AUGUST 11, '85 - MAY 20, '86

8/11/85

JAZZ

IT'S THE BEST OF TIMES FOR MEL TORME

By LEONARD FEATHER

"I swear to God," said Mel Torme, "this is the best time of my entire career. These are golden days for me."

His upbeat state of mind may well be understood in the light of everything that has happened for him in the last two or three years.

Two albums he made in 1982 and '83, both in partnership with George Shearing, won him his first-ever and second Grammy awards. Both were for Concord Jazz, a company that seems, unlike so many others he has worked with in a recording career that has spanned four decades, to understand how to present him and how to attain air play, distribution and sales.

The demand for his services is such that his agent is accepting bookings for 1987. "I can now do just about anything I want to do," Torme says, "with whomever I want. The resurgence of interest in jazz has helped me, since I never did feel that it was a stigma to be identified with jazz."

Torme, who's appearing at the Desert Inn in Las Vegas through Aug. 28, has long been in a unique position. Unlike any other singer he is not only an accomplished instrumentalist (piano, drums) but also writes his own orchestral arrangements. A respected songwriter, he has several standards to his credit; best known are "The Christmas Song" and "Born to Be Blue."

"You have a fine track record as a writer," I said, "but what have you done for us lately?"

"Well, I haven't done anything for myself or anyone else lately. For one thing, I've been working pretty steadily on my autobiography, of which I have completed 39 chapters. For another thing, writing my own arrangements takes me forever; I may work for days on end, two or three hours a day, on one 3½-minute chart.

"I'm so envious of the facility of guys like Billy May, who can sit in a car on the way to the session and write an arrangement, on his lap, with all the parts completely transposed. I just can't work that way—I simply have to do it at the piano, and I write everything in concert key; I let my copyist do the transposing.

"Aside from those reasons, the market for the kind of songs I write isn't all that encouraging. The only things I've done in recent years are 'I'm Gonna Miss You,' which was in my 1982 'Live at Marty's' album; and a tune that Gerry Mulligan and I wrote, 'This Couldn't Be the Real Thing,' which George Shearing sang on an album. Just recently, George suggested that I include something in a duo album we've made. It goes back to the era of 'Born to Be Blue,' when I was collaborating with Bob Wells; it's called 'After the Waltz Is Over.' It's not a bad song."

Admirers tend to ask Torme why he so seldom includes his own songs in a typical performance. "Actually, I like to hear *other* people sing my songs—except for 'The Christmas Song,' which I'll do whether it's December, March or July."

Torme's mention of an impending autobiography augurs a reading experience that should measure up to the articulate standards he has always maintained in interviews. Among his diverse interests, the history of popular music and jazz has intrigued him since his Chicago childhood, when he listened to the big bands on late-night radio.

"Duke Ellington and Artie Shaw were my No. 1 heroes—not that there weren't many others, but Duke's artistry was in a class by itself, and Artie not only was a marvelous musician but also had impeccable taste in his choice of tunes."

TONY BARNARD / Los Angeles Times

Mel Torme: "The resurgence of interest in jazz has helped me, since I never did feel that it was a stigma to be identified with it."

A recent Hollywood Bowl concert in which he shared the bill with Shaw's orchestra was particularly meaningful for Torme, since he calls Shaw "the first man who ever saw anything promising in me as a solo vocalist. When I had my vocal group, the Meltones, we were with the same company as Artie, so they had us record together, and while we were doing a Cole Porter album he really pushed me to do 'Get Out of Town' as a solo vocal. I owe him a lot. That association lasted a year, until the Meltones disbanded and I finally went out on my own.

"Three bandleaders really went to bat for me. The others were Woody Herman and Les Brown. They went to Carlos Gastel, who was Nat Cole's and Peggy Lee's manager, and told him: 'Look, this young squirt just might have a chance as a solo singer.' So I signed with Carlos, which was a major step in my career."

Torme sees Carl Jefferson, founder of Concord Jazz Records, as a no less valuable factor in his more recent successes. "Here's a guy who was just a jazz fan, a Lincoln Mercury dealer in Concord, Calif., and really a dilettante in the music business; but he began recording people he liked, and gave up his auto dealership to concentrate on building a catalogue. I really admire him. In the last year or so I've had offers from four other companies, but obviously I have a fealty toward Carl, even though I'm not under contract to Concord."

Another catalyst whose activities have been invaluable to jazz at large and Torme in particular, he says, is George Wein. "Promoters like George have helped bring the music out of those dingy clubs, the cellar joints, into the daylight. Today, some of my most enjoyable gigs are played at great open air concerts or festivals and on jazz cruises."

While every other ambition on the Torme travelogue seems to have been realized, or to be due shortly for fulfillment, one objective seems unattainable.

"Hardly a week goes by without two or three people asking me, 'Why have you never made a record with Ella Fitzgerald?' It seems like the most logical thing—you remember we were together on the Grammy Awards program in '76, and it got the longest standing ovation ever seen on the show.

"My understanding, to be candid, is that Ella's manager, Norman Granz, has been blocking it for some reason. He has virtually said nobody's good enough to sing with Ella. Well, he may be right! But I'd sure as hell like to try; I'd even go in on a tentative basis, and if it didn't come out well, I'd waive my fee, and let it not be released. That's how eager I am to do it.

"I presume it would be for Norman's company, Pablo Records. Since I'm a free agent, that would present no problem."

One can hardly imagine that the album would present any problem either. Torme's admiration for Fitzgerald was best expressed in his special "Lady Be Good" lyrics ("Ella Be Good") and in his duplication of her famous scat vocal to that song. That there would be immediate chemistry with her on an album seems almost beyond dispute. For what it is worth, he is hereby informed that we share his frustration and hope for a favorable resolution.

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Reached at her Beverly Hills home, Ella Fitzgerald said: "Sure, I'd love to record a session with Mel. We had a ball doing that Grammy show together, and I enjoyed sitting in with him one time at the Fairmont in San Francisco.

"I think we have the same sort of feeling, the same approach. He's not only one of my favorite singers, but also a great writer; we have an arrangement on his 'Born to Be Blue,' one of his best songs. I really hope we get around to collaborating on an album."

Told about Mel Torme's and Ella Fitzgerald's remarks, Norman Granz said: "I have no comment." □

8/8

FREEWAY ON EXPRESS TRIP TO FUSION

By LEONARD FEATHER

Freeway, a quasi-jazz group with a heavy rock emphasis, is a direct descendant of Tom Scott's L.A. Express, one of the most successful fusion groups of the mid-1970s. Freeway's leader, the bassist Max Bennett, was a member of that band and writes much of the music for Freeway. And the drummer, Trevor Feldman, is the son of Victor Feldman, who was percussionist with the L.A. Express.

Like its predecessor, Freeway is well rehearsed, and on Monday at Donte's it played tightly knit charts as it ranged from colorless ballads ("It Was Good While It Lasted") to bright Braziliana ("Samba de la Noche"). Emil Palame, whose pseudo-steel drum effects brightened "Calypso Mama," and Pat Kelley, the guitarist, contributed some of the originals.

One does not look to a group of this kind for swing in the jazz manner, yet at times, with Feldman's help, it does swing in its own heavy-footed way. Sam Riney, playing saxophones, is an unpretentiously satisfactory soloist who displayed a few much-needed moments of delicacy toward the end of "Brasilia."

Imagination is not the long suit in this combo; however, if fusion in the L.A. Express tradition is your bag, Freeway is worth checking out. The quintet returns to Donte's on Tuesday.

LF Scrapbook 34

001

Nick Ceroli, Drummer Known for Versatility, Dies at 45

Nick Ceroli, a veteran drummer equally comfortable driving the raucous rhythm section of Stan Kenton's big band or quietly accompanying a trio led by guitarist Barney Kessel, died at his Studio City home Sunday, apparently of a heart attack.

Ceroli was 45. A native of Niles, Ohio, he studied at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music before joining Ray Anthony's band in the late 1950s. He later worked with Lionel Hampton, Terry Gibbs and Kenton, before joining Herb Alpert's Tijuana Brass in 1965.

He left that group after five years and toured with Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme and Vikki Carr. He appeared periodically on "The Tonight Show" and performed regularly with the Mort Lindsey orchestra on "The Merv Griffin Show."

Most recently he had done studio work with the bands of Zoot Sims, Bob Florence, Dee Barton and Don Menza. His last public appearance was earlier this month with Kessel at the Sunset Hyatt.

Ceroli leaves a son, Michael; his father, Nick Sr., and two sisters. Funeral services are pending.

Los Angeles Times

Tuesday, August 20, 1985/Part VI 3

WHAT COMES NAT-URALLY

"My brother Ike and I took piano lessons—Ike has been working at the Pump Room in Chicago for the past six years—and I played my first professional job when I was about 15."

The Coles family (the brothers all dropped the *s* in professional life) moved north from Montgomery, Ala., when Nat was 4. The Rev. Edward Coles became pastor of a church in northern Chicago. All six Coles children, including the two girls, showed enough musical ability to play church organ and piano at Sunday school services.

After one of Freddy's first local jobs, at the Capitol Lounge, he went on the road for a short time, but "my mother insisted that I continue my education, so I returned to school. I went to New York to study at Juilliard, then on to the New England Conservatory. My roommate there was Ross Tompkins, who for years has been the pianist for 'The Tonight Show' band."

Though Cole's recording activities began early, they played a role in his career far less successfully than Nat's. He had an early hit on a small label with a song called "The Joke's on Me." During an early stay in New York he recorded for OKeh Records. In 1977, he ran into a wealthy sponsor who subsidized an elaborate album taped in England with a 42-piece orchestra ("Sing," on Demand Records, 3800 S. Ocean Drive, Hollywood, Fla. 33019). More recent (1983) and more typical is "Like a Quiet Storm," with an intimate backing, on Dinky Records, Box 42281, Atlanta 30311.

Many of Freddy Cole's accomplishments have been registered thousands of miles to the east or south of this country. His passport

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LEONARD FEATHER

Freddy Cole says he would like to gain more jazz aceptance: "I'd like to appear at some of the really prestigious festivals."

COLE

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has almost run out of space for admission stamps.

"The places I've been? Oh boy! As they say in Portuguese, *todo o mundo*. Everywhere in South America; all the European countries, including France, Germany, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania. Also Hong Kong, Singapore, Manila, Thailand. I'm still hoping someday to play Japan.

"The biggest album I ever had was one of three I made in Brazil; it was never released in this country. I had a song in it that was included in one of the major soap operas there, 'Novela.' It was very big, and they keep re-releasing the soap opera, which has this song running through the whole series. I also did an album down there singing in Portuguese and Spanish."

In the United States, Cole says he has played "tank towns by the hundred," but in addition to having to wait until 1985 for the Los Angeles booking, he has rarely been seen in a New York club. "I worked once at Marty's, and I subbed briefly for Bobby Short at the Carlyle. I also did a lot of jingles in New York. But some of the few good bookings I've had are due to the help of Joe Williams, a great friend from the old Chicago days. He's always liked my work and he's been tremendously supportive."

Has there been any trouble about his being billed as Nat Cole's brother?

"That's almost never been a problem. But I had to laugh when someone put an ad in the paper with Nat's name bigger than mine. I told him: 'You're not paying Nat Cole prices. Nat's not playing here.'

"I've always worked hard and, as Nat once said to me: 'The old saying is, every tub sits on its own bottom. You sit on yours, I'll sit on mine.' I've always felt that I can sit on mine and plan my own direction.

"As for my piano playing, I've always gone my own way. John Lewis was one of my favorites. I never tried to sound like Nat."

Relations within the family, for the most part, have been fairly close. During his Vine St. gig, visitors to the club included Nat Cole's sister-in-law and one of his twin daughters. He is friendly with Natalie, his pop-star niece. But, clearly, the closest bond was between Freddy and Nat.

"I've often said that if there was anything about my brother that I'd like to emulate, I'd just want to be even one-tenth the man that he was. He and my father were the finest persons I ever knew."

Freddy Cole's admiration for his sibling was best expressed in "He Was the King," a song he wrote three years ago that is included in the 1983 album. "I did that when all this talk came up about a Nat Cole movie. One day the idea hit me, and I worked on it with my bass player, Phil Morrison. So we submitted it for possible use in the film, but the project never materialized."

Another of his songs reflects the problems that have plagued Freddy Cole throughout his life in music. Written while his brother was living, it bears the title, "I'm Not My Brother, I'm Me." He often uses it in a medley that includes "Sweet Lorraine" and other songs associated with Nat.

As a young man, Nat Cole was an award-winning jazz pianist and occasional vocalist. Over the years, his changing image established him as a vocal superstar of pop who only intermittently and briefly returned to the piano. Freddy Cole's situation, ironically, is somewhat antithetical: He would like to gain more jazz acceptance.

"I played one of the big jazz festivals, the North Sea Festival in the Hague, but it was almost like a zoo—they herd the talent through there like cattle. I'd like to appear at some of the really prestigious festivals, particularly in this country."

Another possible explanation for Freddy Cole's lack of domestic fame could be that for the last 14 years he has lived in Atlanta. "A friend there had a club I worked in, and I just fell in love with the city. I came home to Chicago and told my wife, 'We're moving!' I've been married 25 years; two kids. My son, Lionel, is extremely musical; he plays piano and arranges. He was only 14 when he wrote 'After All These Years' for my 'Quiet Storm' album."

Because of the startling resemblance to his late brother—in tone quality, not physically—one final question seemed inevitable: Does it bother Freddy Cole when he overhears comments on the similarity?

"Heck, why should it? No, I never worry about that. After all, sounding like Nat isn't that bad. It sure beats sounding like Freddy the Frog."

JAZZ

8/18/85

CREAM OF THE BUMPER CROP HAS SWEET SOUNDS

By LEONARD FEATHER

These are heady times for the record collector. New jazz LPs (including reissues of priceless classics) are gushing forth at the rate of at least 100 a month. This puts the jaded critic at an advantage: He can cast aside the mediocrities and concentrate on whatever deserves special attention and high ratings. Following are a few in this elite category.

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"ONE NIGHT WITH BLUE NOTE PRESERVED." Blue Note BTDK 85117. The historic concert at which the Blue Note label was given its new lease on life (thanks to Bruce Lundvall) is preserved here on four live sets (available boxed or separately). Taped in February at New York's Town Hall, it is a virtual cross section of the idioms promulgated by Alfred Lion, the company's founder, to whom this benefit concert (part of the proceeds went to the African Children's Relief Fund) was dedicated. Except for Horace Silver, who inexplicably refused to take part, almost every surviving major Blue Note figure was present.

Volume I finds Herbie Hancock in luminous form on his own "Canteloupe Island," assisting Bobby Hutcherson in the latter's engaging waltz "Little B's Poem," and Joe Henderson in the saxophonist's "Recorda Me." Freddie Hubbard and the flutist James Newton contribute, along with Tony Williams and Ron Carter.

Volume II is split between a splendid side by McCoy Tyner and, overleaf, the demonic presences of pianist Cecil Taylor and a newly signed Blue Note artist, saxophonist Bennie Wallace who has tried to swallow Coltrane, Rollins, Ornette Coleman and others, an effort that brought on indigestion.

Volume III is more traditional: Art Blakey, surrounded by a covey of his alumni, reinvestigates "Moanin'"; Stanley Turrentine and Jimmy Smith and Kenny Burrell and Grover Washington explore early 1960s blues-funk. The colors haven't faded.

Guitarist Stanley Jordan's two amazing tracks are relegated to the end of Side 4, the rest of which finds Charles Lloyd's tenor sax or flute in moods variously dreary, panicky or (in the West Indian flavored "El Encanto") lighthearted. Lloyd's pianist, Michel Petrucciani, deserved a set on his own.

Though no album spanning so many areas can be consistently rewarding to every ear, the many moments of exhilaration compensate for the occasional lulls. 4 stars.

□

"JUMPING IN THE SUGAR BOWL." Amina Claudine Myers Trio. Polygram/Minor Music 002. An early associate of the Chicago AACM avant-gardists, Myers defies classification as pianist, composer, singer and organist. She veers from touches of Tyner in the title number to a frenetic four-beat groove in "Cecil B." Vocally, she brings a special beauty to the pop ballad "Another Day," then treats us to a fascinating exercise on what could be African double talk in the improbably titled "Guten Morgen." On organ in "Cameloupe" she is sui generis. Fine bass and drum backing. An enthusiastic 5 stars.

□

"MULTIPLE INSTRUMENTS." Scott Robinson. Multijazz 101 (Box 722, Boston 02199). Incredible! Robinson, 26, a faculty member at Boston's Berklee College, plays more than 30 different woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. More important than the gimmickry and overdubbing, though, is his ability to play many of them with passion and control.

Shifting idioms as unpredictably as he switches horns, he plays only tenor sax on "Ben," a warm dedication to Ben Webster, and on his own intriguing composition "New." The other cuts take in Dixieland, swing, bop, avant-garde, and in the closing "Survival on Venus" (on which he uses 23 instruments), an undefinable brand of musical science fiction.

Robinson knows his jazz history: His use of the C melody saxophone on "I'm Coming, Virginia" leaves no doubt that he was inspired by Frankie Trumbauer's 1927 version of that classic. Some of the instruments on other tracks have seldom if ever been used in jazz before: the ophicleide, the normaphon, the ro-

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003

Just in case you missed this

JAZZ

Still There

NORMA DELORIS EGSTROM, the frightened, unknown blond singer from Jamestown, North Dakota, who was hired as Peggy Lee by Benny Goodman in the summer of 1941, still lives inside the glacéed, world-famous blond singer from Bel Air, California, who is now at the Ballroom, on West Twenty-eighth Street. What is visible at the Ballroom is a creation that has been slowly and carefully constructed over the years by Peggy Lee herself and by her various image-makers. This onstage figure has grown more intricate. When Peggy Lee appeared at the Empire Room of the Waldorf-Astoria ten years ago, she was swathed in white robes and white makeup, and she suggested snow queens and Icelandic sagas. At the Ballroom, she wears a close-fitting helmet covered with glass beads, huge, round tinted glasses, an egg-size amethyst ring, a heavy rope of pearls, and various silk robes and gowns. All that can be seen of her beautiful face is the tip of her nose; the famous mole adrift on the alabaster sea of her right cheek; her mouth; and her resplendent chin. The total effect is of antimacassars and gingerbread. The contrast between this encrusted beauty and the simon-pure voice is startling. Peggy Lee's style settled into place in the late forties. She is a stripped-down singer. She keeps her vibrato spare and her volume low. (She has a powerful voice but chooses to hold it in reserve.) She avoids long notes and glissandos, and if she uses a Billie Holiday bent note she lets it die almost immediately. Many singers confuse shouting with emotion. Peggy Lee sends her feelings down the quiet center of her notes. She is not a melody singer. She does not carry a tune; she elegantly follows it. She is a rhythm singer, who moves all around the beat, who swings as intensely and eccentrically as Billie Holiday. (Her accompanists at the Ballroom include Mike Renzi on piano, John Chiodini on guitar, Mark Sherman on vibraphone and percussion, Jay Leonhart on bass, and Grady Tate on drums.) She is a subtle and brilliant showman. She can slink, arch an eyebrow, push out a hip and rest a hand on it, half smile, wave wandlike arms, bump, tilt her head, and slouch—all to dazzling, precise effect. And her shows themselves are models of pacing and sequence. She sings two dozen songs at the Ballroom. (On Tuesday nights, she gives just one show. Wednesdays through Saturdays, she gives two shows—the equivalent of two long concerts.) They include Cy Coleman's "Big Spender;" "Lover," in six-eight time; "You're My Thrill;" Duke Ellington's "I Got It Bad;" "Just One of Those Things;" Bart Howard's "Fly Me to the Moon;" "I Won't Dance;" "Love Me or Leave Me;" "As Time Goes By;" and Kris Kristofferson's "Help Me Make It Through the Night." She also does her own fine songs —"It's a Good Day," "Mañana," "I Don't Know Enough About You," "Johnny Guitar," and "I Love Being Here with You." She dips in and out of her anthems ("Fever," "Baubles, Bangles, and Beads," "I'm a Woman," "Why Don't You Do Right"), but gives full, affecting readings of the Ellington and Kristofferson, of a Japanese folk song, and of the strange Leiber and Stoller "Is That All There Is?" The voice slowly subsumes her image and by the end of the show has enveloped us.

A SINGER, a former singer, and a pianist talk about Peggy Lee. The first is Sylvia Syms: "I first knew her in the Goodman days, when she was known by the nickname of Norma Jean, which I still call her. She's always had great humor and great sensuality. She's very articulate. She's very intelligent. She is mannered—but Peggy Lee–mannered. She has a way of making her relationship to a song seem so simple. Her sound is like a reed. She walks away from any other singer. The colors in her voice are pastel rather than the bright greens and blues and reds of so many other singers. I have never once felt stifled in a Peggy Lee show—there is always a wonderful feeling of air. She's very caring about her audiences. There is none of the it's-too-bad-I-have-to-be-bothered-with-all-this feeling that certain performers give off. She knows what an exalted thing it is to be alive."

The next is Jane Feather, wife of the jazz critic Leonard Feather: "I started out in the early forties as a singer. I called myself Jane Leslie—in honor of Leslie Howard, who was very big. I was sent up from Minneapolis, where I lived, to replace Peggy in Grand Forks, North Dakota, where she was a great favorite—Peggy Lee and the Collegians. Then we both worked in Fargo. I was at one end of town and she was at the other, in Powers Coffee Shop, and we became friends. In 1941, she got a job with Benny Goodman at the College Inn in Chicago, and I was at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, and we roomed together. When Benny went to New York for a long gig at the New Yorker Hotel, we rented an apartment in the Village. It was a basement place with a garden, and we thought it was fantastic. Peggy was still pretty much a wild North Dakota farm girl. Instead of buying six potatoes, she'd buy a twenty-five-pound bag. And she'd make bread and put the dough to set in a warm closet —and run down to Washington, D.C., to see a boyfriend."

The third is Mel Powell, the brilliant Goodman pianist who retired from jazz thirty years ago: "Peggy was brought into the Goodman band to fill the celebrated shoes of Helen Forrest, and it wasn't easy. She was supposed to sing in Helen's keys, and Eddie Sauter's arrangements were difficult. I was eighteen and she was nineteen, and plain human compassion made me take her under my wing. I'd tell her to watch my mouth, and I'd silently count off the beats until she was supposed to start singing. One of Peggy's first assignments was a record date. It was in Chicago, with John Hammond in the booth, and she had to sing 'Elmer's Tune.' She stood at the mike with the sheet music in her hands —I'm pretty sure she couldn't read it —and it shook so badly it sounded like a distant forest fire on the first take. It took her a long time to settle down with the band, and one reason was that Benny didn't subject himself to any kind of sensitivity training. He rarely took the trouble to learn the names of his sidemen, so he called most of them Pops, which was O.K., but he called Peggy Pops, too, and that didn't speed up her acculturation. So a bond formed between Peggy and me, and it's still there. We talk on the phone, we see each other, and Peggy and my wife have become very close. Whenever I hear her sing, I think of what Louis Armstrong said on the set of a movie called 'A Song Is Born.' It was made

Los Angeles Times 8/30/85

JAZZ REVIEW

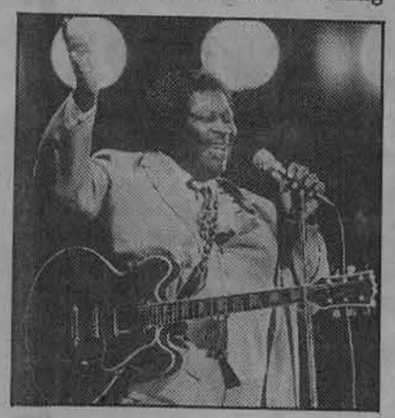
CHARLES, KING RELY ON OLD STANDBYS AT BOWL

By LEONARD FEATHER

As you could tell from half a mile away, the house was sold out. The huge traffic jam occasioned by the presence of Ray Charles and B. B. King on Wednesday at Hollywood Bowl prevented some of the 17,699 of us from catching the first part of King's set.

Reliable information assured us that we missed nothing we hadn't heard before. For both artists, this was largely an evening of reruns.

As much as anyone on the jazz or soul scene, Ray Charles has spent the later years of his career leaning on past glories. How much his performance meant on this occasion depended on how many times any given listener had sat through "I've Got News For You," "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning," "Some Enchanted Evening" and the rest of the expectable reliables.



MARSHA TRAEGER / Los Angeles Times

B. B. King, left, and Ray Charles in concert at Hollywood Bowl.

Another element contributed a negative note to the proceedings: "The Genius" seemed to be in a particularly irritable mood. In the course of 65 minutes on stage he expressed apparent dissatisfaction with the balance of the sound, the tuning of the piano, the musicianship of certain members of his orchestra. Whether his gripes were justified, it surely was unnecessary to draw such attention to them.

Nevertheless, there was a respectable quota of moving passages. "Georgia," sung almost out of tempo, with long suspensions and an occasional falsetto tone, has retained its hypnotic fascination through the quarter-century since Charles recorded it.

The Raelettes seemed to serve a mainly cosmetic function, their gowns attractive, their choreography rudimentary, their vocals adequate.

Ironically, some of the best music was played during the 15 minutes before Charles came on stage. His 16-piece band gave a fine account of itself, with a be-bop line on "Night and Day" and a splendid arrangement of "Wave." Mark Curry on trumpet and Ernest Vantrease on organ also had some spirited moments. Typically, Charles gave no name credits to any of his sidemen.

Typically too, B. B. King did make gracious mention of every man in his smaller and no less efficient ensemble. Like Charles, King continues to rely primarily on long-established hits. One number, however, was unfamiliar: a minor-key blues in which we were told that he had a mind to give up living and go shopping instead, to "pick me out a tombstone and be pronounced dead." This last word in lost love laments was sung, appropriately, at a funereal tempo.

Comedy interruptions and antics on the bandstand took up some of the time on "'Tain't Nobody's Business," although when the tempo doubled up, King really got down. As for Lucille, she remains the bluest guitar this side of heaven.

The band was conducted by the leader's nephew, saxophonist Walter King, with good solo work by James Bolden on trumpet and Edgar Synigal Jr. on sax.

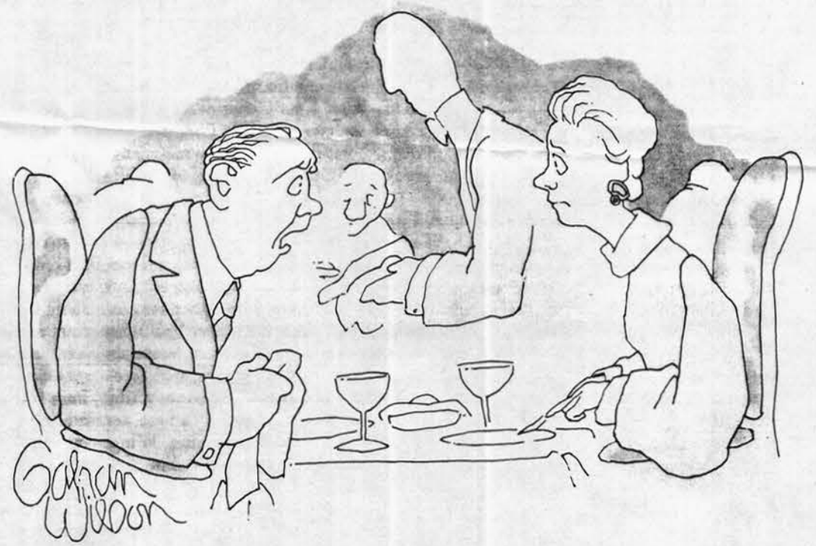
In general, it was *deja entendu* time for some of us and an occasion for standing ovations for many others.

in 1948, and a lot of jazz musicians were in it. Somebody asked him about swinging, and he said, 'Man, if you can't swing quarter notes, you ain't going to swing.' Peggy can swing quarter notes, and all the rest—behind the beat, on the beat, in front of the beat."

PEGGY LEE collapses on her two days off—but not completely: the engines of publicity must be kept running. On a recent Monday, she had a one-o'clock interview with William B. Williams, the WNEW disc jockey and current maestro of the "Make Believe Ballroom." She travelled the five blocks from her hotel to the station in a stretch limo, and Greg Dawson, the amiable proprietor of the Ballroom, and Phoebe Jacobs, her old friend and aide-de-camp, went with her. Peggy Lee wore a wide-brimmed black straw porkpie with a big black rose on one side, round rhinestone-rimmed tinted glasses, a black-and-white silk knee-length jacket, and black pants and black shoes. Her hat was tilted, and her face was in the shade. William B. had been ill, and it was his first day back. He looked shaky, but his voice reverberated nicely, and he was pleased to have Peggy Lee aboard. She told him that he was a big part of New York life and that millions of people had been praying for him, and he told her that he was a big believer in prayer and that "a cry from the heart to God is the highest form of praying." He also told her that she was a basically small-town lady yet represented the height of elegance. Peggy Lee said she lapped that up. Williams said that he didn't know what an abashed fan was but that he was an unabashed Peggy Lee fan. Peggy Lee called him Sweet William, several Peggy Lee records were played, and the interview was over. The narrow, labyrinthine halls outside Williams' studio filled with hugs, and Peggy Lee made her way to her limo on Dawson's arm. The limousine went back to the hotel. Dawson disappeared, and Peggy Lee and Phoebe Jacobs had lunch in a small restaurant off the lobby. Phoebe Jacobs is a cheerful presence who has been an amanuensis of the likes of Benny Goodman, Ella Fitzgerald, Red Norvo, Duke Ellington, and Sarah Vaughan. She has a good understanding of how show business impinges on the verities of jazz. The women ordered fruit salads, which were served in long-stemmed celery vases. Phoebe Jacobs laughed, and Peggy Lee said, "I get the feeling I don't belong here." After lunch, Peggy Lee, now on Phoebe Jacobs' arm, went back to her suite, on the twelfth floor. The view from the living room was to the south, over Murray Hill, and was dominated by the Empire State Building. Peggy Lee attended to some wardrobe matters, helped by Phoebe Jacobs and by Holly Foster, Peggy Lee's blond eighteen-year-old granddaughter, who had made the trip from California with her. (Peggy Lee has one child, a daughter named Nicki.) Then she showed Phoebe Jacobs some enormous acrylics of roses that she had painted and brought with her from California, and that Mario Buatta, the designer, was going to help her sell, perhaps to a textile company. The acrylics were soft and elegant and finished. She sat down on a sofa and talked about herself. She talked in short paragraphs, broken by spacious pauses. Her voice is low but not soft, and she has a big, surprising laugh. She went where her mood took her.

"I live in Bel Air, in a French Regency house," she said. "It's stucco and has a mansard roof. The foyer is two stories high and has a circular staircase. The kitchen is white. The rest of the house is in different shades of peach and apricot. The house has more than ten chandeliers. The two in the kitchen are wood, and there is one over my bathtub. I have a wonderful view from almost every room of trees in the foreground and the ocean in the distance. It's a perfect place to grow roses, and I have at least a dozen varieties, including Bing Crosby, Peace, Eiffel Tower, Mister Lincoln, Mon Cheri, and the Peggy Lee rose, which is registered with the American Rose Society and is the biggest rose I've ever seen. Even the roots are enormous. I have a green thumb, but now I have a gardener with a green thumb, too, and we planted them together. Somebody asked me recently if I always dress up, and I do—even for rehearsals. But when I plant roses or paint I wear karate clothes."

"MY father and mother had Norwegian and Swedish blood. Mother's name was Selma Anderson. She was a tiny, beautiful lady, who weighed about ninety-eight pounds. My father was Marvin Egstrom. He was tall and thin, and he had light-brown hair, which never turned gray. He had beautiful gray eyes and a beautiful smile. He was a railroad man—a station agent—and we moved from town to town. He always wore a three-piece suit, even in the remotest parts of North Dakota. There were seven children—Milford, Della, Leonard, Marianne, Clair, me, and Jeannie. All are gone except for Marianne, who lives near me and is my dearest friend. I helped her run away from home when we were little. When I was four, Mother died, of diabetes. She knew she was going to die, and she made clothes for all of us. My father was totally bewildered by her death. A year later, he remarried. My stepmother was cruel, and physical violence became a daily part of my life. She was particularly cruel to me, because I was my father's favorite. Unfortunately, my father and I didn't see much of each other, even though he lived into his seventies. But I know the value of forgiveness, and I've long since forgiven her."



"Sometimes I have this awful feeling I'm really a West Side person."

"THE guitarist Dave Barbour was my first husband. He was very handsome and had a special, dry sense of humor. He called Louella Parsons Louella Parsnips, and one day when we were playing golf and he swung and missed the ball completely he said, 'Golf is harder than oboe.' Another time, when he was being wheeled into the operating room and I was running along beside him saying, 'I love you, I love you,' he said, 'Stop nagging me.' And when I told him we were going to have a child, he said, 'Why, Peg. I hardly know you.' We were married eight years. But he had a problem with alcohol, and he finally asked me to divorce him. It was one of the hardest things I ever had to do. He eventually joined A.A., and he didn't drink for thirteen years. We remained close, and we decided to remarry. But he died four days later. He was only fifty-three.

"I've been married three times since, but I don't consider the marriages to have existed. They were of very short duration. It wasn't anybody's fault, and there's no bitterness."

PEGGY LEE went into her bedroom and came back with a doctor's reflex hammer. She began to tap her cheeks gently with the hammer, saying that she had to tone up her skin for a television interview she had with James Brady at WCBS just before six o'clock. Then she tapped her forehead, and her throat. All the while, she talked about singing: "There are layers in my mind when I sing. When I was doing 'Why Don't You Do Right' at the Paramount, a whole poem came into my head, and I couldn't wait to get to my dressing room to write it down. What might be emotionally feeding you—a person you're involved with, a musician playing well behind you—will form another layer. Still another might be: Did I wear the right shoes with this gown? People say my voice is thin or small, but I have a lot more voice than I ever use. I ration it, and it's lasting very nicely. I've compared some of my old records with my newest record, and I don't find any lessening. God willing, I'll sing as long as there's breath. And I certainly hope that I'll be able to tell if I weaken, or that people around me will tell me if I don't know myself. My understanding of singing has expanded as my mind has expanded. There are songs that I've outgrown, that I can no longer sing. They're miniskirts now. I'm a quick study, but it takes me longer to learn a new song, because I delve deeper into the words. It took me a year to understand 'Is That All There Is?' The reason I do 'Lover' in six-eight time is that when I saw a French movie with a lot of running horses in it it occurred to me that the horses' gaits were in Latin rhythms. I thought about a song I could work the same rhythms into, and tried 'Lover.' I also decided to change keys every chorus, which gives the illusion it is going faster and faster—from trotting to cantering to galloping."

PEGGY LEE retired to put on her "television face." She reappeared at five-fifteen, shaded this time by an enormous red porkpie. A smaller limousine waited downstairs, but her entourage had grown—Phoebe Jacobs, Holly Foster, Greg Dawson, who was waiting in the lobby, and Henry Luhrman, a publicity man, who was picked up on the way to the CBS studios on West Fifty-seventh Street. The makeup man at the studios turned out to be the same one she had had when she did "The Ed Sullivan Show," in the fifties and sixties, and he told her that she knew more about her makeup than anyone else. The interview with Brady lasted, in the profound way of television journalism, four minutes. Dawson and Luhrman left, and Peggy Lee told her driver to go back to the hotel. She said that Benny Goodman had been at opening night at the Ballroom and that he was in very good shape. "After Benny hired me, he would just stare at me, and I thought I was getting what musicians called 'the ray.' But I finally figured out that that look simply meant he was preoccupied—he had become so immersed in what he was listening to or thinking about that he didn't realize he might be staring rudely. I started with the band at the College Inn. The lighting consisted of a huge single spotlight, and I had the feeling I was being run down by a steam engine. Mel Powell saved me. He taught me the arrangements, and he introduced me to Billie Holiday's singing. Sid Catlett was in the band, too. He was a sweetheart. He cried when he learned that Benny was letting him go. I was with Benny two years, and that was a long time for a girl singer. I had dinner with him a year or so ago. The first thing he said to me, as if what had been going through his mind when he first heard me were still going through it, was 'You know, I didn't care for Helen Ward's singing'—Helen having been one of his earlier singers, and a good one. Just like that, with a little smile. One of the good things about being with Benny was that I got to know Alec Wilder. Alec and I used to sit and talk by the hour in the lobby of the New Yorker Hotel, where Benny was playing. Or, if we had time, we'd go out and find a curb and sit on it and talk. We were great curb-sitters. We even found a curb to sit on in Beverly Hills when the band was playing in Los Angeles. I introduced Alec's 'While We're Young,' and he wrote a song for me—'Is It Always Like This?' He also wrote the lyrics, which begin, 'Are the trees always so green? Has the sea this silvery sheen?' Alec always thought I was Alice in Wonderland. Maybe he was right."

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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Given the major contribution which *PCLA* offers to the study of language, it seems petty to bring up any shortcomings. However, it must be noted that typological and other proofreading errors are fairly widespread in the text. These errors never really take away from the value of the papers, but they do sometimes cause irritation. For instance, delivery of a sarcastic retort to Bickerton by Meisel on page 131 is poiled by a misspelling.—*Language in Society.*

Aw, shucks.

•

Nick DiMuro, consultant to Philadelphia Electric Nuclear Science Education, was the speaker at a recent meeting of the Phoenixville Golden Agers Club.

He said that radiation is all around us, even in some of the foods we eat.

A funny fashion show was presented by members of the club.—*Phoenixville (Pa.) Evening Phoenix.*

Feel better, Golden Agers?

Jazz—Remembered and Preserved

by Leonard Feather

Throughout the first five decades of this century, jazz as an art form was reviled, or at best ignored, in most American schools and colleges. This music, now taught in countless institutions of higher learning, and whose principal creators have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Freedom and other honors and sent overseas by the U.S. State Department as goodwill ambassadors—this is the same American jazz which many youths were thrown out of the classroom for playing.

Yesterday there was organized opposition to jazz as a menace that threatened to kill music. Today there is an organization of a very different nature: a National Association of Jazz Educators whose members, all of them boasting extensive musical credentials, teach jazz history, jazz theory and jazz performance.

These educators are dedicated to the preservation of a genre now widely accepted as America's one truly indigenous art form. Similarly dedicated are such groups as the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Though jazz has changed immeasurably in the course of its history, the members of this band evoke vividly the colorful origins of what originally was simple folk music distilled almost exclusively by Afro-Americans.

Preservation Hall is important as a symbol of the emergence of jazz from its segregated status. All but unknown to white America at the turn of the century, jazz today has gained broad acceptance and is performed by the very segments of our society to whom it had been a mysterious obscurity. Significantly, the white tuba player Allan Jaffe, born in Pennsylvania in 1936, was drawn by his lifelong passion for jazz to New Orleans, where he found in Preservation Hall an informal gathering place for the survivors of the music's early years.

Jaffe and his wife took over the operation of the hall, soon establishing it as a cynosure for jazz traditionalists from all over the world. Today there are seven combinations of players who perform at Preservation Hall, three of them touring groups.

The brothers Percy and Willie Humphrey, this evening's trumpeter and clarinetist, are members of a distinguished family of black musicians. Willie Humphrey Jr., born in 1900 in New Orleans, was the son of Willie Eli Humphrey (1880–1964), also a clarinetist. The senior Humphrey played from 1900–1910 in the Eclipse Brass Band alongside his father, the trumpeter Jim Humphrey (1860–1937), who had organized the group in the late 19th century. From 1920 on, Jim Humphrey dedicated his life to instruction, becoming one of the most respected music teachers in the history of New Orleans.

Willie Humphrey Jr. speaks with reverence of his grandfather and with pride of his New Orleans heritage. Though the history of jazz and its origins is clouded because so much of it was improvised and none was recorded during its first two decades, the recollections of men like Humphrey indicate that music similar to what we hear today from Preservation Hall Jazz Band was being performed at least seven or eight decades ago.

If one considers ragtime an antecedent of jazz (and despite its more formalized structure it had many rhythmic and harmonic elements in common with early jazz), the comments of Eubie Blake, who died in 1983 at the age of 100, should also be taken into consideration. The Baltimore-born pianist took delight in telling his audiences that "Charleston Rag," one of his first compositions, was written in 1899.

In order to trace pre-jazz origins it is necessary to go back much further, and to acknowledge that though New Orleans was a vitally important center, the evidence proves that jazz (both instrumental and vocal) took shape gradually and simultaneously in many areas of the United States—wherever black Americans congregated in substantial numbers.

It is an oversimplification, too often employed by casual observers, to equate jazz with "black music." Blacks in America developed their music along many diverse lines. In 1872 the Colored American Opera Company was organized in Washington, D.C. Some blacks were thoroughly conversant with the European melodic and harmonic traditions; black society was and is multifaceted, and black music cannot be traced back simply to ragtime, to spirituals or to the brass bands, though characteristics of each of these sources went into the making of the first orchestral jazz forms.

Black choral singing had some of the idiosyncratic traits that would be handed down to the first jazz generation. The Fisk University Jubilee Singers in Nashville, Tennessee, organized shortly after the Civil War, went on an international tour, singing a concert repertoire that consisted in large measure of plantation slave songs made more sophisticated through the use of harmonized arrangements.

The shape of jazz to come was perhaps as clearly evident in the Fisk ensemble as in the complex rhythms of African folk music. Paul O. Tanner and Maurice Gerow, in *A Study of Jazz* (1964), observed: "At the time when the chief exponents of jazz were generically closest to their African ancestry, the rhythms utilized by these jazz performers were of a very simple nature, far removed from the complex pattern combinations actually used by the natives in Africa."

Melodically and harmonically, jazz took its form from the European tradition, with one notable exception: the frequent use, within the diatonic scale, of the so-called "blue notes," the flatted tones (usually on the third and seventh notes of the scale) that were endemic to the blues and eventually to almost all jazz. How and why these blue notes originated has never been logically explained, but they became a central part of the lifeblood of jazz.

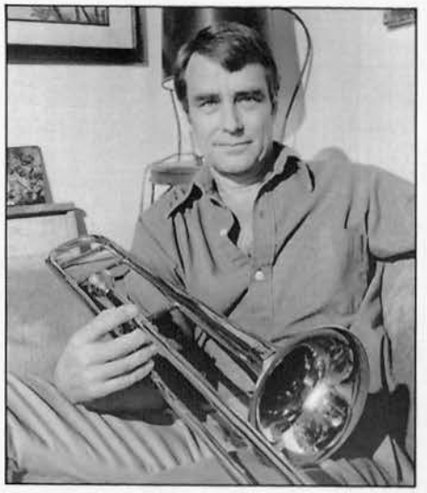
While spirituals were sung in the concert hall, brass band music found its principal locus operandi on the streets in parades, and of course at funerals, when mournful music was played en route to the cemetery in contrast to the cheerful sounds that blasted forth on the way home. Ragtime arguably grew out of banjo music, but by the 1880s it belonged essentially to the piano. In *This Is Ragtime* (1976), Terri Waldo wrote of a black artist, John William ("Blind") Boone, who not only brought the Negro spiritual to the concert stage but also followed his interpretations of Liszt and Chopin with a few ragtime-oriented works. Boone, who made some piano rolls in 1916 (before any jazz had been recorded), wrote several pieces that entailed complex, syncopated rhythmic phrases.

Ironically, it was a white group, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band from New

JAMES EDWARD "SING" MILLER

Narvin Kimball, *banjo,* is the son of one of the all-time great New Orleans bass players, Henry Kimball, and by the age of 17 was a professional banjo player with Fate Marable on the *Capitol* steamboat. Subsequently he played with Sidney Desvigne's Orchestra, Papa Celestin's Tuxedo Orchestra, and Louis Armstrong, and also had his own band. Mr. Kimball was born in 1909 in New Orleans and is the composer of "Don't Let Old Age Creep Up On You."

NARVIN KIMBALL



FRANK DEMOND

Frank Demond, *trombone,* was born in 1933 in Los Angeles. He was bitten by the New Orleans jazz bug in the late 1940s when he heard the Kid Ory group in New Orleans, and later sat in with New Orleans musicians playing both trombone and banjo. Ultimately he gave up a successful career as a house designer in Southern California to move to New Orleans and join the Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

Allan Jaffe, *tuba,* was born in Pottsville, Pennsylvania in 1936 and worked in business and the military before being drawn to New Orleans in 1960 by his lifelong passion for the city's famous music. With his wife, Sandra, Mr. Jaffe revitalized Preservation Hall and made its musicians world-famous through their global tours.

ALLAN JAFFE

Orleans, that first brought jazz to international attention through its recordings and its first visit to New York, in 1917. That year was a meaningful one for the evolution of jazz in other, less recognized ways. It was in 1917 that Louis Armstrong formed a small group in New Orleans and began to make a name for himself as a soloist of exceptional merit; and in the same year King Oliver, Armstrong's mentor, left Kid Ory's band to move to Chicago. (Armstrong, who five years later would join Oliver in Chicago, took his place in the Ory Band.) It was also in 1917 that a legendary pianist named Fate Marable, long a fixture on the Mississippi riverboats, embarked on the band-leading career that would take countless great black jazzmen on their first trips north.

By the early 1920s traditional jazz had taken a fairly consistent shape. The front line usually consisted of trumpet or cornet, clarinet and trombone; the trombone's role was mainly limited to rhythmic punctuations rather than melodic statements. In the rhythm section were piano (unless, of course, the band was a parade group), banjo (later replaced by guitar), tuba or string bass, and drums. The saxophone, though it gradually came into common use during this time, was not considered essential in New Orleans-style bands or in the white so-called Dixieland bands that played basically the same repertoire—blues, original works based on old marches ("Tiger Rag" was the best known), and popular songs of the day such as "After You've Gone," "Ja-Da" and "Whispering."

It was not until 1921 that a black band of any consequence made a jazz recording. That seminal event took place in Los Angeles, when Kid Ory's small group recorded two tunes for a short-lived company. It would be two or three more years before jazz and the recording studios were to have more than a casual acquaintance. The form that then made the most conspicuous impact was the blues.

As a vocal form, the blues had been around so long that its origins are lost in 19th century obscurity. "Frankie and Johnny," based on the regular 12-bar blues structure played to this day, is believed to have originated around 1850; according to one source, it was sung at the siege of Vicksburg. But the official documentation of the blues apparently begin in 1912, the year that saw the publication of "Baby Seals Blues," "Dallas Blues" and W. C. Handy's "Memphis Blues." Two years later Handy's "St. Louis Blues" established the genre firmly.

The blues was not heard on records, however, until the release of Bessie Smith's first Columbia session in 1923. Later that year Gertrude "Ma" Rainey began a long series of sessions for Paramount. Many other blues artists, almost all female, rose to prominence, but it was Bessie Smith who become known in black America as the Empress of the Blues.

That same year was a catalytic one also for instrumental jazz, for it was in 1923 that Fletcher Henderson, leader of the first "big band" (in those days "big" was anything with arrangements written for three or more saxophones, three or more brass players and a rhythm section), began his historic recording career. Some of Henderson's most notable arrangements were written by one of his saxophonists, Don Redman, a brilliant instrumentalist and composer and one of the forgotten giants of jazz. It was Henderson's band that would bring to general attention some of the works written by New Orleans composers, such as Jelly Roll Morton's "King Porter Stomp."

Though it was the first to place jazz improvisation in the context of relatively sophisticated written arrangements, the Henderson Orchestra preserved in its performance some of the traditional essence. For a while, in 1924–5, Henderson even had Armstrong as a sideman. But the soloist to emerge triumphantly from this setting was Coleman Hawkins, whose ten years in the band established him as the pioneer tenor saxophonist and one of the first virtuoso soloists on the instrument.

Overlapping with the Henderson years was the arrival of several significant white soloists. The cornetist Bix Beiderbecke, the saxophonist Frank Trumbauer, the violinist Joe Venuti and the guitarist Eddie Lang all were part of the large, pseudo-symphonic, quasi-jazz orchestra of Paul Whiteman, who acquired the "King of Jazz" sobriquet at a time when that title belonged more justifiably to Henderson or to Duke Ellington. Some of Whiteman's better recorded works were written by Don Redman, who thus established an early, albeit unseen, interracial collaboration. The Whiteman soloists, all held down to minor roles in elaborate orchestrations, were heard to better advantage in records with various small groups. Beiderbecke, who died in 1931 at the age of 28, was probably the first white genius of jazz; though best known as a cornetist of great lyricism, he is remembered also for his piano solo, "In A Mist," which was decades ahead of its time in harmonic subtlety.

After Duke Ellington opened at Harlem's Cotton Club in 1927, he dominated the field as composer, arranger, pianist, and leader of an extraordinary orchestra for which he wrote music in terms of the particular qualifications of the soloists. It was Ellington who in 1936 inaugurated the concept of a miniature jazz concerto, building a three-minute recording around a particular individual. Until then, most recorded jazz solos had been confined to a single chorus. Ellington (1899–1974) became the towering figure in orchestral jazz. He was responsible for many innovations including the use of the voice as an instrument within the context of an arrangement, the writing and recording of extended works covering two or four sides of the old 78 discs, and eventually such ambitious ventures as his 1943 "Black, Brown & Beige," subtitled "A Tone Parallel to the History of the American Negro."

Ellington also wrote short, unpretentious pieces like "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing" (1932). Though it was Benny Goodman, a superb clarinetist and leader of a competent band, who became known as the King of Swing, it was the Ellington band that established the common use of the term "swing" as a noun in jazz circles. It was far from new even then; in 1917 a writer for the *New York Sun* commented, "Jazz is based on the savage musician's wonderful gift for progressive retarding and acceleration guided by his sense of 'swing'." (Whether he was writing about black or white "savages" is unknown, but since 1917 was the year of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, perhaps he had that group in mind.)

The 1930s became the decade of swing music, dominated by the big bands of Ellington, Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and others; but during this period small, informal bands along the lines established by the New Orleans pioneers were still heard from. Along New York's 52nd Street, swing music in this predominantly improvised format was provided by small units under the leadership of the white New Orleans trumpeters Wingy Manone and Louis Prima, the

black violinist Stuff Smith, and the guitarist Eddie Condon, who became a focal point for Dixieland jazz from the mid-1930s until a decade or so before his death in 1973. Condon's groups often included black musicians who clung to the old-time values, among them saxophonist Sidney Bechet, trumpeter Hot Lips Page and the pioneer stride pianist James P. Johnson.

Despite the initiatives of Condon and others, it was not until the 1940s that the earliest forms of New Orleans jazz were revived on a significant scale. This development stemmed from the rediscovery, by a group of young jazz fans, of the long forgotten cornetist Bunk Johnson (1897–1949). Johnson, who had retired from music and was hauling sugar cane in Louisiana, was equipped with a new set of teeth, jobs in California and New York, and recording sessions, surrounded by other New Orleans pioneers. Though Johnson's ability by now was severely limited, he acquired a cult following as a living legend, continuing to play at jam sessions, concerts and record dates until 1948.

Rediscovered along with Johnson was the clarinetist George Lewis (1900–1968), who in the 1950s led his own group of veterans, visiting England and the Continent, and touring Japan with great success in the 1960s. Lewis inevitably became one of the Preservation Hall coterie; in fact, one of his albums was called *Jazz at Preservation Hall.*

While the traditionalists clung loyally to the repertoire and style of a fast-fading yesteryear, jazz continued inevitably to move into new, more challenging areas. The swing era brought jazz to new improvisational peaks: clarinetists such as Artie Shaw and Benny Goodman, brilliant trumpeters like Roy Eldridge, Red Allen and Bunny Berigan and such piano individualists as Earl Hines, Fats Waller and the incredible Art Tatum, all pointed to new directions for a music whose adherents were more advanced technically than their predecessors.

Along with these developments, the impact of jazz in the media was belatedly felt. By the 1940s this music was no longer barred from the concert halls. Ironically, it was in Europe that the first jazz concerts had been presented in the 1930s; in Europe, too, the first serious discussions of jazz took place in magazines (England's *Melody Maker,* France's *Jazz Hot*) and books (Robert Goffin's *Aux Frontières du Jazz,* 1931, and Hughus Panassié's *Le Jazz Hot,* 1934).

Newspapers in the United States that had remained almost totally blind to a thoroughly American art form suddenly discovered its worth as a topic for intellectual consideration. *The New York Times,* which had not run a single line to note the death of Bix Beiderbecke, began in the 1940s to run occasional jazz features, and by 1952 had hired John S. Wilson as regular jazz reporter. The neglect of jazz in the print media, as well as on radio and television, was directly related to racist attitudes in American society. Segregation's barriers fell slowly. It was not until 1935 that white and black musicians even appeared together in public with the formation of the Benny Goodman Trio (Teddy Wilson was the black pianist), and another decade passed before interracial groups became fairly commonplace.

A vital source of jazz employment opened up in 1954 when George Wein presented the first U.S. jazz festival at Newport. (Here too America lagged behind; there had been jazz festivals in 1948 at Nice and in 1949 in Paris.) Although by this time the harmonic and rhythmic advances of bebop had long since taken over center stage in the music's evolution, Wein's festival, like hundreds that would follow, afforded an opportunity for jazz to be heard in its ever-broadening range of styles; in fact, the opening set at this initial Newport night was provided by an Eddie Condon group playing the likes of "Muskrat Ramble" and "Bugle Call Rag," with Vic Dickenson on trombone, Pee-Wee Russell on clarinet and other keepers of the flame.

The 1950s saw the print media opening up fully to jazz. Publishers became aware of a growing audience for serious scholarly examinations of the music; such critics as Nat Hentoff, Ralph S. Gleason and Marshall Stearns found more opportunities to expound their views in books and magazines.

Little by little jazz has expanded on every level. For so long a segregated idiom confined in musical compass, work opportunities and geographical exposure, it has become increasingly internationalized. Until the 1940s only two non-American musicians had made contributions of true originality—the Belgian-born gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt and the British pianist George Shearing, whose quintet, organized in New York in 1949, proved widely influential. But during the next decade or two the floodgates opened. Musicians in Sweden, France, Japan, Denmark and a score of other countries provided creative contributions to their own jazz scene (and ultimately to ours, since many of them moved to America, by now their spiritual home).

Although nowadays we read mainly about the newcomers and the latest developments in avant-garde and fusion music, the preservation of earlier jazz forms seems reasonably safe. True, most young black musicians know little about the Louis Armstrong legacy, and even those who have studied it prefer to pursue their own contemporary route. As a consequence, the continuation of traditionalist jazz styles has been left in the hands of a few New Orleans veterans such as the Preservation Hall bands, or the young and middle-aged white musicians who have a deep affection for these decades-old sounds.

This past May, in Sacramento, California, the 12th annual "Dixieland Jubilee" was held. There were 250,000 admissions to a series of recitals by about a hundred bands, among them several from overseas, all dedicated to the sounds and songs of the early 20th century. Without any racial motives, the organizers have usually hired a personnel that is 99% white—simply because, they claim, there are so few black musicians interested in perpetuating the style created by their grandparents.

In a sense, though, the great black generational progression continues. Today two of the most admired young musicians in a contemporary style are the trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, 23, and his saxophonist brother Branford, 24. Like the Humphrey brothers, they are products of a musical family; their father, Ellis Marsalis, is a celebrated pianist and teacher whose proteges include several of the best and brightest in the jazz world of the mid-1980s; and again like the Humphreys, they are all from New Orleans.* The music changes; the moving finger writes on a fresh sheet of manuscript paper; but the great tradition of jazz, ready soon to round out its first century, lives on.

Leonard Feather, jazz critic for the Los Angeles Times *since 1965, is the author* of The Encyclopedia of Jazz *and ten other books on jazz and has composed almost 300 recorded works. He has lectured at UCLA, Harvard, Princeton and other universities and in 1984 was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Berklee College of Music in Boston.*

*Wynton Marsalis and his Quintet will appear on the 1985–86 season Jazz Series at UCLA, with special guest Ellis Marsalis.

MICHAEL EDWARDS / Los Angeles Times

Eartha Kitt: still purring, pouting and parading her sensuality.

8/22

JAZZ REVIEW

AN EARTHA QUAKE AT BAR & GRILL

By LEONARD FEATHER

"I'm still here," Eartha Kitt informed us defiantly. "I met me a big financier and I'm here." This was her opening number Tuesday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, where she will be purring and pouting and parading her special brand of sensuality through Sunday.

In this opening song there were many clearly autobiographical references, even a passing mention of "Santa Baby," although she never got around to singing it.

Even without that trademark tune, all but copyrighted by her more than three decades ago, Kitt remains essentially unchanged by the years. Svelte and sleek in a black outfit, she brought a self-mocking conviction to her hedonistic lyrics, often ending by tossing back her head and laughing that special saturnine laugh.

There is nobody else quite like Eartha Kitt in all of show business. She is the ultimate actress/singer/comedienne, the complete cosmopolitan who never lets you forget it. "I'm just an old-fashioned girl looking for an old-fashioned house," she assured us, "with an old-fashioned millionaire."

Her world, she would have us believe, is a world of caviar, money, champagne, money, pheasant, money, acquisitiveness and money. In fact, the references to these topics came up so frequently in so many of her songs that it verged on becoming (to borrow the title of her "New Faces of 1952" hit) monotonous. But the power of her personality eliminated any such danger.

Rolling her r's, her accent still a curious mixture of European influ-

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EARTHA KITT STILL SUAVE

Continued from Page 1

ences, separating her lines now and then with pregnant pauses, transfixing an occasional customer with a long, hard stare, embarrassing a surprised maitre d' during one song by insisting that he help her kill a bottle of champagne, she kept her audience involved right up to the final "C'est si bon."

For her encore she switched moods with a touching self-written poem performed as a recitative and written, she said, for her daughter during a lonely episode in London. Her performance would have been enriched by one or two more such serious moments, and one or two fewer millionaires.

There were only two conventional standard songs: Noel Coward's "Mad About the Boy," updated with a samba beat, and "Guess Who I Saw Today," with a once surprising punch line, by now so familiar that she sensibly omitted the word we all expected, segueing instead to another number.

Kitt's first local nightclub booking since 1978 drew a predictably large and loyal crowd. She was well served by the backing of her pianist and musical director Gerald Dolin, Barry Zweig on guitar, Paul Gromley on bass and Ted Hawke on drums. The verdict: More *bon* than ever.

8/27

BENNETT SATISFIED WITH MUSIC, ART, OFFSPRING

By LEONARD FEATHER

Tony Bennett has many sources of satisfaction nowadays. Not only are his two careers—music and art—flourishing as never before, but his children have shown evidence of following one or other of the examples he has set.

In a sense, Anthony Benedetto the painter will be opening tonight for Tony Bennett the singer. Patrons entering the Westwood Playhouse will be witnesses to a preview of lithographs and paintings by Bennett's alter ego.

Bennett's two-week engagement at the intimate theater will provide him with a setting in sharp contrast to the Hollywood Bowls, Ravinias, Irvines and other vast amphitheaters that have claimed his services in the recent past. The exhibition of his artworks will be held not only at the theater, but also from Sept. 6-9 in the Art Expo at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Relaxing at a Beverly Hills hotel during a recent visit to town, he talked with pride about his offspring. "Not long ago I was working at Blues Alley in Washington and my daughters got up and sang. It was dynamite! I have no idea yet whether they will want to become professionals. Antonia, who's 11, is very sensitive, very creative—she loves to paint and she's already won art awards. Joanna is 15; she's been studying at the Lee Strasberg School, and she's as talented as she is beautiful."

Even more central to his life at the moment are his grown sons, Daegal and Danny. "They are my managers, and they have a wonderful studio in New York, where I'm going to do some of my recording.

"I can't give you the details yet, but I have an exciting new record deal coming up. My sons will be producing, and we'll be taping in London with (arranger/conductor) Claus Ogerman."

Bennett's return to the studios for a major label will end a 10-year absence. He was with Columbia from 1951 to 1974, making 89 albums. After that lengthy association, he had his own musically admirable but short-lived label, Improv.

"I was thrilled to make some of those records—with Bill Evans, with Ruby Braff, with Marian McPartland—but was just too difficult to arrange distribution. The masters are in England now, but maybe the company I'm signing with will take them over and reissue them eventually."

The reminder that most of the albums made during the past decade involved collaborations with eminent jazz soloists brought up the inevitable question: Is he or is he not a jazz singer?

"That whole categorization thing is kinda funny to me. Sure, I've sung with Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Al Cohn, Zoot Sims, Woody Herman, all those great

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Los Angeles Times 8/24/85

JAZZ REVIEW

BAND SUCCEEDS IN GOING AGAINST TIDE

By LEONARD FEATHER

It takes courage, in forming a new band, to swim against the current tides of fusion, electronics and funk. A dirty job, but someone has to do it, and Mike Price, the composer and former name-band trumpeter (Kenton, Rich, Akiyoshi) has done it with remarkable success.

His septet played its fourth gig Thursday at the Comeback Inn, the vegetarian restaurant and jazz club in Venice. From the brisk treatment of Jimmy Heath's "Homes" to "Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting," a Charles Mingus gospel blues, everything was composed or arranged by Price.

The ensemble work is crisp, with three horns alternating between unison and harmony. They are Price (sometimes too hard hitting on trumpet but pleasantly resonant on flueglhorn), the powerfully imposing George Bohanon on trombone and a newer, most impressive personality in Bob Militello, heard often these days with Dave Brubeck.

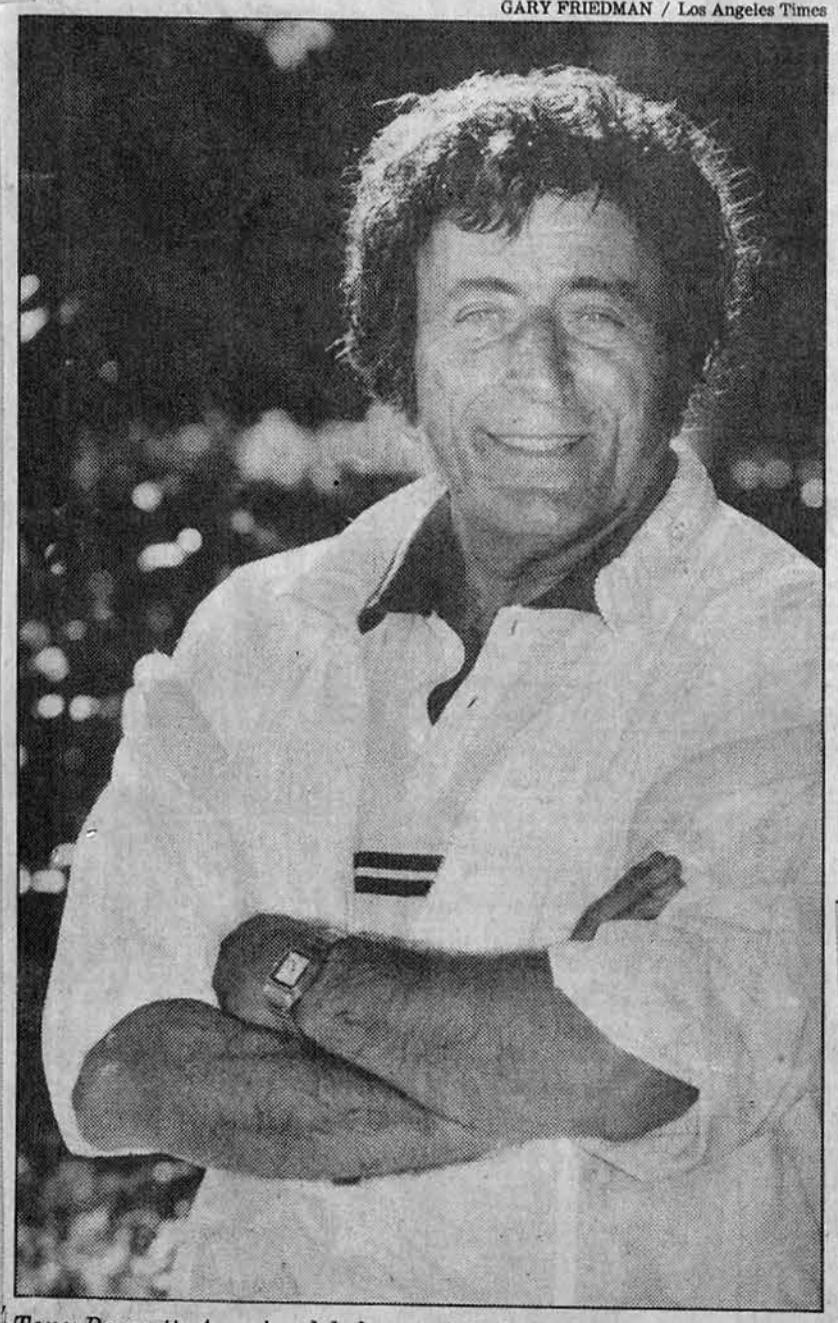
Militello brings excitement and brilliance to his solos on soprano, alto, tenor saxes and flute. Every number, from Price's witty "A Mingus A-Mungus" to the ingratiating Ellington work "Getting There Is Half the Fun," was enriched by his presence.

Of the several Price pieces heard, two were movements from an unfinished five-part suite. Changes of tempo and mood sustained the interest in one extended work that found Militello humming and fluting simultaneously.

Adding to the group's cachet of originality was the use, along with the admirable drummer Sherman Ferguson, of a percussionist, Mike Turner, who played an African talking drum and, in one Brazilian *baion* number, a *berimbau*. With Michael Hughes at the piano and Roger Spencer on bass, Price has a rhythm team that inspires the horns throughout his loose, imaginative charts.

The group will be back at the Comeback Inn every Thursday next month, starting Sept. 5. The sounds are modern, though acoustic, the virtuosity is pervasive and, in every sense at this small, unpretentious room, the Price is right.

GARY FRIEDMAN / Los Angeles Times



Tony Bennett: A major-label record deal after a 10-year dry spell.

BENNETT PROGENY CONTINUE A TRADITION

Continued from Page 1

people—so I've sort of gathered up the jazz audience unintentionally. I've never compromised, always gravitated toward the best music and musicians and songs I could find."

Whatever category he may be placed in, Bennett could care less. The jazz classification certainly has no disadvantages now, as he points out: "The new young adults around the country are terrific. They've eliminated that generation gap stigma; they like all kinds of good music, classical or jazz and punk or rock and everything else. That's a healthier attitude, more normal, and they get a better education that way."

As for the works signed Anthony Benedetto (the name with which he was born), he has taken painting from a hobby to a serious alternate career, one that has begun to show substantial profit.

"A lithograph has been made of a painting I did in the South of France; they're going for $750 a print and most of them are sold already. I've sold a lot of things for quite a lot of money. The most I've ever been paid for an original was $10,000; that was for a cityscape of New York, sold to the Franklin Mint."

Benedetto takes his painting seriously enough to have continued studying over the years. "In New York, I study with Basil Balin, who's a marvelous portrait teacher; he teaches in the tradition of the Old Masters. In England, I had a fellow named John Barnicoat, who taught me a lot about Impressionism. He showed me how Bonnard and Van Gogh painted. I've really been getting quite an education."

The traditions of the Old Masters carry over from Benedetto's interests into Bennett's. "I still like Joe Williams and Vic Damone and, of course, the master, Sinatra, as well as Ella and Sarah and Billy Eckstine. I admire singers who are jazz-influenced but can sing bop, following along the lines of Louis Armstrong and Bing Crosby. There's a craft there, and singers who have that talent—including people like Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme—are still flourishing. But it's hard to think of many people under 40 who sing that way."

True to his values in music and art, Bennett contentedly sums up his present situation: "Once in a while you can become a little world weary, a bit tired of the throngs of audiences. When that happens, it's nice to be able to get away to some quiet place and paint.

"This whole adventure of combining business and pleasure on two levels is very rewarding. The simple fact is that I like to sing and I like to paint, and I'm fortunate enough to be able to make a living doing the two things I love most. It's a pretty wonderful balance."

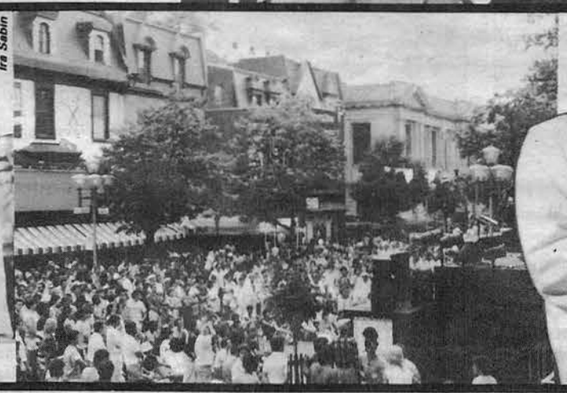
FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE JAZZ DE MONTREAL

Denis Alix

Denis Alix

Among the Montreal musicmakers: Miles Davis, Pat Metheny, Paul Horn and David Friesen.

Ira Sabin



Ira Sabin

by LEONARD FEATHER

Unless you have witnessed it in person, it is hard for an outsider to imagine the size and scope of the Montreal Jazz Festival. My visit to the sixth annual celebration brought a sudden realization of how much I had been missing.

Montreal, a very civilized city, has an ambiance unlike that of any other festival host metropolis. To quote Barney Kessel, who was here as a guest soloist with Louis Bellson, "This is the New Orleans of Canada: great music, great food, great spirits."

