BACK IN BUSINESS

DAVE PELL

By LEONARD FEATHER and FRANKIE NEMKO

Dave Pell is back in business again — the business of record-making, that is. It's been six years since Pell and partner Bill Traut were involved in a small, artistic venture with Headfirst Records. Three of their artists at that time were the Metheny brothers, Pat and Mike (on separate projects), and trumpeter Allen Vizzutti, whom Pell drew out of Chick Corea's band to present as a dazzling soloist.

Now Pell has an opportunity to not only re-release some of those gems, but to produce totally new material by some lesser-known, but equally talented young jazz players. This year Pell reactivated Headfirst, and has signed a distribution deal with the unlikely K-Tel company.

"Actually, the guy I'm doing business with at K-Tel is Al Bergamo, who used to be head of distribution at MCA, and was the first person Bill Traut and I were working with when we had Headfirst back in the early '80s. Al said, 'Why don't you run a label for me?' Apparently, K-Tel had suggested that they have a jazz section; they also wanted a black label — live! K-Tel had never been in the live recording business before. So I said yes, of course; what a dream come true!

"I asked Al if it would be all right for me to do an album of the Dave Pell Octet, because we were playing so differently now than when we were doing those Shorty Rogers and Marty Paich charts back in the 1950s. Al said he thought that would be sensational.

"So far, we've put out five albums: one by the Octet; the others featuring Jules Broussard, Gary Herbig, Sherry Winston and Vinny Bianchi. We just finished up the recording part of our next one, which is a debut by a marvelous guitarist, Rick Zunigar, who up to now has only been heard as a sideman with people like Freddie Hubbard, the Crusaders, Alex Acuna and others. But, he's typical of the kind of people we want to present on Headfirst, the soloists that don't usually get the chance to be heard in their own right."

With the inception of the "new" record company, will there be time left for playing himself? "Obviously not," Pell says, "although I would like to keep the octet as a working unit whenever possible. The thing about a record company that really works is when your artists know that the head of the company is a musician himself. I've always felt that's important."

Pell's earliest and biggest influence, he feels, was Lester Young, and this led to the formation, in 1978, of a group known as Prez Conference. The reason why the ensemble didn't make it — in the way, for example, Supersax did — was, in Pell's opinion, GNP-Crescendo's Gene Norman's lack of follow-through, so that the album got little or no exposure. Did he think, though, that maybe Supersax was simply more commercial. Pell is adamant: "Oh, no, I think Lester was far more commercial than Bird, because he played more melodically, more like an arranger. It was simply a matter of promotion."

There was a time, too, when Pell even gave up playing altogether. For a while, during the 1960s, he concentrated all his efforts as a producer, and was instrumental in that capacity in singer Vicki Carr's rise to popularity. He was also head of Motown Records when that company first set up offices on the West Coast. "Then, when I started Uni Records, which was MCA's contemporary label, I just didn't feel like playing."

Pell is also an active spokesman for jazz, and has been a director of NARAS (National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences) for the past 26 years. "I was president of the Los Angeles chapter twice, and now I'm on the Board and I love that. They need our kind of voice in there. We're constantly fighting for jazz, and when NARAS was giving us a hard time by practically ignoring jazz in its annual awards programs, we screamed and hollered, and then the next year they

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tried to make up for it by including more jazz people.

"You know, it's ironic that most of the groups involved in almost any kind of music today have some sort of jazz background. Uncle Festive is a good example; even though they've been known as a backup band for Barry Manilow, they have a strong jazz flavor. And this is what we aim to bring out with Headfirst this time around. I see the Gary Herbigs who've been lost in the ranks of the big bands and the studios; and the kids coming out of the schools — they may even be in a commercial bag, but they all can *play*.

"For instance, on Rick Zunigar's date, it's such a pleasure to work with a guy who'll play a standard just beautifully, then go into one of the newer things — and has the chops to do both. Right now, I'm trying to find *the* player of our time!"

Incidentally, all the product on Headfirst is available on CD, and Pell says that when he made "Dave Pell Octet Plays Again" in the early '80s, it was recorded digitally, for a company in Spain called Fresh Sound. When he first brought the album over to the States, nobody knew what to do with it, because the CD wasn't invented yet! As times change, so must the makers of those times. In his middle-plus years, Dave Pell is a visionary with his feet planted firmly in the now. His strong love for the music, coupled with a long history of its business side, will be great assets in the careers of many up and coming jazz players, as well as reintroducing such established names as Michael Urbaniak (due for reissue shortly) and Pat Metheny.

10/23

JAZZ

A Full House of Recorded Bebop

By LEONARD FEATHER

"BEBOP." Milt Jackson. East-West 7 90891-2. "Bebop" as an album title (spelled without the hyphen, as it was in the book "Inside Bebop" in 1949 and has been ever since) is a rarity. Time was when the word was considered controversial and uncommercial; today it's almost nostalgic.

As this new recording reminds us, veteran boppers like Jackson, J.J. Johnson and Jimmy Heath can team with slightly later arrivals such as pianist Cedar Walton and drummer Mickey Roker, as well as such relatively young lions as trumpeter Jon Faddis and bassist John Clayton, without any sense of a generation gap. The tunes (five by Gillespie, two by Parker, one by Tadd Dameron) have long been familiar to all hands, but even on this far-from-fresh material they bring a loose-limbed sensitivity to "Au Privave," "Ornithology" and "Good Bait." Gillespie's "I Waited for You" is a bonus cut on the CD only. 4 stars.

■ "YARDBIRD SUITE." Frank Morgan. Contemporary C 14045. It was inevitable that Morgan, as a direct disciple of Charlie Parker, would eventually come up with an album of tunes associated with him (he also includes "Skylark," which he says Bird wanted to record but never did). With Ron Carter on bass, Al Foster on drums and the much younger but compatible Mulgrew Miller on piano, Morgan plays flawless tribute to his mentor, though on a cut as long as "Scrapple from the Apple" it would have been better to allot him more choruses in which to build up a head of steam, instead of yielding so often to piano or piano-and-sax trade-offs. Still, 4 stars.

JAZZ

■ "CRUISIN' THE BIRD." Bobby Hutcherson. Landmark LLP 1517. Despite the title tune, this is a triumph for Hutcherson as composer in a post-bop vein, and as today's preeminent master both of bop and modal idioms, either on wood (he doubles delicately on marimba in three of his tunes) or metal (vibes on the rest). Fresh sounds, particularly from the young saxophonist Ralph Moore and the pianist Buddy Montgomery; top-notch support from Vic Lewis on drums and Rufus Reid on bass. On his subtly crafted "Sierra" and "Imminent Treasures," Hutcherson puts them all through the tunes' unpredictable harmonic and melodic paces. 5 stars.

■ "OOP POP A DA." Moe Koffman Quintet featuring Dizzy Gillespie. Soundwings/Duke Street DSRD 31048. According to the LP notes, "Koffman joins forces with Dizzy Gillespie on seven swinging originals." Wrong! Gillespie is heard only on "Night in Tunisia" and the title tune (plus a third in the CD version). "Oop Pop a Da" is described as "Gillespie's new piece." False! He wrote and recorded it in 1947. The originals of the Gillespie items were the definitive versions, but there is good jazz with an Americanadian accent here by Koffman (saxes, flute) and the world-class Canadian guitarist Ed Bickert. 2½ stars.

■ "ARNETT COBB/DIZZY GILLESPIE/JEWEL BROWN." Fantasy F 9659. More deceptive billing. Again Gillespie is heard on only two cuts, one of which is yet another "Tunisia." On the other he plays very little and sings the blues, to comedic effect. Jewel Brown, a quondam Louis Armstrong singer, emerges from retirement for two cuts only; on "This Bitter Earth" she evokes an agreeable Dinah Washington flavor. Five cuts offer the tough Texas tenor sax of Cobb, a noble survivor of the 1940s Lionel Hampton band. The final tune features none of the three billed artists; it's a hell-bent-for-boogie piano solo by Sammy Price, antiquated but adequate. 3 stars.

■ "THE METRONOME ALL STAR BANDS." RCA Bluebird 7636-2-RB Imagine Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie and Fats Navarro in the same trumpet team, J.J. Johnson and Kai Winding on trombones, plus Charlie Parker, Buddy de Franco and Lennie Tristano. This occurred in the final (1949) session of an intermittent series. The other dates, mainly prebop, began in 1937 with a quintet fired by Bunny Berigan, Fats Waller and Tommy Dorsey. The big bands, made up of poll winners, almost all white in the early years (that's how jazz fans were educated back then), are graced by the presence of Benny Goodman, Jack Teagarden and, later, Benny Carter, Johnny Hodges, Cootie Williams, Count Basie, Teddy Wilson, ensuring a plethora of brief but brilliant solos. The magazine folded in 1961; these works are its valuable legacy. 5 stars.

■ "BEBOP & BIRD." Vol. I, Vol. II. Hipsville/Rhino R2 70197, 70198. An ethical as well as a musical question arises here. There are those who believe that anything ever committed to tape, even accidentally, by Charlie Parker *ipso facto* should be released and rates five stars; others feel that amateur recordings, with miserable sound quality, solos starting in mid-chorus and unexplained fade-outs, are less a dedication to his memory than a desecration of it.

Of the 27 cuts, 15 are air checks from the Rockland Palace in Harlem or Birdland. With their sizzling drums and underrecorded bass, they sound as though they could have been recorded in a phone booth.

The remaining tracks stem from various Dial studio sessions, chosen with an apparent lack of discrimination.

In fairness to the memory of an artist whose genius has too often been ripped off, all the Dial studio dates should be assembled in sequence and issued on CDs; the balance of what is heard here could best be destroyed. No rating. (Note: "Charlie Parker: The Complete Original Master Takes," two CDs comprising his seminal Savoy studio dates, is available on Savoy ZDS 8801; many other elaborate sets based on studio sessions will be released in the near future on Verve and Savoy.) ■

JAZZ REVIEW 11/24

Two Nashes at Alfonse's

Generational couplings are by now so common in jazz that a father-and-son team such as Dick and Ted Nash should seem neither surprising nor incompatible. Tuesday evening at Alfonse's they made what has become an annual local appearance; since saxophonist Ted Nash now lives in New York, he is seen in these parts only when he drops in for a holiday season, tied in with a gig.

Just as surely as bop was the common parlance in the developmental days of 28-year-old Ted Nash, his father was the product of an era in which swing music was the lingua franca. In fact, most trombonists of Dick Nash's younger days (he is 60) came up under the influence of Tommy Dorsey or Jack Teagarden, yet it was clear in his every solo that he later absorbed most efficiently the post-J. J. Johnson influence.

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NASHES

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With the younger Nash doubling on alto and tenor saxophones, the pairing works as well as can be expected under these ad hoc and ad lib conditions. There were virtually no arrangements except for a first and last chorus played mainly in unison, and the usual string of solos in between. Usual, that is, in their predictable sequence, but the creative force generated was at a consistently high level.

Ted Nash played a dazzling set of five choruses on Charlie Parker's "Yardbird Suite." His father dealt persuasively with Tadd Dameron's "Good Bait" and a Horace Silver piece called "Gregory Is Here."

Lou Levy on piano and Monty Budwig on bass shared the solo space compellingly, with Nick Martinis on drums rounding out an adequate if less than inspired rhythm section. The set ended with an ebullient round robin on the Sonny Rollins blues "Sonnymoon for Two"—an apt finale, since the blues has been the universal language of jazz since long before the Nash dynasty began.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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MUSIC

11/14

Noteworthy New Videos of Jazz Eminences

By LEONARD FEATHER

Although recorded jazz and sound movies are roughly contemporaneous in origin (both were essentially established during the 1920s), the preservation of jazz on celluloid has always lagged. The reasons for this are familiar: racism and the low repute in which jazz, black or white, was held in the country of its origin.

Given these difficulties, it is remarkable how many admirable jazz films have surfaced in recent years, on public TV and/or home videos. Through the combination of live footage, stills, early file film, voice-overs and interviews, the lives of such artists as Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker and Bix Beiderbecke have been effectively documented.

Reviewed below is the most brilliant recent addition to the list, along with others of value dealing with past and present eminences.

■ "Song of the Spirit—the Story of Lester Young." Bruce Fredericksen, Box 444, Willernie, Minn. 55090; 93 minutes; $79.95. Lester (Prez) Young, whom Billie Holiday called the president of the tenor saxophonists, was doubly disenfranchised—a performer in a minority-appeal music whose laconic sound and style were at first misunderstood and rejected even by sophisticated jazzmen.

He was a maverick on other levels too. His speech patterns were so odd that much of what he said left listeners scratching their heads . . . yet some of his hip jargon became common parlance decades later. He withdrew early into a world of his own, disliking all that was hard or harsh, wearing slippers rather than shoes and eventually resorting to various forms of chemical abuse.

Prez is on hand in this unique film, seen playing with the Count Basie band and heard uttering a few obscenity-larded comments in voice-overs. But essentially the story is told in interviews with his daughter Beverly and with John Hammond, Jo Jones, Buck Clayton, Roy Eldridge, Count Basie, John Lewis, Norman Granz and others whose paths crossed with his own.

Scenes in New Orleans and Minneapolis, where he was raised, help set the ambiance. Most moving is the actual transcript of the court-martial that led to Young's humiliating detention and dishonorable discharge from the Army. That he was ever inducted seems incredible in the light of what one learns here about his personal problems.

"Song of the Spirit" tells, with insight and compassion, the story of a heavy price paid for nonconformism in music and in American society. 5 stars.

■ "A Brother With Perfect Timing." Abdullah Ibrahim, Rhapsody Films; 90 minutes; $39.95. Ibrahim, who was born Dollar Brand in Capetown, came to the United States in 1965 and acquired his new name on converting to Islam three years later. Ibrahim, a pianist and composer whose influences clearly include his idol Duke Ellington, talks at length about religion, race, apartheid, bagpipes, circular breathing and a strange range of other topics.

In the musical interludes, he leads his seven-piece band, Ekaya, at Sweet Basil's in New York, or plays solo, or sings and slaps his thighs for rhythm, or rehearses a choir in Africa.

Though his talk becomes obscure at times and is inhibited by a stammer, his comments on the blending of cultures are often provocative and at times convincing. "The samba didn't come from Brazil," he insists. "It came from Africa." He amplifies this with stories about the Angola-to-Brazil slave trade.

The music peaks near the end, with warmly affecting solos by Ricky Ford and Carlos Ward on saxophones, and by Ibrahim.

Though judicious editing would have helped, it is clear that Ibrahim, who recently toured in the United States, is a charismatic storyteller and a musician capable of touching all idiomatic bases. 4 stars.

■ "Jazz Hoofer: Baby Laurence." Rhapsody Films; 37 minutes; $29.95. Baby Laurence literally took the art of jazz tap dancing many steps beyond the early initiatives of Bill (Bojangles) Robinson and John Bubbles, both of whom are seen here briefly in old clips. Basically, though, this is an in-person session with Laurence performing for an audience in Baltimore a few years before his death in 1974.

Backed by a small jazz group, he taps out every note of Charlie Parker's "Billie's Bounce" and gives impressions of some of [illegible] predecessors. 3½ stars.

■ "Born to Swing." Count [illegible] et al, Rhapsody Films; 50 minutes; $39.95. The imprimatur of quality here is the name of John Jeremy, the British director who made "The Long Night of Lady Day." Under his guidance, we are taken on a retrospective tour of the Basie band, with British trumpeter Humphrey Lyttleton as narrator.

Basie alumni, idolaters and critics are interviewed; the full band and a small alumni group provide the music.

Much of this seems to have been filmed long ago, because the on-camera talkers include Gene Krupa, who died in 1973. 4 stars.

■ "Chick Corea Electric Workshop." DCI Music Video; 53 minutes; $39.95. There's less history and more how-to in this highly personal lesson-cum-recital. At the piano, Corea discusses and illustrates the work of such influences as John Coltrane and Bud Powell before switching to his keyboard-heaven spaceship to construct, with bassist John Patitucci and drummer Tom Brechtlein, an original composition and arrangement. □

11/19 Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

Freddie Hubbard Shines at Royce With Help From All-Star Group

By LEONARD FEATHER

The career of Freddie Hubbard has taken as many turns as a politician makes promises. After two decades of indecision about whether to pursue the straight-ahead route or go for the gold via fusion, he landed on stage Saturday at Royce Hall with one of the best pure all-star jazz groups he has ever fronted.

Reading from left to right there were Cedar Walton at the piano, Andy Simpkins on bass, Joe Henderson on tenor saxophone and Ralph Penland on drums. With a lineup of that caliber it was hard to go wrong, and the 50-year-old trumpeter stayed largely on course from the opening measures of Monk's "Off Minor" to the dramatic, long, drawn-out coda on Gillespie's "Night in Tunisia."

His technique is as stunning as ever, though he tends to strain a little in the upper register, and to aim rather frequently at histrionic effects in the stratosphere. His most musically valid moments were reached during a ballad medley, when he segued surprisingly from the verse of "Star Dust" to the chorus of "Body and Soul."

Hubbard has always shown a sensitive melodic ear as a composer; on this occasion only two of his works were presented—"Up Jump Spring," which he described as "my favorite waltz," and the elegant "Little Sunflower." For both of them he switched to fluegelhorn.

Henderson, a frequent associate,

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with Hubbard on the ements and soloed of fierce intensity he brought to his work, the expense of rhythd beauty.

ilton came close to show. He has moved bop beginnings, but the elements of that era with a lyricism that has few equals on the contemporary keyboard scene.

Andy Simpkins, too, was a constant source of joy to the crowd and clearly also to Hubbard. Ralph Penland, in addition to furnishing a pop touch through his solos, provided an attentive ear as a rhythm section component.

HUBBARD

Continued from Page 2

blended well with Hubbard on the thematic statements and soloed with the level of fierce intensity he has always brought to his work, sometimes at the expense of rhythmic finesse and beauty.

Cedar Walton came close to stealing the show. He has moved beyond his bop beginnings, but incorporates the elements of that era with a lyricism that has few equals on the contemporary keyboard scene.

Andy Simpkins, too, was a constant source of joy to the crowd and clearly also to Hubbard. Ralph Penland, in addition to furnishing a pop touch through his solos, provided an attentive ear as a rhythm section component.

Los Angeles Times 11/16

Courtney Pine: Main Link in the British Connection

By LEONARD FEATHER

Courtney Pine is Britain's answer to the Marsalis brothers.

Like Wynton Marsalis, he made an early leap to prominence: at 20 he formed the Abibi Jazz Arts, designed to stimulate an interest in jazz among black British musicians. Like the Marsalises, he presents a conservative image in his clothes, is articulate and fired by a keen sense of direction. Coincidentally, he even worked briefly in London with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, the group in which Wynton and Branford Marsalis spent formative time in 1980.

Pine, now on his third visit to the United States and his first to the West Coast (he appears this evening in the Santa Monica venue At My Place) is the first black British jazz musician ever to achieve international prominence.

"I was born in London, March 16, 1964," he said in a phone interview from Baltimore. "My father, who came to England from Jamaica, is a carpenter in London. When I was 8 my mother bought me a recorder—a virtual flute. Later I wanted to switch to saxophone, but my teacher said I had to study clarinet first, which I did. My main instruments now are soprano and tenor saxophones and bass clarinet."

Had it not been for a lucky accident he might have remained in the world of reggae and funk that took up three of his teen years. "At the age of 15, I happened to see Grover Washington Jr. on TV, and the presenter of the show said this was jazz music. Well, I went to the record library to discover more about jazz. I saw an album cover that attracted me—Sonny Rollins' 'Way Out West,' with Sonny in that Western outfit. At first it was only the cover that interested me, but then I listened and noticed that the music had something in common with reggae. I was brought up mainly on ska, a music that led directly to reggae."

MICHAEL MALLY

'I listened and noticed that the music had something in common with reggae.'

—Courtney Pine

After Rollins came other discoveries: Wayne Shorter with Weather Report, John Coltrane's "Love Supreme" period. Pine soon realized that young black Britons could relate to jazz. Out of his Abibi initiative came a 20-piece orchestra, the Jazz Warriors, who in 1986 made their debut at the Fridge, a London club.

"We began to attract more and more musicians; it reached the point where we started running workshops and promoting additional bands. The Warriors made an album and I began recording with my own group."

His first album, "Journey to the Urge Within" (Antilles 90909-2) has been well received in the United States and even became a hit in England when "Children of the Ghetto," a track featuring the vocalist Susaye Greene (formerly with Ray Charles, now a British resident) achieved substantial air play.

Billy Banks, the executive producer of the album, happened to be with the Marsalis brothers as their road manager. "He told me they had a young brother, Delfeayo Marsalis, who was involved in production," Pine said. "Well, in England it's very difficult to find a producer who can record acoustic music authentically. Delfeayo sounded very curious on the phone; soon after he came over to produce my next album, 'Destiny's Song + the Image of Pursuance'" (Antilles 8725).

Both records display dramatically the degree to which this leader of the young lions of London has captured the spirit of Coltrane while adding his own intermittently West Indian flavor. He hopes soon to extend the Marsalis connection by recording with Wynton.

With him for the American tour are drummer Mark Mondesir and pianist Julian Joseph, both heard on the records, and bassist Delbert Felix.

Are they all young? "Yeah," said Pine, "they're all about 24—my age. If that's young, they're young."

For an artist of his age, Pine has an exceptional backlog of credits. He has led other groups of his own such as a reed quartet known as the World's First Saxophone Posse; he toured in Europe with the American drummer Elvin Jones and the arranger George Russell, and gigged in England with a big band led by the British rock drummer Charlie Watts. His meeting with Art Blakey (in whose band he played at London's Camden Jazz Festival in 1986) led to an invitation to come to America and play with the Messengers.

Was it exciting? "Well, we rehearsed for a week and then played in a Blakey reunion band at the Apollo Theater. To tell you the truth, it was nerve-racking; right afterward I ran back home to London."

In the two momentous years since that brief Blakey encounter, Pine has taken giant steps forward. Convinced that black British jazz can evolve into a distinctive idiom, he has the cultural awareness, the sensitivity and the ambition that can guarantee him a long and illustrious life in music.

11/17

JAZZ REVIEW

Toots Thielemans at Catalina Bar & Grill

By LEONARD FEATHER

When Toots Thielemans begins to play, old songs become young, harshness gives way to harmony, and a long despised instrument, the harmonica, becomes a thing of beauty.

Tuesday evening at Catalina Bar & Grill in Hollywood the Belgian musician reminded us that after four decades of primacy he remains the jazz world's only total master of the mouth organ (Larry Adler has always been principally a classical performer). In his hands the difficulties of limning a flowing melodic line in this challenging medium are never discernible. His unique brand of lyricism was apparent from the first song, "My Foolish Heart," to which he brought the romantic stamp that is his principal virtue.

Some of the more jazz-oriented pieces, such as Wayne Shorter's "Speak No Evil" and Benny Carter's "Only Trust Your Heart," showed Thielemans' capacity for establishing a buoyantly swinging groove, but the return to a ballad mood in "We'll Be Together Again" marked another highlight, displaying not only his own virtuosity but also the empathetic collaboration with his pianist, Fred Hersch.

Heard here some time ago with Art Farmer, Hersch is Damon to Thielemans' Pythias, alternately a deferential but valuable accompanist and a consistently innovative soloist. Toward the end of the set the two other members, Mike Formanek on bass and Jeff Hirshfield on drums, laid out while Hersch and the leader brought the melodic

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charm of Jacques Brel's "Ne Me Quitte Pas" ("If You Go Away") into exquisite focus.

As has long been his custom, Thielemans set aside the harmonica long enough to pick up his guitar, repeating his celebrated routine of whistling and playing the guitar in octave unison on his best known composition, "Bluesette," which he now refers to as "my Social Security number." Somehow this led into a totally unexpected chorus of "Night Train" followed by an even more improbable whistled version of "Giant Steps."

Thielemans has been the *ne plus ultra* in his field for so long that his mere presence is a guarantee of creative quality.

11/21

Jazz Reviews

Yokoyama Faithful to Duke With Mercer Ellington

Imagine an Ellington orchestra in which the artist at the piano is neither black nor American, and not even male. That is how it was Friday in Beckman Auditorium at CalTech when the petite Shisuko Yokoyama, at the keyboard in Mercer Ellington's band, played her amazingly faithful replication of the Duke's original introductory chorus to "Rockin' in Rhythm."

Just back from a five-week tour of Japan, the orchestra gave a generally splendid account of itself in a program that balanced old chestnuts (often in new arrangements) and less familiar material.

It was variously stimulating and unsettling to hear famous solos assigned to musicians who were infants or unborn when the Duke Ellington orchestra was in its original glory.

After intermission, Mercer turned to some of his own music. Two movements from his new suite "Music Is My Mistress" displayed his personal skill without leaning too much on the orchestral devices of his father.

If, to quote an Ellington title, things ain't what they used to be, it could well be that this is precisely what Mercer had in mind and, it is safe to assume, the way Duke himself would have wanted it.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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11/20/88

A Festival That Runs on Cruise Control

By LEONARD FEATHER

LEONARD FEATHER

Tenor sax man Illinois Jacquet holds forth at the Norway's Checkers Lounge.

The world of jazz on land today is sadly circumscribed. There is no longer a 52nd Street where clubs were nestled so close together that the musicians could sit in with each other's bands between sets. Concerts are even more firmly structured; after two hourlong sets, it's all over at 11 p.m. For this reason, among others, the floating jazz festival has certain advantages over any other form of presentation.

Where else can you find dozens of world-class musicians literally under one roof (or on one deck) 24 hours a day, free to play where and when they wish, often until 4 or 5 in the morning? Where else can the fan, instead of rushing for a taxi or parking lot after the show, mingle with his idols for a midnight snack, or hang around until the wee hours while jazzmen come and go in an intimate lounge?

This year the sixth annual "Floating Jazz Festival," produced by ex-CIA agent Hank O'Neal and his wife, Shelly Shier, consisted of a split fortnight, starting on the S.S. Norway out of Miami and ending, aboard her sister ship, the newly launched S.S. Seaward.

First, a warning: If you are into Sun Ra, Ornette Coleman or Cecil Taylor, do not opt for a jazz cruise. The Yellowjackets or Spyro Gyra would be similarly out of place. The O'Neals, whose tastes dovetail neatly with those of the passengers, eschew all forms of avant-garde and fusion, leaning generally to straight-ahead, swinging maturity.

This year, for the first time, an entire 16-piece orchestra was brought aboard to be included in the first week's cast. Sure, we all know that big bands are out and that in order to form a new one nowadays it has to be attached to the name of some deceased maestro; but Illinois Jacquet, a veteran of the tough Texas tenor sax school, decided to buck the odds. While leading a student band during an artist-in-residence semester at Harvard in 1982, he was reminded that this was his logical setting. Soon afterward he formed a professional ensemble in New York.

Jacquet's values, established during his years with the bands of Hampton, Calloway and Basie (and on tour with "Jazz at the Philharmonic"), are unchanged. Playing Lester Young's "Tickle Toe" or a blues, then climaxing with the "Flying Home" routine that became one of the most imitated sax solos since Coleman Hawkins' "Body and Soul," he uses the band mainly as his personal backdrop, though now and then a sideman will contribute a spirited chorus or two.

When Jacquet was not holding forth at the Norway's Checkers Lounge, his place was taken by an admirable house band. Under the leadership of trumpeter Alan Hoel, once the lead trumpeter with Sammy Spear on Jackie Gleason's Miami-based TV series, this chameleonic group backed up a series of guest soloists: drummer Ed Shaughnessy (moonlighting from his "Tonight Show" job), and the trumpeter Erskine Hawkins, who had a dance band decades ago at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom.

Hawkins achieved a dubious claim to fame when he was assumed to have played the solo on his hit record of "Tuxedo Junction," though the actual performer was one of his sidemen, Dud Bascomb. Marginally better than it was 45 years ago, Hawkins' trumpet was soon supplanted by that of Clark Terry, under whose guidance the house band took on a new and

Cruise

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hey were old friends; they were ot required to play. In this catego- y was Dexter Gordon (who did, owever, perform briefly on the nal Norway night).

The Seaward cruise, ironically, layed a no-trumpets band, though Jonah Jones and Buck Clayton were both non-playing passengers. With no big house band to back up any soloists, and no female participants (except for a couple of musicians' wives who sat in), the musical level fell below the Norway's standards of diversity and quality.

Some of the cruise regulars provided luminous moments: Joe Williams, backed by his own group or joining with friends at late night jam sessions; two incomparable pianists, Dick Hyman and Tommy Flanagan, and such O'Neal favorites as Scott Hamilton's smooth-sailing quintet.

Terry Gibbs, the vibraphonist, on his first voyage in 40 years (he was scared almost permanently by a bad transatlantic crossing long ago), joined forces with Peanuts Hucko for a vibes-and-clarinet synergism that worked wonders in the Lionel Hampton-Benny Goodman manner.

The farewell sessions on the Seaward were a "Piano Spectacular" emceed by Mel Powell, and a final all-out get-together hosted by Milt Hinton.

Of the 1,800 passengers on the Norway and 1,410 on the Seaward, it was estimated that two-thirds were jazz fans; the rest were cruise regulars for whom the usual musical fare (including country & Western sessions and a Mexican musical revue) was available. During the second week we even heard briefly from an accordionist who hovered over the diners, but after a brief appearance, no doubt aware that this was not his crowd, he disappeared silently into the night.

vital character. Terry, an Ellington veteran, has it all: phenomenal technique, originality, wit.

A group billed as the New Quintet of the Hot Club of France, heard at the Club International, offered proof that you can teach a new dog old tricks, but it's hardly worth the effort. Frank Vignola, the leader, does his commendable best to simulate the memorable Django Reinhardt guitar, but the violinist, Bob Mastra, is all fast fingers and no flame or fire. To 1988 ears this group has all the impact and drive of a 1938 Chevrolet; only when a guest soloist was added (guitarist Howard Alden, pianist Roger Kellaway) did it come to life.

Gospel, a valuable first-cousin to jazz, resounded in the Saga Theatre when Marion Williams, in her first-ever ocean voyage, took over for a glorious Sunday matinee. Ranging from jubilee shouts to a quasi-calypso, she brought her decades-old vibrancy to "Oh Happy Day" and was joined late in her act by a much younger woman, Juanita Brooks, whose sound accented even more powerfully the mood of exaltation. Brooks, almost 6 feet of New Orleans glory, switched effortlessly from sacred to secular the following night when she sang "Basin Street" and other standards with a jazz combo.

The redemptive force of music was stunningly demonstrated during an all-saxophone colloquium one night at the Saga. Buddy Tate blew at gale force in his first major appearance since major heart surgery several months ago. Then Arnett Cobb, severely crippled years ago in an accident, still on crutches, walked slowly on stage and let the passion transcend the pain as he wound his way through "The Nearness of You," earning a standing ovation.

Sharing the stage with Tate and Cobb were Illinois Jacquet, Flip Phillips, Red Holloway, the Norwegian Totti Bergh, Sam Rivers of the Gillespie band, and Benny Carter on alto. This extraordinary summit meeting would have been even more effective had not so much time been given over to each man playing a slow ballad. Even the healthiest appetite may resist eight oversized portions of ice cream.

Totti Bergh's wife, Laila Dalseth, sang twice during the week, in her first appearances aboard a ship named for her country. As her Oslo recordings revealed not long ago, she has a curious, nervous vibrato recalling a long-gone jazz oriole named Lee Wiley.

As always, Dizzy Gillespie was an infectiously live wire, though he tended to come more fully alive when sitting in with other bands. By and large, the ad-hoc groups worked better than the organized units. Normally staid and elegant, Benny Carter hit the deck running during a concert with Clark Terry, stepping delightfully out of character when the two of them engaged in a lighthearted vocal on "All of Me."

Along with the scheduled performers, the O'Neals invited a few musicians who were on hand either as window dressing or because

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Jazz Reviews

N.Y. Pianist Mulgrew Miller Fronts Local Trio

The New York-based pianist Mulgrew Miller, last seen in town as a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messenger, is now working the club circuit as a leader. However, he has not yet reached the point at which he can take his own group on the road; consequently, he appeared Thursday at the Loa (where he will close tonight) with a local bassist, John Clayton, and drummer, Harold Mason.

Opening with a bright bop theme, Miller displayed formidable technique and a wealth of ideas, despite an occasional tendency to lean on 1940s clichés and 1950s George Shearing chord patterns. Moving beyond his hard bop origins, he brought a pensive beauty to his own composition "Song for Darnell." The performance was enriched by enough harmonic invention, and the changes of tempo and meter, to sustain the interest despite its inordinate length.

John Clayton's arco solo—he has long been a master of the bowed bass—illuminated the Frank Loesser 1950 song "If I Were a Bell." Miller's two-fisted excursions here stretched the boppish borders into brittle, breakneck explosions.

A welcome change of pace was the old ballad "Never Let Me Go," embellished so gracefully that Miller seemed to be composing it himself. Here again, Clayton's arco interlude was the high point.

Mason underlined the beat with consistency, taking the requisite fast tempo solo on the closing number, a Charlie Parker blues piece entitled "Relaxin' at Camarillo."

Whether Miller is ready to keep up a career as a soloist is questionable. That he possesses the makings of a first-rate improvising jazzman is beyond doubt.

—LEONARD FEATHER

L. A. TIMES 11/27/88 (SYNDICATED)

JAZZ

Stanley Jordan—The Future of Jazz Goes Commercial

By LEONARD FEATHER

"FLYING HOME." Stanley Jordan. EMI-Manhattan E1 48682.

What happens to a dream defaulted? Does it dry up, like a rhythm in the sun? Or does it expire? Four years ago Stanley Jordan was the talk of the jazz world—a 25-year-old Princeton graduate whose revolutionary guitar style enabled him to become a virtual one-man ensemble. By tapping both hands on the fingerboard simultaneously, he performed independent or interrelated parts. You had to watch him for proof that he wasn't magically overdubbing himself.

His versions of "'Round Midnight," "Georgia," "A Child Is Born" and of his original works left listeners slack-jawed in disbelief. He was greeted with standing ovations and critical plaudits. His arrival, I wrote, "reinforces our belief in the bright new tomorrow of jazz."

Hold it a minute. Suspend that belief.

Stanley Jordan today bears as much resemblance to the jazz genius of 1984 as Kenny G does to Charlie Parker. He has taken the fast route to $ucce$$. So much is happening in this new album, given the presence of drums, percussion programming, overdubbed guitars, keyboards, synthesizers and digital technology, that it no longer matters whether he is creating everything at one fell swoop or simply overdubbing until the result fits the all-too-familiar pop formula.

In other words, the technical wizardry, the unique ability to innovate on his own, the characteristics that established Stanley Jordan, are not now relevant. Most of what is heard during these nine original cuts could almost be part of an album by just about any capable pop guitarist. To add insult to injury, "Flying Home" is not the famous jazz standard; it's a boring Jordan original.

The situation is doubly deplorable in that he didn't need to move in this direction; his magic touch was commercial enough per se. We should be thankful that for every Jordan who capitulates, there is a Wynton Marsalis who holds to his original values. 1 star.

■ "CLEANHEAD & CANNONBALL." Eddie Vinson/Cannonball Adderley. Landmark LLP 1309. Unissued or long in limbo, these 1961-2 sessions constitute a fitting memorial to Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson, who had a rare triple talent for writing witty blues lyrics (he sings on seven of the 10 tunes), composing first-rate jazz instrumentals and playing blues-and-bop-inspired alto sax. On four cuts Adderley plays the alto solos; in the backup band in his quintet are Nat Adderley on cornet and Joe Zawinul, who in those days truly cooked as a funky blues pianist. 4 stars.

■ "SWING STREET." Howard Alden-Dan Barrett Quintet. Concord CCD 4349. The real "Flying Home," composed by Lionel Hampton, is included here, with Alden, one of the best young guitarists in the Charlie Christian tradition, among the soloists. But his work, and Barrett's trombone, have a lot to compensate for: lightweight, out of date, cliche-ridden charts and a limping rhythm section. There is, however, a neatly scaled down version of the original Ellington "Cotton Tail" arrangement. 2½ stars.

■ "IN ANGEL CITY," Charlie Haden. Verve 837 031-2. Though bassist Haden has gained most of his fame through a long off-and-on association with Ornette Coleman, his "Quartet West" (with Ernie Watts on tenor, Alan Broadbent on piano and drummer Larance Marable) is geared mainly to the vintage values that predated Coleman, as witness the leitmotif of Haden's calypso, "Child's Play," the eerie treatment of Miles Davis' "Blue in Green" and Watt's waltz, "Live Your Dreams." There are, however, two Coleman pieces, one of which, "Lonely Woman," is on the CD version only. 4 stars.

■ "CLOSENESS" DUETS. Charlie Haden. A&M CD 0808. Haden goes farther outside here, playing duo dates with Keith Jarrett, Ornette Coleman, Alice Coltrane and Paul Motian, respectively. Coltrane's harp is mystical and elusive. The Motian cut, "For a Free Portugal," is highly political, with Portuguese Liberation Army battle sounds, vocal touches and liner notes by Haden (who will never be accused of being soft on fascism) recalling how he played his "Song for Che" in Portugal and was arrested for his trouble. This is a reissue of a 1976 album for Horizon Records. 3½ stars.

■ "JAMES NEWTON IN VENICE." Celestial Harmonies 13030-2. In the footsteps of flutist Paul Horn, who recorded alone some years ago in the Taj Mahal and the Great Pyramids, Newton undertakes the same experiment at the Church of San Lazzaro Dewgli Armeni in Venice. There is a solemn splendor in this sound, but in the course of the 75 minutes, for all Newton's superb craftsmanship, only the couple of well known themes (Debussy's "Syrinx" and a spiritual sequence that includes "Amazing Grace") provide a needed crutch of familiarity. In fact, the session could have been subtitled "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Flutist." 3 stars.

■ "JULIUS HEMPHILL BIG BAND." Elektra/Musician 60831-2. The alto soloist of World Saxophone Quartet renown leads a 16-piece orchestra in a series of his own works, vacillating between tonal and atonal, order and chaos, shock-wave ensembles and vigor-packed solos, mainly by the leader. "Leora" offers Hemphill's horn against shifting brass-and-reed patterns without rhythm; "C/Saw" is a blues at various tempos that seems undecided whether to become seriously traditional or simply satirical. In "Drunk on God" the band serves as background for a cryptic poem written and spoken by K. Curtis Lyle. The final "Bordertown" is a dubious stab at jazz-rock, with Hemphill on soprano sax. Some of his writing is so skillful that one wishes the interpretation had been more disciplined and the intonation sounder. 2½ stars.

■ "20." Harry Connick Jr. CBS CK 44369. While such mature pianists as Fred Hersch, Harold Land Jr. and Marcus Roberts still toil away mainly as sidemen, Harry Connick Jr. at 20 has his own CBS Records contract and is revealed, this time more than last, as the most egregious example of too much hype too soon. His immaturity is most conspicuous harmonically (listen to what he does to a beautiful song, "Stars Fell on Alabama"); nor does his singing on several cuts add much of value. He even has Carmen McRae to help out on one tune and Dr. John on another, thereby elevating the rating to 1½ stars. □

"CLEANHEAD & CANNONBALL," an early 1960s reissue, makes a fitting memorial for Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson, left, and Cannonball Adderley.

11/30/88

Great Pacific Band Does Honor to Dixieland

Traditional jazz, mainly taking the form known as Dixieland, is almost a stranger to the Southland's best-known clubs, and the ranks of its true exponents are thinning. Still, every Sunday the old-time sounds ring forth at the Beef and Barrel in Northridge.

The Great Pacific Jazz Band has been at this location for more than two years. In charge is Bob Ringwald, now best-known as the father of the band's original vocalist Molly, who sang with him as a pre-teen-ager until she went on to greater fame as a film actress.

The basic joy in this musical form can still be conveyed when it is performed with the authenticity brought to it by such veterans as Zeke Zarchy, whose trumpet buoys up the entire band. Teamed with the soprano sax of Don Nelson (who once played with his brother Ozzie) and with the admirable valve trombonist Betty O'Hara, he helped establish both the clean, swinging ensemble sound and the solo strength.

The rhythm section has the odd values associated with this genre. Ringwald is mainly tied to the wafer-thin sound of a four-stringed banjo, though at one point he switched to piano for a keyboard stride duet with Jim Turner. There is no string bass; instead, Jack Wadsworth pumps away at a bass saxophone.

The band alternates between tributes to black and white pioneers of the 1920s (Armstrong and Morton, Beiderbecke and Carmichael), along with some of the tunes Zarchy played in the 1930s with the Benny Goodman and Bob Crosby bands.

Drummer Ray Templin plays in the rather static style of those days, yet somehow the band continues to swing. You are left with the conviction that elderly need not mean moldy. —LEONARD FEATHER

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JAZZ

Clora Bryant toots her own horn in letter to Gorbachev.

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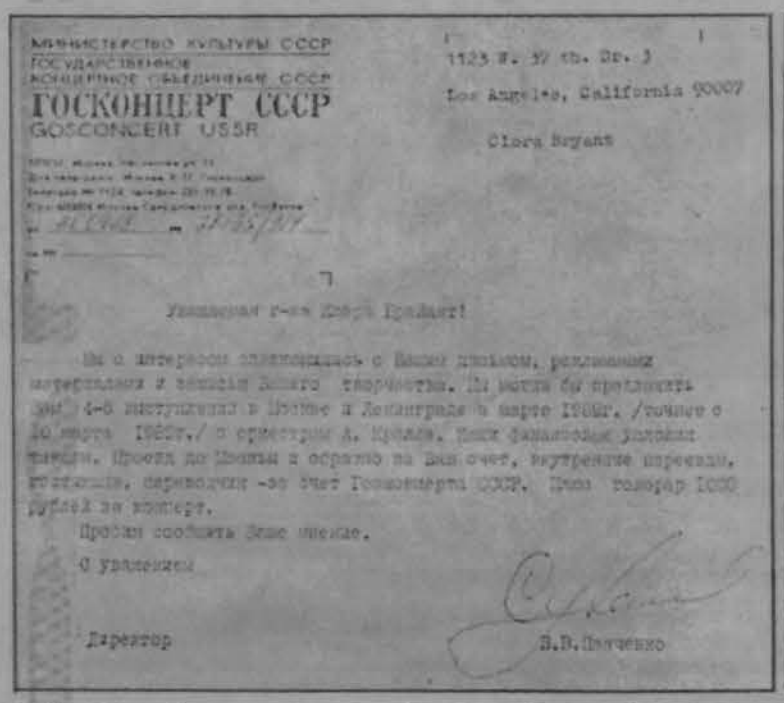
TONYA A. HYATT



МИНИСТЕРСТВО КУЛЬТУРЫ СССР
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ
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GOSCONCERT USSR

1123 N. 37 th. Dr. 3
Los Angeles, California 90007

Clora Bryant

Уважаемая г-жа Клора Брайант!

Мы с интересом ознакомились с Вашим письмом, вызвавшим интерес к записям Вашего творчества. Мы хотим бы пригласить Вас с 4-6 выступлениями в Москве и Ленинграде в марте 1989г. /точнее с 10 марта 1989г./ с оркестром А. Кролла. Ваши финансовые условия таковы. Просим по приезде в офис по Вам счет, внутренние перелеты, гостиница, переводчик -за счет Госконцерта СССР. Ваш гонорар 1000 рублей за концерт.

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С уважением

Директор В.В.Пичугин

Letter from Gosconcert, and writer Clora Bryant: "I've been studying the language, and with some help I understood the whole thing."

Letter-Writer Clora Bryant: To Russia With Trumpet

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Dear Party Leader Gorbachev: When I was young, my father always said nothing ventured nothing gained, so I am venturing, and hopefully will gain a line of communication to you that will result in my being the first lady horn player to be invited to your country to perform, and maybe a friendship will blossom, because it seems that now is the time to try to open our hands and our hearts to each other."

With those words Los Angeles trumpeter Clora Bryant began a letter to the Soviet leader and addressed simply "Kremlin, Moscow, U.S.S.R." Encouraged by bass player Eugene Wright, who visited Moscow last spring with Dave Brubeck, Bryant two months ago also sent Gorbachev a biography, photos and a tape of a recent performance.

"I have succeeded in getting along without any manager or agent since the 1950s," said Bryant on Thursday as she sat in her downtown living room blanketed with wall-to-wall photographs of her idol, Dizzy Gillespie. "I remember whenever my dad wanted something important he used to write regularly to a senator in Texas, and he always received a reply. So my theory is, if you want something badly enough, why not go direct to the top?"

On Nov. 11 Bryant received a reply: a letter from the Soviet Cultural Agency's Gosconcert U.S.S.R. office, offering her up to five concerts in Moscow and Leningrad, starting March 10, at 1,000 rubles a concert (roughly $1,600, non-exportable). She will be provided an orchestra, an interpreter and transportation between Moscow and Leningrad.

"The letter was in Russian," said Bryant, 59. "I've been studying the language, and with some help I understood the whole thing. The only problem is that I have to pay my own way there and back."

Bryant, 59, would like to take her two sons along with her. Kevin, 23, is a drummer, and Darrin, 21, composes and sings. "I want them to see how young people live over there, and compare notes with them," she said. "But if I can only get the fare for myself I'll go anyway.

"I've written to [Secretary of State] George Shultz asking if he can arrange the transportation. If nothing happens there, I expect to be helped out by the Society for Cultural Relations U.S.A./U.S.S.R., here in town. One way or another, I'll get there."

A former child prodigy who at 15 graduated from high school in Denison, Tex., Bryant moved West soon afterward. For much of her professional life she has been fighting both racial and sexual prejudice while establishing herself on the Southland music scene. Along the way she has played and sung with Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Scatman Crothers, Dizzy Gillespie and Benny Carter.

A television documentary in which Gillespie plays warm tribute to her is now in production. "Trumpet is a man's instrument, and a young man's instrument at that," says Gillespie, but just listening to Clora, you would never know she was a woman." Bryant also has been at work for two years on an autobiography.

Since mid-1987 she has worked frequently with the Jimmy and Jeannie Cheatham blues band; Friday morning she flew with them to New York to play a one-night stand. She also works locally with her own group; Friday she will be heard at the Nucleus Nuance in Hollywood.

Along with her regular American repertoire, which includes a vocal and instrumental impression of Louis Armstrong, Bryant plans to include some Russian songs in her Soviet performances.

"American artists as a rule don't take the trouble to relate to people by learning their language," she said, "but I know it's greatly appreciated when they do."

