, both races have shared the close quarters of the bandstand without being able to share restaurants, hotels, and other travel accommodations. Ex-Englishman **Feather** brought to America the objective eye of another culture, and has noticed some instances of racial bitterness (even among musicians) which may have gone unnoticed by the native eye. He deplores these givens and sighs in disappointment.

Feather's chapter "Business" documents the all-too-common scandalous practices of businessmen against artists. It is impossible, he asserts, to reconcile jazz music with the very cold and calculating world of the music industry. He personally suffered as certain publishers, bandleaders, and others in positions of power would force him to share the composer's credits for some of his songs, thus "cutting in" on the royalties of the sales. There seems to be a ray of hope here, however; whereas the music industry of the 1940s was largely dominated by the publishers and superstar personalities, the industry today sees much more power in the hands of the artists themselves.

What has happened to American jazz since **Feather** arrived in New York in 1935? This art form has attracted a worldwide audience. No longer owned only by Americans jazz has been eagerly embraced and developed internationally, thanks to recordings, radio broadcasts, magazines, concert tours, and festivals. The emotional appeal of jazz brings together men and women from vastly different cultures.

In addition to his narrative, **Feather** provides 16 pages of photos, 6 pages of exhibits (historic concert bills and newspaper clippings), and copies of the lead sheets for 14 of his songs. And if you are interested in the genesis of his three-volume Encyclopedia of Jazz, you'll learn how that ambitious project developed.

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(A resident of Madison, Wisconsin, **Paul Baker** also writes for Be-Bop & Beyond. We are pleased to welcome **Paul** as a contributor to the Jazz Journal.)

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JAZZ REVIEWS

11/5/87

Magic of Lionel Hampton Still Dazzling

By LEONARD FEATHER

Survival has been very much on our minds this past week. The loss of one hardy perennial, Woody Herman, reminded us that the ranks are thinning; on the other hand, Lionel Hampton's concert Tuesday at the Ambassador in Pasadena focused welcome attention on the toughest survivor of them all.

Hampton has been leading a band, usually a big one like his present 17-man unit, for 47 years. As so often happens, he has tended to lean heavily on past successes while incorporating a reasonable quota of newer material.

More and more, the emphasis is now placed on the leader; as long as he stuck to the vibraphone, as he did during most of the first half, the magic was still in brilliant and dynamic evidence.

Hampton is indomitable. As he showed in a long solo on "Cherokee," he can build his ideas magisterially while the band, riffing and punctuating, supplies intermittent support. But his real tour de force was "Skylark," performed simply with the rhythm section. As he moved from straight melody to simple variations to fierce flurries of 16th notes, he seemed more than ever in command of the instrument he brought to the attention of the jazz public more than half a century ago.

Along with Hamp the vibraphonist, of course, there is Hamp the entertainer and showman—singing, scatting, taking his turns at the drums, shouting ancient code words like "Hey-baba-rebop" and creating an atmosphere of simulated pandemonium.

Though the orchestra has become more and more a backdrop for these shenanigans, there were a couple of superior soloists among the seven or eight heard, notably Joe Magnarelli on trumpet and Cheryl Howard, who materialized for the second half to sing two Ellington numbers. A few unfamiliar arrangements were heard, with John Gordon's trombone well showcased in "My Shining Hour."

As the evening wore on, it lapsed into familiar routines, from "Hamp's Boogie Woogie" to "Flyin' Home" and "In the Mood." This capitulation to popular taste is an inevitable climax to every Hampton performance, and the Pasadena public ate it up. By the time the band got through it had done everything but break into a community tap dance.

Meanwhile, those of us who had come to hear the real artistry of Lionel Hampton had enough memories of that first half to keep us satisfied until his next visit. The great man's feet carry him more slowly today, but those magical hands have never been retarded by time.

JAZZ REVIEW

11/7/87

Trombonist Bill Watrous Sans Orchestra at the Loa

By LEONARD FEATHER

Bill Watrous, whose new album presents him in an elaborate orchestral setting, is working under conspicuously different conditions at the Loa in Santa Monica, where his accompaniment consists simply of three musicians playing without arrangements and obviously without rehearsal.

Fortunately, Watrous' virtuosity as a trombonist, and the quality of the company he is keeping on this modest gig, are rewarding enough to compensate for some of the shortcomings. He shines most brightly in the delineation of a standard melody such as "Stella by Starlight."

As he moves from thematic statement to variations, his phenomenal technique sometimes tends to run away with him. Typically, on a blues written by fellow trombonist J.J. Johnson (whose new quintet opens at the club Thursday), he began in an unpretentious indigo mood, then stepped up the notes-per-second quota until the original impact was slightly reduced.

Ron Eschete, the guitarist who seems to be a semi-regular in this room, achieved a commendable blend of fire and finesse, of chords and cooking single note lines, without ever overextending himself. Regrettably, he did not announce the two songs in his medley, "In Love in Vain" and "Stars Fell on Alabama." Watrous also failed to identify his own specialty, Ray Noble's "The Touch of Your Lips." Tunes of this type, unfamiliar to many younger listeners, deserve to be named.

Watrous has been featuring himself lately as a whistler, a role he assumed during one number here. Though he is an expert lip-puckerer, this sound is an acquired taste, like the bagpipes.

Bassist Ray Brown, leader of the backup trio, offered his by now familiar bowed solo on "Samba de Orfeu," performed impeccably.

Though this set clearly was not without its kinks, given the general level of talent among the participants it can be assumed they will be ironed out before the group closes Sunday.

60