Having never attended the North Sea Festival, I can't guarantee that this is the world's biggest jazz festival, but it seems improbable that anything could rival it. There were about 158 presentations, of which more than 90 were free, open air events. Mainstream, big bands, avant garde, reggae, blues, cajun, bop, tango, Dixieland, Zydeco, all were accounted for.

Of the dozen venues around town, most were concentrated in or near the Rue St. Denis, where indoor theatres and outdoor stages vied for attention. The sounds began at noon and continued until around 2 a.m.

In a three block stretch of St. Denis that was closed to vehicles, the nightly human traffic became so dense that it took me ten minutes to struggle from one threatre to another next door. The teeming masses at any given time were estimated at 25,000; among them were strolling musicians, clowns, acrobats, jugglers, fans with firecrackers, dancers and, on the streetside stages, Canadian performers. This is the most festival of festivals; moreover, these huge, euphoric crowds are as cheerful and orderly as the subways are clean and safe. Nothing like this could ever hapen in New York.

Alain Simard, the youngest of the major impresarios, was only 29 when be presented, in 1980, his first jazz festival, With the help of Quebec's Ministry of Cultural Affairs and other government departments, plus commercial sponsors, the event has grown continuously; this year's attendance topped 300,000.

Big mainstream U.S. names were used as the main bait; Simard booked dozens of them, from Louis Bellson, the Basie band, Tony Bennett, Dave Brubeck, Art Blakey and Chick Corea to Miles Davis, Ahmad Jamal, Lee Adams; Max Roach was here with his quartet, playing with an unrivaled intensity; Cecil Taylor's appearance drew unanimous press approval, as did Muhal Richard Abrams. Charlie Haden, though ailing, impressed a packed theatre with his Liberation Orchestra.

Of all the U.S. visitors, Pat Metheny who had played the last five of the six festivals, seems by now to be close to adopted-son status. This year, augmenting his group with a gospel vocal quartet, he sold out the house so fast that a second concert had to be scheduled. "Montreal is one of the few places," he said, "where I feel I'm a celebrity."

Like the Belgian-born Django Reinhardt, Lagrene is a gypsy (but born in Alsace). He was playing concerts at 13, evoking memories with a style that drew strongly on Django. By now, however, he has expanded; after opening the show, backed by bass and drums, playing very musty standards and old Reinhardt tunes, he switched from acoustic to electric guitar and abandoned antiquity in favor of a world closer to John McLaughlin and Al di Meola.

Lagrene succeeds on both levels; in fact, playing the Reinhardt tunes such as "Nuages," he improved on the original, drawing on his more advanced harmonic acclaimed as a worldwide force in jazz.

Among the many Canadian musicians, the pianist Lorraine Desmarais seemed the likeliest contender for success south of the border. A small brunette, she brought to her work a synthesis of what sounds variously like Bill Evans, McCoy Tyner and Chick Corea influences. Last year she won a Yamaha talent contest. Desmarais, who has a debut album of original works out on a new Canadian label, would be a logical choice for one of the piano recitals at Carnegie next year.

There were also the Montreal Tout Etoile, the impressive allstar sextet that opened for Tony Bennett; Dave Young, the bassist from Winnepeg, leading a traditional piano-guitar-bass group; and the popular Jacques Loussier, still cashing in on his perennial "Play Bach" gimmick.

At Biddie's, a club partly owned by bassist Charlie Biddie and the dexterous pianist Oliver Jones (a former student of May Peterson, Oscar's sister), Jones and the guitarist Nelson Symonds attested to the healthy condition of local small group jazz. At one of the open-air stands on St. Denis, I heard Gordon Fleming, from Winnipeg, who actually made respectable noises on an accordion.

One element leaves room for improvement. Of the doxens of shows I have seen here, only one was an organized, packaged production with a specially assembled cast. "In the House of the Blues" has been presented every evening at the Club Soda, a crowded cabaret. Its history-of-blues scripts wandered back and forth in time, not always even factually correct (Helen Humes' famous "Million Dollar

I asked Leonard to leave me some space to fill in my impressions on the Festival. Close to 800 musicians performed, half of them Canadians, most of them played their keesters off.

The acoustics were excellent in the indoor venues, the fans were, if anything, overly receptive. In fact, all the performances that I attended ended with standing ovations.

Among the highlights: Charlie Haden's Liberation Orchestra, including Dewey Redman, Paul Motian and Cecil Bridgewater providing happy vibes and a few laughs. Cecil with Max Roach the following night. Odean Pope and Tyrone Brown rounding out the quartet with straight ahead energy.

Ricky Ford, the new Brandeis University Jazz Ensemble director, joining Ran Blake for the Piano Plus concert series.

Sphere—Charlie Rouse, Ben Riley, Kenny Barron and Buster Williams—playing a top drawer group of originals and topping it off with Monk's *Well You Needn't*.

Paul Horn's dramatic entrance at the St. James United Church—joining David Friesen performing to a sold out crowd of over 1800 people. Dave was playing his invention, the acoustic-sounding Oregon Bass.

The crowds were overwhelming. Once you stepped out into the stream of traffic, the flow of the crowd determined your direction. On one occasion we were pushed into one of the many bars lining the street and were very happily surprised to hear Bob Mover, the ex-New York alto player, who was blowing everybody away, accompanied by an all Canadian rhythm section.

The '86 dates are set for June 27th through July 6th. The festival will spread out into a second site to ease the crowds and to accommodate the expected increase of fans. Make your plans now to be a part of it.

—Ira Sabin

MONTREAL JAZZ FEST

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show was hampered by an overwrought emcee, and by a tendency to turn songs that were once poignant and moving into cheap comedy vehicles.

Dave Brubeck offered his usual program with his regular quartet; in New York he had been the centerpiece in "The Musical Life of Dave Brubeck," with several alumni rejoining him, Hendricks narrating, and Carmen McRae singing some of Brucbeck's most attractive songs. Montreal clearly could use a few such "concept" programs.

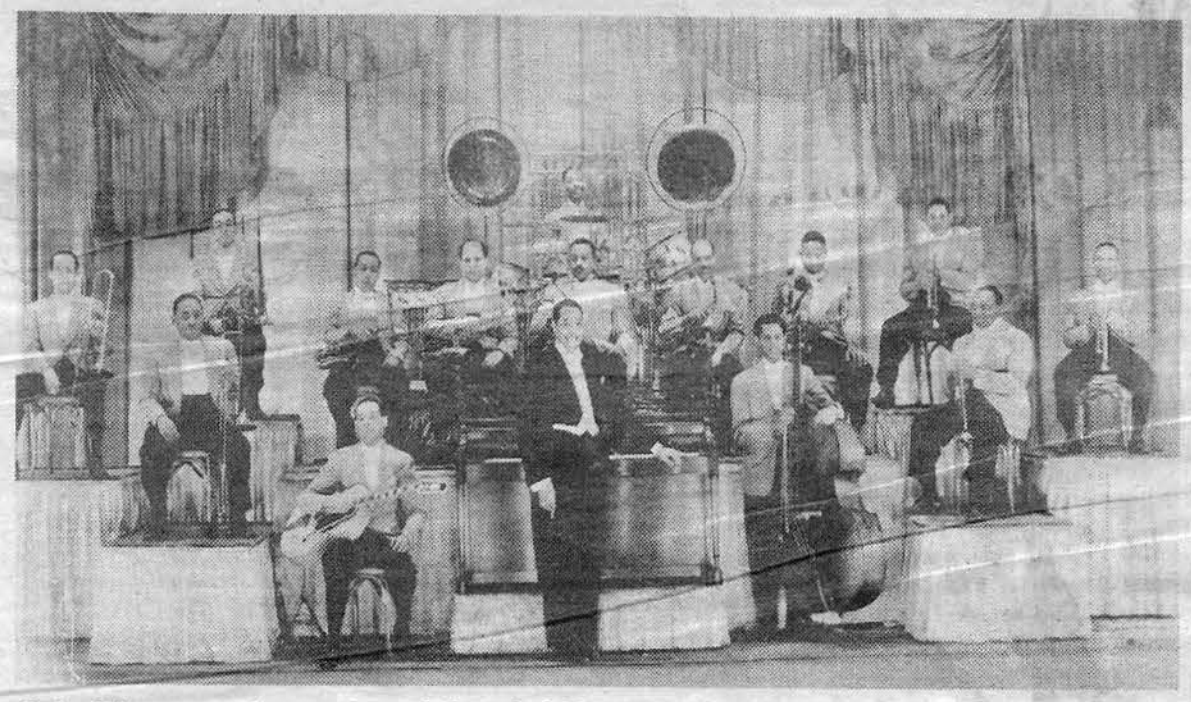
Except for Jon Hendricks, I can't recall that any Ameican artist made more than token use of a much appreciated gesture: the use of announcements in French, the language spoken by two thirds of the audience. As Paul Horn reminded me, "When someone speaks three languages, he's called trilingual. If he speaks two, he's called bilingual. If he speaks one, he's called an American."

However, for an extended examination of the many languages of jazz, with a soupcon of cosmoplitan atmosphere, Montreal would be hard to beat, even if you don't know how to say "Merci." The fine festive vibes here are unlike anything I have experienced elsewhere on the American continent. ■

JAZZ

ESSENTIAL ELLINGTONIA FROM 1932—IN STEREO!

By LEONARD FEATHER



Duke Ellington orchestra, circa 1940, included musicians heard on "Reflections in Ellington" LP.

Would you believe a 33⅓ r.p.m. microgroove record in 1932?

Be advised: It is indeed believable. Beyond any doubt there were such things.

Well, how about stereo recording in 1929?

This, too, is an indisputable fact of history that was neither publicized nor deliberately kept secret in the ensuing decades. Now, however, thanks to the perseverance of three dogged record collectors, one of whom is a recording engineer, the evidence is documented in the form of a newly released album, "Reflections in Ellington" (Everybody's Records, c/o Marlor Productions, Box 156, Hicksville, N.Y. 11802).

The first side of this unique disc begins with two medleys, each 7½ minutes long, recorded by the Duke Ellington orchestra at the RCA Victor studios Feb. 3 and Feb. 9, 1932, as part of the company's microgroove program.

As the lengthy and engrossing notes inform us, the attempt to cram more music onto a record was nothing new even then. As far back as 1922, an English inventor, Noel Pemberton-Billing, had produced a 16-inch record that would play 20 minutes per side. In 1926, Thomas Alva Edison launched a 12-inch, 20-minutes-per-side record, but the recorded microgroove sound was poor, the stylus often failed to track accurately and, after a few months, the line was abandoned.

On Sept. 17, 1931, RCA Victor announced, amid considerable hoopla, a series of 10- and 12-inch discs that would produce, respectively, 10 or 15 minutes per side. In the publicity campaign, RCA Victor referred to them as "Program Transcriptions." Although many seem to have been recorded with the use of two microphones and two cutting tables, they were released monaurally.

Because they had to be played on a special machine that few could afford in those deeply depressed times, even this widely heralded microgroove experiment got off to a shaky start, despite recordings by Hoagy Carmichael, Fred Waring's Pennsylvanians, Leo Reisman, the d'Oyly Carte Opera Company, Noel Coward and Gertrude Lawrence.

Bowing to the pressure of economic conditions (not to mention the competition of live radio, which sent the record industry into near-collapse during this period), Victor gave up the project early in 1935.

Aside from the microgroove nature of these sessions, the other, no-less-significant aspect somehow escaped attention. Evidently, two microphones had been set up at different vantage points, each fed through an amplifier to a separate wax master in the booth. In effect, this was a primitive form of binaural or stereo recording, though the product could only be played back in that manner by using two perfectly synchronized turntables—a near-impossibility, which explains why the idea never got off the ground.

The two-channel nature of these sessions went unnoticed until a few years ago when, as a result of some tireless research tantamount to detective work, it turned out that there were in existence two versions of the Duke Ellington Feb. 3 medley. One had been released; the other, in the form of a test pressing, showed up when an American Ellington fan, Steve Lasker, bought a copy from a Belgian collector. Not until three years later was Lasker able to turn up a copy of the original, issued version. He and Brad Kay, a collector and audio engineer, then compared the two.

Musically, they were identical, note for note, but there were subtle differences. On one, Sonny Greer's drums were very prominent; on the other, they were all but inaudible. What could this signify?

"I think," Kay told Lasker, "that what we have here are the left and right channels of a stereo recording."

Fascinated by this unlikely prospect, Lasker and Kay devoted almost 10 months to achieving a perfect synchronization of the two discs. It then turned out that Jerry Valburn, who owns what is certainly the world's biggest Ellington collection, owned both versions of the second (Feb. 9) medley. This too was matched up after several months of tantalizing effort.

The results were worth all the labor. No other recording made in 1932—a quarter-century before stereo came into general use—could approach the brilliance, the vivid quality of this innovative recording.

To this day, nobody seems to be quite certain whether the stereo effect was deliberate or accidental. As one veteran engineer pointed out, it could simply have reflected a desire on the part of RCA Victor to obtain a spare, safety master. But if so, why were the microphones set up separately before they were fed to a different amplifier and turntable?

The result is more noticeable in the first set of tunes: "Mood Indigo," "Hot and Bothered" and "Creole Love Call." As Kay observes: "During the last chorus of 'Creole Love Call,' Ellington has the brass come in one at a time . . . first, one horn enters slightly on the right; then another comes in slightly on the left; and then the rest center, filling in the gaps. It is a stunning moment, causing one to wonder at how well worked out was the stereo concept by this early date."

According to Kay and Valburn, a vast quantity of material, much of it classical, was recorded in this prehistoric binaural fashion, some at 33⅓ and some at 78 r.p.m. It remains necessary to find the corresponding pairs of parts, as happened fortuitously in the case of Ellington. When this happens, who knows what other gems may be found? Early stereo of Gilbert and Sullivan, of Stravinsky works recorded half a century ago, of Paul Whiteman's then-dominant orchestra. In cases where both versions were released at different times, Kay has already matched them; one instance is the Stokowski version of "Rite of Spring."

Meanwhile, all we have available is the 15 minutes of Ellington. To round out the album, Valburn supplied rare air checks of the orchestra in 1940, broadcasting over what was then called NBC's Red Network (NBC's Blue Network later became ABC).

Though the sound on these tracks is monaural, these too are discoveries of great value. The sources are live remotes from the Eastwood Gardens in Detroit, Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H., and the Hotel Sherman in Chicago. The band then included Ben Webster on tenor sax, Jimmy Blanton on bass and all the perennial Ellington giants.

One number, "Jig Walk," was never recorded by Ellington except in a very early (1926) piano solo version. The others, among them a typically tongue-in-cheek "Boy Meets Horn" showcasing Rex Stewart's cornet, differ enough from the regular recorded versions to make them important acquisitions.

For that matter, even if the entire LP were blank except for those two stereo medleys, it would remain an essential element in the collection of any serious student of jazz (or of recording history). We are all in debt to Lasker, Kay and Valburn, whose efforts helped unevil a forgotten but invaluable development in the evolution of the record industry. □

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JAZZ

BRANFORD MARSALIS GOES TO POP

By LEONARD FEATHER

It may not be world-shaking news in the jazz community, but it surely is the talk of mondo pop.

Branford Marsalis, 25, who was well on his way to a solid jazz reputation as saxophonist with the quintet led by his trumpeter brother, Wynton, left the group a while back, declaring that he was tired of jazz, and is now a resident of the small pop music company touring under the leadership of the singer and guitarist Gordon Sumner, a.k.a. Sting.

Though there were rumors of an unfriendly fraternal breakup, Branford Marsalis carefully avoids criticizing his brother. Asked whether he was bored with Wynton's quintet, he more or less dodged the question by replying: "I was bored with playing jazz in general, because I'd been doing it for so long—five years. Let me explain it this way: I don't like to stay too long with anything. I went to three elementary schools, three high schools and two different colleges, so five years in jazz was the longest I'd ever done anything in my life."

Tracing the events that led to his seemingly improbable musical move, Marsalis made it all appear perfectly logical.

"I was basically weaned on pop—*not* jazz, as everyone seems to want to believe. I was exposed to jazz from a very early age, of course, because of my father's reputation around New Orleans as a jazz pianist and teacher; and then when Wynton decided to really get into jazz, I was always sitting around listening. When you're exposed to something as much as I was, you can't discount the extent to which that may affect your future. But I kept on buying pop albums very regularly."

His admiration for the Police in general and Sting in particular dates back, he says, to about 1980, though his association with Sting was the indirect consequence of a chance encounter two years ago. After finishing his own solo album for Columbia in September, 1983, he was in the CBS promotion department, talking about the project, when he noticed photos of Sting's guitarist (Andy Summers) and drummer (Stewart Copeland) prominently displayed on the wall. When it turned out that the publicist was a good friend of the Policemen, Marsalis casually asked her to pass along word that he admired their music.

"Then, in 1984, after I had recorded with Miles Davis on his 'Decoy' album and they had a party at CBS to celebrate its release, I met Andy Summers. He told me how their friend Vic Garbarini, who's the editor of Musician magazine, had taken along a cassette of my album on the Police tour, and how they just freaked out over it."

Fast forward to January, 1985. Marsalis receives, out of the blue, a call from Garbarini. "Remember me? We met at Miles' party. Sting's doing a project and he wants you to be in it."

Marsalis' immediate reaction was cautious. "Is it a new band," he asked, "or just the Police?" As he explains, he liked the well-established sound of the group, and felt that joining a band with an already firm identity might force him to work within its special confines: "Instead of lending more of yourself to the group, you're in danger of simply falling in line with what they're doing."

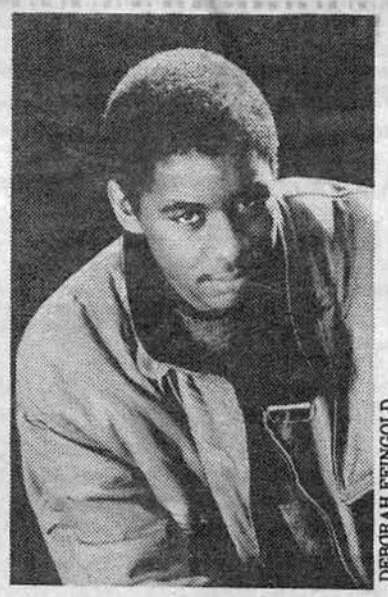
Garbarini assured him that this was to be a new band with a different concept, that everything would be starting over. After Marsalis agreed to discuss it, a meeting was arranged.

"We met in New York, and from the very moment I shook hands with Sting, I knew we could work together. There's a certain vibe, a sensitivity he has about people; I felt it immediately, and it turned out I was right."

The talk of a "new concept" was an understatement. Ironically, each of the present members of Sting's group has a distinguished record for his associations in jazz. Kenny Kirkland, the pianist, like Branford, is an alumnus of the Wynton Marsalis quintet. Darryl Jones, the bassist, leaped to prominence on the strength of his work with Miles Davis. Omar Hakim, the drummer, has been a part of the scene as a member of Weather Report. They all take part in "The Dream of the Blue Turtles" (A&M SP3750).

However, Branford Marsalis insists, "It's not really a jazz group. It's pop music with jazz sensibilities. It can't really be jazz, because you can dance to it! Often the band doesn't have the collective creative spontaneity that a jazz band might have, but that really isn't important. What matters is that this group gives off sparks—and the greatest thing is, Sting has very big ears, man. He really hears stuff."

The Sting venture climaxes a series of outside moves that began while Branford was still a member of Wynton's group. In addition to the Miles Davis album, he has recorded with the vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson, with drummer Billy Hart and done two albums with Dizzy Gillespie, one of which, "New Faces," brought about what seemed like a valuably stimulating experience for the veteran trumpeter, though Marsalis had mixed feelings.



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Saxophonist Branford Marsalis, on his new pop thrust: "I was bored with playing jazz."

"I found I was doing things that were stylistically correct, but in terms of innovation, it was pretty predictable. I did a second date with Dizzy, a fusion thing for a Japanese label, that was pretty sad."

A major side effect of the Marsalis Brothers' separation is that it left Wynton without a second horn. The interweaving of trumpet and saxophone lines had been a central element in the success of the quintet. Branford, who has not been replaced, feels that his brother will adapt well to the change.

"Wynton has a tremendous mind; he can write for a quintet like nobody else I ever heard. Now he simply has it to learn to write for a quartet. It may not be easy for him, but it wasn't easy for me to write for the quintet.

"It's funny; people come up to me and ask, 'When are you going to start composing?' I tell them Wynton is the composer; I just write tunes. He can sit down at the piano and come up with these unbelievable things that I could never write for a quintet. As a matter of fact, that's what I'm going to have to learn to do now, because Sting is a quintet plus the two background singers."

Along with its musical rewards, the Sting deal is a profitable and secure arrangement for Marsalis. "We're booked eight months ahead and they keep on booking us. We have a movie coming out, 'Bring on the Night,' in October."

As for his own plans as a leader, they are on hold, despite the good reception accorded his first Columbia outing, "Scenes in the City."

"I'm getting a lot of publicity out of what's happening now, and I want to stay with Sting until the middle of 1986, when I'll work on my own second album. After that, I'll probably go out with my own group. But right now I'm exactly where I want to be." □

MICHAEL EDWARDS / Los Angeles Times

Herbie Hancock leads his quartet at Universal Amphitheatre.

JAZZ REVIEW

HANCOCK QUARTET PLAYS IN MILES DAVIS MOLD

By LEONARD FEATHER

The shadow of Miles Davis hung heavily over the Universal Amphitheatre Tuesday evening, both in the personnel of the Herbie Hancock Quartet and in the choice of repertoire.

This was, in fact, the Miles Davis Quintet of 1964-68 without the leader: Hancock's cohorts were Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. The program began with Shorter's "Footprints" and ended with "All Blues," originally introduced by Davis. In between were "Walkin'," "Stella by Starlight" and "Four," all associated with one Davis era or another.

The house Tuesday was so disappointing that Hancock preceded his set with a suggestion that those in the emptier sections in the rear move forward. Any of his fans who absented themselves missed a performance remarkable for the inspiration, dexterity and cohesion of all

Please see HANCOCK, Page 5

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Los Angeles Times

HANCOCK QUARTET

Continued from Page 1

hands.

It was a pleasure to hear Shorter, after so many years hemmed in by the complexities of Weather Report, stretching out freely on both tenor and soprano saxophones. True, he got carried away once or twice, playing so many notes on "Four" that he seemed to lose track of the beat, but generally he was in peak form. He turned "Walkin' " from a blues into a near abstraction, with only token allusions to the theme until the last minute.

Hancock played space-age bebop on this piece and turned in a performance that illustrated how far he, like his colleague, has progressed beyond the relatively tonal values of their Davis days. In his own "Maiden Voyage" and in "Stella" he took the group through a deftly conceived dynamic rise-and-fall pattern, ending both with a slow and haunting fade to silence.

Tony Williams remains the perfect team player and soloist. His interlude on "Four," found cymbals, snares and an incredibly fast bass drum locked in mortal combat for the evening's climactic note. Ron Carter, too, has moved with the times without losing track of the jazz essence. His solo on "Walkin' " lived up to the title as he moved with unflagging agility, four paces to the bar, through a long solo that slowed down gracefully during its final seconds.

Opening for Hancock was George Howard. Although his records have sold well, it seems unlikely that they appeal to anyone who appreciates the subtleties of Hancock's jazz work. Howard's soprano sax is the only, lonely horn in a seven-piece group that took us into the world of Michael Jackson, Lionel Richie, et al.

Despite good craftsmanship, notably in the drums and percussion departments, there was not a shred of true inspiration during Howard's 40 dreary minutes of Fuzak. This kind of thing will never be noted in the history books, though it may rate a footnote in the bank books.

Shorter. Blue Note 84232. During his Miles Davis incumbency Shorter taped this date, with Herbie Hancock plus bass and drums, dealing sensitively with Jimmy Rowles' plaintive waltz "502 Blues" and with five Shorter originals. Among these were the ominous "Footprints," the blues-inclined title tune and the mystical ballad "Teru." Shorter (who only played tenor in those days) and Hancock displayed far less complexity, but perhaps more soul, than would be discernible in later years. 3½ stars. □

9/23/85

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

By LEONARD FEATHER

"HORNS A-PLENTY." Betty O'Hara & Johnny Varro. Magnagraphic MJ 103 (8600 Louise Ave., Northridge, Calif., 91325). This belated debut album reminds us that O'Hara, a valued Los Angeles presence for 25 years, is as versatile and talented a horn player as can be found on the Southland scene. For samplers, check her trombone, as well as the dubbed muted trumpet behind her own limpid vocal on "Star Dust," her handsome fluegelhorn timbre on "You Stepped Out of a Dream," and best of all, her own composition "Euphonics," with Ping-Pong stereo effects on her double-belled euphonium and an arrangement using six overdubbed euphoniums. Varro has the spotlight on two competent piano tracks; the bass and drums backing could have swung more, but O'Hara carries this remarkable set single-handed (and multiple-tracked). 4 stars.

□

"GRAND PIANO." George Shearing. Concord Jazz 281. After turning Shearing loose every which way but solo, Concord has accorded him this welcome outing on his own, playing nine standards and singing an unexceptional original, "Imitations." That he can swing without a rhythm section is no longer news; however, he reminds us gracefully in "Nobody Else But Me" and "If I Had You." The latter, credited to Irving Berlin, actually is an English song by Jimmy Campbell, and "While We're Young" is an Alec Wilder song, not by Coots and Gillespie as Concord tells us. Surprisingly, Shearing makes music out of "Mack the Knife" by reharmonizing the melody, turning it from C major to A minor in a slow, moody treatment. 4 stars.

□

"A FIRST." Ruby Braff & Scott Hamilton. Concord Jazz 274. This 1930s retrospective by a swing combo pits Braff's biting cornet against Hamilton's purring tenor. It makes for fine chemistry, with material mostly inspired by singers (four Holidays, a Fitzgerald, two Armstrongs and Ethel Waters' "Dinah"). The rhythm section, with guitarist Chris Flory taking a couple of solos, fits into the early Teddy Wilson small-band mold. Nothing innovative here, but a sure sedative for fusion-weary ears. 3 stars.

□

"ADAM'S APPLE." Wayne

011

JAZZ

9/8/85

JOHN COLLINS: HE BACKED THE BEST

By LEONARD FEATHER

Press agents, when trying to impress us with their client's experience, like to say that the list of artists with whom the performer in question has worked "reads like a Who's Who of jazz." Usually this is nonsense, but in the case of John Collins, who has no press agent, it comes close to the truth.

Collins has come up through the ranks and the decades, playing guitar with Art Tatum, Roy Eldridge, Benny Carter, Lester Young, Fletcher Henderson, Dizzy Gillespie, Nat King Cole (on tour for 14 years) and backing such singers as Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Carmen McRae, Joe Williams, Sammy Davis, Mel Torme, Diana Ross, Nancy Wilson, Bobby Troup and on and on.

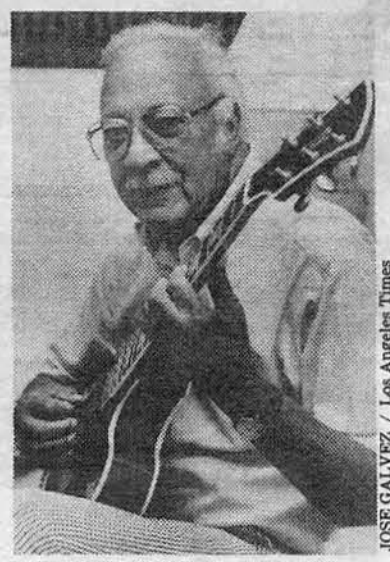
Internationally known and respected, Collins—incredibly—has never recorded an album as a leader. Perhaps somebody will rectify that after the salute that is being organized for him next Sunday from 2 to 8 p.m. at Myron's Ballroom, 1024 S. Grand Ave., downtown. Musicians from around the country are jetting in to honor him and to herald his upcoming (Sept. 20) 72nd birthday.

Pianist Roger Kellaway will be here from New York, as will guitarist Bill Harris from Washington and Collins' friend Truck Parham (with whom he played in Collins' mother's band 50 years ago) from Chicago. Among the local friends joining him will be trumpeter Harry (Sweets) Edison, guitarist Al Viola, pianist Ross Tompkins, saxophonist Buddy Collette, several singers, and Naomi Collins, his wife of 43 years.

Born in Alabama, raised in Chicago from age 13, Collins made his impact felt when, after working in New York with Roy Eldridge, he remained there and slowly built a name, receiving Esquire's "New Star" award as best guitarist of 1947. A panel of experts did the voting; it was the only poll Collins ever won. In 1958, during his years with Nat Cole, he moved his family to Los Angeles.

Looking back over a career that began under the wing of his mother, Georgia Gorham, the pianist who at one time worked as a song demonstrator for W. C. Handy ("St. Louis Blues"), Collins feels he was fortunate to grow up around so much good music. "I worked with my mother's band for a while; I was exposed to all the good tunes—in fact, I think that's why Art Tatum liked me so much, because he played hundreds of tunes and I knew them all."

The association with Tatum and with Roy Eldridge (then billed as "the world's greatest trumpeter") spanned several memorable years at the Three Deuces, one of Chicago's jazz cynosures of the 1930s. Collins shunted back and forth between Tatum and Eldridge, though often all three played together in a phenomenal, leaderless group, one that should have been recorded but now is lost to posterity.



JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

Guitarist John Collins, Nat King Cole's guitarist for 14 years, will be focus of a 72nd birthday salute next Sunday.

In 1940, after working with Eldridge at the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, Collins hooked up with Lester (Prez) Young. The tenor saxophonist had just left Count Basie and John Hammond, Collins recalls, wanted him to form a band to be fronted by Billie Holiday.

"When John put this proposition to Prez, he hit the ceiling. He loved Lady Day, but he wanted to be a leader in his own right, and that's the way it went. We rehearsed every day in the basement of the Woodside Hotel in Harlem, and played at Kelly's Stable on 52nd Street."

The year 1940 marked a turning point in guitar history. Electric guitars had been available for a couple of years, but Charlie Christian's recordings with Benny Goodman created a worldwide phenomenon starting late in 1939.

"I used to go uptown to Minton's Play House and listen to Charlie," Collins recalls. "I admired him, but didn't try to play like him; I was thinking more chordally, harmonically.

Soon afterward, Collins was drafted. Playing in Army bands during the next four years, he used the electric guitar.

Once out of the Army, Collins soon joined Slam Stewart's quartet, with Billy Taylor on piano. Taylor was replaced by Beryl Booker, whom Collins recalls with affection as one of the unheralded great women of jazz. (Booker died, forgotten, in 1978.)

Several more jobs spanned the next few years: with Billy Taylor's quartet (at one point, this group became incorporated into Artie Shaw's Gramercy 5), with Tadd Dameron, and a few months back with Art Tatum, whose trio then included Slam Stewart.

The Nat Cole years began in September of 1951 and ended with Cole's death in 1965. Collins has mixed emotions: "I saw him go from $3,000 a week to more than $10,000 a night, but the money for us sidemen was never too great. He had us on a retainer for about six months out of the year. Nat wasn't playing that much, and he'd always give me a solo during the show. I kept bugging him to play more piano, because he played so great; he did start playing more and cut *my* solo out!

"I thought about leaving, but stayed there for the security, to send my two daughters through school. After Nat died, I worked with Patti Page for a hot minute, then Al Viola called me to sub for him with Bobby Troup, who was singing and playing piano at a club here in Los Angeles. That turned into a six-year association. Bobby is a very fair man, a pleasant, wonderful person to work with."

During and after the years with Troup, Collins found himself increasingly in demand for television shows (two seasons with Terry Gibbs' orchestra on "Operation Entertainment") and for innumerable record dates.

Little by little, Collins' name became known around the jazz continents. He toured France and Spain with his own group, worked the fashionable Meridien Hotel in Paris, and played in several show bands, including the Ellington "Sophisticated Ladies" and Jon Hendricks' "Evolution of the Blues."

The Cole image dies hard. A year or two ago, Carmen McRae, about to record an album associated with Nat's legacy, added Collins to her accompanying trio for "Sweet Lorraine" and nine other songs. In a neat coincidence, the album's title tune, "You're Looking at Me," was composed by Bobby Troup.

Collins has been taking things a little easier since he suffered a heart attack three years ago. His daughters are in their 30s; he has four grandchildren and prefers to remain close to home. "I can't stay on the road but so long. I've had more than my share of that."

He keeps involved, retaining a lively interest in the newer developments. Speaking of the latest guitar sensation, Stanley Jordan, he commented: "I'm not quite accustomed to his sound yet—it's a little thin for my taste; his technique is tremendous, and his ideas are just marvelous. He really has something different to offer."

Will Collins himself be an active participant in the concert honoring him? He smiled and nodded assent. "I haven't retired yet—I've been very fortunate, I'm enjoying life and I'm glad to be still in the ballgame." □

9/13/85

JAZZ REVIEW

A STREAMLINED ELLA IN FREE FLIGHT AT THE BOWL

By LEONARD FEATHER

The gasp that coincided with Ella Fitzgerald's arrival on stage Wednesday at the Hollywood Bowl was not due to anything amiss. On the contrary, it reflected the audience's incredulity upon seeing her so strikingly slimmed down. In her first public appearance since a recent illness, and her first Bowl concert in a dozen years, she exuded an impression of radiant good health to match her perennial good spirits.

MARSHA TRAEGER / Los Angeles Times

An engrossed Ella Fitzgerald at the Bowl.

Backed variously by the 35-piece Nelson Riddle Orchestra, the trio of her expert pianist Paul Smith and—in the evening's most rewarding episode—simply by the guitar of Joe Pass, the singer who has always been so much a part of our lives revealed that most of her qualities are still in place.

She is a vocal Statue of Liberty. Her freedom flights were nowhere more completely expressed than in "Night in Tunisia." Her scat routine on this Dizzy Gillespie song, with a Keter Betts bass solo and involving quotes from various sources ("A Tisket a Tasket," "Ochi Chornya"), found her exploring every level of her range, from a tongue-in-cheek series of low notes to an astonishing altissimo ending.

One does not chip away at a statue; however, if occasional imperfections manifest themselves, they have to be pointed out. Quite often, particularly during the first half, what was supposedly a vibrato came out sounding more like a wobble. Happening generally during the slower and softer songs, this was intrusive enough to be disconcerting to some lifelong admirers.

Reaction was varied. One professional singer said: "This is not the Ella I have known and loved." But a young fan probably spoke for the majority: "She was marvelous—I'd never heard her before and she thrilled me."

Was the wobble due to a rather chilly evening at the Bowl? Or to her recent indisposition? Presumably time will tell whether this was a temporary problem or a flaw that has set in during the Indian summer of a glorious career.

Along with the old predictables (a "My Fair Lady" medley, some Ellingtonia, a sneakily slow "Lady Be Good"), there were a few admirable ventures outside the standard repertoire: "Somewhere

Please see ELLA, Page 22

ELLA

Continued from Page 1

in the Night" (the old "Naked City" TV theme) and "Make Me a Rainbow." In her elegant set with Pass, following the guitarist's three impeccable solos, she took every conceivable liberty with "One Note Samba." Nobody has ever accused this lady of lacking a sense of humor.

Though she has never been closely identified with the blues, this was the form that provided the basis for her two closing numbers, a buoyant "Alright, Okay, You Win" followed by a more traditional "St. Louis Blues."

Riddle's orchestra dealt splendidly with his generally supportive charts. As he and Ella walked off arm in arm, they left the 14,264 customers yelling for more; but it is better to be satisfied than saturated.

Los Angeles Times 2/14/85

WOODY SHAW'S TRUMPET POLISHES OLD STANDARDS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Woody Shaw, the trumpeter and composer, came up through the hard-bop ranks in the early 1960s, with side trips into free jazz. Thursday evening, Shaw the trumpeter was in town, but Shaw the composer stayed home.

It's an all-too familiar story. Despite his brilliant record as a leader of groups and writer of challenging works for them, Shaw had to hire a local rhythm section for his appearance at the Palace Court (ending tonight). Since there were no rehearsals, everything played was a standard well known to the participants.

Though it was impossible to convey a full picture of Shaw's artistry, his performance rose nobly above these conditions. Opening with "What's New," taken at an abnormally fast clip, he left no doubt during half a dozen swirling choruses that his bold, assertive style and total control can find few counterparts on the contemporary scene.

In the old movie theme "Invitation," he maintained a solo warmth most trumpeters cannot achieve without switching to the fluegelhorn. Thelonious Monk's "Bemsha Swing" found the pianist, Henry Butler, in a puckish, Monkish mood. Elsewhere during the set Butler displayed chops galore, but was inclined to floridity and to overplaying behind the horn solos.

For a ballad interlude, Shaw used a 1957 Sinatra hit, "All the Way," a splendid vehicle for his more harmonically oriented explorations. A fast blues, with Butler in an adventurous outside groove, ended the set.

Shaw was fortunate to have on hand Billy Higgins, long the most dependable among the Southland's drummers, and Tony Dumas, a bassist who functions dually as a rhythmic foundation and a spirited, melodic soloist.

JAZZ VIDEO BRIEFS

9-22-85

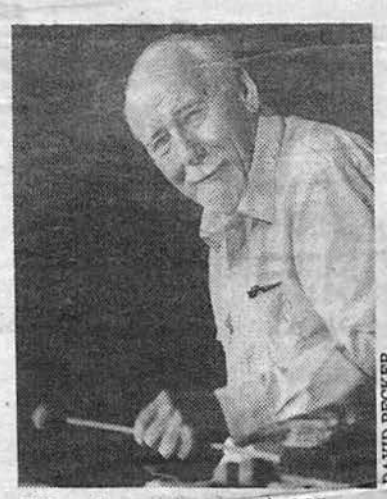
NORVO: RARE VIEW OF 'MALLET' PIONEER

By LEONARD FEATHER

"JAZZ AT THE SMITHSONIAN." Red Norvo. Sony 96 W 50070.

Norvo was the jazz world's mallet-instrument pioneer, first on xylophone, then on vibraphone, to which he switched after Lionel Hampton had popularized it. His classically gentle sound is enveloped here in a typically simple and appropriate setting, assisted by guitarist Tal Farlow, an old friend and alumnus from the 1950s, and bassist Steve Novosel.

As is his custom, Norvo stays within the confines of the familiar jazz standards: "All of Me," Fats Waller's "Jitterbug Waltz" and the like. During the session, Mavis Rivers, a frequent Norvo partner, steps in for a couple of agreeable, lightly swinging vocals, assisted by the trio plus pianist Norman Simmons and a drummer, Mike Sheppard. Though it would have been preferable to hear some of the challenging original works Norvo has composed, this 58-minute color session, taped in 1982, provides a welcome chance to see and hear an artist who had been before the cameras all too seldom. 3½ stars.



DAVID BECKER

Vibraphone pioneer Red Norvo sticks to classics on new video.

MARSHA TRAEGER / Los Angeles Times

Benny Carter's new video suffers from a poor sound mix.

□

"JAZZ AT THE SMITHSONIAN." Benny Carter. Sony 96 W 50072. Carter's case is not unlike Norvo's, for although he has been a vital figure since the pre-swing years, visual footage on him is scarce. He was in a memorable nightclub scene in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (with Ava Gardner and Gregory Peck) and in a few other movies, but most of his film work was done on the other side of the camera as a composer or arranger of scores. The video of this 1982 concert presents him as the peerless alto saxophonist he has long remained, in 57 minutes of high-grade mainstream music.

This could have been a priceless document, but poor production, mainly in the sound mix, comes close to ruining the results. It is worth checking out if only for the chance to admire Carter's nonpareil sound. The late George Duvivier's bass is so overmixed that one almost has the impression he was the leader.

Joe Kennedy, Carter's talented cousin, plays jazz violin; Kenny Barron on piano and Ronnie Bedford on drums complete the group in a program of jazz standbys: "Misty," "Cotton Tail," etc. Sony would be well-advised to remix this session and reissue it with a more satisfying balance. 3 stars.

□

"ONE NIGHT WITH BLUE NOTE." Volumes I and II. Various artists. Sony. These two tapes, 60 and 55 minutes long, in color, offer almost two-thirds of the music heard in the four-LP set of last February's Town Hall concert, reviewed here a few weeks ago. Volume I is essentially the "4-H" set (Herbie Hancock, Freddie Hubbard, Bobby Hutcherson, Joe Henderson) with the valuable addition of the two Stanley Jordan guitar solos, an Art Blakey alumni combo in "Moanin'" and James Newton's flute embellishing the charming waltz "Little B's Poem." 4½ stars.

Volume II is an odd mixture: On the one hand, Kenny Burrell with Grover Washington (also with Jimmy Smith), McCoy Tyner both solo and leading a quintet; on the other hand, Charles Lloyd's saxophone and 12½ minutes of Cecil Taylor's vertiginous piano. 3½ stars.

□

"MEET THE SINGERS." Nat King Cole, Sarah Vaughan, Herb Jeffries. Swingtime Video VHS 117. At last, a generation to whom he is just Natalie's father will have a substantial opportunity to examine the singular art of Nat King Cole.

Among the eight songs are "Sweet Lorraine," which triggered the conversion of his image from that of jazz pianist to pop vocal superstar; "The Trouble With Me is You," a harmonically engaging rhythm song; "Route 66," his definitive version of the upbeat Bobby Troup blues and "Nature Boy," the quasi-mystical tone poem that had enhanced his fame and fortune in 1948.

Although three numbers are laden with a dreary string section, for the most part this is the small group Cole led in 1950-52, with Irving Ashby on guitar, Joe Comfort on bass and Jack Costanzo on bongos. Cole's keyboard is heard in a few solos that are brief, but not too brief to remind us of his great influence as a pianist.

Watching this supremely compelling artist, seeing musical history recaptured with the visual dimension added, reminds us how much we have missed by being unable to trace the whole story in this manner, from "Jazz at the Philharmonic" in the '40s clear back to Duke in the '30s and the Armstrong-Hines Hot Five in the '20s. But then, that is rather like complaining that Sarah Bernhardt never made any talkies, or that Will Shakespeare didn't set up any photo sessions.

Following Cole, Sarah Vaughan, 27, slender and attractive against a phony rooftop setting, sings magnificently the too-seldom-heard John Green song "You're Mine You," and three others. The stilted, brassy arrangements don't hamper her too much.

Finally Herb Jeffries, with conductor/pianist Dick Hazard, offers his 1950s style bravura balladry in four songs, one of which has a clarinet solo by Marshal Royal.

For the Cole and Vaughan cuts, this is an indispensable 4½-star special. Black and white, 47½ minutes; available only by mail order for $29.95 from Box 3476, Hollywood 90078.

□

"MEET THE SMALL BANDS." Count Basie, Cab Calloway, the Four Freshmen, George Shearing Quintet. Swingtime Video VHS 116. Serendipity again. Basie's unique, short-lived small band was captured on film in 1950. Though the four tunes are short, he gets to play more two-fisted piano than was his wont in later, laissez-faire years. The front line, with Clark Terry, Buddy de Franco and Wardell Gray, couldn't have been better. Freddie Green, who's still touring with the Basie band today, is on hand to make it real; as is the great drummer Gus Johnson. A bonus on "I Cried for You" is Helen Humes' vocal.

Fast forwarding past the Calloway antics of 1950 and the not-so-Freshmen of 1952, you will find five samples of George Shearing in the throes of his strictly bebop phase, and doing it very convincingly, on "Swedish Pastry" and his own "Conception." In the 1950 quintet were Joe Roland on vibes, Chuck Wayne on guitar, Denzil Best (who wrote the opening number, "Move") on drums, and John Levy, now better known as Joe Williams' manager, on bass.

Overall rating, on the strength of Basie and Shearing, 3½. Black and white, 52 minutes. Mail order only for $29.95 from Box 3476, Hollywood 90078.

□

"MEET THE DIXIELAND BANDS." Jack Teagarden, the Bobcats, Swingtime Video VHS 115. Teagarden, like Nat Cole, was a vocal and instrumental giant whom few jazz students of today's generation have heard and virtually none could have seen (he died in 1964, a year before Cole).

There are problems: The group on his nine tunes is a middleweight traditionalist octet; the producer saw fit to mandate straw hats and to saddle the leader with two inane female backup singers on "Rockin' Chair" (his vocal duet on this song with Louis Armstrong was a gem now lost forever). Still, to hear Teagarden apply his burnished jazz baritone voice to "Basin Street Blues" or "Stars Fell on Alabama," or to study his incredibly modern trombone solo on "Lover," is to know that he was without competition at that point in his life.

The balance of this video comprises eight cuts by the Bobcats, a splinter group from Bob Crosby's orchestra, with "Muskrat Ramble" and other hardy or not-so-hardy perennials. Bob Haggart and Ray Bauduc do their "Big Noise From Winnetka" shtick (bassist Haggart is still at it, with whatever drummer happens to be around).

Jess Stacy's piano solo, "Complainin'," and Eddie Miller's tenor sax on "Lazy Mood" gives this set enough validity to counteract the often dated air. Dixieland die-hards will delight in all of it. Black and white; 54½ minutes. 4 stars for Teagarden, 3 for the Bobcats; ergo, 3½ overall. □

PENNI GLADSTO

Still Dizzy After All These Years

Dizzy Gillespie during one of his infrequent performing appearances at the final concert in the "Jazz of the Bowl" series Wednesday night, featuring the big bands of Toshiko Akiyoshi, Woody Herman and Gerald Wilson. More than 11,000 fans toasted the trumpeter, celebrating his 50th year as a musician. *Review on Page 13.*

L.A. TIMES 9/15/85

JAZZ

THE GIBSON CLAMBAKE —A FIRST-CLASS JAM

By LEONARD FEATHER

DENVER—Dick and Maddie Gibson's annual Jazz Party at the Fairmont Hotel differed from all its 22 predecessors. Not because it was the biggest ever with its 60 hand-picked, world-class musicians; not that many new participants were involved (only five were on their first visit), but simply because any time artists of this caliber assemble, there is a kind of give and take, a compatibility and camaraderie, that lives only for the moment, never to be captured in the more formalized world of concerts and festivals.

Marshall Royal, the Los Angeles-based alto saxophonist, summed it up best: "A lot of us don't tour that much nowadays, so the party gives all of us—guys from New York, Florida, wherever—a rare chance to get together. When you can just play whatever you want, with a bunch of first-class men, it all comes off naturally, effortlessly. Only two or three times a year do I have a chance to enjoy myself this way."

The Gibson bash this time included 11 saxes, 10 pianists, 9 trombones, 8 trumpets, 7 basses, 6 drummers drumming. No partridge. No pear tree. A surprise guest, Joe Williams, sang the blues, flanked by Red Holloway, Harry (Sweets) Edison and a few old friends from his Basie days.

Stretched over the Labor Day weekend, the 31 hours of music were at once a celebration of life and a remembrance with sober overtones: The past year has seen the loss of such party regulars as the saxophonists Budd Johnson, Zoot Sims and Chris Woods, the trombonists Trummy Young and Vic Dickenson, the drummer Shelly Manne and the bassist George Duvivier. Yet the most lamentable news can generate admirable music.

Ray Brown, deciding that a tribute to Duvivier was in order, called on his fellow bassists, wrote a tune for them, rehearsed it Sunday morning and, that evening, brought Milt Hinton, Major Holley, Bob Haggart, John Heard, Carson Smith and John Clayton onstage. The seven took turns playing and holding the music for one another as the haunting, blues-like tune unwound, while the audience listened spellbound. Toward the end, Haggart began whistling, softly and gently, bringing the piece to a poignant end.

Ed Shaughnessy paid his tribute to Shelly Manne with a solo built on two figures: "Artistry in Percussion," written for Manne during his Stan Kenton days, and the "Salt Peanuts" riff Shelly had played on a 1945 record with Dizzy Gillespie. It takes a rare sensitivity to bring taste and discretion to a drum solo; Shaughnessy, the drummer on "The Tonight Show" band, has those qualities in abundance. (Five of his Carson colleagues were on hand for this party: Pete and Conte Candoli, who duetted on "Jitterbug Waltz" and "Night in Tunisia," trumpeter Snooky Young, saxophonist Bob Cooper and pianist Ross Tompkins, all playing like birds released from a gilded cage.)

The music at a Gibson gathering defies categorization. It isn't precisely classic or traditional jazz; "Muskrat Ramble" no longer offers a challenge, if it ever did, and when the British trombonist George Chisholm, whom Gibson brought over from London for the third time, played "Struttin' With Some Barbecue," he removed the cobwebs by playing it as a bossa nova.

Where, in any case, does tradition end and contemporaneity begin? When the clarinetists Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern glided into the ancient "St. Louis Blues," it took on a startlingly different coloration while nine trombonists, all standing in a corner away from the bandstand, decided on the spur of the moment to toss in a few riffs. This unexpected touch of binaural sound brought the spirit of 1985 to a 1914 song. The trombonists included Al Grey and Benny Powell (ex-Basie), Carl Fontana, Urbie Green, Slide Hampton and Frank Rehak (ex-Herman), and Bill Watrous (ex-both).

Rehak's presence said something about the affection with which musicians regard the Jazz Party. A month earlier, a doctor had told him that he had a grave illness. Determined to come to Denver first, he postponed surgery or radiation and played throughout the weekend with unquenchable enthusiasm.

Most of the men here owe their musical maturity to years of big-band dues. A few are younger and have simply absorbed the varieties of mainstream jazz by being around the right elders, or by becoming their students. John Clayton, the 33-year-old bassist whose solo specialty was part classical (a segment of Koussevitsky's Concerto for Double Bass, a segue to Jobim's "Insensitive"), studied with Ray Brown. Jeff Hamilton, the 32-year-old drummer, is also a Brown protege.

LEONARD FEATHER

Frank Rehak, left, Benny Powell were two of the nine trombonists at this year's Gibson Jazz Party.

The youngest joint tenant in the ballroom, John Pizzarelli, 25, played guitar duets with his father, Bucky. Scott Hamilton, 31, is an anachronism who came up immersed in the world of Buddy Tate (with whom he teamed here), and Paul Gonsalves and Coleman Hawkins, rather than that of John Coltrane.

Some of the most enchanting sounds at a jazz party occur without premeditation. During the first afternoon, Roger Kellaway, a pianist whose virtuosity is all but unchallenged, found himself engaged in a blues duet with Herb Ellis, while the bassist and drummer fell silent. Idea piled on idea while the two, as if suspended in midair, played chorus after chorus until more than 20 minutes had slipped by. "It felt so good," Kellaway said, "I just couldn't find a way to stop." By the end of this exchange, the audience's hands were sore and Gibson's schedule was ruined.

A lesson one re-learns every year on occasions of this kind is that it takes our supreme jazz interpreters to remind us of our heritage of song and keep the flame alive. The ballads were frequent and fulfilling: such works as "Poor Butterfly" (1916), "All This and Heaven Too," "We'll Be Together Again," "You've Changed," "This Is All I Ask," "I'll Wind" (played by Buddy De Franco after he had learned that his home in Florida was in danger of destruction by a hurricane), along with more recent compositions ("Wave," "Send in the Clowns," "A Child Is Born"), brought the beauty of North and South American music into sharp focus. The lyricism of which America's finest jazzmen are capable was particularly evident in the solos, on both alto sax and trumpet, by the perennially eloquent Benny Carter.

Of course, the musicians' own creations also form an indispensable part of the jazz repertoire. Without the compositional gifts of Gillespie, Parker, Monk, Charlie Christian, Ellington, Carmichael, Waller (where would the clarinetist Peanuts Hucko be without "Stealin' Apples"?), the jazz world would be all but tongue-tied. And then again, maybe not, for as Monty Alexander and Louise Duncan illustrated in their buoyant piano duet, you can turn "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"—and conceivably anything else ever written—into a handy vehicle for ad-libbing.

In addition to the party, Dick Gibson now presents occasional concerts in a Denver theater, and is one of the owners of an apparently successful all-jazz radio station. Jazz has not made him wealthy; years ago, he scored a killing with the Water Pik, but since then his fortunes have fluctuated.

He declares that the party, which this year grossed $126,960 (576 patrons at $210 each), lost money, which seems to have been the case ever since it began. Yet as long as he can look around and see his friends and hear the sounds, and as long as he can stand up there during the final set every year and holler a chorus of "I Ain't Got Nobody" in his stentorian baritone, I doubt that Gibson will ever give up on the music he has loved since his Alabama childhood. □

015

9/20/85

Los Angeles Times

NIGHT IN CA HUENGA PAYS LIP SERVICE TO GILLESPIE

By LEONARD FEATHER

Although most of the advertising and publicity neglected to mention it, the premise for Wednesday's program at the Hollywood Bowl was a salute to Dizzy Gillespie on his 50th anniversary as a professional musician.

With three fine orchestras on hand, one might have expected the trumpet virtuoso to be heard in a stunning variety of settings, playing many of his own compositions such as "Woody'n You" (which he wrote for Woody Herman), "Con Alma" and "Night in Tunisia."

None of this happened. Although Toshiko Akiyoshi's orchestra, in a departure from her policy of playing only her own music, offered an arrangement of Gillespie's "Bebop," the guest of honor never sat in nor did he join forces with the Woody Herman band.

Aside from announcing the orchestras, Gillespie did not perform until 20 minutes into the closing set by Gerald Wilson's orchestra, and even then, what should have been a triumphant meeting of two great minds just didn't ignite.

Overall, the balance of styles represented by the three orchestras was effective. The Akiyoshi band's opening set found the leader at the piano in a reflective mood, intensified by Lew Tabackin's tenor sax. "Remembering Bud," her tribute to the late Bud Powell, was an elegiac work in which her incisive playing came close to Powell's own articulation.

The band's long suit is its sax section, piloted by Frank Wess on lead alto. Whether playing saxes or flutes, these five men meshed like no other reed team in big band jazz today and in "Autumn Sea" provided the evening's most incandescent moments.

Herman's orchestra has a less sharply defined personality, because he draws on a variety of eras, writers and images, jumping from 1930s and '40s songs to meatier material such as Don Grolnick's "Pools" (from the Steps Ahead repertoire) and trombonist John Fedchock's lyrical arrangement of John Coltrane's "Central Park West." A pointless "Sonny Boy," with a Herman vocal, was inexplicably dedicated to Gillespie. But despite its lack of focus, this band remains one of the most buoyant survivors among the remaining jazz ensembles in the mainstream tradition.

Gerald Wilson, like Akiyoshi, uses his band as a sounding board for his own colorfully textured music. His set opened with three numbers from his new album, richly painted by the leader's brush.

Then came Gillespie, playing on a couple of unidentified Wilson numbers. Too much of the time he stood around while other soloists took their turns. "Round Midnight" came off better, and a blues had its moments, but at times it seemed almost as though Gillespie were a sideman in Wilson's orchestra.

The concluding sequences—with the trumpeter banging a cowbell, singing "Swing Low Sweet Cadillac," waiting for yet another sax solo, then singing "Oo Pa Pa Da"—was more stuffing than meat. The great man seemed vaguely disengaged, and the fault was less Gillespie's than that of unimaginative production in this flawed tribute to an artist who deserves better.

Attendance was 11,163. This was the last concert in the summer "Jazz of the Bowl" series.

9/21

TOMPKINS SCORES IN FIRST PIANO SOLO

Ross Tompkins has been heard in so many local groups playing such a variety of good, bad and indifferent keyboards that the only thing left unaccomplished was a solo outing on a first-rate piano. The Hyatt on Sunset obliged him with just such an opportunity for two nights on a splendid instrument, newly installed in the Silver Screen Jazz Room.

Playing alone has obvious advantages for the well-equipped pianist. He is his own man; he can add a few bars here and there, go in an out of tempo, change the harmony when the mood takes him, insert interludes between choruses, without having to worry about whether a bass player and drummer can follow him.

Tompkins not only has the technique and imagination to take advantage of this freedom, but also a repertoire that may have few equals this side of Gerald Wiggins. Perhaps as the result of playing for acts by the thousands during his 18 years on "The Tonight Show," he seems to know every popular and jazz tune worth remembering from the past six or seven decades.

During his first hour Thursday, his choices alternated with requests in a set that included "You and the Night and the Music," "My Ideal," "Younger Than Springtime" and Dizzy Gillespie's "Con Alma" (which he had played Wednesday when Dizzy sat in at the club after his Hollywood Bowl gig).

Always an eclectic in whom traces of Oscar Peterson and others may be observed, Tompkins is as much at ease solo as with a rhythm section. He will return in the latter capacity Oct. 12. Next week, Wednesday through Saturday, the saxophonist and flutist Frank Wess will lead a quartet.

—LEONARD FEATHER

9-27

WOODS AND QUINTET

Phil Woods, whose *macho* alto saxophone has become to the 1980s what Charlie Parker was to the '40s and Cannonball Adderley was to the '60s, is well aware that unity is strength. Not for him the hastily arranged gig with a local rhythm section; his quintet is as organized as any in jazz today.

In the group he presented Wednesday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill (he closes Saturday) are bassist Steve Gilmore and drummer Bill Goodwin, both of whom joined him a decade ago. Pianist Hal Galper has been with the unit since 1981; Tom Harrell, the newest addition, brought his trumpet on board a couple of years ago.

Such continuity is rare in these economically daunting times. The results were immediately evident when the two horns took off, hellbent for creation, on a fast, quirky Galper arrangement of "Getting Sentimental Over You."

Woods is in command of the horn, ideas gushing forth with hurricane force, yet never short on continuity or passion. In "Willow Weep for Me," linked together with the famous vamp from Miles Davis' "All Blues," he produced polytonal effects by repeating the title phrase in whatever key struck his fancy; he quoted from "Heat Wave," while the rhythm section kept up a fierce, fast-waltz beat that was a heat wave in itself.

Tom Harrell, when not playing, stands motionless, head bent down, hands clasped as if in prayer. When the moment comes for a trumpet solo, it is as if he has been pierced by a thousand needles. Like Woods, he has a strong, very personal sound and a continual flow of improvisational thoughts.

Two of the most appealing arrangements were "Heaven" and "Azure"—both by Duke Ellington, both 16-bar themes, and both blending Harrell's muted trumpet with Woods' clarinet, which he played with the same heated conviction that informs his saxophone. He is the most underrated clarinetist in jazz.

Hal Galper's fleet piano took on Tyner-like modal colorations in the Harrell composition "Occurrence." Goodwin is as supportive a drummer as any leader could hope for, rounding out a many splendored quintet that may well be without peer in contemporary acoustic jazz. What I am trying to say is: Don't miss it.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

HOME-GROWN PIANIST WESTON IN SOLO RECITAL

By LEONARD FEATHER

A handful of admirers turned up Sunday evening for Randy Weston's solo recital at McCabe's in Santa Monica. The pianist/composer has enjoyed a long and productive career; however, like too many of our home-grown jazz greats, he is appreciated more abroad than domestically, having traveled extensively (and sometimes lived) in Africa and Europe.

As he made explosively clear at McCabe's, he is a powerful performer imbued with the pure essence of jazz and exceptional technical command. An imposing figure, basketball-player-tall, he creates vividly dancing patterns with his big hands and long fingers that seem capable of stretching a 12th.

If he seemed at times given to excessive pounding, the fault was that of a piano with a clanky upper register that was unworthy of him. This was particularly discomfiting during his charming "Congolese Children's Song," played entirely in the higher octaves.

Clearly two of Weston's early influences were Thelonious Monk and Duke Ellington, who were the subjects of his opening and closing medleys. These tributes aside, the program consisted entirely of Weston originals, among them such long familiar and always engaging melodies as "Little Niles," "Hi Fly" and "Pam's Waltz."

Several of his works were inspired by African themes; one, written after his first visit to Nigeria, incorporated brooding minor chords with fast, furiously pulsating outbursts. Closer to home, his "Blues for Strayhorn" evinced a lyricism reminiscent of Billy Strayhorn's own creative gifts.

That Weston could only appear in Los Angeles for one night, before such a small audience, and that he is presently without a record contract, can only be considered additional proof of the disparities that separate talent from success when such crucial factors as luck and good management are not involved. Randy Weston belongs at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, but we would be ill advised to hold our breath until he arrives there.

JAZZ REVIEW 9/30

STANDARDS ACCORDING TO JARRETT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Keith Jarrett's credentials are so comprehensive, involving accomplishments free-form, classical, jazz and whatever other area of music he chooses to tackle, that there is a sense that he seems to have been overextending himself. The presence of a rhythm section and the billing "Keith Jarrett Plays Standards" at the Beverly Theatre were special inducements Saturday evening for those of us who feel that he is at his best under these conditions.

With "Come Rain or Come Shine" or "Skylark" or "Someday My Prince Will Come" or "My Funny Valentine" as a basis, Jarrett gives the ear something to relate to throughout. Moreover, each excursion lasts about 10 minutes, in contrast to the hourlong peregrinations through which we were required to wade during his solo recitals.

Every tune is a launching pad from which he takes off for parts unknown, yet the impression of his powerful personality on the harmonic structure is variously lyrical, elliptical, startling (the seemingly polytonal convolutions on the first chorus of "All the Things You Are") and invariably ingenious.

The second half of the recital

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JARRETT

Continued from Page 2

became more abstract, with a protracted E-minor vamp that began by jarring you out of any complacency but was ultimately a mite tedious.

Jack de Johnette seems to have inherited some of the most valued characteristics of all the great drummers, from Jo Jones through Roach and Blakey and Elvin Jones. Though he and Jarrett seldom seemed to be listening to one another, his participation was a vital element in the success of the evening.

Gary Peacock has always been the ideal drummer for this trio; his countless credits include a stint with the late Bill Evans, to whom Jarrett's work in this context often bears a strong resemblance.

The matter of Jarrett's gyrations leaves you wondering: Without an audience—in a recording studio—does he still bob and weave and stand and crouch and throw arms and legs and head and torso in every direction at once? (When a tree falls in an uninhabited forest, does it make a sound?) Perhaps we are not meant to know the answer to either question. In any event, what was played finally became more important than whether his act (if such it is) enhances or detracts from the performance.

SHEARING IS MAGIC AT THE KEYBOARD

George Shearing's way with songs is unlike anyone else's. In the course of a single show Wednesday at the Vine Street Bar & Grill, he performed more tricks than a roomful of magicians at the Magic Castle.

For example, how does one convert such an incorrigibly hopeless tune as "Mack the Knife" into a lazy, haunting, minor-mood love song? It takes only Shearing's pianistic sleight of hands.

Almost the same skill was involved in making of the simple 1924 Irving Berlin waltz "What'll I Do?" a gospel-flavored journey into funk. As for Ray Brown's disarmingly titled "Very Hip Rock 'n' Roll Tune," Shearing at one point went into a series of rhythmic tricks as if he were skipping over oddly placed rocks across a pond.

During most of the set he was paired with ("accompanied by" would be inadequate) the unsurpassed bass artistry of Don Thompson. One can only marvel at the advances made in this instrument when a single week has brought performances by Dave Holland, John Clayton, Charlie Haden and now Thompson, who goes a step further by doubling at a second grand piano.

10/11/85

The two keyboard duet numbers that closed the show were "Lullaby of Birdland," notable for a dazzling display by Thompson, followed by his own "Stratford Strut," with some astonishing and witty interplay between the pianists.

Shearing contributed his tremulously pleasant voice to the exquisite lyrics of "You Must Believe In Spring." His gift for finding arcane melodic delights was in evidence with the stately waltz "Sometime Ago." His unforgotten bebop origins were on display in "Up at the Crack of Down," a Thompson tune with Shearing in full swing on long parallel-octave runs.

A year ago, hearing him at this same room, I concluded that George Shearing is the quintessential jazz pianist. That will have to do as a summation until a more apt phrase comes to mind. He closes Saturday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

017

9-29

JAZZ

'ROUND MIDNIGHT' FILM: NOW IS FINALLY THE TIME

By LEONARD FEATHER

The sorry record of the motion-picture industry in dealing with jazz and its protagonists need hardly be reiterated here. Aside from a couple of partial successes such as "Paris Blues" 24 years ago, the level of respect or understanding shown by screenwriters toward the artists and their legacies has been consistently dismal.

Reports from Paris during the past three months have indicated that, at long last, there may be a departure from this unhappy pattern. "Round Midnight," named for the Thelonious Monk composition and filmed mainly in the Eclair Studios outside Paris, clearly was conceived with lofty intentions and, according to all the evidence to date, the results seem likely to set a remarkable precedent.

Consider the cast. Central to the plot is the friendship of an American expatriate saxophonist (played by Dexter Gordon) and a Frenchman (Francois Cluzet). Others in the cast, many of them doubling as actors and musicians, are Herbie Hancock, who has been serving as musical director and will write the score; saxophonist Wayne Shorter; trumpeter Chet Baker, singing a tune by the late pianist Bud Powell; vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson; guitarist John McLaughlin; drummer Billy Higgins; bassist Pierre Michelot and singer Lonette McKee. (Martin Scorsese, interviewed on Page 22, plays a club owner and record producer who also manages Gordon.)

The musical content promises to maintain an extraordinarily high level. In addition to the title song, there are such jazz standards as Charlie Parker's "Now's the Time"; Bud Powell's "Time Waits," "Celia," and "Una Noche Con Francis"; Dexter Gordon's "Tivoli" and "Society Red," and Jimmy Rowles' "The Peacocks," as well as a new Hancock piece called "Berengere's Nightmare" and two works by the French pianist Henri Renaud. Lonette McKee, who may earn a better break here than in the ill-fated "Cotton Club," will be heard singing "How Long Has This Been Going On?"

With musicians enacting the roles of musicians, a screenplay was called for that would offer them a chance to display their personalities naturally in an authentic story. (Bertrand Tavernier and David Rayfiel wrote the script.)

According to Herbie Hancock, "The film was based partly on incidents in the life of Bud Powell; they'll also constitute part of a book about Bud that's being written by Francis Paudras. It's supposed to have been inspired by the relationship between Paudras, who's a graphic artist, and Powell, whom he helped through some difficult years when Bud was living in Paris. It's fictional, but it was based on real events."

Irwin Winkler, the producer of "Round Midnight," elaborates: "Actually we draw on many real-life occurrences; we had in mind the deaths of Bud Powell and Lester Young, and some of Dexter Gordon's own background. We felt it was logical to have musicians play the main roles rather than actors, because they can bring true authenticity to the story.

ADAM WINKLER

In Paris, Dexter Gordon rehearses as director Bertrand Tavernier confers with Francois Cluzet, co-star of "Round Midnight."

"Dexter Gordon was a perfect choice. His style in talk, in movement, his personal experiences, enabled him to bring understanding to the character he plays—after all, he's been living a lot of the same life himself for 62 years."

Wayne Shorter, who spent a week in July at the studio and returned for a longer visit in August, attests to the genuine flavor. "Bertrand Tavernier, the director and co-producer, is a real jazz fan who feels that the lives and contributions of artists like Bud Powell have been mistreated or ignored in the movies. He wanted the dialogue to be completely natural.

Hancock added: "Sure, Tavernier really depended on us to authenticate the lines, which I thought was admirable. He knew we were the ones that led the lives, and he wanted us to help make it as real as possible. Except for a few passages where French people are talking to one another, the dialogue is all in English. Warner Bros. will distribute it in the U.S."

That the dialogue will ring true should give "Round Midnight" a significant advantage. Historically, films dealing with jazz have suffered from the derelictions of screenwriters who for years put pseudo-hip lines in the mouths of actors.

Other problems in the past were posed by story lines based on ridiculous premises. It will be hard for some of us to forget "St. Louis Blues," an idiotically patronizing screen biography of W. C. Handy, with Nat King Cole in the title role, featuring an actor who played his father mouthing such lines as "Don't play jazz, son—that's the devil's music!"

There was also "The Gene Krupa Story." Ludicrously inaccurate even by Hollywood standards, it was full of distortions, anachronisms and outright fiction, with Sal Mineo playing the drummer whose minor brush with the law on a pot charge was blown up out of proportion to reality. "The Five Pennies," based on an incident in the life of the cornetist Red Nichols, was so sentimentalized and sensationalized as to be worthless except for the appearance on screen of Louis Armstrong, Shelly Manne and other first-rate musicians.

"The Benny Goodman Story" also had some superior musical interludes, but relied on a plot that failed to deal with a remarkable aspect of Goodman's career, his defiance of the color line in hiring Teddy Wilson for the Goodman Trio. This typical example of dishonest writing was a reflection of the racial hang-ups that long prevented any genuine portrayal of the jazz life. As late as 1950, Hollywood was afraid to show black and white musicians on screen together, or to portray blacks in any situation where they were not subservient to whites. Fear of offending the Southern market was the excuse always used for this segregationist policy. Obviously, none of these strictures will apply to "Round Midnight."

In this modestly budgeted ($3 million) production, much of the action is set in a re-creation of the Blue Note, a Paris club where Powell worked during his expatriation. Powell, a genius of modern jazz piano who came to prominence along with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker as a trend-setter of the mid-1940s bebop era, led a life marred by mental illness and hospitalizations. He moved to Paris in 1959, staying for five years. After returning to New York for a supposedly brief visit, he played at Birdland, then disappeared, fell into bad company, and died less than two years later at 41.

Will this be, at long last, the definitive jazz movie?