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Los Angeles Times Dec. 4 1988 (Syndicated)

Toots Thielemans' Life of Making Music

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Belgian-born musician Jean (Toots) Thielemans is unique. He is the only man on earth to have become reasonably rich and famous with his particularly odd trilogy of talents. He plays the harmonica. He whistles. He plays the guitar.

He also composes. His "Bluesette," which he whistled on a 1961 record in Stockholm, became one of the most famous of all jazz waltzes; at least 100 artists have recorded it.

He is in the news at the moment. His record "Only Trust Your Heart" (Concord CCD 4355) is the first album he has made as a leader in a dozen years, and he has been on tour, playing clubs in the United States. "My wife calls this my jazz vacation," he said the other day during a break between sets at Catalina Bar and Grill in Hollywood.

While his tour may not be a vacation, it is a break for Thielemans. He has devoted much of his time in recent years to pursuits far more profitable than jazz. "Whistling for jingles is very lucrative," he said.

The Good Life

Jobs at that elevated level have enabled him to lead the good life, with two homes, a farmhouse outside Brussels and an East Side New York apartment. His stature is the more remarkable in view of his sickly childhood and a late and tentative start.

"I played accordion as a kid, but never took music seriously. It wasn't until I had seen the Harmonica Rascals in a movie, and heard a couple of Larry Adler records, that I found out there was such a thing as a harmonica. I was at Brussels University, suffering from asthma and generally poor health, and I was studying to become a math teacher."

He played the harmonica for kicks, still with no serious ambitions. During another illness—he was in bed with pneumonia—a friend brought him a guitar.

"By that time I was 20 and listening to Django Reinhardt's records. It wasn't until after the liberation that I hung out with GIs and American officers, playing dance music for the soldiers."

America was on his mind; he even took an American nickname. "I knew there was a sax player with Benny Goodman named Toots Mondello, and this sounded hipper than Jean, so it stuck."

On Thielemans' first visit to the United States in 1948, during the dying days of 52nd Street, he sat in with Lennie Tristano and others.

An acetate record he made privately came to the attention of the trumpeter Ray Nance, who was visiting Europe with Duke Ellington. "Ray took the record to an agent in New York, who called me and said, 'I want to bring you to the States and call you 'the Belgian King of Bebop!' He wanted to put me with Benny Goodman, who was going through a bop phase, but my permit never came through. I did wind up working with Benny, though, when he toured Europe in 1950."

The following year he emigrated to America, and for a while, the pickings were slim. "I tried to go the commercial route in a trio with harmonica, organ and banjo. It flopped, and I really scuffled until Tony Scott, the clarinetist, recommended me to George Shearing."

Thielemans auditioned for Shearing, playing solo harmonica backstage at Carnegie Hall. "I just played 'Body and Soul' and I guess he heard the musicianship, because he said if I could play the guitar parts, he'd hire me."

Shearing's next chance to hear Thielemans came about when the Belgian musician was booked to play a week at the Earle, a black theater in Philadelphia. "Dinah Washington topped the bill. In second billing were the Charlie Parker All Stars, with Miles Davis, Milt Jackson, a rhythm section, and me on harmonica. Hearing me that week satisfied George, and he began teaching me the guitar parts."

Touring for six years with the Shearing Quintet, playing mainly guitar but always featured in a harmonica specialty, Thielemans became entrenched in the American jazz community, recording with various groups of his own as well as with Shearing. "Toots was one of the most versatile and inspiring musicians I've ever worked with," Shearing said recently. "But it wasn't until after he left me that he began that routine of playing guitar and doubling the melody an octave higher by whistling."

JEFF SHARE

Jean (Toots) Thielemans

That device proved to be a true turning point in Thieleman's career. On a visit to Sweden, where he had long been popular, he decided to record "Bluesette." "I went into a studio and started to rehearse it on harmonica, but the producer said, 'Toots, that's a pretty song. Why don't you try to whistle it and play it on guitar?' "

The record became an international hit; soon Thielemans was in constant demand. Starting in 1963, he was a staff musician at ABC-TV in New York. Later in the 1960s and throughout the '70s he played on several movie sound tracks ("Midnight Cowboy," "Sugarland Express") and began a long, close association with Quincy Jones.

There were live jazz festival recordings with Dizzy Gillespie and Oscar Peterson at Montreux, and a studio date ["Affinty," Warner Bros.] with Bill Evans, of whom he has especially fond memories.

Another perennial admirer of Bill Evans is the pianist Fred Hersch, whom Thielemans credits with luring him back to jazz recording after a decade-long absence. "I was financially secure, and I'd made a couple of records that I wasn't too proud of, but Fred kept pushing me, and after a couple of years I finally did it. I'm glad, too, because it's a good statement of what I am and where I am today."□

12/15

Johnny Varro Solos at the Encino Marquis

The piano bar is a curious institution, providing casual entertainment primarily for a small group of drinkers gathered around the keyboard. Typical of these venues is the Encino Marquis on Ventura Boulevard, where pianist Johnny Varro holds forth Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Varro's credentials go back to the early Eddie Condon days in New York, and to the type of music now branded as traditional, regardless of whether the songs are of jazz or pop origin. Clearly aware of the contributions made by such pioneer pianists as Teddy Wilson and Fats Waller, Varro devotes himself to unspectacular treatments of "It's Been So Long," "It's You or No One," and whatever else he may have heard on late-night radio during his formative years, along with the occasional piece by Waller or Louis Armstrong.

Now and then he will venture somewhat tentatively into stride, though more often his left hand seems to cry out weakly for the companionship of a bassist and a drummer. In fact, Varro has been heard to better advantage in the more encouraging setting of a small band; as a soloist he is not quite strong enough to overcome the burden of material that too often sounds superannuated. But that, presumably, is what people who sit around a piano bar are happy to accept. —LEONARD FEATHER

12/7/88

JAZZ REVIEW

Weldon Sings Out at the Biltmore

Maxine Weldon, whose voice was in full cry Monday when she began a two-night stand at the Biltmore's Grand Avenue Bar, has long been noted for two characteristics: her personable, self-confident manner and her taste for interesting songs, some of which draw on sources outside the jazz norm.

The first tendency became clear when she opened with "Your Place or Mine," a tune of C&W origin to which she brought more than a hint of the blues. Later came Percy Mayfield's "You Lied to Me Baby," Gordon Parks' attractive "Don't Misunderstand" and a single pop standard, "My Romance."

Weldon's basic style, a mixture of jazz, soul and R&B elements, may not have changed, but there was an apparent lack of rapport between her and the five musicians. Even though this is her regular accompanying unit, led by the pianist and arranger Randy Randolph, what seemed to be happening was a vocal and instrumental shouting match, with singer and band trying to outdo each other in projecting to the last row of the room.

John Bolivar, on saxophone and flute, and Bobby Rodriguez on fluegelhorn and trumpet, constituted a less than ideal blend, playing arrangements that interfered more than they interacted. Little was heard, in fact, that a more restrained setting, matched with a muted horn and guitar, would not have improved. The band also played instrumental numbers, to better advantage, especially when Bolivar switched to flute.

Weldon has shown on records and often in person a finesse and sense of dynamic contrast that somehow have been lost along the way. A self-evaluation is called for if she is to recapture those seemingly mislaid and long attractive values. —LEONARD FEATHER

12/10/89

JAZZ REVIEW

Dave Frishberg's Welcome Wit

By LEONARD FEATHER

Dave Frishberg arrived Thursday and closes tonight at the Vine St. Bar & Grill. The very brevity of this visit makes it the more valuable. There are lyricists in town, not to mention singers and pianists, who could do well by simply studying this gifted man night after night.

Frishberg's songs never wear out their welcome. If they are familiar ("Blizzard of Lies"), you sing along with it mentally, or whisper the next line to your companion to show your hipness. If they are new, you relish his capacity for matching the attractive melodies (many of them his own, some by Johnny Mandel or Al Cohn) to his words, most of which reveal a quirkily resourceful and witty mind.

"Let's Eat Home," for instance, is a menu of gustatory delights, touring the world for deluxe dinners ("New Year's Eve in Tel Aviv") before landing anticlimactically on the title line. Some of Frishberg's images are funny on the very face of them: How can you not react to a line like "In El Cajon we danced the night away"?

He takes particular pleasure in the derogatory ("I Can't Take You Nowhere") or the nostalgic. After smiling at his comedic concepts you may become misty eyed during the poignant "You Are There" or his tributes to a turn-of-the-century New York Giants pitcher and the 1920s jazzman Bix Beiderbecke.

Frishberg's piano solos and interludes are no less individual. Working without a rhythm section, he implies rather than states the beat, as if he had two right hands interacting.

Though his vocal timbre is about as operatic as Louis Armstrong's, it serves his purpose. He even manages to make certain tones sound downright sarcastic. This came in handy during the satirical "As Long as You're Looking Good," which he says he wrote a year ago with nobody in mind, but which he now dedicates to J. Danforth Quayle. Frishberg is not only a writer and a player, but a prophet to boot.

12/11/88

JAZZ

What's Cool for the Yule

By LEONARD FEATHER

"The Peace Album." Paul Horn. Kuckuck 11083-2 (Celestial Harmonies, Box 30122, Tucson, Ariz. 85751).

The Christmas season and the art of music have too often been tied together by contrivances of dubious value. Jazz versions of yuletide songs are no longer a novelty, though in the past they produced some engaging results. Paul Horn's album is an extraordinary example of Christmas as a point of departure that is unique from every standpoint—conception, repertoire, execution.

Recorded in a studio in Brisbane, Calif., it is a one-man performance, with Paul multi-tracking parts on flute, alto flute, bass flute, and using a multivider that splits tones into several different notes. Several centuries are spanned, from Gregorian chants to Palestrina, a J.S. Bach air, Handel, Schubert, and some of the customary seasonal songs—"Silent Night," "The Lord's Prayer," "We Three Kings."

The arrangements are sublime, serene, soaring, caressing and, indeed, peaceful, using canon forms, harmony and counterpoint with the sense of innate taste that has always been associated with Horn. Unlike all those trivial tributes to red-nosed reindeer, this is an album that will be played for endless pleasure at any reason. ★★★★.

BRIAN DRAKE

Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis

"A GRP Christmas Collection." Various artists. GRP GRD 9574.

In utter contrast, here is an album that's everything the Horn set is not. It is as though the producer were saying: "Have yourself a sentimental Christmas: trite, banal and bland." There are some pleasant moments: Diane Schuur at her unaffected best in "The Christmas Song," Eddie Daniels playing "Sleigh Ride" and the cuts by Gary Burton and Lee Ritenour. For the most part, the GRP roster of artists contributes poppified or fusionized versions of overworked works. Don't expect to hear a note of this from Dec. 26 forward. ★★.

"The Christmas Collection." Various artists. Prestige OJC 6011.

Mel Torme may be delighted with this album, since three of the artists happen to play his "Christmas Song." On the other hand, he may not, since none of them (Dexter Gordon, Lockjaw Davis, Gene Ammons) does justice to his subtly brilliant melody. In fact, it's hard to think of a non-mercenary reason for putting together a collection of this kind; there are good moments scattered throughout, notably clarinetist

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Cool Yule

Continued from Page 4

Bill Smith's "Greensleeves," but or the better cuts you have to put up with an organ tribute to that red-nosed reindeer. ★★½.

"In a Christmas Mood." The Starlight Orchestra. Mobile Fidelity MFCD 796.

As the notes make clear, this is an attempt to recapture the Glenn Miller sound without using the Miller name (proscribed by the maestro's estate, which still reserves it for the currently touring official Glenn Miller orchestra).

Given a group of capable studio musicians, it is not difficult to duplicate the particular blend and arranging style that established Miller as the dominant figure of the circa 1940 pop-swing era. Here are 23 songs (some in medleys) with the long familiar clarinet-lead-over-saxes, the occasional vocal, the state-of-the-art sound. A co-producer and co-arranger for this production was John LaBarbera, a trumpeter who from 1968-71 played in the actual Glenn Miller orchestra, when Buddy De Franco was its leader. LaBarbera was born in 1945, a year after Miller died.

The Starlight Orchestra will decorate the winter wonderland to the tune of ★★★★ for anyone in the Miller mood or mode.

Meet Me at Jim & Andy's." By Gene Lees (Oxford University Press, $18.95, 265 pp.).

Ponderous scholarly treatises aside, there are five requisites for a readable and valuable book on jazz: enthusiasm, insight, compassion, wit and technical knowledge of the music.

Gene Lees has them all. The Canadian-born, Ojai-based writer and lyricist ("Waltz for Debby," "Quiet Nights") has a deep love for the music and musicians he discusses in this collection of essays (from his monthly "Jazzletter"). His chapters on Art Farmer, Paul Desmond and Dr. Billy Taylor leave no doubt about this.

His insight into the personalities of his subjects is manifested in the essays about the enigmatic Duke Ellington, the bassist-turned-painter John Heard and the tragic Frank Rosolino, who took his own life. Lees' compassion is no less evident in the sensitive Woody Herman chapter, and in the story of the Gerry Mulligan-Judy Holliday romance.

His sense of humor protects him from the pomp that dominates too much jazz writing. An introduction recounts the wild story of Blind Orange Adams, a fictional character who existed only in a series of news items by Lees and other Down Beat editors around 1960, and who seemed so real to readers that a New York record company actually asked Lees to arrange a record session.

As for the fifth dimension, Lees can tell you how a flat ninth works with a dominant chord, in case you need to know. More significantly, his eminently readable essays bring into sharp focus the characters, life styles and artistry of a dozen men whose lives have intersected with his own.

The title (a reference to a New York bar patronized by jazzmen in the 1960s) is too esoteric; the subtitle, "Jazz Musicians and Their World," is closer to the core. "Meet Me at Jim & Andy's" is an ideal gift book.

"Satchmo." By Gary Giddins (Doubleday, $24.95, 239 pp.)

Produced by Toby Byron, this is as much a picture book as a text—understandably, since the Armstrong story has been endlessly retold. Along with the familiar anecdotes, however, Giddins does come up with some new information, most remarkably that Satchmo was the object of an FBI investigation. There are also excerpts from posthumously discovered writings by Armstrong, who along with his lifelong love for marijuana was an early typewriter addict. Visually, this is a superb production; many of the photos, or letters from Louis (the latter will require use of a magnifying glass) have never been published before. This may look like just another coffee table book, but both the words and the illustrations lend it historical value. □

JAZZ REVIEW

Fresh Proof of Timeless Wonder o

The timelessness of Benny Carter's contributions, as alto saxophonist and composer, has long been one of the wonders of the music world. Saturday night, in a concert with a full orchestra at El Camino College, he proved it yet again.

It would have been impossible for the unwitting listener to discern that "Symphony in Riffs" and "Elegy in Blue" were written 55 years apart, the former in 1933 and the latter just months ago. Both are perfect examples of the big band forum.

Much of what Carter writes and plays relies more on melody and beauty than on complexity. He is capable of conveying every emotion, every passion from joy to sorrow—except anger, which he seems unable or unwilling to express. It's a true illustration of the art reflecting the man.

The program ranged from his 1936 composition "When Lights Are Low" and his 1939 arrangement of the old pop song "Sleep" to such recent works as a couple of movements from his "Central City Sketches." This suite was introduced in its entirety last year in New York; it's too bad this occasion was not used to offer a full West Coast premiere.

Carter was well served by a splendid brass section, with fine solos by all the trumpeters and

ELLEN JASKOL

Benny Carter at El Camino.

wistfully lovely cornet chorus by Bill Berry on "I Cant's Get Started."

The entire band, assembled just for this occasion, performed spiritedly, with a tenor sax chase by Dor Menza and Bob Cooper, and with pianist Mike Wofford, bassist Larry Gales and drummer Sherman Ferguson effective both singly and as a rhythm section.

Enjoyable though the concer was, it left the feeling that Carte deserves an evening devoted en tirely to his music, with a vocalis to interpret some of the songs to which lyrics have been set. It is always a pleasure to hear his versions of "Misty" and "Honeysuckle Rose," yet you can't avoid the feeling that every moment of non-Carter music, no matter how convincingly he personalizes, is a moment of self-sacrifice.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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LOS ANGELES TIMES 12/18/88 (SYNDICATED)

Joe Williams at 70: He's Got It All

By LEONARD FEATHER

LAS VEGAS—Celebrations ending in a zero tend to be momentous. When the zero is preceded by a large digit, the significance is accordingly multiplied. So it was last Monday when Joe Williams celebrated his 70th birthday.

Determined to make this a night to remember, Williams' wife Jillean brought in the entire Count Basie Orchestra, with which he spent six crucial years of his career.

Friends flew in from Chicago and Miami, from England and Germany, from Los Angeles (composer Mel Powell and his actress wife Martha Scott), from New York (George and Ellie Shearing). After dinner, actor Greg Morris and his wife Lee collaborated on a nostalgic biographical tribute to the honoree, written and sung by her, narrated by him. George Shearing sat in with the Basie band; inevitably, the blues filled the room as Williams joined in. Long before midnight Sunday, when the actual birthday began, the banquet room in Bally's Casino was rocking in rhythm.

In a odd twist of fate, Williams' 70 years have been split evenly between the insecure and the secure. His first 35 years were marked by sporadic local success as a band singer in Chicago, odd jobs as stage door manager and door-to-door salesman, a bout with tuberculosis that took a year out of his teen life, three troubled marriages, a nervous breakdown, a few recordings for small labels.

The turnabout began right after his 36th birthday, around Christmas of 1954, when he flew to New York to join Basie. Only a few months later he recorded the series of hits ("Ev'ry Day I Have the Blues," "Alright, Okay, You Win," "Roll 'em Pete") that proved vital not only in terms of his own sudden fame, but also in lifting the orchestra out of its commercial doldrums.

The secure second half of his life is reflected in his relationships. He has had the same manager, John Levy, for 26 years; the same p.r. woman, Devra Hall, for close to a decade; the same home town, Las Vegas, since 1968 (he moved just once, in 1975). He has been a regular on the "Tonight" show even longer than Johnny Carson himself, with a total of well over 200 appearances, starting in the Steve Allen days.

Probably most significantly, there is the bright-eyed, bubbly Englishwoman, Jillean Milne Hughes-d'Aeth, who met him in 1957, became a steady part of his life in 1959 and married him almost 24 years ago.

"Jillean became an anchor," he says. "Around the time we began seeing each other, I had stopped living from payday to payday; I began investing, and everything became more stable. Suddenly the word *home* had a new meaning."

Joe and Jill live in Las Vegas with their three cats and three dogs ("the maximum the law will allow," he says). Golf, the love of which played a part in bringing them together, is still a near-obsession. When John Levy explains why he keeps Williams on an easy work schedule, he says it's because "Joe is happy having time off to play golf and relax."

A glance at his itinerary for 1988 shows 118 working days, very few of which involve more than three or four consecutive one-night stands. With an income around into the five-figures-a-week bracket, he can afford to take it easy. This year, there have been several highlights: two consecutive honorary doctorates of music, at Berklee College in Boston and Hamilton College in Saratoga, N.Y.; a brief reunion tour with the Basie band in Europe; his annual jazz cruise, this time on the Seaward; the eighth annual trip to Washington for the Kennedy Center Honors (he is a member of the nominating committee); and appearances at the Bing Crosby and other golf tournaments. The rest is divided among college dates, concerts and very occasional night clubs.

He has an unusually close relationship with his musicians. Norman Simmons, his musical director and pianist, says: "I joined him in 1979 and he's not only a good friend; he was even a matchmaker. He saw a young lady one day and decided she was right for me. He introduced us but didn't say anything. Sure enough, Karen and I started dating and a year later we were married." At the wedding, which took place on St. Thomas during a jazz cruise, Williams served as best man. An hour later in the same church he gave the bride away at the marriage of his drummer, Gerryck King.

Completing Williams' backup quartet are Joe's golfing buddy, Las Vegas bassist Bob Badgley, and guitarist Henry Johnson.

Never dependent on record sales, Williams has floated around happily from label to label. Recently he guested on a duet track with Lena Horne for an independent company. A session with Red Holloway's Blues All Stars won him a Grammy in 1984. He is at work on an album that will include duo cuts with Marlena Shaw and Shirley Horn. But he feels that the Johnny Carson exposure, other TV shows (notably his occasional appearances on the Bill Cosby Show, as the star's father-in-law) and the occasional movie are more important than records in keeping his career on track.

Ironically, he hardly ever works in Las Vegas. "I don't want to, unless I can do the whole thing, with a full orchestra including strings, the whole schmeer."

If ever a contest were held to determine the biggest egos in show business, Joe Williams would be a disastrous loser. A few years ago, making a local radio appearance in Washington, D.C., he devoted the entire show to Frank Sinatra, playing his records, congratulating him on his birthday—and never once mentioning that it was his own birthday, too.

"As far as manager-artist relationships go, Joe is about the tops of all the 70-plus people I've dealt with," says John Levy. "I haven't had a contract with him for 20 years; just his word and mine. He has no hangups, no jealousies. For years I had to stop him from building up all the other singers in his interviews, reminding him that he could sing rings around those people.

United Press International

Joe Williams celebrates No. 70 with the Count Basie Orchestra.

"Joe is the only person I know who, if he senses that the audience is right for it, may start a show with a ballad, just voice and piano. He's become more and more relaxed over the years, singing as if he

Please see Page 88

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Flip Phillips and friends at KLON jazz party. Page 2

Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

1940s-Style Jam Session Comes Alive

'Gee, this is the oldest band I ever worked with," said Flip Phillips on Saturday during KLON's "Jazz at the Paramount," produced by Ken Poston as a fund-raiser for the jazz-oriented radio station.

He may have been right; at 61, tenor saxophonist Allen Eager was the new young kid on the block. Yet what happened during this 1940s-style jam session was less a reliving of a lost past than an energetic reminder of an ongoing maturity.

The object was to simulate the ambiance of a Norman Granz "Jazz at the Philharmonic" concert. Everyone except Eager worked for Granz, including the entire rhythm section of Arnold Ross, piano; Herb Ellis, guitar; Red Callender, bass; and Alvin Stoller, drums.

Conspicuously missing was a trumpeter to lead the way; still, the front line of Eager, Phillips and the incomparable Buddy DeFranco on clarinet was powerful enough to sustain the excitement.

Succinctness was often the name of the game. These men came up during the 78 rpm record era, long before John Coltrane invented the 78-minute solo—one of history's most questionable initiatives. Here is how "I Can't Get Started" went: First chorus, 16 bars of Eager's big, warm, smoke-filled sound, redolent of the great 52nd Street days; eight bars of Phillips, bolder and heavier, a Ben Webster through Eager's Dexter Gordon; DeFranco for the last eight bars. Second chorus: DeFranco, 16 bars in a brief compelling voyage of adventure, then Ross for 16; third chorus split between Ellis and Phillips, and out. Moral: If you can't tell your story in five minutes, you might as well stay home.

Eager's presence—he had not been seen here in decades—was a particular joy. His blend of Lester and Dexter on "Body and Soul" was a reminder of the place he could fill on today's scene, with so many of the tenor giants gone. Phillips showed his eternal youthful vigor on the "Perdido" finale; DeFranco moved from exquisitely-stated melody to superlative double-time blowing on "You've Changed."

All the others soloed, but the horns took top honors, cooking on the blues as if there were no tomorrow but plenty of dues-building yesterdays.

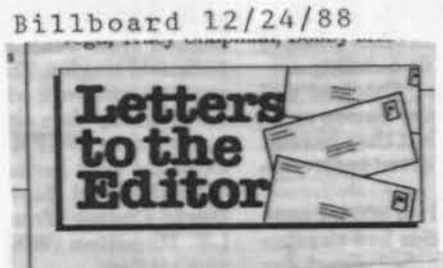
The frenetic crowd reaction at the theater in the Paramount studio indicated the availability of a ready audience out there for music that builds on a noble tradition without ever wallowing in nostalgia.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JIM MENDENHALL / Los Angeles Times

Herb Ellis, left, Red Callender and Flip Phillips at KLON's "Jazz."

Billboard 12/24/88



JOE WILLIAMS SALUTED

In reference to Billboard's recent salute to Joe Williams, he has been a part of my life musically for more than 30 years (since I first heard him with the Count Basie band at Birdland in 1956) and personally for almost that long.

Sometimes when one gets to know an artist one admires, a certain disillusionment may set in: There may be a lack of warmth that seems incompatible with a major talent. In Williams' case, it is exactly the opposite. The more you learn about him as a human being, the more fully you realize why his gifts are so wide-ranging and so durable.

That he is a consummate blues artist is a given. That he is a peerless

(Continued on page 91)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Continued from page 11)

singer of ballads and pop songs has sometimes been overlooked. He is also the owner of a great sense of humor (have you ever heard him sing "It Ain't Easy Being White"?) and an outgoing personality that has endeared him to everyone who knows him well.

My compliments to Billboard for having the vision to run such a spectacular tribute to a musical giant in the world of jazz.

Leonard Feather
Los Angeles, Calif.

Articles and letters appearing on this page serve as a forum for the expression of views of general interest. Contributions should be submitted to Ken Terry, Commentary Editor, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036.

JAZZ REVIEW

12/22

Kellaway Does an Acoustic Turn at Le Cafe

We are fortunate to be living in an age when, for all the inroads of artificial keyboard machinery, there are giants around to remind us of the majesty inherent in the grand piano. Roger Kellaway, who played Tuesday and Wednesday in the Room Upstairs at Le Cafe in Sherman Oaks, is such a man.

It's not that Kellaway avoided later developments; at one time or another he has been involved in everything from film scores to contemporary art music and electronics. But when he chooses to play regular jazz on a regular piano, it is a profoundly moving experience to be in an intimate room with him.

Happy to work at a venue where no food is served and every table faces the bandstand (in New York, he said, "all the clubs are restaurants and everybody talks"), Kellaway commanded instant attention with the opening, oddly atonal chime effects that led into "If I Were a Bell." Soon he was off and cooking, simultaneously engaging the listener at three levels: Melodically, with wildly skittering downward runs and sudden clusters of chords; harmonically, with unexpected changes; and rhythmically, with his implacably swinging left hand.

"All Blues" was a masterpiece of dynamic contrasts, with a long slow fade leading to a great swell and long-held tremolo. John Guerin's sticks-on-cymbals interlude was superb, and Chuck Domanico's bass solo as intriguing as his interaction with Kellaway. The three, who have played together off and on for 20 years, are as close as triplets.

Kellaway's solo number, "I'll Never Be the Same," was a vivid if occasionally ornate reminder of his ability to dispense with a rhythm section. Then it was back to the trio and "Secret Love," as Doris Day (who helped to win this song an Oscar) never dreamed of hearing it.

With a 30-year career of composing and playing behind him, Kellaway, who lived here for many years, today is at a creative peak. New York's gain is indeed our loss, and to hear him describe it, he doesn't even seem to care.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Los Angeles Times

VARGA

Continued from Page 12

a lounge act in Lake Tahoe when Ray Anthony called me. I stayed with Ray for seven years, starting as one of the two 'bookends' with his orchestra, eventually doing a TV series with him and putting his shows together."

Through the late Joe Parnello, the pianist, she met Ed DeVries, then manager of the Biltmore. "He asked me if I knew the Grand Avenue Bar, and whether I could do something with it. I said, 'How about live jazz, and a radio show out of the room?' On Feb. 2, 1987, we started the policy, with Tommy Newsom leading a small group. On March 3, we had Shorty Rogers and his Giants for our first live KKGO broadcast. We're still on the air every Tuesday at 8, and the live music goes from 5 to 9 Mondays through Fridays."

Happy with the Grand Avenue, the management turned over to Varga operation of the Rendezvous Court, where pianist Dini Clark holds forth Tuesdays through Saturdays from 7-11:30 p.m.

Most significantly, Varga recently extended her wingspan to take in the famous Biltmore Bowl, a legendary 1,000-capacity room that opened in 1934 and became a showplace for Harry James and other name bands of the day.

Varga has staged an all-star evening at the bowl headed by Dizzy Gillespie, followed by a memorial tribute to the late Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson. A Latin jazz night will be presented Feb. 3, featuring Tito Puente and Poncho Sanchez.

Diane Varga is ecstatic. She's dealing with the music and musicians she loves, and the job is getting better all the time. New Year's Eve, she will have jazz in four rooms at the Biltmore. "I just knew things would turn out this way," she says, "because all my life, I've been achievement-oriented, and with my spiritual beliefs, I don't have any financial worries."

12/23/88

RANDY LEFFINGWELL / Los Angeles Times

Diane Varga: "All my life I've been achievement-oriented."

Diane Varga Has Jazz in Her Genes

By LEONARD FEATHER

It is hard to imagine a more fitting background for a jazz promoter than Diane Varga's. Her grandfather, Andrae Nordskog, launched Nordskog Records in 1921, and a year later made history by putting on wax the first-ever recordings by a black jazz band from New Orleans, Kid Ory's Sunshine Orchestra.

"He was also," Varga says, "one of the founders of the Hollywood Bowl, one of the first tenors to sing there, and the first manager of the bowl."

The former dancer and comedienne, now a successful entrepreneur in charge of jazz at the Biltmore Hotel's Grand Avenue Bar, Diane Varga still sings occasionally.

She came to her current position by an oddly circuitous route. Los Angeles-born, she was classically trained as a ballerina—"But then I started hearing jazz, and decided that ballet was too rigid, too disciplined for me. But I kept on dancing through my school years until a flamenco dancer had me audition at the Moulin Rouge for Donn Arden. Well, he signed me the next day to a three-year contract as a featured dancer. I was 15. He changed my name from Hingley to Varga, because he said I looked like a Varga girl."

Dancing in Las Vegas with Arden, she ran into that classic movie cliché: The singer didn't show up, and Arden asked Varga if she could fake her way through a vocal. Before long, she was doing songs, dance and comedy on the road with a Barry Ashton revue.

"Those were the golden Vegas years, with people like Harry James and Buddy Rich, Ella Fitzgerald, Pearl Bailey, all working along the Strip. A little later, I had

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12/25/88

JAZZ

Tuck & Patti Doing Their Own Thing

By LEONARD FEATHER

Tuck & Patti: Still defying the recording industry's rules.

Tuck & Patti are natural-born rule-defiers.

Success in the music world is assumed to be linked with hit records. Tuck & Patti, together on stage since 1978, man and wife since 1981, enjoyed a decade of success, first in the Bay Area, then in concert tours overseas, before their album "Tears of Joy" for Windham Hill Jazz put them in the record market.

Success is also supposedly related to the iron whim of a producer. "Some of the record companies," says Tuck Andress, "assumed we would use the standard jazz instrumentation with piano, bass and drums. Others wanted to turn us into a real pop-type, slickly produced act. Another would say something like, 'Well, we don't want to change the magic of what the two of you do on your own, but wouldn't it be really nice on this song to hear a cello solo?' "

"Yeah," said Patricia Cathcart Andress, "that's the producer. Everything's the producer."

"So finally," said Tuck, "we just decided to build our own studio. Since it was only for her voice and my guitar, we could afford it, using just two tracks."

"While we were starting," said Patti, "we got a call from Windham Hill saying they had this new jazz label and were ready for us."

They were not only ready, but also willing—unlike the others, to let these two self-sufficient artists be themselves, without electronic overdubbing or any outside help.

The duo even balked at convention in choosing material. It didn't bother them that "Time After Time" was firmly linked with Cyndi Lauper, or that most listeners knew "Better Than Anything" through Al Jarreau's version; nor did they mind that the Rodgers & Hart "My Romance" had been aging in the wood for 53 years.

These songs and a few more, including three attractive works of their own, made up the low-cost album, which has sold in excess of 100,000 copies.

Sharing tears of joy, after showing how to succeed in the record business without being told what to do, are William Charles Andress (born in Tulsa, Okla., on Oct. 28, 1952) and Patricia Cathcart Andress (San Francisco, Oct. 4, 1949).

"I'm a twin," said Patti. "For years, my sister Peggy lorded it over me, thinking she was the older, but then we saw our birth certificates and found I was four minutes ahead of her. We're nonidentical and have led very different lives; she's a doctor of philosophy and theology in the Bay Area."

Raised in San Mateo, Patti grew up enveloped in music at home, in church and at school.

"One morning in first grade, I sang one song; the teacher said, 'Oh!'—and that afternoon I was singing with the sixth-graders."

Patti also studied operatic vocal technique, but spent years rocking and rolling from one pop band to another. Meanwhile Tuck, also classically trained, took up guitar at 14 and gave three years to rock before discovering George Benson and Wes Montgomery.

In 1978 Tuck met Patti when they both auditioned for a band.

"Nothing came of it," says Tuck, "except that's how we met."

"It was musical love at first sight," said Patti.

From small clubs they soon moved into bigger and better jobs. During the early years, Patti had to fight a severe weight problem; at one point she ballooned up to more than 290 pounds, a figure that seems unbelievable when you look at her today.

"It's amazing how she did it," says Tuck. "After nine months, she'd lost 140 pounds."

"It's mostly a matter of will power," says Patti, "plus the fact that I just knew things were going to happen for us, calling for more travel and much more energy than I used to have."

Patti's premonition has come true. Typically, they just finished doing a week of national television in Rome. "It's a prime-time show with guest artists," says Tuck. "This is interesting; they're marketing us as a pop group over there. But we'll still do exactly what we always do."

Patti confirms the couple's firmness of purpose: "I'm happy that after 10 years, we're still doing this."

Tuck pointed out that during the years before they recorded, audiences have been supportive from the beginning. But records, he added, are just that—a document or a recording of what the artist does.

"Records are just one segment of what performers do in their careers," Patti insists. "Too many people have gotten into a pop mentality, as if you're only as good as your last record.

"We could have done some typical pop thing, maybe organized a band like everyone else, but why? We'd completely lose the very thing that's made us special. Look at that vocal group, Take 6. They made an entire album a cappella—we heard them in person and they were really incredible. They don't need outside help either. It's exciting to see groups that the producers are leaving alone."

Not since Ella Fitzgerald met Joe Pass on stage has there been so felicitous a mating as Tuck & Patti. She has been compared to Fitzgerald, to Sarah Vaughan and even Tina Turner, but the years have molded Patti's own wide ranging style, just as Tuck has transcended the Wes Montgomery image to forge his own unique blend of ja classical and folk elements.

They are not in an iron-c situation; Tuck has his own s deal with Windham Hill, and P may become involved in ot collaborative projects. What m ters to them both is the free they enjoy.

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JAZZ REVIEW

12/26/88

Joe Pass and Ray Brown at Loa

By LEONARD FEATHER

Although Joe Pass and Ray Brown have similar backgrounds, they had never worked together simply as a duo until Thursday night, when they began a three-night stint at the Loa. A capacity crowd braved the rain to witness this unprecedented event.

Pass opened the show alone, playing his guitar mostly finger style, holding the pick in his mouth and assuming the body-all-aching-and-wracked-with-pain expression that traditionally accompanies (and belies) his performance.

Through a series of standards ("If I Should Lose You," "All the Things You Are," Victor Young's "Beautiful Love"), he moved with cat-like grace, chording the melody, adding long, complex interstices and furnishing his own rhythmic undercurrent. Not until he moved into a lickety-split series of 16th notes on a blues was his scowl at last transformed into a smile.

Then came Ray Brown, who of course is the Joe Pass of the bass (and, of course, vice versa). Pass now used the pick more often, knowing that Brown would relieve him of the necessity to be his own rhythm section, he leaned more toward those lightning single note lines that the plectrum can facilitate.

"But Beautiful" was just that, with a give-and-take exchange of closing cadenzas so mutually stimulating that the two men seemed reluctant to quit. Pass embellished Brown's splendid arco solo on "Round Midnight" before the two wound up this dazzling session with "I Got Rhythm."

That the interaction throughout was totally spontaneous goes without saying; these two artists are so familiar with each other's personalities that to prepare for the evening would have been about as necessary as rehearsing a ballgame. With Pass and Brown it was clear in advance that the Loa was Home Run City.

Los Angeles Times

12/29/88

JAZZ REVIEW

Bobby Bryant Leads Quartet at Biltmore

Bobby Bryant has long been known as a heavyweight of the trumpet, musically and physically. A large, imposing figure well-known for his high note work in big bands, he was heard Tuesday in a very different setting, leading a quartet at the Biltmore's Grand Avenue Bar.

Bryant started one set playing fluegelhorn, but his style did not involve the lyricism and long, winding phrases associated with Art Farmer's use of this potentially mellow instrument. Switching to trumpet, he seemed more in character on Victor Feldman's "Seven Steps to Heaven," his sound and personality better suited to the upbeat groove. Perhaps because of breathing difficulties in the crowded room, he seemed slightly ill at ease, fluffing here and there.

A slow, sinuous blues found him relaxed and emotionally communicative, with admirable support by bassist John Clayton (who bowed a solo chorus), Roy McCurdy on drums, and the pianist Cedric Lawson, an inventive and technically adroit musician. However, Lawson spoiled one number with a literally two-fisted display, hammering away in the lower register in a silly outburst that suggested a thunderstorm or a parody of Cecil Taylor, or possibly both.

Bryant came equipped with a vocalist, Gene Diamond, who showed promise in a strongly stated "My Favorite Things" and a pleasantly restrained "My One and Only Love." Although basically not a jazz artist, he was effective in this setting and may have pop commercial possibilities.

It was during one of the vocal numbers that Bryant made his only foray with a mute—a welcome change, reminding us that there are times when gentle hints can be as helpful as extrovert declarations.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAN. 1, 89

88 Golden Feather Awards: Wealth of Choices

LEONARD FEATHER

The problem with jazz awards is that this field has about as much breathing room as the Train during rush hour. So, in ever more crowded arena, the in consideration in selecting norees for the 24th annual Gold- Feather Awards was who uld be reluctantly eliminated her than whom to include.

oes New Age belong in jazz tory? Does fusion? NARAS, recording academy, says no on h counts. But even within the et parameters of jazz, how can decide on a single record when many albums were issued that even a critic can claim to have ived and listened to them all?

lurdling these hazards, I have en a few artists and events se impact on the scene rates orable mention.

TRUMENTAL GROUP: The tle Island String Quartet. For first time in jazz history, a ng ensemble has shown the ity to improvise individually swing collectively.

iolinist David Balakrishnan's angements of "Milestones," ght in Tunisia" and "Stolen nents" are alone reason enough uy this debut album (Windham Jazz WD 0110). The second rd, due out Jan. 28, offers even ter inducements.

CAL GROUP: Take 6. Now six ng, this amazing group origi- d as a quartet, organized by four students at Oakwood College, a small Christian school in northern Alabama. Singing entirely a cappella, without overdubbing, they achieve a phenomenal blend in their own arrangements of gospel-based traditional and original material. No vocal unit has sung, or swung, this compellingly since Singers Unlimited.

Despite the overwhelming reaction to their album, relatively little has been seen or heard of Take 6 in recent months. The principal reason is their religion: They are strict Seventh-Day Adventists and have played many dates in churches to raise funds, but they limit their other appearances. Early this month they were booked to take part in a concert at the Universal Amphitheatre, but the date was canceled when they learned it was on a Saturday, when they do not perform.

Four of the members are now living in Nashville; two are in graduate school. Because of the intense interest in their record on the part of jazz-oriented radio stations, it is hoped that they will be make themselves more available for lay dates in 1989. They will appear Jan. 14 at the Town & Country Hotel in San Diego as part of the National Assn. of Jazz Educators convention.

ALBUM: The eponymous debut session by the above cited Take 6 (Reprise 25670).

SINGER: Bobby McFerrin's runaway commercial victory, at the top of the pop chart ("Simple Pleasures," EMI Manhattan E148059) just happened also to be a creative triumph. This kind of dual achievement occurs at most once in a lifetime.

BIG BAND: A surprise last-minute entry was the arrival of "Soft Lights and Hot Music" by the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra (Music Masers CIJD 60172F). The drummer-leader, who inherited this band from his partner, the late Thad Jones, has kept it unusually stable; although its only regular gigs are Monday nights at New York's Village Vanguard (there were a few outside ventures including a European tour this year), no personnel changes have taken place in six years. Mike Abene's startling rearrangement of Irving Berlin's "Soft Lights and Sweet Music" justified the title change. It's a sad reflection of our economic structure that Lewis has been unable to bring this magnificent orchestra across and around the country.

SOLOIST: Eliane Elias. After living in New York for seven years, the 28-year-old pianist from São Paulo has established herself as a composer and soloist of growing conviction and individuality. Her "Cross Currents" (Denon CY 2180) gives a potent indication of creative things to come.

REISSUE: "The Complete Charlie Parker on Verve" (Verve 837-141-2). Selling at $160, this

McFerrin: Singer of the Year.

10-CD set tells you everything you could possibly want to know and a great deal you don't need to know about what Bird did for Norman Granz's company, from "Jazz at the Philharmonic" concerts in the 1940s through his final studio session in 1954. (Among the things you could live without are the 10-second false starts and up to 11 different partial or complete takes on the same tune.)

Phil Schaap, who packaged this production (with written introduction by Dizzy Gillespie, session analyses and many unreleased selections) has done a masterfully detailed job. The total listening time of 11½ hours could have been pared to much less; we needed no further proof that despite Parker's genius he was fallible and wasted a lot of studio time. Still, it's a fascinating, historically essential adjunct to any jazz library.

BOOK: "Bass Line" by Milt Hinton (Temple University Press). Hinton's double life as bassist and photographer and now (aided by David G. Berger) as autobiographer add up to a visual and readable delight.

SURPRISE: Patti Austin's "The Real Me" (Qwest 25696). Her a cappella, multivoiced treatment of an old Quincy Jones jazz number, "Stockholm Sweetenin'," is the all-too-brief high point. Perhaps this shouldn't have come as a surprise; after all, should we expect less from Dinah Washington's god-daughter? Singing Gershwin, Ellington and Arthur Hamilton ("Cry Me a River"), Austin displays flawless taste, style and intonation.

BLUE NOTES: The toll was unusually heavy as we lost Joe Albany, Ashley Alexander, Mousey Alexander, Chet Baker, Ray Bauduc, Billy Butterfield, Al Cohn, Gil Evans, Al Hall, J.C. Heard, Horace Henderson, Memphis Slim, Sy Oliver, Don Patterson, Pony Poindexter, Charlie Rouse, Danny Richmond and Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson, as well as such good friends of jazz as Dick Bock, David Chertok, Charles Delaunay, Barney Josephson and Baroness Nica De Koenigswarter, in whose home Charlie Parker and later Thelonious Monk spent their dying moments.

Does the size of the death toll indicate that jazz may be moribund? Certainly not. Given the number of bright new talents constantly emerging, we can be assured of the survival of the art form, in its diverse manifestations, far beyond the end of the century. Stay tuned. □

POP MUSIC REVIEW

Caymmi Plays Sounds of Brazil

To those observers who equate rock 'n' roll with Armageddon, the sounds of Brazil represent a last bastion of melody, harmony and good taste in pop music. For such listeners, the Tuesday opening of Dori Caymmi at Le Cafe (he closes tonight) was an event of rare significance.

It was the first show in this country for the second-generation composer, singer and guitarist (his father, Dorival Caymmi, was one of the 1960s pioneers of bossa nova). Surrounding him were three versatile locals: Gregg Karukas on keyboard, John Leftwich on bass and Michael Shapiro on drums.

The junior Caymmi, now portly and graying, creates themes in the same graceful spirit that marked the early works of the Brazilian new wave. His guitar, used mainly for self-accompaniment, has a dancing, almost gypsy-like quality. The amplification was a hair excessive at times, but effective use was made of a slight reverberation on his voice.

The songs were delivered with warmth and charm in a gruff manner that gave the impression he felt the meaning of the words, despite a language barrier that made it impossible for most of us to pass judgment. Karukas, using a flute-like synth effect here and there, added a touch of the old Brazilian sound.

Still more typical of what enchanted so many North Americans originally were a few closing numbers for which Caymmi was joined by Gracinha Leporace, the singing wife of Sergio Mendes. A small, dark woman with a modest, gentle voice, she joined with him for duets in English, Portuguese and the international language of wordlessness.

The Brazilian innovations of the '80s are notably more energetic than those of yesteryear, but Caymmi has found a middle ground between then and now that works well enough to retain the old attraction while adding a needed contemporary rhythmic impetus.

He encored with a solo piece, his own "El Cantador" ("Like a Lover"). As on the other occasions when he performed without the band, it was among the brightest moments of this most engaging hour.

—LEONARD FEATHER

RICK COBBA! ES

Albert McNeil's Jubilee Singers have built a worldwide reputation in 25 years, but have only become known here in this decade.

McNeil's Jubilee Singers in 25th Year: Message Rings True

By LEONARD FEATHER

This is the silver jubilee year for Albert McNeil's Jubilee Singers, and he is celebrating it in style.

More than any individual in any other musical medium, McNeil, a native Angeleno, has become virtually synonymous with an entire genre. Since the Jubilee Singers were formed a quarter-century ago, they have carried their message of joy and hope to 79 Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist countries.

This week they will begin commemorating their anniversary year with three performances at the Gindi Auditorium of the University of Judaism on Mulholland Drive. Saturday at 8:30 p.m., Sunday at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

Though their primary appeal is rooted in black spiritual music, the Jubilee Singers (a traveling company of seven men and six women, a resident company of 26) have included in their vast repertoire a gospel mass, selections from Ellington and Gershwin, calypso and musical theater works.

"Along the way," McNeil says, "I've worked with many other choirs. On Jan. 15, we'll be joining with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for a live CBS-TV presentation from Salt Lake City, with the two choirs performing separately and together. Then we'll be touring the United States through March 5, take four days off, fly to Rome, do two weeks in Italy and three weeks in Spain—our 13th time in Western Europe, where we are better known than we are here in the States."

McNeil's is a unique story. Though deeply immersed in black music (he is the author of many educational textbooks on the subject), he is not of Afro-American origin. Not until he was an adult and had to apply for a passport did he discover that he was adopted; his natural parents were Puerto Rican, his adoptive parents black Creoles from Louisiana. "They were in vaudeville, with a song and dance act. As a teen-ager I sang or played piano in churches—I was a Catholic, but the Catholic churches didn't pay, so I played also in Protestant churches and made two bucks every Sunday."

Still in his teens, he began directing choirs, and eventually calls came to conduct groups for musical movies: "Porgy and Bess," "Carmen Jones," "Hurry Sundown."