Herbie Hancock is optimistic: "I certainly believe it has a chance. All the music has come out great—like some duet things I did with Bobby Hutcherson. The story begins in New York, moves to Paris, then ends partly in New York and also at a jazz festival supposedly in Lyons. I'll be finishing up the scoring in November."

Wayne Shorter's view was no less hopeful: "Everybody was guarding against one thing. They didn't want the movie to leave that old, negative impression. I think we finally have a film that does justice to the subject."

Irwin Winkler summed it up succinctly: "It won't be a new milestone," he said, "it will be the *only* one!" □

10/6/85

MONICA ALMEIDA

rumpeter Wynton Marsalis offers some engaging moments in is latest effort, "Black Codes (From the Underground)."

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

BLACK CODES (FROM THE NDERGROUND)." Wynton arsalis. Columbia 40009

This will presumably be the final album by the Marsalis Quintet. (Branford Marsalis is since left, and the driving, tense piano of Kenny Kirkland is been replaced.) "Black Codes" nsists of three originals by the ader and one by Kirkland. The tter, "Chambers of Tain" (the le refers to drummer Jeff Watts' ckname), has a strong Miles avis late-1960s flavor, as do sev-al of the other tracks.

Though this is not Wynton's nest hour, there are many engag-g moments here: the graceful, ft 3/4 swing of "For Wee Folks" ith Branford's soprano and Wyn-n's muted horn; the easy, canter-g of "Delfeayo's Dilemma" amed for another of the Marsalis others); and the consistently rong undercurrent of the en-age bassist Charnett Moffett. The most successful cut is the nplest of the lot—an ad-lib blues played by Wynton and Moffett and revealing more of Marsalis' emotions than several of the more organized pieces. 4½ stars.

—LEONARD FEATHER

□

"THIS BUD'S FOR YOU." Bud Shank. Muse 5309. After working for years in blander, less-challenging settings, Shank here is like a tiger unleashed. His horn could not have been better galvanized than by Kenny Barron's piano, Al Foster's drums and Ron Carter's bass. All four shine in bop standards by Parker, Powell and Silver as well as in Shank's own samba "Cotton Blossom" and one improbable vehicle, "Never Never Land" from "Peter Pan"). Shank left his flute home, but brought along all he needed, his real image as a hard-driving alto saxophonist. 4½ stars.

—L.F.

□

"HARK." Buddy De Franco & Oscar Peterson Quartet. Pablo 2310-914. It would be hard to find five musicians better qualified or more empathetic than De Franco, Peterson, Joe Pass, bassist Niels Pedersen and drummer Martin Drew. Yet there are flaws: The first chorus of "All Too Soon" lags along lethargically; "Summer Me, Winter Me" as a quasi-samba doesn't work. De Franco's originals, the title track blues and the Brazilian-flavored "Llovisna," evidence of his enlightened harmonic ear, are splendid, and the blowing passages of "Joy Spring" and "This Is All I Ask" reflect the masterful control and inspiration of four superb soloists. 4 stars.

—L.F.

□

"WHITESTONE." Joe Pass. Pablo 2310-912. Whenever a slick producer enters the picture and tells a jazz musician what is good for him, a sort of reverse Peter Principle sets in: The jazzman sinks below his own level of competence. This is the kind of group that you might expect to find on a Lee Ritenour album: Don Grusin, Harvey Mason, Abe Laboriel & Co. There are a couple of pretty tunes ("Estate" and "Tarde"), but it did not require the talent of a Joe Pass to make "Shuffle City," which is no tune at all, or "Lovin' Eyes," with its trite vocal. In fact, any of dozens of studio guitarists could have recorded some of these cuts. 2½ stars.

—L.F.

□

"DYNAMICS." Bruce Forman-George Cables. Concord Jazz 279. A welcome fusion of two eminent talents, without fusion in the music. Along with items by Monk, Jobim and Rollins, there are several works new to these ears, two of them by guitarist Forman. Cables' piano moves slowly and slyly on "Doxy." The two men interact persuasively on the waltz "Mimi's Song," which mysteriously acquires a different title ("Dome-Stick Trankelty") on the label. 4 stars.

—L.F.

□

"PATCHA, PATCHA, ALL NIGHT LONG." Joe Turner & Jimmy Witherspoon. Pablo 2310-913. How many times can the same singers record the same blues verses in the same key? Two giants of the genre retread very familiar territory; only the titles have been changed. Solid backing by Red Holloway on saxes, Bobbly Blevine on keyboards, Gary Bell on guitar. Still a living art, the blues should not need to rely so heavily on past glories. 3 stars.

—L.F.

□

"COUNT BASIE SWINGS: JOE WILLIAMS SINGS." Verve 2591. An amazing contrast! The blues, in these hands, takes on a timeless vitality. Here are the original 1955 sessions that elevated Joe Williams to worldwide recognition and brought the Basie orchestra back to center stage. The arrangements by Frank Foster and Ernie Wilkins played an invaluable role, but the singer's hypnotic personality dominates "Every Day," "In the Evening" and the seven other components of this very welcome reissue. 5 stars.

—L.F.

JAZZ REVIEWS

10/8

BUTLER ADDS CLASSICAL TOUCH

MEL MELCON

Pianist Henry Butler in "Jazz Fission" concert at LATC.

By LEONARD FEATHER

Fission, if we are to believe Webster, is a splitting or breaking up into parts. The antithesis, in fact, of fusion. With this in mind, it seemed apt that the concert Sunday at Theatre No. 1 of the new Los Angeles Theatre Center was one of a series entitled "Jazz Fission."

Roughly half the program was fissioned off into works and performances that could better be characterized as classical music, with Henry Butler as the central figure. New Orleans-born, Butler was trained at the Louisiana State School for the Blind. For the last year he has worked in local clubs as a pianist, but surprisingly, his local concert debut succeeded mainly to the extent that it displayed him as a classical singer.

His repertoire consisted of

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019

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JAZZ CONCERT AT LATC

Continued from Page 2

"Mighty Lord and King" from Bach's Christmas Oratorio, and four spirituals that he adapted, three of them with string quartet arrangements by Fredric Myrow, the theater center's music director. Butler's sound is strong and resonant; in a sense he resembles Paul Robeson. Myrow, in addition to writing backgrounds for some of the vocal passages, most effectively in "I Want Jesus to Walk With Me," contributed several instrumental interludes and, on the Bach work, provided the sole accompaniment on the synthesizer. Only one Butler vocal, "Motherless Child," found him accompanying himself at the piano.

As a composer he was represented in the impressionistic opening solo, "Improvisation on an Afghanistan Theme," but closed the show with two of his jazz pieces, "Fivin' Around" (in 5/4 time) and "Butler's Blues," both highlighted by the contributions of Charlie Haden on bass and Billy Higgins on drums.

Of the other piano numbers, John Coltrane's "Giant Steps" was by far the most impressive, bolstered as it was by Haden, Higgins and a splendidly played Myrow arrangement reminiscent of the Kronos Quartet's recent album of tunes by Thelonious Monk. "I'd Rather Not Say," an intriguing, partly atonal semiclassical piece, listed as an improvisation but sounding prepared, was a duet for Butler and the violinist Richard Greene.

Jimmy Van Heusen's "Like Someone in Love" (wrongly credited to Bill Evans) and Victor Young's "My Foolish Heart" were typical Butler, with rambling, waterfall preambles or closing cadenzas and occasional passages that settled into a good rhythmic groove. At times he suggested a classical pianist dabbling in various jazz forms. Thad Jones' "A Child Is Born" was barely recognizable in its too-clever, up-tempo ragtime, funk and stride disguises.

Due later and perhaps less fissionable in this unconventional series are the multi-reedman Vinny Golia on Dec. 30 and Bruce Lofgren's orchestra on Feb. 24 and flutist James Newton will appear next Sunday as part of the Ecco-Music Series.

ELLIS' STYLE STILL TAPS HIS ROOTS

Le Cafe in Sherman Oaks, which offers a light but filling music menu every night but Monday, wisely hired the guitarist Herb Ellis to assemble a trio for the intimate room Friday and Saturday.

Ellis' Texas blues origins are never far out of earshot. Whether the subject is "Days of Wine and Roses" or "Wave" or an actual blues, he brings a touch of down-home funk to almost every solo.

Often he would open unaccompanied, strolling through the first chorus of a ballad mainly in rich, sensitively selected chords interspersed with long, nimble single-note runs. Then his aides, John Clayton on bass and Jeff Hamilton on drums, would ease in to add a supple rhythmic undercurrent.

Ever since his years with the Oscar Peterson Trio, Ellis has been admired for his impeccable technique, but the use to which he puts it is never excessive or emotionless.

He has evidently listened to all the formative guitar stylists since Charlie Christian, but has distilled his experience into a style that is distinctively his own. As a composer, he co-wrote at least one jazz standard, "Detour Ahead." On the set heard, he closed with a charming jazz waltz written with his son, Mitch.

John Clayton is a phenomenon. Backing Ellis with a light, unobtrusive beat, he soloed on most numbers, often using a bow. Clayton's intonation, musicianship and wealth of ideas reflect his broad experience; he spent several years with the Amsterdam Symphony. He is the master of an art that could well disappear; who ever heard of an arco solo on Fender bass?

Hamilton, like Clayton a young artist with fine credentials, is no less at ease in this setting than he was with the Woody Herman band. His brief solos, sometimes using brushes, were invariably tasteful.

It is a sad irony that Ellis, who lives here, is set for a monthlong stay at a club in Mobile but can only work in Los Angeles for two nights a couple of times a year.

—L. F.

L.A. TIMES 10/20/85

JAZZ

TOGETHERNESS KEY TO PHIL WOODS' SUCCESS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Time was when the small jazz group was a year-round entity for countless musicians whose trios, quartets and quintets toured internationally, with only occasional changes of membership. The Modern Jazz Quartet, Dave Brubeck, Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, Horace Silver, George Shearing, all enjoyed this stability.

However, during the past decade the picture has changed dramatically. One of the few leaders to organize and maintain an acoustic jazz combo, with a minimum of personnel shifts, has been alto saxophonist Phil Woods.

Unlike leaders who are often obliged to pick up local sidemen in the cities in which they perform, Woods was in Los Angeles recently during a tour with his own quintet—which may be the most cohesive and identifiable group on the contemporary scene.

Three of them—Woods, bassist Steve Gilmore and drummer Bill Goodwin—have been together since 1974. The pianist, Hal Galper, has been a member for four years; in 1983, Woods added an astonishingly gifted trumpeter, Tom Harrell. (The group also included a guitarist, Harry Leahey, for a couple of years in the late '70s.)

In the face of such economic realities as the drying up of endowment grants and inflation in air travel and accommodations, how does Woods explain his unusually smooth track record?

"I like to think it's sheer hardheadedness and persistence," he said. "Luck has had something to do with it, too; but the guys have told me they need the band—we all agree upon the kind of music we're playing, and none of us would care to go anywhere else.

"All of my cats have had other offers and could have taken more lucrative gigs, but we run the group on a very equitable basis; the finances, like the music, must be a group dialogue. Too often leaders try to get away with cheap sidemen—I've done enough of that in my life. I've also had my share of going out as a single, and I swore never again, no matter what."

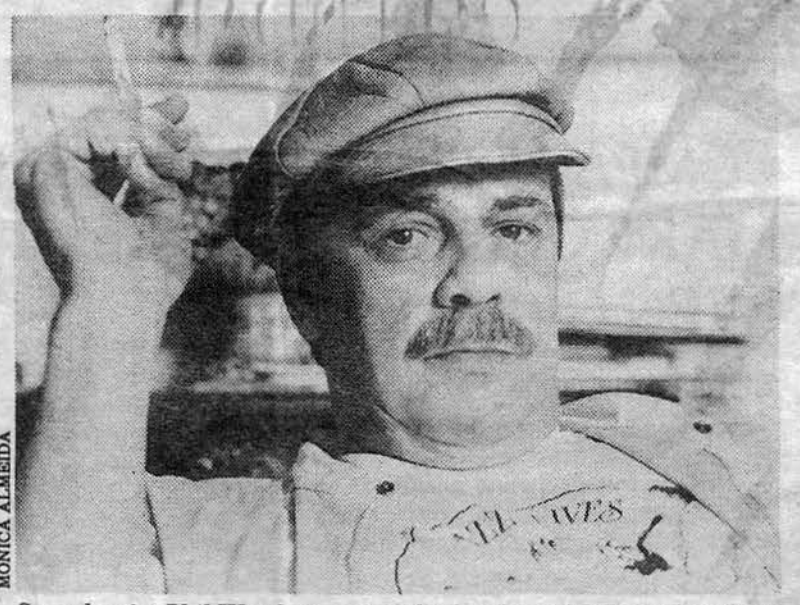
The enthusiasm of Woods and his colleagues is clearly reflected in their work. Each arrangement has just the right mixture of group blends and solo passages, of original music by Woods or one of the others, of standards given a new twist, of mainstream sounds and of adventurous forays.

As Woods points out, "We also have just about the only acoustic group. That's something that really annoys me; aside from the pickup rhythm sections, the sound of most of the bands around is so bloody loud. What we're doing is like chamber music. We couldn't use a Fender bass—that has nothing to do with the bass as I understand it. It's just a guitar."

One of the virtues of the Woods ensemble is its eclecticism. At present the men play compositions and arrangements by members of the band, mixed in with standards. Eventually, Woods said he would like to make an album of the music of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, and another comprising Bud Powell's original works.

"I'm doing a lot of writing. For kicks, I've been working on a brass quartet, which I may convert into a sax quartet. I still have on the back burner a big band for which I've already completed a library. . . . Ideally, we'd like to make a record with a big group, and a video. If we can't do that for a while, I'd like to expand the group occasionally, bring in some guest soloists."

The presence of Harrell has encouraged Woods to resume playing clarinet, enabling the quintet to display a variety of tonal textures. Harrell, though much less written about than Wynton Marsalis, is at least as well respected among his contemporaries. He seems to have distilled the essence of all the trumpet masters who preceded him: Clifford Brown, Kenny Dorham, a touch of early Miles Davis, even Louis Armstrong. Woods calls Harrell "a giant. He has total music recall; he's a marvelous pianist, composer and arranger. He never relies on cliches or licks; every note is meaningful. Tom just amazes me every single night."



MONICA ALMEIDA

Saxophonist Phil Woods is one of the few band leaders who's been able to maintain an acoustic jazz combo for more than a decade.

For Woods, there is nothing he could do that would be as artistically meaningful as keeping this group together. "If I had to drop the group I'd rather just forget about playing and become a teacher, working with young people and passing along the information. I couldn't just work at music—that's not the lesson I learned from the old timers, guys like Budd Johnson. They all had that dedication, that determination."

The togetherness within the present group extends beyond the bandstand. "We all live out in the Poconos area (in Pennsylvania)," says Woods, "except for Tom, who's still active in the New York studio world."

Surprisingly, the group has worked very little for George Wein, who controls the talent for a vast number of jazz festivals worldwide. "I think it's possible," Woods remarks without bitterness, "to be a working jazz musician and not work for either George Wein or Norman Granz; of course I'd rather have their support. But too often they want you to have an all-star group instead of your own band.

"That's the reason we don't get to Japan. I'd love to take the band over there, but they keep insisting on an all-star bunch, and I have to keep telling them that it just wouldn't sound as good, could never be as tight as what I have together now."

Woods said he misses the days when there were organized jazz combos touring continuously. "Nowadays, you only run across that kind of thing in Europe. This doesn't really do the jazz fan much good, when he goes to a club and hears the leader with a pick-up group playing 'Stella By Starlight' and all the other standards; that way you never get beyond the jam session stage.

"But I'm really lucky," Woods concluded. "After all, in 17 years I've had just two bands—the European one and this one. So I guess I must be doing something right."□

10/27/85

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

"BILLIE HOLIDAY ON VERVE 1946-1959." Verve OOMJ3480-9.

Billie Holiday's recording career began in 1933, when she sang briefly on two tunes by Benny Goodman's orchestra. She was in the studios regularly from 1935 on, and during the next decade or so left a legacy that is without parallel in the annals of vocal creativity.

This extraordinary 10-record set is somewhat misleadingly titled since, except for Side 17 and part of Side 18, it consists entirely of performances made between 1952 and March 1959, five months before her death. Nobody who has given any serious consideration to the work of this incomparable artist will pretend that her best work was accomplished during these failing years.

True, there were moments when the spark was rekindled, when the emotional impact compensated for the slow but inexorable technical degeneration. "You've Changed," taped at her penultimate studio session, is as moving a testament as any of this ability to rise above her problems. The fact remains that on most of these later dates she only tried, with indifferent success, to rework songs associated with her golden years.

The album notes in this elaborate Japanese import, by Akira Yamato, are painfully honest. Writing of a 1955 session, he comments that "her intonation has a troubling unsteadiness." He writes of a 1957 live performance on the final side that "not a trace of the Billie who has been called 'the world's greatest jazz singer' can be found." And dealing with her final studio LP, he observes: "By now hardly anything was left of the singer she had been before, and she seems to be singing as though it were a mission she had to get through."

The production values in this package are remarkable: a 40-page booklet with liner notes in Japanese and English; reprints of all the song lyrics; reproductions of some of the early 10-inch LP covers with color art by David Stone Martin and a painstakingly researched documentation of every performance Holiday ever gave that may or may not have been recorded. It is as if this monumental effort had been undertaken to compensate for the weaknesses in the music itself.

Four cuts were never previously released. Taped at a 1947 Carnegie Hall concert, with splendid accompaniment by her pianist Bobby Tucker, they still have to be compared to previous versions of the same songs. "You'd Better Go Now," for example, had been recorded in a definitive version with orchestral backing two years earlier.

The album is listed at 20,000 yen, or, if you happen to live in the United States, $99.80. To sum up the plus factors: many of these 136 tracks are at least adequate representations of a unique, emotionally charged sound. Many have obbligatos or solos by Harry (Sweets) Edison, Benny Carter, Ben Webster, Jimmy Rowles, Barney Kessel, Herb Ellis, Ray Brown and others. One tune is unique in that

The 10-record set, "Billie Holiday on Verve, 1946-1959," consists mostly of performances made between 1952 and '59.

Billie's accompaniment on "Yesterdays" is provided mainly by Oscar Peterson on organ.

Only if you already own every record Billie Holiday made for Columbia, Commodore, or Decca (now on MCA) can this extravagant investment be recommended.

—LEONARD FEATHER

□

"GEORGIA BLUE." Julius Hemphill and the JAH Band. Minor Music 003. Hemphill is a member and chief writer for the acclaimed World Saxophone Quartet, but this live album recorded at a German festival last year features an electric backing quartet that includes the local contingent of guitarist Nels Cline, bassist Steubig and drummer Alex Cline. Their restraint is crucial to the success of "Georgia Blue." Hemphill's alto and soprano saxes freely roam through pieces like the gorgeous title ballad without being forced to battle the flailing scale runs many young musicians are prone to. "The Hard Blues" touches on late '60s psychedelic blues while the choppy melody and tricky rhythms of "Dogon II" are adroitly executed. The band could engage Hemphill more actively, but "Georgia Blue" definitely whets the appetite for more music from this combination. 3½ stars. —DON SNOWDEN

□

"TOGETHER AGAIN." Modern Jazz Quartet. Pablo 2380-244. Representing a period shortly after the MJQ was reunited four years ago (they had disbanded in 1974), this was taped at the Montreux Jazz Festival. The quartet has never been famous for dashing into action every few months with a plethora of new material. Predictably, this set consists entirely of works that had been recorded at least once or twice before. "Django," "Odds Against Tomorrow" and "Bags' New Groove" are all here, along with six other familiar John Lewis or Milt Jackson originals and a single number from an outside source, Dizzy Gillespie's "Woody'n You."

The group is in its perennially elegant form; the solos, of course, differ somewhat from those on earlier versions. Whether this is a sine qua non for one's collection depends on the size of the potential buyer's MJQ library. Intrinsically, anything performed by this impeccable unit is of 5-star quality, though for many this will be far from essential listening.

—L.F.

□

"THE BASH." Bruce Forman. Muse 5315. This may well be the guitarist's best recorded venture, at least on a level with his recent George Cables duo encounter. Except for "Night and Day" (to which he ingeniously attached the chord pattern of "Giant Steps" in the first eight bars) and Hank Mobley's "Home at Last," these are all Forman originals, fortified by a powerful rhythm team with the late, greatly missed Albert Dailey at the piano, Eddie Gladden on drums and Buster Williams on bass. Now 29, Forman has made steady headway since his early San Francisco dates with Richie Cole. 4 stars.

—L.F.

□

"BEATITUDES." Robert Watson/Curtis Lundy. New Note 11867 (2170 Century Park East, Suite 1009, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067). A crisp, clean-toned alto saxophonist, Watson spent five years with Art Blakey but is still relatively unknown. He and his bassist partner (Lundy also composed "Orange Blossom") have worked together off and on for more than a decade. Watson's compositions (two of which, "To See Her Face" and "E.T.A.," were previously recorded with Blakey) are admirable frameworks for his solos, particularly the bossa nova "Karita" and the excitement-generating title cut. The pianist Mulgrew Miller and Kenny Washington on drums complete this thoroughly well-integrated combo. Watson might be the perfect complement for Wynton Marsalis in the trumpeter's presently saxophone-less group. 4 stars.

—L.F.

□

"COLLABORATION." Charlie Shoemake/Bill Holman. Pausa 7180. Literate lyrics by Arthur Hamilton, pleasant melodies and vibes solos by Shoemake, vocals by his capable wife, Sandi. Shoemake, no lyrical slouch himself, wrote the words to "Where's My Scene Today?," a satirical look at the degeneration of the music world. Holman's arrangements sublimate the material, as do the solos by Bob Cooper, Ted Nash, Conte Candoli and the trombonist Andy Martin. Nothing profound, nothing pretentious here; it's almost like an elaborate demo to show off Shoemake's wares as a songwriter. 3 stars.

—L.F.

Los Angeles Times 11/16

JAZZ REVIEW

CANDOLI'S IMPASSIONED TRUMPET LEADS QUARTET

By LEONARD FEATHER

Conte Candoli has been in charge of Thursday-night proceedings at Donte's for several months. In partnership with pianist Ross Tompkins, his colleague on "The Tonight Show," he leads a quartet completed by the drummer Roy McCurdy and bassist Leroy Vinnegar.

Trumpet plus rhythm is a less than inspiring instrumentation, one that cries out for an additional horn. In the course of the evening the group usually acquires one, since the time-honored practice of sitting in is often in evidence here.

Candoli sustains the interest by playing with passion. Instead of sounding like a studio musician going through his jazz paces, he moves into his bop choruses with a personal sense of direction, avoiding cliche strings of eighth notes as scrupulously as he shuns overworked tunes.

"Beautiful Love," "Like Someone in Love" and "I Should Care" proved inspiring vehicles for Candoli. Tompkins, reviewed here recently in a solo stint, typically alternated between easy, affecting balladry and hard-hitting bebop lines.

McCurdy gives the group just the impetus it needs without becoming obstreperous. Vinnegar, a good rhythm player who shares Candoli's geographical background (Indiana to Chicago to Los Angeles), was too laid back, showing limited solo ideas, but came to somewhat more adventurous life on "Someday My Prince Will Come."

Candoli's brother Pete made it a two-trumpet team for the second set, joining him in neatly worked-out routines on "Willow Weep for Me" and Sonny Rollins' "Doxy." Pete is somewhat more powerful and Conte a trifle less exuberant. A tenor player, Maury Stein, also sat in, but the fraternal duo seemed entirely self-sufficient as a front line.

Records In Review

A Brief Look At The Cream Of The Recent Jazz Crop

By LEONARD FEATHER
Los Angeles Times Service

These are heady times for the record collector. New jazz albums (including reissues of priceless classics) are gushing forth at the rate of at least 100 a month. This puts the jaded critic at an advantage: He can cast aside the mediocrities and concentrate on whatever deserves special attention and high ratings. Following are a few in this elite category.

THE HISTORIC concert at which the Blue Note label was given its new lease on life (thanks to Bruce Lundvall) is preserved with "One Night With Blue Note Preserved" (BTDK 85117) on four live sets (available boxed or separately). Taped in February at New York's Town Hall, it is a virtual cross section of the idioms promulgated by Alfred Lion, the company's founder, to whom this benefit concert (part of the proceeds went to the African Children's Relief Fund) was dedicated. Except for Horace Silver, who inexplicably refused to take part, almost every surviving major Blue Note figure was present.

Volume I finds Herbie Hancock in luminous form on his own "Canteloupe Island," assisting Bobby Hutcherson in the latter's engaging waltz "Little B's Poem," and Joe Henderson in the saxophonist's "Recorda Me." Freddie Hubbard and the flutist James Newton contribute, along with Tony Williams and Ron Carter.

Volume II is split between a splendid side by McCoy Tyner and, overleaf, the demonic presences of pianist Cecil Taylor and a newly signed Blue Note artist, saxophonist Bennie Wallace who has tried to swallow Coltrane, Rollins, Ornette Coleman, and others, an effort that brought on indigestion.

Volume III is more traditional: Art Blakey, surrounded by a covey of his alumni, reinvestigates "Moanin' "; Stanley Turrentine and Jimmy Smith and Kenny Burrell and Grover Washington explore early 1960s blues-funk. The colors haven't faded.

Guitarist Stanley Jordan's two amazing tracks are relegated to the end of Side 4, the rest of which finds Charles Lloyd's tenor sax or flute in moods variously dreary, panicky, or (in the West Indian flavored "El Encanto") lighthearted. Lloyd's pianist, Michel Petrucciani, deserved a set on his own.

Though no album spanning so many areas can be consistently rewarding to every ear, the many moments of exhilaration compensate for the occasional lulls.

AN EARLY associate of the Chicago AACM avant-gardists, Amina Claudine Myers defies classification as pianist, composer, singer, and organist. On "Jumping in the Sugar Bowl" (Polygram-Minor Music 002) with the trio that bears her name, she veers from touches of Tyner in the title number to a frenetic four-beat groove in "Cecil B." Vocally, she brings a special beauty to the pop ballad "Another Day," then treats us to a fascinating exercise on what could be African double talk in the improbably titled "Cuten Morgen." On organ in "Cameloupe" she is *sui generis*. Fine bass and drum backing. An enthusiastic recommendation.

INCREDIBLE! Scott Robinson, 26, a faculty member at Boston's Berklee College, plays more than 30 different woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments on "Multiple Instruments" (Multijazz 101, Box 722, Boston, Mass. 02199). More important than the gimmickry and overdubbing, though, is his ability to play many of them with passion and control.

Shifting idioms as unpredictably as he switches horns, he plays only tenor sax on "Ben," a warm dedication to Ben Webster, and on his own intriguing composition "New." The other cuts take in Dixieland, swing, bop, avant-garde, and in the closing "Survival on Venus" (on which he uses 23 instruments), an undefinable brand of musical science fiction.

Robinson knows his jazz history: His use of the C melody saxophone on "I'm Coming, Virginia" leaves no doubt that he was inspired by Frankie Trumbauer's 1927 version of that classic. Some of the instruments on other tracks have seldom if ever been used in jazz before: the ophicleide, the normaphon, the rotary-valved posthorn. Even Rahsaan Roland Kirk never got around to them.

On the brief "Muskrat Ramble," Robinson is a one-man band, playing cornet, clarinet, trombone, banjo, tuba, drums, soprano, and sopranino recorders. On the other tunes, he is backed by a French bassist, a Finnish drummer, and the excellent Danish pianist Niels Lan Doky. Cast aside your skepticism and invest in this wonder.

THOUGH ISSUED under Wynton Marsalis's name, "The All American Hero" (Who's Who in Jazz 21026) was taped live at a Florida nightclub when Marsalis was a sideman with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, all of whom are present.

Marsalis was a week shy of his 19th birthday, yet the qualities that soon catapulted him to fame are in evidence. "My Funny Valentine" and "Round Midnight" find him close to his current creative level. On "ETA" and "Time Will Tell," written by the alto saxophonist Bobby Watson, he comes on with juggernaut intensity. The opening Wayne Shorter tune, "One by One," is first-rate 1960s post-mainstream music. Jimmy Williams's piano is the only weak link, with Billy Pierce on tenor and bassist Charles Fambrough rounding out the sextet.

IN "NEW FACES," Dizzy Gillespie (GRP 1012), producers Dave Grusin and Larry Rosen had the commendable idea of surrounding Gillespie with forward-looking musicians (most of them young enough to be his grandchildren), such as Branford Marsalis and Kenny Kirkland, both alumni of the Wynton Marsalis group, and Dave Valentin's drummer, Robert Ameen. The result is neither fusion nor funk but a splendidly cohesive jazz session in which the youngsters bend a little more toward Diz that he toward them, though they clearly kept him on the qui vive. Along with such familiar framework as "Birks' Works" and "Tin Tin Deo," there are two new Gillespie tunes as well as the kicking, blues-tinged "Every Mornings," penned by his erstwhile pianist Mike Longo.

HELEN MERRILL must be as weary of the "most underrated singer" reviews as we are of writing them. Murmuring as though there were a silk screen shielding her throat from the listener, she is an incomparable ballad singer. On "No Tears . . . No Goodbyes" (Owl 038, distributed by Polygram, 810 7th Ave., New York 10019) she is backed solely and sympathetically by the London-born Gordon Beck on acoustic and electric pianos and Korg organ. She winds her way sinuously through the title song, "I Love Paris," "I Got It Bad," and others. Only the mood-breaking effect of Beck's two solo cuts keeps this below the maximum rating.

"CALAFIA" Gerald Wilson Orchestra of the 80s (Trend 537) retains the color and bravura that have always marked Wilson's writing; from Anthony Ortega's flute clear down to Red Callender's tuba, and from the dark, brooding opener (introduced on guitar by Wilson's son Anthony) to the updated version of "Viva Tirado," still a haunting refrain after all these years. Liberally sprinkled with strong solos by Ernie Watts, Milcho Leviev, Oscar Brashear, and others, this is 200-proof Wilson, modern yet classic.

DAVID FRISHBERG'S reputation as a witty lyricist, imaginative melodist, exceptional pianist, and intimate vocalist precedes him on "Live at Vine St." (Fantasy 9638). Along with such typical songs and themes as "The Sports Page" ("The only place to go when a feller wants to know the score") and "Long Daddy Green," a sarcastic tribute to the almighty dollar, set to Blossom Dearie's melody, there's a piano medley of tunes by Johnny Hodges, Duke Ellington, and Billy Strayhorn. Other items such as "El Cajon" are mildly amusing, while "Zanzibar" and "You Would Rather Have the Blues" fall just a hair short of Frishberg's eminent standards.

JAZZ

Nov. 3 '85

MULLIGAN'S TALENT STEW

By LEONARD FEATHER

Gerry Mulligan's name conjures up a bright yet somehow fuzzy image.

He has been a leader and a sideman, a composer and arranger, has headed groups of every size and shape, and has voluntarily been semi-inactive for extended periods. Nevertheless, he has enjoyed what may be an unequaled series of consecutive poll victories as the No. 1 baritone saxophonist, starting in 1953.

Today, very belatedly, Mulligan has devised a setting that enables him to display his multiple talents. He is leading, more or less on a full-time basis, a 15-piece orchestra that devotes itself primarily to his compositions and arrangements. In recent years, he has taken to doubling on soprano saxophone, an instrument that has been violated by so many squeaking, out-of-tune dilettantes that the purity Mulligan brings to it is a rare joy indeed.

It was good news to me that Jeru (this is the nickname given him many years ago by Miles Davis) and his band had been booked on two cruises out of Miami. Since many musicians were involved in this venture, Mulligan, an inveterate sitter-inner, was able not only to present his own ensemble but also to join impromptu forces with various small groups involving a few old friends and several promising youngsters.

Al Cohn, the tenor saxophonist, was particularly pleased to be reunited with Mulligan during one of the late-night jams. "Gerry and I go back a long way," he reminded me. "I played with him and Zoot Sims on his 'Mulligan Song Book' album in 1958, and I wrote some of the arrangements for the album he did with Judy Holliday."

Cohn is just one of the many saxophonists who have locked horns with Mulligan in the course of a recording career that has found him teamed with Johnny Hodges, Ben Webster, Paul Desmond and Stan Getz. His affiliations with trumpeters have been no less felicitous. Chet Baker was his partner in the original 1952 Mulligan quartet, a group that shocked the jazz world of the day by making do without a piano. Later, he directed a combo that featured Art Farmer and was seen with him in the movies "I Want to Live" and "The Subterraneans."

Probably the most surprising ad-hoc grouping during the cruise was his alliance with Art Hodes, the Chicago-based pianist who will be 81 on Nov. 14. After playing briefly with a rhythm section that included an old Mulligan teammate, Bobby Rosengarden on drums, Hodes paired with Mulligan for a slow, pensive blues for which the two men were alone on the bandstand.

Hodes has always taught Basic Blues Piano 101 in his simple performances. Time was when I found his style limited, once writing impetuously (and quite inaccurately) that I could cut him at any session. Hearing him in a more mature light four decades later, I was impressed, not only by the taste Hodes showed within his technical compass, but also by the sensitivity with which Mulligan adjusted his style to a situation that was, for him, quite unusual.

"I enjoyed playing with Art," Mulligan said afterward. "In fact, it's been a kick having so many people around whom I don't normally get a chance to play with."

Saxophonist Gerry Mulligan's 15-piece band provides showcase for his multiple talents.

For some of the less experienced artists present, the opportunity to play alongside such giants as Mulligan, Joe Williams, Dizzy Gillespie and others was a rare learning experience. Cyrus Chestnut, a 22-year-old pianist and composer, was on hand as a member of a group of students from the Berklee College of Music in Boston, under the direction of the trombonist Phil Wilson, who's on Berklee's faculty.

During the same set, Mulligan summoned to the bandstand an onlooker who was not an official member of the festival. Eliane Elias, a gifted pianist from Brazil, had joined the party as the wife of Randy Brecker, the New York studio trumpeter.

For all his pleasure in these unplanned collaborations, Mulligan clearly was proudest of the moments when he presented his full orchestra in concert. Essentially, this is an updated extension of the slightly smaller band, 13 strong, with which he toured internationally in the early 1960s, but the present band's repertoire was almost a cross-section of his variegated 33-year life as a leader.

"Bweebida Bobbida," for instance, with which he opened one recital, brought to mind for me his very first session with a band of his own, in 1951, for which he composed it. Though the original record, by a nine-piece group, sounds a little dated, he has brought to the present version the textures and orchestral diversity one expects from him.

"Line for Lyons," named for the Monterey Jazz Festival's Jimmy Lyons, was a product of the 1952 quartet with Chet Baker; though he has recorded it several times, the 1985 treatment brings it up to date.

Outstanding in the band's library are several compositions from his album "Walk on the Water," which won him a best big band Grammy in 1981. "Song for an Unfinished Woman" accentuated the band's sedulous attention to subtle dynamic contrasts. On "42nd and Broadway," a delightfully captivating melody, Mulligan switched to soprano saxophone. For Duke Ellington's "Across the Tracks Blues," he virtually duplicated the master's original version.

Mulligan's talents do not end with his writing and playing. "When I Was a Young Man" presented him as a cheerful, quaintly charming vocalist and writer of lyrics to his own song.

True, the tall, crew-cut, clean-shaven redheaded youth of the old quartet days has yielded to a tall, gaunt, whiter-bearded figure, but the effervescent personality seems to improve with age along with his music. In short, the 1985 Gerry Mulligan displays more talents, in a far more appropriate context, than the youngster who exploded on the West Coast scene more than three decades ago. □

JAZZ REVIEW

11/5/85

CORYELL, REMLER PAIR UP

By LEONARD FEATHER

There was a mixed singles match, at a court in Hollywood over the weekend, in which both participants were winners. The scene was the Palace Court, the participants were Larry Coryell and Emily Remler, and instead of racquets they carried their guitars.

Coryell, 42, a veteran of countless teams both in straight jazz and in various forms of fusion, has found an ideal partner in Remler, 28, whose experience has been broader than her age might lead one to expect. As a duo they have toured Europe and the United States for the last nine months, displaying their empathy along with their talents as soloists and composers.

Any couple of this sort calls for constantly open ears and a keen sense of interplay. Coryell and Remler succeed both in their choice of material and in an inspired mix of arrangement and improvisation.

Remler's own "Nunca Mais" displayed a boldly assertive sound and her stunning mastery of intricate cross rhythms. Coryell's tone, a little thinner and pinched (he was using a borrowed guitar), was more than adequately compensated for by his sensitive backing for Remler, and by his own solo work, particularly in a thumb-plucked foray on "How My Heart Sings," in the driving intensity of a tune he dedicated to Ronald Reagan (it turned out to be Jobim's "How Insensitive") and in the revelation of his more tender side on "You Don't Know What Love Is."

Both musicians also traded between plectrum and finger-style passages throughout the hour. For two numbers they switched guitars, Coryell to a semi-hollow body instrument and Remler to an acoustic (but amplified) model, for a dense, multichorded original work in a brooding flamenco mood.

Remler was in her glory on "Joy Spring," swinging jubilantly through several choruses that never let up. After a crisp and hardly less dazzling solo by Coryell, the two went into a counterpoint passage, drawing enough applause to force them into an encore, a variation on the beguiling old Claude Thornhill theme "Snowfall."

The absence of bass, drums or piano was never conspicuous; Coryell and Remler are their own rhythm section. They're also the most engaging pair of guitarists to team up since the golden days of Herb Ellis and Joe Pass.

Floating jazz festival proves things are looking up

By Leonard Feather
Los Angeles Times

MIAMI — You could say it was the world's longest jazz festival. The 28-day multiple musical extravaganza began Oct. 5 and came to a jamming climax last weekend.

There was an almost 100-percent turnover in the audience every Saturday, along with weekly shifts in the talent roster.

For some of the musicians it was an almost uninterrupted gig: Al Cohn, Ruby Braff, Doc Cheatham, Benny Carter, the Scott Hamilton Quintet, Maxine Sullivan, Kenny Davern, Clark Terry and Eddie Higgins were among those who stayed aboard for all four weeks. The term "aboard" is used advisedly, because the scene was the 65,304-tonne Norway, leaving from Miami on a series of four one-week jazz festival cruises.

JAZZ

If ever proof were needed that things are looking up in at least one section of the jazz community, the floating festival phenomenon would offer the most resounding evidence.

In 1983, producers Hank O'Neal and Shelley Shier put together a single week of jazz at sea. In 1984 this venture was expanded to two one-week voyages. This year the project was not merely redoubled but octupled. In addition to four cruises on the Norway, a dozen others, using lesser jazz names, sailed away on the smaller Skyward, Southward and Starward.

Because most of the Norway's personnel changes took place after the second week it was possible, by sailing on the second and third cruises, to hear virtually all the 102 participating musicians. During that time I was exposed to an unprecedented cross-section of artists, many of whom had not taken part in the previous years' voyages: Danish violinist Svend Asmussen, trumpeter Randy Brecker, vibraphonist Gary Burton and trombonist Phil Wilson (both members of the Berklee College of Music faculty, each leading an ensemble composed of young Berklee students); Cab Calloway, fronting both the Woody Herman Orchestra and Chip Hoehler's excellent Norway house band; pianist Art Hodes, who will be 81 on Nov. 14; bassist Major Holley, pianist and organist Dick Hyman, thousand-fingered Czech bassist George Mraz, Swedish singer Monica Zetterlund and the 15-member orchestra of Gerry Mulligan.

From the audience's standpoint, the hero of the festival was Cab Calloway, who drew a series of outstanding ovations in the 550-seat Saga Theatre. As handsome a silver-haired 77-year-old as can be found on any stage, he strutted and pranced through his dramatic paces (Stormy Weather, Blues in the Night, and of course, Minnie the Moocher) with the swinging big band accompaniment that has always been essential to his act. Whether he belonged in a jazz festival may be questioned by purists, but his show qualified as jazz-oriented entertainment.

Drummer of choice

Mel Torme, in addition to singing impeccably in a variety of settings, became the drummer of choice among fellow-musicians for many of the informal sets at the Checkers cabaret and in the Internationale night club. During one of Torme's playing sessions, Clark Terry brought a microphone over to the drums as they conjured up a vocal duet on Ellington's Just Squeeze Me.

Like Torme, Joe Williams repeated his triumphs of last year, but this time he extended himself, inviting Dizzy Gillespie, 22-year-old pianist Cyrus Chestnut, 80-year-old trumpeter Doc Cheatham and other shipmates to embellish his blues and ballads.

Cyrus Chestnut was one of the Berklee students for whom the festival offered not only a rare chance to rub shoulders with the mighty, but also to add a needed balance in a festival that tended to be dominated by older musicians. As a member of Phil Wilson's student quintet he provided many of the group's most inventive arrangements. It is safe to assume that within a few years Chestnut will be remembered not simply for his uncommon name. The 22-year-old drummer Marty Richards, who doubled in the Wilson group and in Gary Burton's sextet, also made a profound impression on many of his elders.

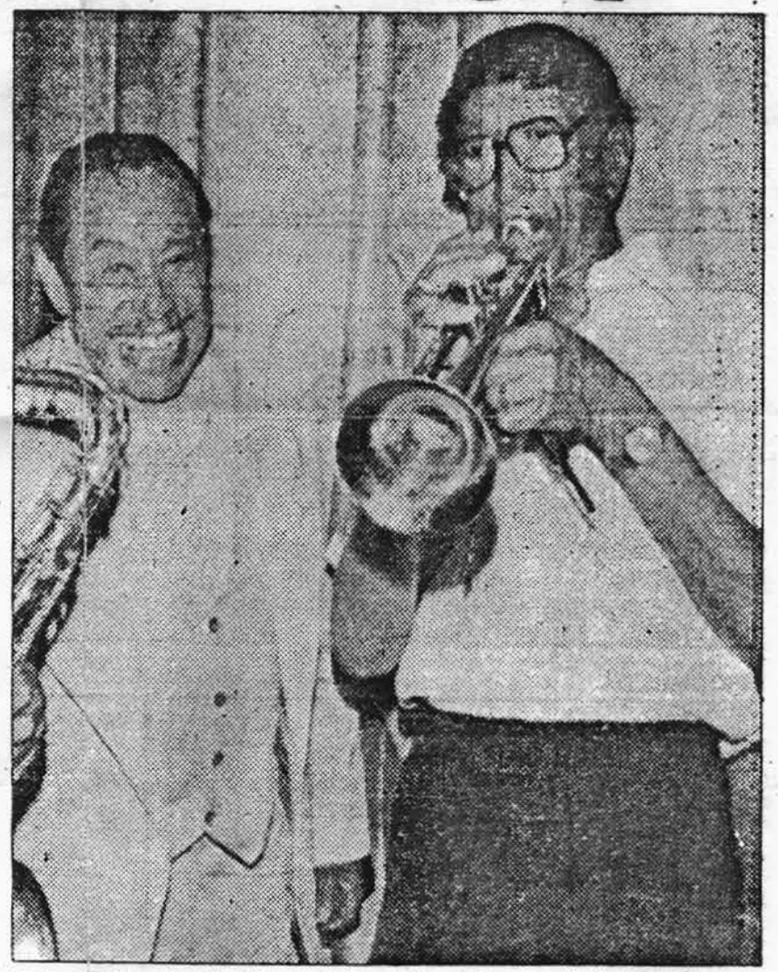
The Burton unit, more impressionistic and less aggressive than Wilson's, had an international cast typical of the Berklee student body: an 18-year-old saxophonist from Scotland, a French pianist and bassist, a flutist from Sweden and the remarkable 25-year-old Kazu Michishita, a Japanese guitarist of whom more will certainly be heard.

Danish virtuoso

The festival's international flavor was heightened by the presence of Svend Asmussen. Americans who react to the phrase "European jazz violinist" but uttering Stephane Grappelli's name ought to know that this Danish virtuoso may well be the most accomplished hard-driving artist in the field since Stuff Smith, who was one of his idols.

Asmussen's unaccompanied performance of Sweet Georgia Brown was incredible. Now and then a horn player alone on a stage has succeeded in maintaining a creative melodic-rhythmic force throughout an entire number, but Asmussen is at least the equal of any. Within a couple of days on board he established so strong a reputation that applause broke out whenever he stepped to the microphone for a solo.

Of the festival's three big bands, Gerry Mulligan's made the strongest impression. Now white-bearded and gaunt, yet spirited and cheerfully informal, Mulligan distinguished himself on several levels: as composer-arranger (Song for an Unfinished Woman, its subtly shifting dynamics beautifully interpreted), as a soprano saxophonist on his fascinating melody 42nd and Broadway, as singer and lyricist on his charming song When I Was a Young Man, and primarily, of course, as a baritone saxophonist who has long led the field on this demanding horn.



Cab Calloway (left) and Doc Cheatham get it together.

Woody Herman still has a spirited, youthful band and an eclectic repertoire. However, given the presence of essentially the same audience each night, one wonders why he chose to repeat Woodchoppers Ball and It Don't Mean a Thing not only at his own concerts but in his warm-ups for Torme and Calloway. Herman's best pieces were those that showed the orchestras's broad instrumental palette, from piccolo to bassoon.

Incongruous couple

All concert promoters have to take a chance now and then and the booking of Marion Cowings and Kim Shaw proved that these experiments do not always work. An incongruous couple — he balding and serious, very formal in white tie and tails; she flapper-like in coiffure and gown — they moved unconvincingly through their low-cal Jon Hendricks paces.

One special memory remains with me. Around midnight, as we sailed back to Miami, Dick Hyman played the organ while Ruby Braff, the cornetist, evoked memories of everyone back to Buck Clayton, Bunny Berigan and Louis Armstrong. With drummer Jake Hanna providing a subliminal backing, Hyman and Braff reminded us that melody, whether in pristine or improvised form, is what it's all about.

As the set ended, Hyman observed: "I'm sorry now that I only booked this gig for two weeks. I'm sure I would have been happy to stay the whole month."

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Leonard Feather
13833 RIVERSIDE DR.
SHERMAN OAKS, CA 91423

JAZZ

WESTON'S KEYNOTE IS IN THE SOUNDS OF AFRICA

By LEONARD FEATHER

SUNDAY OCT 13 1985

Although jazz has often been characterized as Afro-American music, relatively few musicians, black or white, have gone to great lengths to investigate the significance, within that term, of its first two syllables.

Randy Weston is one of the preeminent exceptions. During a long professional life in music and a recording career that began in 1954, he has devoted considerable time to studying the sounds of Africa and their relationship to American jazz.

This research, he feels, is helping to open new doors for him as a concert performer. "I think there's a growing interest today in the cultural aspects of our music," he said recently, stretching his 6-foot-6 frame over a chaise longue in a Los Angeles living room. "The African influence is being felt in many areas of music. The fact that I've been playing African melodies and blues, and then talking about the subject in lectures and seminars, has worked to my advantage."

Weston's curiosity originally was piqued when he attended a lecture by the late Marshall Stearns, a musicologist, at Music Inn in Lenox, Mass. "Dr. Stearns had made an extensive study of the music of West Africa and wrote about it in his book, 'The Story of Jazz.' We started talking about it and wound up collaborating on some history-of-jazz lectures and recitals.

"That was before I had gone to Africa. I went to Nigeria to play at a performing arts festival in 1961, and went back there a couple of years later."

These visits led to a long series of pilgrimages; Weston became a world traveler. In 1967, he undertook a three-month, 14-country tour of West Africa under the auspices of the State Department. Later that year he settled in Morocco. For a time, he ran his own Rhythm Club in Tangier; later he organized a festival of American, African and Moorish music there.

Randy Weston's brand of jazz explores Afro-American roots.

During the past decade, along with many return trips to Africa, he has performed his "Uhuru Afrika Suite" and other works in American concert halls and appeared in concerts from Tunisia to Scandinavia, as well as at festivals from Monterey to Montreux.

"Last year I was in Tahiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe. This year at Montreux, I led a 10-piece band with some of the great American expatriates—Benny Bailey on trumpet, Sahib Shihab on saxophone. On my European dates I've worked every way from solo piano to a 60-piece orchestra with 25 strings. We did a phenomenal concert this summer in Pompeii, in the ruins; so a lot of things have been happening, and they're getting more and more prestigious."

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Despite his residencies in Africa, Weston today divides his home life between his native Brooklyn and Annecy, France. There have been occasional significant bookings on home soil. "I got a commission in 1981 to write a new work for the Boston Pops with John Williams conducting. I called it 'The Three African Queens.' It was an incredibly beautiful experience. Last February, a two-day tribute to me was staged in Brooklyn, with my old friend Melba Liston, the composer and trombonist, conducting a 23-piece orchestra in her arrangements."

Clearly Weston's experiments as a researcher, composer and performer have earned him respect in many areas at home and overseas, yet whatever prominence he has achieved in recent years has been based largely on personal appearances and word of mouth—during the past decade, except for a few solo sessions for small companies in Europe, he has done no recording.

"It's ironic," he says. "I've been working more since I stopped recording than when I was making albums regularly!" During the 1950s and '60s he recorded for Riverside, United Artists, Roulette and several other labels, yet almost none of these exceptional ventures can now be found in the catalogues. ("Zulu," an excellent small-group twofer, is still available on Milestone 47045.)

"I did a date with Melba Liston for Polydor in 1973, which was nominated for a Grammy as one of the five best big-band albums of the year. We went to the awards ceremony, but the award was won by Woody Herman.

"At that point, apparently, Polydor decided to lose interest. They kept me tied up to my contract for another year but didn't do anything with me. I realized that the only thing to do was look for a company that was really interested in me."

Weston spoke last year to Orrin Keepnews, who produced his albums for Riverside and who recently launched Landmark Records. He talked about leasing Keepnews the tapes of a memorable set at Monterey in 1966, when he led a concert with such giants as the late Booker Ervin and Cecil Payne on saxophones, Ray Copeland on trumpet and Big Black on conga drums. They might well be more marketable today than at the time they were recorded. Weston at press time had still not heard from Keepnews, who says, "I'm still trying to make up my mind. I've always admired Randy—we go back a long way together—and I hope to figure out soon whether these tapes are commercially viable."

Although African concepts have been incorporated into much of Weston's music, it was through the writing of straight-ahead jazz instrumentals that he first came to prominence. Two of his works, "Hi Fly" and "Little Niles," have become standards and were fitted with lyrics by Jon Hendricks. ("Little Niles" was named for his son Niles Weston, now a drummer in New York under the name Azzedin Weston.)

Asked what African elements Weston found that relate to jazz, he said: "It's very complex, covering everything from music that was played in the ancient courts of African emperors and kings to a 25-piece orchestra I heard in Dakar, with strings, playing what you would swear was chamber music with a beat to it.

"In the years that I spent over there, mainly in West and North Africa, speaking to musicians and ethnomusicologists, I realized that we are simply playing a lot of melodies that our ancestors played—restating them on different instruments."

Weston does not go along with the theory that only the rhythmic qualities of African music have found their way into jazz. "When I got together with some of the musicians and let them play their traditional music, I'd go to the piano and try to play some of it; and in it I found the spirituals, I found the blues, I heard the whole two worlds coming together—in some ways in a most basic form, yet at the same time tremendously complicated.

"Listening to the sounds and colors as well as the rhythms, I heard things that were related to early Duke Ellington! This whole orchestral concept is supposed not to have happened in Africa; yet I'm still discovering new links.

"The way I approach the piano on some of this music is quite possibly related to the way my ancestors played the drums—maybe a thousand years ago. Many studies are still being undertaken about the African-American connections, some with the help of computers."

While these discoveries continue, Weston brings his message to wherever the call originates. "The latest development," he says proudly, "is extraordinary. Swiss Television is arranging to bring me over with a 23-piece orchestra, two singers and a dancer to do a concert for TV in Lausanne."

"It would be interesting," a reporter remarked, "to see a U.S. network fly over an orchestra from Europe for one jazz concert. When has something like that been done on American TV?"

Weston laughed. "American television? When has anybody been on American television?" □

11/9

JAZZ REVIEW

HAYWOOD: A VOCAL GLIMPSE

By LEONARD FEATHER

Meet Matilda Haywood: actress, composer, saxophonist, clarinetist, pianist, vocalist. More accurately, meet an artist who, Wednesday evening at the Sunset Hyatt's Silver Screen Jazz Room, put just the last two of these gifts on display.

Even this partial glimpse provided ample evidence that Haywood deserves fuller exposure than can be afforded by her solo stint as a self-accompanied singer. She also left no doubt that she has made a study of jazz and popular music history in a broad variety of its forms.

Her style shifted subtly according to the demands of each tune. On the old Bessie Smith blues, "Looking For My Man," she dug in deep, capturing the 1920s spirit both vocally and at the keyboard. "My Romance" showed her soulful approach to a pop standard; the Brazilian "So Danco Samba" earned a fittingly light treatment with scat touches.

It isn't easy to categorize her sound and her melodically liberated style. You may hear a touch of the early Nancy Wilson here, a hint of Aretha Franklin there, even an echo of Dinah Washington. Despite her affection for such Billie Holiday vehicles as "God Bless the Child" and "I Cried For You," no Lady Day influence is detectable. Essentially, she is her own woman.

As a pianist she plays serviceably, though her solo number, "Canadian Sunset," hit a little too hard and could have benefited from more dynamic shading.

To atone for the lack of a rhythm section Haywood keeps at her left hand an electric bass keyboard, used now and then to flesh out what occasionally becomes a somewhat lonely sound.

One can only hope that she'll be heard in due course with a bassist and drummer, which in turn will enable her to stand up and show off her hornblowing facility. In the meanwhile, she will take over the piano every Monday at the Money Tree, before returning to the Sunset Hyatt Nov. 27-30. Opening tonight at the Hyatt: Lee Konitz.

11/19/85

HOME TECH

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

With videocassette recorders in nearly one-third of American households and compact disc players selling briskly, more and more people are finding there's no place like home for entertainment. This new weekly feature will offer reviews of some recent releases for the new gadgetry, and will also spotlight records and audiocassettes of special interest.

✓✓✓ Excellent ✓✓ Good ✓ Fair ✓ Poor

"The Big Tenor: The Complete Ben Webster on EmArcy." EmArcy. Webster (1909-1973) was a big man with a warm, full tenor sax sound to match both his size and his improvisational stature. This two-record set of 1951-53 sessions finds him leading his own groups, working as a sideman with Johnny Otis and Jay McShann, even backing Dinah Washington (a riveting "Trouble in Mind") and the Ravens. There are numerous alternate takes and previously unissued masters. The anthology includes three takes of "Stardust." ✓✓✓½ —LEONARD FEATHER

Edited by Terry Atkinson

023

11/10/85

JAZZ

A GUITAR *WUNDERKIND* LOOKS TO GYPSY ROOTS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Django Reinhardt, the first non-American ever to make a vital impact on jazz, died in 1953. Thirteen years later, in the view of some listeners today, he was reincarnated when Bireli Lagrene was born.

The parallels are astonishing. Both guitarists were born in caravans, to Gypsy families: Reinhardt in Liverchies, Belgium, in 1910, Lagrene 200 miles south in Alsace, France. Both were self-taught, not bothering to learn to read music. Both enlisted the aid of a fellow-guitarist brother in their groups: Joseph Reinhardt and Gaiti Lagrene. Reinhardt gained fame by teaming with violinist Stephane Grappelli; Lagrene worked with him half a century later.

The disparities are as striking as the resemblances. Lagrene, who turned 19 on Sept. 4, called his first album "Routes to Django" when he recorded it at age 13, but today he alternates between acoustic solos, on material written or inspired by Reindhardt, and contemporary electric performances that led guitarist Larry Coryell to describe him as "a walking dictionary—I heard some John McLaughlin influence, some Al DiMeola, a little of everything. He's amazing!"

Lagrene, who makes his California debut Thursday at Concerts by the Sea in Redondo Beach, first appeared in the United States at the 1984 New York Kool Jazz Festival. Last week, by telephone from his home in Strasbourg, he talked about his background, his zooming career, and his ambitions. He speaks French, fairly fluent English, German and the dialect of the Sinti tribe of his ancestors.

"I was mainly influenced by my father, Fiso, who was well-known locally as a guitarist. He gave me my first guitar when I was 4 or 5; then, at 6, I first heard Django's records, and I wanted to play his music.

"It wasn't easy to duplicate what he did, because after an accident that paralyzed two fingers on his left hand, he used an unorthodox technique. So I tried to imitate his two-finger style with five fingers, and I wished so much that I could have seen how he accomplished what he did despite that handicap."

Lagrene said that, just as Django listened to Charlie Christian's records and was inspired by them to create his own improvisations, "I took Django's ad-lib solos and incorporated his ideas into my own songs. But it wasn't just *what* he played; how he did it, the way he used the vibrato and his personal manner of phrasing, were just as important.

"I'll always admire Django and I still enjoy playing his music, but there are so many other things to explore today. Last night in Stuttgart, I played in a rock-fusion group with keyboards, drums and

Bireli Lagrene—mixing Django Reinhardt, electric fusion.

percussion. The audience loved it! There are so many artists of the present generation who interest me: Pat Metheny, Jaco Pastorius, Chick Corea—I'd love to record with him—as well as Weather Report, and many of the Brazilian musicians and song-writers."

Clearly Lagrene has moved far beyond the areas of the acoustic guitar and the Swing Era without ever losing interest in his pre-electric roots. For his Los Angeles engagement, he expects to display primarily the acoustic and traditional aspects of his work.

This teen-aged *Wunderkind*, who says he only has to listen to a melody three times before he knows it by heart, also plays bass and violin (on his debut album, taped live in a club, he took a bass solo in "All of Me"). He has accumulated an impressive list of credits as a composer. "Bireli Swing," one of his early works, became the title of his second album, a 1981 studio session. Because he lives so close to Germany, and has made many of his most successful appearances there, he is proudly claimed by both countries.

□

Lagrene began his professional life in folk bars and jazz clubs, soon moving to occasional TV and stage work. A sensation at "Newcomers' Concerts" during the German Jazz Festival in Frankfurt, he scored again on a tour billed as a "Very Special Guitar Summer's Night," for which his partners were McLaughlin, DiMeola and Paco de Lucia.

For his third album, he taped a live session in Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart.

One critic wrote that the LP sold poorly because "the music seems a bit too avant-garde for an audience tuned in for traditional Gypsy jazz."

By 1983, the public seemed ready for Lagrene's personal brand of eclecticism. Every concert was sold out on a tour of England and Ireland. Before he cut his fourth LP, just prior to his 17th birthday, he came under the influence of the Polish violinist Michel Urbaniak and talked about wanting to leave old-time swing behind and find more modern avenues. "I wanted to try everything and see if it worked," he says.

By 1984, the next logical prestige move was America. The Carnegie Hall debut, he says, "was very special, because I was happy to perform for a big crowd in the United States." Later, he returned to New York for a "Tribute to Django" jam at the club Fat Tuesday's.

□

Last July, I was able to observe the young phenomenon in person when he appeared at the Montreal Jazz Festival. For the first half, he played such tunes as Reinhardt's elegant ballad "Nuages" and a few of his own Django-oriented pieces; after intermission, he switched to electric and to the world of McLaughlin and DiMeola. I heard slashing single note lines, harmonic subtlety, and seamless, breathlessly lengthy phrases indicative both of his debt to Django and of his far broader technical and creative canvas.

Just as Stanley Jordan astonished the jazz world with his novel string-tapping style and brilliant simultaneous use of bass notes, rhythm figures and solo lines, Lagrene has found a new approach, but one that is more firmly grounded in the traditions and evolution of jazz guitar. Instead of developing a new technique, he has found ways of advancing and enriching the skills of yesteryear and today.

Like Django in 1935, Lagrene in 1985 relies entirely on performance. His appearance is disconcerting, with a sometimes sullen mien, a ruffled look, jeans and sneakers and T-shirt. He does not speak to his audience. Like Miles Davis, he believes his music can tell its own story, a story that seems certain, very soon, to be told triumphantly in jazz communities around the world. □

JAZZ REVIEW

11/11/85

SAXOPHONIST KONITZ IN HOLLYWOOD

By LEONARD FEATHER

The presence in town of Lee Konitz, one of the most distinctive alto saxophonists to have survived the crests and lapses of almost four jazz decades, is welcome under any circumstances. Always one of the individualists least given to compromise and most unwilling to yield to fads and fashions, he was heard Friday and Saturday at the Hyatt on Sunset, and will resume Tuesday through Saturday.

Though he came up in the Charlie Parker years, Konitz owed less to Bird's influence than any other saxophonist of the day. Tonally, he is closer to Lester Young's tenor than to any alto soloist; his melodically resourceful ideas and non-aggressive sense of time have a confiding quality, as if he were sharing a secret with his listeners.

More's the pity, then, that he arrived in Los Angeles confronted by that recurrent dilemma, the need to work with a hastily assembled rhythm section, and certainly not one he would have chosen.

Frank Strazzeri is a fluent and competent neo-bebop pianist who doesn't seem to relate to Konitz's values in the manner of such previous partners as Lennie Tristano or Bill Evans. John B. Williams functioned as a capable anchor on bass, but Clarence Johnston, a splendid drummer for many other situations, overplayed consistently, using brushes on only one number and failing to allow for the weakness of Konitz's microphone, which seemed to deal only with the high frequencies.

Because of the ad-hoc nature of the group, none of Konitz's attractive compositions could be played; it was just another evening of "All the Things You Are," "Star Eyes" and the rest.

"Body and Soul" achieved the most unified groove, with the horn avoiding the melody but weaving sinuous original ideas on its venerable chord pattern from start to finish. Even Johnston was in a welcome mood of relaxation here.

Despite the circumstances, there were enough moments in the light and languid Konitz manner to satisfy the less fretful listener. It can be assumed that the needed empathy will improve as the week continues. But it's high time for a local concert by Konitz, with the ensemble of his choice.

Los Angeles Times

11/20/85

GIBBS, DE FRANCO TEAM UP AT VINE ST.

By LEONARD FEATHER

Terry Gibbs and Buddy De Franco, who have teamed up for the last five years whenever the opportunity has arisen, played their first Vine St. Bar gig Monday evening.

For the occasion they called on their regular West Coast bassist, Andy Simpkins, hired the fleetly dependable Alan Broadbent for piano duties and, to keep the home fires burning, turned the drums over to the 21-year-old Terry Gibbs Jr.

The proceedings began shakily, due to an excess of sound emanating from the drums and an insufficiency from the vibraphone and piano. Nothing, however, could stop De Franco.

He has been preeminent in his field longer than any other artist on this demanding instrument. The annual Down Beat Readers' Poll, which he just won again, is a victory he first scored in 1945. Over the decades his technical mastery seems to have reached a step or two beyond perfection. If this sounds impossible, it is apt, since his improvisational achievements simply do not seem feasible.

To hear him go through the entire cycle of 12 keys, a half-step up every 12 bars, in "Blues for Brodie" was an experience defying credulity. How can you be natural when you're blowing in G-flat? Only De Franco knows.

Gibbs, also a fine foil even if he does seem to make his vibes hyperventilate, was at his most creative in his ballad solo, "What's New." The sound balance improved during the set and the younger Gibbs, a promising percussionist, acquitted himself creditably, as did Simpkins in a masterful solo.

Instead of always returning to material from their two albums, Gibbs and De Franco should consider updating their repertoire. Don't get me wrong: some of my best friends are blues—but is now still the time for "Now's the Time"? Would it be an unthinkably giant step to negotiate Coltrane's "Giant Steps"? Maybe next time, since this was, alas, a one-night stand.

12/2/85

JAZZ REVIEW

BELLSON'S TRIBUTE TO STRAYHORN

By LEONARD FEATHER

Billy Strayhorn, the most underrated composer in jazz history, would have been 70 years old Friday. Louie Bellson, a close friend of Strayhorn when both men worked for Duke Ellington in the 1950s, commemorated the occasion Friday evening at Donte's.

It was the Bellson band's first appearance here in five years, and the room was packed all evening. Although Bellson's library does not include as many Strayhorn works as would have been appropriate to the occasion, those that were performed during the first two sets offered ample justification of the premise.

"Chelsea Bridge," the Strayhorn work in which some critics heard the influence of Ravel, was given an interpretation skillfully devised by Tommy Newsom that was remarkably close to the original Ellington recording. The reed passage, with Pete Christlieb playing the clarinet lead, was pure Strayhorn elegance. Thom Mason was the tenor soloist in the segment originally assigned to Ben Webster.

The hip flip side of Strayhorn was well represented in "The Intimacy of the Blues," also arranged by Newsom. A long string of soloists—Ray Reed on alto sax, Bill Green on soprano, and Andy Martin on trombone—led to a climactic explosion, with Walt Johnson echoing Cat Anderson's stratospheric trumpet.

Strayhorn's best known opus was, of course, "Take The A Train." Don Menza's arrangement made fewer attempts than Newsom to hew to the original concept,

Please see BELLSON, Page 6

BELLSON

Continued from Page 1

achieving a briskly effective character of its own.

A touching interlude was the piano medley by Frank Strazzeri, who captured the ethereal spirit of the composer in "The Star Crossed Lovers" and in Strayhorn's final work, "Blood Count."

The balance of the evening was typical Bellson, with the leader's own tribute to a fellow drummer, "Our Man Shelly," exemplifying both his skill as a writer and his credulity-defying technique and creativity as a drummer. The impossible he does right now; the difficult just took a little while. After 30 years his use of the two bass drums remains unique in the annals of percussion.

025

11/17/85

JAZZ

ANNIE ROSS TWISTS HER WAY BACK TO THE U.S.A.

By LEONARD FEATHER

Annie Ross is an adopted American again. The songwriter ("Twisted," "Farmer's Market," "Jackie") and singer (partner of Jon Hendricks and Dave Lambert in a trio that revolutionized modern jazz singing) came back to New York in October of last year and decided, after 18 London-based years interrupted by many visits to the United States, that this is where she belongs.

Visiting Hollywood for an engagement last week at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, she looked as radiant and sounded as enthusiastic as the young Annie whose years of worldwide fame were brief (Lambert, Hendricks and Ross existed as a recording and touring unit only from late 1957 until early 1962) but historic.

"Actually, I feel much more American than English," she said in her gently cadenced mid-Atlantic accent. "All my formative years were here."

Born in Surrey, England, in 1930, she left for California before her fourth birthday to be raised by her aunt, the Scottish singer/actress Ella Logan. Leaving for England at 17, she already had substantial credits: appearances in several "Our Gang" comedies and, at 12, a role as Judy Garland's sister in "Presenting Lily Mars." After three years acting and singing in England and France, she spent the '50s shuttling between New York and Europe, working the Paris clubs, singing with British bands and scoring a hit in the London revue "Cranks."

Back in New York she teamed with Lambert, one of the earliest bop singers, who had already collaborated with Hendricks on a vocal adaptation of the instrumental "Four Brothers." The three of them went to work on an album of songs, for all of which Hendricks had fitted lyrics to the ad-lib recorded solos. Each of them overdubbed their voices four times. The result, billed as "Sing a Song of Basie," was without precedent in the annals of vocal jazz.

They followed it up with "Sing Along With Basie" (sans overdubs, using the entire Basie orchestra plus Joe Williams) and "The Swingers." Signing with Columbia in 1959, the trio turned out a series of LPs based on the same premise; the first was aptly billed "The Hottest New Group in Jazz." Another was "Lambert, Hendricks & Ross Sing Ellington."

RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

Annie Ross is back in the U.S. after many years in England.

Taken ill while the trio was in England, Ross quit (her replacement was the Ceylonese Yolande Bavan). She remained in London, married and divorced an actor, the late Sean Lynch, and moved one step at a time from singing into acting.

"I really didn't sing for a long while. I did 'Pirates of Penzance,' I did 'A View From the Bridge' and I was in all sorts of movies, from 'Yanks' to 'Superman III.'

"For six months I had my own jazz television show in Glasgow, but at the same time I was doing a TV situation comedy there, so I was very, very busy. You'd be surprised how much television is going on in Glasgow."

Because of her acting commitments, most of the singing Ross has done for the past decade has been occasioned by her visits to New York. "In the States I'm just known as a singer, whereas in London I'm known as an actress/singer. I really want to get back into acting over here, and since moving back to New York I've made some excellent contacts."

In the meantime, her dual life has led to at least one major dilemma and a considerable sacrifice. Last January she was booked into the Algonquin Hotel in New York. Two days before she was due to open, her agent called from London and said, " 'Are you sitting down? I have a question and need an immediate answer. The Royal Shakespeare Company wants you to join them for a year. Starting now.'

"I put the phone down and thought, my goodness, what can I do? If I pull out of the Algonquin, my name is mud. So I had to turn it down—but what a lovely thing to be asked! Maybe they'll ask me again some day."

Over the years Ross and Hendricks have kept in occasional touch. (Lambert was killed in an accident on a Connecticut turnpike in 1966.) Hendricks has generally maintained a group along similar lines, using four singers who have included, at one time or another, his wife Judith, his daughter Michelle and his son Eric.

Not long ago, the former partners ran into one another when Hendricks dropped by to see Ross at Michael's Pub in New York. "I always thought that Jon and I could do something together and still have that magic. He got up on the stand, we did a couple of numbers, and it just broke the place up!

"It seems to me that there is a generation—perhaps even two generations—of kids who know about Lambert, Hendricks & Ross but never saw them. They think, are they still alive? What do they look like? So we talked, and Jon said he'd send for Bruce Scott, who works in Los Angeles with Full Swing and who knows all Dave Lambert's old parts. I didn't meet Bruce until the night we opened, but we did a week at the Blue Note and it was just fine. Then I went back to being a single."

It was as a single that Ross made her first impact on the record world when, using a technique later made famous by Hendricks, she set lyrics to two recorded jazz solos, Wardell Gray's "Twisted" and Art Farmer's "Farmer's Market." The former, with its wittily neurotic story of the analyst's patient who was "a wizard at 3" but who refused to ride on double-decker buses "because they have no driver on the top," became a standard and was recorded by Bette Midler, Joni Mitchell and Mark Murphy.

As our conversation switched to the contemporary jazz vocal scene, Ross could hardly contain her enthusiasm for Bobby McFerrin and his wordless vocal innovations. "I saw him at the Blue Note in New York; he started out with the drum-effects thing—he did everything. And his second number was 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' which he sang like Aretha Franklin. I nearly fell over! He is just tremendous."

Of Manhattan Transfer's recent "Vocalese" album, with Hendricks as lyricist and guest singer, she observes: "It's excellent, and I'm glad they're helping to perpetuate the tradition."

Why does she prefer the vision of a future in drama rather than in the vocal field that catapulted her to fame?

"Simple. First, acting is a very joyous experience—I love the rhythm. It's like a game of tennis: You whack the ball, they whack it back, you have this wonderful volley.

"Second, when you're 85 years old you can still get up on that stage and act. How many 85-year-old singers have you seen working in jazz clubs lately?" □

Los Angeles Times
Thursday, November 21, 1985

LARRY DAVIS / Los Angeles Times

Pia Zadora turns spellbinder as a classy singer of classic pop songs on stage at the Beverly Theatre.

POP MUSIC REVIEW

A POOR BUTTERFLY'S RICH VOICE

By LEONARD FEATHER

She has it all: the range, expert intonation, a sensitive feeling for the lyrics and enough dynamic variety to preclude the danger of overkill.

The poor little rich girl finally has it made.

Heaven knows Pia Zadora has taken her lumps over the years from a cynical press brigade. Whether she deserved them will remain unknown to those of us who have seen none of her movies or TV appearances.

Never having been wined or dined on her behalf, not even being quite sure how to spell Meshulam Riklis, we came open-minded Tuesday to the Beverly Theatre, where she appeared in the first of her two nights as a singer of classic popular songs.

By the end of the evening, her standing ovation seemed uncontrived, even deserved, and it was clear that the last barb probably has been flung.

In a word, Pia's Zadorable. She can belt out "Maybe This Time" with the power and conviction of a Streisand, do justice to the inherent beauty of "For Once in My Life" and bring the program to a stirring climax with "I Am What I Am."

She has it all: the range, expert intonation, a sensitive feeling for the lyrics and enough dynamic variety to preclude the danger of overkill. True, she is exploring territory that's been reopened by Linda Ronstadt, but why not? Songs of this caliber need all the exposure they can get.

If Zadora ever turns back from "It Had to Be You" and "All of Me" to the disco world she once inhabited, the contemporary music scene will be regrettably impoverished. She will also be putting 41 musicians out of work—fewer than the 92 who accompanied her on the LP with the London Philharmonic, but still enough to provide the Robert Farnon arrangements, under Vincent Falcone's baton, with a luster that enriched a musically impeccable evening.

About halfway through the show, Zadora gave us enough of her biographical background to leave no doubt that she had substantial credits for many years before her overpublicized marriage to Riklis.

Her personality was appealingly unassuming; you had the sense she was eager to win over a skeptical and potentially hostile audience. All it took was talent, and Zadora left not a scintilla of doubt that she has something not all her spouse's millions could have bought—a genuine gift in a sadly underpopulated field.

A bonus was the knockout performance by Johnny Yune, the Korean comedian who opened for her. Having just completed a stint with Zadora in Chicago, Yune has established that he is the joker in the show and that the lady, at least in terms of this aspect of her work, is nothing to laugh at, and likely never will be again.

RNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1985

Soviet Union CURRENCY

BOOKS

LA TRISTESSE DE ST. LOUIS: Swing Under the Nazis

By Mike Zwerin. 197 pages. £13.95. Quartet Books, 27 Goodge Street, London W1.

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

CAVEAT: This title is misleading. "Jazz Under the Totalitarians" might have been closer, since the author deals at length with Eastern Europe in 1985, but even this would have been a misnomer, for once beyond the halfway mark you find that about a third of the footage is devoted to Django Reinhardt before, under and after the Nazis.

Zwerin has a rationalization. "The present," he observes, "clarifies the past." And so we have an entire chapter devoted to the author's recent visit to South Africa leading a jazz quartet under U. S. auspices, and an explanation of why he had no reservations about it. ("The boycott laws provide for atonement by writing and/or speaking out about the truth of this evil system, the most evil system since Nazi Germany, which I am doing.")

We have, too, a report on the use of dope at jazz events in Poland in the 1980s, and a sudden and totally irrelevant put-down of the guitarist and singer George Benson, who was 2 years old when the Nazis were defeated. We have inexplicable factual foul-ups, such as the placing in Paris, after World War II began, of Duke Ellington (he had gone home months earlier) and Stéphane Grappelli (who remained in England throughout the war).

All this having been said, "La Tristesse de Saint Louis" remains an absorbing work, providing additional evidence that Zwerin — a trombonist and a writer for the International Herald Tribune on popular music and jazz — is among the two or three most perceptive and readable authors on jazz, as we learned in his autobiographical "Close Enough For Jazz." A little egocentric, yes, with a tendency to remind us too often how many kilos he lost while writing the present book. He is discursive, using too many flashbacks and flashforwards; yet Zwerin's idiosyncratic way of telling these intermingled stories seldom wanders too far afield.

The glue that holds these pages together is the passages devoted most closely to the theme supposedly at hand. When Zwerin interviewed subjects who lived in Germany, occupied France or Poland during the war years, he elicited information of which most of us were only vaguely aware.

His research was neither as well-organized nor as extensive as that in S. Frederick Starr's "Red & Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union," the subject matter of which overlaps slightly with Zwerin's. Like Starr, Zwerin makes the point that totalitarianism of either the left or right is incompatible with a love of jazz. We learn how certain Gestapo officers mellowed a little when they dealt with an enemy who shared their concern for swing music. The thin line separating the bandstand from the concentration camp could be strengthened if the subject played good saxophone or had some Count Basie records to trade.

The obscene absurdities of those years come to light: "You could buy Benny Goodman records until 1938," a German fan says, "then somebody must have realized he was Jewish. After that you could buy Artie Shaw records because they did not know his real name was Arshawsky."

Some of Zwerin's dramatis personae are fascinating: the bandleader George Scott, whose mother was Polish and whose father was black, who, without collaborating, somehow ingratiated himself with the Nazis in Warsaw, attracting uniformed officers to his club; the trumpeter Bronislaw Stasiak, who led a jazz band in Auschwitz; Wieslaw Machen, leader of a group in the Flossenbürg camp ("There were six of us. We could get half a loaf of bread, some marmalade and a few cigarettes. Thanks to music, I not only survived the war but I became a professional bass player").

The "jazz saved my life" theme is a recurrent motif. The subject of Zwerin's most extraordinary interview is a former SS man, Heinz Baldauf, who shows the author a series of letters testifying to his alleged kindness. One was from a youth whose apartment was raided by Baldauf while the young man was listening to a banned radio station during a party. "Mr. Baldauf asked me to come into the next room and said, 'Mr. Haas, you are a half-Jew. This could mean real trouble for you, so I will overlook the matter of the radio station; it will not be written into my report.' The result was that I was not punished, and until today I am thankful for his humanity."

As Zwerin wryly observes: "Is it possible? A good Gestapo officer? A nice SS man?" The interview ends with Baldauf whistling a few bars from "Take the A Train" and asking Zwerin to send stamps for his stamp collection.

This episode and others no less engrossing make "La Tristesse de Saint Louis" indispensable reading.

Leonard Feather, jazz critic of the Los Angeles Times, wrote this review for the International Herald Tribune.

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11/24

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

"OUT OF THE BLUE." Blue Note 85118. How was this sextet formed? Where had its members worked? What were their backgrounds? The notes tell us almost nothing except for a vague reference to 35 young artists "who attended the auditions." Whoever conducted the auditions (producer Michael Cuscuna?) had a sharp ear. The evidence is out front in the saxophone exchanges between Ralph Bowen on tenor and Kenny Garrett on alto in Bowen's "Reunited," by potent and vivid trumpet or fluegelhorn of Michael Philip Mossman on his own "O.T.B.," by the rhythmic cohesion of bassist Robert Hurst and drummer Ralph Peterson (both doubling as composers) and the chameleonic, sometimes modal piano of Harry Pickens. Some of the cuts have a neo-Blakey sound, but Garrett's "Eastern Love Village" is slow and lyrical. In short, here's additional evidence that not all young jazzmen have been siphoned off into rock, fusion or the avant-garde. 4 stars.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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"THE ETERNAL TRAVELER." Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen. Pablo 2310-910. Who would have dreamed, not too many years ago, that two Danes and a Swede could create indigenous jazz of this caliber? The material is curiously refreshing: several traditional Scandinavian folk songs; Paganini's "Moto Perpetuo" as prologue and epilogue played by Pedersen at an impossible speed (no wonder he works so often as Oscar Peterson's bassist), and something called "Skul Gammel Venskab Rejn Forgo," which turns out to be "Auld Lang Syne." Gospel touches by the pianist Ole Kock Hansen and strong support by the Swedish drummer Lennart Gruvstedt fortify this unconventional album by a phenomenally talented artist, truly the great Dane of jazz. 4½ stars.

—L.F.

L.A. Times 1/5/86

CHUCK STEWART'S JAZZ FILES By Charles Steward and Paul Carter Harrison (Little Brown: $40 hardback; $16.95 paperback). The proliferation of jazz photo books continues with one that ranks among the best. Charles Stewart, active in New York since the early 1950s, observes: "Most musicians are already energized and full of electricity so you don't have to prop them up with fake exotic poses." True for the most part, though one of the best items here is the back cover shot of Zoot Sims, cigarette in hand, dozing at a record session. Stewart's sympathy for and rapport with his subjects illuminate many of these pages. They are in no chronological order (we are, however, brought up to date with David Murray in 1985) but were subdivided under brass, strings, reeds, keyboards etc. Though the candid shots are most striking (B.B. King agonizing over a chord, Toots Thielemans and Cannonball Adderley laughing infectiously), the more formal shots (a gorgeous Lena Horne in 1953) are among the most memorable. Paul Carter Harrison provided generally useful texts for each chapter, as well as an introductory dialogue with Stewart that is often both informative and anecdotal. There are a few of the typos and factual errors that seem nowadays to be ubiquitous (whatever happened to proof-reading?). Irving Berlin is killed off; in the same paragraph, Stewart credits ownership of Duke Ellington's tunes to Harry Mills, who was one of the Mills Brothers, rather than to Irving Mills, and refers to the tune "Whisper Not" as "Whisper Now." The Eddie Condon group shot is remarkable, since it was taken in 1961 and allegedly includes James P. Johnson, who died in 1953. (It is in fact Meade Lux Lewis.) But such goofs detract little from a generally admirable coffee table book.

—LEONARD FEATHER

FOR THE RECORD

An error in transmission caused a garbled sentence to appear in Leonard Feather's review of George Coleman in Tuesday's Calendar. The sentence should have read: "Still, his commanding inspiration on tenor, blending the best elements of early Rollins and the late Rahsaan Roland Kirk, places him very near the top of his class in today's saxophone school."

11/26

SAXOPHONIST RETURNS AFTER 10 YEARS

By LEONARD FEATHER

In his first local visit since 1975, George Coleman, the tenor saxophonist, played Friday and Saturday in the theater club known as At Home, on Crenshaw Boulevard near 43rd Street. With him were two fellow Memphis natives, his regular pianist and bassist, Harold Mabern and Jamil Nasser. Carl Burnett, who arranged the presentation, replaced Coleman's usual drummer, Idris Muhammad.

Coleman is a phenomenon. His tone is deep and dark, his playing starkly declarative. There was an irony in the use of Sonny Rollins' tune "Oleo," since Rollins, recently touted by a New York critic as the world's greatest saxophonist, has in fact been in a steady decline for years, whereas Coleman's work, particularly in "Oleo," far outclassed the composer on every level. Avoiding Rollins' tendency to toss in irrelevant quotes, he maintained a breathtaking buoyancy during a couple of choruses backed only by two-bar breaks.

The choice of material was no less impressive: "Jeannine," followed by an untitled boppish blues, a Mal Waldron ballad called "Soul Eyes" and Lee Morgan's "Ceora."

Coleman is a total extrovert. His tendency to overkill and lack of dynamic contrast marred an otherwise flawless performance, but the surrounding sounds may have been at fault. The drivingly intense Mabern was fighting a miserable piano and Burnett at times seemed to be fighting Mabern (the tempo slowed noticeably during the blues). Only Nasser came through untroubled, keeping a good bass line going throughout and delivering strong-toned, bop-inspired solos.

Although Coleman plays fine alto sax, the lighter horn was left on a chair during the set heard Friday. It could have provided a needed tonal change. Still, his commanding inspiration on tenor, blending the best elements of early Rollins and the late Rahsaan Roland Kirk, plays his hymns very near the top of the class in today's saxophone school.

JAZZ BRIEFS

Continued from 83rd Page

Chico Freeman, David Friesen et al. 2½ stars. —L.F.

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"THE FIRE FROM WITHIN." Billy Bang Sextet. Soul Note 1086. Inspired by a book by Carlos Castaneda, New York-based violinist Bang has enlisted an unorthodox trumpet-guitar-marimba supporting cast to create an appealing, lightly textured sound here. The seven original pieces ably encompass the buoyant, classic jazz swing of the "The Glow of Awareness," the polyrhythmic African flavor of "The Nagual Julian" and the bluesy "The Mold of Man." Bang's playing has always fallen closer to the Gypsy camp than the conservatory; the other musicians can't match his fluid soloing here but the ensemble work is so enjoyable that "The Fire From Within" stands as a strong blend of tradition and experimentation. 3½ stars.

—DON SNOWDEN

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"THE COMPLETE BLUE NOTE RECORDINGS OF SIDNEY BECHET." Mosaic MR6-110 (197 Strawberry Hill Ave., Stamford, Conn. 06902). Every Mosaic album is a labor of love. This six-LP set comes equipped with a booklet, photos, intense and valuable notes by John Chilton, Max Harrison, Art Hodes (pianist on six of the 13 sessions) and the reissue's producer, Michael Cuscuna. The time ranges from 1939, when Blue Note had its first hit with Bechet's "Summertime," to 1953, when the Paris-based New Orleans Creole was visiting New York.

For me, Bechet's importance rested in his influence, as soprano saxophonist, on Johnny Hodges and others. There is some warm, simple blues playing here by him, by trumpeters Frankie Newton and Wild Bill Davison, the pianist Cliff Jackson and a few others, but too many of the rhythm sections, even those with the great Sid Catlett on drums, are stodgy, almost leaden. Six alternate takes are included, along with one tune never before issued (the jaunty "Porto Rico"). Still, plowing through 12 sides of this primal material is like walking through a museum for 12 hours without stopping. The entrance fee is $54. Unratable.

—L.F.

□

"THE COMPLETE CANDID RECORDINGS OF CHARLES MINGUS." Mosaic MR 4-111. This may be the most valuable item in Mosaic's series to date. Produced in 1960 by Nat Hentoff, these four LPs reflect in excelsis Mingus' driving forces: the blues, the church, folk forms and Ellingtonia.

Five cuts were previously unreleased, one with good reason. (Michael Cuscuna tactfully tells us that a nine-minute drum solo "is included for completeness.") The others include a long "Body and Soul" from a session that seems unorthodox by the bassist's standards, since the personnel includes two Swing Era giants: Roy Eldridge on trumpet and Jo Jones on drums. Eldridge clearly was inspired by the company he kept throughout this date.

Several of the titles are familiar through other versions, among them two treatments, on different dates, of "Reincarnation of a Love Bird," one of which begins engagingly with Ted Curson on trumpet and Eric Dolphy on flute. The same group revisits a very early Mingus work, "All the Things You Could Be by Now If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother." Price is $37 for the set, including shipping. 4½ stars.

Note: On my copy, the labels are reversed on Sides 1 and 2.

—L.F.

□

"THE ALTERNATIVE MAN." Bill Evans. Blue Note BT 85111. Evans' concept for the "Alternative Man" involves fashioning a fresh synthesis from disparate strands of '80s jazz and pop much as Weather Report did 15 years ago. The compositions range from the twisting melody of "Path of Least Resistance" to the straight blowing of "Miles Away" and the exuberantly funky "Let the Juice Loose!" Evans' accomplished playing on soprano, tenor and flute readily adapts to these varied contexts, but he could use a crash course in modern production techniques. 2½ stars.

—D.S.

"AT LAST!" Miles Davis and the Lighthouse All-Stars. Contemporary C-7645. Better late than never? Perhaps better never, as Davis might agree. It was unfair to him to dredge this up out of his past. Sitting in at a 1953 jam session, he was in a fallow period, had not yet kicked his narcotics habit and played hesitantly on a borrowed horn in Shorty Rogers' "Infinity Promenade" and Monk's "'Round Midnight." He's in better form on "Night in Tunisia," but ironically, the Lighthouse trumpeter at that time, Rolf Ericson, outplayed him. The other cuts are a drum solo by Max Roach and a feeble "At Last" by Chet Baker. Good solos here and there by Bud Shank and Bob Cooper on saxes, and the late Lorraine Geller on piano, with Howard Rumsey on bass completing the group. 2 stars.

—L.F.

□

"HI-TECH BIG BAND." Matt Catingub. Sea Breeze SB-2025. On 5 of the 11 cuts, Catingub becomes a one-man band, overdubbing various saxophones, rhythm instruments, synthesizer, etc., and using weird pseudonyms such as Garth Vader, Lookma Nostrings and Babey B. Bopper. It is more of a technical than an artistic accomplishment, and the simulated sax section sounds thin. His mother, Mavis Rivers, sings on two tracks, one of which features the full live band. There's some amazing craftsmanship by the fast-moving trombone section on "Donna Lee," Brilliant though he is, Catingub should search for a personalized direction instead of relying on gimmicks and rehashes of 50-year-old charts such as Edgar Sampson's "Don't Be That Way." 3 stars.

—L.F.

Beginning next week, Leonard Feather's byline will appear only occasionally in The Times. He is taking a partial leave of absence to complete work on a book of memoirs. Titled "The Jazz Years—Earwitness to an Era," it will be published by Quartet Books of London.

Book Review

Singing the Blues Over Joe Willams Saga

By LEONARD FEATHER

Every Day; The Story of Joe Williams by Leslie Gourse (Quartet: $16.95)

Joe Williams has long been respected internationally as a superlative interpreter of rhythm songs, pop tunes, ballads and blues; in the view of many, he is the greatest all-around male vocalist of our time, admired for his artistry and his humanity. It follows, then, that a biography devoted to a performer of this caliber deserves a writer of comparable maturity to tell his story. Two or three pages into "Every Day" it becomes evident that he has not been accorded this honor.

Williams' story offered rare opportunities. Born in Georgia, reared in Chicago, he had to face not only poverty and white racism but also prejudice among black families: "Some parents told their daughters to bring home only light-skinned men." During his long, slow climb to the top, culminating in his six triumphant years with the Count Basie orchestra, Williams went through three failed marriages and a nervous breakdown.

Whenever he is quoted directly, the story takes on a warmth that reflects his personality. "Music is like bathing," he says. "It bathes you, washes you, cleanses you, transports you."

The prose style of Leslie Gourse does not offer similar transportation. Apparently written in haste and carelessly edited, rife with wrong dates and contradictions. "Every Day" is narrated in a style somewhere between Ann Landers and People magazine. A sample: "Joe Williams, you will recall, dear reader, has large feet." The word *kudos* is used as a plural noun. Far more serious is the inattention to important details. Williams, we are told, was born in 1918, yet the opening chronology informs us that in 1943, "at age twenty, Joe marries his first wife." His mother dies twice: in 1947 on Page 6, and again in 1948 on Page 33.

A photo of Basie's guitarist Freddie Green is identified as Joe Williams. Georgie Auld, a white saxophonist, somehow makes his way into a list of "big names in the black entertainment world." Misspelled names abound.

Gourse seems to be on safer ground when dealing not with fact, but with the appealing personality of Jillean Williams, the singer's British fourth wife. Their interracial relationship, starting in 1959, encountered relatively few problems; the passages dealing with their early meetings, a shared interest in golf and their decision to live in Las Vegas (despite that city's deplorable racial record) are delineated sympathetically and perceptively.

Gourse did not apply the same diligence to the rest of her research. Although the book got under way before Basie died, he was not interviewed. Among others not consulted were John Levy, Williams' manager since 1961; his two surviving ex-wives and, most conspicuously, his two children.

Feather is The Times' jazz critic.

12/1/85

JAZZ

MAX ROACH: THE ELDER STATESMAN IS STILL BUSY

By LEONARD FEATHER

Wherever in the jazz world man can read or listen, chances are Max Roach's name is known today, just as it was honored in narrower areas when he came to the forefront as a trend-setter of modern music.

He was, of course, the innovative, pioneering drummer who did for the new movement of the 1940s what Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie were doing on the saxophone and trumpet. This image, however, is far too limited in the light of this later accomplishments.

In the 1950s, Roach was co-leader with the trumpeter Clifford Brown of a quintet that took small group jazz into vital, uncharted territory. In the 1960s, he was in the forefront of the Afro-American fight for justice: His "Freedom Now" suite, written in collaboration with the singer and lyricist Oscar Brown Jr., became the music world's battle cry for the whole movement. Today, it is more topical than ever (one movement is titled "Tears of Johannesburg") and is still available on LP (Columbia 36390). In 1966, it was converted into a short film in Italy that won first prize at a film festival in Locarno.

To his roles as drummer, composer and spokesman, Roach soon added that of lecturer. Appointed professor of music at the University of Massachusetts in 1972, he traveled to Africa to do research. After five years at the university, he was persuaded by Bruce Lundvall, then president of CBS Records, to return to the public eye and ear through club work and recordings. Since 1978, he has been back at the university on a part-time basis as an adjunct professor.

Roach today has reached that seemingly inevitable stage at which such terms as *dean of modern percussionists* and *elder statesman* are applied to him; yet, he is so much an active part of the contemporary scene that any implication of his sitting back and basking in past glories would be thoroughly unjustifiable.

In 1985, he is, in fact, even more than the sum of his parts. At 60, he is more impassioned, more enthusiastic, more verbally combative than ever—and more eclectically creative.

During the past few years, he has composed works for soloists, choruses, orchestras, theater, films and TV; has been a key figure in a unique percussionists' collective called M'Boom; has continued to lead his own quartet, with trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater (who joined him in 1971), Odean Pope on tenor sax and Tyrone Brown on bass, and can be heard leading a wide range of groups on a dozen record labels.

Roach was in Los Angeles recently, mainly to visit his two sons. Incredibly, not a day's work had been lined up for him. He was not too concerned, since New York held exciting prospects: He was due to take part, with Lukas Foss and the Brooklyn Philharmonia, in a program devoted to three centuries of black classical composers.

□

Roach's role as professor has been the source of some pleasure and a little frustration. "In a conservatory, or any music department, all you can do is give a student the tools; from that point on, they have to work things out for themselves. Sometimes it will work and sometimes not, but at least they'll have the techniques, and that's important whether you want to be a Charlie Parker, an Art Tatum, or just a musician who works in the studios. You have to know those basics, and if a student comes out strengthened by that advantage after working with me, I'm happy."

Some of Roach's proteges have come to him with a strictly classical background, knowing nothing about jazz. "Nevertheless," he says, "they often come out of there swinging, improvising on tough chord changes like Coltrane's 'Giant Steps'—they acquire that ability simply by listening. Jazz is one of the best ear-training vehicles in existence."

At present, among some 250 students majoring in music, not one is black. Roach understands the reason: "Because of the whole socioeconomic situation in the U.S.A., black families are hard-pressed to send their children to college at all, and if they can afford to, they won't send them for the arts, they'll send them for general education. Strangely enough, the few black students we have had, who came in on scholarships, majored in classical music."

There was an old gospel-blues line that said, "A man can go to college, a man can go to school; if he hasn't got religion he's an educated fool." Is it possible, I asked, that by substituting *rhythm* for *religion* one could apply this to the study of jazz?

"Well, as I said, certain things cannot be taught formally," Roach said. "If you look at our history, from Louis Armstrong to Charlie Parker, you find that the most creative music was not a product of conservatory training; rather it was passed along, as Charles Mingus used to say, 'from mouth to mouth and hand to hand.' Duke Ellington was not conservatory trained."

Reminded that today it is possible to take a course in the Ellington style of arranging (at Berklee in Boston), Roach said, "That's fine, but it still goes back to the same premise: To do something valuable, you obviously have to find your own way. The black church has provided a great source of training, not only for most singers but also often for musicians.

"If, say, Lester Young had gone to a conservatory, we might never have had the genius of a Lester Young, because they would have told him he wasn't playing correctly, his sound was wrong. They would have forced him to change. The same thing applies to Dizzy and many others.

Women's Jazz Fest simply lacks funds

By Robert C. Trussell
arts and entertainment writer

Even though the Women's Jazz Festival Inc. would have received $11,000 in state and local grants for next year's event, the group's board of directors has decided to call it quits.

"We would have had some money, just not enough," said Mary Hodges, a director of the organization. If the group had staged a festival in 1986, it would have received $8,000 from the Missouri Arts Council and $3,000 from the Municipal Art Commission.

Ms. Hodges said it was with regret that the board voted Sunday to discontinue the festival. "We're not quitting because our mission was fulfilled. There is still a great need."

The organization had sponsored the Women's Jazz Festival each year since 1978 except for 1984, when the festival wasn't held because of insufficient funds. The festival, intended to showcase major female jazz talent, was the first of its kind and served as a model for women's jazz festivals elsewhere in the country and the world.

Ms. Hodges said the principal reason for discontinuing the festival was the lack of a full-time staff to organize the event.

"Jazz deserves to have enough support here to support it with a staff," she said. "To be done well, it has to be a year-round thing. If you're going to go after government funds, you have to apply 18 months in advance. There's a lot of paper work to be done."

Jeff Charney, another board member and vice chairman of the Kansas City Jazz Commission, said he argued for continuing the festival.

"I argued for it because I don't like to see this quit," he said. "I just don't want to see the Women's Jazz Festival die. I didn't see why we couldn't do some kind of event, even if it wasn't the grand festival we had this year . . . The people on the board want to quit. They're tired."

Jazz critic Leonard Feather, an enthusiastic supporter of the Women's Jazz Festival in its early years, said he was disappointed but not surprised.

"They never had the financial support that they needed, so it was really difficult to find the really big attractions," he said today in a telephone interview from Los Angeles.

CHUCK STEWART'S JAZZ FILES By Charles Steward and Paul Carter Harrison (Little Brown: $40 hardback; $16.95 paperback). The proliferation of jazz photo books continues with one that ranks among the best. Charles Stewart, active in New York since the early 1950s, observes: "Most musicians are already energized and full of electricity so you don't have to prop them up with fake exotic poses." True for the most part, though one of the best items here is the back cover shot of Zoot Sims, cigarette in hand, dozing at a record session. Stewart's sympathy for and rapport with his subjects illuminate many of these pages. They are in no chronological order (we are, however, brought up to date with David Murray in 1985) but were subdivided under brass, strings, reeds, keyboards etc. Though the candid shots are most striking (B.B. King agonizing over a chord, Toots Thielemans and Cannonball Adderley laughing infectiously), the more formal shots (a gorgeous Lena Horne in 1953) are among the most memorable. Paul Carter Harrison provided generally useful texts for each chapter, as well as an introductory dialogue with Stewart that is often both informative and anecdotal. There are a few of the typos and factual errors that seem nowadays to be ubiquitous (whatever happened to proof-reading?). Irving Berlin is killed off; in the same paragraph, Stewart credits ownership of Duke Ellington's tunes to Harry Mills, who was one of the Mills Brothers, rather than to Irving Mills, and refers to the tune "Whisper Not" as "Whisper Now." The Eddie Condon group shot is remarkable, since it was taken in 1961 and allegedly includes James P. Johnson, who died in 1953. (It is in fact Meade Lux Lewis.) But such goofs detract little from a generally admirable coffee table book.

—LEONARD FEATHER

1/5/86

PENNI GLADSTONE

"Must we all cross over and become popular?" asks Max Roach.

"It all comes down to originality. There was one unforgettable night when I worked with Prez (Young) at Birdland. Because I was with Prez, and because he and Papa Jo Jones were so close in the Basie band, I played all of Papa Jo's old licks. At the end of the evening, after I said good night to Prez, he gave me one of those succinct lessons in that personal language of his. He said, 'You can't join the throng till you write your own song.' That's a great lesson, something that stays with you the rest of your life; this music allows you, prefers you to be an individual, to do your own thing."

□

Since those days, Roach has been writing his own song in every conceivable construction of the phrase. Last year, he went to work on the music for three plays by Sam Shepard. ("We had a quartet of jazz musicians covering everything from Cajun to country-Western.") His scores won him an Obie award.

Last January, Roach produced and recorded a unique album, "Easy Winners" (Soul Note 1109), for which his regular quartet was teamed with a string quartet. The age-old assumption that classically oriented string players cannot be made to swing is neatly disproved, particularly in "Bird Says," a blistering bebop outing, and on "A Little Booker," a Roach composition named for the late Booker Little, who was his trumpeter in 1958.

"There really is a way to get results from a string section. I toured Europe with this group, but for the second tour I hired a working classical string quartet from Sweden. What we did was sing them the parts. After they heard them sung, looked at the music and figured out the fingering and the bowing, it worked out just fine."

Playing viola in the string unit on "Easy Winners" is Maxine Roach, who also wrote the arrangement for the title tune, a Scott Joplin rag. Now in her early 30s, Roach is earning a fine reputation for herself in New York. Says her father: "She's a very hot free-lance player, doing shows and all kinds of work. She grew up with people like Dizzy and Bird coming around, so she has the right training and background from every point of view.

"I remember when Maxine did her final paper, before she graduated from Oberlin University, she met musicians with names like Abdullah Buhaina—also known as Art Blakey—and others who had embraced Islam. So she decided to write a paper on Islam and the black jazz musician. But her professor told her there wasn't enough written material on the subject to justify her doing the paper.

"We need more literature on areas that haven't been covered. That's one of my arguments with critics. Sometimes I'm dissatisfied with what they write, but I'm also unhappy about things they *fail* to write.

"Stanley (Crouch, a jazz writer for the Village Voice) and I had a real shout-out, not about something he wrote but about something he neglected to write. I did all that music for the Sam Shepard plays, and none of the jazz critics took the time out even to come and hear it, let alone review it."

That Roach has been unhappy with much of the jazz historiography he has read may well be related to his intention to write his own book of reminiscences. One aspect with which the Roach book undoubtedly will deal is the short shrift he feels has been accorded to drummers. Their rhythms, he points out, have been vital to the nature of the art form through all its generations, yet the documentation of their work has been limited.

"Take, for example, the whole Dixieland-New Orleans period. People will talk and write about Sidney Bechet, Louis Armstrong, all the wonderful horn players, but how often will they mention Baby Dodds or any of the other drummers who contributed to the evolution of the music?"

Roach will also deal with the inherent dilemmas involved in trying to "popularize" a music not designed for ephemeral popularity.

"Do we really all have to toe the line? Must we all cross over and become what they call popular? A lot of times it has been tried and didn't work. I know one very wonderful trumpet player who tried it, and all it did was interrupt, for a moment, what has been a brilliant career."

Asked whether he is optimistic or pessimistic about the music's future, he answered guardedly: "I'm both. Pessimistic in the sense that the music needs more help than it has been getting for the media. (Roach's last appearance on network TV was a guest spot when Bill Cosby subbed for Johnny Carson on "The Tonight Show" a few years ago.) But I'm optimistic when I hear people like Wynton Marsalis. He has the technique, the knowledge of theory and harmony, and I hope he'll never compromise.

"Miles (Davis) has always had the same attitude; after all these years, he's still evolving, playing brilliantly, still doing what he believes in. If you keep developing your own genuine brand of feeling, the way Louis and Lester and all the rest of the giants did, I'm sure you can really survive." □

LOW-KEY ROWLES

12/30

Call it laid-back or low-key, perhaps simply relaxed; the music at Dino's in Pasadena on Friday was not calculated to disturb the neighbors.

Though guitarist Dave Koonse was the nominal leader, the responsibilities were shared equally by Stacy Rowles on fluegelhorn and her father, Jimmy Rowles, at the piano. All three displayed a fondness for resourceful harmony, a gentle approach to melody and a subtle sense of rhythm.

Stacy Rowles displays latent power while holding it for the most part in reserve. It was not until the fourth number, Larry Gale's attractive "Loco Motif," that her considerable technical finesse came into play.

The opening tune, Alec Wilder's 40-year-old "While We're Young," illustrated the group's ability to tackle seldom-heard material adventurously, as it was updated with a bossa nova beat, established by drummer Paul Humphrey and bassist Paul Gormley. Its meter doubled from a 32- to a 64-bar chorus, with elegant work by Koonse and a simple, sensitive statement by Jimmy Rowles, "While We're Young" became young all over again.

Stacy Rowles later brought out the heart-wrenching beauty of "Blood Count," Billy Strayhorn's final composition. This would have been even better as a brief horn specialty.

In general the quintet suffered from a shortage of vitality. "What's New" was taken at a tempo that would trail behind a snail. With a touch more variety this could be one of the more engaging mainstream groups on the Southland scene.

—LEONARD FEATHER

12/31 B&S

"I Just Want to Sing." Joe Williams. Delos. As a follow-up to his Grammy-winning album on this label, Williams offers an hourlong program of 13 items. Every aspect of his talent is on display: the ballads, the virile beauty of a spiritual ("Ain't Gonna Study War No More"), the good-natured humor of "Fat and Forty" and of course the blues, well represented on two tracks. Splendid Lockjaw Davis tenor sax, John Collins guitar, Norman Simmons piano. Only weak spot: "After You've Gone" doesn't work as a slow bossa nova. ~~~½

—LEONARD FEATHER

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE POLITICS OF JAZZ

To the editors:

In his article "The Faking of Jazz" (November 18), James Lincoln Collier claimed that he had been duped into believing that Europeans patronized jazz while white Americans downgraded it, and that this concept was fostered by those damned leftist jazz critics. What magic revelation suddenly caused this 180 degree turnabout in his thinking?

Having been on both scenes since Mr. Collier was a child, I can attest to the total fallacy of his claims. So much greater was the demand for jazz in Europe, and such was the shortage of recordings, that John Hammond was commissioned to produce a series of sessions from 1933-35 specially for British release. In any event, what mattered was not the quantity of white U.S. listeners, but the quality of their appreciation. Like other European students, I always regarded jazz as an art form; to most Americans who went "slumming" at the Cotton Club, it was casual entertainment.

Mr. Collier pretends that foreign writers were always "uninterested" in visiting the U.S. I had been writing for only 18 months when I visited New York in 1935; I returned several times before settling there in 1939. Hugues Panassié spent almost half of 1938 in New York; Nesuhi and Ahmet Ertegun, Timme Rosenkrantz, and several other aficionados visited or settled in the States during those years. Robert Goffin lived here for several years in the early 1940s.

The list of writers in Collier's paragraph linking them with the "left-wing press" is laughable if not libelous. I knew these men well; Barry Ulanov, like me, was a staunch anticommunist and antifascist; George Simon was apolitical; Dave Dexter, who always struck me as a conservative both musically and politically, was an early champion of Stan Kenton, later a George Wallace supporter and the most right-wing of all the major jazz figures in his day. To brand men like these as leftists is outrageous. As for my own politics, I never had illusions about the far left and at one time wrote for the *New Leader*, which even Mr. Collier can hardly brand as pro-leftist.

By Collier's own admission, John Hammond tried to write about jazz for THE NEW REPUBLIC, but was rebuffed; because of such obstacles he accepted assignments from the *New Masses*, but most of his writing in the 1930s had to appear in British publications such as *Melody Maker*, *Gramophone*, and *Rhythm*. Hammond regarded the Communists as opportunists who blew hot and cold on the race issue.

There was not a single regular print outlet for jazz in the U.S. when I began writing for *Melody Maker*, where jazz had been covered regularly since 1926. *Down beat* in Chicago and *Jazz Hot* in Paris started within months of one another, in 1934-35, but the former at that time was devoted to popular dance bands and cheesecake photos, along with some jazz, while *Jazz Hot* from the start was a serious, all-jazz periodical.

Racism, a factor neatly circumvented by Mr. Collier, was a central factor. It would not have helped his argument had he pointed out that for years *down beat* and *Metronome* seldom if ever put a black face on the cover; or that while Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald were honored in European magazines, *down beat* celebrated the election as number-one jazz singer of Helen O'Connell and then Dinah Shore. Holiday never in her life won a *down beat* or *Metronome* poll.

LEONARD FEATHER
Sherman Oaks, California

To the editors:

Because what I wrote about jazz in the 1930s and 1940s was published in the *Nation*, James Lincoln Collier places me in the group of politically leftist writers who he says politicized jazz—i.e., whose own leftist political views and those of the papers they wrote for "forced them to regard the world of jazz around them in [the] particular [political] way" he describes in his article.

In actual fact, writing in the books and arts sections of the Bliven/Cowley *New Republic* and the Kirchwey/Del Vayo *Nation* was done by some who opposed the views of the magazines' political sections. And in my own case what I wrote about jazz included nothing related either to my particular leftist political views that were concerned with the Soviet Russian purge trials, or to the published views of those magazines on those trials that outraged me. I was not asked by the magazines to support those outrageous views or to promote any view of the world of jazz. I wrote about what interested me in jazz, which was not the world around it but the music I heard in it. The Louis Armstrong records I had begun to hear in 1932 had corrected the mistaken idea of jazz that Gilbert Seldes's writing in the 1920s had implanted in a mind acquainted solely with classical music: I had learned from Armstrong that jazz was not the slick Paul Whiteman performances Seldes had been enthusiastic about, which I had found unimpressive, but the improvisatory performances by small groups like Armstrong's Hot Five and Hot Seven, in which a solo of his offered the fascinating and exciting experience of moment-to-moment working of a creative mind with an inventive exuberance controlled by a sense for coherent developing form. As a result, the performances of Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke, Jack Teagarden, and Teddy Wilson were added to those of Toscanini, Schnabel, Szigeti, and the Budapest Quartet that I began to report on to the *Nation*'s readers in 1936.

Those performances were all I was concerned with in jazz then; and I do not agree now with Mr. Collier's contention that "if we are to know what the music means, we must know how it relates to the society and culture from which it sprang."

B. H. HAGGIN
New York, New York

To the editors:

James Lincoln Collier has written a ground-breaking article. As an ardent jazz fan since the age of 12 (early 1938) and an equally ardent conservative, I soon began to feel about as comfortable with the politics of my jazz mentors as an Orangeman in the St. Patrick's Day parade. I know Mr. Collier doesn't share my antediluvian politics, so a double bow to him. I only hope his critics don't fasten on a few questionable but minor statements and thus manage to obscure his central point, which is indisputable.

NEIL MCCAFFREY
Harrison, New York

James Lincoln Collier replies:

I certainly did not intend to imply—and I think did not—that all of the writers mentioned were Communists, or were even aware of the Comintern's policies on jazz. My point was that they gener-

continued on page 49

Los Angeles Times 12/29/85 (syndicated)

JAZZ

ON BALANCE, IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

By LEONARD FEATHER

This has been a year of major achievements and saddening setbacks for jazz.

On the positive front, there have been new artists who, in their various ways, have kept the pure acoustic sounds alive in all the media. Even television—admittedly public or cable television, for the most part—has stepped up the pace of special shows devoted to a particular artist or concept.

Jazz concerts, festivals and cruises continue to pick up the slack left by the gradual diminution of nightclub activity. Another healthy trend has been the growth of jazz societies, those groups of altruistic citizens who import musicians to stage jam sessions. During the year, they banded together to form the American Federation of Jazz Societies, a nonprofit organization through which more and more artists are setting up tours; records and books are being purchased for jazz libraries; radio publicity is encouraged in each community, and the welfare of jazz is substantially improved.

The healthiest sign on the horizon is the extent to which concerned jazz citizens are becoming organized. At the fourth annual Jazz Times magazine convention in New York, panel discussions dealt with the preservation of jazz history, international activities, the growing jazz video market, radio and TV programming, the jazz market for compact discs and a dozen other topics.

Among the individuals who contributed to our collective welfare during 1985 were a number who qualify for honors in this, the 21st annual Golden Feather Awards ceremony:

Innovator of the Year: Stanley Jordan, the 26-year-old guitarist whose technique of tapping the strings, rather than plucking or strumming them, was so imaginatively employed that his debut album, "Magic Touch" (Blue Note), has enjoyed both artistic acclaim and commercial success; last week, it was still No. 1 on the jazz charts and, after 32 weeks, still on the pop charts at No. 136.

Renovator of the Year: Bireli Lagrene, just 19, an amazing French Gypsy who at 13 was recording his impressions of Django Reinhardt, the original source of his inspiration. Today he plays both acoustic and electric guitar, switching effortlessly from classic '30s jazz to funk and jazz/rock.

Collaborators of the Year: Larry Coryell and Emily Remler. This duo made a unique impact with international concert tours and on a splendid album, "Together" (Concord Jazz). Remler, on the same label, displayed her creative skill as a composer in her own album, "Catwalk."

Record Producer of the Year: Bruce Lundvall, whose masterful guidance of the revived Blue Note label was celebrated at a Town Hall concert, a live album of that event, and a series of admirable new releases as well as countless classics reissued.

Festival Producer of the Year (landlocked): Alain Simard, whose 10-day Montreal Jazz Festival, with its 158 indoor and outdoor presentations by some 800 American and Canadian performers, was as genuinely festive as any I have yet encountered.

Festival Producers of the Year (seaborne): Shelli Shier and Hank O'Neal, who in October staged the world's longest jazz event: 28 days—four one-week Caribbean cruises with an aggregate of 102 musicians, aboard the Norway.

Singer of the Year: Joe Williams. He hit 67 the day Sinatra made 70. This was indeed his year, with a Grammy-winning Delos album and, recently, the recurring role of Bill Cosby's father-in-law on the Cosby TV show, which will help his national name value and, in turn, his record sales.

Vocal Group of the Year: Manhattan Transfer, entirely on the strength of its current album, "Vocalese." Like Stanley Jordan, the group surprised everyone by showing that a musically valid concept could also be commercially viable.

Instrumental Group of the Year: Phil Woods' Quintet. The best-organized and most-inspiring unit on the scene, its value maximized by Tom Harrell's trumpet, Woods' alto and arrangements.

This year, I asked a few other leading critics to name their choices for the instrumentalist, group and singer (preferably but not necessarily new) who have impressed them most during 1985. Their comments are telling:

Ira Gitler, writer for Jazz Times magazine and author of the valuable new book "Swing to Bop" (Oxford), said: "I was impressed by Ralph Bowen, the tenor sax player with the new group OTB (Out of the Blue) on Blue Note. The best group? The Basie Band, with a special commendation for what Thad Jones has done since he took over leadership. I'd name two singers: Dianne Schuur, for her very pure, ungimmicked sound, and Laurel Masse."

A. James Liska, writer for Hollywood Reporter, Down Beat and The Times, shared my enthusiasm for Stanley Jordan as well as Gitler's for the Basie band. ("Even without Bill Basie, it continues to grow.") He also cited the Seventh Avenue Band, a Los Angeles group led by the drummer Mike Stevens, represented by an album on ITI Records. "There are no new singers to speak of, but the return of Nina Simone impressed me enormously."

Nat Hentoff, long respected both as a jazz student and a political observer and analyst, said: "Craig Harris, the trombonist, has disappointed me on records, but he's great in person. Someone else who's not really new, but certainly important, is the trumpeter Olu Dara. Groups? I like the group called Sphere—Charlie Rouse on tenor and a lot of Monk's music. As for singers, I'm always hoping there'll be a new one. I'd like to name Joe Williams if I can have a parenthesis: I select him in the hope that he will cut the ballads in his repertoire by two-thirds. He's such a good jazz singer."

Zan Stewart, jazz editor for L.A. Weekly and contributor to The Times, chose the sub-bantamweight French pianist Michel Petrucciani: "Bold invention, endless ideas, fantastic technique." His preferred group is Freddie Hubbard's: "His playing is powerful and stimulating; the group is consistently strong." Stewart's vocal choice is the pianist-songwriter-singer Dave Frishberg: "He is a rare talent; his songs are wonderful and his interpretation of them is unique."

Gary Giddins, author of two first-rate books on jazz and critic for the Village Voice, said the instrumentalist of the year was David Murray, the eclectic and brilliant tenor saxophonist. "Every time I hear him, he sounds better. Last week, I caught him with the World Saxophone Quartet—who, by the way, will be my choice for best group. As for singers, I'll take Kay Starr. She's been around a while, but she knocked me out recently during a New York club booking: straight-ahead swinging and good ballads."

Dan Morgenstern, who directs the Institute of Jazz Studies at the State University of New Jersey in Rutgers, had a choice with which nobody is likely to argue: "The instrumentalist is Benny Carter. He's still playing extraordinarily well, always coming up with something fresh and surprising—a symbol of the lasting validity of great artists. I chose two groups: OTB, a fine young group of musicians who work together admirably; and a very different combo, the Classic Jazz Quartet. No drums, no bass and a most unusual approach to repertoire. Their album is on Jazzology. None of the new singers has impressed me too much, so I'll select Carol Sloane, one of my all-time favorites, who's still not getting the recognition she deserves."

As for those setbacks: The omissions of jazz from the Grammy Awards telecast at the time seemed scandalous, but since this has long been basically a pop-rock show, its long-range significance was minimal. Far more regrettable were the losses: Big Joe Turner, Zoot Sims, George Duvivier, Jo Jones and Philly Joe Jones, among others. Let us hope that for every such passing, a potential 21st-Century giant will arrive.

On balance, 1985 has been a year for more grateful memories than regrets. □

1/5
86

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

"HOT AND BOTHERED." Mercer Ellington. Doctor Jazz 40029. Recorded here last year, with several West Coast musicians joining the regulars, this is the Ellington orchestra's first album in a decade. It's based on a daring premise: Mercer took nine of his father's very early compositions (1926-1936) and had them rescored for a larger orchestra. Barrie Lee Hall did a splendid job of updating and renovating the charts; his trumpet provides the most authentic solos. The results are a delightful mixture of the campy (Kenny Burrell switching from guitar to banjo for a solo on the title tune) and contemporary (Hall's fluegelhorn in "Caravan").

True, there are no soloists today in the Johnny Hodges-Paul Gonsalves class, but the section and ensemble passages on "Daybreak Express," "Harlem Speaks" and "Creole Love Call" are so well performed and recorded that the result is a unique ancient/modern pastiche. 5 stars.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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"THE COTTON CONNECTION." Teresa Brewer-Mercer Ellington. Doctor Jazz 40031. This is not the Ellington orchestra but a New York pick-up group with Al Cohn, Al Grey et al., along with some of Mercer's regular sidemen. "Creole Love Call" again appears, this time with effective vocal overdubbing by Brewer. Her participation in "Ring Dem Bells" and "Duke's Place" seems arbitrary and trivial; she's much better suited to "Stormy Weather," her best cut. 3 stars.

—L.F.

□

"NEW EARTH SONATA," Hubert Laws/Quincy Jones/Chick Corea. CBS Masterworks M30858. This album offers startling evidence of the increasingly frequent disappearance of any demarcation lines between classical music and jazz. Harold Blanchard's title composition, written for flute, guitar, piano and rhythm, takes up the first side. Although the three-movement work, with its subtitles "Security," "Peace" and "Joy," is skillfully crafted for the ensemble, Laws' flute brings together the disciplines of both worlds or rather, of the one united world he represents.

To some degree, this is also true of Chick Corea, who divides the keyboard responsibilities with Blanchard, and some of whose work is clearly improvised; this applies also to the guitarist Bill Kanengiser and the bassist Bob Magnusson. It would have been impossible for most of these musicians to have brought the project to fruition without extensive empirical understanding of both the classical and jazz elements.

The second side comprises three movements from Telemann's Suite in A Minor for Flute and Strings, with Quincy Jones conducting a string orchestra. Here the written elements are dominant, as is the case in the concluding track, a peaceful and graceful arrangement by Laws and Don Sebesky of the traditional "Amazing Grace," with personnel that includes the harpist Dorothy Ashby and John Beasley on the Yamaha DX7.

Quincy Jones is quoted in the notes as stating, correctly, that music has been undergoing a dramatic turnaround, of which men like Hubert Laws and more recently Wynton Marsalis have been symbols. 4 stars.

—L.F.

□

"BUDDY DE FRANCO PRESENTS JOHN DENMAN/JOHN DENMAN PRESENTS BUDDY DE FRANCO." Lud Records 101 (P.O. Box 44056, Tucson, Ariz. 85733). This meeting of the classical and jazz words is far less formalized than the Blanchard/Telemann album reviewed above. The London-born Denman, formerly a professor at Trinity College of Music, is now a principal clarinetist with the Tucson Symphony, but on these sides he emerges, surprisingly, as a first-rate jazz musician. As De Franco states in the notes: "I would say that my 'legit' playing is pretty good for a jazz player, and John's jazz playing is pretty good for a legit player. This is the closest we could come to combining the two and mixing it up a little."

Two of the tracks were classically inspired: the Paganini "Caprice," which combines Brahms and Rachmaninoff treatments of the same material, and the Bach-oriented "Unauthorized Touching," which moves from traditional classical harpsichord played by Paula Fan, Denman's wife, to jazz harpsichord by Keith Greko. Completing the combo are Phil Pearce on bass and Jim Bastin, who produced the album, on drums.

Although De Franco again offers evidence of his nonpareil technical command and harmonic imagination, the passages on which they trade fours in a couple of numbers leave Denman unscathed. Their harmony and counterpoint in "But Not for Me" shows a sensitivity and sympathy that is entirely successful in proving that this concept was musically and pragmatically valid. 4 stars.

—L.F.

□

MULDAUR UNCHANGED AT VINE ST.

By LEONARD FEATHER

When you hear the tone, it will be 13 years past "Midnight at the Oasis." The time that has passed since Maria Muldaur's big hit has not wrought any significant changes in her, as she revealed Wednesday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill.

Muldaur came to the attention of the jazz world as something of a maverick: A pop, rock and jug band-skiffle singer who, with the right background, could bring authenticity to the works of Duke Ellington, Hoagy Carmichael and Don Redman.

Of course, "right background" had to be the key words. Given the presence on her mid-1970s albums of such giants as Roger Kellaway, John Collins, Ray Brown and Paul Humphrey, it was disconcerting to hear her at Vine St. (or sometimes almost fail to hear) backed by a quartet that laid down a loud, tight, insensitive beat.

Despite this problem, drawing on such diverse sources as Fats Waller, Sippie Wallace and Dr. John, Muldaur displayed the same light-textured timbre and jazz-inspired phrasing heard on those long-ago records.

The musicians settled down, with the drummer Brent Rampone switching to brushes, for "Lover Man." On a more contemporary note, her coming single, "Let's Hold Onto Each Other," was an attractively harmonized vocal duet with her bassist, Mike Eje.

Muldaur's personalized growl and quasi-yodel effects worked well in "Adam and Eve Got the Blues." On most numbers the guitar of Archie Williams, in a B. B. King groove, and Rick Shafer's colorless keyboard work had solo space.

"Cooking Breakfast for the One I Love," from a 1930 Fanny Brice film, was played strictly for camp, to minimal effect. Dave Frishberg's "Wheelers and Dealers," which calls for close attention to the witty lyrics, was lost in the rhythmic shuffle.

As for the big finale, how else could she end but with "Midnight at the Oasis"? It's a pleasant enough song, though its huge success seems a little surprising in retrospect. Muldaur closes Saturday.

Anaheim, CA
(Orange Co.)
Anaheim Bulletin
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NOV 23 1985

Pia Zadora gets good reviews for a change

2547

BEVERLY HILLS — Baby-faced Pia Zadora, blasted by critics for her work in movies financed by her rich husband, hears a different tune these days.

"She has it all," Los Angeles Times music critic Leonard Feather said in a Thursday review of her reeent concerts featuring song standards of the '40s and '50s.

"She can belt out 'Maybe This Time' with the power and conviction of (Barbra) Streisand. ...

"She has it all: the range, expert intonation, a sensitive feeling for the lyrics and enough dynamic variety to preclude the danger of overkill," he said of her two nights singing such melodic standards as "I Am What I Am."

The switch in her treatment in the press has taken Miss Zadora by surprise.

"I bought five copies of (Feather's) review," she said. "I wanted to make sure they didn't print a retraction in a later issue."

In the past year, the 28-year-old singer found critical acceptance she had not heard since her performances as a child on Broadway in "Fiddler on the Roof," "Promises, Promises" and "Dames at Sea."

wife of a Vice President who is hospitalized against her will; hmm, would Martha Mitchell mind? This month will also mark the publication of *Conglomerate,* by former Congressional Spouse **Rita Jenrette;** it's a racy story about takeover attempts in both bedroom and boardroom.

■

His lifetime figures are impressively large: 2,211 hits, 1,555 RBIs, 521 home runs (including 18 grand slams), 6 ft. 4 in. of height—and now .810 on the Hall of Fame ballot. That number represents 346 out of a possible 425 votes and makes **Willie McCovey** only the 16th player to enter the hall in his rookie year of eligibility. But "Stretch" always started fast. The San Francisco Giant first baseman was a Rookie of the Year in 1959. Second in this year's voting, four votes below the 319 needed, was **Billy Williams,** hard-hitting outfielder for the Chicago Cubs. But Yankee Slugger **Roger Maris,** whose 61 homers in 1961 broke **Babe Ruth's** immortal record, died last month while ballots were being cast and came in fifth with 177.

LEDERHANDLER—AP

The power and the glory: McCovey still on the ball in New York

■

"She has it all," proclaimed the glowing critique, "the range, expert intonation, a sensitive feeling for the lyrics and enough dynamic variety to preclude the danger of overkill." A concert by Barbra Streisand? How about **Pia Zadora?** Yes, Pia Zadora, who confesses that she went out and bought five copies of the rave by Los Angeles *Times* Critic Leonard Feather, "hoping they wouldn't print a retraction." They didn't, and in the ensuing three months Zadora's U.S. concert tour has radically improved her image: cinema's laughingstock has suddenly blossomed into a serious singer of such pop classics as *It Had to Be You, Maybe This Time* and *For Once in My Life.* An album, *Pia and Phil* (short for Philharmonic), has also been well received. "I'm thrilled," says Zadora. "A whole new world is opening up." Apparently so. In two weeks she will make her debut on the hallowed stage of New York's Carnegie Hall. Who would have ever guessed?

Call them *The AC-DC Team.* On second thought, call them a cab. Call them off. Call them irresponsible. But call them on the phone, and they don't call back. Not that there is ever really any need to explain the logic of plots on *The A-Team.* On one of next month's episodes, British Rocker **Boy George** shows up, more or less playing himself—just as **Mr. T** does every week. It seems Mr. T has long been a fan of the flamboyant singer. "He admires Boy's style of telling it like it is and that he does his own thing," explains T's agent, Peter Young. "The two are alike in that." Not to mention a shared taste in unconventional coifs.

Boy meets man: George and Mr. T coming to grips with each other


ADLER—PHOTOREPORTERS

■

He is the archetypal know-it-all neighbor, country style. **Ernest P. Worrell** oafishly offers his two cents on any subject before screwing up his face and yelling his trademark "Hey Vern!" But that screwed-up face is the most effective ad phiz in the biz, now that Clara Peller has stopped demanding "Where's the beef?" Five years after his first commercial, Ernest has become a national phenomenon, appearing in nearly 3,000 television ads, almost all of them for local sponsors in 100 TV markets. Last week, on behalf of a soft drink and a bed company, he began assaulting viewers in New York City, who don't yet know what has hit them. The man behind the big mouth, Kentucky-born Actor **Jim Varney,** 36, attributes Ernest's popularity to his unabashed intrusiveness: "He thinks he's really being helpful, giving wonderful advice when you don't really want it." (Example: "If you're waitin' on me, you're backin' up!") Has success gone to Varney's head? "We'll do lunch," he quips. "My machine will call your machine."


RIES—USA TODAY

Varney: hick hard sell

—By Guy D. Garcia

No more laughing: Zadora sitting on the bar of her California home

HOMETECH

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

✓✓✓Excellent ✓✓Good ✓Fair ✓Poor

VIDEOCASSETTES

"Portrait of an Album." MGM/UA. $39.95. This 65-minute video chronicles the making of Frank Sinatra's 1984 "L.A. Is My Lady" album, with the title tune downplayed (used only during the closing credits). Much time is taken up by voice-overs and interludes in which the Bergmans, Quincy Jones, Phil Ramone and others deliver how-great-thou-art homilies to the chairman. Star glitz is added by the presence of Michael Jackson. For the rest, it's sub-vintage but often persuasive Sinatra, with fine Sam Nestico and Frank Foster arrangements.✓✓

—LEONARD FEATHER

L.A. WEEKLY

[GOOD]

BILLIE HOLLYWOOD

It's about time. Twenty-seven years after her death, Billie Holiday, possibly the most influential and legendary jazz singer of this century, is going to get a "star" on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, after a long campaign by one of her biggest supporters, Leonard Feather. But stars cost money. So, in order to raise the $3,000 needed to buy immortality, Vine St. Bar & Grill is holding an all-star show that will feature many of the singers influenced and touched by Lady Day's magic: Carmen McRae (who always seems to wind up narrating documentaries about Billie); Marlena Shaw; Maxene Andrews; the great vocalese artist Annie Ross; Jimmy Rowles; Johnnie Ray; the originator of the "Cow Cow Boogie," Ella Mae Morse; blues great Jimmy Witherspoon; Lorraine Feather; and many more surprises. Not only can you honor the Lady; you can also hear some of the best jazz singing that can currently be found in L.A.

—Craig Lee

Billie Holiday Fund-Raiser, *Vine St. Bar & Grill, 1610 N. Vine St., Hlywd.; Sun., Jan. 26, 8 & 10:30 p.m. Call (213) 463-4375.*

035

1-28

Los Angeles Times

A CELEBRATION WITH HOLIDAY SPIRIT

A few magical moments capped "A Celebration for Billie Holiday," a high-spirited benefit performance featuring 25 jazz and pop music artists Sunday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill to raise funds to pay for Holiday's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The evening began ideally when the magnificent pianist Jimmy Rowles delivered a brief, unaccompanied "No More," full of floating, probing chords set against sparkling notes of melody. He then sang "Miss Brown to You," his oozing, hoarse whisper and perfect sense of time capturing the essence of Holiday's rendition of this tune. Later, Rowles returned to provide Carmen McRae with a sumptuous, cushioned background for "Some Other Spring," which she sang with her customary mixture of flawless musicianship and sublime jazz feeling.

Other tunes recorded and/or composed by Holiday were aired. Marlena Shaw, purposely dragging and rushing her phrasing, was reminiscent of McRae on a powerful medium-up version of "Them There Eyes," while Ella Mae Morse employed a wide vibrato in a quietly determined "God Bless the Child." Lorraine Feather and Charlotte Crossley happily bounced their way through "My Mother's Son-in-Law," which Holiday recorded as "Your Mother's Son-in-Law."

Ernie Andrews and Jimmy Witherspoon wailed on a few blues, while guitarist Herb Ellis, working with Dave Frishberg, piano, Bob Maize, bass, and Dick Berk, Holiday's last drummer, soared splendidly through Cole Porter's "I Love You," the evening's only extended instrumental feature.

Several guests reminisced about Holiday and the documentary short, "God Bless the Child," was shown.

The one-night-only event reportedly raised the $3,000 needed to pay for Holiday's star, scheduled to be installed on her birthday, April 7, when she would have have been 71.

—ZAN STEWART

1/14/86

Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEWS

ANN WELDON SHINES IN WEST L.A. CLUB

By LEONARD FEATHER

While Ann Weldon was fulfilling TV and movie obligations as an actress, the screen's gain became music's loss. Happily, she is now back flexing her vocal muscles, handling the Sunday evening sessions at a restaurant called At Marty's in West Los Angeles, where a supper club entertainment policy was recently initiated, somewhat in the tradition of New York East Side rooms.

It was evident from the first moment that the hiatus has done no damage to Weldon's rare blend of musical and histrionic values. Tall, bright-eyed and striking in a silver gown, she bears a close enough resemblance to her vocalist sister Maxine (who was in the room) to be her fraternal twin.

Both in her repertoire and in the accompanying group, the show maintained a welcome balance between jazz and contemporary sounds. There was not a single tired standard song in the hourlong set. Several numbers were chosen for their storytelling value. "I'm a Woman" by Leiber and Stoller had the audience laughing and applauding at Weldon's machine gun delivery of the pre-feminist lyrics. Jackson Browne's "Running on Empty" and James Taylor's "Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight" had her listeners spellbound, as did the June Christy specialty, "Something Cool."

One or two numbers were unfamiliar, notably Myra Waters' "Sun Will Shine in the Summertime," preceded by Weldon's touching explanation of the song's origin. Among the older pieces, the early Aretha Franklin "Think" and the Duke Ellington-John Latouche "Tomorrow Mountain" illustrated her dynamic and dramatic skill.

During a Marvin Gaye medley three young female backup singers, all cousins of Weldon, offered discreet rhythmic punctuations while remaining almost hidden in an alcove near the bandstand.

In their instrumental support, pianist Andy Howe and guitarist Jim Bruno, with Tony Lewis on drums and Dave McDaniel on bass, provided exactly the right mix of jazz and light rock sounds.

BOBBY'S SHORT STOP AT BEVERLY THEATRE

By LEONARD FEATHER

Not long ago, a cartoon in the New Yorker depicted a bare, deserted barroom with a solitary customer at one end of the bar addressing the bartender at the other end. "You know," he says, "a Bobby Short could do wonders for this place."

The trouble is, there's no such thing as *a* Bobby Short. There is only *the* Bobby Short, and he is no longer given to working very often in saloons.

"The only saloon I play now—and I say saloon because that's the way Variety puts it—is the Carlyle, which seats 96 people," he said. "Then there are the occasional sorties into one of the Fairmont hotels; other than that, nowadays it's just concerts and private affairs."

Private affairs can be a source of private pleasure. After all, why stay in a saloon when King Hussein will fly you to Jordan for a one-night stand at a reputedly astronomical fee? "I won't tell you how much," said Short, "but let's say the king is a generous king." (The figure was in the high five-digit zone.)

At 59, the singer and pianist from Danville, Ill., radiates the same bonhomie conversationally that one hears in his recitals of classic pop songs. The world of Gershwin, Porter, Ellington and their peers, which he has happily inhabited since their music was brand new and he was a child prodigy, still holds an unquenchable fascination for him.

Tonight at the Beverly Theatre will be unusual: Short will perform with his regular rhythm section supplemented by six horns, a percussionist and Lou Levy conducting and playing electric keyboard, with arrangements by Dick Hazard, who wrote the music for his last album.

These are eventful times for him. In the new Woody Allen feature, "Hannah and Her Sisters," he is seen in a sequence set at the Carlyle. Recently, he taped a public television tribute to Benny Goodman, appearing as a presenter who introduced the singer Carrie Smith.

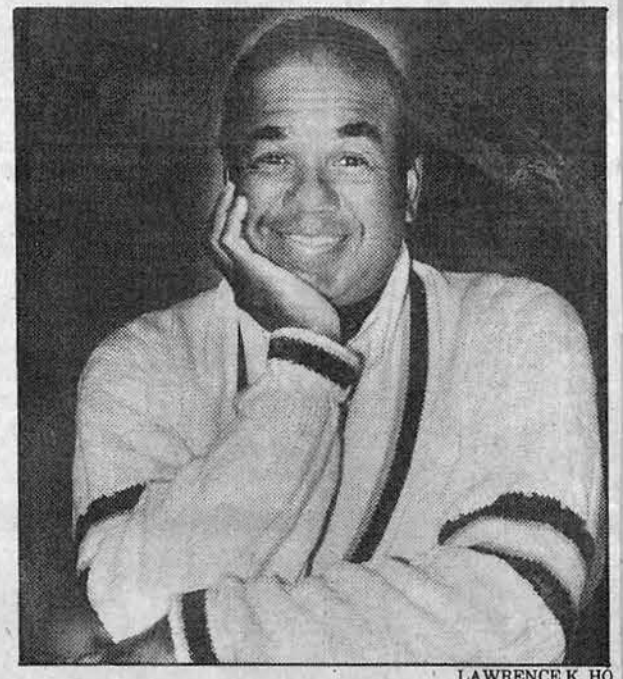
His year is planned well ahead. Next week, he'll go back East "to open a new inn in Connecticut," before flying to his home in the South of France for a rest. After that come two concerts (at Carnegie Hall on March 21 and at Post College in New York on March 22) with Skitch Henderson conducting the New York Pops, a return to the Carlyle (April through June), the usual summer visit to his Riviera hide-out (July and August) and still more concerts and private parties (September), with another stop at the Carlyle in October.

Last year he took a plunge as a producer, organizing for the New York Jazz Festival a compelling and briskly paced salute to the late Ethel Waters, whom he knew and idolized as far back as the '30s. He would like to do another this year, but said, "We're running out of subjects; homage has already been done to most of the great men and women, and there are very few jazz heroes walking the earth today. It's kind of sad."

There are also, he pointed out, few songwriters producing the music he and his audiences demand. "Today's pop music—well, I have to throw in the sponge. In the old days there were goals for the writers; they could have the ambition to be chosen to write for a Broadway show. That's vanished. The same thing with movie musicals. This throws a performer like me a lot of curves; so one goes into the past and finds things that haven't been done for a long time, or that escaped public attention altogether."

Why doesn't he write some material for himself?

"I've thought about that. In fact, when I was 11 or 12 and unversed in the storehouse of excellence in pop writing, I wrote some things in the June-moon-spoon tradition. They weren't bad; the melodies were original. I suppose if I had the time I could just sit back and write.



LAWRENCE K. HO

Musician Bobby Short: "There are very few jazz heroes walking the earth today. It's kind of sad."

"Maybe I should have just fewer house guests. The surest way to avoid work is to have house guests."

The same writer's block has held up production of Volume II of his autobiography. The first book, "Black, and White Baby," a witty and absorbing recollection of his childhood, stopped at the age of 17 when he was about to go off to Chicago and resume a career interrupted by school.

"The book didn't do badly; not that I was that important, but I had a different story to tell in terms of the so-called black experience: my years in vaudeville as a child performer, my home life in Danville as a member of a very distinct minority."

The second volume, parts of which he has sketched out, will be subdivided less chronologically and more by way of saloons. "That, in fact, is the working title—'Saloons.' All I need is 16 months in the South of France—or the South of California. What I have to say had better be documented, because too quickly these things go down the drain, then come back again misrepresented in the form of fiction and lies."

Because he was thrown into the vortex of show business very young and is blessed with almost total recall, a chat with Short may be peppered with legendary names of people he knew and admired: Fletcher Henderson, the original big band maestro of the 1920s and '30s; trumpeter Bunny Berigan; all the Ellington musicians, particularly Ivie Anderson, whose singing with the Ellington band is one of his most special memories.

"In 1972, George Wein invited me to take part in an Ellington concert at Carnegie Hall, doing a segment just devoted to some of the songs Ivie sang with the orchestra. That was one of my dreams—a high point of my career, to sing with that fantastic band and do Ivie's songs.

"I'd just love to do a whole concert in tribute to Ivie, but who today would remember her?"

One of those songs, "I'm Satisfied," is on the schedule for the Beverly. It represents quality writing, class performance, elegance—everything Anderson stood for, everything Short stands for in a world where class is literally in Short supply.

2/2/86

JAZZ

AN AMERICAN IN DENMARK

By LEONARD FEATHER

The word *expatriate* bothers Ed Thigpen, an American drummer who has been based in Copenhagen for the past 13 years.

"I took the trouble of looking up that word in the dictionary," he said the other day, "and one of the definitions refers to renouncing one's native country. That really bothers me, because it's something I've never done. Of all the American musicians living in Europe, you could probably count on one hand those who have given up their passports."

Two theories have been applied to jazz expatriation. One is that black musicians go to Europe because of racial problems in the United States. The other is that Europeans love jazz and provide greater work opportunities.

Neither situation applies to Thigpen, who was in town recently to attend the National Assn. of Jazz Educators convention in Anaheim and to play several nights at the Silver Screen Club in West Hollywood.

"I was doing very well at home and had no particular desire to live in Europe. I worked with the top people—six years with Oscar Peterson; several years off and on with Ella Fitzgerald—so I had no complaints," he said.