Along with his career as leader of the Jubilee Singers, McNeil in 1969 joined the faculty at UC Davis, heading the Department of Music Education and teaching Afro-American music courses three days a week. Fridays through Mondays he is at home in Hermosa Beach, or conducting the Jubilees in weekend dates.

"I can do these international tours because we get every sixth quarter off; so every other year I can retain my outside relationships during my sabbatical."

The Jubilee Singers made their first European trip in 1968 and returned regularly throughout the next two decades. There were domestic tours for Columbia Concerts from 1975-9, but as McNeil says, "What really turned things around for us, in terms of American bookings, was an appearance in 1981 before a gathering of choral directors. The word of mouth was terrific and our bookings just shot up. In 1985 we performed in Salt Lake City at their national convention, on the bill with the King Singers. We were the only black group."

The spiritual rewards of reaching audiences with the universal emotions of the music has, McNeil says, helped ensure loyalty within the ensemble. Two of the group's singers are original members; most of the others have been with McNeil for periods ranging from 6 to 20 years.

"They're all dedicated musicians," says their 62-year-old leader, "but when they're not with me they may be teaching school, or working as librarians, computer experts or in civil service. Most of them play one or two instruments; some conduct school or church choirs."

McNeil is carrying on a tradition that goes back well over a century. In 1870 the Fisk Jubilee Singers appeared at the Court of St. James before Queen Victoria. "It was she who announced to the world that there was a vocal forum called the Negro spiritual."

Given his worldwide reputation, hasn't it been tempting to quit UC Davis and simply concentrate on the choir?

"Sure, I've thought about it often. Eventually, probably around 1991, I'm going to retire and devote my entire time to this. People have always loved the spiritual and I know they always will."

In the meantime, whenever their itinerary takes intercontinental wings, McNeil and his company can continue to boast that they've got the whole world in their hands.

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JAZZ REVIEW

Rodney Quintet at Enlarged Catalina's

By LEONARD FEATHER

The newly enlarged Catalina's Bar & Grill, where 40 additional seats now enable most viewers to face the bandstand instead of peering around corners, played host Thursday evening to the newly revised Red Rodney Quintet.

Actually the veteran bop trumpeter has made only one change: It was the first night for his drummer, Paul Kreibich, who has fit into the group's dynamic pattern as easily as if it were a contour chair.

The other members are thoroughly familiar with the charts. Dick Oatts, who worked his way up the saxophone ladder from tenor to alto to soprano during the set heard, has been a fiery and compatible partner for three years; bassist Jay Anderson joined up eight years ago, and Rodney's colleague of 10 years, Garry Dial, has become an invaluable left- and right-hand man as pianist and composer.

Rodney's appearance was billed as a salute to Charlie Parker; in fact, Mike Zelnicker, who plays Rodney in the film "Bird," was in the house opening night, but only one bop tune from the Bird era, Miles Davis' "Little Willie Leaps," was heard during the first set. There was an abundance of post-Parker energy and a sense of renovation, due in part to Dial's writing and to the fact that Rodney, Oatts and Dial are all improvisers for whom the spirit of Parker lives but the time is indubitably today.

Rodney's implacable lines, his sense of time and his melodic creativity have never been more impressively displayed. Whether on trumpet or fluegelhorn, on a straight ballad ("Every Time We Say Goodbye"), in a traditional mood ("Greensleeves") or updating Coltrane with a "Giant Steps" that swung back and forth between a fast waltz and 4/4 time, he was in total control. With Anderson and Kreibich keeping the rhythmic level high, such tunes as Dial's "How Do You Know?" and Bobby Shew's "The Red Snapper" came vividly to life.

Rodney and company will be on hand through Sunday. He and Garry Dial can be seen Sunday at 8 on Ben Sidran's "New Visions" interview and music show on the cable channel VH-1.

1/8/89 JAZZ

Tom Harrell: A Horn Sound for the '90s

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Stories." Tom Harrell. Contemporary C 14043.
★★★★
Best known as Phil Woods' sideman for the past five years, Tom Harrell emerges here as arguably *the* trumpeter/composer for the 1990s, if his health permits. His sound is exquisite, his phrasing logical and his style reminiscent, at times, of Clifford Brown.

Among his six compositions, the beguiling "Song Flower" and the extended waltz treatment of "Stories" stand out. He is well served by the robust tenor sax of Bob Berg (ex-Miles Davis), and the young Danish pianist Niels Lan Doky. Guitarist John Scofield, who joins the group on three cuts, seems a trifle incongruous on "Viable Blues" but is compatible in the Spanish-tinged "Water's Edge."

As the notes point out, Harrell has succeeded despite a condition that has plagued him for 20 years; suffering from schizophrenia, he takes powerful medication to control his chemical imbalance. Many observers who have noted his lethargic appearance on the bandstand with Woods are unaware of the personal triumph represented by his ability to transcend the illness. Bassist Ray Drummond and drummer Billy Hart complete the band in this well-balanced set.

"A London Bridge." Milt Jackson. Pablo 2310-932.
★★★★½
Recorded live at Ronnie Scott's in London, this does full justice to all concerned: Jackson's vibes have never been more compelling; Monty Alexander is well represented as composer ("Eleuthera") and pianist, Ray Brown as bassist and composer, and drummer Mickey Roker supplies the solid undercurrent. "Captain Bill" by Brown is a tribute to Count Basie; fittingly, it's a blues that modulates from F to D Flat, as did "One O'Clock Jump." Alexander even strums the piano strings for a Freddie Green-like effect. "Close Enough for Love" is a wondrous blend of composer (Johnny Mandel) and interpreters. "FSR" (by Brown), meaning For Sonny Rollins, is based on the same chords as Rollins' "Doxy," always a happy hunting ground for improvisers.

"Full Circle." Jackie & Roy. Contemporary C-14046.
★★★★
Mr. & Mrs. Kral have been doo-be-doing it since 1948, and it never grows stale. The purity of Jackie Cain's intonation is the focus in her solo outing on "Sleigh Ride in July." Among the wordless vocals are "For Jackie & Roy," written for the duo by George Shearing, and Kral's title tune. Bob Cooper's tenor sax and Conte Candoli's trumpet are helpful throughout.


Trumpeter/composer Tom Harrell has new LP, "Stories."

"Holiday for Swing." Buddy De Franco/Terry Gibbs Quintet. Contemporary C-14047.
★★★½
"Holiday for Strings," the opening cut, is an unswinging tune that most jazzmen have been avoiding for 45 years. "Serenade in Blue" (done in double-time) and Charlie Christian's "Seven Come Eleven" come off better, as do Bud Powell's "Parisian Thoroughfare" (complete with street-noise effects), De Franco's shuffle-beat "Chad's Bad" and Gibbs' "Fickle Fingers." The leaders (with a rhythm section that includes Gibbs' son Gerry on drums) are still the Goodman and Hampton of be-bop.

"Eastern Rebellion." Cedar Walton/George Coleman. Impulse MCAD 33102.
★★★★½
Two giants of latter-day beyond-the-mainstream music are dually represented as players and writers: Pianist Walton wrote "Bolivia" and "Mode for Joe," Coleman plays energetic tenor and wrote "5/4 Thing." Coltrane's "Naima" is another intriguing track; "Bittersweet," by the late Sam Jones, bassist on the date, completes this vigorously inventive and valuable reissue of a 1975 session.

"The Final Performance." Al Cohn with Al Porcino Big Band. RazMTazJazz 44003 (c/o Sutra, 1 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010).
★★★
Stone Cohn fans will put up with the problems: sound balance from adequate to mediocre, with Cohn's robust tenor off mike at times. Led by U.S. trumpeter Al Porcino, this German orchestra played well during a live session at a club in Karlsruhe, West Germany, in March 1987 (10 months before Cohn's death). Four of the arrangements were by Cohn. Best cuts: Artie Shaw's "Back Bay Shuffle" and Cohn's own "The Goof and I."

"Louisiana Suite and Other Instrumentals." Thomas Talbert Jaz Orchestra. SeaBreeze CD SB 107-2.
★★★½
Given limited distribution on its release in 1978, this newly remixed CD displays Talbert's writing talent in 11 originals, five of which constitute the suite. The 14-piece band is at ease with his straight-ahead tonal works, a couple of which do capture an updated New Orleans flavor.

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Los Angeles Times 1/10/87

JAZZ REVIEW

Greene Quartet in Mekler Gallery

ROBERT DURRELL

The Greene Quartet, from left, Richard Greene, Margaret Wooten, Melissa Hasin and Jimbo Ross.

It seems like yesterday that there were no string quartets dabbling in jazz-cum-classical repertory. Now there are at least three, one of which, the Greene String Quartet, was heard Sunday in a recital at the Mekler Gallery on La Cienega Boulevard.

Among their many talents violinist Richard Greene and his violist, Jimbo Ross, have the ability to play improvised jazz. This gives them an advantage over the Kronos Quartet whose members read meticulously but have to call on outsiders to add the ad-lib element.

The Turtle Island String Quartet has even greater credentials, since all four are versed in the free-wheeling art; however, Greene and his colleagues claim such a delightfully eclectic repertoire that their program, announced with a dry wit by Greene, was a flawless blend of classical virtuosity, swinging good humor and passionate dedication.

Opening with a touch of country style swing in "Hoedown," the group soon took up the everlasting subject of the blues in Jon Charles' riff-rife "Bluegreene."

In two pieces originally written for a full-string ensemble, the quartet's harmony was rich enough to suggest a much larger group. The high point was reached with an adaptation of "Goodby Porkpie Hat," Charles Mingus' tribute to Lester Young. In the evening's only vocal, Jimbo Ross and violinist Margaret Wooten sang the lyrics; then Ross simultaneously scatted and played a solo, a la George Benson.

The gifted cellist Melissa Hasin filled a dual part, adding her sound to the ensemble's but occasionally playing pizzicato in the manner of a walking jazz bass. Never was the absence of a regular rhythm section conspicuous.

Ed Kusby's ingenious arrangement of "Doin' Things," a 60-year-old piece by jazz violinist Joe Venuti, found Jimbo Ross strumming his viola like a reincarnation of guitarist Eddie Lang. After winding up with a Doors medley, the quartet offered a tongue-in-cheek novelty, "Diary of a Fly," as an encore.

The group worked contentedly without amplification in this intimate setting. After all the time its members have put in playing pop in the studios or rock in the clubs, it was obvious they were having the time of their lives, as was the audience. —LEONARD FEATHER

TV REVIEW 1/13

'Visions' Has a New-Age View

The "New Visions" series presented every Sunday evening on cable's VH-1 channel is doing a commendable job of combining in-person music and interview shows (hosted by Ben Sidran) with videos of jazz and New Age artists.

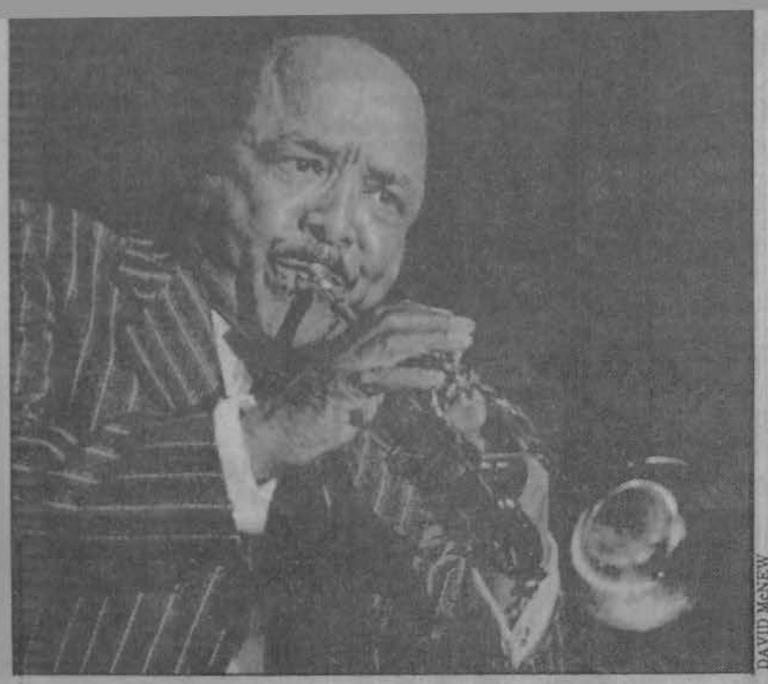
The first of this Sunday's two hours will be devoted to Fahreed Haque, a guitarist of Pakistani origin. Haque's music, performed both finger-style and with a plectrum, effectively blends jazz, folk and New Age elements. He is accompanied by David Spinoza on rhythm guitar and the eminent Harvie Swartz on upright bass.

Sidran, who has many credits of his own as pianist, singer and composer, knows what questions to ask and how to keep the interviews reasonably interesting, though Haque comes across as a far-from-dynamic personality.

Splitting the show with him is the duo of Carla Bley and Steve Swallow. Playing material from their recent album, they are an intriguing couple. Bley, a pianist and composer who has one foot in the avant-garde and the other in sheer satire, remains largely invisible through her great mass of blond hair; even during the interview, her eyes cannot be seen.

Her slightly Monkish solos are conservative by her own normally abnormal standards. Bley tells Sidran that her attempts to be commercial having failed to sell, she plans to "do more weird stuff." An odd woman and self-described cult hero, she is at least never dull. Swallow backs her capably on electric bass.

—LEONARD FEATHER



DAVID McNEW

"Tonight Show's" Snooky Young performs at the 'Basie' show.

1/16

Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

'Basie Suite' Lively Retrospective at Teachers Convention

By LEONARD FEATHER

SAN DIEGO—At the sprawling, 33-acre Town and Country Hotel, where panel discussions, classes and live music sessions took place in a dozen of the hotel's venues, Friday's most eagerly awaited event at the National Association of Jazz Educators Convention took place in the large Atlas Ballroom, where Frank Foster, leader of the Count Basie Orchestra, presented the premier of the "Basie Jazz History Suite."

This elaborate 97-minute production turned out to be mainly a retrospective of the orchestra's most durable hits, linked with a narration read by Joe Williams.

No concert by this orchestra can lack excitement, and such warhorse tunes as "Jumpin' at the Woodside" and "Whirly Bird" (the latter featuring Foster in a greased-lightning tenor-sax solo) found the man in peak form.

The narration, however, was something else. Williams' reading of the script was hesitant—not surprisingly, since the flat, matter-of-fact writing was at odds with his loose, easygoing personality. It could have used some of Basie's own dry, elliptical wit.

The Kansas City years were glossed over with indecent haste. The blues, a vital thread during the band's 50-year history, was not touched for an hour into the show.

Important alumni were left out: Even Gerald Wilson, who later in the evening would receive an award from the association's Black Caucus, was not mentioned. Guest soloist Snooky Young's heralded participation (the "Tonight Show" trumpeter once played with Basie) consisted of a single short number.

The soloists were in dazzling form. The brass section roared; the saxes had one wondrous soli outing.

The concluding 17 minutes, comprising a new three-part composition by Frank Foster, was a skillfully organized series of frameworks to show the band's current and future direction.

Preceding the Basie segment were two small band sets: One by Red Rodney's vigorous, tightly knit quintet and one by five faculty members from the Southland's Dick Grove School of Music, led by the trombonist Rob McConnell, who admitted that the Rodney group was hard to follow.

Earlier in the day, some of the smaller rooms were filled with the sounds of intimate jazz. From Denver came the vastly underrated Getz-like tenor sax of Spike Robinson, teamed with a soulfully swinging pianist and singer, Ellyn Rucker. They will be in Los Angeles Tuesday at Alfonse's.

From France by way of Los Angeles came the Aldeberts, Louis and Monique. After all their years trying to gain a major foothold in Los Angeles, their appearance here before a crowd that had never heard of them was a revelation. The two singers (Louis also plays electric keyboard) were a delight in their hour of original songs and adaptations of Bill Evans and Michel Legrand. Singing in English, French and Le Jazz Scat, the Aldeberts are a cool Franco-American champagne cocktail.

The convention has been valuable not only for the music but for such side shows as the exhibit hall, where a mob of visitors milled around examining the dozens of display booths, promoting colleges (the New York University booth lists its jazz degrees), jazz books (hundreds of them), festivals, instruction manuals, saxophone reeds and, of course, T-shirts, which outshone the patrons in their rainbow variety.

Los Angeles Times 1/14/89

JAZZ REVIEW

Drummer, 7, Steals the Show at Convention

By LEONARD FEATHER

SAN DIEGO—A 7-year-old drummer sitting in as a guest soloist with an Air Force band was the first-day sensation at the 16th annual convention of the National Assn. of Jazz Educators.

Playing "Giant Steps" at a matinee, Jacob Armen proved he can outperform many drummers four times his age. Armen lives in Glendale and sits in Saturday nights at his father's Magic Lamp restaurant in Pasadena, where he has no trouble handling the tricky 7/4 and 9/4 meters of Armenian music. As Louie Bellson said a year or so ago, "By the time Jacob is 8, he'll be unbelievable." He will be 8 next month.

Joel Leach, head of Cal State Northridge's jazz department, said that "Jacob has a natural understanding of every sound. We featured him with the CSUN jazz band and he was astonishing."

The participants at this three-day meeting are men and women who are here to teach, communicate, study or play—in many cases all four. Among the estimated 350 musicians who came here mainly to perform are students, full-time professionals, and service bands. A record 3,000 are in attendance.

The Thursday evening concert, held in the Convention Center, opened with a bristling set by the San Diego State University Jazz Ensemble, conducted by Bill Yeager. It is a familiar complaint that the universities produce cookie-cutter jazz, too high on technique and short on soul. Not true; at least, not if this band is a yardstick. Playing straight-ahead Big Band music alternating with intelligently wrought fusion, the orchestra revealed a major talent in Derek Cannon, a 28-year-old graduate student, whose trumpet solo in a Don Menza arrangement of Henry Mancini's "Moment to Moment" was a study in sheer lyricism.

DAVID McNEW

Jacob Armen, 7, wows the audience in San Diego.

Bill Watrous followed, playing trombone with his unique blend of control and abandon. He is a magnificent musician, but still insists on singing and whistling, "in order to improve the way I can communicate with you," as he put it—but no improvement was needed, and none was achieved.

One of San Diego's own, alto saxophonist Charles McPherson, showed in a vivid be-bop set that this idiom is as vital today as ever, and is the chosen path of two generations: his son, Charles Jr., played drums, and his pianist was the phenomenal Harry Pickens, 6-foot 9-inch bop giant who in the afternoon had given a most articulate clinic on the topic "Peak Performance—How to Make Inspired Performance a Habit."

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Television Reviews

lba' a Look at Life of Celebrated Aussie Opera Star

...nnas, dead or alive, ...me for every kind ... Virtually ... Maurier's ...ber's expertise of long theatrical experience.

Rodney Fisher has directed with minimum ingenuity. There are far too many close-ups and pastoral scenes involving fellow Australians. The film is hardly to be taken as authentic biography, but as mild entertainment it will do for an idle slot.

—ALBERT GOLDBERG

'Fats' a Delight in Spite of Poor Treatment of Waller

Of all the jazz artists dealt with by Hollywood, none was more misunderstood and misrepresented than Fats Waller. "Fats Waller: The Joint Is Jumpin'," a 48-minute film airing at 7 tonight on the Bravo cable channel, offers abundant evidence.

A pioneer of stride piano, Waller (1904-1943) became so well known as a comedy vocalist and all-around entertainer that his musical genius was submerged in all of his feature films and shorts. Even during the few piano solos here, the camera is not on his hands but on a bevy of admiring beauties.

"Honeysuckle Rose," one of his best-known compositions, is accorded this treatment. "Do Me a Favor" and "Your Feet's Too Big" suffer similarly. There is a brief snatch of Waller playing the pipe organ, but it's sound-only, with stills for the visual counterpoint.

Yet it is a delight to catch even these glimpses of Waller's magic, and to observe the commentary by his son, Maurice, whose reminiscences about his father's run-ins with Al Capone and others are enlightening, as are the remarks by musicians of that era, including Marshal Royal and Eddie Barefield.

Produced and directed by Howard Johnson, "The Joint Is Jumpin'" justifies itself through the light it sheds on the 1930s black social and musical jazz Zeitgeist.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Harry (Sweets) Edison: His imprimatur is on each tune.

JAZZ REVIEW

Edison's Horn: How Sweets It Is

Call it singularity, personality, individuality; whatever the word, Harry (Sweets) Edison, who played Tuesday and Wednesday at the Biltmore Hotel's Grand Avenue Bar in downtown Los Angeles, has it. The sound of his horn is so special that given four bars heard by chance on a radio station, you could make a killing with a bet on his identity.

If you ask him in what year his trumpet first brightened the brass team of the Count Basie Orchestra, Edison will cover his mouth while answering. (It was 1937.) Ever since then, his style has been one of the most personal, most swinging, most humorous in jazz history.

Open or muted, weaving long, sinuous lines or bending notes up and down with eel-like slipperiness, Edison puts his imprimatur on each tune. It may be an old pop song like "I Wish I Knew" (to which he applied one of his famous long, slow fades) or "Green Dolphin Street" complete with half-hidden quotations from other songs, or his perennial blues theme "Centerpiece;" the longer he serves it up, the sweeter the taste.

At the Biltmore he was in fitting company. Herman Riley's blustering tenor sax kept pace with the leader in bold adventures and sly asides.

Art Hillery at the piano, was, as always, the reliable latter day mainstream. Andy Simpkins on bass was a model of sectional and solo virtuosity, and Roy McCurdy's drums kept the pot boiling consistently.

During the 8 p.m. set Tuesday, aired on KKGO, Edison went through his by now mandatory litany of self-praise, introducing himself with about 25 laudatory adjectives. But don't be persuaded that he is kidding with his music. When Edison takes off on one of his fanciful flights, he means business; and he has been in business for more years than he cares to admit.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Roger Kellaway: Musical Chameleon

By LEONARD FEATHER

Few musicians on the contemporary scene can claim a record of more continual growth than Roger Kellaway. The former Angeleno has been associated, as composer and/or pianist, with every major facet of jazz, classical and popular music.

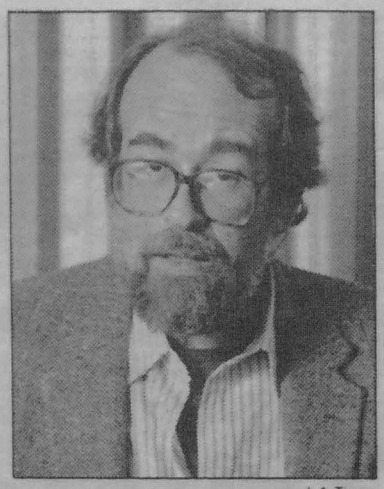
Consider these credits: composer of the famous closing theme of television's "All in the Family"; of the film scores for "Paper Lion," "A Star Is Born" and "Breathless"; of a ballet commissioned by George Balanchine; musical director or arranger for Bobby Darin, Joni Mitchell and Carmen McRae; longtime associate of Tom Scott in small combo jazz; writer of a work commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic; arranger for the "Supersax Plays Bird With Strings" album.

The man behind this impressive list is a bearded, articulate genius who can trace his musical lineage back to Dixieland (before becoming a professional pianist he played bass with Jimmy McPartland's traditional band).

He lived in Los Angeles from 1966 until 1983, when he moved back to New York. It was in New York in 1959, after two years at the New England Conservatory of Music, that he first established his *locus operandi*.

Recently, back in Los Angeles to visit relatives of his wife, Jorjana, he explained what had taken him away and how his life has changed.

"I didn't necessarily think I could do better in New York; I just wanted to reacquaint myself with life in the East," Kellaway said. [illegible]ling very soon was 'Why did I wait so long?' It's not the answer to everything, but back there I do feel really in place.



L.A. Times

Kellaway: Man of many talents.

"Soon after arriving, I found a manager. She knew nothing about me or my background, but after only a couple of weeks she told me, 'Every place I call, they want you, and they know who you are. Who the hell are you anyway?' I was delighted that people remembered me from the 1960s."

And so his career took a turn from mainly composing to principally playing. "I have two sets of fans. There are the ones who remember me from albums such as 'More Blues and the Abstract Truth' with Oliver Nelson, 'Alfie' with Sonny Rollins, 'Bumping' with Wes Montgomery; and the others who never heard anything I'd done but react to me like I'm the new guy on the scene. Sure, I'm new, except that I'm 49 years old and I'm arriving totally mature in how I feel about music.

"Both these groups welcomed me with open arms; meanwhile I've also been going to Europe and I feel like I'm taking it country by country. The bassist Red Mitchell, who lives in Stockholm, is an old friend; I often go and work with him."

A legacy that Kellaway left behind in California is a series of recordings with the Cello Quartet, a unique group with classical overtones imparted by Kellaway's writing and by the presence of virtuoso cellist Edgar Lustgarten.

"I wanted to avoid the regular drum sound of cymbals and tomtoms and bass drums, so I got Emil Richards to play miscellaneous percussion, mainly mallet instruments. Without drums we had chamber music."

The Cello Quartet played a few gigs a year through the 1970s and left three superb albums. "Then Edgar passed away in 1979 and I couldn't continue it without him—at least, not until now."

Another reason for Kellaway's plan to return occasionally to Los Angeles is the imminent rebirth of the Cello Quartet. "I've found another fine cellist, Fred Seykora, who played next to Edgar on all my film scores. I'll have the same bass player, Chuck Domanico, plus a violinist, and this time we'll use three percussionists, playing everything from congas to hand drums and mallets, for Balinese and African sounds. I want it to be a group that can go in any direction, span the entire world of sound."

What pointed the way to the cello revival was Kellaway's association with Eddie Daniels, a dazzlingly virtuosic clarinetist, who commissioned him to write a suite, "Memos From Paradise"(GRP 9561), which included a string quartet. Seldom had his talent as a composer and arranger been more luminously displayed.

Before he gets going with the new cello quartet, Kellaway has to deal with what may be the greatest challenge of his renewed New York career: In 1986 he was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to write a tuba concerto.

"I think the idea came from Roger Bobo, who recorded a cello quartet piece that I'd rewritten for him to play on an F tuba. So the tuba community of the world got to know me as a writer for that instrument, and after a meeting with [N.Y. Philharmonic music director] Zubin Mehta, it was agreed that I go ahead with this work.

"It's been hard figuring out how to complete the job; after 2½ years I'm still a few months away from finishing it. I wanted to employ some Ellington influences, such as the use of plunger mutes, as well as a harmonic density along the lines of Gil Evans. I feel a responsibility to keep that kind of textural writing alive. Often, since Gil passed away, I've had him on my mind when I worked on the piece."

That he can summon the concentrated effort for such a task may be due in part to another aspect of Kellaway's life, one that changed dramatically soon after he moved back to New York. "I gave up my bad habits—the booze, the cocaine—in 1984. Maybe it's odd that I did this in an intense place like New York, but I really wanted to change, and it has provided me with a tremendous clarity."

Curiously, Kellaway attributes his successful eclecticism to the fact that he doesn't listen to jazz. "I've played it, fortunately, with the greatest players in the world, but when I go home I'll listen to Berlioz, Stockhausen, Messiaen, Stravinsky. When it comes to jazz, Oscar Peterson was my original idol, and he's still the most unbelievable master; to this day there's nobody around to touch him."

Kellaway's schedule for 1989 will be typically diversified: a two-piano recital in March with his occasional partner Dick Hyman ("Now there's a guy that can go in 10 more directions than I do"); a concert in New York with Yo-Yo Ma in May ("He wants to play my piano trio piece, 'The Endless Life,' dedicated to Jerusalem"); an album with Stephane Grappelli and Ma; finishing touches on the tuba concerto; another piece for Ma, this time with the Cuban saxophonist Paquito d'Rivera; then back to New York for an October appearance at Carnegie Hall with David Grisman's band, Grappelli and Ma.

"So that's how the next nine months look. You know, in the five years I've been back in New York, I've only done two or three commercial projects. I'm just playing with the people I want to play with and I'm writing for the people I want to write for. Everything's happening just the way I hoped it would. That's a pretty good life." □

Los Angeles Times

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JAZZ REVIEW

Take 6 Takes Honors at Convention

By LEONARD FEATHER

DAVID McNEW

A cappella sextet Take 6 performing at Jazz Educators Convention. From left, Mark Kibble, Mervyn Warren, Claude McKnight III, David Thomas, Cedric Dent and Alvin (Vinnie) Chea.

SAN DIEGO—The National Assn. of Jazz Educators Convention ended here Saturday on a note of triumph. Reflecting a rare prescience on the part of the organizers, three of the main participants in the final concert were Grammy nominees; the fourth was the winner of the College Band contest.

Top honors went to Take 6, the a cappella vocal sextet nominated for three Grammys (Best New Artists, Best New Soul/Gospel Group, Best New Jazz Vocal Group). These men (21 to 26), all former students at a Seventh-day Adventist college in Alabama, are simply the best vocal group in the country today.

Even the astounding success last spring of their first album did not prepare the audience for the visual impact. Along with a gorgeous harmonic blend, they displayed humor, charm and personality, distilling a rhythmic fervor that had the crowd in an uproar.

Their lyrics (some traditional, some original) are couched in a Christian spirit of love: "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before, We Sure Do Need Him Now," "Spread Love," "Oh Mary Don't You Weep," "Get Away Jordan." From the lead tenor Claude McKnight to the sonorous bass voice of Alvin Chea, they are riveting.

The Berklee College Jazz Ensemble from Boston, given the thankless task of following Take 6, displayed the constant creative and technical growth of collegiate jazz. The Berklee musicians had emerged as winners during a matinee; the other finalists, from the University of North Texas and William Patterson College in New Jersey, gave them tough competition.

Trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis led the group, which boasted a cohesive ensemble spirit on such future star soloists as trumpeter Roy Hargrove, Antonio Hart on alto sax, and Masahiko Osaka, drums.

Branford Marsalis, Delfeayo's older brother, himself a Berklee alumnus, sat in with the group to blow some devastating tenor sax, offering evidence of how he earned his two Grammy nominations (Best Small Group Jazz, Best Jazz Soloist). Tim Owens scatted the blues, adding a welcome vocal change of pace during a performance that showed the band's versatility.

The Count Basie Orchestra followed with a set that topped its own performance of the previous night. No longer saddled by a script and unfamiliar material, the men reminded us that beat for beat, this is still the best surviving reminder of big-band jazz with the accent on swing.

Leader Frank Foster and fellow tenor man Eric Dixon and Kenny Hing kept the temperature high; Bob Ojeda and old-timer Sonny Cohn sparked a great trumpet section; Danny House, the band's youngest member, brought his eloquent alto sax sound to a solo number, and Carmen Bradford, who gets better all the time, left one wondering why she doesn't record an album in this setting.

Saxophonist Michael Brecker, also a Grammy nominee in the small group category, closed the show with a set that pleased some of the more ardent fusion fans, though there were too many droning moments that recalled a concerto for bagpipes.

Herb Alpert of A&M Records, in a moving speech Friday night, contributed $100,000 to a scholarship fund, speaking warmly of the men in whose names he had made the donation: Louis Armstrong, Gil Evans, Clifford Brown and Charlie Parker. With friends like Alpert and and a sponsor like Southern Comfort (annual supporter of the college band contest), jazz and its pedagogues and protagonists can continue to thrive.

JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

Le Cafe's Lois Boileau

Super Mom

Lois Boileau has the best of two worlds. She presides over Le Cafe, the popular room in Sherman Oaks, and the gourmet market next door. As a singer, she can hire herself to perform in the Room Upstairs, an intimate 70-seat venue over Le Cafe. She'll be singing there tonight, backed by Lou Forestieri's quartet.

Born in Hollywood, Boileau was a vocal natural from age 3. "My mother noticed I had perfect pitch and can sing difficult songs. At 11, I began operatic training, but I always listened to jazz—Ella, Billie Holiday, Sarah, Dinah, Peggy Lee."

Before her high school graduation, her career was under way: Local jobs, shows in Las Vegas, Civic Light Opera. But she says, "Professionalism scared me. I really wanted to be a wife and mother."

Married in her teens, she had three children. After the marriage ended she found "a marvelous man whose art work you can see in the Room Upstairs. He was my second husband, a clinical psychologist. I became a lay therapist and worked with him for 17 years, until he died some 10 years ago." She is now married to Jay Hodes, a physician.

Her son Dale had the idea of launching a sidewalk cafe. The restaurant opened in June, 1979; the following New Year's Eve Lois Boileau introduced the talent policy upstairs. For a while she was the only singer; later,

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FACES

Continued from Page 2

with the help of Bill Henderson, Joyce Collins, Sue Raney and others, the music expanded from two to five to seven nights a week, with Boileau concentrating on the business end and singing a couple of nights a month.

Boileau's children all help out.

"My daughter Diana, who also does film editing, handles the beverages and bar; Dale, my older son, books the talent—he's also going into personal management—and Paul operates the kitchen, is the comptroller, and he's a computer whiz.

"Yes, they all have peripheral outside interests, but believe me, when you're in the restaurant business, your other interests *have* to be peripheral."

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

Patterson, Rucker Take the Lead at Alfonse's

Two women of noteworthy ability and seasoned authority took to the bandstand Monday at Alfonse's in Toluca Lake.

Ann Patterson, the locally based alto saxophonist, and Ellyn Rucker, the pianist and singer who has been based for many years in Denver, had never before worked as co-leaders, but the group they headed lost no time establishing their empathetic credentials.

Patterson, best known for her years as leader of the superb all-female orchestra Maiden Voyage, had a far greater opportunity in this intimate setting to display her improvisational gifts. Opening with "Manha de Carnaval," accorded a relaxed medium bossa nova beat, she at once showed her influences (Charlie Parker or any of Parker's musical heirs) while revealing a personal sound and identity.

Most of the more mature bop musicians are well-versed in the adaptation of their styles to a ballad mood. Patterson proved the point during the first half chorus of "Polka Dots and Moon Beams," for which she was accompanied simply by Rucker's piano, without establishing a tempo. At the bridge, the bassist Bob Maize moved in quietly and effectively, joined in due chorus by the drummer Sherman Ferguson. This song has been worked over thousands of times, but Patterson managed to sublimate it successfully.

For "Emily" she switched to flute, playing capably, but it was Rucker who dominated the Johnny Mandel waltz with her exceptional blend of soul, subtle technique and incisive rhythm.

Regrettably, Rucker had only one vocal opportunity during the long set: "My One and Only Love," a demandingly rangy tune, in which her phrasing was intuitively right and her timbre attractively husky.

Patterson or Rucker, though normally separated by geography, ought to work together more often; there is a chemistry here that brings out the best in their several considerable talents.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

Aged-in-Oak Sound of Phil Woods Quintet

Familiarity in the jazz world breeds contentment. It can produce—among gifted artists long aware of one another's personalities—a rare level of collective invention. So it is with the Phil Woods Quintet, playing for a week at Catalina Bar & Grill in Hollywood.

When the alto saxophonist organized this group in 1975, he had a solid rhythmic foundation in the persons of drummer Bill Goodwin and bassist Steve Gilmore, both of whom are still with him. Also aged in the Woods are pianist Hal Galper, who joined up in 1981, and the visionary trumpet and fluegelhorn soloist Tom Harrell, added in 1983 to what had previously been a quartet.

Of course, there is more to the story than the group's longevity. Woods and his sidemen, particularly Harrell and Galper, are composers whose contributions lend the unit much of its character as a latter-day mainstream-modern ensemble. Galper's tune "Just Us," which opened the first set Tuesday, was in fact a variation on the long familiar chord pattern of "Just Friends."

It was intriguing to hear how the quality of Harrell's contributions varied as he switched horns throughout the set. Though his imagination never flags, it was on fluegel, which more and more is becoming the horn of choice for jazzmen, that he produced his most consistent solos.

Woods by now is the source of inspiration to thousands of alto players, even as Charlie Parker was to him. His fire-breathing work on the samba-like "Repetition" was balanced by a more reflective approach on "Autumn Nocturn."

Gilmore became a virtual prototype of a new breed of bassists in the late 1960s, pointing the way to a peak of melodic creativity on this cumbersome instrument. As for Goodwin, he has set a standard in sensitive small combo drumming that has inspired countless younger players.

All five men pulled their weight in the grand finale, a riotous workout in which "Willow Weep for Me," played mainly as a breakneck waltz, was somehow intertwined with "All Blues" and even a quote by Woods from "I Feel Pretty." This was a head arrangement, and as such a telling example of how delightfully these men can stir up what the Spanish called an *olla podrida*—a highly seasoned soup or stew. With musicians of this caliber, the cooking is easy, and the pot will be boiling through Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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Carroll & Damone Having Wonderful Time

By LEONARD FEATHER

The careers of Vic Damone and Diahann Carroll were joined when they were married Jan. 3, 1987, in Las Vegas. It was the fourth marriage for both; they were each twice divorced and once widowed.

"It's such a comfortable relationship," said the amiable, elegant Carroll. "We are both from a New York background; both very family oriented. I guess I'm a little more driven than Damone, but working together is a great experience."

"It's true," said the man Carroll usually refers to by his last name. "She is very disciplined and organized; I'm a bit more inclined to just let things happen."

How things happen will be on display tonight and Saturday at the Orange County Performing Arts Center at 8 p.m. Billed as "An Evening of Love and Romance," the program will be devoted largely to the great classic-pop standard songs.

Personally and professionally, the Carroll-Damone union has been a smooth one, except for a tragedy on the day after their second wedding anniversary: Sandra Boucher, Damone's sister, to whom he was very close, was fatally shot in what police said was a murder-suicide in Miami. Boucher, police said, was killed outside a bingo parlor by her ex-husband, Avrum Cohen, who then turned the gun on himself. Boucher was engaged to another man at the time, and they were to have been married at the end of this month.

The grieving Damone and Carroll hastened to Florida.

Back in town last week, they began preparing for the new act, which precedes their own Broadway review, due to start rehearsals in New York on Feb. 6.

One of their most gratifying recent appearances took place before a star-laden crowd, including the Reagans, at the last Kennedy Center Awards in Washington. Their segment was in honor of Perry Como. "When I was an usher and elevator operator at the Paramount in New York," said Damone, "I sang for Perry in the elevator, and he encouraged me to go ahead Vegas, gave us our wedding, and we performed there that weekend—but then we went off to this beautiful house of Steve's in Atlantic City, where Damone promptly doubled over with kidney stones."

"She had to take me to the hospital," says Damone. "Quite a honeymoon."

Among the good times was a 60th birthday party for Damone last June, when his sister came to Beverly Hills for what would be her final visit.

Although Damone's acting years seem to be behind him, his wife's screen activities continue intermittently. She was the first black actress to star in her own TV series ("Julia," in 1968); she won a Tony award for her stage role in Richard Rodgers' "No Strings" and was an Academy Award nominee for her title role portrayal as "Claudine" in 1975. She'll be seen in an NBC miniseries, "From the Dead of Night," due to air in late February.

Diahann Carroll and Vic Damone offer "Love and Romance."

While Carroll is reluctant to make records, Damone has continued as a recording artist, with five albums on his own Vianda label. "I can't understand why Diahann doesn't want to record," he says. "She's a fine singer who deals with lyrics intelligently."

But Carroll demurs: "I've always considered myself primarily a visual artist. I just don't like to listen to my records."

"She won't play them for me," says Damone with a grin, "so when I want to play records for her, I play Andy Williams."

The Damones hardly need record royalties to bolster their incomes, which enable them to maintain homes at a country club in Indian Wells, Calif., in Beverly Hills and in New York.

Asked to explain how their partnership came about, both Damones had roughly the same answer: They just fell in love. But Carroll had a wry final comment: "We're just having a wonderful time, off stage and on. Come to think of it, this is probably the *only* time I should have gotten married."

The Damones explain their partnership by saying they just fell in love.

The Damones explain their partnership by saying they just fell in love.

and elevator operator at the Paramount in New York," said Damone. "I sang for Perry in the elevator, and he encouraged me to go ahead with a singing career." Not too long after, Damone himself was the Paramount headliner; after he married actress Pier Angeli, they had a son 33 years ago and named him Perry.

The first glory days for Damone were the late 1940s and the '50s; as a movie star he appeared in a series of true-to-the-period MGM musicals, singing "Stranger in Paradise" and "This Is My Beloved" and "Kismet."

Carroll became aware of him early. "I remember, as a little girl, seeing his picture with Pier in the paper. I thought to myself, 'Oh, what a pretty couple!' " (The little girl was just seven years younger than her future husband.)

Several ironies were involved as their paths crossed. They got to know one another when Damone married his second wife, Judy, at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, where Carroll was working.

"After the wedding," he recalled, "I said to Judy, 'We've got to see Diahann Carroll.' So we caught the show and then went to see her backstage."

"I'd always admired Damone," Carroll said, "for his phrasing, his breathing and technique. Often, without his knowing it, I'd sneak into clubs to study his work. When he came backstage that night I said to him, 'What are you doing here? Why aren't you off on your honeymoon?'

"There was another strange irony. Damone looked at a house in Benedict Canyon that he loved and wanted to buy. But the agent called him and said, 'Sorry, that house has been purchased by Miss Diahann Carroll.' "

Damone and his second wife had three daughters before she died; he was married and divorced again. Meanwhile Carroll's domestic life had been turbulent. Her teen-age marriage to agent Monte Kay, later known as manager of the Modern Jazz Quartet and of Flip Wilson, broke up, but they were good friends until his death last year. "Monte and I both had a lot of growing up to do. But I thank God for that marriage, because I produced this incredible creature, my daughter," Suzanne, 29, Carroll's only child, appears on the Movie Time cable TV channel.

Carroll now says that marriage didn't work for her when she was "too young, married to my work, and quite selfish about it." She was married briefly to a Las Vegas businessman, but dismisses that episode as "a silly marriage and a silly divorce." Her third husband, much younger than she, was "a complex, brilliant young man," who died in an auto accident.

The marriage to Damone got off to a rocky start. "Steve Wynn, the owner of the Golden Nugget in Las

DAVID McNEW

Success has come quickly for Take 6 members Mark Kibble, left, Mervyn Warren, Claude V. McKnight III, David Thomas, Cedric Dent and Alvin (Vinnie) Chea.

The Miracle Mix of Take 6

Vocal group rates a 10 on the success scale

By LEONARD FEATHER

The leaps-and-bounds musical success story of the a cappella group Take 6 is unlike anything else that has hit its field in recent years.

Consider what has happened since its first album titled "Take 6," was released on Reprise last March:

—The singers played two dates at Radio City Music Hall with Stevie Wonder, who bought 200 CDs of their album to distribute to friends.

—They recorded the theme song for Candice Bergen's TV show "Murphy Brown."

—They took part in an album by Joe Sample, singing a song called "U Turn," which they co-wrote with him.

—They did other studio work with Johnny Mathis, Stephanie Mills, Smokey Robinson and Kenny Rogers.

—They sang the National Anthem at a World Series game.

—They taped one of their original songs for the sound track of Spike Lee's upcoming movie.

—They toured with Andy Williams, taped a 501 Blues Jeans commercial, performed on the Lou Rawls Parade of Stars fund-raiser, and drew rave reviews at the recent National Assn. of Jazz Educators convention.

—They have been nominated for three Grammys (best new artists, best soul/gospel group, best jazz vocal group), of which they are certain to win one, probably two (remember, you read it here).

Heady stuff for six young products of a small Seventh-day Adventist college in Alabama, who figured it would take them another four or five years to reach any measurable degree of success.

Take 6 began as a quartet, but became a quintet by accident, when they were rehearsing in a bathroom. "Bathrooms always have the best acoustics," says the founding member and lead tenor Claude McKnight. "Suddenly we heard this flush, and out came Mark Kibble, who added his voice to ours." Kibble, also a tenor, became chief arranger. The group now includes two other tenors, Mervyn Warren and David Thomas; a baritone, Cedric Dent, and the bass voice of Alvin (Vinnie) Chea.

"Cedric is still in school," McKnight said. "He's in a doctoral program in music theory at the University of Maryland. He's only been singing recently; all his life he was a pianist, in fact, he's doing his dissertation on Bill Evans. Alvin also is still in school, but he and Cedric will be through in June."

Meanwhile, the group is juggling dozens of offers. They will have a song on Quincy Jones' next album. Reuben Cannon wants to write them into his script for the TV show "Amen." Anita Baker wants them to open for her in London in October. They will headline a European tour in July.

Gladys Knight and Whitney Houston want to work on projects with them; Bill Cosby is writing them into an episode on his show. To put it succinctly, they've got the whole world at their feet.

Their songs are mainly gospel and their Christian beliefs are powerful. "We've been Adventists all our lives," McKnight said. "Our parents are Adventists and most of them went to the same college we did, as did some of our grandparents."

Despite their common religious heritage, their tastes and backgrounds vary considerably. "Actually, I grew up as a trombone player," McKnight said, "but when I went to college, they didn't have a good band, so I thought I'd better sing. My influences were the trombonist Urbie Green and big bands like Woody Herman and Count Basie."

Born in October 1962, McKnight is the second oldest; Dent is two weeks his senior. Kibble and Warren are both 24 and both are sons of ministers. The youngest members are Thomas, 22, an engineering student until the record took off and forced him to change his plans; and Chea, 21, son of a Liberian father and Guianese mother.

Given the subtlety of their harmonic blend, it seems incredible that very few of the group's arrangements are written down. "Even though we all read music proficiently," McKnight said, "the arrangements sink in quicker if one of the guys will work it out at the piano and teach it to us part by part."

Kibble, who composed or arranged some of the sextet's best songs ("Get Away, Jordan," "He Never Sleeps," "David and Goliath," and, with McKnight and Warren, he hit single "Spread Love"), confess to a somewhat limited early background. "I grew up listening to classical music, Christian music and easy listening; it was all pretty conservative, without much secular exposure until an uncle turned me on to Gene Puerling of the Hi Los, and Lambert, Hendricks & Ross."

The group's musical range is so broad, it was no surprise to learn of McKnight's use of falsetto. "I sing the top tenor part, but I'm a natural baritone, so a lot of what I'm doing is falsetto," he said. "If it's a slower, mellower tune, I may sing the entire song falsetto; if it's uptempo and higher register, I've expanded my range to where I can do a lot of things in my full voice."

Coming along smack-dab in the middle of an era of over-electrified gimmickry, Take 6 takes pride in its ability to get along, when necessary, without any amplification at all. During a clinic at the Jazz Educators' convention, they dispensed entirely with mikes; in a large auditorium for a regular show that evening, they used six mikes, as has become more often their custom lately, but confessed that they weren't too happy about the results. "It gets a little confusing," McKnight said, "if the system isn't just right."