"My reason for moving wasn't political, racial or financial. I simply fell in love with a Danish girl, and when I brought her back here she couldn't make the adjustment. Meanwhile, Ella had to lay off because of an eye operation; my wife was in Copenhagen, so I went over there and she gave birth to our daughter, Denise, who's now 13½. All of a sudden, flying back to L.A., I said to myself, 'Why not just move over there?' I thought maybe I'd wind up commuting, but it didn't work out that way.

Drummer Ed Thigpen explains that his move to Denmark "afforded me an opportunity to grow . . . as a human being."

"As for the money, my income dropped by four-fifths. Between lost income, selling property, canceling insurance and other necessities, in the first 5½ years it cost me over a quarter of a million dollars."

Thigpen's wife died very young; for the last eight years, he has been

a single parent, raising their daughter and an 11-year-old son, Michel. Thigpen feels at home in Copenhagen where, he says, "I can speak enough Danish to keep the bills in order." He speaks mostly English with his children, "but they communicate with each other in Danish. My daughter now has good command of English, Danish, German, a little Swedish and Turkish.

"The life experience I've had to deal with because of my move has afforded me an opportunity to grow, to develop in many ways as a human being. I won't say it was just fate, but somehow every move in my life seems to have had the effect of a guiding force."

Thigpen's career has taken him through a series of geographical stages, each in its own way important to his evolution. Born in Chicago, he was raised in Los Angeles, gaining his first jazz experience in the school swing band at Thomas Jefferson High, and winning the school's music award. He spent a year at Los Angeles City College as a sociology major, but decided on a career in music and left to live, for a year, in St. Louis with his father, Ben Thigpen (1909-1971), a celebrated drummer who in the 1930s and '40s played with the Andy Kirk orchestra.

After working with Cootie Williams' band at the Savoy Ballroom in New York, the younger Thigpen was able to turn his father's counsel to good use, as a drum instructor with the 6th Army Band Training Unit at Ft. Ord. Later, he served in Korea with the 8th Army Band.

Next came four years in a series of small group jobs with Dinah Washington, Toshiko Akiyoshi and Billy Taylor, after which he joined the Oscar Peterson Trio in 1959; the third member was the bassist Ray Brown.

After the years with Peterson and a tour with Fitzgerald, Thigpen settled in Los Angeles and free-lanced with Johnny Mathis, Peggy Lee and Oliver Nelson, followed by almost four more years with Fitzgerald until he made the Copenhagen decision.

"Of course, I never made and still don't make a living in Denmark. That's a small country. For me, it's just a comfortable place to use as home base. To travel the equivalent of a cross-country tour of the U.S., you have to go through many countries in Europe," he said.

Traveling has become a less necessary part of his life since he became heavily involved with jazz education, instructing once a week at the Conservatory and taking private students. "I've worked hard at developing two good programs, one for drummers and the other for general music education."

Thigpen has published four books: "Ed Thigpen Talking Drums"; "Be Our Guest," with Ray Brown; "Rhythm Brought to Life" and, most recently, "The Sound of Brushes."

Max Roach, Jack de Johnette, Billy Cobham, Tony Williams and Butch Miles have endorsed the "Brushes" book. Thigpen explains the need for such a work: "Since the emergence of rock, which for the most part has always required heavy drumming, the brushes were set aside, or, for most of the young players who began during this period, have never been used at all. My father and many others—Jo Jones, Art Blakey, Buddy Rich, Max (Roach), Shelly Manne, Elvin Jones—all had a great influence on my use of the brushes, which I still believe must remain an important part of any drummer's performance."

The "Brushes" book is accompanied by a 90-minute audiocassette. In addition, Thigpen also has a one-hour video of a drum clinic he gave, in which he demonstrates solos using first his hands, then brushes, later sticks and finally mallets.

His books, cassettes and video are gradually making their way into the American classroom. "That's one reason I came over here—to make more of the jazz educators aware of what I've been doing."

Despite his intense involvement with education, Thigpen still spends part of each year playing—in Europe with the pianist Kenny Drew and the formidable Danish bassist Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen; in the States occasionally with pianist Monty Alexander, vibraphonist Milt Jackson and bassist John Clayton.

Given the renaissance of his name through his educational works, would he consider moving back to America?

Thigpen paused a moment, smiled, and said: "I wouldn't want to uproot my children. However, one never says never." □

SAX CONCERT IS LIKE AULD TIMES

2/4/86

By LEONARD FEATHER

Auld acquaintance was not forgotten Friday evening when the bandstand at Donte's was occupied, for the first time in 15 years, by one of the best-remembered tenor sax eminences of the swing era, Georgie Auld.

For many years Auld has lived in Palm Springs, retired except for occasional jobs overseas (and his brief emergence in 1976 for an acting and playing role in the film "New York, New York").

Given this long stretch of inactivity, it was to be expected that the Auld horn might be more than a little rusty.

The expectation was wrong.

On the very first chorus of "Perdido" he came tearing in, all batteries charged, the sound still strong and bold, the phrasing and sensitivity undiminished.

Auld's reputation as a veteran of the Coleman Hawkins/Ben Webster school was established in his classic recordings with Benny Goodman's Sextet, alongside Charlie Christian and Count Basie.

That is the kind of company you keep once in a lifetime. Still, his Donte's colleagues offered propulsive enough support, with two old associates, Dick Berk on drums and Marty Harris at the piano, and a bassist new to him but not to local ears, the supple and dependable Chuck Berghofer.

The occasion was doubly reassuring because Auld's driving beat was as buoyant as ever on "Jumpin' at the Woodside" and the like, but his ballads, in which the hard-edged tone is tempered by a rare warmth and sense of melody, offered a needed reminder of the basic beauty inherent in this often debased horn. There were no freak notes, no gimmicks, no fashionable 99-notes-a-second flurries.

Auld should return permanently to our world; voices like his are needed.

JAZZ FEST LISTS NOTABLE DEBUTS

2/15

Herbie Hancock, Nina Simone and Miles Davis will be among the headliners at the eighth-annual Playboy Jazz Festival at Hollywood Bowl, producer George Wein announced Thursday.

This year's lineup is unusually heavy in first appearances. On opening day, June 14 (a Saturday), only Miles Davis, Mel Torme and Art Blakey will be previous participants. Andrae Crouch will bring the festival its first gospel group, Rob McConnell its first Canadian big band and the Newport All-Stars will keynote Wein's first participation here as a pianist, alongside Scott Hamilton, Slam Stewart and others.

Also set for debuts are guitarist Al Di Meola, vocal group Rare Silk and saxophonist George Howard.

Returnees on the June 15 program will be Herbie Hancock's Quartet, with a guest appearance by George Benson; B. B. King with guest Stevie Ray Vaughan, and Maynard Ferguson's Orchestra. Newcomers will include the Capp/Pierce Juggernaut Band with singer Ernie Andrews, Honi Coles, Nina Simone, Azymuth with Flora Purim and Airto, the L.A. Jazz Legends, and Kenny G.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Nearly all of the $3,000 needed to get a Hollywood Walk of Fame star for the great Billie Holiday was raised last weekend at the Vine St. Bar & Grill. But not all. The exact total came to $2,865, which prompted the fund-raiser's host, jazz critic Leonard Feather, to pull out his wallet for $35 more, and it all finally came to an over-the-top happy ending when Henry Mancini, who couldn't attend the party himself, nonetheless sent a check for $100, assuring that Billie H.'s star will be installed on April 7, which would have been her 71st birthday. ... That $3,000 total doesn't seem like much in this era of multimillion-buck fund-raisers but this one, too, came strictly from the hearts and pocketbooks. And it couldn't be for a nicer cause: a little more immortality for one of the entertainment world's great artists. ... Hollywood didn't do right by Billie Holiday in her lifetime; let's hope after the fact is better than no fact at all.

The Great Life

George Christy

"I've been working on this for five years. I've written and wired Diana Ross asking for help — Diana played Billie Holiday in 'Lady Sings the Blues,' but I never got a response." Jazz critic and aficionado Leonard Feather has wanted a Billie Holiday star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame (it costs $3,000), and his dream was realized on Sunday night when Ron Berinstein turned over his Vine Street Bar & Grill to Leonard for a benefit to raise the money for Billie's star, which will come to pass on April 7th, her birthday. Leonard and his wife Jane were longtime pals of Billie's — their daughter, Billie Lorraine Feather, is Billie's godchild. "She was a homebody, Billie liked to cook," offers Jane Feather, "but the men she hung out with abused her." Leonard adds that they were her New York neighbors, living on West 87th Street (Billie died on July 23, 1959, when she was only 44 years old). It was Leonard who organized her concert tour abroad

Johnnie Ray and Maxene Andrews, right; Jane and Leonard Feather with their daughter Billie Lorraine, below right; Guitarist Herb Ellis and Margie Evans, below left

(she had never been to Europe) with the Red Norvo Trio and other renowned musicmakers. And the Vine Street evening's benefit program included Leonard's prize film clip of Billie singing "God Bless the Child," which was shown during the second show (due to projector problems with the first show). Pianist Jimmy Rowles played a Billie Holiday favorite, "No More," Maxene Andrews sang, as did Dolly Dawn, the bandleader who's influenced Ella Fitzgerald and led 18 male musicians during the '40s (Dolly Dawn and Her Dawn Patrol). "Billie and I shared the same arranger, Danny Mendelsohn," offered Dolly, as she reminisced about the big band era. "One night we'd play to 2,000 people, the next night to 20,000 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where they'd open the tobacco warehouses to accomodate the crowds." In honor of Billie, Dolly sang "I Could Kiss You For That" and "Music, Maestro, Please." She'll be appearing in the new lounge room at the Biltmore Hotel beginning Feb. 3rd. That fine pianist Gerry Wiggins played for Jimmy Witherspoon ("fully recovered from cancer," informed host Ron Berinstein about Jimmy), who sang "Ain't Nobody's Business," and kidded, "I had to do something for my country, so I wrote a classic." The classic turned out to be "Don't got to take you to the dentist this morning/I'm knocking out your teeth tonight." After that, Jimmy sang "Big leg woman/Keep your dress down/Cause I know you got something/Makes a dog grab a hound." Gerry Wiggins played for Marlena Shaw (whose cheekbones resemble Faye Dunaway's) — Marlena sang "Them Thar Eyes," and Carmen McRae sang her heart out with "Some Other Spring" wrenching the souls of the audience — Billie first heard the song when Carmen was singing it. Herb Ellis and

The spirit of Billie Holiday, above, pervaded the Vine Street Bar & Grill during the benefit evening jazz critic Leonard Feather organized to raise moneys for a Billie Holiday star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame; Jane Duke and Artie Shaw, left; Dolly Dawn, Carmen McRae and Doris Roberts, below left; pianists Jimmy Rowles and Gerald Wiggins flank Vine Street Bar & Grill's Ron Berinstein, below right

Dave Frishberg played an instrumental, "I Love You," Ella Mae Morse mooned over "St.Louis Woman," and bandleader Artie Shaw looked back to the days when Billie was a "cult singer" in 1929 at the age of 18 — "she sang in after hours clubs that went from 4 a.m. until noon." He added that Billie had humor, common sense and joined his band at $60 a week in the early '30s, when he couldn't find any white singers to keep up with the music. One night he invited her to come with him and the band to a party. "Are there going to be ofays there?" she wanted to know. Artie told her yes, only to have Billie nod, "Man, I never go out when it's over my head." "We played dances, amusement parks," offered Artie, "and it was either in Virginia or Maryland where they'd never seen a black girl singing with a white band that a redneck asked for the 'nigger wench' to sing another song. Billie got red under her tan, and we moved her fast to our bus and took off. You might not believe this, but in one Southern town Hot Lips Page wasn't allowed to play with the band unless he was 15 feet away from the nearest white musician. We never did play that town." Johnnie Ray admitted Billie influenced his style of singing, before he crooned, "I've Got a Gal Who Drinks Whiskey and Gin"; Lorraine Feather and Charlotte Crossley, who are part of a group called Full Swing, harmonized on a Billie Holiday charmer, "Your Mother's Son-in-law"; Ernie Andrews sang "Sophisticated Lady" a capella (no mean feet) plus a blues number about a no-good mama, followed by Margie Evans belting, "29 Ways To Get To My Baby's Door," with Margie asking all the singers to come forth in a finale and sing, "Just a Closer Walk With Thee." "Let's face it," Margie declared, "All our singing started in church," with Ernie Andrews conceding, "You got that right!" Forthcoming evenings at Vine Street will feature Chris Connor, Billy Eckstein, Yma Sumac, Mose Allison, George Shearing, Eartha Kitt, Carmen McRae, Joe Williams.

Jimmy Witherspoon, Marlena Shaw and Ernie Andrews, above; Charlotte Crossley and Ella Mae Morse, below left; pianist Dave Frishberg and Vine Street's manager Steve Applegate, below right

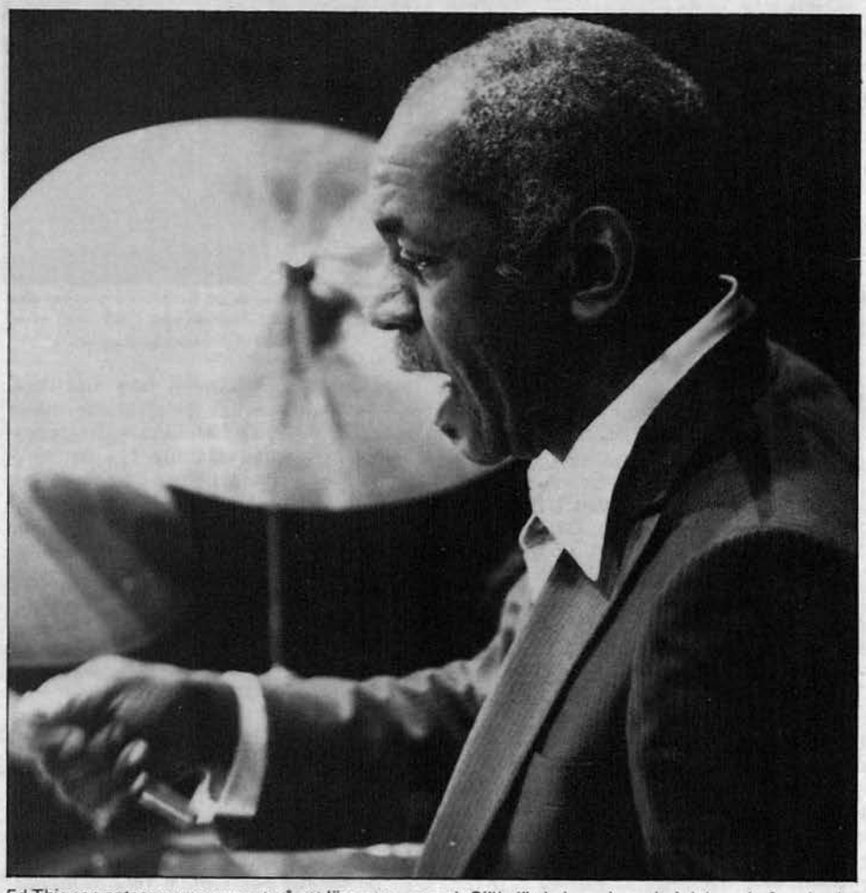
Mary Welkert

Weekending in Los Angeles, New Yorker Eden Collinsworth, publisher of Arbor House books, informed that her publishing house came up with the idea for Rex Reed to write "Personal Effects," the novel about Hollywood (insiders tattle that Gilda Greenway is based on Ava Gardner) — "we asked Swifty Lazar to sell it to TV, since the book was our idea, and consequently we got a nice sum of money upfront." Eden is now tying in with Thom Mount, who wants a James Bond-like character to emerge in fiction before the character becomes a screen figure. Jon Bradshaw is writing the novel, along with articles about the hotshot character Rafferty. Upcoming on Eden's late spring list is "Washington Wives," a novel by Maureen Dean — "our idea again; Maureen's been working with author Stephen Gaines." There's also "Mayflower Madam" about blueblooded Sydney Biddle Barrow "using a Harvard MBA approach" with tremendous success in promoting the world's oldest profession (written with "Iacocca" author William Novak). On the fall list is "45/85," based on the 40 years (1945-85) that were documented on ABC TV by Peter Jennings and Ted Koppel, who'll make promotional appearances over the Memorial Day weekend at the American Booksellers Association convention in New Orleans. Eden had been in the Napa Valley for a weeklong visit with author Bill Hamilton, whose witty cartoons in the New Yorker are always on Yupscale target and whose family has resided in the wine country for generations. She laughs about her initial luncheon with Bill when he became overly chummy and she impaled him with her fork ("I broke skin"), but a month later they ran into each other abroad when Bill gave her one of his coveted seats to the Paris Opera, and in no time they became best friends. Eden confirms the $1 million advance for Burt Reynold's autobiography, which is being written by Sandra Harmon, the author of Priscilla Presley's bestselling "Elvis and Me."

039

Köpenhamnaren Ed Thigpen satsar på sin undervisning

I Köpenhamn bor han sedan många år, trumslagaren Ed Thigpen, som vi också har kunnat höra i Sverige vid åtskilliga tillfällen. Fast numera satsar Thigpen mer på undervisning och läromedel än på aktivt musicerande. Han har publicerat fyra böcker om trumspel och dessutom gjort ljud- och videokassetter. OJ:s USA-korrespondent LEONARD FEATHER träffade honom i Los Angeles när han var där för att lansera sitt material.



Ed Thigpen satsar numera mest på att lära ut trumspel. Själv lärde han sig en hel del av sin far, den legendariske Ben Thigpen. (Foto: Leif R Collin)

Ordet "expatriate" (utvandrare) irriterar Ed Thigpen. Han är en trumslagare av världsklass som, trots sina tretton år i Köpenhamn, fortfarande är välkänd och respekterad i sitt hemland. Han kom nyligen hit till Los Angeles för att vara med på ett möte med National Association of Jazz Educators i Anaheim och för att spela flera kvällar på Silver Screen Club i Hollywood.

— Jag slog upp ordet i ett lexikon, berättade han, och en av definitionerna är att man förnekar sitt hemland, där man föddes. Det bekymrar mig verkligen, eftersom det är något jag aldrig har gjort. Av alla amerikanska musiker som bor i Europa, kan man nog räkna på ena handens fingrar dom som har bytt ut sina pass.

Det har framförts två teorier om jazzmusiker som har flyttat från USA. En är att svarta musiker kommer till Europa på grund av rasproblemen i USA. Den andra är att jazzen har större uppskattning hos europeerna och att detta ger musikerna fler arbetsmöjligheter. Ingen av dessa situationer gäller för Thigpen.

— Jag var framgångsrik hemma och hade ingen speciell längtan efter att bo i Europa. Jag jobbade med dom bästa — sex år med Oscar Peterson, flera år till och från med Ella Fitzgerald — så jag hade ingen anledning att klaga.

• Förälskad i danska

— Att jag flyttade hade ingenting att göra med politik, ras eller ekonomi. Jag blev helt enkelt förälskad i en dansk flicka, och när jag tog med henne hit till Los Angeles kunde hon inte anpassa sig. Samtidigt var Ella tvungen att ta det lugnt på grund av en ögonoperation. Min hustru var i Köpenhamn, så jag åkte över dit och hon födde vår dotter Denise, som nu är 13 1/2 år. Plötsligt en dag, då jag flög tillbaka till Los Angeles, gick det upp för mig att jag kunde flytta över till Köpenhamn. Jag trodde att jag kanske skulle pendla mellan städerna, men det fungerade inte.

— Min inkomst minskade med fyra femtedelar. Förlorad inkomst, försäljning av mark, uppsägning av försäkringar etc kostade mig under dom första 5 1/2 åren en kvarts miljon dollar.

Thigpens hustru dog mycket ung. Under de senaste åtta åren har han levt som ensamstående far till deras dotter och elvaårige son Michel.

Han ångrar ingenting.

— Dom livserfarenheter jag har skaffat mig på grund av min flyttning har gett mig möjligheter att växa, att utvecklas på många sätt som människa. Jag vill inte säga att det bara var ödet, men varje gång jag har brutit upp från en plats har det på något sätt påverkat min inriktning i livet.

• Lärde av fadern

Thigpens karriär har fört honom igenom en serie av sådana geografiska stadier, vart och ett på sitt sätt mycket betydelsefullt för hans utveckling. Han föddes i Chicago och växte upp i Los Angeles, där han fick sina första jazzerfarenheter i swingbandet på Thomas Jefferson High School och blev belönad med skolans musikstipendium. Han läste sociologi ett år på Los Angeles City College, men bestämde sig för en karriär inom musiken och flyttade till St. Louis för att bo hos sin far Ben Thigpen (1909—1971), en berömd trumslagare som under 30- och 40-talen spelade med Andy Kirks orkester.

— Min far lärde mig mycket om hur man skulle använda bastrumman, hur man skulle anpassa den till kontrabasens ton. Han visade mig massor om trummornas funktioner och samspelet mellan bastrumma, virveltrumma och toppcymbal. Jag kunde använda några av dom lektioner jag fick från honom i en artikel jag skrev för tidskriften "Modern Drummer".

Efter en tid med Cootie Williams band på Savoy Ballroom i New York kunde den

Thigpen få god nytta av faderns råd, han var trumlärare i Sixth Army Band Training Unit vid Fort Ord. Senare tjänstgjorde han i Korea med Eighth Army Band.

• Med Oscar i Toronto

Thigpen spelade sedan under fyra år i mindre grupper med Dinah Washington, Toshiko Akiyoshi och Billy Taylor, innan han 1959 kom med i Oscar Peterson Trio, där även basisten Ray Brown ingick.

— Vi bodde alla tre i Toronto en tid, eftersom Oscar hade startat sin Advanced School of Contemporary Music där. Men det var inte heller då fråga om att lämna sitt land, det handlade bara om praktiska saker.

Efter åren med Peterson och en turné med Ella Fitzgerald slog sig Thigpen ner i Los Angeles, där han blev mycket aktiv som frilansmusiker med Johnny Mathis, Peggy Lee, Oliver Nelson och därefter nästan fyra år med Ella Fitzgerald, innan han bestämde sig för Köpenhamn.

— Naturligtvis kunde jag aldrig och kan fortfarande inte försörja mig i Danmark. Det är ett litet land, och för mig är det bara en bekväm plats att ha som hem och utgångspunkt. För att göra motsvarigheten till en turné runt hela USA, måste man ta sig genom många länder i Europa.

• Framgångsrik som pedagog

Resandet blev en mindre nödvändig del av hans liv, då han för några år sedan fick mycket att göra som jazzpedagog. Han undervisar en gång i veckan på konservatoriet och har även privata elever.

— Jag har arbetat hårt med att utveckla två bra kurser — en för trumslagare och den andra för allmän musikutbildning.

Thigpen har publicerat fyra böcker: "Ed Thigpen Talking Drums", "Be Our Guest" tillsammans med Ray Brown, "Rhythm Brought to Life" och senast "The Sound of Brushes".

Max Roach, Jack De Johnette, Billy Cobham, Tony Williams och Butch Miles har alla rekommenderat "The Sound of Brushes". Thigpen förklarar behovet av en sådan bok.

— Då rockmusiken slog igenom, med krav på starkt trumspel, blev visparna omoderna. De flesta unga musiker, som började spela trummor vid den tiden, har aldrig använt vispar. Min far och många andra — Jo Jones, Art Blakey, Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Shelly Manne, Elvin Jones — hade alla stort inflytande på mitt vispspel, och jag anser fortfarande att det är viktigt för varje trumslagare att kunna använda visparna.

"The Sound of Brushes" innehåller också en 90 minuters ljudkassett. Thigpen har dessutom en timmes videoinspelning av ett trumseminarium han höll, där han ger en vältalig föreläsning och demonstrerar solon med händerna, vispar, stockar och klubbor.

Hans böcker, kassetter och video är successivt på väg in i de amerikanska klassrummen, en utveckling han ser som ett tecken på att han har lyckats åstadkomma något värdefullt.

Under sin tid som "dansk" har Ed Thigpen besökt Sverige åtskilliga gånger. Här är han fångad vid en skivinspelning för Sonet i mitten på 70-talet.

— En av orsakerna till att jag kom hit till Los Angeles var att jag ville få fler av jazzpedagogerna medvetna om vad jag har gjort. Eastman är intresserade, liksom American Conservatory i Chicago och University of Indiana, så jag hoppas mina böcker och kassetter ska accepteras och få större spridning som pedagogiskt underlag.

Trots sitt intensiva engagemang i undervisning, tillbringar Thigpen en del av sin tid varje år med att spela i Europa med pianisten Kenny Drew och den formidable danske basisten Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, i USA ibland med pianisten Monty Alexander, vibrafonisten Milt Jackson och basisten John Heard.

Han känner sig hemma i Köpenhamn.

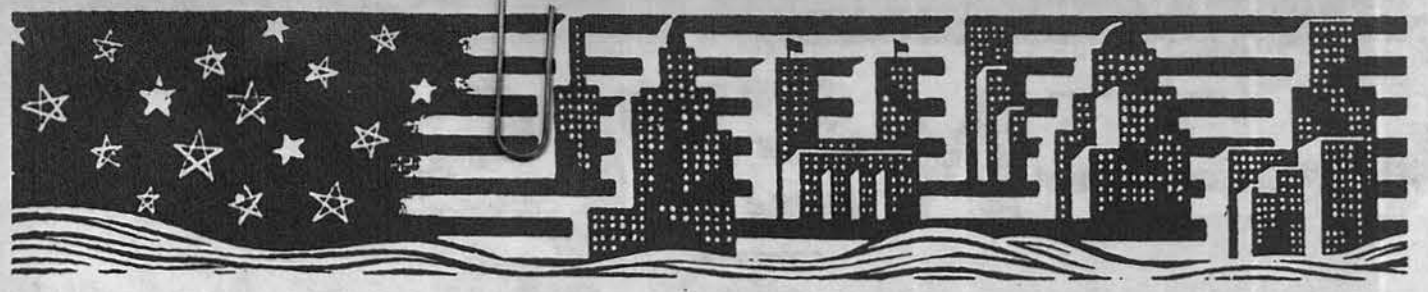
— Jag kan tala tillräckligt mycket danska för att hålla ordning på räkningarna. Jag talar mest engelska med barnen, men dom kommunicerar med varandra på danska. Min dotter behärskar nu engelska, danska, tyska och litet svenska och turkiska.

När hans namn nu har fått en renässans genom hans pedagogiska verksamhet, skulle han då kunna tänka sig att flytta tillbaka till Amerika?

Edmund Thigpen funderade ett ögonblick, log och sa:

— Jag skulle inte vilja beröva barnen deras rötter. Men, man ska aldrig säga aldrig.

Ed Thigpen blev berömd på 50-talet som trumslagaren i Oscar Petersons trio. Vid basen: Ray Brown. (Foto: Bengt H Malmqvist)



AMERICAN NEWS • from Leonard Feather

BY SAILING on the second and third of the S/S *Norway's* four consecutive one-week cruises (October 5 – November 2) I was able to hear almost all of the 100-plus musicians who took part in this unprecedented event, produced by **Hank O'Neal** and **Shelley Shier.**

With three or four concerts or jam sessions every day, and with the supposed 2am curfew often extended until dawn's early light, there was a magnificent array of talent and a remarkable span of idioms and ages. They ranged from **Tommy Smith**, 18, from Scotland, a Berklee student member of **Gary Burton's** quintet, and **Cyrus Chestnut**, the promising 22-year-old drummer/composer with **Phil Wilson,** who led the other Berklee combo, to **Doc Cheatham,** 80, who played in half a dozen settings (even sitting in with **Joe Williams**) and **Art Hodes,** still teaching Blues Piano 101 and only weeks short of his 81st birthday when he joined unlikely forces with **Gerry Mulligan** for a duo blues that worked surprisingly well.

Of the three big bands, Mulligan's 15-man ensemble impressed most formidably. A casual, amiable leader, he shone in several roles: on baritone, of course; on soprano in his delightful melody *42nd and Broadway;* as vocalist in *When I Was a Young Man* (his own lyrics and music); and as composer/arranger for a band that seemed well rehearsed and happy with the charts and paid careful attention to dynamics.

Bill Mays' piano, Dean Johnson's bass, Seldon Powell's tenor and Jerry Dodgion's alto stood out in Jeru's generally strong roster of soloists.

Woody Herman leads a generally youthful and enthusiastic band, though it was tiresome to hear him repeat, in his own concerts and in those backing **Mel Torme** and **Cab Calloway,** the same charts for essentially the same audience. Torme triumphed, this year as last, both as singer and as the preferred drummer of many fellow-musicians. Calloway was a tremendous crowd-pleaser.

Chip Hoehler, a capable jazz trombonist, led his Norway house band in splendid sets on its own and in others backing guest soloists (**Clark Terry, Al Cohn, Benny Carter**).

The unexpected hit of the festival was **Sven Asmussen**. At 69, eight years Grappelli's junior, he played smashing, hard-driving violin with a good rhythm section (**Eddie Higgins, Phil Flanigan, Bobby Rosengarden**), but swung most of all when, on *Sweet Georgia Brown,* he played entirely unaccompanied and proved himself at least the equal of any horn man who has ever tried the solo route. It's a shame he has so rarely been heard in the US.

Among the surprises or special delights: two classic, classy sets by **Ruby Braff** with **Dick Hyman** on piano and organ; **Maxine Sullivan,** whose sound at 74 is as sweet and gentle as it was almost 50 years ago; **Buddy Tate** breaking out his flute for a fine solo; **Dizzy Gillespie,** celebrating his 78th birthday aboard and switching combo affiliations nightly; **Chris Flory,** a superior Christian-era guitarist, heard not only in **Scott Hamilton's quintet** but in the Hoehler band backing Joe Williams and in other small units; a plethora of first-rate bassists such as **George Mraz, Jack Lesberg** and **Major Holley;** and so many able mainstreamers that space precludes a mention of them all: **Kenny Davern, George Masso, John Bunch, Alan Dawson,** and on and on.

As if all this live jazz were not enough, O'Neal and Shier had assembled a 30-hour continuum of great jazz videos which we could turn on all day in our cabins until 2am, among them rare items imported from Japan (a Hollywood Bowl tribute to **Billie Holiday,** with **Carmen McRae, Esther Phillips** *et al,* never released in the US), and countless old gems by **Duke, Basie** and scores more. So without even leaving your room you could be inundated with great sounds, but if you showed up at the Saga Theatre or the Checkers Lounge or the Club Internationale aboard this 72,000-ton colossus you could be all but sure of hearing jazz that was, quite literally, like nothing on earth.

♦ NORWAY TO TREAT A LADY: Maxine Sullivan sings, Feather fingers.

■ A new ensemble, which plans to become a major jazz repertory orchestra, has been organised in New York City. With **Gary Giddins** as artistic director, it is expected to retain a stable personnel of about 20 respected jazzmen. The orchestra, which will be based at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, will present guest soloists and conductors in ambitious works by **Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Gil Evans** and others, as well as small band recreations. Originally announced as the New York Jazz Orchestra, it will be known in future as the **American Jazz Orchestra.** A search for a chief conductor and musical board of directors is in progress.

■ Due for a new release on Milestone is **L. Subramaniam,** now in the final production stages of *Super Instinct.* The LP will feature the violinist with special guests including **Tony Williams, Larry Coryell, Maynard Ferguson** and **Alex Acuna.**

Subramaniam opened the Fall season of the **New York Philharmonic** with the world premiere of his *Fantasy on Vedic Chants for Indian Violin and Orchestra,* with **Zubin Mehta** conducting. He then embarked on a tour of India, after which he performed his concerto with the **Hong Kong Philharmonic** for the Festival of Asia. He also gave a command performance in Bangkok in November for the **King** of Thailand – a jazz saxophonist and clarinetist.

■ **David Mackay,** the pianist and composer who records for Discovery, received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to present himself in a series of concerts. Featured with him are the young flutist **Lori Bell,** with **Chuck Domanico** (bass) and **Denny Seiwell** (drums). Seiwell is a New York jazzman who came to prominence as **Paul McCartney's** drummer for five years. He has been working Los Angeles gigs with **Victor Feldman, Mike Garson** and the **Candoli** brothers, **Pete** and **Conte.**

■ After a long absence from records, the Brazilian guitarist **Bola Sete** recently made a new solo acoustic album, *Jungle Suite,* on Dancing Cat Records, an affiliate of the Windham Hill label. The album represents his first solo recording on classical guitar with steel strings.

■ A long lineup of traditionalist musicians appears at the 11th Annual Central Illinois Jazz Festival, January 24-26. Dedicated to the memory of **Johnny Guarnieri,** the festival will present **Al Grey, Milt Hinton, Eddie Higgins, Marty Grosz, Glenn Zottola, Brian Torff, Butch Miles, Chuck Hedges** and many others.

■ **John Collins**, the guitarist who rose to prominence in Chicago in the '30s with **Art Tatum** and **Roy Eldridge,** and who toured with **Nat 'King' Cole** for 14 years until Cole's death, was honored in a special tribute presented by the Los Angeles Jazz Society, September 15, at Myron's Ballroom. Among those taking part were **Roger Kellaway, Sweets Edison, Ross Tompkins,** also **Al Viola** and several other guitarists including **Bill Harris,** who will fly in from Washington DC.

■ **Richard Stoltzman,** the classical clarinetist whose first love was jazz, has recorded an album for RCA with **Bill Douglass** (piano) and **Eddie Gomez** (bass), playing *Blue Monk* and other jazz works. He also began touring wih **Woody Herman's** orchestra in October, playing a new arrangement by **Clare Fischer** of **Stravinsky's** *Ebony Concerto,* which Stravinsky composed for the Herman orchestra almost 40 years ago.

■ **HARRY SWEETS EDISON,** recovered from his operation and out of hospital, went back to work in mid-November, playing a concert for promoter **Dick Gibson** at a Denver theatre.

■ 'The Future Isn't What It Used To Be' is the provocative title of a series of May 1986 concerts and symposiums at the University of California in Los Angeles, examining the past, present and future of music. Taking part will be **Dave Grusin** and **Larry Rosen** of GRP, **Tom Scott, Joe Smith** (former chairman of Elektra/Asylum Records), **Leonard Feather** and others.

JAZZ REVIEW 2/10

SAX MAN JOHNSON AT DONTE'S

By LEONARD FEATHER

The joys of sax were again celebrated at Donte's on Friday when Plas Johnson arrived with the quartet he calls Grease Patrol.

This was an experimental version of the group: no bass, no piano, just two DX-7s, one played by Art Hillery and programmed to resemble an organ. The other, played by Steve Solomon, settled in a no-man's land between piano and guitar.

Johnson's robust, solidly swinging tenor was unaffected as he wove his way through a couple of blues, "What Now My Love" and "Time After Time" (the standard Jule Styne ballad, not Cyndi Lauper's novelty). The commandingly steady drumming of Jimmy Smith was a central plus factor.

Hillery soloed well and tried valiantly to supply the missing bass line; yet when you come right down to it—and you should—a bass is a bass is a bass. That, literally, is the bottom line.

Postcard illustrations by Frank DuVal

Ken Franckling

Bridging generations: saxists Scott Hamilton and Buddy Tate.

Ira Sabin

Two favorites: Saxophonist Al Cohn and Cab Calloway.

A Floating Phenomenon

by LEONARD FEATHER

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Los Angeles Times, 2/9/86

JAZZ ALBUM BRIEFS

By LEONARD FEATHER

"LET IT LIVE!—SARAH VAUGHAN SINGS POPE JOHN PAUL II." Jazzlette JLR 1 (Box 240, Ojai 93023). As a young man in Poland, Karol Wojtyla, now better known as Pope John Paul II, wrote a series of poems. They were later translated into Italian and set to music by two Milan composers, Tito Fontana and Sante Palumbo.

In 1982, an Italian impresario, Gigi Campi, persuaded Gene Lees, the Canadian lyricist, to attempt a free translation into English. With an American singer (Sarah Vaughan), a Belgian arranger (Francy Boland), an Argentine conductor (Lalo Schifrin) and a German setting (the Tonhalle concert hall in Dusseldorf), this album was produced, live, in June, 1984.

Actually, only 5 of the 15 cuts present Vaughan singing Wojtyla. On one, the voice is that of Benard Ighner. There are two original songs co-written by Lees: "The Mystery of Man" (music by Boland), which is used chorally or instrumentally on several tracks in addition to Vaughan's, and "Let It Live" (music by Schifrin), heard briefly as an instrumental and then as Vaughan's triumphant finale, with a kind of gospel groove.

This is by no stretch of the imagination a jazz album, though some members of the large orchestra (including strings) are among Europe's foremost jazz musicians.

Wotylja's poetry expresses no profound thoughts, though "The Armaments Worker" is an effective message vehicle. The Lees translations, and more particularly the sensitive lyrics of his own two numbers, are carried aloft by Vaughan's beatific readings.

There are a few brief instrumental solos, uncredited: It's Tony Coe on tenor sax, Sahib Shihab on soprano, Bobby Scott at the piano. What matters most in this multinational effort is a mood that is established at the outset and sustained through the two sides with a consistency that reflects credit on all 75 participants. 5 stars.

□

"ERROLL GARNER PLAYS GERSHWIN & KERN." EmArcy 826-224-1. This is the first album of unreleased Garner material since his death in 1977. Everything is in place: the intricate introductions and the polytonal humor on "Love Walked In," the infinitesimally delayed eighth notes against that strumming left hand in "Old Man River," the abrupt endings, the puckish, almost Monkish touches that set up a cooking "Make Believe." Superlative support by Eddie Calhoun's bass, Kelly Martin's drums and, on "I Got Rhythm," a helpful conga beat supplied by Jose Mangual. Garner was the most marvelous maverick in jazz piano history. 5 stars.

□

JIMMY ROWLES-RED MITCHELL TRIO. Contemporary C-14016. Rowles, whose harmonic imagination is *sui generis*, has met his match in Mitchell, a stunningly agile bassist. The best cut is Larry Gales' "Loco Motiv," an ominous minor theme with the added delight of Rowles' daughter Stacy on muted trumpet. She reappears on her father's beguiling original, "Stagoo," and on "The Thill Is Gone," playing fluegelhorn. Rowles *pere* croaks an amusing vocal on "I'm Getting Nowhere With You." The British drummer Colin Bailey rounds out this congenial combo. 4½ stars.

□

"MORE FOR LES AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD." Art Pepper. Contemporary C-7650. In the fourth volume stemming from his fertile New York live series, Pepper is heard in four capacities: unleashing his alto sax for several dozen choruses of up-tempo blues on "No Limit," switching to tenor for a ballad mood on "These Foolish Things," playing pleasantly understated clarinet on the title tune and closing with an unaccompanied "Over the Rainbow" that reminds you how valuable were his teammates on the other tracks: George Cables and Elvin Jones, the ultimate rhythm section pianist and drummer, and their impeccable Czech-mate on bass, George Mraz. 4 stars.

□

"TOUCH OF THE RARE." Lisa Rich. Trend TR 541. Rich sings in tongues: English, Spanish, Portuguese and vocalese. Backed by Clare Fischer's efficient keyboards and percussion-oriented quartet, she tackles fearlessly such odd melodies as the title tune and "Ornithardy," takes full advantage of Bronislau Kaper's durable "Invitation" and deals handily with "Love for Sale" converted into a long-meter Latin disguise. A thoroughly professional, jazz-influenced artist. 3½ stars.

□

"HERMAN." Herman Riley. Gem 017. The Los-Angeles based tenor and soprano saxophonist is backed by four musicians worthy of him: Milcho Leviev on keyboards, Ron Eschete on guitar, John B. Williams on bass and Paul Humphrey on drums. The rhythms are mostly light funk or reggae, sometimes repetitious and bordering on monotony; in fact, it's the one straight-ahead tune, "MPH," that finds him displaying his true, relaxed potential. 3 stars.

□

"LINGUA FRANCA." Belladonna BR 1102 (Box 29211, Los Angeles 90029). The Bulgarian pianist Milcho Leviev, the Yugoslav guitarist Dusan Bogdanovic and the Soviet saxophonist Alexei Zoubov have been working together off and on for the past year. Side 1 was taped live at the Vine St. Bar & Grill. The three do indeed have a common language but would have been better off putting it to less pretentious use. The mix of originals with touches of Chopin and Stravinsky tries to cover too many bases; Zoubov's dark, swirling lines are attractive on "Compulsion," but elsewhere he indulges pointlessly in split tones, squeaks and tricks. This adventurous group needs a focus. 2½ stars.

□

"DON'T FORGET THE BLUES." Ray Brown. Concord Jazz CJ-293. Don't forget the ballad either: "Jim" is a ringer in this set, though none the worse for it under Al Grey's plunger-muted control. The guitarist Ron Eschete, in a splendid indigo mood on "Rocks in My Bed," seems not at all out of his league among such senior heavyweights as Gene Harris on acoustic and electric piano, bassist Brown and drummer Grady Tate. Nothing new here, just a comforting reminder of an ancient verity, well expressed in Brown's title tune. 4 stars.

□

"TWILIGHT TIME." Bennie Wallace. Blue Note BT 85107. A ridiculous, outrageous, yet at times surprisingly engaging LP. Who would expect to find Wallace's tenor sax hysteria, Dr. John's piano and Stevie Ray Vaughan's and John Scofield's guitars in the same album with Jack De Johnette and Eddie Gomez? It's as if they were all booked in the same studio by mistake and decided to make the best of it. Inexplicably, "Saint Expedito" on Side 2 is simply "Sainte Fragile" from Side 1 speeded up. Inexcusable tunes ("Is It True What They Say About Dixie?") along with "Trouble in Mind" and a fine boppish line called "Fresh Out" add up to a hectically eclectic experience. 2½ stars.

2/11

JAZZ REVIEW

THE MATURING STYLE OF BILLY CHILDS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Billy Childs, the pianist well known for his work with Freddie Hubbard, played the first of a monthly series of engagements Sunday evening at Le Cafe, leading his own trio.

Now 28, Childs has made impressive headway both as a keyboard artist and composer. He is creating a style and sound of his own that cannot be classified, with elements of classical impressionism, touches of fusion, a nod to bebop in "All the Things You Are" and for the most part an agreeable unwillingness to be pigeonholed.

From the original composition that opened the set, throughout an hour of mainly his own works, it was evident that this is not just a group of musicians playing a casual date but an admirably organized unit. The rapport established by Childs—doubling on piano and DX7—with Jimmy Johnson on electric bass is exceptional. On his pensive and evocative "Totally Alone," Childs alternated between the two keyboards, sometimes playing a supportive role while Johnson outlined the melody.

Childs puts his obvious knowledge of jazz piano history to intelligent use. In his "Fleeting Instant" there were rhythmic reminders and harmonic overtones of Bud Powell. A more direct salute was his version of a little-known Bill Evans tune, "34 Skiddoo." Less successful was an unaccompanied tribute to Art Tatum. Recasting the Tatum treatment of "Yesterdays" in his own image, he displayed the requisite technique but worked too hard, capturing none of Tatum's incomparable delicacy.

Steve Houghton on drums rounded out the group efficiently except for an occasional tendency to flamboyance that drew the focus of attention away from Childs.

In general, Childs symbolizes a trend among contemporary pianists. He has heard many of his most-gifted predecessors but, beholden to none, is using his listening experience to develop what may well become a widely accepted individual personality.

JAZZ REVIEW

CHILDERS STICKS TO THE FLUEGELHORN

By LEONARD FEATHER

Since a change of ownership late last year, Alfonse's, the Toluca Lake restaurant, has stepped up its music policy, which now consists of jazz seven nights a week.

Tuesday the incumbents were Buddy Childers, the John Leitham Trio and the singer Diane Varga. For Childers, this was a less-than-typical setting, most of his credentials having been racked up in the trumpet sections of innumerable big bands, from Barnet and Basie to Dorsey and Goodman, not to mention seven stints with Stan Kenton.

On this occasion, he played only fluegelhorn, putting its gentler sound to generally relaxed and fluent use. He does not, however, seem completely adjusted to the horn; occasional minor slips led one to wonder whether he might not advantageously switched back once in a while to the bigger, bolder sound of the trumpet.

Childers' choice of material is as well conceived as the use to which he puts it. "My Funny Valentine" shook off its cobwebs by the back-and-forth use of a fast three beat and a moderate four. His own "Anything" fitted old-timey chords to a buoyant waltz meter.

John Leitham's trio of transplanted Philadelphians is sparked by the astonishing rhythm and solo work of its leader, who plays upright bass left-handed. Tommy Adams' boppish piano and the solid drums of J. J. Le Compte interact well and support Childers capably.

Surprises were the order of the evening in Diane Varga's set. "Under Paris Skies," a 1950s waltz, worked well for her in a breathless up-tempo four-beat conversion. The seldom-heard Andy Razaf lyrics to "Stomping at the Savoy" and her scat duet with Childers' horn on "Bernie's Tune" were apt vehicles for her jazz-tinted sound. The coy, cabaret style treatment of "I Enjoy Being a Girl" was uncomfortably out of place in this context.

As was evidenced in his recent album (recorded during his two-year residency in Chicago), Childers needs a full orchestra to express himself totally both as composer and soloist. However, if he intends to continue playing small group jobs, he has found a backup unit that will be well suited to his needs, and a singer who serves as a compatible partner.

2/20/86

Los Angeles Times

FRISHBERG'S SHOW SPANS FIVE DECADES

By LEONARD FEATHER

Nominated for a Grammy with his "Live at Vine Street" album, Dave Frishberg was indeed live at Vine Street for the first of a series of Tuesday evenings at the Hollywood haven for the hip.

Frishberg may own the biggest memory bank in jazz. Just program him right, and out comes the decade of your desire. You want the '60s? Here is "Marilyn Monroe," Frishberg's haunting tribute (with an Alan Broadbent melody). The '50s? He's set lyrics to a Zoot Sims tune of those days, "Red Door," now retitled "Zoot Walks In."

Moving back to the '40s, he sings a tune Ray Nance recorded with Duke Ellington, "Otto Make That Riff Staccato." (Almost all of Frishberg's material, as he points out, is about people, some real, some fictional. When he tells you about his attorney Bernie, you're about convinced he must exist.)

The '30s are perhaps his favorite decade; it was the subject Tuesday of his opening medley, from "Song of the Wanderer" to "My Ideal." Frishberg works solo but, in effect, is accompanied by Dave Frishberg on bass (his walking left hand) and Dave Frishberg on drums (no pianist gets a more percussive sound).

Delving further back into the sentimental attic of his mind, he gave us "The Mooche," a 1928 Ellington piece offered as a raw, rumbling piano solo, and his own song "Dear Bix," dedicated to the cornetist who flourished in the '20s.

As he moves through his program of songs variously lyrical, satirical and, finally, hysterical ("I'm Hip"), Frishberg takes you through a time warp so convincingly that at the end of the show you expect the waiter to bring you a bill for $3.50 for your dinner.

Frishberg is almost—as Ellington himself liked to say about those he admired most—beyond category. Let us simply award him one star as lyricist, one as tunesmith, one as singer, one as pianist and a fifth just for that memory bank. That adds up to a total not too many performers can lay claim to in an age when it is a pleasant surprise to find, in a given artist, any one of these talents in full bloom. He is a winner with or without Grammies.

2/16/86

STEVE DYKES

"This is more fun than anything else I've ever done," says Marian McPartland of her long-running radio series.

JAZZ

MARIAN McPARTLAND HAS A GIGGLE OVER HER RADIO GIG

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz" is unquestionably the most honored radio series in the history of jazz, and most probably the best.

Since she launched it almost six years ago, the protean pianist/composer/educator/journalist/broadcaster has provided airspace for a vast cross-section of jazz and pop artists. On each show her guest is interviewed, plays a few solos, and winds up in a two-keyboard duet with her.

At once lively, entertaining and informative, the series has won the George Foster Peabody Award, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Award and many other trophies. "This is more fun than anything else I've ever done," said the effusive English-born host, who is in town for a recital tonight at the Ambassador in Pasadena.

Produced by the South Carolina Educational Radio Network for National Public Radio, "Piano Jazz" was suggested to her by the late Alec Wilder.

For the initial program, in April, 1979, her guest was the late Mary Lou Williams, then on the faculty at Duke University. "That was a big mistake; I was a nervous wreck, never having done this sort of thing before, and she was in one of her militant moods—but by the end of the show she was really nice, and I'm happy I got her. We've lost her, and too many other I interviewed later: Bill Evans, Johnny Guarnieri, before he died. It's awful that I missed Count Basie and Earl Hines—they both wanted to do the show, but we never could get together."

Most of the guests have been eager to talk freely about their lives and pianistic *modus operandi*. "Even Teddy Wilson, who is often laconic in interviews, was rather verbose and talked about all sorts of things. I'd say the most lucid and articulate of all was Bill Evans.

"Helen Keane, who was Bill's manager, is putting together an album using some of that show as one side of the record. I think that's sensational, because Bill really did an educational program, showing how he puts together a tune from the ground up."

Though the concept of converting some of these programs into albums seems logical, McPartland has qualms. "There'd be problems dealing with clearances, extra payments for the artists, and so on; but George Shearing has said he'd be willing to have some of his shows released in album form, and maybe there are others like him.

"Shearing, by the way, is a bloody genius. He and I are always competing, trying to trick one another. On the show we took his 'Lullaby of Birdland' and I asked him, 'How would you do it if Debussy were playing it?' and he did that. I kept nagging him, saying things like 'Do Wagner,' and he didn't do what I expected; instead, he came up with some beautiful music from 'The Ring' and incorporated 'Lullaby of Birdland' into it. It was just fantastic! For sheer musicianship it was one of the best shows ever—but I can't forget Dick Hyman and Oscar Peterson, who both knocked me out."

McPartland's qualifications are her own consummate keyboard artistry, her encyclopedic knowledge of piano history, and her ability to switch styles so that she can duet with all comers.

Some of the most intriguing programs have involved artists not primarily knows as pianists: Carmen McRae, who began her career as intermission pianist at Minton's in Harlem; Dudley Moore ("He was a laugh from start to finish"), George Wein, Sarah Vaughan, Dizzy Gillespie, Henry Mancini and Mel Torme, who was taped during McPartland's visit to Los Angeles last month. At that time programs were also completed with Nellie Lutcher, Lou Levy and Pete Jolly.

McPartland takes special pride in having rediscovered a couple of performers long in obscurity. She brought Phineas Newborn Jr., one of the giants of the 1960s, from Memphis to New York for a session. "He's a little strange, untalkative, but still plays wonderfully." Her most improbable find was Cleo Brown, the singer and pianist born in 1909, who in 1972, in a book called "Who's Who of Jazz," was listed as "deceased."

"I heard Cleo was living in Denver, and it took months to track her down. She's got religion and won't do anything the least bit suggestive such as 'The Stuff Is Here,' which she recorded in 1935. But she did do some boogie-woogie, and we had a great time; every other sentence was 'God bless you' or 'Praise the Lord.' I sent a copy of the tape to John Chilton, who wrote the book listing her as dead. I attached a note saying 'Surprise!' "

Cleo Brown was one of the senior citizens taped by McPartland for posterity; others were Art Hodes, 81 ("Amazing, very interesting—he has a style of blues that's all his own"), and Jess Stacy, 82, the one-time Benny Goodman sideman, lured momentarily out of his long retirement. The youngest guest to date has been Makoto Ozone, who appeared on the series a year ago at 24.

Dave Frishberg, Blossom Dearie, Shirley Horn and others have doubled as vocalists. Max Morath, the historian who specializes in turn-of-the-century music, presented a challenge. "I was dreading that; I thought, my God, I can't play in that bag at all. But Max sang and played a poignant old Bert Williams tune, 'Nobody,' and some pieces out of a 'Ragtime Ladies' album about people in the early 1900s who played piano in their drawing rooms; then we duetted on 'Bill Bailey' and 'I Found a New Baby.' It was really fun."

At last count, the series was on 164 stations around the United States. (In Los Angeles it has been on KCRW but was dropped temporarily pending the arrival of new material. KPPC in Pasadena, 89.3 FM, runs it Sunday evenings from 11 to midnight.)

"There are so many people I'd still like to do," said McPartland. "I expect to have Jack Lemmon, and I'd love to do Stephane Grappelli—he plays good enough piano, and he's so cute and wonderful—I've known him forever."

McPartland's in-person career continues as it has for many years. "I seem to be averaging two concerts a week, including occasional symphony dates. I'll be back in London this summer for an appearance with the London Symphony, where my old friend John Dankworth, the composer, has a whole series going for them. I'm hoping George Wein will bring me back to the Nice Festival, where Jimmy and I worked last year." (Jimmy McPartland, her trumpeter ex-husband, still a close friend, continues to play occasional gigs with her.)

Meanwhile the awards keep coming. Not long ago her entire series was donated to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound at the New York Public Library. "It seemed like a great occasion for a get-together, so we had a party and 40 of the pianists showed up. The late Dick Phipps, my wonderful producer—he died a few weeks ago—had a great idea: He had small bronze replicas of the Peabody Award made for each pianist.

Yet another honor came her way last month when she became the first woman to be named "Jazz Educator of the Year" by the National Assn. of Jazz Educators.

"Gene Shalit presented it to me on the 'Today' show. It was thrilling, but I couldn't help feeling a little sad. After all, Mary Lou Williams certainly should have received it before I did." □

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JAZZ REVIEW 2/22

GRECO KEEPS TO HIS STANDARDS AT CINEGRILL

By LEONARD FEATHER

The refurbishing and upgrading of the Roosevelt Hotel has entailed a valuable fringe benefit in the form of a weekend music policy in the Cinegrill.

Buddy Greco, who opened Thursday and closes tonight, is a Steve Lawrence-Vic Damone-style singer with hints of Nat Cole, whom he saluted with "When I Fall in Love" and "L-O-V-E." His full-bodied sound and jazz-trained phrasing (Greco spent several years as Benny Goodman's pianist) were set off to best advantage in such swingers as "The Lady Is a Tramp," which he rescued from banality by adding some extra choruses of ingenious self-written lyrics, and "Taking a Chance on Love."

The use of too many overworked songs, such as the inescapable "Satin Doll" and "The More I See You," tended to accentuate the Las Vegas flavor of his 80-minute performance, though at its best this is more than your run-of-the-mill lounge act. A little-known and touching tune by the late Moose Charlap, "Here I Am in Love Again," offered a welcome respite

Please see BUDDY GRECO, Page 5

BUDDY GRECO AT CINEGRILL

Continued from Page 2

from the "At Long Last Love"-type standards.

Greco still is a gifted jazz pianist, as he reminded us in one or two interludes, but his only instrumental specialties were a derivative "Misty" and the pretentious, overlong "MacArthur Park," used as a finale.

Helping him consistently throughout the show was Jeff Walters at the DX7, producing organ, guitar and other apt effects. Anthony Brock on electric bass and John Bishop on drums played the serviceable charts well, but Hans Teuber's two sax solos—on alto and tenor—were blandly uninventive.

It is good to have Greco back on the local scene, looking fine and sounding cheerful. It would be even better if he were to lace his act with more original material. How about declaring a 10-year moratorium on "Satin Doll" and digging up some of the more obscure and valuable Ellingtonia? Why not a couple of new Greco originals from this 30-year veteran of ASCAP?

Variety, Jan. 29 1986

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ge 11, Column 5)

Performers Honor Holiday At Walk Of Fame Benefit

By HENRY SCHIPPER

Any way you measure it, the benefit bash for a Billie Holiday Walk of Fame star, held Sunday at the Vine Street Bar & Grill, was a success. The affair netted the $3000 needed to get the legendary singer her long-overdue piece of the Walk.

Artistically, how could a night like this miss, with a lineup of artists and friends, many of them directly inspired and influenced by Lady Day's exquisitely expressive style, on hand to pay homage to her as artist and femme?

A number of perfs had a special intensity, the singers offering distinctly personal testimony to what Holiday, generally regarded as the premier singer of the jazz era, meant to them.

Though the atmosphere and mood of the night were happy and celebratory, much of the night's fare had a bittersweet quality, appropriately so, given the triumphant/tragic nature of Holiday's life.

A particularly fine turn was handed in by Carmen McRae, who sang a number she introduced Holiday to decades ago, the elegant, intensely dreamy "Some Other Spring," which she handled with a kind of anguished toughness that Holiday would certainly have understood.

Bluesman Jimmy Witherspoon likewise chose an apt song, "Ain't Nobody's Business If I Do," trading in the usual party-time take on the tune for a moody, almost defiant version that read like a proud defense of Holiday's drug-alcohol-love-law plagued life.

Dawn Rendition

Dolly Dawn, a veteran singer whom Ella Fitzgerald credits as a major influence, kicked in with the tipsy-sad "Music Maestro, Please," catching in subtle fashion the longing for escape and implicit pain one hears on many of Holiday's recordings.

Other strong turns were provided by Ella Mae Morse, whose "Cow Cow Boogie" sold 11,000,000 records in the late 1940s and whose voice waxed clean and expressive on "God Bless The Child," a song Morse introduced as Holiday's "personal philosophy" (and which Holiday wrote the lyrics for), and hot-voiced Marlena Shaw, who spun her way through a lively rendition of "Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out."

Blues belter Margie Evans closed the show with a commanding "29 Ways (To Get Through My Baby's Door)" and then led an ensemble

(Continued on Page 13, Column 4)

Performers Honor Holiday At Walk Of Fame Benefit

(Continued from Page 7, Column 5)

finale of "Please Let Me Walk Closer To Thee," a song that seemed to be addressed as much to Holiday as the spirit on high.

A nonsinging appearance was made by big-band great Artie Shaw, who broke the color barrier with Holiday in the early '30s, hiring her to front for his band when they were both barely out of their teens.

Shaw told of an attempted tour of the South during Jim Crow days that ended after one night when an enraged Holiday nearly precipitated a riot by muttering obscenities on stage after someone from the crowd called out a racial epithet.

Maxene Andrews, Johnnie Ray, Loraine Feather (Leonard's daughter and Holiday's godchild), Charlotte Crossley and Ernie Andrews also performed. Excellent instrumental support was provided by pianist Jimmy Rowles, guitarist Herb Ellis and drummer Dick Berk, all of whom played extensively with Holiday.

Pianists Gerald Wiggins and Dave Frishberg, bassist Bob Maize, drummer Carl Burnet and trumpeter Stacy Rowles also made tasty contributions.

Show was put together by jazz critic Leonard Feather, friend of Holiday since the 1930s, who emceed, and Vine Street owner on Ron Berinstein, both of whom cosponsored the Holiday star via the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

Feather has been lobbying for the sidewalk salute for years, having written an open letter in the L.A. Times in 1981 calling for Diana Ross, who portrayed Holiday in the "Lady Sings The Blues" film, to "get the ball rolling" with regard to the honor.

The letter went unanswered, and the project lay dormant for lack of funds until Berinstein suggested the benefit. Ceremonies installing the star are scheduled April 7, the 72d anniversary of Holiday's birth.

2/26/86

AMERICAN NEWS • from Leonard Feather

■ **Wild Bill Davison,** a world traveller who seldom sees his home in Santa Barbara, California, was back home during the New Year's holiday and celebrated his 80th birthday with an all star jam session featuring **Dick Carey, Eddie Miller, Bob Havens, Bill Allred, Chuck Hedges** and many of his other long-time associates. The affair was sponsored by the *United Jazz Clubs of Southern California,* at the Los Angeles Marriott Hotel.

■ **Alice Coltrane,** who has been living in quiet meditative obscurity in her San Fernando Valley home, has started a weekly television programme. Heard after midnight every Sunday, it is devoted to meditation, religious devotion and music. The saxophonist's widow has made almost no public apperances in many years.

■ **Ed Thigpen,** a Copenhagen resident since 1972, came to Los Angeles to take part in the *National Association of Jazz Educator's* annual convention in Anaheim in mid-January.

■ **The Women's Jazz Festival,** the world's first event of its kind is dead. At a meeting of the directors in mid-December it was decided that even though there would be a guarantee of $11,000 in funding if a 1986 festival were held, the organization was financially unable to carry on.

Organised in 1978, the *Kansas City Women's Jazz Festival* was the brain child of **Carol Comer,** a local singer and pianist, and **Dianne Gregg,** a disc jockey. Together they staged a series of events that were soon imitated in New York and many other cities.

Mary Lou Williams, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Mary Osborne, Jane Ira Bloom, Cleo Laine and countless other women performers took part in the festivals held until 1983. Then Comer and Gregg, tired of working for no reward and with limited audiences, pulled out. There was no festival in 1984 but one was held in '85 by a different group of women, with limited success.

Comer and Gregg were responsible for some unique initiatives. They brought **Melba Liston** back to the US after her five years living in the West Indies. In 1980 they staged a memorable reunion of many members of the *Sweethearts of Rhythm,* the all female band prominent in the 1940s.

■ **Woody Herman** has organised a small band of West Coast musicians to work with him at the Vine Street Bar & Grill in early January. It consists of **Jack Sheldon,** trumpet; **Bob Cooper** tenor; **Ross Tompkins,** piano; **John Heard,** bass and **Jake Hanna,**drums. After this job Woody will reorganize his big band for a tour. He is still planning his 50th anniversary as a bandleader, to be celebrated in the form of a concert at the Hollywood Bowl next August or September, with classical clarinettist **Richard Stoltzman** playing in the **Stravinsky** work written for Woody's band 40 years ago, *"Ebony Concerto."*

JOE NEWMAN

■ **Joe Newman** will be the guest of honour at the *Paradise Valley Jazz Party* in Arizona, March 15–16, with some 22 other name jazz artists including, **Clark Terry , Al Grey, Urbie Green, Bob Wilber, Pepper Adams, Kenny Davern, Lew Tabackin, Bobby Enruiquez, John Clayton, Barney Kessel, Butch Miles, Major Holley, Buddy Tate** and blues singer **Carrie Smith.**

■ **Stan Getz** has been appointed Artist in residence at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, starting January 1.

The main purpose of his tenure is to build a Jazz division of the music department; the University already has divisions for Classical, Baroque and Computer music, Getz will cut down on his touring schedule in order to concentrate on this job. He will conduct master classes in all instruments as well as singing.

■ **Red Callender,** the veteran Californian bassist, has accepted a job as bass teacher at Loyola University in Los Angeles.

■ **Annie Ross,** who moved back from England to New York in late 1984, is now residing in Los Angeles and hopes to expand her activities as a television and motion picture actress, though she will continue to sing occasionally.

■ Pianist **James Williams' quintet scored a big success at the 13th annual convention of the** *National Association of Jazz Educator's* held in Anaheim (near Disneyland). With him were **Billy Pierce,** tenor and soprano; **Kevin Eubanks,** guitar; **Billy Higgins,** drums, and **Richard Reid,** bass.

Also well received at the convention (which lasted four days in mid-January and included dozens of clinics and panel discussions) were Supersax, **Dave Frishberg, Anita O'Day,** and the big bands of Bob Florence and Maiden Voyage. One of the main themes of this year's convention was *Women in Jazz.* **Jane Ira Bloom, Clora Bryant** and numerous other female instrumentalists were on hand both to play and take part in discussions.

■ **Lester Young's** daughter, **Beverley Young,** in Minneapolis, has been working with film maker **Bruce Frederickson,** on a documentary biography of her father. Beverley is now 54, is suffering from cancer and spends most of her time in a wheelchair in a small Minneapolis apartment. She played piano professionally for a while in the 1950s. Her mother, Bess, died in 1931, when Beverley was an infant.

In addition to the movie, on which she has been working for the past two years, there was a play presented recently in Minneapolis, entitled *'The Resurrection of Lady Lester'* which had a run at a local theatre.

Lester Young though born in Mississippi, lived in Minneapolis from the age of ten, as did most of his large family of sisters and brothers.

■ Jazz cruises are becoming more and more popular. Name bands such as the **Ellington, Basie** and other Jazz and Swing orchestras have been sailing weekly from New York on the *Royal Viking Line.* **Louis Bellson** and his big band have been set for a cruise out of Los Angeles starting January 28 along with **Ernestine Anderson, Dave Frishberg** and a trio led by bassist **Pat Senatore,** with **George Cables** and **Roy McCurdy.**

The enormously successful *SS Norway* venture will be repeated for the fourth year, again with a cast of almost 40 top names, next October 11–25.

LINEUP RUNS DEEP FOR JAZZ FESTIVAL AT BOWL

By LEONARD FEATHER

The 1986 Playboy Jazz Festival will feature a strong lineup of both old and unfamiliar names, many of them new to the festival and some making their first Los Angeles appearance. It will be June 14 and 15 at Hollywood Bowl.

The Herbie Hancock Quartet will include saxophonist Branford Marsalis, Ron Carter on bass and Al Foster on drums, plus a guest appearance by guitarist George Benson.

David Murray, the avant-garde saxophonist making his local debut, will have John Hicks, piano; Ed Blackwell, drums, and Ray Drummond, bass.

Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers will include Terence Blanchard on trumpet and Donald Harrison on saxophone.

The Newport All-Stars will consist of Norris Turney and Scott Hamilton on saxophones, Warren Vache on trumpet, festival producer George Wein at the piano, Oliver Jackson on drums and Slam Stewart on bass.

The Juggernaut Orchestra, coled by drummer Frank Capp and pianist Nat Pierce, with vocals by Ernie Andrews, will involve some of Los Angeles' best-known heavyweights, among them Marshal Royal on alto sax; Bill Berry, Snooky Young and Conte Candoli on trumpets; Buster Cooper on trombone and Bill Green on baritone sax.

The L.A. Jazz Legends will include such veterans as Harry (Sweets) Edison on trumpet, Teddy Edwards and Red Holloway on saxophone, Jimmy Rowles on piano, John Collins on guitar, Red Callender on bass and a drummer still to be selected.

Bill Cosby, who has appeared at all but two of the previous festivals, will be back as master of ceremonies. Also on hand will be Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, a longtime jazz aficionado. He will introduce the winning group in the Hennessey Jazz Contest and will make a demo record with it for possible release on his new Cranberry Records jazz label.

In addition, there will be several free pre-festival events, including the March 11 opening of a jazz wing at the Hollywood Bowl Museum's new "Sound Waves" exhibit; a May 4 concert at Los Angeles Valley College featuring Free Flight and the Poncho Sanchez Latin Jazz Band; a May 23 Watts Senior Citizens concert by the Msingi Workshop group from Locke High School; a June 8 rooftop performance by the Bill Holman orchestra at the Hyatt on Sunset; and a "Jazz on Film" presentation June 13 by archivist Mark Cantor, at a location to be announced.

The festival itself will run from 2:30 to 11 p.m. each day, with the following participants, though not necessarily in this order:

June 14: Miles Davis, Mel Torme, Andrae Crouch, Al DiMeola, Art Blakey, George Howard, Rare Silk, Rob McConnell's Boss Brass, Chaffey Festival Winner.

June 15: Herbie Hancock with George Benson, B. B. King with guest Stevie Ray Vaughan, Nina Simone, Maynard Ferguson Orchestra, Kenny G, Azymuth with Flora Purim and Airto, David Murray, Honi Coles, Juggernaut, Jazz Legends, Hennessey Jazz Search Winner.

Ticket prices range from $8.50 to $22.50. Ticket hot line: (213) 450-9040.

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2/23/86

JAZZ

CDs ARE A GREAT GROOVE

By LEONARD FEATHER

Beyond doubt, the compact disc is the groove of the future. (Yes, yes, I know it has no grooves.) It will duly become to the LP what LPs were to 78s. Because of digital mastering (and in some cases digital recordings and mixing), the sound, read by a laser beam through the plastic surface of the 4½-inch, 1-millimeter-thick disc, is just about as perfect as perfect will ever get.

Though this small, silver surface can accommodate up to 70 minutes of music on a single side, certain inconsistencies have to be resolved. A CD offering only 32 minutes looks exactly like one that may carry twice as much; moreover, the store may overcharge you for the former, as there are no firm price regulations. Even if not used to maximum capacity, of course, the discs are great space savers.

What follows is a sampling of the best I have heard, representing jazz in various styles and stages:

"HERBIE HANCOCK QUARTET." Columbia CKG 38275. Hancock and Wynton Marsalis could hardly ask for better company than each other's. Recorded in Tokyo, this is the ideal CD: impeccable music combining the entire 68 minutes of what originally was heard on four sides of a two-LP set. Hancock's two originals, two each by his colleagues Ron Carter and Tony Williams, two by Thelonious Monk and one standard ("I Fall in Love Too Easily") make up this exemplary collection. 5 stars.

□

"HELEN MERRILL." EmArcy 814-643-2. This has become a historically valuable item, not only because of the breathless beauty of Merrill's whispered ballad vocals, but owing to the presence of Clifford Brown on trumpet. The somewhat tentative charts were written by a 21-year-old arranger named Quincy Jones. Three decades before Linda Ronstadt, Merrill sensed the inner meaning, lyrically and melodically, of "What's New." Mel Torme's "Born to be Blue" and Billie Holiday's "Don't Explain" are early portents of the unique Merrill persona. Total time, as you should remind your salesman, is only 32½ minutes. 4½ stars.

□

"HOT HOUSE FLOWERS." Wynton Marsalis. Columbia CK 39530. A year or so after its LP release, this attempt to broaden Marsalis' appeal via pop and jazz standards ("Stardust," "Django," "I'm Confessin'") sounds just as gracefully mature, with Robert Freedman's arrangements offering support that never lapses into banality. As with most CDs, the original liner notes (by Stanley Crouch) have been retained in a leaflet. 5 stars.

□

"THA'S DELIGHTS." Bill Mays Quintet. Trend TRCD 532. It is hard to determine whether Mays' pen (he composed or arranged all six works) or his skill at the nine-foot Steinway grand contributed more to this delightfully intimate session. The presence of Tom Harrell, a deftly inventive fluegelhorn virtuoso, adds luster to the two standards ("'S Wonderful," in ¾ time, and "Goodbye") and to Mays' four originals. 4½ stars.

□

"AN EVENING AT CHARLIE'S." Mel Torme and George Shearing. Concord CCD 4248. The mutual pleasure enjoyed by these two men bringing out the best, the brightest and the wittiest in one another is by now a familiar and frequent sound. Both are heard as composers: Shearing's "Caught in the Middle of My Years" and Torme's "Welcome to the Club" are segued as a medley. There's good fun in "I'm Hip," tenderness in "Then I'll Be Tired of You," and a piano interlude (with Don Thompson's bass) in the Horace Silver tune "Nica's Dream." For more Shearing-and-Thompson, there is also the "Live at the Cafe Carlyle" on CCD 4246. Both 5-star sets.

□

"MAGIC TIME." Bob Florence Limited Edition. Trend TRCD 536. Florence takes his regular collection of Los Angeles heavyweights through a program of six original works, all scored with great skill. Some unusual voicings (the title tune has six clarinets playing the melody; "Sailing" employs a brass choir with tuba) lift this above the run-of-the-mill big-band level. 4 stars.

Carmen McRae, Herbie Hancock: perfection on a silvery surface.

□

"COLE PORTER SONGBOOK, Volumes 1 and 2." Ella Fitzgerald. Verve 821-989-2 and 821-990-2. "RODGERS AND HART SONGBOOK, Volumes 1 and 2." Verve 821-579-2 and 821-580-2. Technically, as well as in the quality and quantity of what we hear, these four sets offer proof of what CDs can accomplish. Each of the four runs from 54 to 56 minutes. The Cole Porter packages show that even monaural sound benefits from CD values. (The Rodgers and Hart sets were recorded slightly later; 24 of the 34 tunes are in stereo.)

Fitzgerald is represented profusely on CDs from this "songbook" period. Given the caliber of the material and the creative peak she had reached, it is hard to fault anything except the occasionally insipid arrangements by Buddy Bregman. Nor do I take kindly to the conversion of "Have You Met Miss Jones" to the awkward "Sir Jones." (Why didn't she try "Have You Met Joe Jones"?) But why quibble over quality, when Ella's very presence epitomizes it? 5 stars all around.

"HEAT WAVE." Cal Tjader-Carmen McRae. Concord CCD 4189. Given a wide range of tunes, from Irving Berlin to Ellington to Stevie Wonder, and the late vibraphonist's propulsive percussive group, McRae was very much in her element on this 4½-star set. Tjader's Grammy-winning "La Onda Va Bien" also is on CD, Concord Picante CCD 4113. Other recommended Latin jazz: "Crazy Bird" by Clare Fischer, with an augmented Salsa Picante group, Discovery DSCD-914; "Come With Me" and "Wild" by Tania Maria, Concord Picante CCD 4200 and CCD 4264 (preferably the former).

□

"SPORTIN' LIFE." Weather Report. Columbia CD 39908. "SONG FOR JANET LEE." Bob Magnusson Quintet. Discovery DSCD-912. "THE SECOND SET." Scott Hamilton Quintet. Concord CCD-4254. "INTERPRETATIONS OF BACH AND MOZART." Shelly Manne Jazz Quartet. Trend TRCD-525. "SIDE BY SIDE." Duke Ellington/Johnny Hodges. Verve 821-578-2. "STUDY IN BROWN." Clifford Brown/Max Roach. EmArcy 814-646-2. These six CDs are played by small groups; this aside, they have nothing in common. Listed in reverse chronological order, dating respectively from 1985, 1984, 1983, 1980, 1959 and 1955, they illustrate the limitless diversity of idioms that can be lumped together loosely under the "small-group jazz" rubric.

"Sportin' Life" is the most recent and in some respects the most provocative set by the best of all the fusion bands. Magnusson, the lithe bassist who shared with guitarist Peter Sprague most of the writing responsibilities in "Song for Janet Lee," depends on melodic invention and the added strengths of Bobby Shew's fluegelhorn and Hubert Laws' flute.

Scott Hamilton, 31, has become the symbol of the young thinking old, his low-flame tenor ignited by a cooking rhythm team in a program of blues, bossa nova, pop and jazz standards. The Shelly Manne classical-jazz fusion, with liner notes by Henri Temianka, is among the most successful such experiments.

Two potent sets of sidemen participate in the Ellington-Hodges set: Sweets Edison, Roy Eldridge, Ben Webster, Billy Strayhorn, Lawrence Brown, and the Duke himself on most cuts, playing almost 46 minutes of pure small-band classic jazz. The Clifford Brown-Max Roach set, though older, represents a much later form, post-bop, fortified by the hard-driving tenor sax of Harold Land, whose tune "Land's End" is included along with four originals by Brown and a devastating treatment of "Cherokee." All these CDs are of 4- to 5-star caliber.

The potential buyer of a CD machine should bear in mind that jazz CD releases already number in the hundreds, and that along with the newer items, more and more historically vital works will be transferred from LPs. In all probability, too, some CDs will include additional tracks that were excluded, due to pressure on space, from the equivalent LP product. This will be done to stimulate the purchase of players, though it seems that very soon such encouragement will not even be necessary. □

Los Angeles Times 2-26

MICHAEL EDWARDS / Los Angeles Times

The happy Manhattan Transfer, from left, Alan Paul, Cheryl Bentyne, Tim Hauser, Janis Siegel.

MANHATTAN TRANSFER, CLEO LAINE WIN IN JAZZ

By LEONARD FEATHER

In an achievement unprecedented in the vocal jazz history of the Grammys, the Manhattan Transfer's "Vocalese" album figured in victories in three categories.

The awards went to the members of Transfer for best vocal group performance; to Jon Hendricks and Bobby McFerrin (best male jazz vocal), who collaborated on the track "Another Night in Tunisia" from the album, and to McFerrin again, along with Cheryl Bentyne, for their arrangement of the same cut.

Like all but one of the jazz awards, these victories were part of the pre-telecast program at the Shrine, as were all the jazz categories except for the best instrumental soloist award, announced on the air by Maxine Sullivan and Toshiko Akiyoshi and given to Wynton Marsalis.

The other jazz surprise was a belated first win for Cleo Laine. Now appearing on Broadway in "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," the British actress-singer won for her "Cleo at Carnegie: The 10th Anniversary Concert."

Wynton Marsalis has the instrumental combo category locked up: His "Black Codes From the Underground" earned him his third award in that category in a row, in addition to his soloist award. David Sanborn's "Straight From the Heart" won for best jazz fusion performance, ironically a category won in 1980 by Manhattan Transfer.

Something of a shock was the dual prize to John Barry and Bob Wilber for best big band jazz instrumental. Barry's contributions to "The Cotton Club" movie sound-track album that won them both this award were not remotely jazz.

Meanwhile, Akiyoshi, nominated eight times, remains in the always-a-bridesmaid department with her orchestra, which in the past several years has won almost every big band jazz prize given by music publications.

A borderline jazz victory was achieved by a former Buddy Rich sideman, jazz saxophonist Ernie Watts, whose album, "Musician," won as best R&B instrumental performance.

A lifetime-achievement Grammy was handed to Benny Goodman, following a splendid set of vintage film clips showing various stages of his jazz career. Also announced was a special President's Merit Award for John Hammond, the veteran talent scout who played a major role in Goodman's career, and who was prevented by illness from attending.

This year, a jazz interlude attempt to squeeze more than 120 artists into a three-part sequence totaling eight minutes of music. Arguably, it was worse than nothing.

The segment was organized in Noah's Ark fashion, with two of everything: trumpets, saxes, pianos, basses, drums, vibraphones, male singers, female singers, plus Manhattan Transfer and B.B. King.

Instead of giving a few artists a chance to express themselves, NARAS organizers brought on the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, Kenny Burrell, Stanley Jordan, Buddy Rich, Tony Williams, Bobby Hutcherson and others for a hurried jam session on 40-year-old tunes that offered little chance to establish their identities. Even Sarah Vaughan had less than 30 seconds to herself.

Vibist Gary Burton (who resigned from NARAS many years ago) said: "It was hackneyed; we couldn't show what's happening in jazz today."

On the other hand, Joe Williams, among others, said, "It was TV exposure of a sort—certainly better than not having us here."

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TRIBUTE TO JOE FARRELL

2/28/86

THE TRANSFER PULLS OUT ALL THE STOPS

By LEONARD FEATHER

On the heels of its multiple Grammy victory for the "Vocalese" album, Manhattan Transfer was headlined Wednesday in a memorial concert at the Wadsworth Theater honoring Joe Farrell, the flutist and saxophonist who died recently.

Because the quartet's appearance on the awards show was cluttered with outsiders, it was doubly agreeable to hear the group in a normal setting, with its own rhythm section augmented on some numbers by the horns of the Don Menza orchestra.

The success of the album has enabled the Transfer to establish a firm jazz identity, with the help of inspired lyrics by Jon Hendricks. Several cuts from the LP were performed, notably Quincy Jones' "Meet Benny Bailey," Thad Jones' lyrical ballad "To You," and Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring." On this last, as Janis Siegel sang the Hendricks words fitted to Brown's original solo, you found yourself wishing you could listen that fast.

The Transfer displayed its collectively keen harmonic ears on "Blue Champagne" and "Candy," the latter offering a reminder of Cheryl Bentyne's gently agreeable timbre. "Jeannine" was a blockbuster finale, building to such a rhythmic hurricane that the group had to encore with "Blee Blop Blues," using the chart played on "Vocalese" by the Basie band.

Menza's men played a vigorous set of their own, their impact reduced by the overloud bass of Joel DiBartolo, but energized by such moments as a tenor sax battle: Menza rough and explosive, Pete Christlieb smooth and expressive.

The first half of the show consisted entirely of guitar sets. Kenny Rankin sang and played acoustic guitar pleasantly; Wayne Johnson led a rock trio (but later played in the Transfer's rhythm section) and Stanley Jordan, in an unbelievable blend of inspiration and virtuosity, hammered his guitar strings through a blues that told us about jazz history.

Proceeds from the concert, to which the artists donated their services, go to the City of Hope Hospital and the Musicians' Wives Relief Fund.

COMPACT DISCS

"Kind of Blue." Miles Davis. CBS. Here are "Flamenco Sketches," "So What," "All Blues" and the other masterpieces that became a turning point in the evolution from chordal to modal music and in the conceptual development of Davis, Bill Evans, John Coltrane and Cannonball Adderley. The packaging is

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HOME TECH

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foolishly flawed: Evans' sensitive liner notes on the 1959 LP are omitted, as is his co-composer credit for "Blue in Green" and the fact that Wynton Kelly replaces him on "Freddie Freeloader." Still, an indispensable set.

—LEONARD FEATHER

SULLIVAN: PETITE SINGER STILL PACKS A BIG PUNCH

By LEONARD FEATHER

DAVID BECKER

Maxine Sullivan, back in an L.A. nightclub after 40 years.

Here she stands, at 4 feet, 11 inches and 82 pounds: Maxine Sullivan, the undefeated sub-flyweight vocal champion, claiming new victories after entering the ring more than a half-century ago.

How many of those who will catch her show this evening at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, where she starts a three-night run, will be seeing her for the first time? This is, after all, her first Los Angeles nightclub date in more than 40 years.

How many saw her in the movies, co-starring with Louis Armstrong in the 1938 "Going Places" or singing the title song in "St. Louis Blues" in 1939?

Who around here owns the original version of her hit "Loch Lomond," recorded Aug. 6, 1937?

A sweet and modest sylph of a woman with a pure, on-target voice that matches her for size but outweighs her in emotional impact, Sullivan has had a phenomenal career. After 20 years of it she stopped of her own volition for 10 years, then returned to performing during the late 1960s.

"I've had almost another 20 years that I never anticipated," she said, "and it's getting better all the time."

Indeed it is. Long absent from records, she has had four albums out in the last year, one of which, "Great Songs From the Cotton Club," on Stash, was nominated for a Grammy. Two other new ones are due out and still another pair, recorded in the 1950s, have been scheduled for reissue.

Last year, with the saxophonist Scott Hamilton, she toured Japan for the first time (they made an LP there, "Uptown," for Concord). She has been making the jazz club, cruise and festival scene regularly—and all this without an agent. "Musicians and old friends just call me up with job offers," she says.

Sullivan's career actually began in the early 1930s in Pittsburgh (she is from Homestead, Pa.,), but her big breaks came first on records as a protege of the bandleader Claude Thornhill, and then at the Onyx Club on 52nd Street, where she was teamed with bassist John Kirby (her husband from 1937-41), who led a sextet called "The Biggest Little Band in America." Their Sunday-afternoon radio show on CBS, "Flow Gently Sweet Rhythm," was an unprecedented chamber-jazz series.

One of her most delightful credits was a part in "Swingin' the Dream," a short-lived New York musical. "It was a swing version of 'Midsummer Night's Dream.' I played Titania and Louis Armstrong played Bottom. There was an incredible cast, with the Dandridge Sisters, Moms Mabley, Pearl Bailey's brother Bill, the dancer; and in boxes above either side of the stage we had the Benny Goodman Sextet with Charlie Christian, and Bud Freeman's Summa Cum Laude Band. I sang the song from that show that became a standard, 'Darn That Dream.'"

She had a straight acting role in "Taking a Giant Step" on Broadway in 1953 and was nominated for a Best Supporting Actress Tony award in 1979 for a musical show, "My Old Friend." In between came the long hiatus.

"I played Honolulu in late 1957, came home feeling ill, had an operation and decided to give it all up." By then she was married to the pianist Cliff Jackson. She had studied nursing, and for a while worked as a health counselor at schools.

Her return to music was virtually accidental. "I had a call to do two weeks at a club in Washington. I

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SULLIVAN STILL PACKS PUNCH

Continued from Page 2

met a lot of old friends there who had known me at the Village Vanguard, or during my six years at the Ruban Bleu. But it was the rock era and I wasn't about to get back in the business.

"However, one thing led to another. Dick Gibson invited me to one of his jazz parties in Denver; Bobby Hackett asked me to work with him at the Riverboat in New York, and then Dick had me with his World's Greatest Jazzband, touring Europe and making records. By 1970, I realized that I was really back full time." (Jackson died in 1970.) In 1971, Dick Hyman, who had set music to some lyrics by William Shakespeare, induced her to record the enchanting "Sullivan-Shakespeare-Hyman" album.

The only thing Sullivan has not resumed is her playing career. She took up valve trombone in the '50s.

What she does continue to practice is her good work at The House That Jazz Built, a home in the Bronx which she and Jackson dedicated to providing accommodations and other necessities for musicians.

Things are jumping for Sullivan, who takes it all calmly in her small yet giant stride. A New York club in April, then London and Bern, Switzerland, and back in time to celebrate her 75th birthday at home on May 13.

3/2/86

JAZZ

PREPARE FOR A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER REPORT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Weather forecast: Early morning sunshine, becoming hazy for a while with possible change of temperature, clearing later.

That is about as firm a picture as one can draw for the present on the status of Weather Report. The jazz world's most distinguished fusion band is at a crucial stage. Although co-founders Josef Zawinul and Wayne Shorter just completed a new album, it could turn out to be their last collaboration and the final use of the group's famous name.

The problem is that the leaders have been going in separate directions. Zawinul's solo album, his first in the 15 years since Weather Report sent out its original signals, has just been released. Shorter's own LP, "Atlantis," also his first in many years, was issued a few months ago, and he is committed to bookings with his own group for the rest of the year. As a result, Zawinul, who plans to go on tour to promote a new Weather Report album due out in May, will have to do it without his partner and, for legal reasons, without the use of the group's name.

"I didn't know until a couple of weeks ago," Zawinul said the other day, "that Wayne is booked so far ahead. I can't wait another year for him to decide it's time for us to tour again. So we'll definitely go out—but there will be no saxophonist, because nobody can replace Wayne. He came in like a blockbuster and played as great as I've ever heard him on this new album, but for the tour we'll have a guitarist, John Scofield, along with Victor Bailey on bass, Mino Cinelu on percussion and Peter Erskine on drums; and we'll have to change the name, maybe to Weather Update or something."

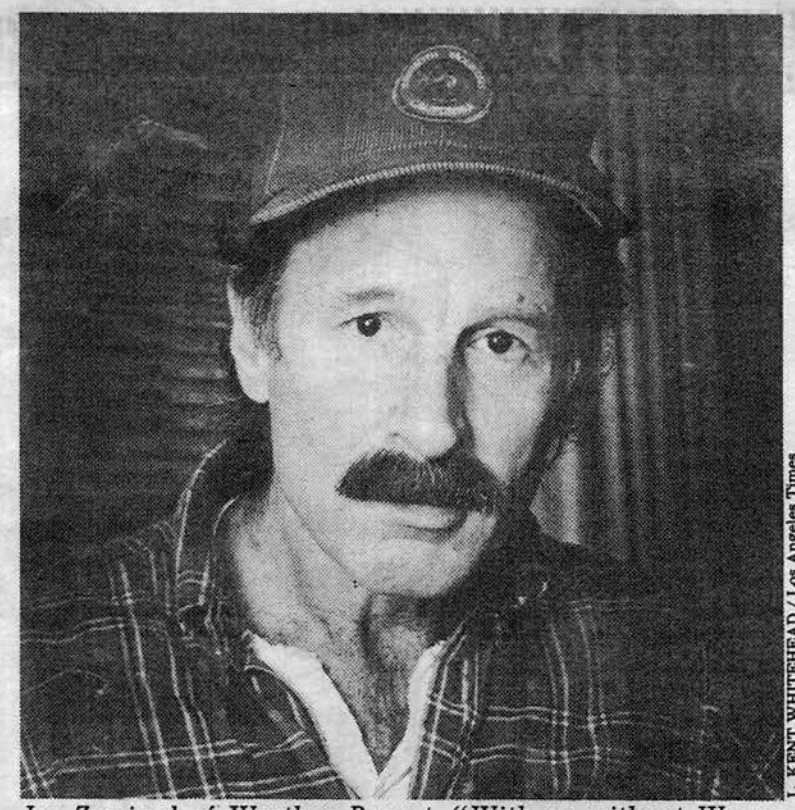
How much the absence of Shorter will affect the impact of the band is debatable, for it is an open secret that Zawinul always has been the dominant figure, writing most of the music (for the new LP he composed six songs; Cinelu and Bailey contributed one each). Critics often have remarked that Shorter's participation both as player and writer seemed to be diminishing.

Zawinul characterized the new album as "high caliber," pointing out that because the members had been apart for a year, the spirit was that of a happy reunion. "Omar Hakim had to be brought in from London, where he was working with Sting; we had to fly in Victor Bailey and Mino Cinelu from Tokyo. Peter Erskine, who was our regular drummer in 1978, came out twice from New York to co-produce and do some of the playing."

In addition to the five regular participants, Carlos Santana was added to play on two tracks. "I wrote a kind of Woodstock-era blues for him. The whole album is a swinging affair; we're calling it 'This Is This.' So between my own album, 'Dialects,' and the new Weather Report album, it'll be a one-two punch."

The first punch is occupying Zawinul's attention at present, and such is his eloquence in describing it that even if one has not heard it, his enthusiasm becomes contagious. (Having heard it, I can confirm that "Dialects" is an extraordinary accomplishment.) A polyethnic collection, it represents, he said, many of the peoples and places he has known, with impressions of their moods, their songs and dances, their laughter.

"Dialects" represents, for Zawinul, the collation of thousands of pieces of music he had taped over a period of several years. Using four keyboards and three drum machines, it is a one-man production and a step forward in the art of the synthesizer. Even some of the vocal effects are produced by Zawinul through the use of a Vocoder.



L. KENT WHITEHEAD / Los Angeles Times

Joe Zawinul of Weather Report: "With or without Wayne (Shorter), with or without Columbia, we're gonna keep going."

"All the pieces on the album," Zawinul said, "were originally just things I sat down and improvised. Then I replayed them, wrote them down note for note and recorded them again to achieve the best possible sound and mix."

Geographically, the album's seven tracks do some fancy continent hopping. Of the opening cut, "The Harvest," the composer said, "This is a worldwide harvest celebration: to me a peasant in my native land, Austria, is the same as a peasant in China or Russia and so on.

"The piece called 'Waiting in the Rain' represents those poor people sitting there—in Ethiopia, any part of Africa, any place in the world—waiting for the dry spell to end. I was trying to capture the feeling of one group of people, a tribe, with a preacher. In every group there's always someone who talks the most, and I assigned Bobby McFerrin to do the improvised chanting here."

The scene moves to Japan in "The Great Empire," with its gong-like synthesizer introduction, symbolizing the shogun days. "Then there are two explosions that to me were the two atomic bombs; and later on we hear how Japan has changed. There are two tones repeated, but they are never used twice in the same way; the rhythm changes every time."

Zawinul's music is evocative of many times and places in his life translated into the new-world languages of the synthesizers. The opening passage in the two part "6 a.m./Walking on the Nile" cut opens with a simulation of barking dogs. "In the village where I lived in Austria, early one morning my whole family was still sleeping and I hung a microphone by my window and picked up the sounds of the birds, the roosters, and then later, when I listened to the tape, I heard this distinct melody of two Dobermans across the street. I just put a bass line to it and that's what you hear in the introduction. The second part of this tune expresses my feelings about the people of North Africa. I used a lot of acoustic instruments here—a kalimba, my dumbeck drums, and a zither my momma used to play when she was a kid.

"The last number, 'Peace,' was inspired by the great classical flutist Jim Galway; I wanted to get his sound—it's a sort of concerto for flute and orchestra."

Both the Zawinul LP and the new Weather Report set are on Columbia, the label for which the group has been recording since its birth. It is possible, however, that this may mark the end of the long association, since the album is the last under the group's third five-year contract.

"We're gonna go shopping," Zawinul said. "I'm not saying we won't continue with Columbia, but several other companies are very interested."

Having devoted 15 years of his life to Weather Report, Zawinul says he has no intention of letting it fall apart. He and his family made many sacrifices, he claimed, and he had chances to do other things; it was because the group kept him so busy that he waited 15 years before making another solo album. And there is, he said, no animosity between him and Shorter.

"Wayne and I are friends; it's just that he's had a taste of being a leader on his own, and he wants to be out there doing his thing. That's fine; but with or without Wayne, with or without Columbia, we're gonna keep going." □

048

May '86 Swing Journal

ショーターは一流の

◀去る3月1日、ジョー・ザビヌルは本誌を訪れ、現在の心境をストレートに語り尽した。(写真：内山繁)

There'll Be a Change in the Weather by Leonard Feather

明日の"天気予報"は誰にもわからない

レナード・フェザー(本誌特約寄稿家)

天気予報——朝のうちは陽が出，午後になって一時天気はくずれる模様だが，また晴れ間が広がるだろう。

というのが，現在のウェザー・リポートについて筆者が予測できる一番確かなところだ。ジャズ界最高のフュージョン・バンド，ウェザー・リポートは今，危機にたたされている。創立者の2人，ジョー・ザビヌルとウエイン・ショーターはつい先頃最新作の録音を終えたばかりだが，2人が顔を合わせるのはこれが最後のアルバムとなるかもしれないばかりか，世にとどろいたこのグループ名を使うのも，これが最後になるかもしれない。少なくとも今いえる範囲では，その可能性大なのである。

問題はどこにあるのかと言えば，単純にリーダーの2人が別々の道を歩み始めたということである。ザビヌルのソロ・アルバムが，先日WRがのろしをあげて以来15年ぶりに発売をみた。一方，ショーターの久々のソロ・アルバム「アトランティス」も，数カ月前に発売されており，しかも彼は自分のグループで今年いっぱいブッキングが入っている。その結果，5月のWRの新作の発売と同時にプロモート・ツアーを予定していたザビヌルは，パートナー抜きでツアーを決行しなければならなくなったわけだが，となれば法的にもグループの名前は使えなくなるということになる。

先日ザビヌルが筆者に語ってくれたのは，次の通りである。『私も1，2週間前までは知らなかったんだ。ウエインがそんな先までブッキングしてたなんて。彼がまたツアーしようと言い出すまで，また1年待つなんてことは私にはできないよ。だから絶対ツアーはやるよ。ただしサックスなしでね。だって，ウエインの代わりはいないよ。今度のアルバムでも，ダイナマイトみたいに入ってきて，これまで聴いたことがないくらいに良いプレイをしていたね。その代わり，ツアーにはギターを入れる。ジョン・スコフィールドだ。その他は，ベースがビクター・ベイリー，パーカッションがミノ・シネル，ドラムスがピーター・アースキン。そうなると当然名前も変えなくちゃならないだろうね。ウェザー・アップデイトとかなんとかね。以上がバンドの今後というところだ。少なくとも近い未来はね』

ショーターの不在がどの程度グループに影響を与えるかは今後議論の的だろう。だが，グループを牛耳ってきたのは常にザビヌルであり，曲の大半を書いてきたのも彼だということは，もうとっくに公然の秘密である（今度の新作では，ザビヌルが6曲，ミノが1曲，ビクター・ベイリーがバラード1曲を提供しており，ショーターのクレジットは1曲もない)。グループにおけるショーターの影が，プレイの面でも作曲の面でも薄くなっていたことは，すでに幾度となく評論家が指摘してきたところだ。

ザビヌルは，今度の新しいアルバムを『最高のレベル』と表現している。そのわけは，メンバーが1年近くも離れていたために，久々の顔合せにはなやいだ空気が充満していたからだという。『オマー・ハキムはロンドンから呼びよせた。スティングとロンドンにいたんだ。ビクター・ベイリーとミノ・シネルは東京から飛んできたし，ピーター・アースキンはニューヨークから2度飛んできて，プレイとコ・プロデュースに参加している。78年にバンドのレギュラー・ドラマーだったけれども，いやはやたいしたミュージシャンになったもんだよ。それからビクターね。これがものすごく練習してるんだ。あんなにうまいウォーキング・ベースを弾く奴は，モンク・モンゴメリー以来初めて見るよ』

5人のレギュラー奏者に加えて，カルロス・サンタナが2曲で参加している。『彼のためにウッドストックの頃を思わせるブルースを書いたんだよ。アルバム全体がもう大ノリ大会。「ディス・イズ・ディス」と今のところ呼んでいるんだけどね。だから，私のアルバム「ダイアレクツ」と，このWRの新作で，ダブル・パンチというわけだ』

ウェザー・リポートの新作はCBSコロムビアから発売される。CBSはWR結成以来のレコード会社である。だが，これを最後に彼らとCBSの長いつきあいには終止符が打たれることになるかもしれない。今度のWRの新譜で，3度更改された彼らの5年契約は，すべて満了するのである。『これからちょっと物色しに出かけるとするか』と，ザビヌルは言う。『CBSと縁を切ろうというわけじゃないけど，他にも興味を示してくれる会社が何社かあるんだ。ただ一言だけは言いたいね。この前の「スポーティン・ライフ」は，もうちょっとアメリカでうまくいっていいはずだった。ただ売りたいから出しているんじゃないけども，私もみんなも真摯に，真剣に音楽をやってるんだ。一生懸命作って，レコード業界の誰だかさんに途中ではねのけられたんじゃかなわない』

人生の15年をウェザー・リポートに捧げてきたザビヌルは，バンドをみすみす空中分解させるつもりは毛頭ないと言い切る。彼自身も彼の家族も多くを犠牲にしてきたし，他のことをやろうと思えば，チャンスはいくらでもあった。なのに15年間，自分のソロ・アルバムさえ作らなかったのは，このグループがあったからだ。だが，ウエインと彼の間には悪感情はまったくない。ジョーが断言する。『ウエインと私は友達なんだ。ただ，彼が自分でリーダーとしてやったことがあったんで，自分のことをやりたくなっただけなんだ。それはそれで良い。でも，こちらはウエインがいようといまいと，CBSが入ろうと入るまいと，やっていく。そんなこと，言わなくてもわかってるだろう』(1986年2月20日ロサンゼルス発)

SJ Special Interview with Joe Zawinul

きいてくれ、これがすべての真相だ

ジョー・ザビヌル(訳：小山さち子)

私の正直な意見を言わせてもらえば，ウエインは偉大な，超一流のサイドマンなんだ。他の人のところでやってる時はグレートなんだ。他のことがまったく頭にないからね。今度のウェザー・リポートのアルバムのウエインについても同じことがいえるんだ。今回は何にも曲を書いてないから，ただスタジ

3/7/86

JAZZ REVIEW

SHELLY LAVIN AT ALLEYCAT BISTRO

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Alleycat Bistro, a restaurant on Overland at Washington in Culver City, has been making good headway with its musical policy, devoted primarily to singers Wednesdays through Saturdays, with the occasional instrumental evening by a jazz combo.

Wednesday's incumbent was Shelly Lavin. Like most of the attractions here, she was billed as "Jazz Vocalist." The arguments about where the borderlines for that genre begin and end have been chewing up newsprint since Bing Crosby's early days. (Was he or wasn't he?) In Lavin's case, it might fairly be said that this seems to be one of her objectives.

"I'm really a torch singer," she declared in the lead-in rap for Leslie Briscusse's "When I Look in Your Eyes." Well, yes, and in such songs as this and the breathily intoned "I Loves You Porgy" she seems reasonably relaxed and in control.

Much of the set, though, was given over to standards of the "Cheek to Cheek" and "I Get a Kick Out of You" variety, delivered with a touch too much extroversion at the cost, now and then, of accurate intonation.

Lavin is, in fact, a conventional performer who needs strong and challenging material to bring out her virtues. Her tone quality lent itself well to the sardonic lyrics of Dave Frishberg's "Peel Me a Grape." Jeremy Lubbock's "Not Like This," popularized by Al Jarreau, illustrated her ability to deal convincingly with contemporary tunes.

Her accompanists—Gregg Kanakas, piano; Steve Samuel, drums, and Jack Daro, bass—all had a solo workout during "The More I See You" in addition to playing a couple of luke-warmup numbers on their own.

3/15/86

BURRELL: FOOLPROOF GUITARIST

By LEONARD FEATHER

Kenny Burrell, who brought his guitar into the Hyatt Sunset on Wednesday evening, encountered problems that would have defeated a lesser man, yet managed to overcome them without even showing the discomfort he must have felt.

The odd casting system that sometimes operates in this room juxtaposed him with Sam Most, who plays flute and tenor saxophone, and who had never before worked or even rehearsed with Burrell. More seriously, Most's microphone refused to cooperate during the first part of the set, rendering him almost inaudible.

Fortunately, the guitar amplification was not affected. By the time Most's sound had been recaptured, the audience had been treated to a superlative example of the continuity and cohesion that long ago established Burrell as one of the literally foolproof guitarists—as Webster defines it, guaranteed to operate without breakdown or failure under any conditions.

After a few minutes of "testing, one, two, three. . . ," Most switched to alto flute, on which his breathy, staccato style has a very distinct personality. "I Love You" was a stimulating vehicle for him and for the captivating, leaping lines of Burrell, who continues to reflect such inspiring influences as Charlie Christian and Oscar Moore.

The rhythm section provided unified support as well as powerful individual contributions. Art Hillery is a Bud Powell pianist whose crisp articulation and use of space bring meaning to every solo. John Heard, the painter and sculptor, still finds time to remind us that he is also one of the preeminent jazz bassists.

Tootie Heath on drums confined himself to easygoing brushwork except for the closing "Night in Tunisia," for which he switched to sticks in a relatively restrained and rhythmically witty solo. On this number Most took up his tenor sax, from which he extracted a muddy but generally agreeable sound.

3/12

JAZZ REVIEW

DOLLY DAWN AT VINE ST. BAR & GRILL

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Vine St. Bar & Grill has expanded its policy to include music at the cocktail hour, provided by Dolly Dawn.

Dolly who?

Granted the name will be unfamiliar to anyone who neither lived in New York during the Swing Era nor listened to the radio remotes by George Hall and his orchestra, with vocals by the same Dolly Dawn. She also recorded under the billing Dolly Dawn and her Dawn Patrol.

Except that Dawn's career began almost a decade earlier, it has paralleled that of Rosemary Clooney, in the sense that Dawn started as a dance-band vocalist, stepped out as a pop singer, disappeared for a long while, then returned in a new, musically improved model with a distinct hint of jazz in her performance and accompaniment.

Dawn, who appears in the room Tuesdays through Saturdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m., draws almost exclusively on popular hits and show tunes of the '30s and '40s. Like Clooney, she stays in close touch with the melody, but her affecting timbre and easy phrasing, with the help of sympathetic accompaniment by her pianist, Don Beamsley, may remind you that ad-libbing and scatting are not necessary to establish a gentle jazz mood.

She negotiates the rangy "Memories of You," on which most singers tend to cheat, with no trouble at all. Her only problem, in fact, is that she sets up each tune with a sometimes overlong announcement addressed to an audience of talking heads. When she sings, the noise usually dies down somewhat. A table (or a seat by the bar) near the bandstand is recommended to those who care to investigate the Dawn of a new era. Her engagement continues indefinitely.

3/18

MULLIGAN: MIDDLE-OF-ROAD MAGIC

If it seemed odd that Gerry Mulligan introduced none of his soloists Saturday at El Camino College, a good explanation would be that he didn't know most of their names.

Despite the "Mulligan and His Concert Band" billing, he had left his regular men in New York and hired the drummer Frank Capp to put together a group of top-notch Los Angelenos. On the third and final night of its existence this 16-piece ensemble interpreted Mulligan's compositions with precision and confidence.

Mulligan's orchestras have always reflected his middle-of-the-road personality, just as his baritone sax with its amiably grainy sound bridges the swing and bop eras. Both as soloist and writer he avoids excessive complexity.

Mulligan was in fine fettle, doubling on soprano sax in his Grammy-winning "Walk on the Water," singing his own lyrics and melody on "I Never Was a Young Man," bringing a pristine beauty to "Song for Strayhorn" and lending a Basie-like beat to "With a Smile on My Face."

Among the soloists, Bob Cooper on tenor, Billy Childs at the piano and Steve Huffsteter and Don Rader on trumpets stood out. The closing "K-4 Pacific" gave Frank Capp a chance to shine without showing off.

There were reminders of Mulligan's debut days as a leader in "Line for Lyons," a product of his quartet years, much of which he performed on this occasion backed only by Capp and the bassist Bruce Lett. Despite the variety of settings in which he has presented himself over the years, there has been a sense of continuity to everything Mulligan has achieved.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ

LOUIE AND PEARL— 33 SWINGING YEARS

3/9

By LEONARD FEATHER

There is no other family in show business quite like the Bellsons.

Louis Paul Bellson (drummer, composer, arranger, big-band and combo leader, sideman) and Pearl Bailey (singer, comedienne, stage and movie actress, social and political activist, author of six books, recently graduated college student) were married in London on Nov. 19, 1952.

They have two children: Tony, 32, a drummer, and Dee Dee, 25, a group singer heard on recent albums by Weather Report and Wayne Shorter. For five years, the senior Bellsons have had a home in Lake Havasu, Ariz., and occasionally they get to see it, despite separate or sometimes interwoven traveling schedules.

In Pasadena recently for a concert, they looked back in contentment on their 33-year marriage.

"The key to our making it work," said Bellson, "is that on all of Pearl's dates she requires at least a quartet, so for about half of each year we're together. The rest of the time I may work with my band, but never for more than two weeks continuously.

"When Pearl did 'Hello, Dolly!,' that was a crucial time, because there she was in New York with this colossal hit for two years and three months—and I was out here in L.A. with my band, or doing sideman dates with Quincy Jones. What we did was very smart—Pearl suggested it. She said, 'Just keep on doing your work, but stop once a month and come to New York for a few days, and bring the children every month or two.' It worked out just fine."

□

"The same thing happened when I was studying," said Bailey, who last May received her bachelor's degree in theology from Georgetown University. "I was there for seven years—it would have been four, but Louie would commute and I'd take time out for weekend gigs and other occasional absences. A girl's gotta eat, too, you know. Because of the traveling, I did some tutorials, but my papers were never late; I made the dean's list twice, and graduated with a 3.34.

"I always wanted to be a teacher; I love learning, love reading. I've attended classes and seminars everywhere from Oxford to Cal State Northridge."

It was in Northridge, in the San Fernando Valley, that they made their home for many years until the move to Arizona. "We have a small house right on the golf course," Bellson said. "It's been perfect for us—so peaceful and quiet after you've been on the road for months. We do our own cooking, our own cleaning; it's just Pearl and I and our little dog Charlie. We try to get back there several times a year; last summer we spent almost a month there. It's always a real vacation for us."

"We moved to Arizona," Bailey said, "because it seemed to me that people in the big cities were losing touch with reality, losing sight of important values like respect for the common decencies of life."

Some of this social disintegration, she feels, is reflected in today's music scene, in which a sense of reality also has been lost. "These videos I've been seeing don't relate to the lyrics, and recordings are becoming less and less natural. When you have to put on a headphone and sing in an empty studio to something pre-recorded, where is that live contact?

"My goodness, we used to go in and record for three hours, break for dinner, come back and have the album finished three hours later.

TOM KELSEY / Los Angeles Times

Pearl Bailey and Louie Bellson—working on and off stage.

Sinatra is still here, and he can do that. So can Ella.

"Jo Stafford can still sing; I can still sing, but we're not even recording. How can you say we don't deserve an award when you can't hear us on a record? I think I'll just go in a studio and do an album—nobody has asked me, so I may as well do it myself."

Bailey's attitude is not simply that of the disenchanted veteran; she has warm words for Stevie Wonder, Neil Diamond and others of less-than-classic vintage.

"I have told Tony and Dee Dee to listen to the great singers and players and songs of every era. Let the young people mix in other things to show our great heritage. Linda Ronstadt did it; Toni Tennille did it. To herd young folks into one area of music is demoralizing!

"The other night, I saw Teddy Pendergrass on a TV show, and when he came out in that wheelchair his soul, his face, his diction, everything about him made me fall in love with him—and when he said his mentor was Nat King Cole, I knew why he understood so much about phrasing and feeling."

Separately and together, the Bellsons' careers have taken them to almost every point on the globe. Some of the visits have transcended musical considerations: After her appointment by President Ford as special representative to the U.S. delegation to the U.N., Bailey made a trip to the Middle East and Africa, visiting hospitals, orphanages, leper colonies, homes for the handicapped, schools and women's groups in Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Liberia, Senegal and the United Arab Emirate.

During a 1974 Middle East tour, she became the first woman to receive the Bel Ami Freedom Medal (it was given to her by good friend, King Hussein). Adept at making friends on both sides of the unmended fences, she has equally strong ties with Israel, where she and Bellson have toured extensively. A musical endowment for the handicapped was established in her name at Bar Ilan University. On March 29, she will be lecturing in Phoenix for the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute.

She has long since lost count of her visits to the White House, often with her husband, under every administration during the past 30 years except John F. Kennedy's.

Bellson, who was a member of Duke Ellington's orchestra when he and Bailey were married, played in the all-star band that honored his ex-boss in the East Room on Duke's 70th birthday in 1969, when President Nixon awarded Ellington the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The Bellsons have been among the few musical visitors to the U.S.S.R. since the start of the Reagan Administration. They were over there last year with Bellson's rhythm section. "We were asked to sit in with some Russian musicians," Bellson said, "and they videotaped that at a high school in Moscow. I heard two sensational guitarists, a great trombone player, and three sax men who played like Stan Getz. The same thing happened in Leningrad—astonishing talent. They learn a lot from records, and from Willis Conover's 'Voice of America' nightly jazz show. You know, they're still talking about Duke's visit in 1971, and Benny Goodman's in 1962."

Like Ellington, Goodman is a name that has been a significant thread in Bellson's career. At 19, he played his first stint in the Benny Goodman orchestra; he has returned many times and is currently involved in a series of dates with him.

"Benny is a perfectionist; give him what he wants musically and he'll be fine. Sure, we've had our differences, but I love the old guy, and I've learned so much from him, it's ridiculous. People think he's foggy, but he knows every move he's making. Here's a man 76 years old, with a bad back, and he stands there and takes two hours to perfect one arrangement. And he's playing better than ever."

Bellson recently recorded an album with Goodman playing some of the original Fletcher Henderson arrangements. "That's ageless music. We're opening March 16 at Radio City Music Hall—Benny's band, Sinatra and Ella."

Bellson soon afterward will revert from sideman to leader and composer for some challenging projects. "The first week in July, I'll be doing some concerts and recordings with the London Philharmonic. We'll be performing a four-part piece for percussion, which Harold Farberman and I wrote—Harold was a principal percussionist with the Boston Symphony."

While Mrs. Bellson continues to divide her time among social works, government-sponsored tours and her regular act as an incomparable comedy-tinged singer, Mr. Bellson goes about his own business in his own world between dates with her. How they have made it all come together, and for longer than most couples stay married, is eloquently explained by Louie:

"I'm so happy to have a wife who really understands me. When we first got married, she said, 'Look, you're a musician. If you have a gig, you come first. You're the man of the house. And that's pretty neat, you know, because she makes a lot more money than I do, but she knows that my thing is to try to create something musically worthwhile. I'll never make millions, but I have a certain amount of respect and security in my career, and that means everything to me." □

051

JAZZ

3/16

FRANK CAPP, NAT PIERCE: JUGGERNAUT SURVIVORS

By LEONARD FEATHER

The condition of big-band jazz, and the dogged spirit that has enabled it to survive, is nowhere better illustrated than in the case of Juggernaut, the Los Angeles-based orchestra co-directed by drummer Frankie Capp and pianist/arranger Nat Pierce.

Typically, Juggernaut does very little traveling. No less typically, the band works only a few nights a month and most of its members earn their living as free-lancers in the TV, movie and recording studios. Still, the men won't give up; they recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of their joyful togetherness, and by today's standards there has been remarkably little turnover in the personnel.

Of the musicians who played on Juggernaut's first album shortly after its formation, 10 are still along for the ride: Capp and Pierce, saxophonists Marshal Royal, Bill Green and Plas Johnson, trumpeter Bill Berry, trombonists Buster Cooper and Alan Kaplan, bassist Chuck Berghofer and singer Ernie Andrews.

"Obviously, we're not in it for the money," Capp says. "Oh, we make enough to buy a bag of groceries and a tank of gas now and then, but we do it because it's fun, because it's great music and it has to be played, and because music like this should survive. Why do symphony orchestras keep playing Beethoven? For the same reason, we play a lot of Basie. Actually, although we've been typecast as a Basie band, we do a lot of other things: Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, originals by Benny Carter and Benny Golson, and of course the blues with Ernie Andrews."

"Whatever we play," Pierce says, "we've reached the point where we get our individual sound. You can't put your finger on it, but even when we play, say, an old Basie thing like 'Moten Swing,' we lend it our own personality."

Juggernaut today plays nightclubs, concerts and dance dates, mostly in and around Los Angeles, but with occasional forays such as festivals in Concord and Ojai. This June, they will appear for the first time in the Playboy Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl.

"The farthest east we've ever been," Capp says, "is Des Moines, Iowa, where we did a PBS television show. But people know us around the country; we have three albums, all on Concord Jazz, and hope to make another very soon."

The orchestra was organized through a lucky accident. "The seed of this band was planted in 1957, when I had a band in Birdland," Pierce says. "At that time, Neal Hefti was writing all those great things for the Basie band, and I asked him if I could copy some of his arrangements. He said sure, so I spent many hours writing out all the parts."

□

Capp, who was then playing with the Andre Previn Trio in Hollywood, came to New York, heard a Pierce rehearsal and asked if he, in turn, could copy the music. "We didn't have any music of that kind in California. I took three or four charts at a time and spent 10 weeks making a set for myself—things by Neal, by Nat, and others. Then Nat and I didn't see each other for 13 years."

Pierce moved to California in 1971, leading his own group occasionally but also writing arrangements for many bands (Basie, Bellson, Bill Berry, Woody Herman), and playing piano whenever a gig came along, often for singers. "Frank and I talked about starting a band, but meanwhile Neal Hefti decided to put one together, and he hired me as contractor for it."

STEVE DYKES / Los Angeles Times

Frank Capp, left, and Nat Pierce are keeping the big band tradition alive and swinging with the Capp-Pierce Juggernaut.

"I played with Neal," Capp says, "and after we worked Disneyland, he asked me to book some more dates. I set up a gig at King Arthur's, a restaurant in Canoga Park, for October of 1975. Then Neal said he was disgusted with the band business and wanted to give it up.

"But they didn't want to cancel the King Arthur's date. The owner said, 'I need something for that night. Got any ideas?' I told him I'd put a band together and call it a tribute to Neal Hefti. I told Neal about it one day while we were playing golf.

"Neal dropped his clubs—and his jaw. He said, 'You're *not* going to use my name on any kind of tribute! I'm sick and tired of other people playing my arrangements!' So I called Nat and said, 'Look, why not bring in some of your library—you have a lot of the old Basie things that Count gave you—let's co-lead the band and we'll call it a tribute to Count Basie instead.'

"This was just supposed to be a one-night throwaway, but the audience really flipped, and they kept us there once a week for several months."

By this time, Capp had the idea of bringing in Ernie Andrews, with whom he had worked in the Harry James band. "He was the closest to the Joe Williams-type singer that I knew, and he's been a great asset to us right along."

Soon after Juggernaut had recorded a live album at King Arthur's, Pierce had to return to another role that had long been a part of his life, that of Count Basie's alter ego, filling in at the piano whenever Basie was ill.

"I sat in with Basie as early as 1950, when he had a small group, but I began officially subbing for him about 1957. In fact, we played a week in Boston, my hometown, and it was odd—here I was, the only white guy in the band, and people were coming up and asking, 'Which one of you guys is Count Basie?'"

□

Though no mention of it is made in the badly flawed Basie autobiography "Good Morning Blues" (ghost-written by Albert Murray shortly before Basie's death and published recently by Random House), Pierce played off and on in the Basie band for 30 years—once for as long as four months, after the leader's heart attack in 1976. He even played piano for three Basie records, twice without credit and once credited (on "Ya Gotta Try" in the "Prime Time" album). During the past six years, he has worked, most often in Europe, in countless Basie-alumni or Basie-tribute bands.

Capp, like Pierce, wears many caps. Aside from Juggernaut and his studio work (musical coordinator for "Moonlighting," contractor for Lalo Schifrin and others), he is simultaneously on the board of governors of the National Assn. of Recording Arts and Sciences, and a vice president of the National Academy of Jazz, formed last year. He is well aware of the Grammy Awards uproar that erupted recently when, going from one extreme (no jazz at all last year) to the other, NARAS overloaded the show with 22 jazz artists and gave them each almost nothing to do. This overkill process was greeted with almost unanimous disgust in the jazz community.

"The NAJ is not in competition with NARAS," Capp says. "We have to co-exist with them, but they never did care about jazz, and what they did this year, in effect, helped the NAJ. As a group of jazz-minded people, we can put on a TV show in which the presentation, the playing time, the staging, can make the music interesting to watch as well as to listen to.

"The jazz academy just got its tax-exempt status, and we're ready to start planning an honors-type show along the lines of the Kennedy Center Awards program—nothing to do with best-selling records or pop music; we'll just pay homage to some of the great jazz artists. We've accumulated 200 members without even trying; record industry people and artists in New York are joining up, and now we're going full steam ahead with a splendid chance of all the financial backing we need."

Capp and Pierce are an odd, Mutt-and-Jeff couple. Capp, a stocky 5-feet-7, is the aggressive partner; Pierce, a 250-pound 6-footer, is laid-back and casual. Like the legendary Dorsey brothers, they have had their personality conflicts, yet the desire to keep the band going still links them firmly. They are planning a new album that will team them with Carmen McRae.

Though their careers have often taken them in diverse directions, both are obviously committed to the advancement of the music they believe in. Whether it's the two of them playing a Juggernaut job, or Pierce on the road with a Basie tribute, or Capp donating his services to a time-consuming chore for the nonprofit National Academy of Jazz, they are dedicated, serious men who place integrity before the numbers game that tends to take the music out of the music business. □

3/18

"Jazz at the Smithsonian: Art Farmer." Sony. $29.95. Farmer's fluegelhorn, both open and muted, maintains his lyrical standards, though the concert would have achieved a group sound, and needed diversity, with the addition of a second horn. Material is drawn from such sources as Charlie Parker, Joe Henderson, Cedar Walton and Thelonious Monk (with pianist Fred Hersch out-Monking Thelonious in his blues solo). Brief interviews with Farmer by Willis Conover.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Good Morning Blues

3/16

The Autobiography of
Count Basie as Told to Albert Murray
(Random House: $19.95; 399 pp.)

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

Show business autobiographies are generally of two types. Some aim at sensationalism, letting it all hang out. Others are more discreet, omitting or altering facts to suit the author's wishful recollection. Count Basie's story falls into the latter category. Even Albert Murray's skill and professionalism cannot overcome this handicap.

... Readers unfamiliar with the Basie story will find Murray's work richly anecdotal and evocative of the *Zeitgeist* in the early New Jersey, New York and Kansas City years. Much of the writing, however, is as elliptical as was Basie's piano. One problem is that it reads too much like Basie in conversation, as if, for authenticity's sake, Murray took it off the tapes, verbal warts and all.

At one point, I began checking off the sentences that included, "I don't remember" or "I can't recall" or, worse, "I'm not going to get into that." I tired of the process after losing count.

Basie's unique story deserved an honest retelling. His was a classic instance of an artist who had greatness thrust upon him. A capable soloist who once played good stride piano, he was limited in his schooling ("I didn't go any higher than junior high school . . . that was the worst mistake I ever made"), in his musical education (he had trouble reading music), and in his ambition: Leading a band was more the result of chance than of any burning success drive.

All he wanted was to be around show people and remain a part of their world.

The early years as a sideman with Walter Page's Blue Devils and with the Bennie Moten Orchestra, in which he and Moten played piano, make an absorbing documentation of black urban life. The further the story moves along, however, the more we are inundated with irrelevant details ("The movie that week was Ricardo Cortez in 'City Girl' ") and dubious facts.

Having known Basie almost as long as his discoverer, John Hammond (I met him during his $21-a-week Reno Club days in Kansas City, saw him frequently until his death in 1984, and even wrote a couple of arrangements for the band), I found it particularly easy to spot the gaps in Basie's recall.

The introduction states that he will avoid gossip but will not "leave out anything just because it is personal." Yet a glaring personal omission is the great trauma in the lives of Katy and Bill Basie: Their only child, Diane, was severly handicapped and still requires constant care.

The errors of commission, though minor at times, could have been checked. Jeanne Taylor is described as "our new girl singer" in 1947 (an amazing coup if true, since Taylor is a very blond white woman; she was with Basie only on a record date). Hot Lips Page, the trumpeter, is described as "the emcee" of a 20th anniversary party for the band, which I attended; Page that night was dying in a New York hospital.

Marshall Royal, Basie's lead saxophonist for 20 years, "became ill" and quit the band, though, in fact, he was inexplicably fired and was quite bitter about it. This misstatement typifies the book's faults; it tells what Basie would like us to believe.

Racial problems are dealt with only glancingly, but this reflects one of Basie's strengths; he tried to ignore race and transcend bigotry. The words *black* and *Negro* are avoided, and the old fashioned *sepia* is substituted.

If the objective in leaving so many details fuzzy is to show us how absent-minded Basie was, Murray has succeeded. In 1960, when I was researching a booklet to accompany one of the band's albums, his road manager told me: "One thing you can be sure about on a road tour with Basie. Basie won't know where he's going, who he's playing for, or how to get there."

What does emerge in these pages is Basie's easy-going, kindly attitude, a disposition that enabled him to retain an ensemble with an unprecedented team spirit.

Lena Horne once said: "Basie isn't just a man, or even just a band. He's a way of life." Much of that feeling comes across, despite the flaws in Basie's dictation and Murray's documentation.

THE BOOK REVIEW/LOS ANGELES TIMES

Continued from Second Page

'Blues'

JAZZ REVIEW

WALDRON, PALS AT SILVER SCREEN

By LEONARD FEATHER

Some of the most creative music in town is issuing nightly from the bandstand at the Hyatt Sunset's Silver Screen Room. Mal Waldron, the leader, is a pianist who lives in Munich; ages ago he was Billie Holiday's last accompanist.

Waldron's work is capricious, verging at times on the Monkish. In his own "Fire Waltz," after displaying a beguiling ability to create an original melody, he began ad-libbing sparely, as if depositing thoughts in an idea bank, then making a sudden withdrawal in the form of a heavy, somberly chorded climax.

David Friesen, seated on his stool, nursed his upright bass virtually in his lap, limning one remarkable line after another, with occasional bursts of chords. He is one of the unsung, or at least seldom sung, masters of the instrument.

Eddie Moore's solo on the closing tune was predictably overlong and boring, but as a team member he made it valuably clear that these three men have worked together off and on for a long time.

Frank Morgan, who had been advertised to appear with the trio, did not show for the first set, but more than made up for lost time during the second. Never having met Waldron, he plowed through familiar territory, yet managed to sublimate six choruses of "All the Things You Are" and an even longer solo on "What Is This Thing Called Love" into fountains of unremitting, cliche-free, surprise-packed invention.

It is safe to say that in peak form, and in terms of the post-Charlie Parker tradition, Frank Morgan is the greatest alto saxophonist living today. New Yorkers just don't know what they are missing.

This altogether extraordinary group closes Saturday.

JAZZ REVIEW

JOHN BLAKE AT PALACE COURT

By LEONARD FEATHER

There has never been a glut of jazz violinists. Most of the pioneers have left us; among the handful who have come to prominence in the last 15 years, the leader in the field, beyond question, is John Blake.

In town for a two-night stand Friday and Saturday at the Palace Court, Blake brought along his own group of fellow Philadelphians; consequently he was able to present his original works in a cohesive setting.

Formerly heard with Grover Washington Jr. and McCoy Tyner, Blake has had the classical training essential to complete command of the instrument. His sound, however, is strongly amplified and somewhat metallic in the memorable tradition of the late Stuff Smith.

There was a flamenco flavor to his opening piece, "Todos Los Ninos," with a powerful 3/4 beat established by the rhythm team and a sympathetic solo by the pianist Sid Simmons.

"The Other Side of the World," preceded by a cheerful rap about a visit to Geneva that inspired him to write it, lived up to its title with Blake's fiercely slashing, near-demonic attack and intensely inventive lines. Gerald Veasley, an exceptionally potent electric bassist, accentuated the extraterrestrial mood in a long solo punctuated by percussive sounds, chord flurries and string-loosening glissando effects. Pete Vinson on drums showed his familiarity with the nuances of every arrangement.

After a hard-swinging workout on Bobby Timmons' "Dat Dere," Blake brought an East Indian influence to bear on "Maiden Dance," played in deft unison with the piano. The set ended spectacularly with "Twinkling of an Eye," the title cut of Blake's latest LP, in which Veasley achieved a sitar-like quality and Blake again demonstrated his rare blend of technique, rhythmic vigor and melodic inspiration.

It is a rueful fact of Los Angeles life that groups of this caliber are in and out of town so fast that by the time the word is around, they're hundreds of miles away. Let us hope the Palace will summon Blake for a return engagement while word of his visit is still fresh in the minds of those who heard about it too late.

053

JAZZ REVIEW

ELLIS MARSALIS, SON WYNTON AT UCLA

By LEONARD FEATHER

Ellis Marsalis might best be characterized as half a household name. Thursday evening, sharing the bill with Wynton Marsalis before a full house at Royce Hall, UCLA, he offered clear evidence of the talent that has been reflected in his more celebrated sons.

Marsalis *pere* is a pianist steeped in several traditions. As one might expect of a musician who devotes much of his time to teaching, he seemed thoroughly in touch with a variety of idioms, from the bebop of his opener, Bud Powell's "Hallucinations" to the swing-era style and even-keel rhythms he applied to "I Cover the Waterfront." Even more engaging was the harmonic imagination he brought to "Lush Life," a complex song in its original form rendered even more subtly intricate in his treatment.

Marsalis the composer was represented in "Homecoming," a slow and seductively melodic work. Later in the set he was joined by Wynton for the only father-and-son appearance of the evening, aptly dedicated to their hometown as they sustained a quietly persuasive mood in Hoagy Carmichael's "New Orleans."

For his two closing numbers, "Love for Sale" and "Moment's Notice," the senior Marsalis borrowed his son's bassist and drummer, Bob Hurst and Jeff Watts, rounding out a well-planned and executed set.

After intermission it was Wynton's quartet all the way, with Marcus Roberts taking over at the piano. Though he included one or two originals, the trumpeter has been concentrating more on standards since the departure of his saxophonist brother Branford left him without a front-line partner to round out the thematic statements. After a cup-muted expedition through the exotica of "Caravan," he seemed liberated by the more chordally oriented "Out of Nowhere," and by a well-planned "April in Paris" that vacillated between 3/4 and 4/4.

The Marsalis backup team with its elastic rhythms has everything under tight control, despite the overall impression of looseness. Wynton remains a master both in technique and of emotion-laden conviction. His use of the old Louis Armstrong theme "Sleepy Time Down South," employing understatement and leading to a low-key finale, was at once a reminder of his awareness of jazz history and evidence of his skill in building on the groundwork laid by his forebears.

Taken on its own terms, the Marsalis Quintet-Minus-One succeeded individually and collectively; yet there had to be moments when one wished that his elder brother were still around, horn in hand. Branford, where is thy sting?

Herald file photo

Jazz singer Billie Holiday at apex of her career in the 1940s.

Singing immortal Billie Holiday gets Walk of Fame star

Associated Press

Lady Day finally got her day of recognition yesterday on Hollywood's Walk of Fame, as old friends and fans gathered to dedicate a star and remember the sweet sounds and stormy life of jazz singer Billie Holiday.

"Billie Holiday represented love to me," said singer Marla Gibbs at the dedication of the star on what would have been Holiday's 71st birthday.

"She was born out of love, and she suffered for lack of love, and she died for want of love. All her music was about love."

Among the notables who paid homage to the woman whose voice shaped generations of jazz vocalists were singers Rosemary Clooney and Carmen MacRae, and jazz critic Leonard Feather.

The best-known of Holiday's recordings include "Lover Man," "Strange Fruit," "Fine and Mellow," "God Bless the Child" and "Love for Sale."

The woman known as Lady Day to her fans began her career singing in such Harlem clubs as the Yeah Man and Jerry Preston's Log Cabin.

Holiday died July 17, 1959, in New York City while under arrest in her hospital room, her longtime addiction to drugs and alcohol taking her life as they had earlier taken the better notes of her once-silky voice. She was 44.

Academy Kick-Off, Manne Salute Bang Drums For Jazz In H'wood

5/1 Variety

By HOWARD LUCRAFT

"The real jazz is back — and Hollywood's got it."

That's the hopeful dictum behind the many local jazz activities this past month. Musicians whose names are international legends, socialized, supported and swung fundamental sounds definitely *not* in the rock/fusion chart-topping, money-making styles.

Monday night saw the official inauguration of the National Jazz Academy at the Hyatt Hotel on the Strip. Academy president, tv director-producer Jim Washburn, gave special credit to Leonard Feather for the group's initiation, and it was Feather (along with the Vine St. Bar & Grill) who organized money for the sidewalk star for Billie Holiday unveiled earlier this month.

Washburn explained objectives of the National Academy: "We plan a jazz awards tv show, probably for the first time in the Fall of the year." Concerts are also skedded "to raise money for scholarships and workshops." Washburn talked of a future musicians' retirement facility in Palm Springs "like the Motion Picture Home."

At the Monday night jazzmatazz, Mel Torme, Bill Henderson and Sue Raney sang, while players included Bob Cooper, Plas Johnson, Frank Collett, Pete Jolly, Bob Florence, Ray Brown, Monty Budwig, Jeff Hamilton, Frank Capp, Terry Gibbs and Herb Ellis.

Thirty minutes of the program was broadcast by KKGO-FM, with the station's leading deejay, Chuck Niles, as emcee.

Washburn introduced an executive from Anheuser-Busch as "our sponsor."

Yesterday the Los Angeles Jazz Society (Teri Merrill-Aarons, president) unveiled a commemorative manhole cover in the sidewalk outside the entrance, on Cahuenga, to the former Shelly's Manne Hole jazz club.

Drummer Shelly Manne's widow, Flip, spoke, along with Marian Gibbons, who heads Hollywood Heritage.

CURTIS PEAGLER DIGS UP SOUNDS FROM THE PAST

By LEONARD FEATHER

An occasional visitor lately to the Nucleus Nuance has been the one-time Count Basie alto saxophonist Curtis Peagler.

He was on hand Tuesday evening, not quite certain what rhythm section had been booked to accompany him. At least he enjoyed an opportunity to check them out before working with them, since they played the first two numbers as a trio.

On drums was the ever reliable Albert (Tootie) Heath, who will be bringing his own quartet back here shortly. The bassist was another stalwart, John B. Williams. At the piano was Dwight Dickerson, an able though faintly florid soloist and a capable component of the backup team. The three offered unspectacularly agreeable return visits to such perennial stamping grounds as "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" and "Quiet Nights."

Peagler, an imposing, tall, shaven-headed figure, then took to the stand and raced through a few rounds of the Sonny Rollins "Oleo" with time out for statements by all the sidemen, including Heath, whose drum solo succeeded in quieting a fitfully interested crowd.

Next, Peagler excavated all the way back to 1923 for a revisionist look at Irving Berlin's "What'll I Do," followed by a second ballad, "Don't Worry 'Bout Me." Both were replete with enough double-time passages to put his impressive neo-Charlie Parker chops on display. Of course, if Peagler owes a debt to Bird, the same assessment might be made of almost any saxophonist who has come into earshot during the last 40 years.

3/23/86

JAZZ

SOPHISTICATED LADIES

By LEONARD FEATHER

The quality and quantity of jazz-influenced female vocalists seems to be improving by the month. Following are some of the more interesting items among dozens received in recent weeks:

□

"HOW DO YOU KEEP THE MUSIC PLAYING?" Susannah McCorkle. Pausa 7195. This intelligent, richly rewarding set of a dozen interpretations will appeal to everyone concerned with the classic American popular song tradition. McCorkle's tone, phrasing and sensitivity match her taste in songs. The repertoire crosses a 70-year bridge, from the 1916 "Poor Butterfly" to Dave Frishberg's "Blizzard of Lies." In between are Webb, Jobim, Legrand, Berlin, Gershwin and Kern.

Who but McCorkle could actually induce me to enjoy a version of "There's No Business Like Show Business," which I once listed among my 10 most abhorred songs? No Ethel Mermantics here: She treats it as a slow waltz ballad. One dozen roses to the lady just for this unprecedented achievement.

Among the other delights: Al Cohn's tenor sax on four cuts (among them "Outra Vez," which is sung in Portuguese), the too-seldom heard "While the City Sleeps" (from "Golden Boy"), and a sly song delivered with McCorklesque humor, "Ain't Safe to Go Nowhere."

This is by all odds the best-conceived and best-executed vocal album of the year to date—and I expect to repeat that claim in December. 5 stars.

□

"TRANSBLUCENCY." Maria Muldaur. Uptown 27.25. If good intentions were all, this would be a 5-star set. Backed by a jazz octet, Muldaur works her way bravely through a splendidly chosen repertoire (who can argue with "Lazy Afternoon," "You've Changed" or the old Nat Cole hit "Looking Back"?). She even duplicates the wordless Kay Davis vocal on the original 1946 version of the Ellington title song. But compare her "Blizzard of Lies" with McCorkle's: She reads the lyrics without seeming to get the point. On several tracks, as in Andy Razaf's amusing conducted tour lyrics on "Massachusetts," her intonation is off—singing the title 12 times, she never quite hits the four notes on the nose. Still, a nice try; for the better moments, 3½.

□

"MIDNIGHT MAMA." Jeannie & Jimmy Cheatham. Concord 297. In every respect—diversity of moods, keys, tempos, material—this is a vast improvement on the Cheathams' debut LP last year. Her no-hollers-barred voice and deep blue piano and her husband's angry bass trombone deal authentically with a collection of lighthearted originals ("Finance Company Blues") and blues legends ("C.C. Rider"). Jimmie Noone's clarinet evokes agreeable memories of his father; Snooky Young's trumpet, Lockjaw Davis' tenor and Curtis Peagler's post-Bird alto capture the spirit. Except for an anticlimactic final track with glee-club vocal and out-of-tune soprano sax solo, this is about as genuine a sample of contemporary-yet-classic blues as you will find around today. 4½ stars.

□

"MEMORIES OF YOU." Dolly Dawn. Dawn 2001 (212 West 91st St., New York 10024). One of the pleasantest surprises of the season is Dawn's re-emergence as a first-rate, jazz-influenced singer. Her glowingly confident sound is applied to the nostalgic "Old Man Time," Alec Wilder's "Blackberry Winter" and a slow, caressing "Pennies From Heaven," complete with the seldom-heard verse. Fine accompaniment by Phil Bodner (clarinet, flute), pianist Tony Monte, et al. 4 stars.

□

"SOMETIMES I'M BLUE." Kim Parker. Soul Note 1133. Parker has that elusive X-factor, a jazz tone quality, but after her promising previous recorded efforts this is a letdown; too often she sounds shaky and ill at ease, her intonation less than perfect. Despite fine piano by Mal Waldron, the rhythm section backing is lifeless on the slow and mid-tempo cuts. Being Charlie Parker's stepdaughter is no guarantee of success. 2½ stars.

□

"IN THE LAND OF HI FI." Dinah Washington. EmArcy 826-453-1. The unforgotten queen of the blues lends her tart-tongued imprimatur to "My Ideal," "Let's Do It" and 10 other standards. Eight bars of Miss D and you are sold; forget the string-laden, unswinging Hal Mooney arrangements. They are relieved only twice: by a brief Cannonball Adderley solo in Phil Moore's "There'll Be a Jubilee" and by Junior Mance's piano in "Love Is Here to Stay," the latter inexplicably credited not to the Gershwins but to three other writers. One star for the orchestra, 5 for Her Ladyship.

□

"OO-SHOO-BE-DO-BE." Lilian Terry with Dizzy Gillespie. Soul Note 1147. Some curiosities here: "Night in Tunisia" sung in Egyptian, "Con Alma" with lyrics (by Abbey Lincoln), and Gillespie as assistant vocalist, trumpeter and jew's harp soloist. The title track, surely the least of Birks' works, trudges on for 10 minutes. Terry's idea of overdubbing "Moody's Mood For Love" and "I'm in the Mood for Love" sounds like two records played at once. Too much gimmickry and comedy, not enough use of the talent at hand. 3 stars.

□

"KING PLEASURE SINGS; ANNIE ROSS SINGS." Prestige 7128. You say you want to know where the Manhattan Tranfer's vocalese concept came from? Here are the lyricized solos of Moody, Getz, Bird, Prez, et al., on which King Pleasure is aided here and there by David Lambert, Jon Hendricks, Betty Carter and a young conductor named Quincy Jones. But Pleasure's eight generally excellent cuts are topped by the four in which a 22-year-old Annie Ross made her spectacular record debut. Here are the original versions of "Twisted" and "Farmer's Market," along with her delightful ballad "The Time Was Right" and a superbly original wordless blues, "Annie's Lament." Four stars for Pleasure's classics of the genre; 5 for Ross.

□

"THE LADY'S IN LOVE WITH YOU!" Margaret Whiting. Audiophile 207. No question, it's a trend: Both generations—the Whitings and Dawns along with the McCorkles and Muldaurs—are involved in the classic-pop revival, with salutary results for songs and singers alike. Whiting is as definitive an artist in this field as you will find on records today. Her backing, with piano, synthesizer and arrangements by Hubert Arnold, guitar by Gene Bertoncini, is unconventional and engaging. Here are Loesser, Gershwin, Cahn, Carmichael, Sondheim and a couple of unfamiliar names among the 15 cuts. Mel Torme's album notes are a strong bonus. 4½ stars.□

055

4/6/86

JAZZ

ROSEMARY CLOONEY'S SURPRISE SUCCESS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Walking into the handsome Beverly Hills mansion, you are imbued with a sense of pop music history, and not only because Rosemary Clooney moved in 33 years ago.

George Gershwin lived here. Russ Columbo died here. Columbo (who preceded Bing Crosby as vocalist with the Gus Arnheim orchestra) could have been bigger than Bing, if that gun hadn't gone off accidentally in the den of this house and wiped him out at 26.

In the living room Gershwin sat at the piano in 1937 and composed "A Foggy Day" and his last song, "Love Is Here to Stay." Later, the house was owned by Ginny Simms, one of the great radio and TV singers of the '40s and '50s. During Clooney's residency, Ira Gershwin was her next-door neighbor and good friend until his death in 1983.

The house, in short, has a history as remarkable as that of its present owner. Rosemary Clooney has had an extraordinary life, told in an autobiography ("This for Remembrance") and later made into a TV melodrama. But right now she neither needs nor wants to rely on the old stories about her stormy relationship with Jose Ferrer (two marriages, two divorces), her fight against pill addiction, nervous breakdown and all the other checkout-counter-magazine gossip. Clooney today is high only on success, and it's a success of a kind she never expected.