The degree to which Take 6 has crossed over to the jazz community can be ascribed in large measure to its singular rhythmic impetus. Chea, a classically trained pianist, was a junior in high school who didn't start singing until a year after he had won the San Francisco Music Teachers' Assn. piano competition. He now supplies the group with its foundation, often in the form of a steady pulse akin to that of a walking bass.

"I love this group," he says. "Singing with it is a personal dream for me; it shows that with the Lord's help, if you put your mind to it, there's nothing you can't do."

McKnight carries the thought further: "This is not only entertainment for us—it's also ministry. We want to reach people who wouldn't normally listen to Christian music. When we can come to something like a jazz convention and be appreciated, well, that's what we're all about. We're enjoying every minute of it, and we're delighted that everyone else seems to be too." □

JAZZ REVIEW

2/1/89

Blue Monday at Biltmore Bar

Monday is blues night at the Biltmore's Grand Avenue Bar. This time around the incumbents were singers Barbara Morrison and Maurice Miller.

Morrison, an enthusiastic and personable woman who was once part of the Johnny Otis blues family, led off her set with two songs far removed from the blues. Steve Allen's "This Could Be The Start of Something Big" is a fine opener for a cabaret singer, but it set the wrong mood for Blue Monday.

"A Sunday Kind of Love" was closer to the requisite spirit, but it was not until the lady moved into her Aretha Franklin bag that she commanded, and received, what she clearly wanted—respect, as a messenger of a grand tradition.

The rest of her selections were drawn from the song books of other women: "Since I Fell for You," a long-ago blues/ballad by Ella Johnson, to which she brought the right indigo sensitivity; "Meet Me With Your Black Drawers On," a raunchy leaf out of Jeannie Cheatham's book; and the Dinah Washington hit "What a Difference a Day Made."

The use of something borrowed for something blue can only take an artist just so far. Morrison needs to seek out material with which she can become personally identified; certainly her strong, compelling sound is an asset of which she should take full advantage.

Maurice Miller fronted a trio with Dwayne Smith, a somewhat florid pianist who now and then dug into the blues with the needed conviction; Laurence Bolden, who offered a twangy solo on electric bass; and Dennis Siewell on drums.

Miller moved around the bandstand as if a whole lot were happening. This visual proposition was belied by the aural facts, since his vocals—numbers such as B.B. King's "The Thrill Is Gone"—were somewhat too derivative. His best moments came during the finale with a parody of the indecipherable blues lyrics of Big Joe Turner. On this he was joined by Morrison as the two of them shook, rattled and rolled with true Kansas City abandon.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ TIMES FEB 89

BIG 70 For Joe!

By LEONARD FEATHER

Jillean Williams wanted to make sure her husband's 70th birthday would be one he would never forget. Taking over a banquet room at Bally's Casino in Las Vegas, she brought in the entire Basie band and sent invitations to 100 of Joe's old friends.

They came from England and Germany as well as from all over the U.S. After dinner and a short Basie band set, we heard actor Greg Morris and his wife Dee offering a This-Is-Your-Life type interlude, with Greg narrating and Dee singing in a very touching tribute. Then it was cake cutting time, after which Joe and Jill, his wife of 24 years, took to the dance floor.

George Shearing, in from New York just for the day, sat in with the band and not only showed a total knowledge of the charts but also offered a perfect Basie imitation. Later Greg Morris coaxed Joe to join in, so it was Shearing, Williams and the blues for a few memorable moments. All this happened some time before midnight, when Joe's actual birthday (Dec. 12) began. By the time this memorable affair was over Joe was already talking about plans for celebrating his 75th. ■

Los Angeles Times 2/3

Television Reviews

NBC's 'UNSUB' Crime-Fighter Series Is a Crime

Just when you may have thought that prime-time had exhausted its supply of elite crime-fighting s that solve the seemingly vable, along comes NBC's UB" at 10 tonight on Chan-6 and 39.

ving the former time slot Vice" (now airing at 9), is the epitome of the rmula that refuses to elite unit in this case ustice Department's nce Unit, whose ooded jumpsuits ir personal re- the scenes of crackerjacks inals ("He sports car. pressed

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"white bone demon."

The production from Stephen J. Cannell is slick, and David Soul is crisp and efficient as the unit's leader, Westy Grayson. When the killer's identity is revealed swiftly and prematurely, however, all mystery and suspense vanish, allowing viewers to concentrate solely on the predictable pursuit and inevitable last-minute rescue. This is no elite series.

—HOWARD ROSENBERG

Saxman Freeman Is a Treat, Man

"Chico Freeman Live at Ronnie Scott's," airing on the Bravo cable channel Saturday at 8 p.m. and Feb. 10 at 7 p.m., is much more than its deceptive title implies.

The saxophonist is almost never shown with the London nightclub as a setting. At various points he may be sitting on a tree branch playing soprano sax, or blanketed in clouds of smoke, or walking away from his own image in a double-exposure scene shot in black-and-white.

When Freeman plays a tremolo, two alternating camera angles vibrate wildly in sympathy. When he uses multiphonics, there are multiple images to match. One sequence has him playing bass clarinet, with close-ups of his eye and other odd shots while he voice-overs a story about a dream, and another about his idol Eric Dolphy.

Visual values aside, Freeman covers a broad musical span, from basic blues to funk to modal and avant garde, mostly on tenor saxophone. His personality comes across vividly as he talks about music as politics, later telling an anecdote about a black man at the gates of heaven.

Freeman leaves a quartet worthy of him, with admirable work by Kenny Barron on piano, Freddie Waits on drums and Santti Debriano on bass. Most of the compositions are his own, reflecting the range of his talent and tastes.

It is a rare pleasure to hear so much first-rate jazz presented with imagination, at no cost to the musical values. Directors Stephen Cleary and Robert Lemkin deserve the credit.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Nurs

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Los Angeles Times

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Jazz Reviews

A Stylish Set by Remler at Vine St. Bar

Emily Remler, the New York-born guitarist who opened Wednesday and closes Saturday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill, has wracked up credits as a student in Boston, with an R&B band in New Orleans, at many jazz festivals and on a series of Concord albums, most of them leading a quartet. Her lineup at Vine St. is more modest, consisting simply of Luther Hughes on bass and Tootie Heath on drums. The first show Wednesday consisted mainly of a rundown of her latest record, "East to Wes," dedicated to the late Wes Montgomery.

The opener, Clifford Brown's "Daahoud," was outlined in her gentle, almost muted sound, swinging implacably. Next came the title tune, for which she made only slight use of Montgomery's trademark octave style, while Heath kept up a steady undercurrent of 16th notes with the brushes, and Hughes maintained a solid four-beat pulse.

Whether using the pick or playing finger style, Remler deployed a steady flow of ideas in the beguiling Blossom Dearie song "Sweet Georgie Fame" and the mellow "Blues for Herb." During the latter she played alone for five stunning choruses. Her sound opened up on McCoy Tyner's "Latino Suite," but the understated groove returned on "Softly as in a Morning Sunrise."

Only in the concluding number, "Hot House," did her fingers falter a little due to a pace that would have defied Willie Shoemaker.

Remler at 31 has entered a plectrum pantheon that numbers only a few of her most talented elders: Joe Pass, Jim Hall, Kenny Burrell. Her selection of songs was as intelligent as her choice of sidemen in this felicitous celebration of rhythmic and melodic elegance. All this having been granted, she still deserves a traveling quartet of her own.

—LEONARD FEATHER

HYUNGWON KANG

Emily Remler dishes up sensitive set at Vine St. Bar & Grill.

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JAZZ REVIEW

Parris Brings Songs From Boston

By LEONARD FEATHER

Rebecca Parris, the Boston-based singer, is in town for a while. Heard during a one-night stand Thursday at Nucleus Nuance, she was set for two evenings at Alfonse's, closing tonight and will open Tuesday for a five-day run at the Director's Lounge of the Registry Hotel in Universal City.

A tall, imposing woman, Parris can claim several of the virtues to which many singers aspire: a personal, confident sound, flawless intonation and an often dominant jazz feeling.

Like many vocal artists she tends now and then to lag behind the beat. This can work well if it doesn't get out of hand, but if during "The Man I Love" the trio is already into the "we'll build a little home" passage while the singer hasn't quite finished the "Tuesday will be our good news day" line, it can make for a disconcerting moment.

The less Parris leaned on her jazz proclivity, the more convincing was her impact. Such songs as "Never Let Me Go," "My Romance," "The Island" and Carroll Coates' charming waltz "London by Night" were delivered in a full, warm and rich manner. On the other hand, "Autumn Leaves" at a ridiculously fast clip was strictly a throwaway.

Parris has a slightly too flip personality that detracts from the mood some of her songs try to establish. And her backup group lets her down. John Harrison, a pianist who came with her from Boston, lacked the light touch and swinging jazz beat that could have complemented her. Between this and an occasionally over-loud drummer she had problems; in fact, it was a pleasing contrast to hear her start one song with just Allen Jackson's bass for accompaniment.

Despite these handicaps, Rebecca Parris deserves the attention of anyone looking for fresh and inventive vocal concepts.

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JAZZ TIMES FEB 89

Benny's Daughter Pays Tribute To Her Dad

By LEONARD FEATHER

Two-and-a-half years have gone by since Benny Goodman left us. Despite the profusion of tributes by alumni groups, reissued albums and newly discovered recordings, it took one determined admirer to spearhead a more formal acknowledgment of BG's genius, his contribution, and his personality. That admirer, it turns out, is Rachel Goodman Edelson, one of Benny's five daughters.

Her activities began with an evening she organized in his memory in November 1986, five months after his death. At the Century Club in New York, friends who had known him very well gathered—Morton Gould, Hal Davis, George T. Simon, Herb Caen, and others, including Edelson herself.

"We didn't want any eulogies," she says, "but simply anecdotes told by people who really knew him well." After the event, Edelson conceived the idea of collecting the speeches in a booklet, along with photographs and a caricature of BG by Hirshfeld. As a bonus she included, attached to a bookmark, one of the thousands of reeds found around the Goodman apartment. This admirable booklet, complete with reed, can be obtained for $100 (tax deductible) from the Benny Goodman Foundation, Dept. 9, Sacramento Regional Foundation, 1900 Point West Way, Suite 128, Sacramento, CA 95815.

Rachel Edelson

The next stage in Edelson's campaign was the preparation of a Goodman film tribute. "I want to put together as complete a portrait of my father as I can—to show the many facets of him, musically and personally—I want it to be halfway between doting and critical, showing the positive feeling I have for him but also, from my perspective, what an incredibly difficult person he was to be around and to work with. I want to have as much as possible of him talking about himself, on TV or audio."

Edelson has already found some valuable footage, including a rare silent home-movie showing Benny and some colleagues in the Ben Pollack orchestra, ca. 1930, kibitzing around on a beach.

"I've already met with Mel Powell, who worked with my father off and on for so many years and is eminently qualified to talk about him," says Edelson.

"I've come to realize that there are a large number of Benny Goodman collectors all over the world. I never realized before how many there were—shows you what a naive daughter I was.

"I want to put together as complete a portrait of my father as I can."

"Anyhow, if anyone has material, stills or footage, I'd be interested in hearing from them; they can reach me c/o the Goodman Foundation. I've already put together a 40-minute pilot, which I'm now in the middle of editing. I don't want this to be just a biography or documentary, but rather a collage. After all, we're talking about a 60-year career, so a straight historical rundown is not what I'm aiming at."

Hollywood dropped the ball in 1955 with a flawed "Benny Goodman Story" (marred by anachronisms and cliches). It may well be that Rachel Goodman Edelson, whose motives are pure, may well pick up where Hollywood left off. ■

LA TIMES 2/5/89

JAZZ

Nostalgia Album Has an Identity Crisis

By LEONARD FEATHER

"SOLID GROUND." Loren Schoenberg Orchestra. Music Masters CIJD 6018 F. ★★★

The jazz community, aware of the fragility of some of its traditions and the mortality rate among its pioneers, has taken to the practice of forming repertory orchestras, designed to revive works that can no longer be performed by the artists who created them. Loren Schoenberg is a 29-year-old musical archeologist who worked for Benny Goodman both as tenor saxophonist and archival researcher. Two tunes in this CD were exhumed from the vaults of the clarinet king, whose conservative tastes prevented him from recording them.

Very well; but what of the other contents of this mixed bag? A couple of them, capably played by a band of white New York musicians, are little more than high-class dance music, complete with girl singer. Several are tributes to, but not by, such men as Basie and Monk.

Still another category finds Schoenberg's arrangers and soloists borrowing directly from old records; but why study his recording of the Billy Strayhorn compositions "Midriff" and "After All" when the original Duke Ellington versions are still available? Why listen to Bobby Pring on trombone and Jack Stuckey on alto sax when we can still hear Lawrence Brown and Johnny Hodges?

Instead of putting his own stamp on these pieces, Schoenberg assumes almost as many guises as there are tracks. When the writer is Benny Carter (as in "You Are") or Eddie Sauter (in a replay of the Artie Shaw recording of "Maid With the Flaccid Air"), something of value emerges. But there is a serious identity problem here. This is not a case of rip-off but rather of mixed intentions.

"SMOOTH GROOVE." Ray Crawford. Candid CCD 79028. ★★★★

Never heard before (it was recorded in 1961 for a company that promptly went out of business), this set by a tough, no-nonsense guitarist finds him sharing space compatibly with Johnny Coles, trumpet; Cecil Payne, baritone sax; Junior Mance, piano; Ben Tucker, bass, and Frank Dunlop, drums. The five unpretentious originals are all credited to Crawford, but who knows? "Impossible," listed here as a Crawford opus, actually is a well-known Steve Allen composition.

"ART TATUM: THE V DISCS." Black Lion BLCD 760114. ★★★★★

How these ever reached the public is a mystery, since the masters of V-Discs (made for use only by the armed forces in World War II) were supposedly scrapped so that they could not be put to commercial use. In fact, Tatum is heard a few times greeting the GIs in this legendary set. Though some of the tunes are available in many other versions, at least three are not to be found elsewhere and may be the only recorded treatments: "I'm Beginning to See the Light," "Song of the Vagabonds," "Nine-Twenty Special."

Loren Schoenberg

Though he has rhythm backing on three tunes (guitarist Tiny Grimes and bassist Slam Stewart are on "Cocktails for Two" and "Liza"), the last 11 cuts are piano solos. At 3:57 the "Lover" here is the longest and most precisely perfect of the several released over the decades.

No matter how slight the difference between one "Poor Butterfly" or "Body and Soul" and another, any extra scintilla of evidence helps broaden our familiarity with the greatest improvising jazzmen who ever lived.

"TRIP TO MOSCOW." Valery Ponomarev. Reservoir RSR CD 107 (276 Pearl St., Kingston, N.Y. 12401). ★★★

The Moscow-born trumpeter, who defected to the West in the mid-1970s, joined Art Blakey soon after and remained with him for four years. Despite the titles of his compositions ("Gorky Park," "Getting to Bolshoi"), this is a typical New York group, with Ralph Moore on tenor, Larry Willis on piano, and two others, conjuring up visions of the old Blue Note and Prestige small bands. Though not quite a reincarnation of Clifford Brown (his early idol), Ponomarev speaks without a trace of an accent the universal language of hard bop.

"DIAL ✓ OATTS." Garry Dial, Dick Oatts. Digital Music Products CD 465 (Park Square Station, Box 15835, Stamford, CT. 06901). ★★★1/2

Dial (piano) and Oatts (saxes, flute) are both normally members of Red Rodney's group; however, with help here and there from a large string ensemble, they display wider-ranging personalities here, in 14 of their own compositions. The pieces move from fast bop and "outside" blowing to a haunting ballad, "Anita," and a jazz waltz, "No Option." Mel Lewis, billed as making a guest appearance," actually does only a little overdubbing on one cut, "Major." This ambitious venture should provide an individual launching pad for both leaders.

"NOBODY ELSE BUT ME." Jackie Paris. Audiophile APCD 245. ★★★

A be-bop survivor (he toured with Bird, recorded with Mingus), Paris was one of the few uncompromising male jazz singers around West 52nd Street. Now 62, he has lost some of his early assurance.

"Indiana" is hasty and uncertain, with expendable scatting, but on the ballads such as Stephen Sondheim's "Not While I'm Around," and the Dietz-Schwartz "Haunted Heart," he displays the earnest, impassioned conviction that endeared him to many musicians. The supportive rhythm backing is led by pianist Jim McNeely.

"EXCURSION IN BLUE." John Handy. Quartet Q1005 CD (467 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto 94301). ★★★1/2

Long absent from records, the Bay City alto and tenor saxophonist taped this set a few months ago with an acoustic rhythm section. If it's a far cry from his experimental days, it also offers compelling evidence that this unpretentious setting is comfortable for him. He is best on the ballads ("My One and Only Love," "How Deep Is the Ocean"), but plays earth-father gut-bucket blues on "Soulsession." Worst cut: "Nuke City Blues," with a three-note figure repeated 96 times as a purported composition.

"SASHA BOSSA." Smith Dobson. Quartet Q 1004 CD. ★★★

Popular in San Francisco, Dobson is an unexceptionably pleasant pianist, with a sometimes tentative, piano-player-wants-to-sing sound in his voice, though here and there he really gets going ("Old Devil Moon"). His wife, Gail, shares vocal duties on two cuts. Mild stuff, enlivened by the presence of Bobby Hutcherson on vibraphone.

"I'LL BE SEEING YOU." Ett Jones. Muse ME 5251. ★★★★

Five of the eight son[gs] ("Laughing at Life," "Jim," "Cr[y] He Calls Me," "Laughing at [L]ife" and "I'll Be Seeing You") [were] recorded by Billie Holiday. [There's a] direct line from Holiday to Jo[nes], evident in her timbre, an ed[ge] in the sound that brings an un[a]dorned honesty along with jazz [in]similitude to every track. T[he] title tune undergoes a startlin[gly] yet effective up-tempo conversion. Houston Person's tenor sax, Stan Hope's piano and George [Bev]ins' vibes head up a fine accompaniment, but did that bongo player have to be so prominent? □

JAZZ TIMES
FEB. 1989

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers: one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this series.

By LEONARD FEATHER

#1: CONTE CANDOLI

RT BLAKEY. ***In Walked Bud*** **(Con-**
elonious Monk, composer. Wynton
trumpet; Branford Marsalis, alto;
e, tenor; Rec. 1982.

I like the tune. I've probably heard
it's something like *Blue Skies* with a
bridge. The alto player was fair.
— I can see Clifford Brown influ-
nds like early Freddie Hubbard —
gave him away; he loves to do that.
l good.

n section was not really steady, not
ther. Tenor player was just fair. But
four stars, mainly for the trumpet.
Wynton? I'm overwhelmed — I
ve it! He plays so different now —
the Miles type thing. Branford on
y! I've never heard him much. You
dn't like Art too much on that.
ally surprised about the trumpet. He
at job. You know, I really think
like him better the way he was
k then — a little more life. But he's
azing player.

OBBY BRADFORD. ***Ashes*** **(Soul**
adford, cornet, composer; James
also; Roberto Miranda, bass; Mark
ass; Sherman Ferguson, drums.

Sort of samba-calypso with an *IGot*
idge... the drummer was all right,
dwerful. The bass work I liked very
me great walking there. The alto I
much although I can't name him.
peter. I don't know and I'm not too
by what he played on this... It's a
gh tune, a good thing to include in
when you want to show how many
ypes of things you can play jazz on.
two, because I really liked the alto

Bobby Bradford? I've heard of him.
players?"...As much as I've played
man, I didn't recognize him on this.
playing with us in Supersax lately
a great job; the best drummer we've
. These are all local people? Really!
said, it's a nice change of pace.

ACY ROWLES. ***Tell It Like It Is.***
). Rowles, trumpet; Jimmy Rowles,
erman Riley, tenor; Chuck Berghofer,
nald Bailey drums; Wayne Shorter,

The tune is great: I love the way it
a minor blues into regular blues —
ve the blend of muted trumpet and
It's probably Stacy and Herman.
like Rowles on piano, too, and Monty
on bass. Maybe Jeff Hamilton on

ked the solos; Stacy sounded great, as
ways does; she's one of my favorite
s, male or female. I remember when
brought her into Shelly's Manne Hole
he was about 12 or 13 and told me he
ng to get her a flugelhorn. I've heard
gress all through the years. Four stars
nd.

So it wasn't Monty on bass? Well,
lonty left Shelly's Manne Hole and
placed him, they sounded very much

ot surprised it was a Wayne Shorter
fact, we had a little band together
years ago, Jimmy and I, and a lot of
Jimmy brought in were by Wayne.

RRISON/BLANCHARD. ***The Cen-***
(CBS). Terence Blanchard, trumpet,
Donald Harrison soprano sax; Cy-
estnut, piano; Reginald Veal, bass; Carl
, drums.

Before: Sounded like Wynton. I must say I like the Wynton with Art Blakey a lot better; there was more feeling in that. The soprano and the trumpet were real clean, and the balance on the recording was excellent. The rhythmic changes I really didn't care for. It was a nice line when they finally got to it, but it didn't move me that much. Three stars for a good performance.

After: Terence — oh, yes, sure! They're all great instrumentalists; they're probably a little younger than Wynton and came up a bit later. They have tremendous technique but lack a

Conte Candoli

little bit in feeling. Not that I feel like I'm old fashioned, but it seems to me that any player, when they were young, they maintained it throughout their whole career. I sure liked the technique, though, and I wonder how they would do with some down home things.

5. RUBY BRAFF. ***I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You*** **(Finesse).** Braff, cornet; Dick Hyman, piano, arranger. Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Michael Moore, bass; Mel Lewis, drums.

Before: That's a tune I've always liked to play. Sounded like Ruby. If not, it's someone who plays a lot like him. I love four-man rhythm sections with the guitar playing rhythm. Could it have been Dave McKenna on piano?

It's amazing how they made the format: trumpet will play 16 bars and the bridge, then somebody else will have the last eight. Ruby's good at that; I remember a gig I did once with Carl Fontana and Joe Venuti and Ruby and I, maybe 20 years ago, and we had no idea what we were going to do, but Ruby had it set up like an organized situation.

Five is the maximum? I'll give this five for Ruby.

After: Yeah, Dick Hyman — I'm not surprised. He's one of my favorite players. Didn't he play on some of the Bird things with strings? [L.F.No.] What a great, great musician — a tremendous pianist. I had a chance to play with him at one of the Dick Gibson parties, and I was just delighted to listen and to be in the same group with him. Musicians all know about him, but not too many other people.

6. ART BLAKEY. ***Ronnie's a Dynamite Lady*** **(Roulette).** Walter Davis, piano, composer; Valeri Ponomarev, trumpet; Bobby Watson, alto; Dave Schnitter, tenor, 1977.

Before: I'm afraid I can't say very many good things about that. I was not impressed by the alto, trumpet or tenor solos. It sounded like a fender bass, unless it was just recorded that way. [L.F. As far as I know it wasn't a fender.] I did like the rather interesting construction of the tune, but I don't think it would be very much fun to play. Two stars.

After: Yes, I know that trumpet player from Moscow; I've heard him play better. I'm surprised that Blakey would play this type of thing. It seems sort of out of character compared to what he normally plays. He's played some very interesting compositions, too.

7. SUN RA. ***Take The A Train*** **(Hat Hut).** Michael Ray, trumpet.

Before: (laughs): Well, I did recognize the melody! After the piano player did his thing and the band went into ¾ time, it reminded me that Bill Holman did an arrangement of this tune in ¾ for us on the Tonight Show.

It goes without saying that I don't know who these people are. (*Laughs*) I wonder what Duke would think! This is about the most different version I ever expect to hear. Trumpet has some chops, but doesn't know quite what to do with them. Maybe I should give it one star just for the attempt to do something different.

The piano — I don't know what he was trying to do. The sustaining pedal was on throughout the whole thing. The band as a whole wasn't too bad, but I still can't rate it higher than one star.

After: I didn't know it was Sun Ra. I haven't heard him; I've heard of him. I remember at the *Jazztimes* Convention they had this display of pictures of various people, and they had this picture of Sun Ra. And I said to someone, who is he? I never heard of him. But I was told, well, he's been around; apparently he's in one of your books.

Michael Ray? I don't know him either.

If that's all Sun Ra has to say — now Ornette Coleman, when he came out, there was a lot of controversy, but he turned out to do some good things. But this — I don't understand why they should take a good tune like *Take the A Train* and really destroy it.

8. TOM HARRELL. ***The Boulevard*** **(Blackhawk).** Harrell, trumpet composer; Ricky Ford, tenor; Albert Dailey, piano; Bruce Forman, guitar; Billy Hart, drums; Eddie Gomez, bass.

Before: Wow!... I like this very much. The guitar player is excellent. Trumpet player really good — pretty sound and nice conti ity. Great solos, and I liked the tune; there many ways you can play on this, an enjoyed what all of them did. I can't name of the artists, but I have to give it five stars.

After: You know something, I was goin say Tom Harrell. I was going to say, w that trumpeter with Phil Woods? He's on my favorites.

I remember Albert Dailey — he's the who worked with Stan Getz. He died a years ago.

Sure, I've heard Tom Harrell in person. has a problem relating with people, but w he's playing it ceases, he has no problem; Phil is very good with him, he shields him.

9. CLIFFORD BROWN/MAX ROA ***Gertrude's Bounce*** **(EmArcy).** Richie Pow piano, composer. Sonny Rollins, tenor. 195

Before: I got a sort of Yuletide feeling f part of that tune. The trumpet player soun like Clifford, but I don't know how old recording is. If it is Clifford, maybe it could Hank Mobley on tenor. But I don't th that's Max on drums.

I'm really confused as to the personnel, I liked the composition very much, and soloists, especially the trumpet player have to give it five stars for the trumpet.

After: It really was Clifford? And it Max, and Sonny? God, no. I couldn't h guessed it was Sonny. Funny thing, thoug was going to say, could it be Bud Powell piano? Because there was one little vamp th where he sounded exactly like Bud, but rest of it wasn't quite Bud.

I'll never forget, when Clifford died, I working at the Lighthouse and I got a from Max, and he wanted me to join band. But I had just joined Howard Rum after trying for a long time to get with group, and I felt I couldn't leave. I've alw been very thankful that Max thought of and I'm sorry I never did it. I guess I reluctant to go on the road.

The influence that Clifford laid down phenomenal. I'm sure glad I did get to kn him. We were about the same age [L.F. Bro was three years younger] and he was the nic guy in the world, no vices, and what incredible talent!

Jazz Reviews

Riley Serves Up a Taste of New Orleans in Hollywood

Mardi Gras is upon us, and the celebrations began in style, both musical and gustatory, when "Windows On Hollywood," the Sunday jazz brunch at the Holiday Inn on Highland, turned over its balloon-festooned bandstand to a sextet led by New Orleans' own Herman Riley.

Given a special spread that took in everything from crab cakes and crawfish to red beans and rice, it was no surprise to find Riley matching the mood by picking up his clarinet for a rousing workout on "Struttin' With Some Barbecue."

The Southern flavor was further accentuated by the presence of two other New Orleans products, veteran drummer Earl Palmer and guitarist Terry Evans. Non-Southerners Al Aarons on trumpet and fluegelhorn, Gildo Mahones on piano and bassist Louie Spears came equipped with the necessary knowledge of a wide-ranging repertoire.

Though Riley is best known as a bop-inclined tenor saxophonist, on this occasion he showed enough adaptability to change the group's color scheme from song to song. The New Orleans visit was followed by a touch of Rio as he switched to flute for Jobim's "Wave." A trip to the Caribbean found him in vigorous form on tenor in "St. Thomas," and echoes of 52nd Street informed the old monk tune "In Walked Bud."

Since no jam session today seems complete without a few choruses are "Softly as in a Morning Sunrise," the sextet took this in stride too, with Riley on yet a fifth instrument, the soprano sax—not his longest or strongest suit, but handled well enough to leave the right impression: Here is a musician capable of far more diversity, both in stylistic and instrumental media, than he normally has a chance to display.

Evans' hard-driving guitar and Aarons' muted trumpet and fluegelhorn stood out in this versatile ad hoc unit. Without arrangements or rehearsal, this festive rooftop session on a Sunday afternoon brought the Fat Tuesday spirit winningly to life.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Hamilton Sticks With Standards

Scott Hamilton, whose three day run at Alfonse's ends tonight, has become a symbol of the jazz world's youthful traditionalists.

Despite exposure to (and respect for) all the vicissitudes of the tenor saxophone during the post-swing era, Hamilton continues to convey through his horn the warmly impassioned values one associates with the trend-setters of the 1930s and '40s.

He growls not, neither does he honk or squeal. All one expects from him is the natural sound of this inherently beautiful instrument, brought to bear on some of the great standard songs. Very rarely does he play a tune that was composed after he was born. That was his modus operandi when he began his professional career in Providence, R.I.; today, at 34, now an international star, he remains happily unchanged in his ways.

Whenever possible Hamilton joins with a group of his old Rhode Island associates. On this occasion, for the usual economic reasons, he is working with a local rhythm section. This seems much less restrictive when you consider that he is backed at Alfonse's by the Gerald Wiggins Trio, with Bob Maize on bass and Jake Hanna on drums.

Wiggins is the all-purpose pianist, as rhapsodically compelling on a ballad like "Skylark" as he is rhythmically engaging in an up-tempo blues. As for Maize, a chorus by this limber performer is much more than a mere interlude between piano solo and saxophone finale; it's an event, an important entity in itself.

Hamilton chooses mutually compatible material: "I Hear a Rhapsody," "Candy," "But Beautiful." Without sounding derivative, he brings colorfully to life the verities established decades ago by giants like Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster. Once described as a good wind who was blowing us no ill, he continues nobly to live up to that characterization.

—LEONARD FEATHER

kenburgh came to her subject armed with affection and understanding. The story takes us from sharecropper families (Koko Taylor talking about her origins) to the minstrel shows and river boats, to Ma Rainey introducing the blues on stage in 1902, and eventually via the vaudeville circuit northward to Harlem and recordings (Mamie Smith's pioneering "Crazy Blues" in 1920) and the movies (the one and only Bessie Smith film a decade later).

The archival footage showing blacks dancing and strutting around the turn of the century is skillfully mixed with live reminiscences by the historian Chris Albertson, the pianist Sammy Price (looking back at Jim Crow in the 1920s) and the guitarist/archivist Danny Barker with his wife, the singer Blue Lu Barker. Alberta Hunter sings "My Handy Man;" not long before her death at 89 in 1984.

Despised by older blacks as "The Devil's Music," the blues was the chosen idiom of an Afro-American generation that flourished until the Depression, when record sales stopped, pop songs took over, and the talkies edged out vaudeville.

Some singers went back to the church; others, like Mamie Smith, died penniless. A handful, like Ethel Waters, became big-time stars.

In a poignant finale, Ida Woodson, in Florida a year or so ago, sings an a cappella blues verse.

Sounds, camera work and production in general are all first rate in this priceless piece of genuine Americana.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Lineup Set for Playboy Jazz Festival

An eclectic lineup of talent will be presented at the 11th-annual Playboy Jazz Festival, to be held June 17-18 at the Hollywood Bowl.

The bash will introduce a new group led by Larry Carlton, it was announced Wednesday at a press conference at the Playboy Mansion. The guitarist is now almost fully recovered from injuries suffered in a shooting outside his home last year. Also on hand will be pianist Dave Brubeck, who underwent heart surgery last week, but is expected to be well enough to take part.

Along with Carlton, the Saturday show will include Ruben Blades y Son Del Solar; Terry Gibbs leading a big band; Wynton Marsalis; Grover Washington Jr.; Stanley Clarke and George Duke; singer Dianne Reeves; Michel Camilo, the fast-rising pianist from Santo Domingo; Buckwheat Zydeco playing Creole dance music; and the winning high school or college' big band from Western Jazz Search.

Set for the Sunday program are Brubeck; George Benson with the McCoy Tyner Trio; Spyro Gyra; Diane Schuur; the vocal group Take 6; tenor saxophonist Illinois Jacquet leading his New York-based big band; Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers; Michael Brecker's group; and the winner of the Hennessy Cognac Jazz contest.

There will be a series of free events presented as forerunners to the festival, including school workshops, a senior citizens' concert, and a three-hour cruise June 11, with the Capp-Pierce Juggernaut Band and Brandon Fields.

Tickets for the festival are available by mail; call (213) 450-9040 during normal business hours for a mailer. Tickets go on sale at Ticketmaster locations April 17.

—LEONARD FEATHER

An Affectionate Look at the Blues Idiom

Although the blues has been documented endlessly in print, it has seldom been dealt with adequately on the television screen. "Wild Women Don't Have the Blues," airing tonight at 10 on Channel 28, is the exception: a superb hourlong examination not only of the idiom itself, but also of its social origins, evolution and impact on black America.

Producer Carol Doyle Van Val-

Drummer Jacob Armen, 7, Going to Beat the Band

By LEONARD FEATHER

Everybody wants Jacob Armen, the Buddy Rich of the 1980s.

The Berklee College of Music in Boston has offered him a scholarship. His parents have been turning down television offers right and left (with an occasional exception such as "The Tonight Show," on which he will be a guest tonight of the avocational drummer Johnny Carson).

Armen has played his drums to standing ovations at the Monterey Jazz Festival and the National Assn. of Jazz Educators Convention in San Diego. However, during an interview with Jacob and his family at their home in Glendale, Genny Armen said of her son: "We want him to succeed, but everything will happen in time. He can wait a while."

He can afford to wait, for Jacob Armen will not turn 8 until Feb. 22. He is an honor student in the third grade at a private school near his home.

The age of maturity in jazz seems to be sliding slowly backward.

Jacob's father, Albert Armen, explained the boy's early start: "I turned on a jazz tape and put it next to his crib. By the time he was 8 months old he was keeping perfect time with his hands."

Said Genny: "I told Albert, 'Don't do that! You will ruin him!' But he kept on doing it."

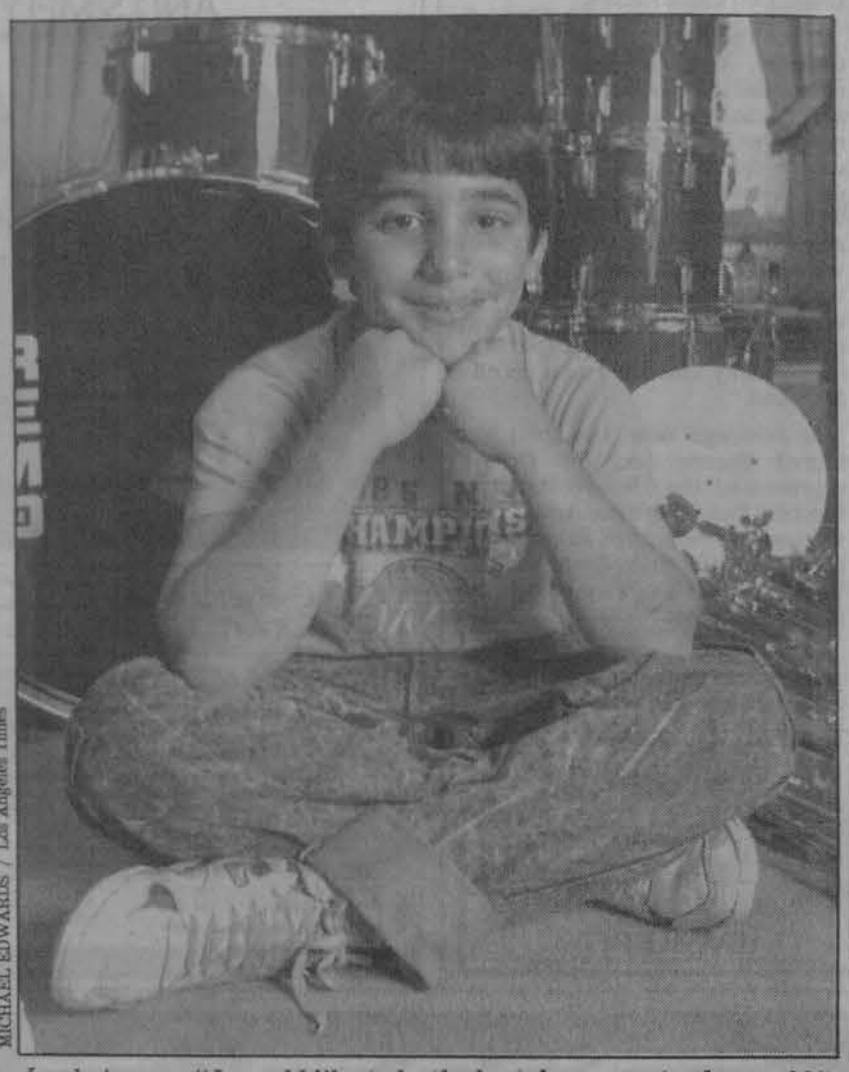
At 18 months Jacob Armen took his seat at a drum set, his father sat at the piano and they played a duet. "Four months later," Albert said, "he played 'Hava Nagila' with my orchestra at a church in Montebello. That was his first public appearance."

Perhaps because of his Armenian ancestry (his parents, born in Iran, came to the United States 27 years ago), the prodigy showed a seemingly innate feeling for picking up the odd musical time signatures common to that part of the world. "I wrote a piece in 9/4 time, which is tricky for most grown-ups," Albert Armen said, "and Jacob was breaking it up into the most complicated patterns of 5/4, 7/4, 3/4—all instinctively."

Trumpeter Bill Berry, with whose orchestra the youngster played at Monterey last September, said: "His time sense is incredible. He proves that there has to be more to it than talent or study—it may be something genetic."

Jacob's musical tastes were formed early, with help from his father. He ignores rock, concentrates on jazz and listens to it avidly on the radio.

Joel Leach, director of the jazz orchestra at Cal State Northridge, said: "Jacob's father called me up at the university and told me his son had heard my orchestra on the radio and wanted to sit in with us. I had no idea how old he was, but when his father said 6, naturally I was intrigued. He invited me down to his restaurant, and Jacob just amazed me. Nothing throws him—he can play cross-rhythms that the most advanced professionals have trouble with."



MICHAEL EDWARDS / Los Angeles Times

Jacob Armen: "I would like to be the best drummer in the world."

Jacob recalled that Leach gave him a copy of the Cal State Orchestra's record of "Giant Steps," the John Coltrane composition. Jacob played it soon after with a college band, and will be playing it tonight on the Carson show.

"Professor Leach told Louie Bellson about me," Jacob said, "and then brought him to my father's restaurant. I played for him for an hour and a half, then we played together. Louie Bellson is my friend."

Besides Bellson, who are his favorites? "A lot of people. Steve Gadd. Gene Krupa—I've heard his records—and Buddy Rich. And I like Dave Weckl—he's with Chick Corea."

For almost two years Jacob has been sitting in regularly on weekends at his father's Magic Lamp Restaurant in Pasadena.

He has an 18-year-old sister, an honor student at UC Riverside, and a gifted brother, 15, who is captain of a high school basketball team. They both play drums, but do not have present plans to take up music professionally.

As for Jacob, he does have an ambition.

"I would like," he says, "to be the best drummer in the world."

It's going to be hard to find anyone who will bet against it.

Grover Hits His Groove

By LEONARD FEATHER

These are unusual times for Grover Washington Jr. His most recent album, "Then and Now" (Columbia CCK 44256), stands at No. 8 on the Billboard charts after a 25-week run that has seen it reach No. 2. (It was No. 1 for six weeks in R&R Magazine's airplay listings.)

What is uncommon about this is that Washington, for whom a place on the Billboard pop charts has been the customary situation, is now on the jazz chart—not the so-called contemporary jazz list, but the regular jazz roster that places him alongside Charlie Parker and Diane Schuur.

The sales of "Then and Now" may not be spectacular, but the contents have been pleasing both to Washington and to those whose interests are in straight-ahead jazz. Along with loose, spontaneous solos by the leader and strong support by his regular sidemen, there are guest appearances, both as players and composers, by Herbie Hancock, Tommy Flanagan and Ron Carter.

A little-known detail is the involvement of Igor Butman, a Soviet saxophonist and longtime fan of Washington's, with whom he jammed during his idol's tour of the U.S.S.R.

As these details make clear, this is beyond doubt a record of unusual interest, which even the stubbornest of jazz purists can appreciate.

Over the years, despite (or perhaps because of) the great commercial success that earned him gold and platinum records through carefully planned sessions aimed at the contemporary/fusion market, Washington has been the victim of negative reviews by critics who tend to be suspicious of anyone whose sales have led to extraordinary financial security.

Some writers have ignored him; others have accused him of bastardizing his music, a charge he finds not only hurtful but also quite untrue.

So it was when Grover Washington Jr. read a review under this byline some years ago, predicting inaccurately and intemperately that the saxophonist would not even be a footnote in American music. Reached last week at his home outside Philadelphia, he engaged in an enlightening conversation about his values, past and present.

"I haven't ever operated under false pretenses," he said. "I knew all along that I wanted to play different kinds of music."

On being told that "Then and Now" met with at least one critic's approval, he said: "Well, thank you. It's nice to know that you like one album out of the 20."

The fact is that Washington had been trying for about 10 years to make a record along the lines of "Then and Now." As he explained, "The record companies I was with just didn't think they were ready to market a product of this kind; but when I signed with CBS a couple of years ago, I had it written into my contract that I could do this."

He may be expected to adhere to this policy when he appears June 17 in the annual Playboy Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl. At

DAVID WELLS

Grover Washington: "I knew all along I wanted to play different kinds of music."

a previous Bowl concert, he shared billing with Stan Getz and recalls that "Stan and I had a great time."

Assuming that equal results were possible for his contemporary projects and albums such as "Then and Now," would he divide his time equally between the two?

"You mean, between a 'Strawberry Moon' type album and 'Then and Now'? Well, first of all, there was nothing equal about these records. The budget for 'Then and Now' was a great deal smaller, and we did it all live in a relatively short space of time. In fact, all the tunes released are first or second takes; the only reason we didn't use the first takes was that they ran a little too long. There was no overdubbing at all, and the enjoyment, the good feeling and the spontaneity really came through the grooves."

This does not necessarily invalidate the more complicated procedure in producing a "Winelight" or a "Strawberry Moon." Such records have to be assembled layer-cake style; as Washington pointed out, there may be as many as seven musicians in the rhythm section alone, whose diverse roles must be worked out separately and with great care.

"You can be in the studio three whole days just trying to get one track completed in such a way that nothing will clash," Washington said.

Contemporary credits aside, Washington's background offers a reminder of his wealth of experiences, ranging from R&B groups to Army bands and organ trios. In 1971 came the turning point. He was booked for a record date with the tenor saxophonist Hank Crawford, but when Crawford failed to show, Washington was assigned by producer Creed Taylor to take over for what became his first session as a leader. The record, "Inner City Blues," was a blockbuster, leading to the formation of his own traveling band and a long series of hits, among which "Mr. Magic" was the first to reach the top spot on several charts.

He does not intend to remain identified with any single image. "My next album will be a contemporary one that you probably won't listen to, but you never can tell what the one after that may be. I want to do some big-band things, symphonic things, a saxophone quartet date; and I want to bring back the organ trio, a format that has been grossly neglected in recent years.

"My objective is to put each project together like a collection of short stories, hoping that the tales I tell will be something anyone can enjoy. In fact, I just want to play the best music I can in any area. It's as simple as that." □

■ Compiled by Zan Stewart. Send information ... versity, Malibu (213) 456-4522, 7:30 p.m.) ... 648-7731, 8 p.m.) ... Stars with Stacy Rowles.

Lacks a Message

Scheduled as it is on KCET Channel 28 at 11 tonight right after a rerun of the magnificent two-hour documentary "A Duke Named Ellington," the hourlong program entitled "Art Blakey: The Jazz Messenger" will come as an anti-climax.

The fault is not Blakey's, but that of the film makers. Not a single piece of music runs its course without interruption in this farrago of voice-overs and on-camera colloquy. Many of the speakers are unidentified; some are no doubt well-known Blakey alumni, while others, presumably fans, have Cockney accents (the film was made mainly in Britain).

Anyone who watches the show hoping to hear the veteran drummer play a concert with his band will find, instead, a mishmash of aborted performances, rehearsals and less-than-enlightening commentary, the best of which is supplied by Dizzy Gillespie. There are a few admirable passages from some of Blakey's early hits, played by trumpeter Terence Blanchard and other recent members, but these two are cut short.

It is fortunate that admirers of the Messengers can hear Blakey and his current septet in person at Catalina's in Hollywood, where they will be on hand through Sunday, without voice-overs. Here is an outstanding example of live music beating out the ersatz taped product. Meanwhile, the definitive documentary on this jazz giant has yet to be produced.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz Reviews

Multitalented Hale Triumphs at Westwood Marquis

Corky Hale has enjoyed so many careers—as harpist, pianist, vocalist, former dress shop owner, and most recently TV producer—that the public has never had a clear image of her. More's the pity, since her level of artistry is too high to be overlooked. This was evident Tuesday when she opened a three-week run at the Westwood Marquis Hotel (closing March 4).

Perhaps because Hale's debut marked the launching of a new entertainment policy in the room, there were opening-night problems with sound and lighting; moreover, the audience at times was so noisy that for Hale it was a triumph of mind over mutter.

The harp being arguably the most difficult instrument in all of music, Hale deserves double credit, not simply for her flawless technique but for an exquisite harmonic sense. This was evident in the several Jerome Kern songs with which she opened: "Yesterdays" and "Long Ago and Far Away," both on harp, and "I'm Old Fashioned," which she sang at the piano. Later came her Valentine's Day version of the Rodgers & Hart "My Funny Valentine," which works sublimely as a harp solo.

Herb Mickman, her bassist, also served a dual purpose, switching to piano to accompany Hale's singing on "Who Cares?" and "Nobody Else But Me." Inexplicably, given the chance to do these numbers as stand-up vocals, she remained seated. She has a pleasing, musician-doubling-as-singer sound, most effectively used when the melody was one she enjoyed tackling, such as "So Many Stars."

Esse[illegible] instru[illegible] sense [illegible] to the [illegible] ful; on

Los Angeles Times 2/24

Television Reviews

Marsalis Documentary Gets in the Right Groove

Eight years ago, Wynton Marsalis was the teen-age *Wunderkind* who sprang to prominence with Art Blakey's Jazz Messages. Today, at 27, he is a spokesman for the music who has long since been absorbed into the mainstream of the jazz community as performer and lecturer.