It began, or more properly recommenced, when Clooney was on tour with Bing Crosby, whose drummer, Jake Hanna, was virtually the house drummer for Concord Jazz records.

"Jake kept telling me I should record for this company. Except for one album with Bing, I hadn't recorded in a long time. I did two tracks for the Ellington memorial album."

Hanna soon persuaded Carl Jefferson, head of Concord Jazz, to record a Clooney album. This was the start of a long association: There are now nine LPs, most of them employing small jazz groups with Scott Hamilton on sax, Warren Vache on cornet, Nat Pierce on piano and Hanna. One album teamed her with the Woody Herman orchestra.

"It's funny having an image as a jazz singer," says Clooney. "My idea of a true jazz singer is Mel Torme; he can scat and do all kinds of inventive things that I can't handle. Still, I do sound more free and jazz-influenced than when this all started."

Actually, it had started many years earlier. She eased into the major leagues by touring as half of the Clooney Sisters with a band led by Tony Pastor, the former Artie Shaw saxophonist. During that time, she recorded a few tunes on her own; in 1949, a Down Beat magazine review declared: "Rosemary Clooney has an extraordinarily good voice, perhaps the nearest thing to Ella Fitzgerald."

JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

Rosemary Clooney has a new image today as a jazz singer.

After three years on the road, Betty Clooney, the younger sister, opted for home and semiretirement; two weeks later, Rosemary quit and went out as a single, armed with a Columbia Records contract. Some of the hits that followed were more valuable for the financial security they brought than for any merit in the songs; she was never enamored of "Come On-a My House" but grants that it was commercially invaluable. She was grateful, though, that long-lasting success came along soon after with "Tenderly."

Married in 1953, a mother two years later, she almost never stopped working; during those years, there were movies, TV series, recordings with Harry James, Benny Goodman and the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

"The album with Duke is still available, you know. In fact, it was just reissued in Japan because my Concord things are doing so well there. It was strange—I was never in the studio with Duke. He sent Billy Strayhorn out here to work on the songs; Billy went back to New York to do the charts, the band recorded there, and Billy came back here, stood in the booth and cued me while I overdubbed the vocals. That was in 1957, and that's one album I'm proud of."

Clooney today is one of a growing number of singers who can claim to have bridged the jazz-pop world, attracting a broad audience with the use of great songs in the Gershwin-Porter-Berlin-Ellington tradition. "I think Linda Ronstadt did us all a hell of a favor," she says. "I hear Dolly Dawn has an album out too. When Betty and I first joined Tony Pastor, we played a theater in Indianapolis and Dolly was the star of the show—she taught me how to put on makeup. I was about 18."

Mention of her sister, who was only 45 when she died suddenly of an aneurysm, led to an enthusiastic discussion of the event that is foremost in her mind at the moment. She has assembled an immensely impressive cast for a concert to aid the Betty Clooney Foundation for the Brain Injured, to be held Monday at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

"We're calling it the first annual singers' salute to the songwriters. I'll be hosting it, and the show will pay tribute to Marilyn and Alan Bergman, Sammy Cahn, Cy Coleman, Barry Manilow and Jule Styne, all of whom will be present.

"Look at this lineup of performers and presenters: We have Bob and Dolores Hope—she really has a wonderful voice—Tony Bennett, Debby Boone (Clooney's daughter-in-law), Diahann Carroll, Jackie Cooper, Harry and Nathaniel Crosby, Beverly D'Angelo, Maureen McGovern, Melissa Manchester, Patti Page, Dionne Warwick, the L.A. Jazz Choir, Jose Ferrer. . . ."

Jose Ferrer?

"Oh, sure. We're friendly now; with five children, you eventually have to be. I'm glad, too, because he's an interesting man, and important for me to have in my life. He'll be a presenter. Oh, and we're starting a Nelson Riddle Award for arranging. This year we'll be giving it to Quincy Jones."

The cause is very close to her heart: "There are so many people, a lot of them quite young, who are brain-injured at the peak of their career. Quincy, who had two aneurysms, survived miraculously. A cousin of mine, a registered nurse, was in a water-skiing accident and went into a coma for 12 weeks but aside from a short-term memory loss, she's OK now."

Her producer, Allen Sviridoff, came up with the idea of paying homage to songwriters. The evening is expected to raise enough funds to establish residential centers providing 24-hour supervision along with psychological and social services for adults with brain injury. Clooney and her brother, TV newscaster Nick Clooney, are co-chairs of the foundation. Instead of the small-group jazz format heard on her Concord albums, she and the other participants will have the support of a large orchestra conducted by Jack Elliott.

Clooney is thankful for the presence of John Oddo, her musical director, who will be writing most of the arrangements. "I got to know John when he was with Woody Herman and I recorded with the band in 1983. It's marvelous how many people Woody has given their start, and then he has the most wonderful relationships with them after they leave. John has been with me ever since we

April 8

worked on that album."

Heavy-set nowadays, Clooney was wearing an attractive gown designed by her daughter Maria. "She's a painter, and she works on fabric. My son Gabri is a wonderful painter too—he and Debby have a son who's 5, twin daughters, and right now they're waiting for their fourth.

"Miguel, who married Josh Logan's daughter, is my oldest son, a fine actor and a good director. Moncita is married to a producer for the Christian Broadcasting Network; she was just here with my little grandson. Rafael, my youngest—he was born in 1960—is an actor; he just left for New York to see how things go there for him.

"So I have four grandchildren and another on the way. The latest is due any day—God, please, soon; because Debby's got to sing at my concert on the 7th!"

Rosemary's babies and grandbabies are a consuming source of interest. She doesn't mind the grandmotherly image, as those TV commercials for Coronet Paper Products make clear. While accepting the pleasures of the present, she cannot dismiss the one trauma of the past that remains with her constantly.

"Betty was three years younger than I, but we were more like twins than sisters. Her death was a terrible shock; we were all kind of held together by her. Betty explained me to Nick and Nick to me; she was the conduit of our best feelings about each other. Nick and I miss her to this day. I'm happy that the foundation will help to perpetuate her memory." □

LOS ANGELES TIMES/CALENDAR

YOKO

Yoko Ono on the front page ("It Still Ain't Easy," by Robert Hilburn, March 30).

Billie Holiday on the third page ("Lady Day Had a Right to Sing the Blues," by Leonard Feather).

Come on. Let's get our priorities straightened out here.

JIM GRAY
Northridge

LADY DAY HAD A RIGHT TO SING THE BLUES

By LEONARD FEATHER

Eleanora Fagan McKay, whom the world remembers best as Billie Holiday and whom Lester Young nicknamed "Lady Day," would have been 71 April 7.

There will, of course, be no national commemoration of her birthday; nothing like the big plans for April 29 when, on the 87th anniversary of his birth, Duke Ellington will be honored by the issuance of a 22-cent postage stamp with his likeness.

Ellington, who came to fame early, never had to deal with traumas such as those endured by Holiday during her relatively brief years of prominence. In fact, given the conditions under which she grew up, and the sheer chance incidents that led to her discovery, we are lucky to have known her at all. Her autobiography, "Lady Sings the Blues," written for her by William Dufty, is best remembered for its opening sentence: "Mom and Pop were just a couple of kids when they got married; he was 18, she was 16 and I was three."

Pop was Clarence Holiday, a guitarist who played in the bands of Fletcher Henderson, Benny Carter and Don Redman. The Holiday marriage was short-lived. Raised by her mother, Billie (who took the name from her favorite silent-movie star, Billie Dove) got as far as the fifth grade in school, picked up nickels scrubbing the doorsteps of white families, and ran errands for prostitutes in a whorehouse. "I'm not the only one who heard their first good jazz in a whorehouse," she said in her book. "But . . . if I'd heard Louis Armstrong and Bessie Smith at a Girl Scout jamboree, I'd have loved it just the same."

According to her version, Billie was never a prostitute herself in Baltimore, but was raped in the house when she was 10, was arrested and sentenced to do penance in a Catholic institution.

After her release, she went with her mother to New York. "Mom got me a room in a beautiful apartment belonging to a lady named Florence Williams." What Mom failed to observe was that Florence was one of the biggest madams in Harlem. Billie said that within days she had her chance to become a strictly $20 call girl—"and I took it."

Arrested again, she was sent to Welfare Island for four months, then wandered through Harlem looking for a job. At one club, Pod's and Jerry's, she auditioned as a dancer, failed, and was asked whether she could sing. She sang "Travelin' All Alone," was hired, and soon found herself earning a salary.

In 1933, at the Log Cabin, celebrities began to patronize the room: Paul Muni, John Hammond, Red Norvo, Mildred Bailey. Hammond brought Benny Goodman, who hired her to sing on two numbers on a record date. After the Log Cabin came the Hotcha and Dickie Wells' club and even the Apollo, for a munificent $50 a week.

John Hammond eventually found her regular recording work as the vocalist with Teddy Wilson and his various recording groups. A year after that series, she also began recording regularly under her own imprimatur. I was at the first "Billie Holiday and Her Orchestra" session, as Hammond's guest. Artie Shaw and Bunny Berigan were sidemen on the date. Billie sang two pop tunes of the day and poured her soul into "Summertime" (then a new song, too, since "Porgy and Bess" only had recently closed on Broadway).

When Billie had trouble with the fourth song, John Hammond called out from the control booth, "Billie, why don't you just sing some blues?

"Billie's Blues," the product of that suggestion, was the first of a handful of songs in that idiom recorded by her. Though branded in the media (and by her book title) as a blues singer, she sang pop tunes and superior standard favorites almost exclusively; in fact, her only other celebrated blues was "Fine and Mellow," immortalized in her TV appearance on "The Sound of Jazz."

I suppose that when I spent an evening at her home (shortly after her stint with the Count Basie band), it was the first time she had ever been interviewed. Her mother, an enormous but very short woman with a kindly manner, was as unaware as I of Billie's private indulgences; the heavy drinking and pot smoking were part of a life she lived away from home.

When she joined Artie Shaw, the first black singer with a white band, this was a unique event; I took a train to Boston for her opening night. There they sat, at opposite ends of the bandstand, Billie and Helen Forrest, the white "protection" vocalist who sang on most of the band's records (Billie was under contract to another company). Shaw was very protective, but the insults were too much, and Billie finally quit in disgust on being told to use the back door—ironically, when the band was playing in a hotel named after Abraham Lincoln.

□

The golden years for Lady Day began with her long tenure at Cafe Society, the Greenwich Village club where both the show and the audience were integrated, a rarity then. She sang her own "God Bless the Child." In 1939, she introduced "Strange Fruit," the song about a lynching. Soon she was working at the 52nd Street clubs, where she could elicit pin-drop silence from a crowd of noisy drinkers.

The producer Milt Gabler signed her for Decca records and asked her to record a new song, "Lover Man." "I want to do it with strings," Billie insisted. She got her way, and this become one of a long line of songs indelibly associated with her. One was her own "Don't Explain," inspired by an incident involving her husband, Jimmie Munroe. It was after her marriage to Monroe, she wrote, that the involvement with hard drugs began: first opium, then heroin. While winning an Esquire award every year, singing at the Metropolitan Opera House and the Los Angeles Philharmonic (where Jerome Kern presented her with the "Esky" statuette), she was sinking deeper into a morass that inevitably led to her arrest.

One of my bittersweet memories is the farewell concert she gave at Carnegie Hall just before reporting to the federal authorities. She sang "I'll Be Seeing You," and if there were any dry eyes in the house, I failed to observe them.

Billie was released from the Alderson, W.Va., women's facility looking healthy, even overweight. One night, she came over to cook dinner for my wife and me. On hearing that we were about to become parents, she said, "Wonderful! I want to be the godmother." When Billie Lorraine Feather was born, her godmother knitted her a pair of booties.

It had long amazed me that Billie had never played outside the United States. I assembled a show called "Jazz Club U.S.A." with her as the star, and the Red Norvo Trio, the Buddy De Franco Quartet and the all-female trio of the pianist Beryl Booker.

We opened in Stockholm in January, 1954, after the first of a series of disasters: Bad weather bumped our plane in Copenhagen and we straggled in by train a few hours before the first show.

In place of the ghetto theaters and sleazy dressing rooms that had marked too much of her life at home, Billie soon found herself besieged by autograph hunters, by fans bringing her bouquets on stage and treating her in a manner so deferential that she reacted accordingly. Her morale was never better.

Back home after that encouraging tour, she soon was surrounded by the old gang of hangers-on and pushers. By now she was recording for Norman Granz on Verve, but the strain of her life style had caught up with her vocal control; her final five years produced some sides worthy of her, along with several that revealed the toll taken on her range and her intonation. There was another arrest in 1956. Louis McKay, whom she had married around this time, moved to California.

In the fall of 1958, Billie agreed to make guest appearances at two concerts I had organized with a history of jazz format. A few old friends were there: Buck Clayton from the old Basie orchestra and Georgie Auld of the Shaw band. Backstage, she told my wife: "I'm so goddamn lonely—since Louis and I broke up I got nobody, nothing."

We lived not far apart on the Upper West Side. After hearing about the death of Lester Young, to whom she had been so close in the Basie days, I dropped by to pick her up and take her to the funeral. In the taxi on the way downtown, she was sunk in gloom. "I'll be the next one to go," she said.

She was. Two months later, there was a pitiful final appearance in a benefit at the Phoenix Theatre for which Steve Allen and I were emcees. She looked so emaciated that I called Joe Glaser, her manager; the next morning we met at her apartment. He begged her to put herself in the hospital. "No, I'll be all right; the doctor said these shots he's giving me will do it. I've got to open in Montreal next Monday."

That was seven days away. On the following Saturday, she collapsed and was carried first to one hospital, then another. In a gruesome finale, she was arrested on her death bed for possession; police were posted outside her room. On admission to the hospital, she had some money strapped to her leg and almost nothing in her bank account.

She died on July 17, 1959.

At noon on April 7, near the corner of Vine Street and Selma Avenue in Hollywood, a star carrying her name will be implanted in the sidewalk. Almost 27 years after she died in a New York hospital bed at the age of 44, Holiday will at last make Tinseltown's Walk of Fame.

Her records are still with us, and the better-late-than-never Hollywood sidewalk star may remind a few stragglers that she was, as every singer from Frank Sinatra to some of today's ingenues have agreed, the ultimate jazz singer.

As I once wrote in a retrospective essay, her voice was the voice of living intensity, of soul in the true sense of that greatly abused word. As a human being, she was sweet, sour, kind, mean, generous, profane, lovable and impossible, and nobody who knew her expects to see anyone quite like her ever again. □

'One of my bittersweet memories is the farewell concert Billie Holiday gave at Carnegie Hall just before reporting to the federal authorities. She sang "I'll be Seeing You," and if there were any dry eyes in the house, I failed to observe them.'

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HARLEM—SAVORING THAT SWING

By LEONARD FEATHER

LARRY BESSEL / Los Angeles Times

Eddie Durham, Laurel Watson of the Harlem Jazz & Blues Band.

The Harlem Blues & Jazz Band is doing for the golden age of swing roughly what the Preservation Hall Jazz Band has done for New Orleans music. The reason? It is composed of musicians who lived through the big-band era, playing with the likes of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw, Ina Ray Hutton and Louis Jordan.

Founded by Dr. Al Vollmer, an orthodontist in Westchester, N.Y., the 13-year-old band will be giving its first West Coast tour this week, playing at Pepperdine University tonight, Downey Theatre in Downey on Wednesday, Fellowship Hall in Pasadena on Thursday and the Forum in Yorba Linda on Friday.

Vollmer himself plays soprano sax; there are eight members, of whom the most distinguished are trombonist Eddie Durham and vocalist Laurel Watson, whose talent deserves broader recognition.

Durham and Watson were in town last week, scouting out the territory and talking about their collective credits, which are astonishing.

Durham has always led a multiple life. One of five musical brothers who had their own band in San Marcos, Tex., he played guitar and trombone from the start, and has kept up that unusual double throughout a 60-year-plus career ("I think I was born in 1906, but all the birth records were destroyed"). Along the way he made a name for himself as a composer and arranger. After playing from 1929-33 in the Benny Moten band that included Count Basie as second pianist, he was with Jimmie Lunceford, Count Basie and dozens of other bands, most often as arranger rather than performer: Glenn Miller, Jan Savitt, Artie Shaw, Ina Ray Hutton, the Sweethearts of Rhythm. For a while he led an all-female band of his own.

Most notably, he was the first jazz musician to play and record on electric guitar.

"I was fooling around with amplifiers back in the Moten days," he says. "I switched back and forth between electric and acoustic. With Lunceford I used a resonator to enhance the sound. With Basie I recorded an electric guitar solo in 1937, and in '38 I played it on two small-group dates alongside several guys out of the band."

It was not until 1939 that New York welcomed Charlie Christian (whom Durham had met in Oklahoma City: "I heard him playing acoustic, when he was still trying to figure out how to make the guitar sound like a horn"). Christian's electric recordings with the Benny Goodman sextet brought the instrument permanently out of the shadows.

Durham has more than 1,500 credits as composer or co-writer of such works as "Topper," "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire," "Time Out," "Out the Window," "Every Tub," "Lunceford Special," "Blues in the Groove," "Harlem Shout" and, for Glenn Miller, "Glen Island Special" and "Sliphorn Jive."

"Glenn Miller was 100% with me—literally. He didn't take a share of the composer royalties. So many of the bandleaders I worked with put their names on my songs and collected half the money.

"I played with Glenn only on a record. He had a complex about his playing, so I told him, 'Get your mind off Tommy Dorsey! Let me bring my trombone to the session and we'll make two takes on "Sliphorn Jive," one with me and one with you.' When they played them back to us, Glenn listened to one and said 'That's you.' But it was Glenn! So we straightened him out on that. I never did know which take they released."

□

Watson's credits are hardly less impressive than Durham's. Born in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., she started with a band led by the legendary saxophonist and composer Don Redman before moving on to Roy Eldridge, Lucky Millinder, Cootie Williams, Count Basie ("I was with Basie for over a year, but never got to record with him"), Tommy Reynolds, Louis Jordan, Buddy Tate and Duke Ellington.

"I didn't record with Duke either—I was supposed to sing on his record of 'Love You Madly,' but one night Johnny Hodges insulted me onstage and I quit. I went to a club in Milwaukee and stayed seven months. Duke finally tracked me down and called up. 'Why did you leave me, baby?' He sweet-talked me into taking time off just to fly to Chicago and do one night with him at the Blue Note," she says.

That was in 1951. Since then Watson has managed to make a living, possessing a major talent but always remaining on the fringe of the big time, sometimes leading her own trio or working alone. She joined the Harlem Blues & Jazz Band three years ago. "I never stopped working, never got married; I've always been independent."

Watson and Durham enjoy the company they keep in the Harlem band. It includes Al Casey, the guitarist whose years with Fats Waller led to two Esquire All Stars awards; Eddie Chamblee, the tenor saxophonist who was among Dinah Washington's half-dozen husbands; Bobby Williams, the trumpeter and nominal leader; Charles Bateman, piano; and John Williams, bass.

How much of Durham's music will they play? Smiling wryly, he says, "Only head arrangements—if I wrote for them they wouldn't rehearse. This band just likes to have fun."

4/13/86

JAZZ

GRIST FOR THE VCR MILL

By LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz videos are proliferating—not at the rate one might hope, but certainly enough to justify the ownership of a VCR by any serious follower of the music.

One recurrent problem is that too many of the shows up to this point have been little more than LPs with images. Aside from an occasional brief interview with the subject there is rarely any attempt to build a true documentary performance, blending past and present footage with well planned historic surveys.

A reason for this limitation could be that most of the videos received recently are simply live concerts transferred to tape. More new material, to which more forethought is devoted, may be forthcoming if there is a concerted effort to produce shows in the studios.

□

"A VERY SPECIAL CONCERT." Chick Corea. Sony 96W50074. Taped four years ago at the Country Club in Reseda, this was a reunion with Corea's old Return to Forever rhythm section and the tenor saxophonist Joe Henderson. Corea credits drummer Lenny White for "putting this whole thing together."

The 56-minute program includes only four numbers, each from 10½ to 13½ minutes long. The breakneck "L's Bop" will appeal to those who are hooked on watching drum solos. Henderson is all motion and no emotion; Corea delivers some fleet single-note lines, often leaving his left hand idle. "Why Wait?" by the bassist, Stanley Clarke, finds the composer displaying his tremendous chops and Corea at his unpretentious best. Clarke shines again in the Latin tinged "500 Miles High," but the Hispanic panic is really on in "Guernica," written by White, with Henderson offering tonal distortions possibly designed to match Picasso's visual unorthodoxies. 3 stars.

□

"A VERY SPECIAL CONCERT." Nancy Wilson. Sony 96W 50076. This is actually a continuation of the Corea concert listed above, with the identical introduction of the four musicians. But then Nancy Wilson takes over. A very pretty lady, until she twists her mouth into unsightly distortions, she was a fine jazz singer many years ago—until she launched a policy of protesting too much and showing her jazz credentials so wildly that everything falls apart.

What were idiosyncrasies for Carmen McRae and Dinah Washington become mannerisms when Wilson uses them. Overacting, losing track of the pitch, she offers a near-travesty of jazz singing. Listening to her attempting Monk's "Round Midnight" is a painful experience. The tape is of some value because there is fine solo work by Corea and, at times, Joe Henderson. For them, a star or two; for the vocalist, zilch.

□

"JAZZ AT THE SMITHSONIAN." Joe Williams. Sony. 96W50080. Williams' versatility is well to the forefront as he tackles blues ("Every Day," "The Comeback"), ballads ("Once in a While"), a Benard Ighner medley of "Same Old Thing" and "Everything Must Change," then turns over the vocal mike to his pianist, Kirk Stuart, on "But Not for Me." Although he talks about Ellington in the interview, none of Duke's songs is included. One of the special delights is an old-timey rhythm tune, "I Had Someone Else Before I Had You." Good rhythm backing, except that there are some annoy-

ing bass drum thumps and thuds. Still, a fine representation of a peerless all-around jazz vocal artist. 4 stars.

□

"JAZZ AT THE SMITHSONIAN." Bob Wilber. Sony 96W50084. Wilber, winner of the most recent Grammy for big band jazz (the album was his Ellington-based sound track for "The Cotton Club") is in a very different bag here, using a small group in a tribute to Sidney Bechet, with additional verbal and instrumental homage to Louis Armstrong and Muggsy Spanier. His soprano sax captures the essence of the period, with a guitarist doubling on banjo in the generally adequate accompaniment. Bechet originals and overworked standards ("China Boy," "Lady Be Good") make up a generally satisfying program for the traditionally oriented ear. 3 stars.

□

"THE JAZZ LIFE." Mike Mainieri. Sony 96W50064. The vibraphonist, an early champion of the electric jazz fusion movement, is teamed here with Warren Bernhart on synthesizer and piano, Bob Mintzer on reeds, the remarkable Eddie Gomez on bass and Omar Hakim of Weather Report on drums. Produced by Ben Sidran, directed and photographed with more imagination than the Smithsonian series, it runs to a full 60 minutes and takes in seven pieces, presumably all originals by members of the group. There is especially good chemistry between Mainieri and Bernhart. Despite the touches of fusion rhythm, it's more down the middle than off the wall. 4 stars.

□

"JAZZ AT THE SMITHSONIAN." Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra. Sony 96W 50086. In effect, this is a salute to Herbie Hancock, since three of four extended performances in the 55-minute set are Hancock originals: the dense, intense "One Finger Snap," the long-familiar "Eye of the Hurricane" and "Dolphin Dance." But the style of the 17-piece ensemble is more reminiscent of big-band bebop, '40s and '50s style. Don't look for any world-shaking innovations either in the solos or the arrangements; nevertheless, as an example of present day big-band jazz with strong links to the past, it's an invigorating set, with bristling work by Gary Smulyan on baritone sax, Gary Pribek on tenor and a rhythm section that cooks with the help of the pianist Jim McNeely and the bassist Dennis Irwin. A three-minute interview gives Lewis a chance to explain the role of the drummer, as he sees it, in a large orchestral setting. 3½ stars.

JAZZ BRIEFS

"ONCE UPON A SUMMERTIME." Blossom Dearie. Verve 827-757-1. Before she had discovered her own talent as a songwriter, Blossom Dearie was content to record the works of others, with a first-rate jazz backing. Her wafer-thin voice still suggests a 33⅓ r.p.m. disc played at 45; her piano is at its most expressively elegant in the company of Mundell Lowe's guitar, Ray Brown's bass and Ed Thigpen's drums. The songs are "Manhattan," "Teach Me Tonight" and 10 others of the same caliber. To sum up Dearie's persona, one need only cite one of the numbers heard here: It amazes me. 5 stars.

—LEONARD FEATHER

program, involving a dozen performers, was his most ambitious yet, and was by all odds the most conspicuously international, offering a mile-wide range of ragas, rhythms and cross-pollinated sounds by musicians from India, Japan, France, Iran and the United States.

Though one horn was heard from occasionally (a lyricon played by Steve Tavaglione), the accent throughout was on string and percussion instruments. Most valuable was the presence of guitarist Larry Coryell, a frequent associate of Subramaniam, who adapted his style and sound brilliantly to the requirements of the occasion. Engaging in frequent back-and-forth improvised exchanges, the two men achieved a gratifying mutual stimulation, both hard driving and impassioned.

No less intensely galvanic were the contests between two of the percussionists, Trichur R. Mohan playing the classical south Indian mridangam drum and Valayapatti Subramanium (no relation), who beat the thavul with the fingers of his left hand and with a drumstick held in his right. Their long contest on "Fantasy," one of several new works introduced, was a riot of rhythmic ingenuity and percussive tonal variety.

During the second half, Kazu Matsui, playing a shakuhachi flute, and June Kuramoto, a koto player from the group Hiroshima, established a contrasting mood with a typically suspenseful elaboration on what sounded like an unresolved dominant chord, though there was much more to it than that.

The two other guests were expendable. Benard Ighner accompanied himself at the piano in a single tune, "Everything Must Change." Joe Sample, a fine pianist with lengthy credits, has mysteriously deteriorated into a plodding, pseudo-impressionistic bore. His heavy-handed solo added nothing to the concert, though he redeemed himself partially in the second half, joining forces with Subramaniam for the last two compositions.

The most remarkable item in this wildly eclectic show was the finale of the first half, the showcase for Manoucher Sadeghi on the santour, an Iranian dulcimer played with two small mallets. The tune, "Indian Express," somehow typified the adventurous and unpredictable spirit of this stimulating evening.

—LEONARD FEATHER

SUBRAMANIAM & CO. AT ROYCE HALL

Lakshminarayana Subramaniam, the violinist and composer from Madras who has made California his home since 1973, presented a concert of what he still likes to call "neo-fusion jazz" Saturday at Royce Hall, UCLA.

The event attracted a near-capacity crowd, enlivened by the profusion of colorful saris. The

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JAZZ EXPRESS march 1986

A Mighty Night for LADY DAY

★ ★ ★ ★ by LEONARD FEATHER

For many years, tourists visiting Hollywood have always wanted to look at the celebrated **Walk of Fame** in and near Hollywood Boulevard. In the sidewalk are embedded stars, bearing the names of great figures in show business history.

All the big movie and music names have a star. Last year Sarah Vaughan belatedly was given one. The Three Stooges and the fictional character Bugs Bunny have stars. But not **Billie Holiday,** who died in 1959.

Five years ago I started a campaign. In an open letter to **Diana Ross,** who does have a star on the street, and whose millions of dollars were earned partly by playing Billie in the movie **Lady Sings the Blues,** I suggested that she should be the one to make sure that **Lady Day** would be neglected no longer. All that is required by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce is that it deems the artist worthy of inclusion, and that a payment is made of $3,000 – payable to the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce – just pocket money for **Diana Ross.** But she never answered my open letter, published in the Los Angeles Times.

I didn't give up. Last year I talked to **Ron Berinstein,** owner of the Vine Street Bar & Grill. Agreeing it was disgraceful that **Lady Day** had been ignored, he arranged to set up an all-star fund-raising night.

The result was one of the most memorable performances I have attended in recent years. More than a dozen jazz and pop singers volunteered their services. **Ron Berinstein** and I shared the emceeing. Both shows played to a packed house.

Throughout the evening there were many songs either written by Billie or closely associated with her. The first tune heard, in fact, was *No More,* exquisitely played by **Jimmy Rowles** (frequently Billie's pianist) with his daughter Stacy on fluegelhorn. "Billie held Stacy in her arms when she was born," Jimmy recalled.

Billie's *God Bless the Child* was sung with deep feeling by **Ella Mae Morse. Carmen McRae,** a close friend of Billie's, was superb, singing *Some Other Spring* backed by Rowles on the first show, and *I'm Pulling Through* to her own piano accompaniment on the second.

Marlena Shaw, the tall and stunning one-time Basie vocalist, captured the spirit of the occasion with *Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out-* and *Them There Eyes.* **Jimmy Witherspoon's** choice was the last song Billie sang in public, *T'ain't Nobody's Business.* He followed this with a so-called "blues classic," which consisted of the lines: "Ain't got to take you to the dentist tomorrow, 'cause I'm knocking out your teeth tonight." Witherspoon talked fondly about his English friends who, he said, saved his life when during a British tour he found he was suffering from throat cancer. He is completely recovered and in fine voice.

The **Gerald Wiggins Trio,** with **Bob Maize** and **Carl Burnett,** backed several of the singers. **Herb Ellis** and the drummer **Dick Berk,** both of whom worked with Billie in her later years, played an instrumental set.

Gottlieb/Redfern

BILLIE HOLIDAY

Lorraine Feather, whose full name is Billie Lorraine and who was Lady Day's godchild, joined forces with her Full Swing teammate, **Charlotte Crossley,** to remind us of the first number Bille ever recorded, *Your Mother's Son in Law,* from a 1933 session with **Benny Goodman.** Crossley later sang *Crazy He Calls Me,* from Billie's 1944 repertoire. Feather sang *Easy To Love.*

The surprise of the evening was **Artie Shaw,** who during both shows reminisced at length about the grief he and Billie went through, when she toured with him in 1938 as the first black singer with a white band.

Johnny Ray, a big pop star of the 1950s, acknowledged Billie as a major influence, then sang *Whiskey and Gin.* Another veteran pop star, **Dolly Dawn,** who was **Ella Fitzgerald's** early favourite, made a surprisingly effective appearance, but it was **Ernie Andrews,** singing a blues and an a cappella version version of *Sophisticated Lady,* who came close to stealing the show.

Dave Frishberg dug back to an early Holiday recording and played *Life Begins When You're in Love.* **Maxene Andrews** of the **Andrews Sisters,** who is now 68, seemed out of place with *Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen.*

Margie Evans closed both shows with a powerful *29 Ways to Get to My Baby's Door,* then called on all the previous singers to join with her for a mighty gospel rideout on *Just a Closer Walk with Thee.*

The second show differed slightly from the first in that it began with a screening of Billie herself in a 1950 film, sing *God Bless the Child.* There were two additional singers, the pixie-like **Ruth Price** and the perenially individual **Bill Henderson.**

The net for the evening was slightly short of the needed $3,000. In typical gesture, **Henry Mancini** called and offered to make up the difference.

By the way, there had been numerous attempts before the occasion to contact **Diana Ross;** she was in town, and I sent her a telegram, but nobody heard a word from her. Shortly after our night for Billie, Miss Ross left for Switzerland, to marry a man who has even more millions than she does.

The installation of the **Billie Holiday** star will take place on April 7, which would have been her 71st birthday. Better late than never.

The Song Has Ended

■ The last of the Blue Devils – really the last – is dead. **ERNIE WILLIAMS,** a vocalist and drummer who was part of the early developments in Kansas City jazz, died January 27th in a Kansas City nursing home where he lived. He was 81.

Williams, who was featured in the 1980 documentary film called *The Last of the Blue Devils,* was the last surviving member of the band. He also performed with **Harlem Leonard's Rockets,** singing with the band on a 1940 session for **Bluebird,** and with **Edwin Swayzes' Chocolate Dandies.** Williams, who was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, had lived in Kansas City for more than 40 years. LF

■ From **Footnote** magazine we learn the sad news of the death following a road accident of banjoist **JOHNNY BASTABLE.** Bastable who was 56 died on December 5, 1985. He was associated with **Ken Colyer's** band for nearly seventeen years and later led bands of his own. A tribute session for Bastable was held at London's *100 Club* recently.

HOME TECH

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

vvvExcellent vvGood vFair vPoor

VIDEOCASSETTES

"Henry Mancini and Friends." Sony. $19.95. Taped in 1980 at an auditorium in Edmonton, Canada, this is definitive middle-American music, impeccably performed by a large ensemble with strings. Concert-in-the-park sounds ("Inspector Clouseau Theme") are mixed with easy-listening Mancini piano solos ("Moonlight Sonata"), pre-rock pop songs (Vikki Carr sings "The Best Is Yet to Come") and theatricality (Robert Goulet in the "Soliloquy" from "Carousel"). There's even a touch of jazz in an intense Don Menza tenor solo. Craftmanship is the keynote throughout, with excellent sound and camera work. vvv

—LEONARD FEATHER

ASTRUD GILBERTO WITH A HEAVY BOSSA NOVA BEAT

By LEONARD FEATHER

Just 23 years ago the professional debut of Astrud Gilberto came about by chance, when her then-husband, Joao Gilberto, introduced her to Stan Getz. Her record of "The Girl From Ipanema" with Getz catapulted her to stardom. After a long retirement, she returned some years ago in a very different setting, which she introduced to Los Angeles audiences Tuesday, beginning a six-night run at the Vine St. Bar & Grill.

Gone are the lambent tones of the tenor sax and the gentle, understated Brazilian rhythms. In their place is a group dominated by a jazz trombonist and indulging in a more voluminous bossa nova beat. For the first few numbers the effect was disconcerting; too often Gilberto's less-than-limitless vocal powers were swamped by the quintet, pouring hot sauce on her vanilla ice cream sound.

Singing most often in Portuguese, sometimes in English, she gradually came into focus, starting with "Goodbye, America." This 1950s Brazilian song found the band in a more subdued mood, eliminating the need for her to rise above it. Moreover, trombonist David Sacks played several explosively expressive solos and sang occasional unison with Gilberto. Completing the group were her son, Macelo, on bass, guitarist Romero Lubambo who pulled a George Benson by playing and scatting in unison on "Ipanema," Steve Herrick on keyboards and drummer Duduka Fonseka who supplied the set's highlight with his solo on the berimbau, consisting of hypnotic rhythmic variations on two tones. The quasi-primitive groove carried over into a Gilberto original, "Xango."

"Waters of March," that most ingenious of all Antonio Carlos Jobim's melodies, was tackled efficiently though a trifle fast, in Portuguese. Michael Franks' "Amazon" in English offered a well-placed contrast. Surprisingly, the performance ended with the rarely heard English lyrics of "Caravan."

What makes Gilberto's present setting work much of the time is the overall ambiance established in those songs that best integrate the vocal and instrumental elements. By the time the set is over, one is satisfied with Sacks and forgets about Getz.

JAZZ REVIEW

PEGGY LEE: THE GLOW IS STILL THERE

By LEONARD FEATHER

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my new heart," Peggy Lee told a clearly sympathetic and receptive audience Wednesday on her return to the Westwood Playhouse. Not a literal statement, of course, but it was known to almost everyone present that the occasion marked her first performance after six months on the sidelines because of heart-bypass surgery.

Inevitably, there was a sense of curiosity in the crowd. How had the long months of hospitalization, the inability even to work out those legendary vocal cords, affected her sound? How would she look in the wake of her ordeal?

The answers were reassuring. Slimmed down, radiant in a white gown and coat with white fur trimmings, wearing shades to relieve eye strain, she simultaneously reassured anyone who may have been expecting visual or vocal signs of wear and tear.

True, the concert was brief, composed of two 45-minute sets; this was a time for pacing rather than pushing. If now and then the sound was minimally less strong, if she held on to a few final notes not quite as long as you might have expected, it really mattered little. The warmth and passion still radiated their personal glow.

As has been her policy for some years, she presented a well-diversified program of the old familiars, which her fans would find conspicuous by their absence, along with contemporary works. In the latter category, Paul Williams' "Love Dance" was particularly moving, as was "Let It Go," a new song written by Lee in collaboration with her guitarist John Chiodini.

THOMAS KELSEY / Los Angeles Times

Peggy Lee at the Westwood Playhouse, thanking the audience "from the bottom of my new heart."

The intense Latin groove she established long ago with her startling transmogrification of "Lover" was used to similarly devastating effect on "Just One of Those Things" and, to a lesser degree, on "Love Me or Leave Me." Another long-established Peggy Lee custom has been the leavening of a sometimes melancholy mood with touches of humor. She still tells a good corny joke. "I Won't Dance" came equipped with drummer Grady Tate (her off-and-on associate for 25 years) supplying a few tongue-in-traps breaks.

First and foremost, though, Lee is the quintessential interpreter of love songs. "I'm Glad There Is You" came across with all the honesty and beauty we have always expected of her, spelled by a brief vibraphone solo by her percussionist, Bob Leatherbarrow. "As Time Goes By" and the all-too-brief closing excerpt from "I'll Be Seeing You" captured the same gently sentimental essence.

With the bassist Bob Magnusson supplying his always firm foundation on opening night (Jim Hughart takes over for the rest of the engagement), there were many inspiring moments provided by the accompanying group. The only disappointment was Emil Palame. Both as accompanist and soloist he lacked the subtlety and improvisational spirit one has heard in so many great Lee pianists from Jimmy Rowles to Lou Levy to Mike Renzi.

To quote from one of her most durable hits, Peggy Lee clearly is convinced that the time has not arrived for "that final disappointment." In short, that's not all there is, and it may even be that the best is yet to come. She closes April 20.

Jazz Educators' Journal
April-May '86

Author/Critic Leonard Feather Honored

Leonard Feather, internationally recognized jazz historian, author, critic, was honored for his many years of involvement in jazz activities during the NAJE convention.

Mr. Feather has been active over the years in almost every area of jazz: pianist, composer, lecturer, producer, lyricist, talent scout, and is presently a staff writer for the L.A. Times.

The plaque presented to Mr. Feather read: THIS OFFICIAL NAJE AWARD IS PRESENTED TO LEONARD FEATHER FOR HIS MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF DEDICATION TO JAZZ PRODUCTION, JAZZ EDUCATION AND THE JOURNALISM OF JAZZ.

JAZZ REVIEW

CLAYTON-HAMILTON AT HYATT

By LEONARD FEATHER

The launching of a new big jazz orchestra calls for courage, a library of arrangements and time to rehearse. An ensemble put together by the bassist John Clayton, with the drummer Jeff Hamilton as co-leader and featuring Clayton's compositions and arrangements, fell somewhat short at the Hyatt Sunset's Silver Screen Room in the first of two Monday evening dates; there had clearly been insufficient preparation.

The 18-man band includes several highly competent musicians: the trumpeters Bobby Bryant, Snooky Young, Oscar Brashear and Bob Summers; the trombonists Ira Nepus, Thurman Green, Buster Cooper and Maurice Spears, five saxophonists led by Clayton's brother Jeff on alto, and a rhythm section that includes a guitar, instilling a somewhat Basie-like coloration.

Clayton, an alumnus of Basie and of the Amsterdam Philharmonic, is a personable figure who spends most of his time conducting—regrettably, since he is an admirable bassist, as he demonstrated in his one solo number. For the most part, he delegated the bass work to Luther Hughes.

Much of what was heard during the first set opening night was chosen unimaginatively. Out of eight numbers, four were overworked standards such as "Lady Be Good" and "On the Sunny Side of the Street," and three were blues. In one of the latter, Clayton took top honors, moving from deep indigo to a soaring, swirling royal blue groove with the band backing him up in a well-built climax.

The brass teamwork was superior to that of the saxes, whose lack of cohesion underlined the need for additional woodshedding. Given Clayton's admirable credentials and Hamilton's strong support, the band soon should be able to work itself into swinging good shape.

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A Mighty Night For LADY DAY by Leonard Feather

ビリー・ホリデイに捧げる一夜

ロサンゼルスはハリウッド・ブールバードにある"ハリウッド・ウォーク・オブ・フェイム(スターの歩道)"には一流スターたちの名を冠した星形の敷石があり、ハリウッドの名所のひとつとなっている。昨年サラ・ボーンもここに名を列したが、いまだビリー・ホリデイのものは設置されていなかった。筆者は5年前から設置キャンペーンを行っていたが、このほど設置のためのチャリティ・コンサートが行なわれ、この4月にレディ・デイの星形が作られることになった。ここではそのコンサートの模様をリポートする。●レナード・フェザー (本誌特約寄稿家)

レディ・デイの"ハリウッド・ウォーク・オブ・フェイム"設置キャンペーン・コンサート

ここ数年来ハリウッドを訪れる観光客が、必ずや一目拝んで帰るというのが、有名なハリウッド大通りの"スターの歩道"である。ここの歩道には、ショー・ビジネスの古今の大御所たちの名を冠した星形の敷石が点々と埋まっており、映画や音楽の大スターでここに星を持たぬものはいない。去年は遅まきながらサラ・ボーンがもらったし、漫画のキャラクターのバックス・バニーも自分の星を持っている。なのに、1959年にこの世を去ったビリー・ホリデイには星がない。

そこで私は5年前からあるキャンペーンを始めた。自らも星の持ち主であり、その巨額の収入の一部を「レディ・シングス・ザ・ブルース」(邦題「ビリー・ホリデイ物語」)から得ているはずのダイアナ・ロスに、私は公開状を出し、これ以上レディ・デイがないがしろにされることがないよう働きかけられるのはあなたしかないと呼びかけたのである。星の設置に必要なのは、歩道の管理者であるハリウッド商工会議所に、レディ・デイが星にふさわしい人物であるということをしたためた書状と代金の3,000ドルだけである。3,000ドルなんて、ダイアナ・ロスにしてみれば、ほんのポケット・マネーではないか。だが、ロサンゼルス・タイムスに出した私の公開状に、彼女からの返事はとうとう来なかった。

私はあきらめなかった。そして昨年、『バイン・ストリート・バー・アンド・グリル』の経営者であるロン・バーリンスタインにこの話をしたところ、彼は私の意見に同調してくれ、レディ・デイの星作りのためのチャリティ・コンサートを催す段取りをつけてくれたのである。

そうして実現したのは、ここ数年ほかに類を見ない感動的なコンサートだった。バーリンスタインと私の呼びかけのもとに、10人を超すジャズとポップのシンガーがボランティアで歌を奉仕してくれ、2回のショーとも満員御礼が出た。

その夜は、まさにビリーによって書かれた歌、あるいはビリーに縁の深い歌のオン・パレード。皮切りは、生前ビリーのピアニストでもあったジミー・ロウルズによる、味わい深い〈ノー・モア〉の演奏で、フリューゲルホーンには、ロウルズが『ビリーは生まれたばかりのこの子を抱いてくれた』という、ロウルズの娘のステイシーが加わった。

ビリーの〈ゴッド・ブレス・チャイルド〉を情感たっぷりに歌ったのはエラ・メイ・モース。ビリーとは親しかったカーメン・マクレエは、最初のショーでロウルズをバックに〈サム・アザー・スプリング〉を美しく歌いあげ、2回目のショーでは、弾き語りで〈アイム・プリング・スルー〉を演じた。

かつてのベイシー楽団のボーカリストで、上背のある迫力のシンガー、マリーナ・ショウは、〈ノー・バディ・ノウズ・ユー・ホエン・ユア・ダウン・アンド・アウト〉、〈ゼム・ゼア・アイズ〉で観客の心をつかんだ。ジミー・ウィザースプーンが選んだのは、ビリーが最後に聴衆の前で歌った歌で、〈エイント・ノーバディーズ・ビジネス〉。彼はこれに、いわゆるブルースのクラシックを1曲続け、『明日歯医者に行くこたないよ、今夜のうちにおいらがお前の歯をぬいてやる』といった歌詞で観客を笑わせた。ウィザースプーンは、英国ツアーの途中で咽頭ガンに気づいたが、イギリス人の手厚い看護で九死に一生を得たと言っている。現在はすっかり回復して、声も元に戻っている。

今宵、シンガー達の伴奏の一部を受けもったのは、ピアノのジェラルド・ウィギンスのトリオで、ベースがボブ・メイズ、ドラムスがカール・パーネットという構成。また、ビリーとは晩年共演している、ギターのハーブ・エリスとドラマーのディック・パークが出て1セットを演じた。

本名をビリー・ロレインといい、ビリーを名付け親にもつロレイン・フェザーは、彼女のフル・スイングのチーム・メイトであるシャーロット・クロスリーと手を組んで、なつかしくも、1933年のベニー・グッドマンとのセッションから、ビリーが初めて吹込んだというナンバー、〈ユア・マザーズ・サン・イン・ロウ〉を紹介した。またクロスリーは単独で〈クレイジー・ヒー・コールズ・ミー〉を1944年のビリーのレパートリーから、フェザーは〈イージー・トゥ・ラブ〉を歌った。

この夜の驚くべきゲストは、アーティ・ショウで、彼は2回のショーの両方に登場し、ビリーが1938年に黒人歌手として初めて白人の楽団と楽旅した時の様々な苦労話を交えながら、延々と思い出話に花を咲かせた。

50年代に一世を風靡したポップ・スターのジョニー・レイは、ビリーに最も影響を受けたと前置きして、〈ウイスキー・アンド・ジン〉を歌った。いま1人の昔のポップ・スターで、エラ・フィッツジェラルドが若かりし頃憧れたドリー・ドーンも、久々の舞台を見事に務めたが、なんと言っても観客の注目を一身に集めたのは、ブルースとアカペラの〈ソフィスティケイテッド・レディ〉を演じたアーニー・アンドリュースだった。

ビリーの昔の録音をあさって、〈ライフ・ビギンズ・ホエン・ユー・アー・イン・ラブ〉を紹介したのはデイブ・フリッシュバーグ。また、当年とって68歳のアンドリュース・シスターズのマキシン・アンドリュースは〈すてきなあなた〉を歌ったが、これはちょっと場違いの感をぬぐいきれなかった。

そして、2回とも〈トゥエンティ・ナイン・ウェイズ・トゥ・ゲット・トゥ・マイ・ベイビーズ・ドア〉でショーのトリを元気いっぱいに務めたのは、マージ・エバンス。彼女は歌い終わるや出演者全員を壇上に呼び上げ、舞台は〈ジャスト・ア・クローサー・ウォーク・ウイズ・ジー〉の全員による力強い合唱で幕を閉じた。

ショーの構成は2回目も、冒頭にビリーのフィルム(1950年の映像で〈ゴッド・ブレス・ザ・チャイルド〉)が流されたのと、妖精のようなルース・プライスと相も変わらず個性の強いビル・ヘンダーソンの2人の歌手が加わったほかは、ほぼ1部と同じである。

この夜の純益は、目的の3,000ドルには少し欠けたが、そこは例によってヘンリー・マンシーニが不足分をもとうと名乗りをあげてくれた。

それにしても、ダイアナ・ロスには何度コンタクトをとろうとしたか知れない。彼女が街にいるのを見計らって電報を送りもしたが、彼女からは一言も言ってこなかった。この"レディ・デイに捧ぐ夕べ"の後間もなくして、ロス嬢は彼女に輪をかけて金持ちの億万長者と結婚すべくスイスに旅立ったのである。

ビリー・ホリデイの星は、4月7日に設置されることになった。ビリーが生きていれば71歳の誕生日である。遅くとも、ないよりはあった方がましである。 (訳:小山さち子)

▲このコンサートのスペシャル・ゲストはアーティ・ショウ。1938年初めて黒人歌手ビリーを白人バンドで歌わせた。当時きわめてセンセーショナルなことであったが、彼は暖かく彼女をむかえ、周囲の敵意から彼女をかばったという。
Photo:W.G.Harris

▼去年出たビデオ「ザ・ロング・ナイト・オブ・レディ・デイ」のなかでもビリー・ホリデイとの交友を語っていたレナード・フェザー。彼女との付き合いも古く、ビリーが最も信頼していたひとりが彼だ。

▼去年サラ・ボーンも"スターの歩道"に名を連ねた。4月7日にはビリー・ホリデイの星形も作られる。Photo: Leonard Feather

▼ビリーと親しかったカーメン・マクレエ。彼女が作った〈ドリーム・オブ・ライフ〉をビリーはレコーディングしている。
Photo:Shigeru Uchiyama

4/20/80

JAZZ

THE JOINTS IN LONDON ARE JUMPIN'

By LEONARD FEATHER

LONDON—No question about it: Jazz is on the upswing in this city. From every point of view—quality and quantity of local and imported talent, availability of venues, coverage in the media—conditions are more encouraging than at any time in recent memory.

When even the normally dour Ronnie Scott tells you he has had two good years, you know something must be going right. Scott's club in the West End, where he leads his own group (he is a first-rate tenor saxophonist) and alternates with visiting dignitaries, was on the verge of collapse a few years ago; on the night of my visit, a Tuesday, the room was packed for the opening of Elvin Jones' group.

That Jones had been booked for two weeks was astonishing in itself. Not a single club in Los Angeles hires groups of this kind for even one week. A four-night stand is a big deal in L.A. jazz circles. Scott later reported that the attendance held up throughout the week of my visit. Londoners are lucky in another respect: Jones' formidable pianist, Fumio Karashima from Tokyo, has worked with him on and off for five years, but almost exclusively in Europe and Japan. Another bonus was the addition of Alan Skidmore, a British saxophone eminence who for this gig was paired of with the group's regular tenor soloist, Sonny Fortune.

Scott, a professional musician for almost 40 years and a club owner since 1959, is now a world-class figure on both levels, but where once he had a near-monopoly as a boniface, today's booming scene leaves room for countless other restorative listening experiences.

On any given night, in the city or the suburbs, you may find live jazz at such spots as the 606 Club ("Jazz Trios 7 Nights a Week From 12 Midnight"), Palookaville, Thatcher's (no relation), the Duke of St. Alban's, the Prince of Orange (host one night last week to the Odessa College big band from Texas), the Ealing Broadway Centre, the Bass Clef, the Bull's Head, and no less than seven taverns, clubs or theater bars that offer Sunday lunchtime jazz.

It has become a common practice to bring over American jazzmen for dates around London and the provinces backed by British groups. Wild Bill Davison, the 80-year-old cornetist, presently is making the rounds on that basis. Lanny Morgan, an L.A. alto saxophonist, is using the Bull's Head, a pub in Barnes, as a *pied-a-terre*, working there off and on throughout April with side trips to the Pizza Express and various out-of-town havens.

Jazz instruction is making belated headway here. American trumpeter Bobby Shew offered an improvisation seminar Saturday at the Guildhall School of Music, presented by the Jazz Education Society. The next day he was at the 100 Club, one of London's oldest jazz joints, backed by the English Sound of 17 orchestra.

Possibly the most remarkable figure on the London scene is the protean Peter Ind. Middlesex-born, he became an accomplished bassist, immigrated to the United States in 1951 and studied with Lennie Tristano. After a decade in New York, playing with everyone from Tristano and Lee Konitz to Coleman Hawkins and Roy Eldridge, he moved to Big Sur for three years, wrote a book based on the theories of Wilhelm Reich, expanded his talent for painting and had an exhibition in Monterey.

Since returning to London in 1966, Ind has still further multiplied his activities. Taking over an old warehouse in the less than salubrious district of Hoxton, he converted part of it into a 24-track recording studio that now caters to many major companies as well as to his own Wave Records label. On the other side of the building is his club, the Bass Clef.

Ind is bullish on jazz in Britain. "All sorts of things are happening here," he said. "We can present just about any kind of music, and there's an audience for everything. What's amazing is the wave of nostalgia for the 1950s and early '60s, the pre-Beatles era. And look at the kind of crowd we get."

Most of the spectators were in their 20s and 30s; they were also unusually attentive, a situation Ind has helped by keeping the dining room separate from the music area. The seven-man band played neatly tailored arrangements of original works by British writers (Alan Ganley, Jimmy Deuchar) and American standards such as J.J. Johnson's "Blue Nun." The trumpeter, Henry Lowther, displayed a lyrical sound in Horace Silver's "Peace."

"We have live music seven nights a week," Ind said. "Fridays, there's a Latin dance session that's always mobbed. Saturdays, we have African-oriented music. Sundays are big jazz matinee days. We opened in September, 1984, and we're beginning to break even."

At the Pizza Express, off Oxford Street, where the munching of pizza cohabits with the music, owner Peter Boizot (who also publishes the monthly Jazz Express) has established a policy typical of that heard at most London clubs, with talent changing nightly, and the occasional American visitor (the ex-Ellington trumpeter Willie Cook is due here next week).

The night of my visit was one of two a week dedicated to the Pizza Express All Stars. I was reminded of the problems that face L.A. club owners: Of the seven regular members, four had sent in subs. The sounds were a healthy mix of Dixie and mainstream, with Colin Smith playing elegant trumpet and Dave Shepherd heading up the band on clarinet.

My last night in town was reserved for a visit to the 100 Club, at 100 Oxford Street, where Stephane Grappelli had been booked for a one-night stand. The stifling, cavernous room was packed to what seemed to be four times its natural capacity; 200 or 300 fans, standing, were crammed in the rear.

Grappelli, leading his regular quartet, took it in stride and managed to make himself heard amid the hubbub. Having been familiar with his music, I found myself wishing that I had arrived a week later, to hear some less crowd-catching and more unfamiliar attractions such as the British band led by pianist Stan Tracey.

One big band that did reach my ears, albeit on a tape, was Loose Tubes. This adventurous 21-piece ensemble is the subject of a feature in the current issue of the Wire, a slick new magazine that deals with every facet of the domestic and overseas jazz scenes.

As the tape revealed, Loose Tubes is just what the Wire calls it, the most exciting new event in British jazz. The arrangements, by Django Bates (his real name) and Steve Berry, make original use of many-colored textures and voicings.

A potentially valuable new development is the emergence of a black British jazz community. Courtney Pine, a 21-year-old saxophonist, the son of Jamaican parents, was raised in London's Paddington district. He has been active lately in forming the Abibi Jazz Arts Society, devoted to "making black people more aware of jazz and giving it a firm base." He has formed a 21-piece band, the Jazz Warriors, and through it may prove his claim that a black British jazz style may be emerging, "because a lot of guys getting into it here come from the reggae thing or the calypso thing, which is very different from what the New York musicians have to offer."

Black or white, traditional or contemporary, the music here seems to be in healthy and enthusiastic hands. Media coverage is better than ever. Jazz Journal, a popular monthly, still is going strong after 40 years. Ronnie Scott publishes a small but lively house organ. Radio personalities such as Peter Clayton offer informative music and interview shows.

Time was, in the pre-George Shearing days, when you could count the truly creative British jazz performers on the good fingers of Django Reinhardt's left hand. This is not to imply that hundreds of jazz artists here are growing rich and famous, but rather to establish the point that their aims and accomplishments are far beyond anything I dreamed possible as a teen-aged fan growing up in London. □

E LA NAVE VA...

Il più lungo festival jazzistico del mondo si è tenuto dal 5 ottobre al 2 novembre a bordo del piroscafo Norway in navigazione da Miami per una serie di crociere. Vi hanno partecipato ben centodue musicisti, dai «senatori» agli studenti del Berklee College, in una «no stop» di concerti e jam-sessions.

di Leonard Feather

Lo potresti chiamare il più lungo jazz festival del mondo. Simile bizzarria musicale di ventotto giorni ha avuto inizio il 5 ottobre ed è arrivata al suo tumultuoso finale il 2 novembre. Va detto però che ogni sabato il pubblico cambiava per quasi la sua totalità, insieme a parte del programma. Per qualcuno dei musicisti è stata comunque una maratona praticamente ininterrotta: Al Cohn, Ruby Braff, Doc Cheatham, Benny Carter, lo Scott Hamilton Quintet, Maxine Sullivan, Kenny Davern e Clark Terry sono stati fra quanti erano imbarcati nell'iniziativa per tutte e quattro le settimane. E non a caso si dice imbarcati, perché la scena si svolgeva sul piroscafo Norway (72.000 tonnellate), in partenza da Miami per una serie di quattro crociere jazzistiche di una settimana.

Servisse una prova della buona salute del jazz, almeno in questo settore, basterebbe dire che nel 1983 i produttori Hank O'Neal e Shelley Shier misero insieme una sola settimana di jazz sul mare, che nel 1984 le settimane diventarono due e che quest'anno, oltre alle quattro sul Norway, una dozzina di altre crociere, sia pure con musicisti meno famosi e con navi meno grandi, si è avuta sullo Skyward, sul Southward e sullo Starward.

Dato che gran parte del cartellone del Norway cambiava a metà del mese, si poteva ascoltare, a patto di scegliere la seconda e la terza settimana, virtualmente tutti i centodue musicisti coinvolti nell'operazione. E in effetti, per tutto quel tempo, chi scrive è stato esposto a un'inedita sfilata di artisti, molti dei quali per la prima volta su queste crociere: il violinista danese Svend Asmussen, e poi il trombettista Randy Brecker, Gary Burton e il trombonista Phil Wilson (questi due, docenti al Berklee College of Musica, guidavano ciascuno un'orchestra di studenti), Cab Calloway che si esibiva tanto con l'orchestra di Woody Herman quanto con quella di bordo (diretta da Chip Hoehler e veramente buona), il pianista Art Hodes prossimo ai suoi 81 anni (li ha compiuti il 14 novembre), Major Holley, il pianista e organista Dick Hyman, George Mraz bassista dalle mille dita, la cantante svedese Monica Zetterlund e l'orchestra (15 elementi) di Gerry Mulligan.

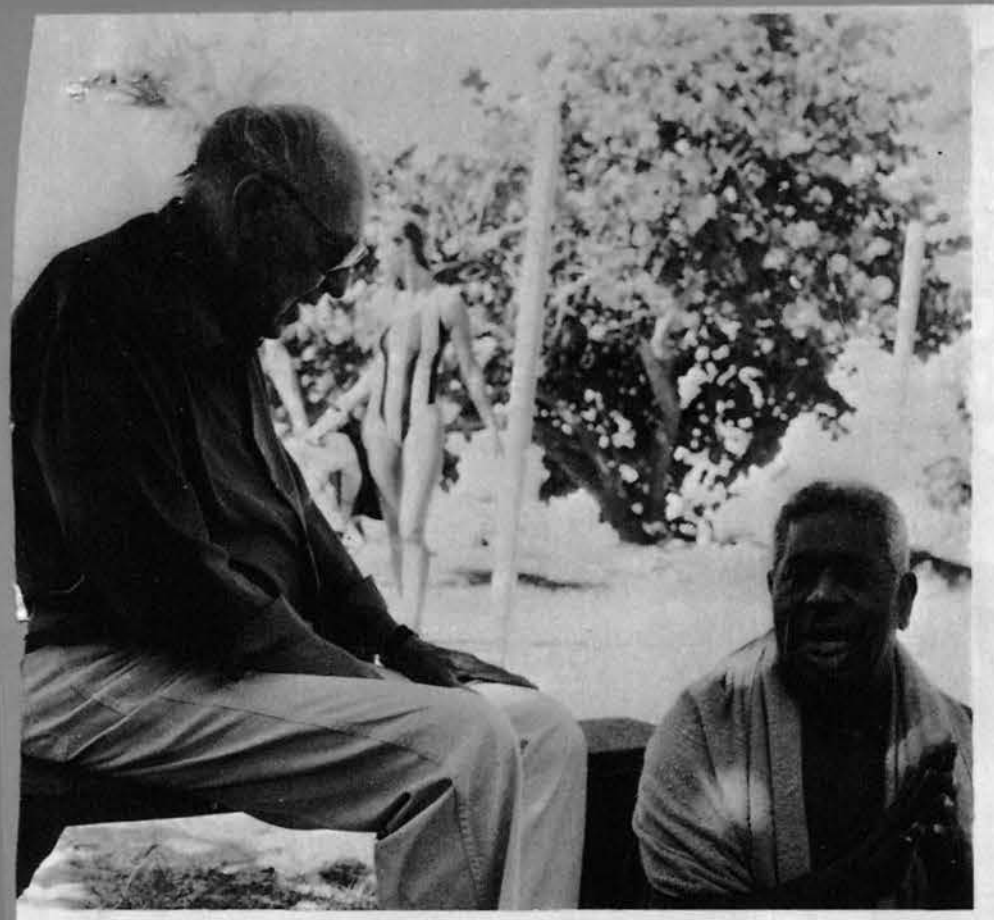
Jam sul Norway: Leonard Feather accompagna al piano Maxine Sullivan.

Proprio Cab Calloway è stato, per il pubblico, l'eroe del festival: tutta una serie di trionfi nel Saga Theatre, una sala da 550 posti. Questo settantasettenne dai capelli d'argento ha ripercorso i suoi teatrali sentieri (*Stormy Weather, Blues In The Night* e naturalmente *Minnie The Moocher*) su quell'accompagnamento di swingante big band che è stato sempre un essenziale ingrediente dei suoi concerti.

In quanto a Mel Tormé, oltre a cantare impeccabilmente in ogni genere di repertorio, è stato anche un ideale batterista per molti musicisti nelle esibizioni informali al Checkers Cabaret e nell'Internationale Night Club della nave. E come Tormé, anche Joe Williams ha ripetuto il suo trionfo dell'anno passato, stavolta spingendosi fino a invitare Dizzy Gillespie, il ventiduenne pianista Cyrus Chestnut, l'ottantenne trombettista Doc Cheatham e altri compagni di viaggio perché abbellissero i suoi blues e le sue ballads.

Ho citato Cyrus Chestnut: si tratta di uno degli studenti del Berklee ai quali la crociera aveva offerto la grande possibilità di misurarsi con i grandi (ma anche quella di ringiovanire un po' l'età media dei partecipanti). Quale membro del quintetto di studenti di Phil Wilson, aveva fornito al gruppo inventivi arrangiamenti. È facile predire che entro pochi anni lo conosceremo non soltanto per il suo strano cognome (Chestnut, come saprete, vuol dire castagno). Comunque ha fatto grande impressione anche un altro ventiduenne, il batterista Marty Richards, sia con quello stesso gruppo, sia con il sestetto di Gary Burton, che era meno aggressivo dell'altro. In compenso era più internazionale, con un sassofonista scozzese diciottenne, un pianista e un bassista francesi, e con Kazu Michishita, un chitarrista giapponese di venticinque anni, destinato a far parlare ancora di sé.

Grande tra i non americani è stato Svend Asmussen, la cui solo performance di *Sweet Georgia Brown* era qualcosa di incredibile. Nel giro di un paio di giorni la sua reputazione a



Qui a fianco: due illustri partecipanti alla crociera jazz, Woody Herman e Dizzy Gillespie, durante un'escursione in un'isola delle Bahamas. Sotto: un concerto nel teatro a bordo del Norway con Bill Mays, Gerry Mulligan e Seldon Powell (da sinistra a destra).

FOTOGRAFIE DI LEONARD FEATHER

bordo è cresciuta al punto da fare scoccare un applauso ogni volta che questo violinista sensazionale si avvicinasse al microfono per un assolo.

Fra le tre big bands del festival, è stata quella di Gerry Mulligan a impressionare di più. E Mulligan, che ostenta ormai una bella barba bianca e un atteggiamento spiritoso, cordiale e informale, si è distinto in svariati modi: come compositore arrangiatore (*Song For An Unfinished Woman* è stata meravigliosamente interpretata con le sue sottili dinamiche), come sopransassofonista nel suo delizioso *42nd And Broadway*, come cantante e paroliere del suo bellissimo *When I Was A Young Man*, e in primo luogo, com'è ovvio, come il baritonsassofonista che ha a lungo fatto da capofila su questo difficile strumento.

Woody Herman ha ancora un'orchestra vivace, giovanile, e un repertorio eclettico. Ci si chiede soltanto come mai, visto che il pubblico era sempre lo stesso ogni sera, egli decidesse di ripetere *Woodchoppers' Ball* e *It Don't Mean A Thing* non soltanto nei suoi concerti, ma anche per accompagnare Tormé e Calloway. I migliori brani erano quelli che mostravano tutta la tavolozza musicale dell'orchestra, dal flauto piccolo al fagotto.

Nei festival di questo genere, la cosa più caratteristica, a parte la possibilità di tanti incontri musicali e sociali, è il fascino dell'inatteso. Per esempio quel Gillespie, sempre a uno splendido livello, che suonava in jam session con chiunque, dai *sidemen* di Woody Herman agli studenti di Gary Burton. O Buddy Tate, che dopo avere arricchito svariati gruppi con il caldo *sound* del suo sax tenore, ha impressionato i colleghi con un assolo di flauto (e mi domando quanti flautisti settantenni voi siate in grado di ricordare...).

Clark Terry ha suonato *In A Mellotone* con la tromba all'incontrario, cioè spingendo all'insù i pistoni! Un puro giochetto, forse, ma il suo assolo era così bello che avrebbe fatto sensazione anche se eseguito con lo strumento tenuto regolarmente. Benny Carter, che ha presentato una serie di sue composizioni con l'orchestra di bordo, ha aggiunto la bellezza senza età del suo sax alto (e occasionalmente della tromba) a molte ballads cristalline. In quanto a Maxine Sullivan, all'età di 74 anni, esercita un fascino e proietta un dolce, delicato *sound* che è ben poco cambiato da mezzo secolo a questa parte.

E personalmente ho un particolare ricordo: a mezzanotte, poco prima di rientrare in porto a Miami, Ruby Braff (accompagnato da Dick Hyman all'organo e da Jake Hanna alla batteria) evocava con la sua cornetta i tempi di Buck Clayton, Bunny Berigan e Louis Armstrong, ricordandoci che la melodia, in forma testuale o improvvisata che sia, è la base di tutto.

Per l'anno prossimo, si parla di crociere non soltanto a ottobre ma anche a maggio. Certo, tanta acqua è passata sotto i ponti e negli oceani da quando lo sconosciuto Louis Armstrong solcava il Mississippi sui battelli della Fate Marable Band. Che i jazzisti possano oggi suonare per 1.700 persone su un solo bastimento sarebbe parsa cosa impensabile per l'imberbe «Satchmo». Così il festival galleggiante deve ora essere annoverato, insieme alla statua di Armstrong a New Orleans, come un altro, impossibile sogno diventato realtà. ●

4/23

RAY PIZZI UNVEILS NEW SOUNDS, SIGHTS AT LATC

By LEONARD FEATHER

Ray Pizzi has an image problem. Actually, the problem is the public's rather than his: Having followed his career as a multi-instrumentalist, his admirers must now consider him in a new light, as a serious and talented composer.

Monday at the Los Angeles Theatre Center's Tom Bradley Theatre he unveiled his new arrangements of 10 original works, most of them involving a string quartet, along with a rhythm section. Switching from tenor sax to alto flute to flute to soprano sax to bassoon, he displayed equal dexterity on all, but was most affecting on tenor sax. It is a joy to hear this instrument dealt with respectfully, to listen to it pleading and praying instead of growling and squeaking.

Pizzi is a melodist who pens logical, often pretty, themes cast in a pre-fusion, non-electronic mold. His writing for the strings was simple and agreeable, especially in the Brazilian-tinged "Love Eyes" and "Deja Vu," the latter a lucid vehicle for alto flute.

The bassoon, of which Pizzi is [illegible] of the, mercifully few jazz [illegible]rs, was deployed after inter[illegible], its froglike sound applied [illegible]wo brief originals and to "All the Things You Are." Pizzi's only bassoon feature utilizing the strings was "Song for Grandpa," in which we also heard that rara avis, a studio violinist who is also a capable jazz soloist, Richard Greene.

This adventurous recital provided several other unexpected pleasures, such as Jim Fox, a guitarist who blends a muscular sound with a melodic style, and Frank Marocco, a pianist who often switched to accordion, reminding us that it is at least as admissible to the jazz family as the bassoon. But the true surprise—I would have called her the show-stealer had she not galvanized everyone else into optimum action—was a lissome dancer, L. Martina Young, who choreographed her three numbers as if she had studied every twist and turn and phrase in Pizzi's writing. This was indeed poetry in motion, the best integration of dance and jazz performance I've seen in years.

After the strings departed, Pizzi encored with a song that begged to be part of the show: "Over the Rainbow," the title tune of his recent surprise-hit movie short. He played it straight, on tenor, providing a tastefully low-key ending to a generally delightful evening of accessible and unpredictable sounds and sights.

Jazz Aid Concert Postponed Again

The Jazz Aid concert, subject of many reports and denials over the last several months, has been postponed from May 15 to Aug. 26.

Producer Tani Jones said Wednesday that the concert was postponed again because she "didn't realize what a vast project it was, and we couldn't line up the appropriate TV air time."

Jones said the event was designed to benefit hungry children in Africa, Asia and the United States, with proceeds to be distributed through the United Nations Children's Fund.