In "Wynton Marsalis—Blues & Swing," an hourlong documentary airing at 9 tonight on "Great Performances" (Channels 28, 15 and 24), produced and directed by Stanley Dorfman, Marsalis is clearly in his element, holding forth for classes at Harvard and at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, and performing with his group at the Westwood Playhouse.

Marsalis describes to his young audiences, in eloquent and sometimes humorous terms, the characteristics and virtues of jazz as an art form, and the need to respect not only its present masters but also its past creative geniuses.

There is no excess of voice-overs; the performances and talk sessions are kept largely separate. On such tunes as "Do You Know What It means to Miss New Orleans?" and "Crepuscule with Nellie," Marsalis' lyrical trumpet is in top form; on the fast pieces, such as "Cherokee" and "Caravan," his emotional intensity does not quite keep pace with his awesome technique. One number, his own composition "J. Mood," suffers from tiresome repetitions of notes and phrases.

He is well accompanied by the remarkable pianist Marcus Roberts, saxophonist Todd Williams, bassist Robert Hurst and drummer Jeff Watts.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW 2/18

Smith Pulls All the Stops Out

By LEONARD FEATHER

Jimmy Smith, the head honcho of the Hammond, the old man river of the organ, has been blowing audiences away since he first hit New York with his trio in 1956. On a rare visit to Los Angeles (he now lives in Nashville), he opened Thursday at the Loa, where he will close on Sunday.

Now as then, he is a thunderclap of energy. What he does now he was doing before rock; he was avant-fusion, avant-synthesizers, avant-Coltrane. Nothing has changed except that he's doing it better than ever, with massive clouds of sound that threaten to loosen the Loa's ceiling.

What matters, though, is not the volume per se; it is his flow of ideas. He conjures up every tone color in the sonic rainbow, seemingly playing more notes in a chord than there are in the scale. Sure, that is impossible, but don't tell Jimmy Smith.

His left foot vigorously working the chromatic pedals, he leaves both hands free to create his harmonic miracles. Some organists cheat by using their left hands for the bass lines; others hire bass players, but Smith has the Hammond B-3 totally under his manual and pedal command. This seems to be an old model, however, and subject to occasional distortion.

Wandering unpredictably from blues to "Mood Indigo" or "Yesterdays" and back to another blues, Smith kept his men constantly on the alert, trying to figure out what he would do next. Guitarist Terry Evans was never fazed, soloing fluently, and even singing agreeably on "Georgia."

Herman Riley, who played so brilliantly on a recent date with his own band, was off-form with his soprano sax, too busy (endless cadenzas) and suffering from intonation problems. When Smith kiddingly began putting money on the organ, it was not clear whether he was trying to persuade him to continue or stop. But later, on tenor sax and flute, Riley redeemed himself.

Frank Wilson completed the group on drums, taking the mandatory solo on the last tune; but Smith was back at the controls for a grandioso finale, reminding us that he is one of the great survivors, destined to outlive every fad and trend, up to and beyond the end of this turbulent musical century.

Terri Lyne Carrington Beats Her Own Drums

By LEONARD FEATHER

Everything seems to be coming together for Terri Lyne Carrington.

She has played with the giants of the jazz and contemporary music worlds. Some of them—Wayne Shorter, Grover Washington, Patrice Rushen, John Scofield, Gerald Albright—are guests on her debut album for Verve/Forecast Records, "Real Life Story," due out this week. She has a steady job five nights a week in the Hollywood-based band on Arsenio Hall's TV talk show.

For the 23-year-old drummer-singer-composer it's a rewarding list of credits in a career that began before she reached her teens.

Soft of voice, cool of manner, Terri Lyne (rhymes with *win*) talked the other day about the curious accident that led her to the drums.

"I started on saxophone," she said, "playing my father's horn, but then my teeth fell out, so I switched to drums. I was 7."

The drums, inherited from a grandfather, were in the Carrington home in Medford, Mass., the Boston suburb where she was born Aug. 4, 1965. "My father could play drums too, and he was my first teacher. Then I had private lessons with Keith Copland and Alan Dawson, who were both also teachers at the Berklee College of Music."

Sitting in with visiting notables became a life style: she shook a tambourine with Rahsaan Roland Kirk, sat in on drums with Dizzy Gillespie and Clark Terry.

"Clark was a great help. When I was 10 he took me to the Wichita Jazz Festival as his special guest. When I was 12, Buddy Rich heard me and got me on the 'To Tell the Truth' show. All through high school, I was playing gigs on the side with people like Kenny Barron, Frank Foster, George Coleman."

Graduating from high school a year early, she promptly enrolled at Berklee College of Music, expanding her horizons with the study of composing and arranging.

Restless and eager to take on bigger challenges than she could find in Boston, Carrington left Berklee after 18 months, headed for New York and found a ready market for her services. She worked off and on with Terry for a year, playing mainstream jazz; but she had arrived equipped for all contingencies.

"Straight-ahead music is a strong foundation for whatever you want to do, but I had been listening to a lot of contemporary stuff too, and wound up playing it. Wayne Shorter is contemporary—I was with him for a year or so, including three European tours—and so is David Sanborn; I worked with him all last summer."

How does a teen-age wonder develop so much maturity and versatility? Carrington went through a series of listening stages: "I liked Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, Roy Haynes, Art Blakey, but I never tried to play like any of them.

"One of my big influences was [drummer-pianist-composer] Jack de Johnette, who's a good friend of the family. He was never actually my teacher, but I used to go to his house a lot to just sit around and talk about music; I learned a lot from him. Today I'm listening to the contemporary drummers who are playing today's music."

Today's music is clearly what Carrington had in mind when she recorded her album, co-produced with Robert Irving III, well known for his Miles Davis associations. "Real Life Story" introduces her in three roles: as drummer, composer or co-composer of all but two of the songs, and lead vocalist.

The basic performing group includes Patrice Rushen on keyboards, Keith Jones on bass and Don Alias on percussion; however, along the way, four guest saxophonists are heard from, as well as the guitarists Hiram Bullock and John Scofield. Carlos Santana plays lead guitar on "Human Revolution," for which Dianne Reeves added some of the backup singing.

Carrington's own singing, though not spectacular, is at least functionally agreeable in introducing some of her own material. "I've been singing off and on ever since I started making demo records of my songs," she said. "I never studied singing, but after starting to realize I liked the way I sounded, I kept it up. On one cut, 'More Than Woman,' I sing two vocal tracks and Dianne overdubbed another."

ANACLETO RAPPING / L.A. Times

Terri Lyne Carrington's career began before she reached her teens.

"Real Life Story" will no doubt make its way into the various radio formats, from contemporary jazz and adult alternative to album-oriented-rock and alternative rock. How much Carrington can promote it depends on her television schedule.

"I'm doing the [Arsenio Hall] show Mondays through Fridays, so I can't go too far out in the promotion; however, maybe we'll have a hiatus," she said. "I'm committed to staying with the show indefinitely, and I'm enjoying it."

Moving to the West Coast was not the result of Hall's offer—she had planned it all along. "I had come out here to look for an apartment and buy a car," Carrington said. "I like it out here; it's closer to the environment I grew up with in Medford—that was suburban, and this is kind of suburban and relaxed. New York is so hard core, and I was getting very tired of that."

After all her success, the gigs and sit-ins with Betty Carter and Stan Getz and Joe Williams and Oscar Peterson, Carrington is eager to continue learning, to meet new challenges.

Listening to a recent record by the drummer Dave Weckl, with Chick Corea's trio, she said: "That represents an awesome kind of modern-day technique—makes me feel I should lock myself up in a closet and practice eight hours a day until I can play like that.

"I don't like the way I played five years ago. Some people possibly liked me better when I was 17 or 18—that's their taste. But if I kept on playing the same way, I would just be stagnant."

ngeles Times 2/23

eila Jordan's Slow Rise to Recognition

ONARD FEATHER

eila Jordan has fought many emons in her life. The road hat led to her current level of success (she opens tonight hree-day stint at the Catalina ad Grill in Hollywood) was nd tortuous.

n in Detroit to a 16-year-old r, she was raised by grand- s in an impoverished coal- g area of Pennsylvania. "I dreamed of becoming a sing- e recalls. "It was a struggle ving; we ate whatever my father caught when he went ig—deer, squirrel, porcupine. there was almost nothing to d not even much to wear.

e church gave me strength to e. I did sing for a while at neetings and on local radio, e other children kidded me so about my singing that I gave

until she visited her mother troit was Jordan turned on to Before long, Ellington, Basie, pie and Holiday were her

Sheila Jordan

idols, Charlie Parker her virtual guru—first on records and later in person.

For a while she and two fellow Bird fanatics formed a vocal trio, setting lyrics to Parker's music, thus becoming the unknown predecessors of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross. But it was hard keeping interracial company in Detroit; she and her black friends were constantly hassled. "The cops would take me to the police station and search me—they couldn't believe that we were just enjoying our music."

After she had left high school and moved promptly to New York, Jordan met Parker through his pianist, Duke Jordan, whom she later married. "Bird was wonderful—when Duke and I were living in a loft downtown, he'd come over and turn me on to composers like Stravinsky and Bartok, and he'd talk about plays and books and bring his painter friend along. He was such a well rounded man."

During those years there were singing jobs now and then, and piano studies with Lennie Tristano, but two years after her daughter Traci was born, the marriage ended and Jordan took a job with an ad agency to pay the rent.

Recognition came very slowly. There was a much praised vocal on a George Russell album, singing "You Are My Sunshine" just the way Russell had heard her sing it for some coal miners during a return to Pennsylvania. And there was her first solo album, on Blue Note. Then came a brief period of recognition followed by long term oblivion.

Ironically (and it's a typical jazz world irony), she began to gain acceptance after paying visits to Scandinavia for concerts and recordings. The late 1960s and the '70s found her winning the Down Beat poll as the female singer deserving wider recognition. In fact, she won that poll nine times, but the recognition was never enough to enable her to give up the day job.

"I was praying like crazy, dear God, let me sing more. Then six months later I was laid off my job. I was devastated, but it was a blessing in disguise—since then I've been singing constantly!"

Jordan likes to sing standards, bop tunes, and a few originals by herself or by Harvie Swartz, the bassist with whom she has worked as a duo off and on since 1981. At Catalina she will be backed by Swartz and pianist Alan Broadbent.

"Things are getting better all the time," she says. "Last summer I was in Hamburg, singing in a jazz opera. It paid so well that I paid off the mortgage on my farm house in upstate New York."

Spending most of last year in Europe, she became a vocal teacher at a music school in Graz, Austria. She has also taught intermittently at City College in New York. "I expect to go back to Graz in the fall. They have some great students there—really talented singers and pianists. It's very gratifying to work as a teacher."

ELDRIDGE

Continued from Page 1

soloist.

Because Eldridge was unknown then, having made almost no records, his unique, searing sound and impassioned style came as a revelation. After he and [illegible]Berry joined the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra he began to achieve recognition as the first major trumpet influence since Louis Armstrong.

In Chicago, in 1938, Roy played at the Three Deuces with an incredible small band. Art Tatum was at the piano; John Collins was the guitarist, Zutty Singleton the drummer. This was Swing era combo music at its supreme level.

In May, 1940, Milt Gabler and I produced a session for Commodore Records with Eldridge, Benny Carter and Coleman Hawkins in the front line. Roy's solos in this intimate setting became classics that have been reissued time and again.

He played alongside Louis Armstrong for their first joint appearance in the Esquire Allstars concert at the Metropolitan Opera House. Roy's disposition always seemed happy and outgoing; it was not until after his later experiences with Jim Crow that *bitterness* surfaced.

He was the only black musician in Gene Krupa's band from 1941-43, one of several blacks in an all-star band on Mildred Bailey's CBS radio series in 1943-44, then became the only black with Artie Shaw's band in 1945.

After he left Shaw he told me of his humiliating experiences.

"As long as I'm in America," he said, "I'll never work in a white band again! It all goes back to when I joined Gene Krupa. It thrilled me to be accepted as a regular member of the band, but I knew that all eyes were on me to see if I'd do anything

Roy

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"All the guys in the [illegible] nice, Gene especially. Then we headed for California and the trouble began. We arrive in one town and the rest of the band checks in. I can't get into their hotel, so I keep my bags and start looking for another place. I get to where someone is supposed to have made a reservation for me; then the clerk sees me, suddenly discovers that a regular tenant just arrived and took the last available room. I lug my dozen pieces of luggage back onto the street and start looking again.

"By the time that kind of thing has happened night after night, it begins to work on my mind; I can't think right, I can't play right. When we finally got to the Palladium in Hollywood, I had to watch who I could sit at tables with. If they were movie stars who wanted me to come over, that was all right; if they were just the jitterbugs, no dice. And all the time the bouncer with his eye on me, just watching for a chance. . . .

"I had to live way out in Los Angeles, while the rest of the guys stayed in Hollywood. It was a lonely life. One night the tension got so bad I flipped. I started trembling, ran off the stand and [illegible] and saying to myself why the hell did I come out here again when I knew what would happen.

"Artie came in and he was real great. He made the guy apologize that wouldn't let me in, and got him fired.

"Man, when you're on the stage, you're great, but as soon as you come off, you're nothing. It's not worth the glory, not worth the money, not worth anything. Never again!"

Happily, Eldridge did not have to live up to his resolution. Conditions improved a little, and by 1949 he was back in the Krupa band. The following year he worked with Benny Goodman, touring Europe, then stayed on the Continent playing with everyone from Sidney Bechet to Charlie Parker and recording, among other things, a delightful blues vocal in French, "Tu Disais Que Tum'Aimais."

Much of the rest of his playing career was with mixed bands, most notably on tour with Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic (named for Los Angeles' Philharmonic Auditorium). He also co-led a quintet with Coleman Hawkins.

Roy Eldridge was to the evolu- [illegible] inside, he did a magnificent [illegible] concealing it.

Ave atque vale, Little Jazz.

'Little Jazz' Left His Mark as a Giant

By LEONARD FEATHER

When Roy (Little Jazz) Eldridge died on Sunday, it was obvious, whatever the official cause of death, that he was the victim of a broken heart. His wife of 53 years, Viola, had recently died, and Eldridge, 78, felt he had nothing to live for. (In a bizarre coincidence, Eldridge's cousin Reunald Jones Sr. also died Sunday in Los Angeles. He, too, was 78 and played trumpet in many name bands.)

Eldridge had been forced to put down his trumpet forever after suffering a stroke in 1980, and had been seen publicly since then only in occasional appearances singing and playing drums.

My first exposure to Eldridge was a magical evening in 1936 at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom; he was with Teddy Hill's memorable band, with saxophonist "Chu" Berry as the other principal

Please see ELDRIDGE, Page 8

ELDRIDGE

Continued from Page 1

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Roy Eldridge in 1955 photo.

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"I had to live way out in Los Angeles, while the rest of the guys stayed in Hollywood. It was a lonely life. One night the tension got so bad I flipped. I started trembling, ran off the stand and threw up. They carried me to the doctor's. I had 105 [degree] fever; my nerves were shot.

"When I went back a few nights later, I heard that people had been asking for their money back because they couldn't hear 'Let Me Off Uptown.' This time they let me sit at the bar.

"Later on, when I was with Artie Shaw, I went to a dance date and they wouldn't even let me in the place. 'This is a white dance,' they said, and there was my name right outside. I told them who I was. When I finally did get in, I played that first set, trying to keep from crying. By the time I got through the set, the tears were rolling down my cheeks. I went up to a dressing room and stood in a corner crying and saying to myself why the hell did I come out here again when I knew what would happen.

"Artie came in and he was real great. He made the guy apologize that wouldn't let me in, and got him fired.

"Man, when you're on the stage, you're great, but as soon as you come off, you're nothing. It's not worth the glory, not worth the money, not worth anything. Never again!"

Happily, Eldridge did not have to live up to his resolution. Conditions improved a little, and by 1949 he was back in the Krupa band. The following year he worked with Benny Goodman, touring Europe, then stayed on the Continent playing with everyone from Sidney Bechet to Charlie Parker and recording, among other things, a delightful blues vocal in French, "Tu Disais Que Tum'Aimais."

Much of the rest of his playing career was with mixed bands, most notably on tour with Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic (named for Los Angeles' Philharmonic Auditorium). He also co-led a quintet with Coleman Hawkins.

Roy Eldridge was to the evolution of jazz trumpet in the 1930s and early '40s what Armstrong had been in the '20s, and what Dizzy Gillespie would be from the mid-'40s, what Miles Davis would be in the '50s. He recorded with everyone from Art Tatum and Harry (Sweets) Edison and Oscar Peterson and Bud Freeman, with a string ensemble, with a Dixieland band.

How it must have rankled him, during those last eight years when playing was forbidden to him, to see so many avenues opening up. What a joy it would have been to share his company, and his sound, at the jazz parties and on the jazz cruises. The last time we talked, a year ago, he sounded as cheerful as ever. If he was laughing on the outside and still crying on the inside, he did a magnificent job of concealing it.

Ave atque vale, Little Jazz.

Davis Collection: More Misses Than Hits

By LEONARD FEATHER

A monthly roundup of recently released jazz recordings:

MILES DAVIS

"Miles Davis: The Columbia Years 1955-1985." Columbia.

★★★★½

During Miles Davis's three decades with Columbia, his evolution from songs and chords to modes, abstractions and electronics was clearly spelled out. This 12-inch box, containing four CDs, includes many masterpieces representing each phase. The half-star deduction from a maximum rating is due less to musical flaws than to questionable production.

That this package may have been put together a little hastily became clear through minor errors, such as the persistent misspelling of the name of Irving Townsend, who produced such memorable sides as "All Blues," and the absence of specific track-by-track comments.

More seriously, there seems to have been a deliberate effort to include as many albums as possible; the 35 cuts are taken from no less than 31 LPs. "Kind of Blue" and "Nefertiti" are represented by two tracks apiece; "Jazz Track.," surely not one of the most deathless albums, is accorded three cuts.

This means that such vital sets as the three seminal collaborations with Gil Evans ("Miles Ahead," "Porgy and Bess," "Sketches of Spain") are represented by only one tune each, as is the radical "Bitches Brew." The tunes are subdivided, not chronologically, but somewhat arbitrarily under "Blues," "Standards," "Originals," "Moods" and "Electric."

Discerning Davisologists may prefer to invest in a few specific albums rather than in this somewhat odd collection; nevertheless, there is of course an abundance of memorable and influential music here, despite Davis's insistence that everything out of his past is now irrelevant.

DUKE ELLINGTON

"Early Ellington, 1927-34." RCA Bluebird.

★★★★★

These 22 tunes (five are missing on the LP) offer a fascinating study of the Ellington band's growth, from 10 to 15 men, and from relatively simplistic arrangements to works of lasting brilliance.

To some ears, the rhythm section on the early cuts, with overly loud, thudding four-to-the-bar bass (replaced by a tuba on "The Mooche") and plunking banjo, may make for rough going, yet there are dateless delights: the scat vocal by Adelaide Hall in "Creole Love Call" (at 80, she's still active in London), the maestro's stride piano on "Washington Wabble," Johnny Hodges at his early best in "Cotton Club Stomp."

Tracks 12 through 22 (1931 and 1934) offer a bigger, crisp brass section, remarkable work singly and collectively by the sax section (Barney Bigard, Hodges, Harry Carney) and a 1931 "Rockin' In Rhythm" that differs not too much from the version Bill Berry's band plays today. There's also the two-part "Creole Rhapsody," 8½ minutes, a pretentious but promising augury of later extended works, and best of all, the incredible "Daybreak Express," light years ahead of its time, from the suspenseful opening accelerando as the train pulls out, to the majestic sax soli passage.

Along with these gems you have some of the very first versions of "Solitude" and "Mood Indigo" and such hell-for-leather 16-bar stomps as "Ring Dem Bells" and "Stompy Jones" (Cootie Williams scatting and playing trumpet). All told, it's phenomenal proof of the elan with which Ellington led the jazz world through its parturient period.

(Note: Duke Ellington's "Braggin' In Brass—The Immortal 1938 Year," a double CD set, is on CBS/Portrait No. R2K 44395.)

EARL HINES

"Piano Man." Earl Hines, Piano & Orchestra. RCA Bluebird.

★★★★

The first worldwide influence in jazz piano, Hines is in magnificent form in these 22 items (four of which are on the CD only). These were his most influential years, particularly the 1939-41 period when the first five cuts were recorded. "Rosetta" (his best-known composition) is a virtual definition of swinging jazz piano. "Body and Soul" and "Child of a Disordered Brain" are a curiosity,

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Jazz Reviews

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recorded on a prehistoric electric keyboard, the Storytone piano. Next comes a unique cut featuring Hines with Sidney Bechet on clarinet, "Blues in Thirds."

Most of the other tracks are by the full orchestra Hines led in Chicago during the 1930s. "Boogie Woogie on St. Louis Blues" and "Piano Man" are built around the leader, but on too many cuts he yields inordinate footage to other soloists. The two early vocals, "Jelly Jelly" and "Stormy Monday," showcase a youthful Billy Eckstine singing somewhat gentlemanly blues.

BENNY CARTER
"My Kind of Trouble," Pablo.
★★★★

No, this is not a reissue. Recorded last August, it is the first organ-backed album in Carter's 60-year recording career. The organist, Art Hillery, works well with Joe Pass' guitar, Andy Simpkins on bass and Ronnie Bedford on drums as support for Carter's ever magical alto sax, most notably on his own alluring tunes, "Only Trust Your Heart" and "My Kind of Trouble is You," and on Don Redman's "Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You." A touch of confusion in the notes: "Eric's Blues," described as a medium-fast G blues, is "Berkeley Bounce."

BIX BEIDERBECKE
"Bix Lives!" RCA Bluebird.
★★

Bix Beiderbecke (1903-1931) was a cult hero in the 1930s and '40s just as Charlie Parker has been since the '50s. Like Bird, he was a genius whose unique sound and original mind were stilled by a life of self-destruction.

Most of his revelatory records were made with small groups under his own name or that of Frank Trumbauer. On the 23 numbers here (18 on the LP) his cornet can be heard for a grand total of little more than nine minutes out of 70. All but four cuts were made with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra; a few ("San," "Louisiana") have stood up well, but most, except for Beiderbecke's enlightened interludes, are inept, with dreary melodies and arrangements saddled by even worse lyrics, *voh-doe-dee-oh* group-vocals and, on six songs, examples of an emerging Bing Crosby. Some may find it worthwhile wading through the dross for the diamonds; others may even find 1927 dance music quaintly amusing. A few solos by Trumbauer (C Melody sax) and Jimmy Dorsey (clarinet) relieve the tedium. □

Los Angeles Times

Part VI/Monday, February 27, 1989

An Affectionate Look at the Blues Idiom

Although the blues has been documented endlessly in print, it has seldom been dealt with adequately on the television screen. "Wild Women Don't Have the Blues," airing tonight at 10 on Channel 28, is the exception: a superb hourlong examination not only of the idiom itself, but also of its social origins, evolution and impact on black America.

Producer Carol Doyle Van Valkenburgh came to her subject armed with affection and understanding. The story takes us from sharecropper families (Koko Taylor talking about her origins) to the minstrel shows and river boats, to Ma Rainey introducing the blues on stage in 1902, and eventually via the vaudeville circuit northward to Harlem and recordings (Mamie Smith's pioneering "Crazy Blues" in 1920) and the movies (the one and only Bessie Smith film a decade later).

The archival footage showing blacks dancing and strutting around the turn of the century is skillfully mixed with live reminiscences by the historian Chris Albertson, the pianist Sammy Price (looking back at Jim Crow in the 1920s) and the guitarist/archivist Danny Barker with his wife, the singer Blue Lu Barker. Alberta Hunter sings "My Handy Man," not long before her death at 89 in 1984.

Despised by older blacks as "The Devil's Music," the blues was the chosen idiom of an Afro-American generation that flourished until the Depression, when record sales stopped, pop songs took over, and the talkies edged out vaudeville.

Some singers went back to the church; others, like Mamie Smith, died penniless. A handful, like Ethel Waters, became big-time stars.

In a poignant finale, Ida Woodson, in Florida a year or so ago, sings an a cappella blues verse.

Sounds, camera work and production in general are all first rate in this priceless piece of genuine Americana.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz Reviews

Williams Gets Daring at Catalina Bar & Grill

Not many singers in a night-club would dare to start a show with a slow, mournful chant, sung a cappella. Joe Williams can get away with it, as he revealed Tuesday at Catalina Bar and Grill in Hollywood. He has this special power because any Joe Williams audience is a gathering of faithful admirers who, before he has taken the first breath, are in the palm of his mighty hand.

From the opening "Let My People Go" he segued into a haunting, 6/8 reading of "Down by the Riverside," backed now by his perennial and uniquely cohesive rhythm section.

Even when he moves into the more conventional repertoire, something original and spontaneous invariably happens. The trading of scat verses against Gerryck King's drums on "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone," the bossa nova update of "After You've Gone," the song that happens to be exactly the same age as the singer (70), the superb backing and filling and soloing by pianist Norman Simmons, the supple bass work of Bob Badgley.

Most remarkable of all was the guitarist Henry Johnson, whose work ranged from gentle chording behind Williams on "How Deep Is the Ocean" to fierce, beyond-George Benson wailing on the closing blues conglomeration.

Williams the nonpareil ballad singer was in evidence for a gentle "Embraceable You" and an "I Got It Bad" that never overstepped the mark from drama into melodrama. "Joey Joey" was a surprise entry, in honor of Bill Henderson, who was in the house, and who had sung it decades ago with Williams in the audience.

Finally, there was a request, a tune sung in a quasi-operatic manner leading to a hilariously anti-climactic four-letter last word.

There was only one missing element in Tuesday's first set. The two blues numbers, "Who She Do" and "Cherry Red," were both heavily interlarded with comedy, all of it high spirited and raunchy fun, but leaving you wishing that he had included "The Comeback" or "In the Evening" to show a darker side of the blues that he interprets with such majesty. No doubt they will be there too, some time before the closing show Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Johnny Otis Cooks Up a Potpourri

Johnny Otis, who opened Wednesday at the Vine Street Bar and Grill in Hollywood, has had more careers than most cats have lives: Drummer, pianist, vibraphonist, composer, music publisher, record producer, singer, journalist, disc jockey, author, but mainly talent scout and catalyst in the rhythm and blues world.

The group he is now fronting constitutes a virtual retrospective of his musical career, with a cast that includes three brass, three saxes, a rhythm section and three vocalists. It's an unclassifiable cocktail of blues, mainstream jazz, soul music and pop singing, with Otis sometimes pitching in as an additional voice, though he functions mainly as pianist (usually in a Basie bag) and as a capable Lionel Hampton style vibes soloist.

His first record hit, the 1945 "Harlem Nocturne," was revived as a solo vehicle for the fluent alto sax of Clifford Soloman. "Flying Home" was another bow to the past: Otis played drums on Illinois Jacquet's version, also in 1945. Of course, "Willie and the Hand Jive," a novelty hit for Otis in the 1950s, is still in the book.

The Basie, Hampton and Ellington instrumentals constituted the backbone of the show. The singers, heard singly and collectively, did not reveal another potential star (Otis discovered Esther Phillips among others).

Otis's Hampton tribute on vibes, an hour into the program, would have been a fine place to stop, but there was another half hour to come. Inexplicably, a male quartet, brought on as guests, sang three doo-wop numbers in a style that went out of fashion with the Ink Spots. La Dee Streeter made her way conventionally through "Lover Man," assisted by Larry Douglas, a tasteful fluegelhornist. Two male singers dueted on "Soul Man," with three more numbers still to come.

Otis' son Shuggie, always an impressive guitarist, should have been given more to do. In fact, there may be more than enough talent in the orchestra to compensate for the vocal shortcomings. But the Johnny Otis Show has always been just that, a potpourri of diverse elements that aims to entertain rather than conquer the world with innovation.

Otis moves out Saturday, but will be back for another run March 15-18.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

CBS' Taylor Good on Stage Too

Jazz has no more valuable propagandist than Dr. Billy Taylor, the eloquent teacher and spokesman who for six years has been interviewing musicians on the CBS-TV show "Sunday Morning."

Last week he was in town for three days of clinics at El Camino College. A concert there Friday offered a potent reminder that he remains an exceptionally fluent and compelling pianist, and an articulate speaker who doubles the interest in his recital by chatting, analyzing and reminiscing.

In his program were a delightful, slow-tempo version of "Take the A Train" with stealthily moving four-to-the-bar left-hand chords; "Tom Voegli," a medium tempo blues; "Morning," Clare Fischer's charming Latin piece; a long workout on "Caravan" highlighting his drummer Bobby Thomas, and several of his own works—including a three-movement suite originally commissioned by the Utah Symphony.

The second half of the show began with three waltzes, each with its own character: an explosive Taylor original, a tender reading of Thad Jones' "A Child Is Born," and an emotional version of the Miles Davis "All Blues," with a long-held tremolo that kept the audience in suspense.

The trio shifted gears into Horace Silver's "Juicy Lucy." It seemed fitting that a concert by an artist who is in town all too seldom should end by offering an encore even to the encore.

—LEONARD FEATHER

3/5/89

Bobby McFerrin scored a multiple Grammy triumph that was at once surprising, gratifying and puzzling.

Making Grammy Crossover History

By LEONARD FEATHER

It's just possible that 1989 may be remembered in the music industry as the year of the great jazz Grammy crossover.

The most obvious evidence lies in the quadruple victory of Bobby McFerrin, who was a winner not just in the male jazz vocal category but in two of the top overall divisions, for record of the year and song of the year ("Don't Worry, Be Happy"), as well as for top male vocal.

But consider also the following: Take 6 won not only for jazz group vocal but also for soul-gospel group. Chick Corea won not in a jazz category, but for R&B instrumental ("Light Years"). Manhattan Transfer edged out a big hit by the Beach Boys to win in the *pop* vocal group department ("Brasil").

Roger Kellaway, a distinguished jazz composer, was a winner for best instrumental arrangement, another non-jazz department, for an album called "Memos From Paradise" by the jazz clarinetist Eddie Daniels. "Blues for Salvador" by the Latin-jazz guitarist Carlos Santana took the honors for best rock instrumental.

What these victories add up to may well indicate a powerful trend. Never before in the 31 years history of the Grammy awards have two top divisions been won by a jazz artist, and never before have so many jazz-related musicians been honored in so many non-jazz categories.

It may be argued that such winners as Manhattan Transfer and Carlos Santana no longer belong strictly in the jazz domain, but those lines are thin and have been the subject of much debate; at the very least one can claim that such victories may lead to interest in other, more jazz-inclined works by the same performers. Corea's career is an important case in point: The attention drawn to him by his R&B victory could have an impact on his new album with a strictly acoustic jazz group.

The multiple triumph of Bobby McFerrin was at once surprising, gratifying and puzzling. Here is an artist whose jazz credentials are impeccable, but who, over the past decade, has broadened his scope and his audience by developing into a unique entertainer and comedic personality.

"Don't Worry, Be Happy" was a surprise winner not only because it was recorded a cappella; unaccompanied (or self-accompanied) Grammy winners are as common as one-armed jugglers. This is just not the normal way to achieve seven-digit sales. It was gratifying because McFerrin, a genuinely gifted artist, has crossed over from the ghetto of jazz categories into the wider world of mass appeal.

Had this expansion not occurred, and had "Don't Worry, Be Happy" simply sold modestly well, there is not the slightest chance that this would have been voted either record of the year or song of the year.

McFerrin, an honest man without a bloated ego, lost no time in admitting that he is fed up with having to sing "Don't Worry," and that the awards obviously are not based on artistic merit. If they were, he could have won years ago.

"Night in Tunisia," his collaboration with Manhattan Transfer in 1985, could have been a record of the year, and some of his earlier compositions such as the fascinating "Feline" or the intriguing "Sightless Bird," both in 1982, might have earned him a song of the year victory. But none of these sold in massive quantities, and no matter what producer Pierre Cossette and other National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences bigwigs may tell us, it has been obvious for 31 years that these top awards invariably go to top sellers; if artistic merit happens to be involved, that is sheer chance.

Grammy's first song of the year in 1958 was "Volare" (a.k.a. "Nel Blu Dipinto Di Blu"), now a standing joke in the record world, indicative of the Academy members' inability to distinguish popularity from musical merit. Jump forward and we arrive at "Don't Worry, Be Happy"—the song of the year for 1989! Hardly a composition, barely a song, really a ditty, requiring about as much talent as a nursery rhyme. McFerrin must be enjoying a secret smile, wondering whether his award-winning opus will enjoy any currency in 2039.

Best rock instrumental honors went to guitarist Carlos Santana.

United Press International

The Manhattan Transfer won a Grammy in pop for its "Brasil."

There is still another irony in the McFerrin sweep: Along with the three pop Grammys, he won in a jazz category not for his own album, nor even for a particular song from that album, but for a single tune for which he sat in with the bassist Rob Wasserman—"Brothers," on Wasserman's MCA album.

Despite all these paradoxes, it remains highly probably that the achievements of McFerrin, Corea, Manhattan Transfer and the rest will have some salutary effect. They not only indicate the growing acceptance of performers by

The policy within jazz, as seems to be indicated by this year's results, must be: If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

jazz-related men and women, but more significantly indicate a willingness to accept them as part of the big picture.

The argument that this trend necessarily means major compromises of the musicians' integrity is not necessarily valid. David Sanborn, yet another crossover artist this year ("Close Up," best pop instrumental), has made it clear in interviews that he is making music he believes in; he never had any intention of selling out.

The most satisfying aspect of the crossovers is that they have enabled these nominees to circumvent the notorious academy policy of according the Cinderella treatment to jazz. Yet again this year, only two of the jazz category winners appeared on the televised ceremony. One wonders whether even McFerrin and Take 6 would have appeared on the endless pop/rock extravaganza had they not enjoyed victories in areas outside jazz.

All this would be of no importance if the public did not take these awards as seriously as if they had any real aesthetic meaning.

The policy within jazz, as seems to be indicated by this year's results, must be: If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. If enough jazz people can make enough modest concessions to popular taste, the end—an end that could bring eventual acceptance to more genuine examples of top-grade jazz—may ultimately justify the means. If it doesn't, well, don't worry, be happy; jazz survived long before there were Grammy awards and will be with us long after the Grammys have outlived their debatable usefulness. □

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3/8/89 Los Angeles Times

STAGE REVIEW

'Lady Day' Misses Sound, Style of Holiday

By LEONARD FEATHER

Ever since her death 30 years ago, attempts have been made to re-create dramatically the mystique of Billie Holiday. Tributes and concerts, a movie and TV documentaries have been largely unsuccessful; the sole exception was a 90-minute British-made television special, which succeeded because Lady Day herself was seen at length in rare film or tape clips and was heard talking in voice-overs.

"Lady Day," at the Odyssey Theater, ranks close to the bottom among these ventures.

In certain respects it recalls the somewhat more convincing "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill," a dramatization seen by this reviewer in Montreal with Ranee Lee in the title role, and later in Hollywood with S. Epatha Merkerson. Both Lee and Merkerson were reasonably successful in capturing some of the essence of Holiday's persona; neither of them tried to imitate her once-in-a-lifetime timbre and in-person charisma.

Rena Scott, in her Lady Day impression at the Odyssey, labors under a series of handicaps. She just is not the actress for the part, which will be apparent to anyone who has seen Holiday, even on TV. She talks too fast, sometimes too flippantly, and switches moods too abruptly.

To aggravate matters, she is backed by a quartet of unyielding mediocrity, with a pianist who seems unfamiliar with some of the songs that Holiday made famous.

With a few exceptions, Scott does not come across vocally as the right artist to capture the dark, forlorn woman behind Lady Day's glamorous mask, nor does she even bring to the brighter numbers, such as "What a Little Moonlight Can Do," the fey quality that enabled Holiday to turn sow's-ear songs into silk melodic purses. Visually

SCOTT ROBINSON

Rena Scott plays Billie Holiday in "Lady Day" at Odyssey.

she is too busy; part of the Holiday magic was her genius for putting a song across with a minimum of movements.

The format of the presentation, set in a diminutive space with virtually no set except for a bandstand, uses only one other character, a stage manager. The scene is London in 1954, at the end of Holiday's first and only European tour.

This writer, who happened to be the organizer and emcee of that tour, never saw Billie Holiday almost falling-down drunk, though that is how she is depicted in the second act. This insult to her memory is only one of numerous inaccuracies and anachronisms.

The songs are interspersed with narration by Scott, some in the form of flashbacks to her traumatized childhood and adolescence. The script, though generally written with conviction, glosses over so many details that the listener may not even catch the glancing references to such episodes as her tour with the all-white Artie Shaw orchestra. The name of her first husband is mumbled just once; the later man in her life, Louis McKay, who in fact went to London with her, is written out and placed in Switzerland.

Scott's voice is at times strong and affecting, if one tries to overlook her apparent indecision about whether to simulate the style of her role model. "Strange Fruit," the most demanding song of all with its gruesome story of a lynching, makes a moving finale for the first act.

Nobody who has studied Holiday's records is likely to accept the use of scat singing, in which Scott indulges two or three times, apparently unaware that Lady Day never resorted to that technique.

The absolute nadir is reached three songs from the end, when Scott sings "I Can't Get Started" in a sort of Ethel Merman upbeat frenzy, with the pianist, Darryl Archibald, plunking out unsophisticated chord changes.

At the show Saturday evening, David Patterson played saxophone, substituting for Louis Taylor. Completing the group were Carter Armstrong on bass and Keith Swan on drums. They, like Scott, are less to blame than whoever cast them in roles for which they seem strangely unsuited.

The larger issue raised by "Lady Day" is that of what seems to be an endless attempt to take advantage of Holiday's posthumous stature as a cult figure. The disastrously distorted story line of the 1972 movie "Lady Sings the Blues" was the egregious case in point. To Diana Ross' credit, though, she came closer than any of her successors to the sound and persona of the woman she portrayed.

Written and directed by Stephen Stahl, "Lady Day" can be credited with good intentions on his part and on that of the ill-starred Scott. But now is the time to lay aside the tributes and dramatizations, buy all available Billie Holiday records, and let the great lady rest in peace.

At 12111 Ohio Ave., West Los Angeles, Thursdays and Fridays at 8:30 p.m., Saturdays at 10 p.m., Sundays at 7:30 p.m., indefinitely. Tickets: $13.50-$17.50; (213) 826-1626.

3/9

ENTIMENTAL JOURNEY — at the Big Band Reunion, honoree es Brown, Doris Day, and music attorney Averill Pasarow. elow, Morey Amsterdam, *L.A. Times* jazz critic Leonard eather and wife Jane, and Steve Allen.

John Newsome Leads a Be-Bopping Quintet at Jax

John Newsome, who introduced his quintet Tuesday to the diners at Jax, 339 N. Grand Ave. in Glendale, is a tenor saxophonist with many credits, mostly as a sideman, though the group he heads has been in operation largely as a rehearsal band.

Rehearsal bands are those that convene more for the joy of playing than for the rewards they may reap. Some are simply too advanced musically to appeal to the typical jazz audience, but that is not true of this bunch of straight-down-the-middle be-boppers.

Much of what they have to offer comes encased in familiar boxes, 32 bars in size, with a first and last ensemble chorus as outside wrapping and a sequence of solos inside.

Newsome's tenor and the trumpet or fluegelhorn of his front-line partner, Steve Huffsteter, leave no doubt that they have run down these lines together a few hundred times, and a blended sound—most often in unison, with occasional touches of two part harmony—is tight and well-controlled.

The repertoire, except for an occasional Newsome original, consists of his arrangements of such time-tested tunes as "Laura," "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes," "Ghost of a Chance" and the inevitable "Just Friends."

The pianist Paul Moer, bassist Harvey Newmark and drummer Paul Kreibich are all reputable local mainstreamers who offer solid support and occasional solos, though Newsome's assertive sound and Huffsteter's fluid lines dominate the proceedings.

This is not the band of the century, nor even of the hour, but where it may fall short in innovation it rates points for spirit and togetherness. The gig at Jax was a one-night stand, but Newsome plans to go public more often.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Moscow Jazz Finds a Champion in Vartan Tonoyan

By LEONARD FEATHER

Remember the address: 23 Chekhov St.—and be sure to drop by next time you're in Moscow. That is where you will find the Bluebird Club, the pride and joy of Vartan Tonoyan, who may be the Soviet Union's first jazz impresario.

This 28-year-old Armenian, who lives outside Moscow with his mother, sister and a puppy named Charlie Parker, was in Los Angeles the other day. His old friend Alexei

ROBERT GABRIEL / Los Angeles Times

Vartan Tonoyan: operator of the Bluebird Club in Moscow.

Zoubov, the tenor saxophonist who has lived here since 1984, was showing him around town.

Tonoyan is a symbol of *glasnost*. In two years he has fought petty bureaucrats to turn his 80-capacity room from a one-night-a-week jazz venue to a seven-night cynosure that has drawn the elite of the Soviet and American jazz worlds.

His passion for jazz began when his grandfather took him to a Duke Ellington concert. "My grandfather was a leader of the Armenian resistance against the Turks," Tonoyan explains in recently acquired though fluent English. "He came to the United States in 1918, and stayed for 10 years; during that time he met Duke Ellington. When Duke played in Moscow in 1971—I was 11—I went to see him; later Duke came to our house and shook my hand."

A journalism student, Tonoyan began writing about jazz in 1979. "For years it was difficult; they didn't want to publish my articles. Then I was told not to write so much about American musicians. I replied that when Soviet musicians play 5% as well as the Americans, I will write more about them!"

There have been attempts to block every step in the career of the aggressive young promoter. For five years he tried to persuade the head of the Magazine Publishing Ministry to let him start the Soviet Union's first jazz magazine. He was told there was not enough paper to print it.

When he approached the director of a cafe about turning it over to jazz, officials said *nyet*. "But I invited all best musicians, and journalists from the West, TV companies; once I pronounced that we were in business, it was too late for them to shut me down.

"We began in April, 1987. Officials came in and wanted to know what percentage of Soviet music we played, why so many diplomats were coming in. We couldn't give our admission fees to musicians; about 30% went to the government, 20% to the racketeers; for racketeering you have to pay everybody. Sure, I can say that. I say whatever I like. That's why my jazz club became famous, because I was saying everything in Soviet Union despite the fact that I could have troubles.

"Since last September we have jazz every night instead of just Wednesdays. We got to the point where if nobody helps us, at least nobody interferes."

When musicians such as Billy Taylor, Dave Brubeck, Paul Horn or Pat Metheny came to the Bluebird and sat in, the Union of Composers wanted to know why Tonoyan had not asked permission. "I told them no, in jazz everyone has right to play; jam session is not KGB."

Tonoyan's tenacity has paid off. For a year, because there was no budget for musicians, he used his own salary of 100 rubles a month ($150) to pay them. "We are cheapest jazz club in world; only three rubles admission. There is no alcohol—in Russia some people have problems with drinking—but we have good food, coffee, juices, very inexpensive."

On the first anniversary of the Bluebird's opening, Tonoyan launched a second room, Vartan's Jazz, a semi-private club aimed mainly at the foreign community. It

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TONOYAN

Continued from Page 6

was here that the last scene was played in the great George Shultz caper.

"I heard he plays tenor sax, so I thought why not invite him? Well, as soon as Soviet officials heard of this, they made all the changes in the Bluebird that I had been requesting for a year: Lighting, furniture, painting, kitchen—to impress him. He didn't come anyway; but he did play at a private party at Vartan's."

And how did the secretary of state sound on tenor sax?

"He played theme only. Our musicians played improvisations."

Since an agreement was made last fall to pay the musicians, they have been receiving ("depending on the quality") from 25 to 50 rubles a night. "It's not bad, because it's so difficult to find jobs for jazz men who are not invited to perform in official concert halls."

One of Tonoyan's problems is defection. The highly regarded avant-garde Ganelin Trio emigrated to Israel. Igor Butman, a tenor player whom Grover Washington heard at the Bluebird, left for Boston to study at the Berklee College of Music; he played on Washington's recent album.

Soviet jazz is improving, but Tonoyan has ambitious plans to upgrade it. "I want to persuade more Americans to come over on visit, not just through official Gosconcert channels, but just dealing directly with us. This week I go to Washington for TV and radio programs. I will talk about my idea of opening a private jazz school in Moscow to invite famous musicians to teach there. I am trying to find sponsors for this."

Despite the red tape, the committees, the maze of paperwork and all the other obstacles, he believes that conditions have improved. "The atmosphere for culture is cleaner; the air is more fresh. You can see the changes Gorbachev is making in Moscow, but in Central Russia it moves more slowly.

"It may take two or three decades to accomplish all we want to do, but we are on our way."

Jazz Reviews

Turtle Island String Quartet Displays Eclectic Ingenuity

The Turtle Island String Quartet made a rare local appearance Saturday at the Valley Cities Jewish Community Center in Sherman Oaks. (The quartet will return Sunday for a free concert at the Wadsworth Theater.)

It is hard to conceive of a musical area in which these totally gifted performers would not be at ease. Their eclecticism took them through a program in which composition, arrangements and improvisation were interwoven with uncanny ingenuity.

Unlike other similarly constituted groups, they all have the ability, both in ensembles and ad-lib solos, to convey a true feeling for the nature of jazz. Violinist David Balakrishnan's inspired arrangement of "Night in Tunisia" established their sensitivity in this idiom. Darol Anger, also an accomplished jazz violinist, composed "Grant Wood," displaying the quartet's adaptability to Nashville roots. There was even a touch of New Age in their salute to Ralph Towner of the group Roegon.

With the cellist Mark Summer usually plucking the strings like a jazz bassist, the quartet often achieved a swinging intensity normally beyond the reach of a string group. Except for one number that used a prerecorded percussion part, there was no rhythm section in the conventional sense, yet there was an innate rhythmic essence to "Stolen Moments," the funky "Street Stuff" and violist Irene Sazer's arrangement of "The Sidewinder," a 24-bar blues in which Mark Summer played arco and pizzicato solos while the others offered riffing support.

Sazer must be the world's foremost jazz viola player (admittedly this is not a crowded field). Her unaccompanied interlude on "Sunny August Full of Moon" was hypnotic, as was her every solo.

Is the Turtle Island String Quartet too subtle to make its mark in a noise-oriented society? One can only hope that time, and a few intelligent promoters, will accord the foursome the worldwide exposure it deserves.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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MUSICA JAZZ March 1989

BEFORE & AFTER

di Leonard Feather

SOTTO TORCHIO CONTE CANDOLI

Il critico americano dà l'avvio a una nuova rubrica, sottoponendo nove dischi al trombettista reso famoso da Stan Kenton.