Originally announced for a Feb. 13 presentation at the Forum, Inglewood, the February date was postponed to May 15. That concert now has been moved to Aug. 26 at the Forum, and Jones said the program will include the Count Basie Orchestra, comedian Pete Barbutti, pianist-comedian Dudley Moore, pianist-singer Ben Sidran and, by satellite from Moscow, flutist Paul Horn.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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JAZZ

DIANE SCHUUR RIDING A SURE THING

By LEONARD FEATHER

It took Diane Schuur a little while to bring it all into focus, but for the past three years she has been on a steady roll. It was lucky that Stan Getz, hearing her sing at the 1979 Monterey Jazz Festival, decided she had star potential. Getz engineered her performance with him in December, 1982, at the White House, where she attracted the enthusiastic reaction of Nancy Reagan. She was invited back in 1984 when the First Lady asked her to perform at a "Ladies of the Senate" luncheon.

Luck prevailed again when the producer Larry Rosen saw her second White House gig on TV. With his partner, arranger Dave Grusin, he tracked down Schuur through Getz. The result was a contract with the Grusin-Rosen GRP label and, in 1984, her first album, "Deedles." (Schuur has a penchant for cute nicknames; the "Deedles" was self-imposed, and throughout our interview she addressed her manager Paul Cantor as "Paulie-Waulie.")

Since the release and very substantial sales of "Deedles" there has been a whirlwind ride of prestigious concerts and festivals, a trip to Japan last summer (she'll be returning in July), and a second LP, "Schuur Thing," in which she duetted with Jose Feliciano. Getz played two cuts on both albums.

□

Luck was not always on Deedles' side. She was born prematurely, weighing less than 3 pounds, and was blinded at birth in a hospital mishap.

Her twin brother ("He's 15 minutes younger than I am!") is a pilot in Auburn, Wash., where the family was reared. Born Dec. 10, 1953, she was barely 6, listening to the radio, when the Dinah Washington hit "What a Difference a Day Makes" all but electrified her. "She had such a great sound and perfect enunciation—I just knew that I had to emulate her. She and Sarah Vaughan were my early childhood influences," she said.

ANACLETO RAPPING / Los Angeles Times

Diane Schuur: "I listened to my share of rock 'n' roll . . . but ballads were really my thing."

"I listened to my share of rock 'n' roll. I guess I was forced to, because everybody else did; but ballads were really my thing. Mom used to listen to a lot of that stuff when she was alive." Her mother died of cancer shortly after Schuur made her professional debut at the age of 9.

Studying at the State School for the Blind in Vancouver, Wash., and later at public school, she managed to keep a career alive. After putting in a few years of weekend gigs at a Tacoma club, at 15 she was taken by her father, an Auburn police captain, to Lake Tahoe, where an audition led to a lucrative offer to open at Harrah's. "But the Police Department back home told my dad, 'Either you go on the road with your daughter or stay home.' So I went home and finished school."

After several more years of local action with little headway, she met Ed Shaughnessy, Doc Severinsen's drummer, backstage at a concert in Seattle.

"Doc's concert was over," Shaughnessy said, "and this young, blind girl comes in and sits down at the Fender Rhodes keyboard and starts singing the blues. Well, my hair stood on end!

"She had just the improvisational, black-oriented style I was looking for to sing in a gospel suite Tommy Newsom had written for my own band. I wound up flying her in several times to work with me at Donte's and other clubs; then when she did the gospel suite with me at the Monterey Festival—this was 1975—she was the greatest sensation of the entire weekend."

The Shaughnessy connection failed to become the breakthrough Schuur had hoped for. Though Severinsen met and heard her, she did not appear on "The Tonight Show" and soon was persuaded by a manager to move to Tucson, Ariz., buying a house with part of the settlement money awarded for the loss of her vision. After three years there, financially drained, she returned to Auburn. Not long afterward, her second Monterey appearance—this time on her [illegible]—proved to be the watershed [illegible] Getz as the principal [illegible]nes mover.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1986

ARTS / LEISURE

Roach Park, Young Turks, Loose Tubes: or, Jazz in London

By Michael Zwerin
International Herald Tribune

LONDON — There's a Max Roach Park in the London borough of Lambeth.

The borough's 31 Labor councillors were recently found guilty of "willful misconduct" by the Law Lords, a body of judges within the House of Lords. The councillors, who refused to reduce benefits and raise social charges as directed by the central government, were fined £8,000 (about $11,600) each, and face a possible five-year ban from political activities or jail.

In the meantime, they have all been fired. Deciding to go out in style, they renamed a construction material depot after Paul Robeson, a library for John Coltrane, a swimming pool for Duke Ellington and a park for the virtuoso percussionist Roach.

A few days after the park's inauguration, the jazz critic of the Los Angeles Times flew into Heathrow airport. Leonard Feather started writing jazz journalism in the early 1930s in Berlin. The autobiography he was delivering to his British publisher had been rejected by half a dozen U.S. publishers, who told him, "Jazz books don't sell." Feather went back to Los Angeles Sunday to appear at the installation of a Billie Holiday star on the Hollywood Boulevard "Walk of Fame."

"A star only takes $3,000 and a recommendation from the Chamber of Commerce. Bugs Bunny has a star," said Feather. He had written an open letter in the Los Angeles Times to Diana Ross — who played Holiday in the big-budget film of her life — suggesting that Ross pay the fee. Feather figured she owed Holiday that much. There was no reply, he said. He organized a benefit that raised the money. On Monday, on what would have been her 71st birthday, Billie Holiday officially became a star, more than 26 years after her death.

Meanwhile Max Roach, 61, in excellent health, is on the map of Europe at the peak of his career. A tale of two continents — recognition dead or alive. An old story, but true enough — with an extra twist at the end. In contemporary London, a good case can be made for a jazz renaissance.

□

"London is very tribal lately," said Dave Robinson, who started in the business as road manager for Jimi Hendrix. He founded Stiff Records in the 1970s and is responsible for recording, among others, Ian Dury and the Blockheads, Elvis Costello and now the Pogues. "We don't seem to be developing rock stars like we used to," he said. "There's a bit of funk, some blues — you'll find some punk meets country. The Pogues is one of the biggest things going at the moment, and they're, shall we say, unusual. Kind of Brendan Behan meets Johnny Rotten.

"In general there's been a dearth of hot new rock bands for several years, and so England has got an odd form of pop music at the moment. It's got to be danceable, but other than that there are no real barriers. Everything goes now. It's great. TV really runs the scene here, and after a recent documentary about Blue Note records and '50s and '60s jazz in general, all of a sudden people started wearing zoot suits and buying Blue Notes."

Robinson spread 22 Blue Note covers on a table and admired the tinted black and white photos of bebop heroes spaced at unexpected angles between the company's trademark jumble of typefaces. "Let's work up some Bluenotey covers," Robinson told his design people. "Don't rip it off, you know, just bend it a bit."

Hoping to have found the next major trend, Virgin Records is preparing a campaign for something called "New Age Music," combining elements of Mike Oldfield, Jean-Michel Jarre, Steve Reich, George Winston, Vangelis and ECM "Euro Jazz."

Soothing space-age music for harried earthbound wage-earners, New Age Music is basically keyboard music. Can guitar heroes be going out of style? "A lot of people consider rock old-fashioned," Robinson said.

The British edition of Feather's "Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties" is sold out and being reprinted. A mimeographed green flyer titled "Jazz in London" advertises at least 11 London clubs presenting jazz on a regular basis.

Carla Bley with ease, and increasing succe[illegible] change, winds of [illegible]mented The Guar[illegible] boardist/compos[illegible] 25, is talented[illegible] busy. A succes[illegible]

Schuur said she has no trouble with being identified as a jazz singer, though in fact her versatility has taken her in several directions. One of the most valuable is gospel: among her later influences were Mahalia Jackson and Aretha Franklin, and one of her best recorded works is "Amazing Grace," on which she accompanied herself. ("I studied Braille music as a kid, but I play mostly by ear.")

Though obviously a star herself by now, Schuur at times reacts like a star-struck outsider. Recalling her appearance at the Grammy Awards show a few months ago, she said: "I met so many important people that day. In the hallway Dizzy Gillespie shouted out, 'I love you, Diane!' and I said 'I love you too, Diz.' He was just flabbergasted that I recognized his voice! Emmylou Harris talked to me for a long time; I hate to drop names, but Linda Ronstadt was so nice, and Roberta Flack came over and gave me a big hug during rehearsal."

Her short stint on that program drew a standing ovation. Dionne Warwick and others were astonished by her extrovert performance, though some singers and musicians felt she tried to do too much too fast, cramming everything she knew into the brief space allotted her.

Her proudest association in recent times involved an accidental encounter with Stevie Wonder, whom she had met briefly in Seattle in 1974.

"Last summer Stan Getz invited me to hear him at the Hollywood Palace. In the middle of the show, in walks Stevie," she said. "Stan asked me to come up and do a couple of numbers; then I went back down and while I was listening to Stan, Stevie said: 'Is Diane still here?' Stan told him yes, so he said, 'Have her come up and do something with me' So we did 'You Are the Sunshine of My Life,' and I'm telling you, people were going crazy! I was on a high from that for days. I think there's a possibility we may do some recording together."

Because of the ingenuity with which Grusin has blended commercial settings and jazz elements, Schuur has managed to transcend the barriers that sometimes confine singers with her special qualities to a limited market.

The rest of the year is filled with important bookings. She is set for the Queen Mary Festival in Long Beach, her Las Vegas debut at the Silver Dome, and a July concert tour with a GRP All Stars group that will include Grusin, Lee Ritenour, Billy Cobham and others in England, France, Austria and Italy. "This will be my first time in Europe and I can hardly wait!"

The next album, she said, will be her first with a full orchestra. "We're going to do it with basically no overdubs, and I'll do some of the good old standards. That's gonna be fun. I look forward to the prospect of doing something live."

She has no regrets about the lost opportunities, the Tahoe job that didn't happen and the other uneventful years. "I'm still young, I've got some experience under my belt now, and I feel mature enough to tackle anything that comes along. Tell you the truth, it's going good and I just couldn't be more excited." □

DUKE ELLINGTON STAMP: A TRIBUTE THAT STICKS

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—Tuesday was a day of celebration for the Ellington People. There were five events spread across the day to herald the issuing—on what would have been Duke Ellington's 87th birthday—of a commemorative 22-cent postage stamp.

The jubilation began in the morning at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in midtown. All the right dignitaries were on hand: the Rev. John Gensel of St. Peter's, who has done more for the morale and support of jazz musicians than any other man of the cloth; representatives of the U.S. Postal Service and officials of the international Duke Ellington Society, whose dogged lobbying since 1982 had produced more than 50,000 letters to the Postal Service requesting the stamp. It could not have been done much earlier, because commemorative stamps of civilians are never issued until 10 years after the subject's death (Ellington died on May 24, 1974).

It was a family affair in every sense. Ruth Ellington Boatwright spoke about her brother's faith and thanked God and the Ellington Society, in that order, for bringing this day about. Her husband, classical singer McHenry Boatwright,

Duke Ellington, as he appears on the new U.S. postage stamp.

sang the national anthem. Mercer Ellington, who took over the orchestra on his father's death, conducted it in an old Ellington work newly retitled "22-Cent Stomp," and in another of the maestro's lesser-known works, "Afrique." Concerning the latter, he re-

Please see ELLINGTON, Page 7

5/2/86

AL COHN GIVES 'EM ONE FOR THE RECORD AT ALFONSE'S

By LEONARD FEATHER

It's history now, but for the record (and what a record it would have made if tapes had been on hand!), Al Cohn played Tuesday and Wednesday at Alfonse's in Toluca Lake.

The tenor saxophonist, who for years seemed as inseparable from Zoot Sims as Damon from Pythias, actually has been a vital force in his own right both as soloist and composer.

Cohn has remained as true as any man to the eternal swinging verities of jazz; a master of muscular, fluent statements, he employs his gruffly personal sound in the service of such standards as "My Shining Hour" and "Sweet and Lovely," as well as such rhythmically contagious originals as "Mr. George."

Playing to a packed room that housed dozens of musicians, Cohn was impeccably supported by two contemporaries, pianist Lou Levy and bassist Monty Budwig. On drums was Vince Lateano from San Francisco, a younger musician who at first seemed slightly daunted by the company he was keeping, though before long he settled into a sympathetic groove.

The ballad highlight during Wednesday's first set was "Embraceable You," to which Cohn brought a pleading quality that was compatible with his strong yet subtle timbre. Though there were traces of the early Lester Young influence that once inspired him, it was clear that he has long since found a path of his own, one that has placed him in the forefront of the tenor sax mainstream.

Appropriately, he closes each set with a moderately paced outing on the blues, that perennial lingua franca of jazz. Music like this, with its wholesome, warmly reassuring character, seems likely to outlast any idiomatic fad that may come along.

ELLINGTON STAMP: A TRIBUTE THAT STICKS

Continued from Page 1

marked: "We were the forerunners of the Post Office—first came the jungle telegraph."

There were countless links to past Ellingtonian glories. Singer Anita Moore and a few other band members are holdovers from the ducal days. On hand, too, were the four Ellington grandchildren, many former sidemen (among them trombonist Father John Sanders, who gave up the jazz world for the priesthood) and numerous women of various ages, each of whom doubtless believes she was the only woman the Duke really loved.

After the St. Peter's ceremony, members of the Ellington Society stayed over for a two-hour jam session. Mercer took off for Roosevelt Hospital to give the inaugural speech for the opening of the new Duke Ellington Cancer Center for the Performing Arts (Ellington was a cancer victim).

Next came a cocktail party at the headquarters of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, held amid a babble of songwriters, elderly Ellington groupies and visiting West Coasters such as John ("Body and Soul") Green. With Mercer were his daughters, Gaye, a painter, and Mercedes, a dancer who has her own company, Ballet Tap USA.

This dance group was one of two (the other an Alvin Ailey ensemble) presented at the day's final affair, primarily a rerun of some of Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert material at the cathedral of St. John the Divine, with Billy Taylor, pianist and educator, conducting an orchestra and with Douglas Fairbanks Jr., whose narration was stronger on diction than conviction. But he was reading Duke's words, and for many of us it was hard to forget the unique and compelling narrative style of the master.

The history of Ellington's sacred music goes back to 1965 and San Francisco's Grace Cathedral. In most of these houses of worship the music may be sacred but the acoustics are profane. Some of the singers, notably the operatic stylist Priscilla Baskerville, rose above the resonance on this occasion. Others, such as the splendid gospel artist Esther Marrow, were engulfed by it.

Whatever the minor musical mishaps, there was an overriding sense of joy throughout this day. As the former Ellington vocalist Joya Sherrill said, clutching her first-day-of-issue stamped envelope, "If somebody had told me, when I sang in the band, that I'd see Duke on a stamp, I'd have said they were crazy. But things have really changed a bit since 1945."

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5/4/86

JAZZ

FROM TERRY GIBBS, FIVE DECADES OF GOOD VIBES

By LEONARD FEATHER

Julius Gubenko, 12-year-old xylophonist, is sent on for an opening and the kid just about steals the show. When asked for an encore he literally had to beg off, for the half pint was too nervous to make the speech that would have taken him off.

—Variety, 1936

Julius Gubenko, who earned this reaction to his public debut at the Stanley Theatre in Pittsburgh, had been heard the night before as a winner on the Major Bowes radio amateur hour. Soon after, he went on the road with Bowes; eventually he became Terry Gibbs, the award-winning jazz vibraphonist.

Celebrating his golden anniversary, Gibbs still talks exactly the way he plays: the words gush forth like the phrases in an "Air Mail Special" solo. His hyper manner and musical enthusiasm have never slackened.

He worked his way from bebop groups on 52nd Street to big bands (Buddy Rich, Woody Herman and his own orchestra); from road tours leading his quartet to conducting assignments, most often with Steve Allen, in whose sextet he played in 1958, and who has played a central role in his career for the past 17 years.

When Gibbs took up the vibraphone hardly anyone else in jazz played it except Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo. "I didn't listen to vibes players anyway; my idols were Roy Eldridge, Benny Goodman, Lester Young. When I started out as a drummer I listened to Joe Jones, Buddy Rich and the Basie and Goodman bands."

When he tells you that music was his whole life, you can believe it. "I wanted to be either a boxer or a drummer. While I was on the road with Major Bowes—they sent a teacher along so I could keep up my education—I was quite an athlete; I'd sneak out of the theater and join any bunch of kids playing ball. I worked the mountains, the small towns, all over. I knew every cockroach in every hotel in the world."

He stayed with the drums for several of his early jobs because, he says, "I had so much technique on vibes that I didn't know what to do with it. Then while I was on furlough from the Army, my friend Tiny Kahn, the arranger and drummer, told me, 'You've got to come and listen to this new music that's going on. It's called bebop.' Well, I listened to Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and my mind went berserk! I started to play vibes again, triple time; I was writing bebop tunes; the guys in the Army band thought I was nuts."

Out of the service, he joined the guitarist Bill De Arango and earned a Down Beat encomium ("the most exciting musician on the scene in many, many months . . . a musician who excites everyone who hears him.")

"Then I had an offer to join Tommy Dorsey. My mother wouldn't let me fly—in those days you listened to your mother—so I took four days to get to California by train, played one tune with Dorsey and knew right away this music was not for me. I decided to quit. Now Tommy had a temper, and being a boxer, I had my hands ready. 'Nobody quits my band,' he said, 'You're fired!' I said, 'If you fire me you have to pay my way home.' He said, 'No, you quit! Pay your own way!' "

The only advantage of this disaster was that Gibbs met Dorsey's drummer, Louie Bellson, who in turn introduced him to Lionel Hampton. "Hamp called up and said, 'Hey, kid, you play drums? I'll make you my protege. You play drums and I'll give you 12 vibes solos.' But I guess Lionel's wife didn't want any young kid upstaging him, not that anyone could upstage Lionel. But he reduced the offer to six, then two vibes solos, then none—he just offered to hire me to play drums, which I didn't want. So he paid my way home, which was nice—more than Tommy would do."

KEN LUBAS / Los Angeles Times

Terry Gibbs: "I believe you should start swinging from the moment you hit that stage."

From the day he joined Herman in 1948, the good times never stopped rolling. "Woody handled young musicians so well, and he knew how to generate excitement. What a band that was! Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Chubby Jackson, Lou Levy, Shorty Rogers, Ernie Royal, Oscar Pettiford—he never had a bad soloist. When I left, he replaced me with Milt Jackson—a great player, who was harmonically ahead of me, though I had all the technique in the world."

Throughout the 1950s one gratifying gig followed another. For a while he co-led an all-star combo with Bellson and the trumpeter Charlie Shavers. For two or three years off and on he worked with his childhood idol, Benny Goodman.

For several years post-Goodman, Gibbs toured with his own quartet, playing his own part in breaking down the sex barrier: at one time or another his pianists were Terry Pollard (who also played vibes duets with him), Alice McLeod (who later married and toured with John Coltrane), Pat

After moving to California in 1957, he formed his own big band. "That was a real dream band—I discovered some unissued material, taped live in Hollywood, which will be released next week on Contemporary Records.

"I went back East for a while, but by 1964 things looked bad for jazz. Birdland closed down and rock was getting very big. Luckily I got a job conducting for Regis Philbin's show in Los Angeles." This series, for which Gibbs composed all the music, helped build up an ASCAP rating that eventually became substantial, later increased with his writing credits on Steve Allen's show and on a successful ABC-TV series called "Operation Entertainment," performed at Army bases, for which Gibbs served as musical director, composer and conductor.

The 1970s were devoted mostly to extensive travels with Allen and a variety of jobs with his own small groups. Then, by chance, a new association began that has proved valuable to him and a gifted partner, the clarinetist Buddy De Franco.

"In 1980 Buddy and I were both booked to play with our own groups at Ronnie Scott's in London. Ronnie asked if we'd like to close the show by doing a number together. Well, we just broke it up, and the next night we did two tunes together. We said to each other, 'Hey, we ought to do this more often."

Out of this accidental encounter, Gibbs and De Franco, who had known one another for 35 years but had never before shared a stage, began to accept joint booking, leading a quintet on a successful KCET television special and on club and concert dates at home and around the world. Critics called them the Lionel Hampton and Benny Goodman of the bop genre, and indeed they did generate the same excitement. Their live album taped in Los Angeles for Palo Alto confirmed the value of the chemistry between them.

"We don't work together often enough to keep a permanent rhythm section together," Gibbs said, "but we always manage to find great people. In June we have a half dozen dates in the Bay Area with Mel Torme, in an all-star group with Louie Bellson, Hank Jones, Remo Palmier and Milt Hinton. You can't do much better than that!" Torme is an old friend and associate, on whose New York TV series Gibbs played regularly in 1950-51.

One area of jazz with which Gibbs has rarely been associated is Latin music. This is now being corrected through an association with Tito Puente.

A special source of pride nowadays is the frequent presence in his quartet of the 22-year-old drummer Gerry Gibbs. "He's never been into rock—he's always been a jazz drummer. A really talented kid—I'm proud of him; and he can relate to me the way I never could to my own father. My Dad had a successful band in Brooklyn, and he could never understand why I'd turn down a nice-paying job with him because I wanted to go out and jam.

"I've always had a philosophy about performance: You never play a first set, you always begin with the third set. I don't believe in building, I believe you should start swinging from the moment you hit that stage. When it gets to the point where I don't feel like doing that, I'll quit. I play to please myself. If the audience likes what I'm doing I'm ahead of the game.

"When people ask me who my competition is and I say I have no competition, they think I'm cocky. But what I mean is, I'm my own competition. I'm not competing with Milt Jackson or Bobby Hutcherson or Lionel or any of the great people. All I ever want is to play better this evening than I played last night." □

5/11/86

JAZZ

NEW YORK BANDS STILL BLOW COOL AND SWEET

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—Am I really at the focal point of jazz? Is this still the city in which all ambitious artists must eventually establish themselves in order to earn a place in the history books?

A good argument can be made for the affirmative answer; nevertheless, certain unsettling developments recently have indicated that all is not as cheerful as it seems.

Nightlife in the clubs, for instance, has certainly cooled off. Some 15 rooms now offer jazz attractions, but because of a local ordinance forbidding the use of drums or horns in certain areas, four offer only piano soloists or piano-bass duos; six others are devoted primarily to singers. The five that provide instrumental combos—Fat Tuesday's, Sweet Basil, the Blue Note, the Gate and the Vanguard—are in Greenwich Village; not a single mid-town jazz club remains. Of the five, only one hires big bands—Mel Lewis' Orchestra plays the Vanguard every Monday—and two others vacillate between combos and vocalists.

The Lush Life, where the superb Toshiko Akiyoshi band used to play every Monday, fell victim to the no-horns law; it is now a Mexican restaurant. As for Harlem, you may catch a jazz act now and then at the Apollo, but the uptown jazz club scene breathed its last gasp when Smalls Paradise, a cabaret that rose to fame in the 1920s, closed down.

That this famous landmark had disappeared was a well-kept secret. John Hammond, the veteran talent scout who during his Yale freshman days (1930) weekended at Smalls, home of the legendary Charlie Johnson band, filled me in: "They went into bankruptcy and sold the furniture a couple of months ago. Incredibly, the newspapers never reported it."

Associated Press

John Lewis moonlights as American Jazz band conductor.

Compensating for the relative paucity of nightclub action are the frequent concerts and so-called festivals (a word now applied to any series of two or more concerts at the same hall). Recently, the Fulton Market Jazz Hall ("Just three blocks south of the Brooklyn Bridge") announced five evenings devoted respectively to Buddy Rich, Herbie Mann, Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton and Dave Brubeck as "Jazz Festival '86."

The real New York Jazz Festival, George Wein's pride and joy here since 1972, almost didn't make it this year. The five-year sponsorship by Kool had ended; shopping around for a new angel, Wein was saved at the count of nine when a Japanese electronic equipment company, JVC, took over.

The festival will run from June 20 through June 29, but its flagship location, Carnegie Hall, will be unavailable. Andrew Carnegie's 95-year-old cultural center is undergoing extensive restoration. Avery Fisher Hall, Town Hall and the other regularly used venues will still be used. The intimate piano solo recitals formerly held at Carnegie Recital Hall will be shifted to the Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center.

The Count Basie Orchestra, no longer under Thad Jones' direction (he quit last Tuesday and has returned to his home in Copenhagen), will launch the festival with a moonlight cruise. As has become the custom for the past several years, there will be a strong accent on tribute events. Natalie Cole, George Benson and Jon Hendricks will take part in a salute to Nat King Cole; three saxophone giants—Ben Webster, Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney—will be the subjects of a Town Hall celebration, and Wild Bill Davison, now in his 81st year, will surround himself with what promises to be the liveliest available bunch of senior citizen jazzmen, among them Art Hodes, Yank Lawson, Jimmy McPartland and Milt Hinton.

Younger artists will not be entirely neglected. The sextet known as OTB (Out of the Blue), heard on an impressive Blue Note debut album some months back, will make its festival bow. Guitarist John Scofield (ex-Miles Davis) will be on hand one evening at St. Peter's Church.

Certainly the most newsworthy new group is the Ganelin Trio, the premier Soviet jazz combo, which has been set for its first U.S. tour from June 21 (at Town Hall) through July 12. Having heard three of its many albums, I can attest to the probability that this will be the most talked-about jazz event of the year.

As listeners in 15 cities will observe, the Ganelin Trio is phenomenal—largely avant-garde and variously outrageous, chaotic, noisy, swinging, adventurous, consonant, dissonant, witty (among its titles are "The Return of the Prodigal Fun," "It's Too Good to Be Jazz," and "Who's Afraid of Anthony Braxton?") and totally unpredictable.

Organized in 1973, based in Lithuania, the trio consists of Vyacheslav Ganelin, 42, on piano, basset horn, guitar and percussion; Vladimir Chekasin, 39, on saxes, clarinet, flute, ocarina and percussion, and Vladimir Tarasov, 39, on drums and percussion.

The Ganelin group has taken a long time to reach us after headlining jazz festivals not only from Moscow to Warsaw to Prague, but also in Italy, West Berlin, Austria, Holland, Great Britain and, yes, Cuba. Its tour, originally planned for Canada only, was extended to include the United States as a result of the recent Soviet-American cultural exchange agreement.

According to S. Frederick Starr, author of "Red and Hot," the first comprehensive history of Soviet jazz, the Soviet Union is well-supplied with more conservative jazz groups, but the Ganelin unit is "beyond question the country's pioneer avant-garde group, one that will interest anyone concerned with any type of contemporary music." (Of the evidence I have on

hand, only one album, "Poi Segue," is available officially for American audiences. Licensed for release here from the Soviet Melodiya label, it is now on East Wind Records, 99 Hungerford St., Hartford, Conn. 06106.)

While we await the arrival of the Soviet alarums and excursions, an experiment of a very different kind, also to be heard during the New York festival, is now on the launching pad. This is the American Jazz Orchestra, a repertory ensemble just formed under the aegis of Gary Giddins, one of New York's most articulate jazz writers.

With John Lewis moonlighting between Modern Jazz Quartet dates to conduct the American Jazz Orchestra, this latest undertaking may be luckier. Giddins, cheerfully admitting that he is involved "not in the mere appearance of conflicting interests but in the murk itself," wrote a whole column in his regular Village Voice space heralding the AJO, which will give its first concert Monday at the Great Hall of Cooper Union.

It was because the director of Cooper Union was receptive to Giddins' idea of an institutionalized jazz orchestra that the initiative became a reality. Still, as Giddins has said, funding probably will be a major hazard. "It took six months to raise the $15,000 that this first concert will cost," he told me. "Why can't we have government support for American music in America? Why was it in France, not here, that the government allotted a million dollars a year to sponsor its own Orchestre National de Jazz?"

Help may be on the way; the National Endowment for the Arts may assist, and a few commercial sponsors are interested. Meanwhile, the AJO looks promising on paper, with such imposing names as Randy Brecker, Ted Curson and Jon Faddis on trumpets; Eddie Bert, Jimmy Knepper and Craig Harris on trombones; Frank Wess, Jimmy Heath, Lorne Schoenberg and Hamiet Bluiett in the sax section, Dick Katz and Hank Jones on piano, Major Holley on bass and others.

With the possible exception of Los Angeles, it would be difficult even to assemble, let alone fund, an orchestra of this caliber in any other American city. The AJO consists exclusively of men (why no women?) who live in or near New York. They will be available for the second concert, again at Cooper Union, June 23, during the JVC Festival. The music will include re-creations of Ellington's "Harlem" suite, a Dizzy Gillespie pastiche arranged by Slide Hampton and classics by Lunceford, Basie and Henderson.

To sum up, despite all the negative factors—the clubs that closed, the repertory bands that failed, the lack of mid-town and Harlem action except at festival time—it seems that those questions I asked myself as I began this survey can be answered positively; in the final analysis, New York City is still the jazz capital of the world. □

LOS ANGELES TIMES/CALENDAR

Los Angeles Times 5/10

MARLENA SHAW GOES THE FUNNY WAY WITH A SONG

By LEONARD FEATHER

Marlena Shaw hit the ground jumping at the Vine St. Bar & Grill on Thursday evening. Her opening song, a vintage Billie Holiday item called "What a Little Moonlight Can Do," accentuated her strong roots in jazz. Her distinctive timbre, with an occasional hint of Carmen McRae, was in evidence again during a verse-and-chorus treatment of "If You Could See Me Now."

Shaw's repertoire is wide ranging; on this occasion she leaned more than usual on standards, among them an up-tempo waltz, "Too Long at the Fair," and the durable ballad "At Last." It was here that her greatest strength was on display, along with her perennial hang-up.

The problem is Shaw's sense of humor. Here is a woman of exceptional beauty, blessed with a no less exceptional voice, who seems unable to decide whether she is a comedian who sings, or simply a singer who now and then tosses in a humorous aside. Even in a great tune song like "At Last" she was not content to play it straight from top to bottom; by the second chorus she had wandered off into a rap about the height and other attributes of the man she wanted.

Pearl Bailey established this route long ago with enormous success. If that is where Marlena Shaw wishes to go, so be it; but she ought to be respected as a fine vocal artist and deserves to break into the international jazz festival circuit that seems to elude her. The reason is clear: She will not be taken seriously as long as she is unable, or unwilling, to take herself seriously.

Her entertaining, well-received set was capably backed by a trio that played a couple of brief, propulsive warm-up numbers: Llewellyn Matthews, piano; Leroy Ball, bass, and Paul Humphrey, drums. They and she will close tonight.

OVERTURE May '86

Musicians Join Salute to Holiday

Jimmy Rowles (keyboards), Red Callender (bass), Alvin Stoller (drums) and Stacy Rowles (trumpet) at Billie Holiday celebration. (See Bill Douglass' report on page 9.)

Jazz singer Billie Holiday was posthumously honored with the 1,825th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on April 7, 1986, what would have been her 71st birthday.

Prior to the ceremony, musicians who had performed with Miss Holiday, members of Local 47, played a concert for the public. Miss Holiday's goddaughter Lorraine Feather sang. Other special guests included Carmen McRae, Rosemary Clooney, Charlotte Crossley, Leonard Feather, music critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, and Ron Berenstein, owner of the Vine Street Bar & Grill.

TRUMPET

Wynton Marsalis
Miles Davis
Dizzy Gillespie

FLUGELHORN

Chuck Mangione
Art Farmer
Clark Terry

FLUTE

James Newton
Dave Valentin
Herbie Mann

TROMBONE

Bill Watrous
Curtis Fuller
Craig Harris

COMPACT DISCS

Harlequin — Dave Grusin & Lee Ritenour (GRP)
Koln Concert — Keith Jarrett (ECM)
In the Digital Mood — The Glenn Miller Orchestra (GRP)

JAZZ VIDEO

One Night With Blue Note — Various Artists (Sony/ Blue Note)
Decoy — Miles Davis (CBS)
Vocalese — Manhattan Transfer (Atlantic)

WRITER - CRITIC

Leonard Feather
Eric Snider
Mark Nesbit Varney

SAX - ALTO

David Sanborn
Phil Woods
Arthur Blythe

SAX - BARI

Gerry Mulligan
Nick Brignola
Pepper Adams

SAX - SOPRANO

Branford Marsalis
Wayne Shorter
George Howard

SAX - TENOR

Sonny Rollins
Michael Brecker
David Murray

ACOUSTIC PIANO

Michel Petrucciani
McCoy Tyner
Kenny Kirkland

ELECTRONIC KEYBOARDS

Chick Corea
Josef Zawinul
Herbie Hancock

BASS - ELECTRIC

Jamaaladeen Tacuma
Mark Egan
Jeff Berlin

BASS - ACOUSTIC

Ron Carter
Charlie Haden
Eddie Gomez

DRUMS

Billy Cobham
Omar Hakim
Jack DeJohnette

PERCUSSION

Paulinho Dacosta
Airto
Nana Vasconcelos

BIG BAND

Toshiko Akiyoshi
David Murray
Carla Bley

FEMALE VOICE

Sarah Vaughn
Ella Fitzgerald
Diane Schuur

MALE VOICE

Bobby McFerrin
Joe Williams
Al Jarreau

MISC

Andreas Vollenweider (Harp)
David Grisman (Mandolin)
Toots Theilsman (Harmonica)

UNDERRATED MUSICIAN

Branford Marsalis
David Sanborn
Lyle Mays

SMOOTH SAILING WITH MAIDEN VOYAGE GROUP

By LEONARD FEATHER

Ann Patterson's Maiden Voyage, the 17-piece orchestra heard Monday at the Hyatt on Sunset's Silver Slipper Jazz Room, has a few things going for it that no other jazz group can claim. Take the leader: In the course of two sets she displayed a pure, silken sound leading the reed section on soprano sax; at other times she was heard on alto sax, flute, piccolo and oboe. But she's just one of several mature talents in this astonishing ensemble.

Betty O'Hara sang "Nobody's Heart" in an endearingly warm voice—and soloed superbly on fluegelhorn and valve trombone. In her own composition, "Euphonics," she switched to a double-belled euphonium. She's a member of the strongest trombone quartet the band has ever had, thanks largely to the presence of Christy Belicki, a student at USC, who excelled both as lead player and soloist.

One cannot help marveling at the dedication, education and inspiration that has gone into the maintenance of this orchestra over the last six years. Where else do you find a talent like Stacy Rowles, whose legato fluegelhorn lit up "My Foolish Heart"? How many brass sections can deliver such a powerhouse performance as these nine members did on Roger Neumann's "Sandblaster"? Is there a more promising composer/arranger than the band's pianist, Liz Kinnon? Her "Early Morning" found all five saxophonists doubling delightfully on flutes, with Kathryn Moses as the featured soloist.

Maiden Voyage also has a rhythm team of unprecedented cohesion with Kinnon, Mary Ann McSweeney on bass and the award-winning drummer Jeannette Wrate.

Mix in all these plus factors, toss in other charts by Brad Dechter, Dick Cary and John Magruder, and you have a band at once so compelling and so accessible that its failure to line up a tour, a visit to Japan, even a record contract, can be ascribed only to an inexplicable lack of perceptiveness among the businessmen who control the world of music. Even without their help, Maiden Voyage remains one of the most remarkable and listenable big bands on the contemporary jazz scene.

FOSTER TO LEAD BASIE ORCHESTRA

5/19

Frank Foster has been signed to replace Thad Jones as leader of the Count Basie orchestra. He will play occasional dates with the band for the next month and will take over on a full-time basis in late June.

Jones, who had fronted the orchestra since not long after Basie's death in 1984, played his last engagement as leader on May 6 and has returned to his home in Copenhagen. He denies rumors that he is leaving due to illness, claiming that he will resume the free-lance composing and conducting assignments that had previously kept him busy in Europe.

Foster, like Jones, is both a soloist and an arranger. He played tenor saxophone in the Basie orchestra from 1953 to 1964. He then worked with Woody Herman, Lionel Hampton and others, played with the drummer Elvin Jones' combo off and on for several years, then divided his time between the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra and his own big band, the Loud Minority.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

5/19

MIXED BAG AT QUEEN MARY FEST

By LEONARD FEATHER

The second annual Queen Mary Jazz Festival in Long Beach was held, like its predecessor, not aboard the mighty liner but on the dock about 100 yards away, in what seems like an enormous converted parking lot.

Again co-producer Al Williams (with Roy Hassett) tried to find a middle ground between artistic values and economic necessities. He succeeded to some extent Saturday, but hardly at all on Friday, when two of the three acts were essentially pop-oriented. Hiroshima, an eight-piece band that achieved, not too long ago, an exciting cultural cross-fertilization, seems to have lost sight of its original aims. Overwhelmed by electronics, its set was noteworthy only when koto soloist June Kuramoto could be heard above the din.

Ronnie Laws is another of those poor little sheep who have lost their way. A schooled musician, he now makes flatulent popular sounds on the soprano and tenor saxophones.

The Modern Jazz Quartet, Friday's only pure jazz act, reached the stage an hour late. Though the MJQ sounded as elegant as possible in view of the out-of-tune piano and its distorted sound, John Lewis, the pianist and musical director, cut the set short after 35 minutes.

Saturday brought a couple of surprises. An unbilled orchestra co-led by bassist John Clayton and drummer Jeff Hamilton (inexplicably introduced by emcee Rick Holmes as "Clayton Hamilton and His Jazz Band") played a short, attractive set. The two leaders and five sidemen remained on stage for the closing set by Ray Charles, whose regular band was absent. Charles' motor has been idling for too many years; this intimate setting could have provided a challenge for him, yet he came on totally unprepared, complaining (as he always seems to) about the sound system, singing the same repertoire he has sung for 30 years.

Some of the most thoughtful music in the eight-hour marathon was offered by Betty Carter's backup team: pianist Benny Green and drummer Winard Harper, both 23, and bassist Michael Bowie, 24. Both in their warm-up number and in various solos during Carter's set, they reminded us that young, unspoiled jazz talent can still be found; it simply needs this kind of exposure. I would gladly have forfeited the entire set by Ramsey Lewis, the Liberace of jazz, to hear a couple more numbers by this promising trio.

Carter was her own unchanging self with a quizzical charm, offbeat phrasing and idiosyncratic scatting. It was a joy to see and hear her, silhouetted against the setting sun, as she tore apart the lyrics of "The Man I Love" into her own very personal shreds.

Al Williams kicked off the afternoon with a mainstream set (Bobby Bryant, Buster Cooper, Herman Riley, et al.) that went well until an arch vocal person named Little Joe Dobbins took over, sang "Cabaret" and devoted a whole song to one feeble pun.

Freddie Hubbard, leading his quintet (Bob Shepherd, saxes and flute; John Beasley, piano; John B. Williams, bass; Ralph Penland, drums), assured the audience that he was about to play jazz rather than rock and roll. He was true to his word, recalling his Art Blakey days with his composition "Thermo" and adding a few new rhythmic twists to "Caravan." His encore, Benard Ighner's "Super Blue," gave John B. Williams a chance to shine on electric bass.

Roy Ayers, a big commercial name for 15 years in crossover music, is still a talented vibraphonist, but this aspect of his work nowadays is secondary to his singing and his comedy raps. The crowd loved him.

BIG SOUND FROM 'LITTLE GIANT' GRIFFIN

5/15

By LEONARD FEATHER

Johnny Griffin, the tenor saxophonist who moved to Europe in the 1960s, is back in the States for another of his occasional tours. Tuesday and Wednesday he took over the bandstand at Donte's.

Known as "The Little Giant," Griffin is no midget; a shortish but stocky figure, he brings to the horn a powerful, technically adroit approach that occasionally evokes his one-time partner Eddie (Lockjaw) Davis. Perhaps because almost his entire career has been spent working in small combo settings, with few colleagues to share the responsibilities, he developed long ago the ability to weave lengthy solos that manage to retain their interest and sense of continuity.

Such was the case Tuesday when he began by easing into some 20 choruses of fast-paced blues that soon became a torrential yet logical flow of notes. His timing is flawless, his sound strong in the Sonny Rollins tradition.

Griffin's companions were three vocal musicians, all well-suited to his requirements: Gildo Mahones, a pianist in the post-bop tradition, Larry Gales on bass and Sherman Ferguson on drums. Gales has an advantage over many jazz bassists in that he has masterful control of the bow.

Predictably, the group, having had very little time for rehearsal, restricted itself for the most part to common denominator songs such as "If I Should Lose You" and "Lover Man." On the latter, Griffin at one point silenced the rhythm section and played an entire chorus unaccompanied—swinging without a net, so to speak.

He also brought along the music for a few of his originals, reminding the audience in "Waltz With Sweetie" that he can create beguiling melodies with unpredictable chord patterns.

Although it would have been more rewarding to hear him in an organized setting, Griffin's bold approach to the horn was as impressive as ever, particularly to fellow saxophonists in the house. Expatriation has done nothing to lessen the stature of The Little Giant.

069

HUBBARD'S ENJOYING A WORLD OF SUCCESS

By LEONARD FEATHER

At 48, Freddie Hubbard, whose quintet will be one of the main attractions tonight at the Queen Mary Jazz Festival, is riding high.

"The music scene has been good to me lately," says Hubbard.

Earlier this year he took part in Jazz Yatra, the annual festival in Bombay and New Delhi; lately he has toured the U.S. with a show called Jazz Explosion. He has six weeks in Europe lined up, starting next month, followed by a Japanese visit. Best of all, for the first time since 1980, he is under contract to a record company, Blue Note. His video, produced during his "Ride Like the Wind" recording, is doing well. This fall he will be seen in "Round Midnight," the French film starring Dexter Gordon.

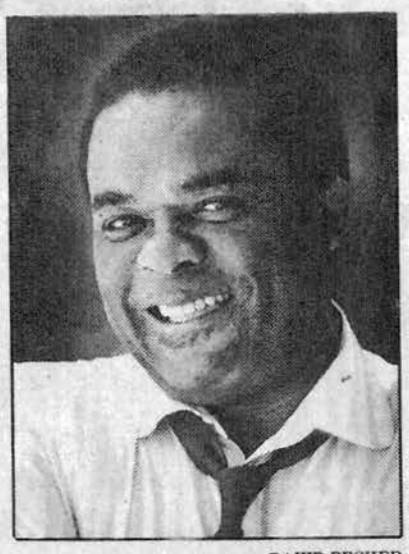
"I just finished this 'Jazz Explosion' tour, which really wasn't jazz—they had people like Angela Bofill, Gato Barbieri, Noel Pointer. The audience was mostly their fans, so it was good—a different kind of exposure for me. I played my own tunes like 'Skydive' and these cats tried to put a rock 'n' roll beat on it. It was kind of funny, but the money was great."

Hubbard's career has been marked by intermittent ventures of this kind in which he plays to the commercial market, then tires of it and returns to straight-ahead jazz. This time his reasons were purely personal. His wife was in a serious accident two years ago, from which she is still recovering. "She's such a part of my life, and sometimes you have to make sacrifices. That accident cost a lot of money, man, and I'm in tax trouble."

For the same reason, he expects to leave, despite serious misgivings, on a six-week tour of Europe with McCoy Tyner's trio and saxophonist Joe Henderson. "This could be the best tour I've ever done, but I still have to check it out and see which cities we're playing and which airports are least dangerous. I'm scared to death. We have 30 one-nighters, then we sit down for a while at the Nice Festival in July. This is a very crucial time, and I don't want to be on the right plane with the wrong diplomat."

Always a dependable artist when the circumstances are right, Hubbard is at his best when he meets a challenge.

"Wynton Marsalis sat in with me one night in New York," says Hubbard, "and I gave him a lesson—a trumpet lesson!" This remark was not in animosity, but half in jest; yet Hubbard is indeed a mature artist from whom most younger men could learn. As he added: "It was as if I were to sit in with Dizzy Gillespie. Wynton is a talented young boy, and all the publicity he's had has helped jazz. His chops were really up that night, too, but the swing isn't quite there yet."



DAVID BECKER

Freddie Hubbard: "This could be the best tour I've ever done."

In his first Blue Note release, "Double Take," Hubbard has a summit meeting with fellow trumpeter Woody Shaw.

"Being with Blue Note, now that it's an active, major company again, is going to help me. When you're free-lancing around, as I was after leaving Columbia in 1980, it hurts you, because no company's going to promote you if you just make one record and split."

It is through Blue Note that his next Japanese tour is being set up. "It's going to be a genuine all-star affair: Woody Shaw, Cedar Walton, Herbie Hancock, Stanley Turrentine, Jackie McLean, Art Blakey with a special group of his Jazz Messengers. We're all meeting on Mt. Fuji for three days, outside Tokyo, and the whole thing will be shot for television.

"It's amazing—all these great things are happening for me around the world, and the one place I can't find a job for more than a single day at a time is back home in L.A."

—L. F.

"The Circle." John Kaizan Neptune. Denon. Playing variously pitched shakuhachi flutes, Neptune is surrounded by an international group in a set of 10 original works that display Japanese, Latin, Indian and/or American elements. The frequent use of a five-tone scale lends much of the music its flavor. "Tokyo Pace" is fast but never furious; "Spring Breeze," with koto effects, is airily cheerful; "North of Noplace" dances along daintily. Superior fidelity (32-channel digital mastering) enhances this polyethnic parade, which runs almost 63 minutes. ~~~½

5/20 —LEONARD FEATHER

FOSTER TO LEAD BASIE ORCHESTRA

5/19

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—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ

NEW LPs, OLD FAVORITES: TATUM, GILLESPIE, PARKER . . .

By LEONARD FEATHER

"ART TATUM: 20TH CENTURY PIANO GENIUS." EmArcy 826-129-1.

Though most of the cuts on this two-LP set were released some years ago on 20th Century Fox Records, they have long been unavailable and are presented here for the first time in toto, without editing.

The occasion was a wrap party for the film "Pete Kelly's Blues" held in July, 1955, at the home of Ray Heindorf, then the musical director at Warner Bros., and owner of an excellent tape machine that captured everything played by Tatum, who was a guest that night.

Though all but two performances ("Little Man You've Had a Busy Day" and "Mr. Freddie Blues") have been heard in other Tatum versions, many of the renditions here differ substantially from their predecessors. "Sweet Lorraine," for example, may be the most inspired and unpredictable of all of his many treatments.

Art Tatum: His album was taped at a wrap party for film.

The liner notes, by Felicity Howlett, are detailed and insightful. As she points out, Tatum was at ease in these surroundings and did not include such showpieces as "Tiger Rag" or "Humoresque." If further evidence is needed (it really isn't) that Art Tatum was the greatest instrumental virtuoso ever produced by jazz, it can be found between these covers. 5 stars plus.

□

"DOUBLE TAKE." Freddie Hubbard/Woody Shaw. Blue Note BT 85121. According to the producer, Michael Cuscuna, six years separated the concept of this album and its execution. Late or not, it was an idea brimming with logic, inspiration and integration.

Though Shaw is six years Hubbard's junior, basically they are products of the same post-bop generation. Playing tunes either self-written or by other trumpeters (Clifford Brown's joyful blues "Sandu," Lee Morgan's "Desert Moonlight," Kenny Dorham's "Lotus Blossom"), they interact superbly; their togetherness on Fats Navarro's "Boperation" is even more of a delight than their individual solos. 4½ stars.

□

"CLOSER TO THE SOURCE." Dizzy Gillespie. Atlantic 81646. "Farther from the source" would be a more apt title. One can hear the buzz in corporate conference rooms: "Let's give Gillespie something the kids can relate to." If this jazz giant wants to sell more records, with the help of Marcus Miller, Branford Marsalis and (briefly, on harmonica and synthesizer) Stevie Wonder, good luck to him. What is remarkable about this set is not so much the triviality of the tunes, the vapid vocals (female), the rhythmic repetition or even the mechanical fades, but rather the degree to which Gillespie, at times, rises above them. On one cut, "You're No. 1 in My Book," he is in fine form, both muted and open. 2½ stars.

□

"SONG X." Pat Metheny/Ornette Coleman. Geffen GHS 24096. For his first album on Geffen, Metheny has joined forces with the man he calls "the greatest improviser of the last 30 years." Essentially, he has moved more in Coleman's direction than Coleman has adjusted to Metheny, a fact that is underscored by the presence of two regular Coleman sidemen, his son Denardo (who shares the percussion responsibilities with Jack de Johnette) and the bassist Charlie Haden, who provides the group with a firm foundation of which it is often in obvious need.

The longest and most adventurous cut, "Endangered Species," involves blistering, at times near-chaotic improvisational interplay, with Metheny using a guitar synthesizer. This is one of the four pieces for which he shares composer credit with Coleman, though "Trigonometry" and "Song X Duo," also given dual credits, are strongly reminiscent of the lines Coleman was inventing in the early 1960s. Haden's walking lines under Coleman on "Video Games" and the melodic theme of Coleman and Metheny's "Kathelin Gray" provide some of the best integrated work. Coleman switches to violin, on which he meanders to minimal effect, on "Mob Job."

A problem with the collaboration is that at times the two leaders don't quite get it together; it sounds as though Metheny, instead of playing direct unison, listened to Coleman, then echoed his notes a millisecond later. Still, this marks an intriguing and intermittently successful change of pace for both men. 3½ stars.

□

"BIRD ON TENOR 1943." Charlie Parker. Stash ST 260. If Charlie Parker were alive today, he might well be spending much of his time in court, trying to prevent records like this from being released. The trouble begins with some cuts recorded in a friend's hotel room, their sound quality so bad that the surface noise virtually competes with the saxophone. On most of these tracks there are no drums, no piano, no bass; one of them even has Parker playing along with a recorded piano solo by Hazel Scott.

Other cuts find Bird in various settings in Hollywood, New York and Oregon, playing tunes that for the most part have been available for many years in properly recorded studio versions. Participants include Gillespie, Miles Davis and Billy Eckstine on trumpets.

DAVID BECKER

Freddie Hubbard joins Woody Shaw on album, "Double Take."

Even the title is misleading, since Bird plays alto, not tenor, on eight of the 13 numbers. The cover art is an apparently calculated attempted to simulate the old Verve albums, with a drawing of Parker in the style of David Stone Martin.

The music adds absolutely nothing to my knowledge of Parker's enormous contribution to jazz. Is there no limit to these kinds of ventures?

Two of the musicians who took part in one or other of these sessions, Jimmy Rowles and Red Callender, say that they were not consulted and have not been recompensed for the use of their names and services. Other musicians are deceased, or are simply listed as "unknown."

No stars for anyone connected with this shameless attempt to capitalize on the name of a genius who is not here to defend himself.

□

"BIRD AT THE ROOST: THE SAVOY YEARS." Charlie Parker. Savoy SJL 2260. Will it never end? This is the second of three volumes that represent, we are told, "the complete Royal Roost performance." Recorded in 1949, it starts with a chaotic "How High the Moon" in which the announcer, Symphony Sid, interrupts every solo to tell us when we are hearing. The other cuts are all retreads of pieces best known through Parker's studio versions; there are four different treatments of "Scrappie From the Apple."

Because the recording in general is better, and because Parker has his own regular group (Kenny Dorham on trumpet and a rhythm section), this two-LP set includes enough inspired Parker to justify its release and purchase. Unlike the Stash material, it offers a reasonably audible glimpse of Bird during his peak period. For Bird, 3 stars.

□

"BACK TO JAZZ." Alphonse Mouzon Band. Pausa PR 7196. An odd title for the run-of-the-grist-mill fusion date. The "band" is a quartet; Mouzon and the pianist double on synthesizers, with Doug Norwine's plodding alto sax as the lone horn. Mouzon sings on the title song; he is joined by two young singing Mouzons, who have a combined age of 9, uttering cliche lyrics that have all the inspiration of a Robin Leach narration. 1½ stars.

□

REFLECTIONS. [illegible] beck Quartet. Concord Jazz CJ 299. Is the clarinet coming back? Certainly, Bill Smith runs away with the honors here; with or without the multiphonics (which he employs extensively and effectively), he is one of the most original and persuasive exponents of the horn.

Pat Metheny, left, calls Ornette Coleman "the greatest improviser of the last 30 years." They join forces for album, "Song X."

Playing eight of his own works, Brubeck is in generally good form, never overextending himself. His son Chris has become one of the most capable electric bassists, delivering an imaginative solo on "I'd Walk a Country Mile." "We Will All Remember Paul" (for Paul Desmond) is a waltz of rare beauty. 4 stars.

□

"HOMECOMING." Eddie Harris/Ellis Marsalis. Spindletop STP 105. The senior Marsalis, a long underrated pianist, teams with the veteran saxophonist in a set that finds them generally compatible. Marsalis' accompaniment to the solos by Harris is so buoyantly sensitive that one never misses the rhythm section. There are free-jazz exploration on "Ethereal Moments" and "Zee Blues," with Harris indulging in squeak-and-squeal routines, but the most ingenious and successful cuts are "Darn That Dream" and "Have You Met Miss Jones," on both of which Harris and Marsalis sedulously avoid the melodies, using only the harmonic patterns, until the final chorus, when Harris hints at "Dream" and actually plays "Jones." An intriguing and diversified collaboration. 4 stars.

□

"JIM HALL'S THREE." Concord Jazz CJ 298. The concepts of Hall, a guitarist whose fingers are butterfly wings, have never been better presented, never more delicately delineated, than in this set of four originals and three standards. The bassist Steve La Spina (he's a [illegible] at NYU) is not merely supportive; he is integral to the group's success, as is the drumming of Akira Tana. Hall communicates his innermost thoughts about the blues in his first recorded outing on 12-string guitar, the unaccompanied "Bottleneck Blues." 4 stars. □

SALSA SPICES DAY 3 OF QUEEN MARY JAZZ FEST

By LEONARD FEATHER

Never underestimate the power of the salsa. That was the lesson to be learned on Sunday, the third of the Queen Mary Jazz Festival's four days. With five of the seven main attractions partially or entirely dominated by Latin rhythms, the crowd occupied about 90% of the 7,400 seats in the dock area.

Mainstays of the 7½-hour presentation were the bands of Poncho Sanchez, Mongo Santamaria and Tito Puente. Their instrumentation is roughly the same: three horns, three percussion, piano and bass. All three served up authentic mixtures of Cuban, African and American jazz concepts.

Sanchez, at 34 by far the youngest, was the most innovative; Santamaria was the big crowd-pleaser whose highly charged rhythms had hundreds of fans gyrating in the aisles. Puente, a veteran who led his first group almost 40 years ago, seemed a little anticlimactic, if only because he offered nothing the other two had not performed at least as well.

A conga player who came to prominence with the late Cal Tjader, Sanchez covered all the territory from basic '50s mambo to an intense African-Cuban piece called "Half and Half" and one tune that captured the hard-bop flavor of the '60s.

Santamaria was strongest in the solo department; aside from his own persuasive congas, there was a stupendous timbale soloist, John Andrews. Bob Quaranta set up dramatic moods at the piano; the versatile Tony Hinson, milking the crowd with tricky repetitions, played soprano and tenor saxes as well as flute.

Stan Getz launched his quartet into a Brazilian groove that was aggressive but not abrasive. His tone as supple and appealing as ever, he played a brief bossa nova medley and two tunes by Victor Feldman, as well as the exquisite Billy Strayhorn ballad "Blood Count."

A standing ovation for Getz led to a generally powerful set by his vocal protegee, Diane Schuur. Accompanying herself at the piano, with Getz backing her on three numbers, she brought her flawless diction and dramatic impact to bear on standard, pop and gospel material. Her debt to the late Dinah Washington is so evident that the one or two deliberately exaggerated nasal effects seemed unnecessary. Schuur's closer, "Amazing Grace," brought the rousing reaction she deserved.

Dave Valentin, a flute soloist who has enjoyed healthy record sales, used a Latin funk beat on pieces by Wayne Shorter, Freddy Hubbard and Lennon-McCartney. Valentin has mastered the instrument, along with a few electronic gimmicks, well enough to know how to stir up an audience. Creatively, not much happened.

The one strictly non-Latin instrumental group Sunday was the Charlie Chan Blues Band, heard at the top of the show. With Chan singing and playing harmonica, Ben E. Yee on keyboards and Dave Walker on tenor sax, the sextet went through its John Mayall-Lowell Fulson-Muddy Waters paces with a lack of pretension.

According to producer Roy Hassett, who with Rodderick Reed and Al Williams put it all together, the festival, due to end Monday evening, was already in the black by late Sunday and will grace Long Beach again in 1987.

JAZZ HOT MAR-1986

JAZZ A L.A.

ECOUTEZ LE PROF !

... le professeur Plume bien sûr, alias Leonard Feather : le célèbre encyclopédiste du jazz, correspondant régulier de Jazz Hot sur la west-coast, est comme un poisson dans L.A., où il vit parmi les jazzmen qu'il défend inlassablement dans les colonnes du Los Angeles Times.

JAZZ HOT : Professeur Léon Plume, vous qui connaissez tout du jazz, y-a-t-il, à votre avis une ambiance typique de Los Angeles ?

Leon Plume : Le jazz n'appartient pas à une seule ville. Beaucoup de musiciens new yorkais viennent ici et vice versa. La musique reste la même. Il n'y a peut-être pas le même dynamisme, la même intensité qu'à New York mais les gens d'ici ne les recherchent pas.

J.H. : Alors le « jazz West Coast » ça n'existe pas ?

L.P. : C'est une étiquette forgée par les critiques, pour désigner des musiciens blancs de la Côte ouest. Alors que des artistes très créateurs, comme Ornette Coleman ou Harold Land, n'ont jamais été considérés comme représentants du jazz « West Coast » ! C'est un terme vague. Que désigne-t-il ? San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle ? Et lorsqu'un musicien comme Ornette s'en va à New York, peut-on dire qu'il fait du jazz « East Coast » ?

J.H. : La vie jazzistique à Los Angeles est intéressante ?

L.P. : Evidemment, New York reste la ville la plus merveilleuse du monde mais L.A. vient immédiatement après. Regardez les annonces du *Los Angeles Times* et vous y verrez près d'une trentaine de clubs qui présentent au moins des trios. Certains lieux sont plus ambitieux, comme « Carmelos » ou « Concert by the sea ». Le seul problème est que la plupart des musiciens vivent à New York et que le voyage est coûteux. Faire venir un groupe de six musiciens est impossible. Les « visiteurs » travaillent donc avec des sections rythmiques locales. Dizzy Gillespie vient sans son groupe, par exemple. Mais il y a heureusement beaucoup de musiciens qui vivent ici. Des chanteuses surtout : Ella Fitzgerald, Carmen Mc Rae, Sarah Vaughan ; Joe Williams vit à Las Vegas ; Freddie Hubbard, Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter et James Newton vivent à L.A. Il y a également la « Wind School », une école de jazz qui est un peu la « Berklee » de la Côte Ouest, où enseignent des gens comme James Newton et Red Callender.

J.H. : Et le public ici est réceptif au jazz ?

L.P. : Le « Playboy Jazz Festival » qui a lieu chaque année au Hollywood Bowl reçoit 18 000 personnes et affiche toujours complet. Plus de 30 000 personnes y viennent en deux jours, c'est bien la preuve qu'il y a des amateurs !

J.H. : Pourtant, à écouter le quartet de Teddy Edwards l'autre soir, nous n'étions que deux personnes, dont moi...

L.P. : Au « Rosalin's » ? Ils ont pourtant un excellent restaurant !

J.H. : Par contre au « Vine Street », il y avait 200 personnes en délire...

L.P. : « Vine Street » est le club qui a le plus de succès. Ils présentent surtout des chanteurs. Ils font de la publicité, ils sont chers, ils payent bien les musiciens et ils sont dans un bon quartier. « Rosalin's » est difficile à trouver. J'ai écrit un article sur le club et Teddy Edwards m'a dit que le week-end suivant, c'était complet. Je regrette que cela n'ait pas continué.

J.H. : Los Angeles, c'est plutôt le disco, la plage, le sport. Les boutiques de disques sont très bien achalandées, mais les concerts « live » sont plus rares...

L.P. : Les gens aiment la musique mais ils ont du mal à sortir. Ils ne sortent que pour les grands concerts ou les festivals...

J.H. : Il est vrai qu'il faut faire 80 km pour aller d'un club à l'autre, alors qu'à New-York, ça se fait à pieds !

L.P. : Exactement.

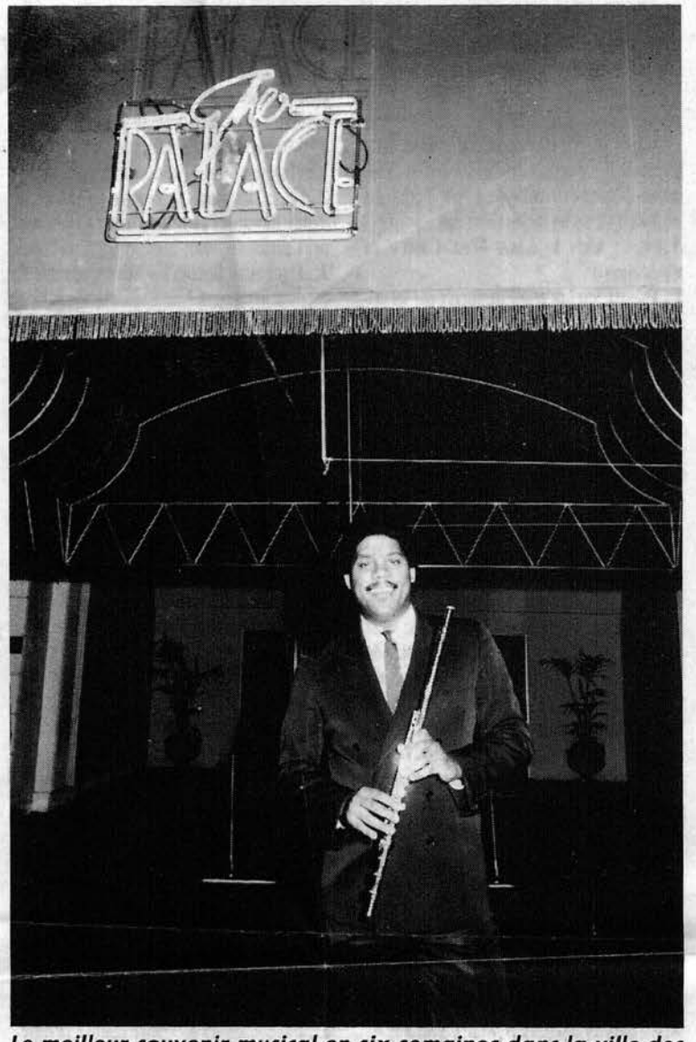
J.H. : Une autre différence frappante avec New York, où tout le monde se mélange, c'est l'impression qu'il y a des clubs où l'on ne rencontre que des Noirs, comme au « Baked Potato » ou au « Rosalin's », et d'autres comme le « Vine Street » où l'on ne voit que des Blancs...

L.P. : C'est dû en grande partie à la ségrégation dans l'immobilier. Récemment encore, certains contrats de vente stipulaient l'interdiction de vendre à des Noirs. Voilà pourquoi on

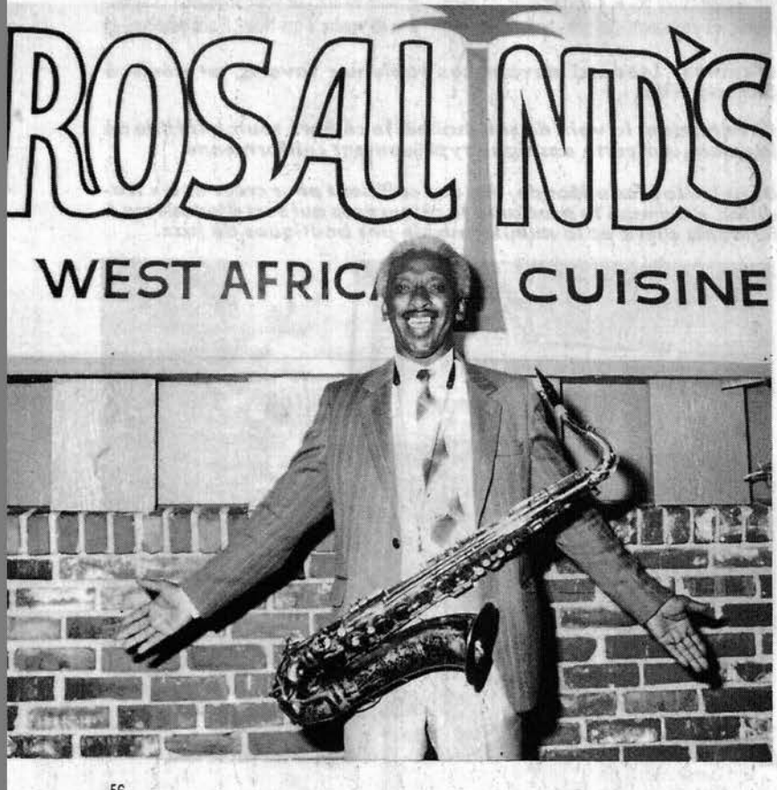
Ci-contre, Léonard devant ses tableaux favoris, at home à Beverly Hills.

En entendant la voix de son maître, le célèbre toutou frétille de la queue sur cette enseigne typiquement californienne.

Dans le Nouveau Monde, dix ans suffisent pour créer une « tradition », comme le proclame le rhinocéros qui sert d'emblème à la moins chère et la mieux fournie des boutiques de jazz.



Le meilleur souvenir musical en six semaines dans la ville des Anges : James Newton au Palace Court



Teddy Edwards (ci-contre), le ténor légendaire de la west-coast, est un familier de Rosalind's, le seul club de L.A. où l'on puisse faire le bœuf sans montrer patte blanche.

En haut, deux grandes figures du jazz hollywoodien réunies par hasard dans les salons de l'hôtel Hyatt : à la caméra, le grand contrebassiste Red Mitchell et dans le rôle de la star, Bill Mays, un arrangeur demandé.

ne voyait pas un Noir à Beverly Hills ou dans la Vallée. D'autres quartiers sont entièrement noirs. Quand une grande vedette noire joue dans un quartier blanc, quelques Noirs se déplacent. Mais même si la situation s'est améliorée depuis quelques années, la ségrégation reste beaucoup plus forte qu'à New York. Shelly Manne a eu ici un club où Coltrane et Miles se produisaient. A une certaine époque, les voyages posaient moins de problèmes parce que les musiciens pouvaient se produire dans de nombreuses villes entre New York et L.A...

J.H. : Et plus maintenant ? Personne ne joue plus à Kansas City ou à Chicago ?

L.P. : Non. Ces villes sont devenues des villes mortes pour le jazz. Personne ne veut faire les frais d'inviter des jazzmen.

J.H. : N'est-ce pas un phénomène général aux Etats-Unis ? On subit partout une musique abominable et personne ne semble même connaître l'existence du jazz...

L.P. : Vous croyez ? Nous avons pourtant deux excellentes radios de jazz qui fonctionnent 24 heures sur 24. Il doit bien y avoir des gens qui les écoutent...

J.H. : Une très faible minorité...

L.P. : Ce pays est évidemment orienté vers ce qui est commercial. On pense que c'est la pop qui séduira le plus facilement le public américain. Mais si le jazz était mieux diffusé, il plairait sans doute davantage.

J.H. : Croyez-vous à la possibilité d'un retour du jazz ?

L.P. : Oui. L'enseignement musical est meilleur. Presque toutes les universités proposent des programmes de jazz. Et beaucoup de jeunes en écoutent ici.

J.H. : En Europe, le jazz retrouve un public. Miles déplace des milliers de personnes

L.P. : Lorsque Miles jouera sur le « Queen Mary », un bateau, à Newport Beach, ce sera sans doute bourré.

J.H. : Pensez-vous que des gens comme Miles puissent amener de nouveaux auditeurs au jazz ?

L.P. : Si vous considérez que ce qu'il fait maintenant est du jazz. C'est une musique différente. Pas mauvaise, mais pas vraiment ce que beaucoup considèrent comme du jazz. Son public est plutôt celui du Rock.

J.H. : Il joue dans des festivals de jazz. D'ailleurs, la Californie ne donne-t-elle pas l'exemple d'une musique plus électrique, avec des artistes comme Hancock... qui sautent du coq à l'âne ?

L.P. : Herbie Hancock est un pragmatique. A quelques jours d'intervalles il peut enregistrer un disque de variétés et jouer au Blue Note Festival... comme avant.

J.H. : Mais les gens ne se fatiguent-ils pas d'entendre constamment Madonna à la radio comme au restaurant japonais ?

L.P. : Il est certain que les médias ne font rien pour le jazz. Lors de la remise des oscars des meilleures musiques enregistrées, « l'Académie Nationale des Artistes Enregistrés », au cours d'un programme de trois heures, n'a présenté que des artistes de pop et de variétés. Pas une minute de jazz. Et même ceux qui ont obtenu des prix dans cette catégorie n'ont pas été invités. Pas un mot sur Joe Williams, Wynton Marsalis ou Art Blakey. Les musiciens de jazz ont été à tel point scandalisés qu'ils vont créer une « Académie du jazz américain » qui aura son programme télévisé.

J.H. : On leur a quand même remis des oscars ?

L.P. : Dans leur catégorie. Mais on ne les a pas invités, alors que Prince et Lauper étaient là. En principe, le but de ces oscars est de permettre aux artistes qui les reçoivent d'être vus par un très grand public...

Au cinéma, ce sont des films relativement peu vus qui obtiennent des oscars. Alors qu'en musique, on ne les donne qu'aux best-sellers. Ils couronnent le goût de l'Américain moyen... qui ne vole pas très haut !

Propos recueillis par Olivier Brémond. Trad. par M.A.