Tutti i lettori appassionati di jazz sanno, o immaginano, che cosa sia un «blindfold test» (letteralmente: esame a occhi bendati), e ben lo so io che ne ho condotti in quantità. Si tratta di fare ascoltare a un musicista dei brani musicali, senza rivelargli nulla di nulla su date e formazioni, e trascrivere i suoi commenti. Ora ho deciso un'innovazione, per dar vita a una nuova rubrica intitolata appunto *Before & After* (Prima e dopo): riferirò anche le reazioni dei musicisti nel momento in cui finalmente gli si dice chi e che cosa hanno ascoltato. Il primo «paziente» con la cuffia dell'hi fi è Conte Candoli, ed è pertanto ovvio che ho cercato dischi in cui il punto di riferimento fosse un trombettista. A volte viene indicata una votazione in «stelle»: è quella abituale nelle valutazioni di dischi in America: cinque stelle vuol dire «eccellente», quattro «molto buono», tre «buono», due e una sola stella, ovviamente, per le bocciature.

Secondo «Conte» Candoli, il minore ma il più noto di due fratelli trombettisti, è nato il 12 luglio 1927 a Mishawaka, nell'Indiana. Impostosi all'attenzione già negli anni '40 con Woody Herman, ha avuto momenti di particolare fama tra il 1952 e il 1954 in una memorabile edizione dell'orchestra di Stan Kenton. Il famoso leader gli aveva dedicato un brano importante, intitolato appunto Portrait Of A Count, *in cui emergeva il suo brillante stile solistico. Valido esponente in seguito del jazz della West Coast soprattutto al Lighthouse Club di Hermosa Beach, si è esibito in molteplici contesti, tra i quali, nei primi anni '60, la Concert Jazz Band di Gerry Mulligan e, molto più di recente, il gruppo dei Supersax. Ha anche partecipato, in Italia, a registrazioni con l'orchestra della Rai.*

1. ART BLAKEY: *In Walked Bud* (Concord). Thelonious Monk, compositore. Wynton Marsalis, tromba; Branford Marsalis, alto; Bill Pierce, tenore. 1982.

Prima: «Mi piace il brano. Devo averlo già sentito; è qualcosa che somiglia a *Blue Skies*, con un altro inciso. Il contralto era gradevole. La tromba... posso sentire l'influsso di Clifford Brown. Suona come il primo Freddie Hubbard. Quel *growl* lo ha tradito; gli piace usarlo. Era davvero buono.

«La sezione ritmica non era proprio compatta, non stava abbastanza insieme. Il tenore era solo gradevole. Ma gli darei quattro stelle, soprattutto per la tromba».

Dopo: «Wynton? Sono stupefatto... non posso crederci! Suona in modo così diverso ora, più vicino alle cose di Miles. Branford al sax contralto? Davvero! Non l'ho mai ascoltato molto. Sai, qui Art non mi è piaciuto.

«Sono totalmente sorpreso dalla tromba. Ha lavorato benissimo. Mi piaceva decisamente di più come suonava prima, con un po' più vita. Ma è ancora uno strumentista sbalorditivo».

2. BOBBY BRADFORD: *Ashes* (Soul Note). Bradford, cornetta e compositore; James Kousakis, alto; Roberto Miranda, Mark Dresser, contrabbassi; Sherman Ferguson, batteria.

Prima: «Una specie di sambacalypso con l'inciso di *I Got Rhythm...* Il batterista era a posto, ma troppo potente. Mi è piaciuto molto il lavoro del contrabbasso, c'era un grande *walking*. Ho apprezzato molto l'alto, ma non so chi sia. Non conosco il trombettista e non sono molto impressionato da quanto ha fatto... È un brano simpatico, una cosa carina da inserire in un album quando vuoi mostrare in quanti diversi modi sai suonare jazz. Gli do due stelle, merito dell'alto».

Dopo: «Bobby Bradford? Ne ho sentito parlare. E due contrabbassisti! ... Benché abbia suonato con Sherman, non l'avevo riconosciuto. È stato con noi nei Supersax, ultimamente, e ha fatto un gran lavoro; il miglior batterista che abbiamo avuto da molto tempo. Sono tutti musicisti locali? Davvero! Beh, come ho detto, è un simpatico modo di cambiare le cose».

3. STACY ROWLES: *Tell It Like It Is* (Concord). S. Rowles, tromba; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Herman Riley, tenore; Chuck Berghofer, contrabbasso; Donald Bailey, batteria; Wayne Shorter, compositore.

Prima: «Il brano è grandioso: adoro il modo in cui passa da blues minore a blues regolare... e mi piace la fusione di tromba con sordina e tenore. Probabilmente sono Stacy e Herman. Suona anche come se ci fosse Rowles al piano, e Monty Budwig al basso. Forse Jeff Hamilton alla batteria.

«Gli assoli mi sono piaciuti; Stacy ha suonato benissimo, come fa sempre; è uno dei miei musicisti preferiti (maschi o femmine che siano). Mi ricordo quando Jimmy la portò allo Shelly's Manne Hole, avrà avuto dodici e tredici anni, e lui mi disse che stava per darle un flicorno. Ho ascoltato i suoi progressi anno dopo anno. Quattro stelle all'insieme».

Dopo: «Non era Monty al contrabbasso? Beh, quando Monty se ne andò dallo Shelly's Manne e Chuck lo sostituì, suonavano in maniera molto simile.

Los Angeles Times 3/12/89

BRIAN GADBERRY

From left, Gerald Wilson, Shorty Rogers and Bill Holman head three big bands at outdoor concert at John Anson Ford Theatre.

JAZZ REVIEW

'Great Arrangers': A Spellbinding Matinee

By LEONARD FEATHER

The great outdoor jazz concert season has begun, and it could hardly have started more stylishly than with the triple-threat attraction offered Sunday afternoon by KLON at the John Anson Ford Theatre.

"Jazz West Coast: The Great Arrangers" was the apt title. Three big bands were led by Shorty Rogers, Gerald Wilson and Bill Holman, whose writing, coupled with a full measure of spirited solos, determined the success of this often-spellbinding matinee.

Rogers was the most traditional, using several charts he wrote for sessions in the 1940s or '50s. Some were derivative but pleasant in a Basie vein; others, possibly more recent, reflected an innovative orchestral approach.

The brass section included two valve trombonists: Mike Fahn was at his voluble best in "I'm Gonna Go Fishin'" and Bob Enevoldsen was well-framed in the richly textured "Contours."

"Lanny Morgan," a mini-suite for saxophone, came alive via shifts of tempo, meter and mood, with Morgan's alto in rare form. The Coopers, Bob on tenor and Buster on trombone, also brought substance to the set, which ended with a glittering sublimation of Bud Powell's "Un Poco Loco."

Gerald Wilson moved from his standard blues opener to a series of originals, of which the Mexican-flavored "Carlos" was most typical of his unique scoring. "Pisces" found pianist Milcho Leviev in frantic form as he plowed excitingly through its shifting rhythms.

Wilson brought on a long-ago sideman, trumpeter Carmell Jones (now residing in Kansas City) as a guest soloist, reviving such early band pieces as "Blues for Yna Yna" and "Viva Tirado." Jones has lost none of his lyrical identity. Ron Barrows on trumpet, Louis Bonilla on trombone and Scott Mayo on alto helped establish the Wilson imprimatur.

Bill Holman's set displayed his arranging skill along with a sense of humor that informs such charts as his "Moon of Mannakoora" parody; the Monk tune "I Mean You," given over mainly to three soprano saxes; and the witty "Just Friends," in which a dozen horns play several choruses entirely in unison, in the style of an ad lib solo.

Bob Cooper broke it up with his masterful tenor sax on "Rhythm-A-Ning." The Mingus composition "Goodby Pork Pie Hat" was plaintively scored, using everything from piccolo and bass clarinet to muted brass.

The next concert in KLON's series will be "A Celebration of Stan Kenton," with an alumni band, April 2 at the Ford Theatre.

JAZZ REVIEW

Moore: Like a Role Model

By LEONARD FEATHER

LACY ATKINS / Los Angeles Times

The trio, from left, Jeff Hamilton, Dudley Moore and Ray Brown.

It was a delight to hear Erroll Garner at the Loa Club on Friday evening. Well, not exactly. That genius of the keyboard has not been among us for a dozen years, but if you believed in reincarnation there were many moments when it was possible to believe that he returned to us in the form of Dudley Moore.

From the very first bar of "They Can't Take That Away From Me" it was obvious, as it always seems to be when the comedian-actor turns pianist, that he fell in love at an early age with music in the Garner manner.

His amazingly fast octave-chord runs, the lag-along beat, the occasional guitar-like strumming in the left hand, all were part of the unique Garner personality. With flawlessly appropriate support from Ray Brown and Jeff Hamilton, Moore kept coming back to this style throughout a set peppered with other delights.

In a more neutral and invariably tasteful style, he offered a medley of songs named for women: "Ruby," "Laura," "Georgia" and "Brogan," the last a charming original dedicated to his wife. The Gershwin medley also worked well. In fact, Moore stumbled only when he overdid the comedy interludes.

His pseudo-operatic vocal, and the long piano solo built on the infamous "Bridge On The River Kwai" theme, are funny the first time around, but this was generally the same set he played at the club on his last visit. Still, his general good humor, phony pratfalls and sly announcements still bring the laughs they deserve.

His choice of tunes is interesting. "Quiet Night," not related to Jobim's "Quiet Nights," was a welcome reminder of a 1936 Richard Rodgers melody. Also from the Rodgers lore was "With a Song In My Heart" (1929).

Surprisingly, neither Brown nor Hamilton played a solo. What they did, though, was exactly right in terms of the requirements: They were in lock-step with a pianist for whom the art of swinging is clearly a triumphant *modus vivendi*.

DUE VOCI JAZZ NELLA HIT PARADE

L'evoluzione della pop music americana poteva del resto preparare a queste felici «intrusioni» nelle classifiche commerciali. E se Bobby McFerrin è famoso da anni, è il momento di conoscere da vicino l'altra protagonista della scalata, l'intensa Anita Baker, cresciuta nel gospel.

MITSUO BOSCOLO

di Luciano Federighi

L'inverno del 1989 sarà un giorno ricordato dai cronisti della musica leggera in Italia come quello in cui ben due cantanti vicini al jazz — Bobby McFerrin con il singolo *Don't Worry Be Happy* (Emi-Manhattan) e Anita Baker con l'album «*Giving You The Best That I Got*» (Elektra 60827) — dettero la scalata alle classifiche discografiche. Preceduta da un altrettanto rimarchevole successo commerciale in America e nel resto d'Europa, la presenza di Bobby e Anita nelle nostre hit parades non è però affatto sorprendente o paradossale: l'evoluzione stessa della musica pop angloamericana negli ultimi anni, con un progressivo ritorno di interesse per voci autentiche, a tutto tondo (vedi, in diversi settori stilistici, la fortuna di Alison Moyet, di Robert Cray, di Tracy Chapman, di Gregory Abbott), ci ha preparati alla possibilità di simili «intrusioni».

Tanto l'arguto funambolo dei «vocalistics» che la nuova signora del canto nero, inoltre, l'uno con mossa scoperta, l'altra con arte più sottile, hanno sapientemente programmato la propria accettazione da parte di un pubblico assai più vasto e generico di quello del jazz o del soul. Il caso di McFerrin è chiarissimo. Il sorridente motivetto *Don't Worry Be Happy*, di sua composizione, unisce una elementare contagiosità ritmico-melodica al potenziale «novelty» di una voce flessibile e camaleontica che — più volte sovraincisa — va a coprire ruoli distinti, scindendosi nelle sue cento luci. E l'allegro clip è già passato, in Italia, su varie reti televisive, fin da febbraio.

Con il morbido trotto della sua scansione reggae, il pigro e scabro accento antillese adottato dal cantante e la cruda articolazione grammaticale del testo, il brano si colloca in un «genere», quello della parodia caraibica, che ha una storia ormai antica: il precedente più gustoso risale al 1946 ed è il calipso *Stone Cold Dead In The Market*, cantanto in duo da Ella Fitzgerald e Louis Jordan. Anch'esso, non a caso, fu un grande hit internazionale.

Anita Baker, una cantante che rivela le proprie radici «churchy». Nella foto in alto, Bobby McFerrin, funambolo vocale.

L'album da cui il singolo è tratto (intitolato, significativamente, «*Simple Pleasure*» (7480591) conferma la scelta parallela di semplificazione sintattica e di (pacata) espressione parodistica effettuata da un McFerrin mutatosi in una sorta di *comedian* canoro. Il doo-wop di strada degli anni '50 (*Good Lovin'*), il funk-rock (*Them Changes*) e lo hard-rock inglese (*Sunshine Of Your Love*), i Beatles (*Drive My Car*), vi vengono tutti rivisitati con quell'abile e guizzante ghigno mimetico che è del resto un tratto che già caratterizzava il più creativo Bobby degli inizi sanfranciscani. A momenti, come nel rock'n'roll adolescenziale *Suzie Q*, i suoi ricami policromatici e il suo formidabile dinamismo ritmico combinandosi in un tono di astratta ironia danno una piena vitalità grottesca al materiale. Ma prevale in questo nuovo McFerrin un senso di incompiutezza e bonario disimpegno che è frutto di uno sfruttamento troppo parziale della fantasia dell'artista, a vantaggio di un più facile *appeal*.

Se Bobby entra nelle discoteche semplificando-banalizzando la sua immagine musicale, la piccola Anita Baker conquista uno status di diva smussando certe asprezze di natura gospel e assumendo una posa appena più sofisticata, senza però intaccare nella sostanza uno stile già formato nel primo album dell'83, l'eccellente «*The Songstress*» (Beverly Glen). Nativa di Toledo, Ohio, ma cresciuta a Detroit (la Detroit «adulta» e verace di Aretha, non quella pallida e ingenua di Diana Ross), emersa dieci anni or sono come solista dei Chapter 8, Anita è una delle figure di spicco di quella corrente che il critico Nelson George ha battezzato «retronuevo»: cantanti neri che recuperano valori della tradizione nera in una chiave moderna, aggiornata nei suoni.

Contralto ampio e risonante, equilibrato tra l'oro bruno delle ombreggiature profonde e il chiarore d'ambra delle plastiche modulazioni di testa, la Baker affronta ballate mature, pensose (come la stessa *Giving You The Best That I Got*), dal tono melodico sinuoso che sembra modellato sul suo canto, con una peculiare dizione un po' sfrangiata e livida, e un piglio emozionale a un tempo intenso e controllato (prima, certo, i suoi «ad lib» potevano anche essere *ferocemente* emotivi, con acuti dalla penetrazione a volte abrasiva, febbrile: e c'era un più nudo pathos e tormento in pezzi come *Feel The Need* o *Angel*), e benché la sua «jazzità» sia forse marginale, subordinata alla matrice *churchy*, l'individualità espressiva è rimarchevole e autenticamente afroamericana, il fraseggio mobile, ben scolpito.

L'eleganza un po' laccata degli arrangiamenti ha contribuito quanto l'astuta, fine compressione della voce al successo di Anita e del suo ultimo Lp. Ma non meno, direi, hanno giocato il singolare fascino del personaggio e il connubio tra tensione interpretativa e vibrante presenza scenica riflessi nella esemplare, rara essenzialità dei suoi popolari clips. Una «telegenia» complessa e inquieta e ricca di vera sensualità, la sua, che si coglie in una bella videocassetta Elektra (*One Night Of Rapture*) realizzata dal vivo in un teatro nero di Washington, con lo stesso repertorio del precedente album della cantante («*Rapture*», Elektra, dell'86) — quello che per primo l'ha proiettata anche oltre i confini etnici del soul. ●

«Non mi sorprende che fosse un tema di Wayne Shorter. In effetti, Jimmy e io avevamo un piccolo gruppo insieme, qualcosa come quindici anni fa, e un sacco di brani che Jimmy ci portava erano di Wayne».

4. HARRISON/BLANCHARD: *The Center Piece* (CBS). Terence Blanchard, tromba, compositore; Donald Harrison, soprano; Cyrus Chestnut, piano; Reginald Veal, contrabbasso; Carl Allen, batteria.

Prima: «Dava l'idea di essere Wynton. Devo dire che preferisco di molto il Wynton con Art Blakey; là c'era più sentimento. Il soprano e la tromba sono molto puliti, e l'equilibrio della registrazione è eccellente. Non ho fatto molto caso ai cambi di tempo. Quando alla fine ci sono arrivati si è sentita una melodia graziosa, ma non mi ha particolarmente emozionato. Tre stelle per la buona esecuzione».

Dopo: «Terence, già, sicuro! Sono tutti grandi strumentisti; sono probabilmente un po' più giovani di Wynton, e sono emersi un filo più tardi. Hanno una tecnica tremenda, ma perdono un po' sul piano del sentimento. Non che io voglia fare il sentimentale alla vecchia maniera, ma mi pare che se uno ha il *feeling* da giovane, lo avrà poi per tutta la carriera. Certo ho apprezzato la tecnica, comunque, e mi chiedo cosa potrebbero fare con qualcosa di un po' più semplice».

5. RUBY BRAFF: *I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You* (Finesse). Braff, cornetta; Dick Hyman, piano, arrangiatore; Bucky Pizzarelli, chitarra; Michael Moore, contrabbasso; Mel Lewis, batteria.

Prima: «È un brano che mi è sempre piaciuto suonare. Mi sembrava Ruby. Altrimenti è qualcuno che suona molto simile a lui. Mi piacciono le sezioni ritmiche con quattro musicisti, con la chitarra che suona il ritmo.

«Poteva essere Dave McKenna al piano? È sorprendente la struttura che gli hanno dato: la tromba suona sedici battute, poi l'inciso, e poi qualcun altro fa le ultime otto battute. Ruby è ottimo in questo; ricordo un'occasione di lavoro che ebbi con Carl Fontana, Joe Venuti e Ruby, forse vent'anni fa, e non avevamo idea di come suonare, ma Ruby mise tutto in piedi come se fosse una situazione pienamente organizzata.

«Cinque stelle è il massimo? Allora a Ruby ne do cinque».

Dopo: «Già, Dick Hyman... non mi sorprende. È uno dei miei musicisti preferiti. Non ha suonato in qualcuna delle cose che Bird ha fatto con gli archi? (L.F.: No). Un grande, grande musicista... e un pianista impressionante. Ho avuto la fortuna di suonare con lui in uno dei party di Dick Gibson, ed ero assolutamente deliziato ad ascoltarlo e ad essere nello stesso gruppo con lui. Tutti i musicisti lo conoscono, molto meno il pubblico».

6. ART BLAKEY: *Ronnie's A Dynamite Lady* (Roulette). Walter Davis, piano, compositore; Valeri Ponomarev, tromba; Bobby Watson, alto; Dave Schnitter, tenore. 1977.

Prima: «Ho paura di non riuscire a dire molte cose positive su questo brano. Gli assoli di sax alto, di tromba e di tenore non mi hanno impressionato. Sembrava di sentire un basso Fender, ma forse era solo una questione di incisione (L.F.: Per quel che ne so non era un Fender). Ho apprezzato la costruzione del pezzo, era abbastanza interessante, ma non credo che sarebbe molto divertente suonarlo. Due stelle».

Dopo: «Sì, conosco quel trombettista di Mosca; l'ho sentito far di meglio. Mi sorprende che Blakey suoni cose del genere. Mi sembra, come dire, un brano fuori carattere rispetto a quelli che ci fa ascoltare normalmente. Ha suonato anche composizioni davvero interessanti».

7. SUN RA: *Take The A Train* (Hat Hut). Michael Ray, tromba.

Prima: «Beh, ho riconosciuto la melodia (ride). Dopo che il pianista ha fatto le sue cose, quando l'orchestra ha cominciato a suonare in 3/4, mi sono ricordato che Bill Holman fece un arrangiamento in 3/4 di questo brano per noi, nel Tonight Show.

«Va da sé che non so chi siano (ride). Mi chiedo cosa ne penserebbe Duke! È un po' la versione più strana che mi aspetterei di sentire. Le trombe hanno del materiale, ma suonano come se non sapessero bene come utilizzarlo. Forse potrei dar loro una stella per premiare almeno il tentativo di fare qualcosa di differente.

«Il piano... Non so cosa stesse cercando di fare. Il pedale di sostegno era uguale dappertutto. La banda, presa nel suo insieme, non era tanto male, ma nonostante questo non posso asegnare più di una stella».

Dopo: «Non sapevo che fosse Sun Ra. Non l'ho mai sentito; ne ho solo sentito parlare. Ricordo che alla Jazz Times Convention c'era una mostra di fotografie, con vari soggetti, e c'era una foto di Sun Ra. E io ho detto a qualcuno, chi è questo? Non ne avevo mai sentito parlare. Ma mi hanno detto che suona da tanto; credo che sia anche nelle tue grazie.

«Michael Ray? Non conosco neanche lui. Certo se questo è tutto quello che Sun Ra ha da dire... Anche su Ornette Coleman, quando è saltato fuori, c'è stata una gran controversia, ma alla fine lui ha fatto qualcosa di bello. Ma questo... non capisco perché hanno voluto prendere un tema stupendo come *Take The A Train* per poi distruggerlo!»

8. TOM HARRELL: *The Boulevard* (Blackhawk). Harrell, tromba, compositore; Ricky Ford, tenore; Albert Dailey, piano; Bruce Forman, chitarra; Billy Hart, batteria; Eddie Gomez, contrabbasso.

Prima: «Wow!... mi piace molto. Il chitarrista è eccellente. Il trombettista è davvero bravo: un suono morbido, una gradevole continuità. Grandi assoli, e mi piace il brano: ci sono molti modi di suonarlo, e ho apprezzato tutto quello che hanno fatto. Non riesco a capire chi sono, ma meritano cinque stelle».

Dopo: Sai una cosa? Stavo per dire Tom Harrell, lo giuro! Stavo per dire, chi è, quel trombettista con Phil Woods? È uno dei miei preferiti.

«Ricordo Albert Dailey... quello che ha suonato con Stan Getz. È morto qualche anno fa.

«Certo, ho sentito Tom Harrell dal vivo. Ha dei problemi di relazione con la gente, ma quando suona scompaiono. E Phil è molto bravo con lui, lo protegge».

9. CLIFFORD BROWN/MAX ROACH: *Gertrude's Bounce* (EmArcy). Richie Powell, piano, compositore. Sonny Rollins, tenore. 1956.

Prima: Ho provato come un senso di festa ascoltando parte di questo brano. Il trombettista suona come Clifford, ma non so quanto è vecchia la registrazione. Se è Clifford, potrebbe essere Hank Mobley al tenore. Ma non credo che alla batteria ci sia Max.

«Sono molto confuso sull'organico, ma ho molto apprezzato la composizione, e i solisti, soprattutto il trombettista... Devo dare cinque stelle, per la tromba».

Dopo: «Davvero era Clifford? Con Max e Sonny? Dio, non avrei potuto indovinare che era Sonny. Buffo, però, che stessi per chiederti se al piano avrebbe potuto esserci Bud Powell... Perché c'è stato un momento in cui ha suonato esattamente come Bud, ma il resto dell'assolo non somigliava a Bud.

«Non dimenticherò mai, quando Clifford morì, che stavo lavorando al Lighthouse e ricevetti una telefonata da Max, che voleva che mi unissi al gruppo. Ma avevo appena cominciato a suonare con Howard Rumsey, dopo aver cercato per molto tempo di entrare nel suo gruppo, e sentivo che non potevo andarmene. Sono sempre stato molto grato a Max per aver pensato a me, e mi spiace di non aver accettato. Credo che fossi riluttante all'idea di essere sempre in giro».

«L'influenza costituita da Clifford è fenomenale. Sono davvero felice di averlo conosciuto. Avevamo quasi la stessa età (L.F.: Brown aveva tre anni meno) e lui era il ragazzo più simpatico del mondo, senza un vizio, e che incredibile talento!». ●

3/12 JAZZ

Schuller: A Man Who Lives in Harmony

By LEONARD FEATHER

Gunther Schuller may well be the ultimate Renaissance man of 20th-Century music.

His brilliant mind knows no barriers. During the last 40 years, his overlapping activities have found him playing French horn in the Metropolitan Opera and on a record date with Miles Davis; writing many works in the area of Western art music; composing and lecturing about "third stream music," a term he coined in 1957 to denote the combining of jazz and so-called classical elements (a close associate was John Lewis of the Modern Jazz Quartet, who recorded several of his words); serving for 10 years as president of the New England Conservatory; composing and conducting for his 16-piece ragtime orchestra; and writing the most comprehensive and valuable series of textbooks ever to deal with jazz from a scholarly technical viewpoint.

Recently, after he visited Los Angeles to conduct the ragtime ensemble in a concert at Pepperdine University, Schuller's relaxed mood belied his staggering schedule.

"It's amazing," he said, "how this music holds up for us. I can come into a ragtime concert feeling miserable, it's been a lousy day, everything's gone wrong, yet after the first four bars of 'Maple Leaf Rag' I'm flying! We do about 30 to 40 concerts a year, using some of the arrangements I've done, a lot of the Jelly Roll Morton things, and we have fun."

Ragtime represents a minor facet of his multiple images. "The main thing," he pointed out, "is that I've been very active as a composer and conductor. To give you an idea of how busy I am, right now I have 18 commissions, and I'm working on three of them more or less simultaneously. All of them have deadlines; one may be due next week, others in two or three years."

ELLEN JASKOL / L.A. Times

Gunther Schuller gets in groove in new book, "The Swing Era."

The commissions are for symphony orchestras, string quartets, chamber ensembles, and as soon as one work is finished, Schuller accepts an assignment for another, so that his schedule for "serious" music is always full. The word "serious" has to be put into quotes, since jazz has long been a no less serious subject for Schuller.

Conducting is another time-consuming factor. "Lots of European conducting; lots of guest conducting—and that can take a week, because you've got maybe two or three concerts, and four rehearsals, so there goes the week. But I love doing that. Since I gave up the French horn 25 years, conducting has been my main performance activity."

Just 20 years ago, Schuller's seminal book, "Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development" (Oxford), traced the music from its origins through the Depression years. Newly published, also by Oxford, is "The Swing Era," an astonishingly detailed work covering the period from 1930-1945. Starting with a 50-page examination of Benny Goodman, it proceeds to a brilliant analysis of Duke Ellington (110 pages), Louis Armstrong, Jimmie Lunceford and Count Basie. After devoting 160 pages to 17 other great black bands, Schuller turns to the "great soloists" (a dozen instrumentalists and Billie Holiday), then spends 138 pages on the best known white bands, concluding with chapters on the "territory bands," the small groups, and sounds to come.

Aside from its enormous size, Schuller's 900 plus pages include no less than 530 musical illustrations, based on recorded examples of solos or arrangements. This, in fact, is not a book you just read; preferably you sit at the piano and play it, with a CD or LP player at your side.

In light of the time involved even in reading "The Swing Era," one wonders how the author found time to write and assemble it.

"Well, it was slow and difficult. The first chapter I wrote, around 1970, was the one on Ellington. Then I realized that a book like this ought to start with Goodman, so I wrote his chapter.

"The fact is, I just struggled. There was a period of two or three years when I didn't write a word or listen to a single record because I was busy with the Conservatory—in fact, that was one of the reasons I left there in 1977. I knew if I stayed I could never finish this book."

Acquiring and listening to the records—some on ancient 78s or long cut-out albums—was a huge task in itself, for which Schuller thanks one of his two sons. "I engaged my son George for this job because he has an encyclopedic mind. He was in charge of amassing this tremendous record collection. We had to beg, borrow, buy, steal—it was lucky that at least in the past few years we've had this flood of reissues to draw on."

The question arises: how can this book be meaningful to anyone unable to read music?

"Well, people can get a general idea of the overall shape of a line; they can feel the general essence of what I mean. But there is really no choice for me in a book that's so essentially based on the music; that's the approach we have in the classical literature, whether it's about Beethoven or Schoenberg. The only difference is that with jazz you have to transcribe it. I do worry about that a bit, the state of musical illiteracy being what it is."

On the other hand, musical literacy must have reached a reasonable level, since Schuller has two thriving publishing companies. "My music companies are idealistic, non-commercial ventures. I put out music that might not otherwise get published; contemporary stuff, also a fair amount of jazz, including Jimmy Giuffre, Charles Mingus, George Russell, Ran Blake and Johnny Carisi, and our own editions of ragtime by Eubie Blake, Scott Joplin and Joseph Lamb. I have 98 composers in my catalogue, and I put out beautiful engraved editions.

"Along with this I have a record company, GM Records. The most famous thing I've put out so far is a recording by [saxophonist] Eric Dolphy of some things he and I did in a concert when we toured in the early 1960s. It's an interesting mix of jazz and classical."

The same comment might be made regarding Schuller's own career. In any given year, he may be found finishing up several major orchestral commissions, working on a book or article, controlling the publishing and record companies, and concertizing with his ragtime band.

"Somehow it all gets done," he said. "And then you throw in the lectures and the composer residencies. You could say it's a full life."

Los Angeles Times Sun. Mar. 26 1989 (syndicated) JAZZ

From Elektric to Akoustic With Corea

By LEONARD FEATHER

"CHICK COREA AKOUSTIC BAND." GRP 9582. ★★★★★

For the musicians so empathetically involved here—Corea, his formidable bassist John Patitucci and his totally accomplished drummer Dave Weckl—this may well be their finest hour.

Everything went right. The sound quality on the group, at least in the CD version, is magnificent. The choice of tunes is admirable, using six standards followed by two new Corea pieces ("Morning ★Sprite," "Terminal Baggage Claim") and two of his earlier works ("Circles" and "Spain").

The performances entail so many dimensions of color, character and melodic/harmonic invention that even such long familiar standards as "Autumn Leaves" and "Sophisticated Lady" make a strong impact. The opener, a very fast "Bessie's Blues," is credited to John Coltrane, but aside from the brief opening and closing theme statements it's simply three wise men blowing the blues.

The only complaint is non-musical: Corea is demeaning himself with these "kute" titles. We've had elektric, now he's akoustic. What next: will he change his name to Korea?

"LOVE MADNESS." Sherry Winston. Headfirst A 79-2. ★★½

Winston's flute is impeccably recorded and her performance is flawless, but on too many cuts she could be any competent studio musician; the instant recognition factor is missing. Her personality is ironed flat by the strictness of her settings, a welter of synthesizers, percussion, bullfrog bass, background vocals and the pop-funk singing by Jocelyn Brown on one of those sophomoric "shall-we-do-it-tonight" songs. She is at her best on the final cut, Horace Silver's "Song for My Father." Suggestion: next time, turn her loose.

"LOVE DANCE." Ivan Lins. Reprise 9 25850-2. ★★★½

In his notes, Lins calls Jolie Jones, his executive producer, "the mother of the project." That would make Quincy Jones the grandfather. The concept of an album mainly in English was no doubt smart in commercial terms. Ironically, he speaks it almost too well; the exotic charm of his own language is missed, though his melodies, notably a waltz called "The Art of Survival" and a five-star melody entitled "Evolution," are engaging, and the English lyrics by Brock Walsh most attractive. Still, the two tracks in Portuguese, "Velas" and "Comecar de Novo," aren't Sarah Vaughan in 1946. There is, in fact, a trace of Vaughan in Haynes. This collection of Jimmy van Heusen songs, with pianist Cedar Walton's trio offering ideal backing, might have been even more effective as a live night club album. There are two little known tunes, "For a Moment of Your Love" and "I Could Have Told You." But the strength here lies in the likes of "Like Someone in Love" (verse included) and "Moonlight Becomes You." In terms of vocal wardrobe, Haynes certainly knows the right things to wear.

"ARETHA'S JAZZ." Aretha Franklin. Atlantic 7 81230-2. ★★★★½

This set of 1968 and 1972 items might as well be titled "Aretha's Blues-Funk-Soul." The jazz element is strong in the big band that backs her, but material by Big Maybelle, Curtis Lewis, Charlie Singleton and Sam Cooke is basically R&B. Her sound was always jazz-drenched in a Billie-to-Dinah-to-Esther manner that works well on Holiday's "Crazy He Calls Me" and Bernstein's "Somewhere." A wild version of "Moody's Mood For Love" puts her head first into the jazz bag, and "Just Right Tonight" turns out to be a vocal version of an old Avery Parrish piano blues, "After Hours."

"V." Ralph Peterson Quintet. Blue Note 91730. ★★★★★

Peterson plays drums, but more significantly he is the composer of these six works, all conceived and executed with power, sensitivity and originality. Some of his music is complex ("Monief" is in 17/8, subdivided into two bars of 5/8 and one of 7/8), but "Bebopskerony" is just the blues. Trumpeter Terence Blanchard is a potent lead voice, with Steve Wilson (alto and soprano sax) at his side in a most promising debut, and Geri Allen again displaying her pianistic strengths. This group carries forward the noble Blue Note tradition into a new and exciting mold for the 1990s.

"RED, HOT AND BLUES." Barney Kessel. Contemporary 14044. ★★★★

Vibes and guitar make a beguiling blend. So do piano and vibes. The three ringleaders here—Kessel on guitar, Bobby Hutcherson on vibes and Kenny Barron on piano—take the quintet through a completely satisfying mainstream-bop set of standards and originals. The stretched-out "Messing With the Blues" leaves space for bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Ben Riley to trade fours. "Barniana," dedicated to Kessel, was composed by fellow guitarist Laurindo Almeida.

"UNDER NORTHERN LIGHTS." Keiko Matsui. MCA D 6274. ★★★

One of the most attractive new additions to the fusion field, Matsui plays mainly synclavier in this pastiche of pop and New Age. (One of the two vocal cuts actually includes the phrase "A new age for the world has come. . . .") She is a fluent soloist and a composer who seems to be finding her own way. Here and there are touches of guitar by Grant Geissman, saxophone or flute by Eric Marienthal.

"THE TRUTH IS SPOKEN HERE." Marcus Roberts, RCA Novus 3051-2-N. ★★★★★

It is indeed. Roberts' talent was only partially revealed in his recordings with Wynton Marsalis; here he reveals an amazing eclecticism both as composer and pianist. Marsalis himself and/or his saxophonist Todd Williams can be heard on several tracks; the late Charles Rouse plays tenor on three. Roberts runs the gamut from stride into incredibly intricate rhythmic knots on "Blue Monk," captures the Ellington piano essence in "Single Petal of a Rose" and cooks in his best straight-ahead groove on "In a Mellotone." Derivative or not, he is capable of original concepts, as his harmonically intriguing "Maurelia" reveals. Elvin Jones on drums and Reginald Veal on bass round out the group in this inspiring debut, produced and annotated by Delfeayo Marsalis.

"RAINCHECK." Nick Brignola. Reservoir CD 108 (276 Pearl St., Kingston, N.Y. 12401). ★★★★

The baritone saxophone somehow lends itself to such ballads as "My Ship" and "Darn That Dream." Brignola, one of today's foremost master of the big horn, sets it aside now and then to display first-class facility on soprano and tenor saxes and clarinet. His rhythm team (Kenny Barron, piano; George Mraz, bass; Billy Hart, drums) leaves not a millimeter for improvement. □

Los Angeles Times 3/16

JAZZ REVIEW

D'Rivera Offers More Than Basics at Catalina's

Paquito D'Rivera, the Cuban saxophonist who docked at Catalina's Bar and Grill in Hollywood on Tuesday, believes in giving the people value for money.

Example: In what was announced as an original composition dedicated to Carmen McRae, he managed to include quotes from "Mona Lisa," "Samba de Orfeu," "Bigliacci," "Allen's Alley" and a couple of other unidentified flying bodies. Seven tunes for the price of one.

The basic melody was pleasant enough, though it might have been played advantageously at a less frenetic tempo. Even D'Rivera seemed aware of this. Granting that the pace was "a bit hectic," he said: "Now we'd like to offer our South of the Border version of 'Summertime.'"

Starting with a synthesizer vamp by Cocho Abres, this took almost five minutes to get to "Summertime" itself, played in 6/4 time, followed by a 4/4 passage leading to a clarinet-and-cymbal interlude, a keening guitar foray by Fareed Haque, and an alto saxophone solo in which D'Rivera managed to incorporate bits and pieces from "Rhapsody in Blue" and "But Not For Me."

On a final samba the rhythmic accents were underlined by two Peruvians, Oscar Estagnaro on bass and Alex Acuna, the highly regarded drummer. The arrangement wove its way in and out of a quote from "Salt Peanuts" (Dizzy Gillespie, vintage 1945).

With his shrill, abrasive alto sound, high-energy style and genial personality, D'Rivera kept the customers entertained. He even had jokes such as the reference to Miami as North Cuba. As a clarinetist he has chops to spare, though an entire chorus played unaccompanied on "All The Things You Are" seemed a little much. But at least it didn't include any quotes. The group closes Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

TV REVIEWS

'Vintage Getz' and an Unforgettable Nat Cole

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Vintage Getz," airing tonight at 7 on the Bravo cable channel, is more than its title implies, since the vintage is very recent. It was filmed last year during a concert at the Robert Mondavi Winery in the Napa Valley.

Stan Getz, a leader of countless small groups for almost 40 years, is seen here heading a since-disbanded but most impressive group, with pianist Jim McNeely as a central figure and composer of the first four pieces: A rhythm tune, a waltz, a ballad and a blues number.

The always-warm sound and subtle phrasing of Getz's tenor sax can be impressive with any backing, but here, with McNeely's well-tailored themes and the strong support of Victor Lewis on drums and Marc Johnson on bass, he is in exceptionally elegant form.

The long show, which begins in daylight in a handsome arbored setting, ends 109 minutes later at twilight. Production values are minimal. There are a few crowd reaction shots; Getz speaks briefly, paying tribute to his new grandchildren and dedicating one song to the memory of his father. There is no interview. The music mercifully is never interrupted by voice-overs.

Not until an hour into the program as edited for TV does Getz get around to two of the bossa nova numbers that enhanced his fame in the early 1960s. Having fulfilled that obligation, Getz says wryly: "Well, now that we've got that out of the way. . ." and proceeds to material more to his liking: "Alone Together," Dave Brubeck's "In Your Own Sweet Way" and, for a poignant finale, "Bloodcount," the last song Billy Strayhorn wrote and clearly one that has a special significance for the ailing Getz.

It might be argued that "Vintage Getz" would have been more compact as a 60-minute show, but when artistry on this level is involved, it is all but impossible to have too much of a good thing. Getz today, as yesterday, is one of the great style setters of jazz history.

□

"The Unforgettable Nat 'King' Cole," airing at 1:30 a.m. tonight and again March 30 and April 17 on the Disney Channel, is an hourlong examination of Cole's life, using rare performance footage and interviews with relatives and friends.

Maria Cole, the singer's widow, was a consultant on the project, co-produced by Jo Lustig and BBC-TV; she is also the main speaker, talking about their lives together, leaving the musical details to Mel Torme,

Nat Cole

Stan Getz

Oscar Peterson, Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald, among others.

The problem with any artist of Cole's stature is that his hit songs were too numerous; most are heard only in brief excerpts. Still, there is enough of "The Christmas Song," "Nature Boy," "Mona Lisa" and others to convey his unique timbre, warmth and intimate personal appeal.

There are fascinating clips from a 1957 appearance on "This Is Your Life" and from "The Nat 'King' Cole Show," an NBC series that was canceled in 1957 after 65 weeks because it was impossible to find a national sponsor for a black artist. Maria Cole quotes her husband as concluding that "Madison Avenue is afraid of the dark."

Madison Avenue was not alone. The Coles' home in Hancock Park was the scene of a cross burning, chillingly described by Cole's daughter Carol. Lee Young, Cole's drummer, recalls the night when the singer was subjected to a racist attack on stage in Birmingham, Ala.

Most observers will be surprised to note that Cole's heavy smoking habit (he died in 1964 of lung cancer) is not discussed. Nor is very much made of his contribution as a jazz pianist. Far too little is heard of his playing. Even when Quincy Jones describes how European audiences cried for him to play more, the subsequent solo yields to a voice-over after a few bars.

As a pianist, Cole won Esquire awards in the 1940s and was a major influence. Failure to bring this out compounds a long-standing injustice to his memory.

Still, as a recollection of his years as a respected entertainer, whose dignity and patience enabled him to endure the bitter racism of his time, "The Unforgettable Nat 'King' Cole" is a valuable document.

LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers; one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this new series.

Born in Los Angeles March 8, 1957, Billy Childs has risen to individual prominence recently, after sideman credits with Freddie Hubbard, Dianne Reeves and J.J. Johnson. His first Windham Hill album last year, ***Take for Example This,*** *reflected his versatility. Having enjoyed acceptance in the jazz and fusion areas, he is now at work in the classical field, composing works for a string ensemble.*

1. TOMMY FLANAGAN, *Confirmation* (from *Confirmation, Enja*). Charlie Parker, composer; George Mraz, bass; Elvin Jones, drums.

Before: That was one of the first things I learned to play on. I like that form of tune, where they go down II-V starting on the VII, instead of going straight to the IV. The piano player was influenced by Bud Powell a lot, with the way he voices his left hand and the fluidity of his lines. I like his sense of phrasing, the way he doesn't always start on the beat and end on the beat.

The bass player was good; showed a lot of technique on his solo, and he walked adequately. The drummer I wasn't crazy about; he just seemed to keep time, just played brushes, and on his solo the beat got turned around. I wasn't crazy about the recording; the brushes sounded really thin. Bass player had a nice round sound. Three stars. The tune — I've played it for years but forget the name. Is it *Confirmation*

After: Really? Oh, shoot! Yeah, I heard Tommy Flanagan with Larry Gales, and in a trio with Larry Gales and Billy Higgins. Now I'm gonna burn in hell with all those New York cats for talking like that about Elvin! He is one of the all time great drummers — I just didn't like that particular performance.

2. Joanne Brackeen, *Dr. Chang* (from *Fifi Goes to Heaven*, Concord). Brackeen, piano & composer; Terence Blanchard, trumpet; Branford Marsalis, alto sax; Cecil McBee, bass; Al Foster, drums.

Before: I like what they were going after with that line. Sounded like young cats shaping what jazz is becoming. These guys had to be from New York. That piano was out of tune, but I like what he played. I'm trying to guess who would write like that and who would play like that. I'll take a wild guess: Geri Allen. Trumpet I really like; sounded a lot like Wynton. Nice fat sound and angular lines. All the horn work was good, drummer was tasty, and all in all it was a four star performance.

After: Joanne Brackeen? Wow! Branford—you know, I was gonna say Branford, but it was on alto and I didn't know he played alto. He sounds great. And she wrote it? Well, I did a tour with Freddie Hubbard around 1980, and she was opposite us. She was playing good then, pretty much the same, except her writing wasn't like this. This has shades of Ornette, with those strange lines that just climb... Back then she was playing a lot of tunes like *Nefertiti* and things like that.

3. CHICK COREA, *The Musician* (From *Return to Forever, Live*, Columbia). Chick Corea, Mini-Moog, composer; Stanley Clarke, bass; Gayle Moran, vocal; Joe Farrell, reeds; Gerry Brown, drums; Jim Pugh, trombone.

Before: Can't remember who that trombone player is. He reminds me of Bill Watrous, going up in those high notes. I really miss Joe Farrell; I played a few gigs with him just before he died. I love the combination of Stanley Clarke and Gerry Brown; they lock well together. The funk sections of this song

— Tia Dodge

BILLY CHILDS

seem more natural to me when Chick gets on the mini-moog and Stanley's popping on the bass and Gerry's playing that Latiny funk. But when they go into the jazz section, it feels kinda stiff, because Stanley's walking on an alembic electric bass and Chick's playing electric piano and just the sounds don't make it necessary to play more accurately to make it sound more like jazz.

Gayle Moran never really knocked me out. She's not really singing jazz; she sounds more like an opera singer singing jazz. She's got a beautiful clear voice, which strikes me as a good orchestrational device.

Chick's one of my influences. His playing always sounds good. When they get into the arrangement, the whole thing sounds kinda 'Vegasy,' like Las Vegas, with all the licks Chick and Joe are playing in between the interplay. I'd give it 2½ stars.

After: (LF: Since you knew who it was, we'll go to the next one. By the way, the trombonist was Jim Pugh.)

4. ART TATUM. *I Got Rhythm* (from *Art Tatum Masterpieces*, MCA). Tiny Grimes, guitar; Slam Stewart, bass; recorded 1944.

Before: Man, everybody should strive to play like that! That's 5 stars, just on GP, Art Tatum being who he is. Everybody swung. Man, I have nothing to say about this one. I'm still learning how to play like that. How can *I* comment on it. I was born in 1957!

After: (LF: He died in 1956! What year do you guess that was recorded?)

Sounds like it was near the late 40's, like maybe 1948. (LF: It was 1944.)

I can't remember when I first heard him but I remember that I first started really listening to him when my father bought me two Art Tatum albums, *Piano Starts Here*, and another one. So that's what made me really get into Tatum, trying to figure out how he modulated, because every turn is rich, not just with harmonic movement but also with orchestrational movement.

5. MARIAN MCPARTLAND. *Take the A Train* (From *Marian McPartland plays Strayhorn* Concord Jazz. Jerry Dodgion, alto sax and arranger; Steve La Spina, bass; Joey Baron, drums).

Before: That's a very witty arrangement of that song. To play that contrary motion sax line against bass line and not state the melody until the end is very interesting. Judging from that third stream type of concept of a group/ensemble type of thing, real slick arrangement of things, maybe Phil Woods? Bass player did some interesting things against the bar line; his sound was rubbery and it didn't swing as hard as I would have liked. The piano really didn't move me that much.

After: It's a nice album; I'd give it two stars. But Marian's great; she's got great harmonic feeling. She just didn't do much on this one.

6. MULGREW MILLER (*Wingspan* from *Wingspan*, Landmark). Kenny Garrett, alto sax; Steve Nelson, vibes; Charnett Moffett, bass; Tony Reedus, drums.

Before: I think that was Mulgrew Miller and boy, that was great! Everything about that I liked. I could tell that was Mulgrew because he did a certain lick that gave him away, and his agile linear approach to changes—he's one of my favorites. Everybody on this was great; the feeling was great; I really like the vibes player. I don't know who they are but I'd give it a four.

After: It was a great composition, like taking Bird and developing it. Mulgrew told me about Steve Nelson and I know Kenny. Great piece.

7. MONTY ALEXANDER. *Happy Lypso* (from *Ivory and Steel* Concord Picante). Othello Molineaux, steel drum; Robert Thomas, Jr., percussion; Frank Gant, drums; Gerald Wiggins, bass.

Before: That was pleasing to listen to. It was kinda metronomic. It really wasn't intended to go anywhere, just to stay at the same level. The piano player had phenomenal technique. It had a Caribbean flavor so I would say Monty Alexander on piano. I would give that 2½ stars because the music just didn't move me.

After: Wow! Man, Monty's great. I have his album, *We've Only Just Begun* and that's vintage Monty Alexander. I mean, he can swing hard.

8. BILL EVANS/JIM HALL. *I've Got You Under My Skin.* (from *Intermodulation*, Polygram Records).

Before: That's Bill Evans and Jim Hall. I think I have this album... I can't say enough about Bill Evans; he's the ultimate in lyricism. Melodic phrasing and harmony—you name it, you get captivated just hearing him play a simply melody. The interplay between the two of them is nice. I'd have to give it 4½ stars.

After: I'm not sure which Bill Evans/Jim Evans album I have, whether it's *Intermodulation* ... Oh yeah, I have another one where they do *My Funny Valentine*. But on this one, I even like how the piano sounded, dry but full.

(LF: The album you have was made almost seven years earlier). ■

3/19

JAZZ

Billy Taylor Hits the Road

By LEONARD FEATHER

It is doubtful that any individual now active has had a greater effect on the appreciation of jazz than the genial, protean pianist and educator Dr. Billy Taylor. Once a month on average, during Charles Kuralt's "Sunday Morning" show, he is seen on CBS-TV interviewing a jazz personality, reviewing and analyzing the artist's work, and generally spreading the word for this music in a style that is accessible to the millions who tune him in regularly.

His involvement with the teaching and propagation of jazz has tended to overshadow a long standing reputation as a fluent and inventive pianist and composer. As if to remind audiences of his original talent, Taylor recently took to the road for a concert tour, armed only with his two sidemen (bassist Victor Gaskin and drummer Bobby Thomas), but occasionally joined by a symphony orchestra.

"This is the kind of thing I've been trying to set up for years," said Taylor during a recent five-day stopover in Los Angeles. "We started on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, playing one of our first dates with the Albany Symphony in Albany, Ga., and since then we've been all around the country from Maine to California.

"Our programs were inspired by Black History Month; we've had the trio in residence at various colleges, all three of us involved in educational activities. We'll rehearse the college jazz band, or I'll give a lecture for the harmony and theory students in a classroom, or we'll talk about the history of jazz, each from our individual perspectives."

Interspersed amid his trio concerts are occasional duo piano dates with Ramsey Lewis. Playing with other keyboard artists has long been a special pleasure for Taylor.

"Three years ago I did a series of programs for Bravo cable television in which I invited other pianists as guests, and we'd play solos and duos—much the same thing Marian McPartland does on her National Public Radio shows. In fact, my first guests on the show were Marian and George Shearing; we were giving a joint concert in Florida, which we taped and edited into a one hour pilot.

"Bravo liked it, and the series ran regularly for a while. We had Les McCann, Dick Hyman, Blossom Dearie, John Lewis and other good friends. That's how the Ramsey Lewis thing came about; he called one day and suggested doing a two-piano concert. I invited him on the show to see how it would work.

"Did it ever work! It felt so good that we set up an in-person concert in Kansas City—no rhythm section; just the two of us playing non-stop for two hours and 10 minutes!"

The partnership evolved into a recording date for CBS Masterworks. "We did compositions by other pianists—Chick Corea, who wrote the title tune for us, 'We Meet Again,' and Duke Ellington, Denny Zeitlin and others. When the record comes out this summer we're going to do a complete tour together."

ROBERT GABRIEL / L.A. Times

Billy Taylor

Taylor's commitments to playing have long been interwoven with his educational ventures, which date back three decades. In 1958, heading the house band in the NBC series, "The Subject is Jazz," he became the first black musician to lead an orchestra on a network station. (One of his sidemen was Doc Severinsen.)

In 1975 he received his doctorate in music education at the University of Massachusetts for a dissertation called "The History and Development of Jazz Piano: a New Perspective for Educators."

Of all his good works, the one dearest to Taylor's heart has been Jazzmobile. Beginning in 1965 as a project to bring live music to the streets of Harlem, it has expanded into a series of workshops and seminars.

"We now have our own building. We're trying to fashion it into a small recording studio combined with a rehearsal hall, so that young musicians who cannot afford to go downtown will have a place to try out their ideas.

"Jimmy Owens, who was a trumpeter in my 'David Frost Show' band, is supervising this logical extension of our workshops. What I like about it is that people come from all over Harlem every Saturday to 127th Street and Madison Avenue, and despite all the bad-mouthing you hear about how dangerous Harlem is, we have about 65% female students; we also have a large percentage of Asians. The age range, from 11 to 67, cuts across all sorts of lines."

With the concert tours, the college residencies, the literary forays, the composing and arranging, and recordings, how does Taylor continue to fit "Sunday Morning" into his schedule?

"I can answer that in three words," he said with a laugh. "With great difficulty!" But the results, he says, have made it all worth while.

"We've done some very rewarding shows with Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Carter, Maynard Ferguson, and non-musicians like Max Gordon, who's in his 80s and still runs the Village Vanguard.

"Peggy Lee was particularly gracious. She hadn't been well, and to make things rougher there was a long delay in getting the camera crew to her house. She just said, 'No problem. Let's all have some coffee,' so we spent the whole afternoon with her and got a nice interview.

"One of the funnier moments was the time I had Bobby McFerrin as a guest. I had a chance to bring on his father, Robert McFerrin, who is an opera singer—in fact, he was the first black opera singer to play major roles at the Met.

"Thinking about the contrast in their musical approaches, I said to him, 'You're into opera. You teac[h] voice. How do you feel abo[ut] Bobby?'

"His reply was, 'Well, I ha[ve] some problems with the way [he] dresses. He looks like he's be[en] sent on stage to move the piano.'

'Catfish Hotel' Won't Fool Anyone in the Know

3/24

'At the Catfish Hotel,'' to be seen at midnight tonight on the Bravo Channel, was presumably designed as a nostalgic glance at the formative years of jazz. Recorded at the Columns Hotel in New Orleans, it was produced and directed by Jim Gabour.

Although Curt Jerde, who plays tuba and was the musical director, is credited with historical research, there is almost nothing to be learned from the script. The story of the New Orleans funeral is told as if we hadn't heard it a thousand times before. This sequence begins with "Just a Closer Walk With Thee," ending with dancers galumphing around to the tune of "Oh Didn't He Ramble."

The band includes Wendell Brunious, a trumpeter who delivers a passable plunger-muted solo, and David Sager, a capable trombonist. For the rest, it's musical twilight time, with a sadly out-of-tune clarinet, a primitive banjo solo and a generally lackluster program of performances in a noble early idiom that deserved better.

For the naive viewer, "At the Catfish Hotel" may come across as an authentic re-creation of a colorful era. For the informed, it will simply look and sound like a botched opportunity.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Florence Orchestra at Alfonse's

'Welcome to the world's biggest sardine can," said Bob Florence as his 17-man orchestra prepared to take on a bustling, wall-to-wall roomful of admirers at Alfonse's in North Hollywood.

Any band this large must be as strong as its weakest link. Florence has no weak links, and the strongest of all is his own talent as a composer-arranger.

He is a master leader who makes more of his charges than mere brass, sax and rhythm sections. In "Silky," for which the fluegelhorn of Steve Huffsteter wove some of the handsomest sounds of the opening set, he provided the soloist with a charming melody, a Latin rhythm, and a background that changed colors frequently, using at one point three flutes, a clarinet and bass clarinet.

Florence's ingenuous version of "Body and Soul" Monday evening ran to about 10 minutes, with a chorus and a half of his own harmonically oblique piano to set the mood. The orchestra then came in (at a doubled-up tempo) for a series of variations separated by surprised interludes. By the fourth chorus the sound had exploded into a near-fortissimo, yielding to the leader's keyboard near the end.

Florence's personnel have changed considerably over the years; only a few of his original sidemen remain, and the lineup Monday reflected the game of musical chairs common among local gigging bands. Lanny Morgan, Bob Cooper and others are the same men we saw two weeks ago with Bill Holman and/or Shorty Rogers.

With his five trumpets, four trombones, five saxophones and rhythm, Florence creates a sonic kaleidoscope unlike any other orchestral sound in the Southland. Not for nothing was his last album titled "State of the Art."

—LEONARD FEATHER

3/24 Los Angeles Times

"MAGICAL! BRILLIANT! COMPELLING!"

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Jazz Reviews

Pianist Ahmad Jamal: Sounds of Surprise at Catalina's

What is Ahmad Jamal's secret? There must be a special magic that enables this virtuosic pianist to retain the interest of his audience with a program devoted mainly to relatively little-known original compositions.

At Catalina's, where he opened Tuesday, Jamal again demonstrated his ability to capture a crowd's attention, not through the recognizability factor, but on the inherent strength of his ideas, and the shifting and swirling of creative patterns. An almost idyllic introductory passage might lead to a violent rhythmic explosion, then to a sequence in Latin rhythm followed by another in straight 4/4.

If ever any artist symbolized what has been called the sound of surprise, it is Jamal. The same contrasts were evident in "Catalina," a recent piece named for the club's owner. Heavy bass accents and blueslike right hand gave way to a simple single-note interlude; high-energy and low-calorie passages went back and forth while Jamal, as if carried away by his own unpredictability, might play for a short while standing up, then sit down to deliver a fusillade of fortissimo chords.

Except for a Jimmy Heath composition, "Melodrama," all the works were his own. The days of "Poinciana" and "But Not for Me" are far behind him, and though there may be moments when you long for a reminder of his unique way with such familiar themes, what Jamal offers now is more innovative and more demanding both of himself and of his listeners.

He still has James Cammack on electric bass, and a new drummer, Billy Kilson, who followed the lead's tempo shifts and abrupt dynamic changes sensitively. Only when Jamal stepped away from the keyboard to offer extended time to his sidemen did the interest level lag. A bass interlude or long drum solo tends to break up the continuity.

Significantly, Jamal drew on Tuesday what looked more like a Saturday-night crowd. He will remain at the Cahuenga Boulevard venue through Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

NEW AGE MUSIC

The Great New Age of Craig Huxley

By LEONARD FEATHER

In 1967, a 13-year-old actor named Craig Hundley was cast as Captain Kirk's nephew in an episode of television's "Star Trek." At that time he was plunging into dual careers as a TV actor (he won roles in "Kung Fu," "The Flying Nun" and "Bewitched") and as a prodigy pianist.

Many years later he returned to the "Star Trek" saga in a very different role; now a successful composer in the electronic music field, he supplied some of the eerie sounds in the Klingon sequence of the film "Star Trek: the Motion Picture." He also worked on the synthesizer programming for parts of "Star Trek II" and was involved with the movie series through "Star Trek V."

Today the one-time teen-age whiz, now 35, is at the center of his own musical and electronic empire. Now known as Craig Huxley (he wanted to identify with the family of philosophers), he owns a $3-million recording studio in Burbank, named (what else?) Enterprise. He records his own music and the music of countless others who use his studios; he produces and performs during many of the sessions, often using instruments he invented. In some cases he releases the results on his own New Age label, Sonic Atmospheres, or on his recently launched pop label, Sling Shot Records.

During his teen years, Hundley/Huxley was identified with jazz; he even had a young trio that played at Shelly's Manne Hole. But at around age 20, he says, "I got out of jazz because I couldn't stand what fusion was doing to it. I found myself more interested in philosophy, and in electronics and New Age and the avant-garde. Then I began inventing and building instruments."

One of his more celebrated inventions, heard during those weird interludes in "Star Trek" movies, is the Blaster Beam. Its sounding board resonator, along with magnets, strings and an 18-foot aluminum beam, can create some of the strangest sounds ever heard. "Some of them," says Huxley, "can be felt rather than heard, as they go a whole octave lower than any note on the piano."

Though he still occasionally plays piano, Huxley's world today is populated by synclaviers, Yamaha TX816s, Roland Super Jupiters, a Flexitonal Clavichord and, of course, the Blaster Beam, all of which can be heard in "Quantum Mechanix," a recent album in which he took part as leader, composer, arranger, producer and engineer.

One of the participants in "Quantum Mechanix" is Hyman Katz, who like Huxley has become as much a businessman as a musician; he is now general manager of Sonic Atmospheres. He and Huxley jammed together as children. Katz is the son of noted cellist Fred Katz, who played in the original Chico Hamilton Quintet.

Here and there in this curious and intriguing CD, along with effects that sometimes suggest a latter-day, toned-down counterpart of Weather Report, are brief reminders of Huxley's past associations: saxophonists Bud Shank and Bob Sheppard are heard on several tracks. For the most part, though, it's Spacemaster Huxley who's clearly in charge.

More typical of Huxley's logue, which now include bums (all available on CD contributions by Don Ha sidered one of the masters Age pop, whose "Elevatio corded good airplay and re ble sales, was followed by " ing Points," which has impassioned praise from the

Please see

ANACLETO RAPPING / L.A. Times

Craig Huxley: "I still play Bill Evans tapes in my car."

composer Mau- ogramming the e released the nd track album heres.) Shortly ired him to co- for "2010," for ated with com-

age piano prodigy and part-time actor.

Today he is a successful businessman, a husband, father of a 2-year-old daughter, and, at heart, a musician who has never forgotten the old values.

"You know," he said, "I still play Bill Evans tapes in my car." □

Huxley

Continued from Page 79

John Sebastian, who programs for the radio station KTWV, "the Wave." Harriss is a virtual one-man band, with his Steinway grand, synclavier, Yamaha and Macintosh computer, and with engineer Gary Chase organizing the synclavier programming for such Harriss pieces as "Sunlight Samples" and "The Rajah's Tea Party."

"With people like Don Harriss, Michael Stearns and L. Subramaniam," says Huxley, "we have a great line of albums. What we have to contend with is the confusion about categories—whether this or that album should be classified as adult contemporary, AOR [album-oriented rock] or whatever.

"After four years of running the company we have a better product. The only real hang-up is distribution, which seems to be a harder problem than ever."

But Huxley has enough other irons in the fire to minimize any need to worry about the evolution of his label. His studios are in constant use by other companies. Answering a phone call the other day, he said: "I'll have to call you back—we're busy in all four studios at the moment. We have the Doobie Brothers in one room, Melissa Manchester in a second, Tom Jones in another, and the flutist Steve Kujala is making an album in the fourth."

Before the dream of building his own studios and record companies became a reality, Huxley had a long run as a performer and composer in TV and movies, working on countless sessions with Quincy Jones, Michael Jackson, James Ingram and other pop biggies.

For the movie "Dreamscape" he produced the entire sound track, working with the composer Maurice Jarre and programming the synthesizers. (He released the "Dreamscape" sound track album on Sonic Atmospheres.) Shortly afterward MGM hired him to co-produce the score for "2010," for which he collaborated with composer David Shire on a predominantly electronic score.

Despite the pressures of his multiple operations, Huxley continues to keep his hand in as a composer. "I still do 'Knots Landing' about once a month, with Jerry Immel as co-composer, and I collaborated with Leon Ware on writing and producing 'Undercover,' which was the title number for Leon's album on Sling Shot Records."

At present the Sling Shot label is more or less dormant, but Huxley and Katz have come up with a third company, Sonic Edge. "We want to use this for material that is, so to speak, on the cutting edge of today's developments," says Katz—a surprising statement, since it would hardly seem possible for anything to be more contemporary than what can already be found in the Sonic Atmosphere lists.

With his studios, his record companies, the composing and arranging and inventing and constant search for expansion and innovation, Huxley has succeeded in areas far beyond anything that was predicted for him during his years as a teen-age piano prodigy and part-time actor.

Today he is a successful businessman, a husband, father of a 2-year-old daughter, and, at heart, a musician who has never forgotten the old values.

"You know," he said, "I still play Bill Evans tapes in my car." □

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Jazz

Corky Hale's Harp Hits a High Note

By LEONARD FEATHER
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

"Nice and Easy" was the first song in Corky Hale's show on Friday at the Gardenia—a perfect opener, defining a unique set that displayed her multiplicity of talents.

The autobiographical format left no doubt that she has had a career straddling idioms and instruments. Starting with preteen jobs at home in Freeport, Ill., she worked with Horace Heidt, Liberace, Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Billie Holiday and dozens more.

Illustrating her narration with a solo for each artist, Hale sang on some numbers, her voice modestly sufficient and pleasing, and played piano often in a style that crossed borders among pop, jazz and classical, but achieved her true moments of glory playing the harp. Hale plays it with a finesse that fits its special grandeur, even making it swing and revealing a subtle harmonic imagination.

Backed at times by bassist John Leitham and keyboardist Jeff Lass, Hale took the audience entertainingly through this guided tour of a spectacularly eventful life. Not by chance, every song illustrating her story was a classic pop gem.

Hale has long been one of the most underrated artists on the entire music scene, largely because she chooses to perform so infrequently.

Due back this weekend at the Gardenia, she is a treat not to be missed.

■ *Corky Hale appears Friday and Saturday at the Gardenia, 7066 Santa Monica Blvd. $12 cover, $8 two-drink minimum. Dinner at 7 p.m., show at 9 p.m. (213) 467-7444.*

Los Angeles Times 4/3

JAZZ REVIEW

Societies Lock Horns Over Image

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Southern California Hot Jazz Society, the Hot Jazz & Alligator Gumbo Society, the Fresno Dixieland Society. . . . It was easy to discern, from the names of the groups, the general orientation of the American Federation of Jazz Societies, which launched its annual convention Friday at the Pacifica Hotel.

These nonprofit organizations do their best to stir up interest by presenting jazz in their areas. However, if the live events presented Friday and Saturday were any yardstick (no live music was scheduled for Sunday), the societies have a serious image problem.

Friday evening, the admirable clarinetist Abe Most, 69, leading a group that included a fine vibes soloist, Peter Appleyard, and Lou Levy on piano, offered a set of swing standards, representative of an idiom that had its heyday half a century ago.

DOUGLAS R. BURROWS

Charles McPherson represents bebop at jazz society convention.

On Saturday afternoon, it went backward from there. Rosy McHargue, a saxophonist who admitted to 87 years, talked and sang and played his way through a set that included such novelty songs as "When Rosy Magula Does the Hula Macula." It might as well have been George Burns. An octet billed as the Jazzin' Babies Jazz Band played this set, complete with tuba and banjo.

Saturday evening, Charles McPherson, pushing 50, a last-minute addition (he was to have taken part only as a panelist), represented bebop, an idiom that is now rapidly becoming traditional. He played mainly tunes of the 1930s and '40s, but the group soared on the strength of its personnel, as well as a delightful McPherson original and a brilliant blues featuring pianist Alan Broadbent and bassist John Clayton. McPherson, his son Charles Jr. on drums, Clayton and pianist Gerald Wiggins were the only black musicians who performed, and the latter two were the only young musicians presented to an elderly, almost all-white audience that became notably sparse during his set.

The trouble is that jazz, as Times Arts Editor Charles Champlin said in his keynote speech, must not renounce its past, but by the same token must not deny or ignore its evolution, which the jazz societies tend to do. Four of the federation's directors and one officer recently resigned to protest the traditionalist bias, pointing out that the societies are supposed to represent *all* forms of jazz.

Artists like the Marsalis family, Terence Blanchard, Emily Remler, Jane Ira Bloom, Marcus Roberts, Harry Connick Jr. and countless others in their teens, 20s and 30s need desperately to be recognized. We cannot drive Model T Fords in an age of Jaguars and Mercedes.

JAZZ REVIEW 4/7

Eubanks Quartet at Vine Street

The Vine St. Bar & Grill in Hollywood has such a splendid track record, bringing in some of the jazz world's outstanding singers as well as an occasional high-caliber instrumental group, that a lapse from grace once in a while can be understood. The Wednesday night opening of Kevin Eubanks' quartet was a case in point.

Music has always been said to consist of three primary elements: melody, harmony and rhythm. To these a fourth has been added in the last decade: energy. Eubanks, a guitarist who works the funky side of the street, has it in abundance, as do his sidemen.

With Edward Simon on acoustic and electric keyboards, Kenny Davis on electric and upright bass, and the explosive Gene Jackson on drums, Eubanks launched his set with a number that seemed to last forever (somebody clocked it at 25 minutes), with an endlessly repeated riff underlined (or undermined) by a slow crescendo on drums. Hypnotic or chaotic? Take your pick.

The second number found Jackson hitting a resounding DHWACK! on the third beat of every bar from here to eternity. Eubanks, as is his wont, displayed chops to spare; in fact, his technique sometimes tends to get the better of him.

Though it may seem unfair to make a comparative judgment, it is true that his current album, using various groupings from solo to trio to quintet, and with sometimes valuable vocal effects, makes the same material sound quite appealing at times. The closing tune, "Cookin'," done at the club simply as a guitar and drums duet, seemed particularly barren.

Eubanks will continue to draw his fans (and they are numerous) through Saturday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Please see JAPAN, Page 9

SATURDAY LETTERS

Jazz Society Specializatio

As president of the Southern California Hot Jazz Society, I feel I must respond to Leonard Feather's article about the American Federation of Jazz Societies' annual convention ("Societies Lock Horns Over Image," April 3).

Feather seems to feel that vintage jazz styles no longer have anything to do with the idiom and that anyone enjoying such music must be ignoring the changes that have taken place over the years.

No other art form has to carry the burden of arbitrary obsolescence that Feather requires.

Young artists do need to be recognized. But surely we can accomplish this without the forced retirements of older artists or those wishing to follow in their footsteps.

If Leonard Father were the advocate of jazz that he purports to be, he might refrain from taking gratuitous potshots at some of its more accessible versions.

JACK WIDMARK
San Pedro

Trad, Dixieland, New Orleans and related older jazz forms are more uplifting, fun and consistent with the upbeat spirit of the American experience than so much of the later, dissonant, brooding jazz that draws inspiration from poppy pods and Colombian agriculture.

Trad-oriented jazz societies are deeply aware of, and grateful for, the black invention of jazz a century ago. Apart from the elderly members of the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, there are practically no blacks learning, playing or interested in listening to classic jazz, and outreach efforts by clubs like ours fall flat. Actually, we're keeping alive benchmark music that blacks have abandoned.

WILL CONNELLY
President, Hot Jazz & Alligator Gumbo Society
Plantation, Fla.

Feather's critical remarks about Rosy McHargue were belittling to one of the jazz greats of our time.

And his statement that Charles McPherson was a last-minute fill-in in the live entertainment schedule is wrong. McPherson was booked months in advance.

ARTHUR O. DROLETTE
Co-Chairman, American Federation of Jazz Societies Convention
Fresno

Asking a Dixieland society to play modern jazz is like demanding that a Bach society play some Sousa marches. Feather should know that to impose such a switch on people who joined a society for a particular style would cause them to leave the concert hall or cancel their memberships. You must sell tickets and memberships to have a successful jazz society.

HAROLD GRAY
Past President
Potomac River Jazz Club
Washington, D.C.

4/9/89 JAZZ

Tom Scott Makes the Sajak Connection

By LEONARD FEATHER

By the time he reached the age of 20, Tom Scott was already a near-veteran of the studio and club scenes in Hollywood. He had two Impulse albums to his credit, had mastered a dozen instruments (saxes, clarinets, flutes), played with Roger Kellaway, Oliver Nelson and Don Ellis, and was a regular on such TV series as "Ironsides" and "Good Morning World." Like his father, the veteran studio composer Nathan Scott ("Dragnet," "Wagon Train," "Twilight Zone"), he had also embarked on a composing career.

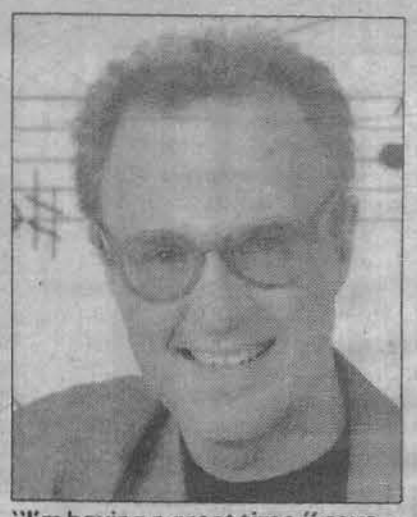
At age 40, with a 1,000 credits as a writer for films and TV shows, winner of seven Grammy nominations and one Grammy (for his arrangements on Joni Mitchell's "Court and Spark"), Scott had a busy and rewarding life in music. It seemed like the wrong time for an abrupt change; yet that is what happened late last year, when he was approached to lead the band on the new Pat Sajak Show.

"It's odd," he said the other morning before leaving for a rehearsal at CBS, "a year ago my wife and I saw Pat Sajak hosting 'A.M. America,' and we noticed what a witty job he did; we thought he'd make the ideal host for an evening talk show."

Approached late last year by the producer of the projected new series, Scott arranged to meet Sajak, "so that we could see if the chemistry would be right between us. Well, for a week I asked around about him, to get an idea of what he was like. On the basis of what I heard, I decided how to handle the meeting.

"I said, 'It's nice to meet you. I must tell you I've been spending the last week, in anticipation of this meeting, trying to find someone who would tell me that Pat Sajak is an ass, but I couldn't find anyone to say that.' He laughed and said: 'Obviously you didn't speak to my ex-wife.' Anyhow, we hit it off right away and became buddies."

Once assigned the job and told he could use seven sidemen, Scott had to decide on an instrumentation. "I could have had four horns, but so much contemporary music, like country and rock, doesn't use horns much; so along with Jerry Peters, who's a very versatile pianist, composer and producer, I got a second keyboard player, Barnaby Finch, who can cover various horn or string parts on the synthesizers.



"I'm having a great time," says music director Tom Scott.

"My drummer, Art Rodriguez, and bassist, Tim Landers, both toured Europe last year with me and Dave Grusin and Lee Ritenour. They were happy to take a job that would keep them in town.

"Eric Gale, a great guitarist, had just moved here from New York, so he was a natural choice; and to cover some kinds of contemporary and rock things I got Carlos Rios, who's played guitar with Chick Corea and was Lionel Richie's

musical director."

With one chair still open, Scott decided to use a second horn. "A friend at CBS told me about David Koz, a young fellow who plays saxes, flute and the EWI—electronic wind instrument. I didn't know him, just called him out of the blue, and he's worked out great. Besides, he's about 26, and most of us in the band are around the 40 mark, so it's nice to have a young, good-looking guy in there."

Using quality as his only criterion, Scott was pleased that he wound up with "a sort of Noah's Ark—a couple of black guys, a couple of Latinos, a couple of Jewish guys. I'm sorry we don't have a lady in the band, but I approached Patrice Rushen and she was too busy."

The program is building up a fair track record for musical guests; sometimes Scott is consulted for ideas. It was he who was responsible for the appearance of Take 6, the phenomenal a cappella vocal group. "They were on the show, as it turned out, the night after their big Grammy sweep, so I became a hero for recommending them.

"We've had Chick Corea, George Duke has been booked, Milt Hinton was a wonderful guest, playing the bass with us and talking about his autobiography."

The schedule, as for any five-days-a-week show favoring musical guests, is sometimes hectic. "Depending on how many numbers I have to arrange or rearrange, I'll be busy from at least noon, then start rehearsal around two, and we tape the shows from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

"Editing down some of the charts can be challenging and fun. When George Burns was on, they gave me a full orchestral chart that must have been decades old, with all kinds of pencil scratches. I had to adapt it to our small group," Scott said.

Among his chores is the assembling of "playon" music for guests associated with a particular theme. This is where Scott's state-of-the-art computer comes in handy. "I've compiled, via the computer, about 70 'playons' for specific people, like, if it's someone from 'Dynasty' or 'Dallas,' we'll use the thing they're best known for," Scott said.

Like his sidemen, Scott is happy to be working steadily in town, the more so since (as Sajak's viewers learned from his bulletins over the preceding and subsequent days) Scott became the father of a daughter, Owen, born just two weeks ago.

Another advantage of this milieu, he says, is the respect accorded him. "Unlike some areas, such as motion picture composing, you don't have people looking over your shoulder, scrutinizing and questioning every move you make. The people I'm working with now trust my instincts."

Inevitably, the time-consuming schedule has necessitated his turning down lucrative offers from what used to be his main sources of income. The other day, he said, his agent had called to report an offer for a TV pilot.

"Actually he was just as happy I turned it down, even though he's getting no commission on the Sajak show. As he put it, 'Listen, this show is doing more for your image, your recognition factor, than anything you could possible do elsewhere. Later on, it will be even easier for us to get jobs for you, on the strength of the reputation you're building now.'"

And when might "later on" be?

Scott smiled. "Frankly, I think I'm going to stay with this show as long as it lasts. I'm having a great time." □

LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers; one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this new series.

This month's musician: Terri Lyne Carrington

After a decade as a teen and post-teen prodigy in Boston and New York, Terri Lyne Carrington moved to California early this year to take a regular job as house drummer with Michael Wolf on the nightly Arsenio Hall TV show. The interview took place shortly after she took up residence in Glendale, CA, and just before the release of *Real Life Story*, her first album on the Verve Forecast label.

1. COURTNEY PINE. *A Ragamuffin's Tale* (Island). Courtney Pine, tenor; Paul Hunt, bass; Mark Mondesir, drums. Rec. 1988.

Before: I love that type of playing. It's actually my favorite type of playing with a lot of motivic development and without piano or chordal instruments; just saxophone, bass and drums. And it's good for drummers, because a drummer gets to walk like the bass and comp like a piano player would.

Sounds like Branford to me. Executed very well, and the drummer was great. I'm not gonna guess who it is 'cause I don't want to be wrong. I would give it 4 stars.

After: Really? I know Courtney. I didn't recognize that.

LF: Really? Where'd you meet him?

TLC: When I was with Wayne Shorter, this band that was opposite us.

LF: In New York?

TLC: No, in Europe.

LF: In England?

TLC: Yeah. Which album was that — a new one?

LF: Yeah, let me show you.

TLC: Branford will probably kill me. No, he wouldn't kill me. It's not an insult or anything.

LF: That was Mark Mondesir on drums, Paul Hunt on bass.

TLC: I know Mark very well. See, to me, the young musicians — i.e. up to 25 — they grow and develop fast. So to me it's harder to recognize somebody — I've heard them play [illegible] a bit, actually. And people grow and improve.

2. ELVIN JONES. *5/4 Thing* (from *Coalition*, Blue Note).

Before: Elvin Jones! I have that record. I think. Well, my father had it. I don't have any records.

LF: Do you know what it's called?

TLC: I want to say *5/4 Thing*. I think George Coleman wrote it. I believe I played it with him. I played it with him a few times. Anyway, that's a great song. Only problem, the thing that bugs me — I mean, I gotta give Elvin five stars, or a hundred stars. You can't really judge someone in terms of stars when it's somebody who helped innovate as much as he did. But the conga drums bugged me, going through the drum solo. Instead of keeping that 5/4 clave thing going, he could have just played along with Elvin. I couldn't zero in on what Elvin was doing.

After: Candido? Well, I didn't know who it was, but he was too loud in the mix. So Frank Foster was on the date, too? But the soloist was definitely George Coleman.

3. FLORA PURIM. *A Esperanca* (from *Midnight Sun*, Virgin). Purim, Michel Columbier, composers; Airto Moreira, percussion.

Before: I liked the song; that was interesting to me because I'm concentrating a lot on writing and singing. The composition was very beautiful. It had definite Brazilian overtones. The chords moved in that Brazilian way.

I've been listening to a lot of Brazilian music over the past couple of years. Wayne Shorter is really fond of this kind of music. I'd give this four stars.

After: I liked the bass player — it sounded like a combination of acoustic and electric bass. Randy Tico? I don't know him.

I thought it was Flora and Airto, but I'm not familiar enough with their stuff, so I

didn't want to say. There's a lot of clones that come out, you know. I don't like to insult people, if it's someone just somebody trying to sound like them. This wasn't your typical conga type percussion — it was, like, toys, which Airto does well. A different sound.

4. RAY CHARLES & BETTY CARTER. *Just You, Just Me* (ABC). Marty Paich, arranger, conductor; Mel Lewis, drums.

Before: That was great; it was Betty Carter. She's one of my favorites. Her phrasing is unbelievable — she's one of the greatest phrasers of all time.

I don't know whose big band that was, but it was supertight. The trumpet section was reminiscent of Basie. I liked the drummer's time. You know, time is so very personal — some people like to hear it played on top, some like to hear it behind the beat, whatever. This guy set up the band just right.

The other singer? Yeah, it sounded like Jon Hendricks for a second, but I couldn't swear that it was Jon. It was a very familiar voice. Five stars.

After: That was Ray Charles? And the tenor solo was Fathead Newman? Well, I never knew about this — didn't know Betty Carter and Ray Charles recorded together. So that was Ray Charles' band? (LF: No, it was an all star pick-up band.) The trumpet section really killed me. Marty Paich? I don't know him. His son is David Paich? I don't know him either.

5. TONY WILLIAMS. *Only With You* (from *Angel Street*, Blue Note). Williams, drums, composer; Billy Pierce, saxophone; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Charnett Moffett, bass; Wallace Roney, trumpet.

Before: It sounded like a Tony Williams composition. Sounds like Tony Williams' band too. The drums were up in the mix.

Depending on which record that was, it could be Billy Pierce, Wallace Roney, Charnett Moffett, Mulgrew Miller.

After: I'm not surprised. Tony has a unique way of writing, but it completely amazes me that he's doing that kind of thing these days. He's done so many things — with Miles, with Lifetime, and back to a more straight kind of jazz. All growing experiences.

LF: Do you like what he's doing now with this group?

TLC: I think people should do whatever they want to do. He's obviously doing that because he's obviously not concerned about making money. That medium isn't — you know — it's not for making a lot of money. So he must really want to do it, and I think that for a long time he's wanted to really write and lead another band. I'm happy for him that he's doing it, as long as he's happy.

I'm not trying to dodge your question, but I don't like to make comparisons. If I were to compare it with Miles Davis — well, I kind of like musically what was happening in the '60's. But these are different times and he's in a different phase. Tony's grown, he's not a kid any more.

I've heard him play some things recently, with Herbie Hancock, or whatever, that seem more challenging to him, to my ear, and he's as great as ever. But I can't expect him to play in a certain way today. I don't play like I played five years ago. Some people probably liked my playing better when I was 16 or 17. That's their taste. But if I were playing the same, I would be stagnant.

I'd rather have someone do something different, whether I like it or not, than do the same thing over and over again.

I would rate Tony five stars, but what I actually heard them I would rate 3½.

6. BUDDY RICH-MAX ROACH. *Sing Sing Sing* (from *Rich vs. Roach*, Mercury).

Before: Whoooo! Thunderous drumming! Sounds like Max Roach to me. Good arrangement too. I forget the name of that song, but I've heard it before.

What can I say? Five stars, a million stars.

Max took drum solos to another level; but I wasn't around at the time, so I can't say he was the first person to do this. He knocked me out at a solo drum concert when I was maybe eight or nine years old. I would go home and try to play the stuff I heard.

After: Really? You know what? I thought of Buddy Rich as soon as those buzz rolls came in. Then I thought maybe there was a time when Max was playing like that. But I couldn't really tell that there were two drummers.

I heard something in there that reminded me of a drum book that I used to practice out of. Buddy Rich and Philly Joe Jones both came out of that kind of snare drum school.

I've heard a lot of people say Buddy was the greatest because he had the greatest technique, but I see him as just a great drummer, and very musical, and he swung; the technique was secondary. He was a great influence for me and people still hear him in me sometimes when I play solo. He helped me out a lot, too; took me on TV shows. Even let me sit in with his big band when he came to Boston. Max Roach did the same, helped me a lot after I went to New York.

7. CHICK COREA ELEKTRIC BAND. *City Gate/Rumble* (GRP).

Before: Composition great; execution great. Drumming great, too; that awesome kind of modern day technique. Makes me feel I should lock myself up in a closet and practice eight hours a day till I can play like that.

The composer took some pages out of Wayne Shorter's book; not from the album I was on, but the one before that. Also, he took a *big* page out of something of McCoy Tyner's —I forget the name. I heard synth stabs with some of the electric-drum snare and cymbal hits. I like that kind of punctuation effect.

I'd give it five for the precise performance, maybe 3½ for the composition.

The drummer sounded like one of the new generation of technical monsters like Dave Weckl. The synth solo was great. I could guess and say Chick Corea.

After: Well, I guessed it right, but I don't like to guess too much and put people in a certain bag. I think pigeonholes are for pigeons! That's my quote for the year. ■

Los Angeles Times 4/16/89 (syndicated)

Le Jazz Hot Now on Video

By LEONARD FEATHER

PARIS REUNION BAND Proscenium Entertainment VSH 10004. (Box 909, Hightstown, N.J. 08520) ★★★

Proscenium has entered the jazz video stakes with a series of sessions recorded in West Germany. Despite its title, "Paris Reunion Band" was taped live at the Theaterhaus in Stuttgart, with a group of Americans most of whom have worked together off and on since 1984.

Of the original members heard here, Nathan Davis is a Pittsburgh-based teacher and saxophonist; the bassist Jimmy Woode, an Ellington alumnus, has lived for many years in Vienna; Woody Shaw is the New York trumpeter, and Walter Bishop, a veteran bop pianist, is also New York based. The band's regular pianist, Kenny Drew, is represented here as composer of the first number, "Tune Down."

Two recent additions are Nat Adderley on cornet (who plays his own standard "Work Song") and Curtis Fuller on trombone, featured in a very busy and unfolksy "Old Folks."

The sloppy ensembles suggest a lack of rehearsal (had they just jumped off the plane from Paris?); but Shaw's eminently personal horn graces "Sweet Love of Mine," and the sax work of Nathan Davis and Joe Henderson counteracts some desultory interludes.

OREGON. Proscenium Entertainment VHS 10005. ★★★½

Oregon's eclecticism is well represented in this live set taped at the 1987 Freiburg Arts Festival. The musicians' sensitive interplay takes them through a series of semiclassical, modal, New Age and Indianesque works, among them the familiar "Icarus" with its bass sitar-like drones, and "Leather Cats" with Glen Moore. The tabla work by Trilok Gurtu, a percussion expert from Bombay, and Paul McCandless on oboe and English horn, stand out in this polyethnic program.

SUPER DRUMMING. Proscenium Entertainment 10003. ★★½

The participation of Louie Bellson on three of the 10 cuts is the only point of interest here, though fellow drummers will no doubt relate well to the contributions of Cozy Powell, a rock drummer from England; Gerry Brown, reportedly Lionel Richie's favorite drummer; Nippy Noya and Pete York, who share the percussion excursions on "Collapso Calypso," and a backup band that includes Brian Auger and Gerd Wilden on keyboards. The supposedly grand finale in which all six drummers take part is anticlimactic. The notes claim that these men constitute a "Who's Who" of jazz and rock drumming—possibly the overstatement of the year. Recorded sound (in a cathedral in Ulm, West Germany) is just about adequate.

EGBERTO GISMONTI. Proscenium Entertainment 10006. ★★★★

A one-time student of Nadia Boulanger, Gismonti here displays his mastery of what he has called "Brazilian funk," both on guitar (for the first four numbers, two of which he plays unaccompanied on 12-string acoustic guitar) and piano (on the last three compositions). Videotaped live in Freiburg, it's a fascinating close-up (literally) of his approach to a highly charged music that is often more essentially rhythmic than harmonic.

Gismonti is backed on some tunes by six-string guitar, synthesizer and percussion. The amazing crisscrossing of rhythms at the piano suggest that if Thelonious Monk had been raised in Brazil, and had enjoyed such phenomenal technique, this is how he might have sounded.

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"COM-PACT, adj.: marked by an arrangement of parts or units closely pressed, packed, grounded or knit together with very slight intervals or intervening space."

Would that it were so. Make that "no intervening space at all."

Space (on the record shelves) becomes ever more sparse as the endless flood of jazz CDs seems less and less compact.

Space (on the printed page) is limited to the point at which the reviewer finds himself unable to deal with more than one CD out of

TONY OLMOS / L.A. Times

Susannah McCorkle

10 (and the occasional LP, though these are by now few and far between).

We should be content that so much of jazz history is being re-enacted through the CD reissue projects at Fantasy, CBS, RCA and elsewhere, but the process of selection is ever more hazardous. If very few items with a rating under three stars appear nowadays, it is by no means due to the shortage of mediocre albums, but rather because of the need to draw attention to the cream rather than the crud.

NO MORE BLUES. Susannah McCorkle. Concord Jazz CCD 4370. ★★★★

McCorkle's switch to Concord should be a helpful career move. Fast-forward past the first two tunes (why does she set up such hurdles for herself as "Fascinating Rhythm" and "Swing That Music"?); cut three is "The Ballad of Pearly Sue," a delightful song by Gerry Mulligan (words and music). Funny and feminist, it will bring

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New Jazz CDs

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joy to the heart of Stacy Rowles. Prominent in the generally commendable backing are Ken Peplowski on tenor sax and clarinet, Dave Frishberg on piano (one tune is his own hilarious "Can't Take You Nowhere") and Emily Remler on guitar. McCorkle, whose Portuguese on "No More Blues" sounds flawless to these ears, has a penchant for picking out little known verses to well known songs, as on "Do Nothing" and "Who Cares?" Perfect on every level—phrasing, timbre, and an ear that can hear grass growing—McCorkle is the best of the entire crop of jazz singers to come to prominence in the 1980s.

JUMPIN' IN THE FUTURE. Gunther Schuller. GM 3010 CD (167 Dudley Rd., Newton Center, MA 02159) ★★★★

As if his gigantic contribution to the literature of jazz were not enough (witness such books as the recently published "Swing Era"), Schuller's ability to practice what he preaches is resplendently displayed here.

The sessions came about when George Schuller chanced across a

collection of his father's old compositions and arrangements, mainly from the 1950s, most of which had never been performed in public. It was decided to rehearse them with a Boston orchestra by the name of Orange Then Blue, in which the younger Schuller plays drums.

The results are startling. If Gunther Schuller is not the most original of composers, he is at least (like his role model Gil Evans, to whom these performances are dedicated) an arranger of transcendent skill.

Do not be disconcerted by the opening title, "When the Saints Go Marchin' In." It is a sort of fantasy-apotheosis based mainly on the first four notes of the theme. Closer to the Gil Evans image are "Summertime," "Blue Moon," "Anthropology" and "Yesterdays." Of the three Schuller originals, the title number is the most astonishing; written in 1947, it was decades ahead of its time, with polyphonic textures and exploratory harmony then virtually unused in jazz.

Orange Then Blue is stronger as an ensemble than as a showcase for soloists, though the presence of Howard Johnson on bass clarinet in "Night Music" is of interest. But first and foremost this is Gunther Schuller's personal triumph.

PORTRAITS. Clark Terry. Chesky JD 2 (Box 1268, Radio City Stn., NYC 10101.) ★★★½

Backed only by piano, bass and drums, Terry uses a familiar premise (tributes to other trumpeters, but never abandons his own style; in fact, Clyde McCoy's "Sugar Blues" is truly sublimated. "Autumn Leaves" and "Ciribiribin" on muted trumpet and "Sleepy Time Down South" on fluegelhorn are affectionate but still non-imitative dedications; "I Can't Get Started" has some of the original Bunny Berigan warmth that inspired Terry, but ends less dramatically. Of the two vocal cuts, "Finger Filibuster" is another long scatting-the-blues excursion, but "Jive a Five" is original and charming. A second horn would have given the session a touch of ensemble diversity.

5/6

Jazz' on Bravo

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Jazz Alive," airing tonight on the Bravo cable channel at 7 and midnight, was taped in 1983 in Toronto, with an assortment of Canadian and American musicians.

Maynard Ferguson, who opens the show with two numbers backed by the Canadian house band self-consciously reading its parts, plays high, wide and not very handsome. A bravura expert, he has rarely shown much class as an improvising musician and seems even less inspired nowadays.

Also past his prime was the great Teddy Wilson, a seminal pianist of the 1930s, seen here three years before his death, going rather sadly through the motions of what was once an excitingly fresh style.

The late Woody Herman, too, is below optimum form as he takes the house band through two of his charts; but Moe Koffman, the principal sideman, redeems this segment with his alto sax and piccolo solos, as well as in his flute specialty on "Jitterbug Waltz." He has never quite received his just desserts outside Canada.

Waving the Canadian flag even more proudly are the vibraphonist Peter Appleyard, whose blues solo digs deep into the roots, and a surprisingly compelling "Lush Life" sung by Cecile Furness. The latter, a tall and striking Afro-Canadian, assuredly deserves south-of-the-Northern-border exposure.

Sharing the vocal honors, Mel Torme is his perennial indomitable self on a "Ridin' High/Shootin' High" medley followed by a blues, "Sent for You Yesterday," in which he trades ad libs with Koffman.

The finale finds Torme on drums with the band as the entire cast gathers on stage for Woody Herman's "Apple Honey." Cecile Furness, in an attempt at scatting, seems a little out of her territory here. Over all, though, it's an amiable ending to a mildly satisfying convocation.

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4/23/89

L. A. Honors the First Lady of Song

Ella Fitzgerald Day will pay tribute to her incomparable successes over five decades

By LEONARD FEATHER

Fitzgerald, who celebrates her 71st birthday Tuesday, has few regrets and a few ambitions.

IRIS SCHNEIDER / L.A. Times

She has been more famous, over a longer time span, than any other female singer. She sits in the living room of her bright, airy Beverly Hills home, dressed in a simple white outfit, slimmer than she has been since her teens. Suspended from her necklace is a jeweled golden ball, a gift from Jacqueline Picasso.

She is surrounded by countless artifacts attesting to her successes: Grammy awards, NAACP Image Awards, Down Beat trophies (she won her first in 1937). Yet Ella Fitzgerald, who will turn 71 Tuesday, remains amazingly unable to acknowledge the full measure of her fame.

The Chick Webb band singer of the 1930s, the pioneer vocal bebopper of the '40s, the Songbook Queen of the '50s and '60s (she won the first two of her 12 Grammys the year they were inaugurated, 1958, for her Berlin and Ellington albums), the world traveler of the '70s, the Memorex and American Express symbol of the '80s, is back on track after three years largely sidelined by a series of illnesses.

"I'm sure looking forward to Friday," she says. That is the day when, during a belated birthday tribute at the Beverly Hilton, she will be saluted by Mel Torme, Joe Williams, George Shearing and dozens of other admirers. She will be the first recipient of the Ella, a lifetime achievement award being instituted by the Society of Singers. Mayor Tom Bradley will be on hand to assure her that it will indeed, officially, be Ella Fitzgerald Day in Los Angeles.

Felled by a heart condition in August, 1986, Fitzgerald underwent quintuple bypass surgery and was off for nine months, then resumed work on an occasional basis, but other physical problems led to another long stretch of semi-inactivity.

"I've had some wonderful doctors," she says. "I go for therapy twice a week. Now they're letting me do more than one concert—last month I played three nights in Palm Springs, so it looks like I'll be working more regularly."

So how has she spent these long periods of convalescence?

"Staying home and being bored. I miss the road. I miss going overseas. Certain cities are almost like home, because I've made so many friends there."

The Ella Fitzgerald story clearly would never make a motion picture; she has had no troubles with booze or drugs, is friendly with her ex-husband, Ray Brown, and virtually defies any scavenging reporter to find a negative comment or even the whisper of a scandal. Who wants to see a movie about that kind of stuff?

She has few regrets and a few ambitions. "I love music so much, but I never really had any schooling. I can read music, but not

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In the 1941 movie, "Ride 'Em Cowboy."

GARY FRIEDMAN / L.A. Times

At the Hollywood Bowl in 1987.

From the Frank Driggs Collection

...Savoy Ballroom in 1940.

From the Frank Driggs Collection

With Helen Humes and Count Basie in 1941.

With Jo Stafford and Benny Goodman.

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Fitzgerald

Continued from Page 4

fast. One time Chick Webb was going to have a lady help me to study voice, but she said I already had a style, so she didn't want to teach me because it might ruin what I had."

Ambitions? "Maybe it sounds silly, but I'd like to do a video with some children—one in which I would sing and dance, to show how I started in the business. I'd show the kids doing their dance, then I would do a dance from my era.

"I've never been to Russia, and I would like to go. A conductor from Russia caught a show of mine at Carnegie Hall and brought me an album with my name on it in Russian. I'd love to go because I understand they love me there, and music is one of the two things that brings people close together: music and sports."

This recent series of layoffs has been by far the longest in a career that began 54 years ago. Benny Carter, the saxophonist and composer, recalls a very early encounter: "I heard Ella in an amateur night at the Apollo in 1935 and knew immediately that a star was being born. I called [talent scout] John Hammond, who was sponsoring the reorganization of the Fletcher Henderson orchestra. John and I took Ella to Fletcher's house. To my great surprise, Fletcher and his wife and John failed to share my enthusiasm. Ella remembers Fletcher saying 'Don't call me, I'll call you.' "

Perhaps the rejection was no surprise to the 17-year-old aspiring singer. "I really always wanted to be a dancer," she says. "In Yonkers, I was known as one of their great little tap dancers."

Joe Williams remembers it well, from a somewhat later period: "She originally wanted to be one of the group called Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. I remember sometimes when she came offstage, I'd carry her to the dressing room—she only weighed about 130—and she and I danced together often."

In a TV duet with Frank Sinatra.

In a last minute change of heart at one of a series of amateur shows, Fitzgerald decided to sing rather than dance. "I knew three songs; I'd heard Connie Boswell sing them on the radio—'The Object of My Affection,' 'Believe It Beloved' and 'Judy.' "

One night, backstage at the Apollo, she sang for the drummer Chick Webb, who grudgingly agreed to try her out with his orchestra on a gig at Yale.

A young saxophonist, Ernani Bernardi, became one of Fitzgerald's early fans. The future L.A. councilman, then playing with Tommy Dorsey, recalls that on Sundays, Harlem's renowned Savoy Ballroom hired white bands to play opposite Webb. "I was sitting on the bandstand alone while the rest of Tommy's guys were off during Chick's set. Ella came over between songs, and I remember she asked me whether I thought that one day, she would get to record with an orchestra like Tommy's. As it turned out, a few months later she did record with a white band—Benny Goodman's."

Fitzgerald's reputation soon outgrew Webb's band. In 1938 she co-wrote an adaptation of an old nursery song, "A Tisket a Tasket." The record spurred nation-wide demand for Webb.

"They came to California that summer," says Tom Bradley, who was not yet a rookie cop. "The record was the hottest thing around. I saw Ella at a small bowling alley at 48th and Central Avenue, the only bowling alley in the city open to blacks.

"She has been a favorite of mine ever since; she can sing anything from ballads to swing to bop with equal ease and authority."

After Webb's death in 1939, Fitzgerald fronted the band for three years, during which she had an acting and singing role in "Ride 'Em Cowboy," an Abbott and Cos-

ello movie, playing the part of remember, this was Hollywood, 941) a maid.

The breakup of Webb's orchesra led to easier and more lucrative obs in tandem with the Ink Spots, ut later and more significantly with the band of Dizzy Gillespie.

By the end of the 1940s Fitzgerald was a world-wide phenomenon, blessed with everything but an ego. "We were in San Francisco," bass player Ray Brown recalls, "when Bing Crosby had a radio show from there. When Ella was asked to do the show, she was so nervous, she was shaking in her boots. I went to Bing's dressing room to say hello to him and to Al Jolson, who was also on the show. Jolson was saying to Crosby, 'What the hell am I going to do with *that* woman on the show?' And I found out that *they* were nervous!"

Other celebrities tell similar stories. "When I finally got to meet her, at a concert she was doing with Oscar Peterson," says Clint Eastwood, "I was totally in awe of her. But to my amazement, she asked for an autographed picture of *me*!"

In 1950 Fitzgerald co-headlined with Mel Torme at New York's prestigious Paramount Theatre and, during that decade, she became a favorite at Birdland, then known as "the Jazz Corner of the World." By then she had acquired two generations of fans.

"You know how I first got to hear Ella?" says Tony Bennett. "Through my mother. She had a birthday coming up and I asked her what she'd like. She said, 'I'd like to see Ella Fitzgerald at Birdland she's my favorite.' So we saw Ella there and she complimented me on my record of 'Blue Velvet,' which really sent me sky high."

Decca Records' idea of popular songs, including such dubious masterworks as "Melinda the Mousie," "My Wubba Dolly," "Santa Claus Got Stuck in My Chimney" and "The Bean Bag Song," left something to be desired.

Nobody was more aware of that than Norman Granz, who from 1950 had been featuring Fitzgerald on his "Jazz at the Philharmonic" concerts and had become her manager. In 1955, he got her out of her Decca contract, and she recorded the "Cole Porter Songbook" for Verve Records.

Fitzgerald adds her comment: "Norman thought I could do more different types of songs; and how right he was! I'll always be grateful for that."

More than a manager, Granz was a respected civil rights activist who fought for accommodations for Fitzgerald and the other "Jazz at the Phil" artists in hotels that tried to bar them. Once, in a typical racist move, Fitzgerald, Gillespie and Granz were arrested in Hous-

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Jazz Reviews

Bruschi incontri e grande musica
nei ricordi di due celebri critici americani

LEONARD FEATHER

FUI ANCHE SUO PRODUTTORE E RISCHIAI LA FOLLIA

di Leonard Feather

Qual è stato esattamente il contributo di Charles Mingus all'evoluzione del jazz? In pratica, chi è stato il vero Mingus? Che cosa ha rappresentato come compositore? Come bassista? Come capogruppo?

Sono domande alle quali è difficile rispondere, dal momento che si tratta di un uomo complesso, la cui carriera si è mossa in molte direzioni. È stato spesso paragonato a Duke Ellington, ma le differenze tra i due sono molto più evidenti delle somiglianze.

Per la maggior parte dei quarantasette anni nei quali fu un protagonista, Ellington è proceduto lungo una direzione di grande coerenza, mantenendo e accrescendo un'orchestra che si faceva sempre più ambiziosa, ampliando il raggio d'azione della sua musica con brani di complessità crescente; eppure il sound di Ellington è rimasto quasi sempre perfettamente identificabile.

Dal canto suo, Mingus non ha avuto una regolare attività di leader fino alla metà degli anni Cinquanta; da allora, e fino all'ultima incisione del 1978, ha diretto di tutto, dai trii ai sestetti, agli ottetti, fino a un'orchestra di ventidue elementi; non ha saputo mantenere unito un organico stabile, e la sua musica — a volte dettata oralmente, a volte scritta sul pentagramma, ma per la maggior parte selvaggiamente aleatoria — si è caricata di una gran varietà di forme, colori e concezioni.

A mio avviso, il momento in cui più si avvicinò a stabilire una propria personale identità orchestrale fu verso la fine degli anni Cinquanta, quando diresse (soprattutto per la Columbia) alcuni gruppi di un'intensità ferina, esasperata, basata su sapori blues e gospel.

La sua ammirazione per Duke era incutibile, benché il suo legame con fosse stato breve e infelice. Molte incisioni riflettono l'influsso ellingno, anche se alcune hanno titoli i come *Haitian Fight Song* o *Yusef Ysef Too* e altre sono ispirate dal suo appassionato coinvolgimento nel movimento per i diritti civili, come *Fables Of Faubus* (intitolata a un noto uomo politico razzista del Sud) o *Prayer For Passive Resistance*. Anni dopo aver inciso *All The Things You Are* lo rifece col titolo *All The Things You Could Be By Now If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother*.

Senza dubbio Mingus è stato una delle figure più eclettiche ed enigmatiche nel mondo del jazz della sua epoca. La sua tempestosa personalità permette di ricordare quanto differenti furono le reazioni dei neri americani riguardo al problema afroamericano. Qualcuno cercò di affrontarlo con disinvoltura e seppe perfino vivere una vita normale, ottenendo soddisfazioni artistiche ed economiche; ma uomini come Mingus non hanno mai potuto accettare le odiose realtà del razzismo; per lui esse furono una spina nel fianco dall'infanzia fino alla morte.

Chi viveva a New York non seppe molto di lui all'inizio della sua carriera, dato che suonava sulla costa occidentale; comunque, quando fu con Lionel Hampton, e quando Hampton registrò il suo *Mingus Fingers*, ci accorgemmo delle sue capacità di contrabbassista e compositore.

Durante il suo passaggio a New York come membro del trio di Red Norvo, nel 1950 o all'inizio del 1951, ebbe luogo un incidente di cui si fece un gran parlare. Probabilmente per il motivo di non fare ancora parte del Sindacato Musicisti di New York, Mingus fu escluso dal trio quando ad esso venne affidata una delle prime trasmissioni televisive a colori. Ma Mingus era convinto d'essere stato escluso perché era nero e perché la TV non voleva riprendere un gruppo misto. Questo fu solo uno dei molti piccoli torti (alcuni reali, altri probabilmente immaginari) che giocarono un ruolo progressivamente maggiore nel rendere Mingus sempre più amaro.

Un paio d'anni dopo Duke Ellington assunse Mingus. Ne ammirava l'abilità di contrabbassista, ma i suoi comportamenti divennero presto una fonte di preoccupazioni. Si parlò di una rissa con Tony Scott, che suonò brevemente il tenore e il clarinetto nell'orchestra, e di un violento litigio che coinvolgeva Juan Tizol. Un giorno suonò il mio telefono; era Duke, che chiamava dall'Apollo Theatre. «Ehi, ascolta, ho bisogno di un bassista. No, non la prossima settimana... subito!». Feci qualche telefonata, e nel giro di un'ora avevo mandato Oscar Pettiford (che con Ellington aveva già suonato per quasi tre anni) a raggiungere l'orchestra e a por termine al pasticcio. Qualche anno più tardi Duke realizzò il famoso album in trio con Mingus e Max Roach, e anche quella volta le cose non filarono proprio lisce.

In qualità di produttore ho avuto solo due incontri con Mingus; uno andò abbastanza bene, l'altro fu quasi un disastro. Ho descritto tutta la storia nel mio libro *The Jazz Years*. Nel 1958 iniziò la mania di leggere poesie di argomento jazzistico con un commento musicale; mi accorsi che l'esperimento non era mai stato tentato con Langston Hughes, il grande poeta nero che conoscevo da anni.

«Mi piacerebbe provare», disse Langston, «ma chi potrebbe fare la musica?». Dal momento che si collegava perfettamente con lo stile della Swing Era, scrissi io la musica per una facciata del disco, usando un gruppo con Red Allen, Vic Dickenson, Sam «The Man» Taylor e una buona sezione ritmica. Per l'altra facciata chiamai Mingus e gli chiesi di preparare della musica per il quintetto che allora dirigeva al Village Vanguard. Siccome Mingus era allora sotto contratto per la Columbia e il mio disco era per la MGM, indicammo come capogruppo il pianista, Horace Parlan. Tutto andò bene, e non ebbi discussioni con Mingus.

Circa due anni dopo ero produttore ►

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Jazz Reviews

Bloom Buries Past, Moves Into New Realm of Sound

Jane Ira Bloom, the soprano saxophonist who came to town this week for a three-day spell at Catalina Bar and Grill in Hollywood (she closes tonight), has moved beyond the tentative modernisms of her earliest recordings, more than a decade ago, into an adventurous realm of spirited sounds on the brink of the avant-garde.

Appropriately, one of the most experimental works in her first show Tuesday was a movement from the suite of compositions she was commissioned to write for NASA after watching the Discovery launch. Here and elsewhere she made extensive use of the electronic effects that have piqued her imagination.

Electronic music on wind instruments is no novelty. Many of the ideas employed by Bloom, such as the octave divider, were popularized by Paul Horn on saxophone and flute more than 20 years ago. But Bloom's wild slashes of sound—at one point in "Miro" she used a series of whole-tone-scale chords—seemed logical, and were well matched by her dance-like body movements.

The lack of a piano (included on most of her recent recordings) was a detriment. Her original works such as "Ice Dancing" and "Drums Like Dancing" were hampered by a backing of just bass (Kent McLagan) and drums (Tom Rainey). Both were efficient, but often—most notably in a chord-oriented song such as "Over the Rainbow"—the keyboard was conspicuous by its absence.

Bloom's sound, when not subjected to the amplified effects, is clean and convincing, her phrasing impeccable. If she doesn't always succeed in her attempts to break into new ground, at least she must be credited for trying to cross some potentially hazardous borders.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ TIMES Mar

LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers; one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this series.

This month's musician: Red Rodney

— Skip Brown

Almost 40 years ago I had the unforgetta- pleasure of hearing Red Rodney playing th Charlie Parker, whose quintet he had just ned. Then, 39 years later, I heard Red and arlie again (portrayed on screen by Michael nicker and Forest Whitaker) in a movie t had brought a triumphant climax to the mpeter's most successful decade. The inter- w was conducted in Hollywood.

1. RANDY BRECKER & ELIANE IAS. *Splash* from *Amanda* (Passport Jazz). cker, trumpet; Elias, keyboards.

FORE: I haven't the slightest idea who that but I can guess. Randy Brecker has done a of things with synthesized trumpet and nplification, like that. Also could be Lew bloff though I've never heard him do that. ut the trumpet player is an excellent trumpet layer. I don't particularly care for that type of nthesized trumpet.

The instrumentalist was very good, very roficient. And I know this is considered rogress; it's got a fusion beat and percussive umming. This is not for me. I understand need progress and I don't have anything ainst that. I just think we have to learn how use those instruments rather than letting em use us.

FTER: It *was* Randy Brecker! I heard him in erugia and I didn't like him. I like to hear andy Brecker play like Randy Brecker. He's marvelous trumpeter, and I love his tunes nd lines. And I was very impressed with liane. That type of rhythm section is not for e. I like a very modern rhythm section, but I lso like a jazz type drummer. I love Randy ut I have to give this two stars. Randy's ther, Bob Brecker, is a pianist, is a lawyer, d he used to play club dates around Phila- phia, and I knew about Randy and Michael en they were very young, when their father 'You gotta hear my kids.'

. ART FARMER. *You Make Me Smile* n *You Make Me Smile,* Soul Note), Farm- luegelhorn; Clifford Jordan, tenor sax; s Reid, bass and composer; Fred Hersch, ; Akira Tana drums.

RE: Was I right? I think it was Art r and Clifford Jordan, or it was a great on. If it was Art Farmer, he's the most l, lyrical player; we owe him a lot. of us who dabble with the fluegelhorn we him a great deal, because he us that the possibilities of that instru- e unlimited.

was a modern rhythm section, a loose d of thing, but it really was jazz. that I could feel and play with and y with.

ufus and I are neighbors. I don't get much any more, since he's busy hat's like the kind of work Rufus t's a gorgeous tune. Both Art and Clifford played beautifully on it. They're world-class players. I say five stars.

3. FREDDIE HUBBARD AND WOODY SHAW. *Nostrand and Fulton* (from *The Eternal Triangle,* Blue Note). Hubbard, 1st trumpet, composer; Shaw, 2nd trumpet solo.

BEFORE: First I thought it was Freddie, then I thought it was Woody, but now I think it's Freddie. Hadn't heard this one before, and I think it's Joe Henderson on tenor.

I don't know about the rhythm section. Freddie's the most fantastic trumpeter out there. No one else can do what he does. The trumpet is a toy in his hands. I'm re-quoting Donald Byrd in last month's **JazzTimes,** that Wynton Marsalis wins all the awards, and Dizzy is the doyen, whatever that word means, but Freddie Hubbard is the baddest cat out there. I hope I'm right after saying all this! For him, I'd rate it 100, but for this tune I'd give it a three.

AFTER: I did get it right, but I didn't notice the two trumpets in the ensemble.

LF: Also that was Kenny Garrett on alto, not tenor.

RR: That's what fooled me.

LF: Mulgrew Miller, piano; Ray Drummond, bass; Carl Allen, drums. That was recorded in June 1987.

RR: Woody Shaw is one of the greatest players of all time. He's got a harmonic concept that's just great. I understand he's ill now and I wish him a speedy recovery. For him and Freddie, I'd give it five stars, but the record is still a two or three.

4. ORNETTE COLEMAN. *Love Call* (from *Love Call,* Blue Note). Recorded 1966. Coleman, alto sax & trumpet; Dewey Redman, tenor sax; Jimmy Garrison, bass; Elvin Jones, drums.

BEFORE: I have no idea who this is. Obviously he comes from the avant garde school of playing. I'm not very well acquainted with that kind of music, nor do I like it. The young men in my band try to go out and be free sometimes, I always admonish them that if they're going to do this, I'll accept it, but remember the melody.

They laugh at me; but I notice they're getting more melodic. I would like to see the entire school of free jazz become more melodic.

I don't know who this is, and I give it no stars. I didn't like the trumpet playing. His chops were off on that particular one, but that happens to all of us.

AFTER: Okay. I love Ornette for the things that he's done. He's a very valuable giant. But I don't like his trumpet playing. I didn't like this. I heard him before on trumpet but didn't recognize it.

5. ROY ELDRIDGE. *Echoes of Harlem* (from *Dale's Wail,* Verve). Eldridge, trumpet; Oscar Peterson, piano; Herb Ellis, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; Alvin Stoller, drums.

BEFORE: Well, it's Roy Eldridge, one of my great heroes. Whatever he's playing, he plays for that particular tune.

AFTER: To me the whole purpose in playing jazz is to be an original player. We all strive for that. Roy Eldridge was an original player from the very beginning.

So he's a great influence to all of us. For him five stars. For the tune.... No, I didn't know the tune.

LF: It's an old Ellington tune, originally done by Cootie Williams.

RR: Well, they captured the essence of that kind of music, or Billy Strayhorn, one or the other. Initially, his rasp gave it away. He was playing with a bucket mute so I couldn't tell. Roy gets five stars; the tune gets three.

6. BENNY CARTER. *Body and Soul* (from *Live at Montreux '77,* Pablo). Carter, trumpet; Ray Bryant, piano; Niels Pederson, bass; Jimmie Smith, drums.

BEFORE: Well, that's King Benny Carter on alto. He plays with such dignity, it's easy to understand that he's such a dignified man.

The trumpet player I thought was Charlie Shavers, and then I thought Benny could have doubled on this one. But that was Shavers' vibrato — so I'll have to go with Charlie Shavers. There was a great trumpet player. He didn't really get his proper due, because just at the height of his playing the bebop movement came in and everybody started listening to Dizzy and Miles and all the other bebop players.

This is unfortunate, because Charlie Shavers was a phenomenal trumpet player. I think it broke his heart that no one was paying attention to him.

On piano, I thought it was Art Tatum. One time when I was a kid in Philadelphia, Art Tatum came through with Charlie Shavers with a trio, and he added Shavers as a trumpet player, and I couldn't get in the place because I was too young. Four stars.

AFTER: You did fool me! First I went back and forth. I don't really know Benny's sound on trumpet.

7. MILES DAVIS. *Dolores* (from *Miles Smiles,* Columbia). Davis, trumpet; Wayne Shorter, sax; Herbie Hancock, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Tony Williams, drums.

BEFORE: I surely wish he were playing like this today. I miss Miles' playing. But he can do whatever he wants to do because to me he's been our greatest innovator in the last 40 years. He's developed so many of the greatest players we have in jazz, and he always knew a youngster's potential when that youngster played with him.

I don't particularly care for what he's doing now, but still—he can do anything he wants.

I think that was Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter, and Tony Williams and Ron Carter, I guess, would make up the rest of the group. Five stars. For what it was, it was done great. The musicianship was tremendous.

AFTER: I got them all right! Yeah, that sounded like it was Wayne's tune.

I can't say enough about Miles. His contribution and innovative abilities have been, more than anyone else, influential for the longest time. No-one has done as much to present change to everybody as has Miles.

8. JAMES MOODY. *Au Privave* (from *Bird Lives!* Milestone). Charlie Parker, composer; Moody, tenor sax; Tom McIntosh, arranger; Jimmy Owens, trumpet; Kenny Barron, piano.

BEFORE: Well, I liked it very much. It was a great big band. I liked the solos. I'm gonna go out on a limb and say that they were all Californians, maybe not names.

I don't listen to too many bands; that could have been a Bill Holman arrangement. This didn't sound like one of them. I don't know who it is, but the soloists were excellent. No, I can't recognize them. I liked the band, the arrangement, the tune.

AFTER:

LF: That's a tune you must've played a million times, with Bird.

RR: That's right. Its called *Au Privave*-...No, Bird never told me what that means. Wow! Was that Moody? It was such a relaxed feel, I didn't recognize Moody. Boy, was I wrong! At any rate, I liked it very much. ■

Los Angeles Times 5/12/89

TV Reviews

'Jacksonville Jazz IX' an Insult to the Musical Form . . .

It would be hard to imagine a more devastating illustration of the low estate into which jazz may seem to have fallen than "Jacksonville Jazz IX," airing tonight at 10 on Channels 28 and 24.

Toward the end of the show, Paul Shaffer says, "Let's bring back Michael Brecker, Louie Bellson, Bob James and Maynard Ferguson"—an odd remark, since none of them has been seen before. We have no way of knowing how their excised individual sets came off, and this hectic finale gives them no time to accomplish anything.

It is ironic that in the TV version of last year's National Florida Jazz Festival, Spyro Gyra comes closest to establishing a measure of validity. The group's three tunes typify its innocuous pop fusion of R&B and Latin, with Jay Beckenstein on sax and Dave Samuels on vibes.

The Dirty Dozen Brass Band from New Orleans has only one tune, with simplistic harmony and a colorless vocal by Jenell Marshall.

The decline of a once-promising voice is illustrated in three appalling vocals by Dianne Reeves, whose mannerisms all but destroy three classic songs. Her ruinous rendition of "My Funny Valentine" includes a 12-time repetition of the first vowel in "Unphotographical." During "The Man I Love," she repeats "I'm waiting" 10 times—and it's not even part of Gershwin's lyrics. Duke Ellington's "I Got It Bad" is a similar miasma of melisma, with the word *like* split up into about 20 syllables.

Closing the show is Shaffer and what is billed as the World's Most Dangerous Band. The only danger is that someone may mistake these gaucheries for jazz, or the musicians' motions for emotion. To throw Bellson into this catastrophic clambake was an insult. But let's face it: The show clearly has a mass appeal for the young-of-IQ.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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JAZZ EYES

コートニー・パイン●イギリス・ジャズ界の台風の眼,なるかアメリカ征服

COURTNEY PINE'S GIANT STEPS

by Leonard Feather

コートニー・パインには,"イギリス版ウイントン・マルサリス" といった趣きがある。20歳そこそこで脚光を浴び,常に清潔な服装に身を包み,ある時は心に思うことをズバズバロに出し,かたや自己の進むべき音楽的方向については熱い確信を持っている。2人の共通点のきわめつけは,ウイントンが修業時代をすごしたアート・ブレイキー&ジャズ・メッセンジャーズと,短期間だがパイン自身も共演を果たしていることだろう。それと同時に,先頃3度目の渡米を果たしたパインにはもう一つの顔がある。彼が,英国籍の黒人ジャズメンとして初めて世界的な名声を得たプレイヤーだということである。

彼がジャズにのめりこむようになったキッカケは,15歳の時テレビでグローバー・ワシントンJr.がなにかの賞をもらう場面をみたこと。「こんなのもジャズに入るのか,と興味をひかれ,近所の図書館でジャズのレコードを探していたら,ソニー・ロリンズの「ウェイ・アウト・ウエスト」があった。ジャケット写真が気に入ったのでそれを借りて聴くうちに,レゲエの母体になったスカを子守唄がわりにして育った僕としては,ジャズにはどこかレゲエに通じるものがあるな,とひとりで納得してしまった」という。もしこのきっかけに恵まれていなかったら,今頃は彼もレゲエかファンクのバンドに身を置いていたかもしれない。やがてロリンズからウェザー・リポート時代のウエイン・ショーターへ,そしてジョン・コルトレーンの「至上の愛」へと聴き進むにつれて,このような音楽ならイギリス生まれの自分でも違和感なく溶けこんでいける,という自信が湧いてきたという。

ソロ・デビュー作「コートニー・パイン」は米国での評価も高く,一方英国ではシングル・カットされた〈チルドレン・オブ・ザ・ゲットー〉を突破口として,その後しばしばオン・エアされるようになる。第2弾の「デスティニー・ソング」のプロデュースをデルフィーヨ・マルサリスに頼んだのは,デビュー作をプロデュースしたビリー・バンクスが,たまたまマルサリス兄弟のロード・マネージャーをつとめていた関係からだったという。この2作を聴いて感じるのは,ロンドンの若き獅子たちの先頭に立つ彼が,圧倒的なまでにコルトレーンのスピリットを自己のものとしつつ,そこに時折彼特有のカリブ海的雰囲気をプラスしていること。彼は,ウイントンとの共演という形で,マルサリス一家との交流を広げたいというから,その実現が今から楽しみである。

パインは24歳という若さのわりに多彩な経歴を誇っている。過去にはエルビン・ジョーンズやジョージ・ラッセルとともにヨーロッパ・ツアーを経験し,英国内ではローリング・ストーンズのチャーリー・ワッツ率いるビッグ・バンドで仕事をしたこともある。ブレイキーとは86年にロンドンで行われたカムデン・ジャズ・フェスティバルで共演し,「アメリカへ来て,一緒にリハーサルしてみないか」と誘われた。その結果,「1週間のリハーサルをした後,ブレイキーのリユニオン・バンドという形でアポロ・シアターのステージに立ったのだが,神経がボロボロになるくらい疲れた。ステージが終ったとたん,飛ぶようにしてロンドンへ舞い戻ったからね」。

その体験から今日に至るまでの2年間は,コートニーにとってずっしりと重い手応えを刻んだ年月だった。その2年間に彼は大きな前進を遂げた。英国籍の黒人ミュージシャンが演じるジャズでもそれなりに大きな意味を持つことができる,と確信した彼は,いまや自己の内なるものにめざめるとともに,感性と野心に満ちたプレイヤーへと変貌したのである。彼がこの先末永く輝かしいキャリアをつらねていくための素地は十分に築かれた,と筆者はみる。

(レナード・フェザー 訳:和田政幸)

4/27 Thursda

Auld Defies Time

Georgie Auld's public appearances in recent years have been about as common as total eclipses; but unlike eclipses, Auld's performances shed light instead of reducing it. That, at least, was the impression Tuesday when his radiant tenor saxophone illuminated the Grand Avenue Bar of the Biltmore.

It took only a few bars of "Just You, Just Me" to provide renewed evidence of a sound and style that have defied the inroads of time. Now three weeks short of his 70th birthday, Auld is as buoyantly expressive now as he was on classic Benny Goodman recordings almost a half-century ago.

His tone is close to that of the memorable Ben Webster; his ballads, "Misty" and "Body And Soul," exuded a very special warmth.

Pianist Marty Harris, bassist Tony Dumas and drummer Dick Berk offered vigorous and sympathetic support.

—LEONARD FEATHER

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY — at the Big Band Reunion, honoree Les Brown, Doris Day, and music attorney Averill Pasarow. Below, Morey Amsterdam, *L.A. Times* jazz critic Leonard Feather and wife Jane, and Steve Allen.

—Photos by Eileene Winters

4/30/89

JAZZ

The Ellington Legend Grows

By LEONARD FEATHER

These are celebratory times in the world of Duke Ellington, which by now is a global area. The composer/bandleader/pianist has been the focus of a four-day event, billed as the seventh annual International Conference of the Duke Ellington Study Group, held in Washington, where he was born 90 years ago April 29.

In New York, tonight at St. Peter's Church, another birthday celebration will be held with "The Duke's Men," led by the orchestra's former trombonist Art Baron. In London last Monday, a Duke Ellington concert at Queen Elizabeth Hall was built around an all-star band led by Adelaide Hall, now 85 and a 50-year London resident, who leapt to fame when she sang the wordless vocal on Ellington's classic "Creole Love Call" in 1927.

Far from dying, the Ellington legend seems to grow with each passing year since his death in 1974. More than any other factor, the proliferation of reissues (and the discovery of previously unreleased material) has contributed immeasurably to the legacy. (The current Ellington orchestra continues to record, most recently "Music Is My Mistress," Music Masters CIJD 60185K.) Following are a few of the many Ellington-related items recently issued:

"RECOLLECTIONS OF THE BIG BAND ERA." Duke Ellington. Atlantic 7-90043-2.

★★★½

Amazing! Given a dumb premise (Reprise Records wanted him to record a series of other bands' themes), the maestro came up with an album that is often almost purely Ellingtonian. Of the 23 cuts (74 minutes), 17 were his own arrangements; three others were by Billy Strayhorn. Even "Rhapsody in Blue" in the Duke's version sounds as if it could have been written for Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges and Jimmy Hamilton.

Hodges is exquisite too, on the Quincy Jones, Benny Goodman and Casa Loma tributes; Paul Gonsalves lends his supple tenor to Jimmy Dorsey's "Contrasts," Cootie Williams embraces "Auld Lang Syne" and "Tuxedo Junction," and Ray Nance is all over the place, on trumpet (for Tommy Dorsey and Louis Armstrong) and violin (a tongue-in-cheek Strayhorn treatment of "Artistry in Rhythm" so elegant that it mocks the Kenton bombast).

The only ringers are "For Dancers Only," for which Duke borrowed Sy Oliver's original arrangement for the Jimmie Lunceford band; "Cherokee," a quid pro quo in which the band sounds like Charlie Barnet (who, of course, loved to emulate Ellington); and a somewhat perfunctory "One O'Clock Jump," with Duke doing his Basie shtick at the piano. But even these are entertaining exceptions to what remains, as a rule, an extraordinarily true-to-type album of *echt* Ellington.

"THE FEELING OF JAZZ." Duke Ellington. Black Lion BLCD 760123.

★★★½

An agreeable but expendable set, most of the 11 tunes having been recorded in previous and better versions; however, Ray Nance specialists should note that on every track he is a featured soloist (sometimes the only soloist) and on two he sings. Among the better items: Strayhorn's "Smada" and "Boo-Dah," and a curious "Black and Tan Fantasy" with both Duke and Strayhorn on keyboards. "Flirtibird" is a brief Nance cornet concerto, from Ellington's "Anatomy of a Murder" film score.

Ellington in the early 1930s and in "extended comps" form.

In the 1985 movie "On the Road With Duke Ellington."

PBS' "A Duke Named Ellington" focused on the composer.

"FOUR SYMPHONIC WORKS BY DUKE ELLINGTON." American Composers Orchestra. Music Masters MMD 60176 L.

★★★★

A new recording, imperfect but important. ACO conductor Maurice Peress and/or Luther Henderson orchestrated these extended compositions: the evocative first movement of "Black, Brown & Beige," the disjointed but intriguing "Three Black Kings," which Mercer Ellington completed after his father left it unfinished; the stately "New World A-Comin'" piano concerto, with Sir Roland Hanna duplicating Duke's original piano part, and the programmatic "Harlem," which gives the lie to critics who claim that Ellington was out of his depth in longer forms.

This is not a jazz orchestra; the strings and rhythm fail to swing in the closing passages of "Black, Brown & Beige," and because most of the guest jazz soloists are non-Ellingtonians (Percy Heath, Jon Faddis), some of the Ducal essence is lost. Yet the overall impression reinforces Ellington's stature, not just in jazz, but, to quote Gunther Schuller, as a man who may yet be recognized as one of the great compositional masters of this century.

"ELLINGTON INDIGOS." Duke Ellington. Columbia CK 44444.

★★★★

Recorded five years earlier (1957), this also includes several reruns ("Solitude," "Mood Indigo," "Prelude to a Kiss"), but the orchestra is in exceptional form and there are two previously unissued tracks, an Ellington piano solo on "All the Things You Are" and a somber "Night and Day." The Jimmy Hamilton clarinet feature, "Tenderly," is as well tailored to him as is "Where or When" to Paul Gonsalves' tenor. "Autumn Leaves" is sung in French and English by Ozzie Bailey, but Ray Nance's violin redeems it.

"THE COMPLETE JOHNNY HODGES 1951-1955." Mosaic MR 6-126 (35 Melrose Place, Stamford, CT 06902). Not available on CD.

★★★

The ever-shifting personnel of the septet Hodges led during his four years away from the band included a dozen Ellingtonians, scattered through these 15 sessions on six LPs. Hodges, Carney, Lawrence Brown, Ben Webster et al. have many moments of beauty. The mixture of jazz and pop standards (many previously recorded by Hodges) provides much pleasure but few surprises. "Castle Rock," the only tune popularized (and originated) by this band, is a run-of-the-mill blues featuring Al Sears on tenor sax. The band lacked an interesting ensemble identity; too many of the upbeat tracks are of little compositional interest. The ballads (there are two ballad medleys) have endured best, though Hodges' alto is sublime throughout. □

Los Angeles Times May 1 '89

JAZZ REVIEW

KLON Concert Reflects L.A. Music History

By LEONARD FEATHER
and A. JAMES LISKA

Segregation was so much a way of life in Los Angeles in the 1950s that two largely separate musical styles evolved. One, predominantly white and low calorie, was represented in a marathon concert dubbed "West Coast Jazz" presented Sunday by KLON at the John Anson Ford Theater. The other, generally more aggressive sound will be represented May 28 at a "Central Avenue Revisted" concert with a virtually all-black cast at the same venue.

This is not a value judgment. What was heard Sunday involved nine groups. Only two of the leaders were born and raised in Los Angeles, and only five now live here, but the opening set by Shorty Rogers' Giants was typical of the neatly packaged, good-humored sounds Rogers built around an instrumentation similar to that of Miles Davis' "Birth of the Cool" group.

The French horn and tuba were put to good use in "Bunny," with Bill Perkins' alto replacing that of the late Art Pepper, for whom it was written. The 10-piece band came alive more vividly with Bud Powell's "Un Poco Loco," and showed its blues credentials in "Martians Go Home," with a minimalist clarinet solo by Jimmy Giuffre.

The planning left much to be desired. Three long sets by Bob Brookmeyer, Giuffre and Bob Cooper, all using the identical rhythm section, could better have been combined into a single, more diversified set using all three horns. However, Cooper's solo set was distinguished by his reading of Duke Ellington's "Prelude to a Kiss," an eloquent offering that was clearly the crowd's favorite of the exceedingly long event.

Hersh Hamel, a bassist, almost brought the show to a halt with his endless gab about the Chet Baker years. Finally, he played a decent enough Mulliganesque set with Bill Perkins as Mulligan and Bobby Shew as Baker.

The Dave Pell Octet was a trimmed-down version of the laid-back Shorty Rogers California trip, with Lucy Ann Polk recalling the era vocally.

A set by trumpeter Jack Sheldon, whose quintet was recently reviewed in the Times, was followed by a reunion of the Chico Hamilton Quintet, whose members deftly rekindled the spirit of that original group with handsome readings of "My Funny Valentine" and Buddy Collette's "Blue Sands."

Saxophonist Bud Shank had the dubious honor of closing the concert, which was running nearly two hours late; but he managed to maintain interest with a spirited, if somewhat dated, revival of his 1957 quartet.

...The danger of such a work's degenerating into self-serving platitudes or ...checklist of famous names dropped for the purpose of evoking ...unswerving objectivity, matter-

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...dium of the century—racism, sexism, institutional neglect, and commercial exploitation.

...ell Berg
...f Kansas

5/12/89 Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

Akiyoshi and Trio at Vine St.

Seven years have flown by since Toshiko Akiyoshi returned to New York, ending the decade-long Southland residency that had brought her to poll-winning eminence as composer, arranger and band leader. Now heard all too rarely with an orchestra, she opened Wednesday at the Vine St. Bar & Grill leading a trio.

More correctly, she opened solo, since her drummer had not arrived. This enabled her to remind us of the unaccompanied power and drama she can bring to "The Village," a 5/4 composition she has been playing for 25 years. Duke Ellington's "Come Sunday" offered her a chance to enrich the song's already opulent harmonic nature.

With Eddie Marshall now manning the drums and Ned Mann on bass, pianist Akiyoshi embarked on a series of pieces the three have obviously played often together. A bopish tune at odds with its romantic title, "I Know Who Loves You," reflected the perennial Bud Powell image that has been part of her persona ever since she was a teen-ager in Japan studying the bop pioneer's records.

"American Ballad" was a handsome revision of a song written for Britt Woodman, who played trombone in her West Coast band. Woodman being an Ellington alumnus, Akiyoshi tailored this piece along Duke-ish lines.

Although she is anything but a funk pianist, Akiyoshi invested Dizzie Gillespie's "Con Alma" with strong, soulful rhythmic insights. Finally there was another trio version of an early orchestral number, the piquant "Notorious Tourist From East."

Marshall and Mann were consistently supportive as this unique jazz pioneer belied her bashful personality with an hour of creative, innovative mainstream sounds. She closes Saturday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

5/7/89

JAZZ

Dave Grusin's Cruisin' With a Hit List

By LEONARD FEATHER

Dave Grusin is on a winning streak. As a businessman, he can point to the success of GRP Records, which he owns in partnership with Larry Rosen. The label, launched in 1978, recently has had hits on one chart or another by Chick Corea (currently No. 1 in the jazz listings), Diane Schuur, Lee Ritenour, David Benoit, Special EFX, Kevin Eubanks, John Patitucci and Grusin himself.

As a musician, he reached a long-unattainable goal this year by winning his first Oscar for his original score for the movie "The Milagro Beanfield War."

Shortly after that achievement, he returned on a note of triumph to his alma mater, the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he graduated as a music major in 1956. The victory and the visit were not directly related; this was his third annual arrival to spend a week on campus, as a participant in the 42nd annual Conference on World Affairs, a unique meeting of the minds that brings together experts from throughout world on every subject from politics and religion to civil rights and the arts.

During the week he discussed such topics as "The Influence of the Media on the Future," "Commercials on TV," "Science and Music," and "Can Jazz Survive the Record Business?" With his younger brother Don, also a talented composer, he took part in two concerts, both mainly devoted to demonstrations of electronic music and synthesizers, a field in which both brothers have been experts since the late 1970s.

He played only two short excerpts from his winning score. When the subject was brought up, he pointed out that he was not even on hand during Oscar night to receive the award.

"I'd had four previous nominations. The first two were for 'Heaven Can Wait' in 1979 and 'The Champ' in 1980, but I didn't attend the ceremonies. I did go when I got the nominations for 'On Golden Pond' in '82 and 'Tootsie' in '83, but this year I thought I was the longest shot of the evening; I figured John Williams would win again, for 'Accidental Tourist.' "

Grusin was at his home in Santa Fe, N.M., watching the show on TV, when his name was announced. "I was astonished; after all, the movie came and went last spring—time enough for people to forget."

The rise of GRP Records has been one of the most impressive phenomena in the record industry during the past decade. Juggling commercial and musical values, Grusin and Rosen have established it as one of the most successful of the independent labels. Yet Grusin is worried about its cash flow and fears the power of the major companies.

"I don't know how long the independents can survive," he said. "With the giants swallowing up smaller companies right and left, it seems as though one day there may be only two record companies left, CBS and Warner Bros.—and we'll have to be thankful that there are two, not one."

At one enlightening matinee during the Colorado Conference (the session was billed as "Tonal Toys: Playing in the Digital Sandbox"), Grusin stood on stage amid a ton of electronic equipment as he and Don and a gifted younger synthesizer expert, Rob Mullins, plunged a bemused audience into a complex world of Roland D-50s, Yamaha DX 7s, Korg M 1s, Kawai Q 80 Sequencers, of MIDI signals and computers through which music is assembled as much as composed.

Associated Press

Dave Grusin: "My prediction potential . . . is very low."

"The synthesizers have their own special value no matter what kind of music you're involved in," said the senior Grusin. "If you're at the piano composing for an orchestra, you don't have much of an idea how your horn or string parts will sound, but with synthesizers you are brought much closer to the end result.

"That doesn't mean that synths will ever be substituted for the traditional instruments; I don't plan to use sampling as a way of replacing players. In fact, the synths are not designed just to simulate other instruments. We're in an area of constant discovery; each synthesizer has its own character, its own touch sensitivity. We can use all these complex wave forms to create sounds you have never heard."

Grusin has been a consistent state-of-the-art artist on every level. His company was among the first to place a strong emphasis on compact discs, at a time when most of his contemporaries were not ready. "Some of the majors didn't realize that the basic CD audience consists of people who have the best possible stereo setup at home and whose tastes lean to jazz or classical music."

He is also ready for DAT (digital audio tape), which many observers feel is the wave of the future. "They already have DATs on the market in Japan. We're not allowed to import them, because of the fear of copying, which is easy with DATs but impossible with CDs. But the technology is great; it's just a matter of time before DAT will become established in this country, and I don't think there is any danger that this will invalidate CDs."

While his partner Rosen handles much of the business end of GRP, Grusin's other life as a screen composer (for which he generally uses orthodox orchestras rather than synthesized scores) continues apace.

"Since 'Milagro Beanfield War' I've completed two other scores. I did the sound track for 'A Dry White Season,' a story about a student uprising in Soweto, with Donald Sutherland, Susan Sarandon and Marlon Brando, for which we had [South African trumpeter] Hugh Masekela on the track. Then I just got through working on the 'History of America' series starring the Peanuts animated characters, using some of my regular associates such as my brother Don, Jerry Hey, Harvey Mason and Abe Laboriel."

Does he sense that there may be another Oscar on the horizon for 1990?

Grusin hesitated and smiled his wry smile. "Who knows? I thought I had a really good chance with 'On Golden Pond,' where there was so much room for music—but that didn't make it, and 'Milagro' did. So my prediction potential, you might say, is very low." □

Feather's rating of the Duke Ellington album "Recollections of the Big Band Era" (April 30) contained a typographical error; it should have been 4½ stars.

JAZZ REVIEW

Cal State Northridge's Band Students Earn Jazzy A's

Jazz education has been in good hands at Cal State Northridge for at least 20 years. That has been the length of Joel Leach's incumbency there as head honcho of the band program, and to celebrate his anniversary an inspiring double-header concert was staged Friday night on campus.

The so-called "A" band of current students showed its colors as Leach took them through charts by Don Menza, Sammy Nestico, Louie Bellson and Dave Black.

College bands spend more time rehearsing than most pros. The result here was typical: Tight, cohesive performances, though on the fast tunes the phrasing was a little hurried at times, particularly when an electric bass inhibited the swinging. But on other tunes, with the bass playing upright and the tempo a little easier, all went well.

The best soloists are pianist Eric Reed (who recently took a week off to play with Wynton Marsalis), guitarist Steve Gregory, the full-toned Chris Pearson on tenor sax, and the high-flying Brian Coyle on trumpet. Jacob Armen, the 8-year-old boy wonder of the drums, made a sensational guest appearance.

Good as the students were, it took only 16 bars by an alumni band (heard after intermission) to separate the men (and woman—Ann King was in the trumpet section) from the boys. Here is how the present "A" band may sound if it can be reassembled in 2001. The energy and éclat were dazzling; the band had only run the charts down once, yet the reading of difficult music by George Stone, Glen Garrett and Gordon Goodwin was impeccable.

It was a treat to hear Grant Geissman playing straight-ahead guitar and Bruce Eskovitz's high-stepping tenor sax on "Giant Steps." Both are 1976 alumni.

Joel Leach can be proud of his indoctrination; these graduates' performances reflected his invaluable impact on their lives.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW 5/17/89

Mullins Masterful at Bon Appetit

Rob Mullins is not yet a household name, but the evidence provided during his weekly session at the Bon Appetit left no doubt that the 31-year-old keyboard artist is headed for status as an international celebrity.

Well versed though he is in synthesizer technology (he often plays electric keyboards at this Westwood club), Mullins on Sunday confined himself to acoustic piano. The confinement, far from pinning him down, offered a chance to display his mastery of the jazz tradition in a setting that gave him unlimited freedom.

With Brian Bromberg, a phenomenally fleet young bassist, and Joel Taylor on drums, Mullins paid his blues dues with a so-soaked treatment of "Georgia on My Mind," complete with funky chording and an occasional foray inside the piano for some evocative string-plucking.

Two tunes from his forthcoming album, "Breakthrough" and the title number "Jazz Jazz," attested to Mullins' successful experimentation as a composer. A blues, "Five-Four-Three-Two-One," found all three men digging deep into the heart of the matter, with Bromberg at his damn-the-torpedoes best.

Usually heard here every Sunday, Mullins will leave soon for an encore tour of Japan, returning to the weekly Bon Appetit gig June 25.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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5/14/89

Levey Marches to a Different Drummer

By LEONARD FEATHER

Stan Levey is one of the Southland's more successful commercial photographers. He works for major ad agencies, shoots conventions, heads a staff of six and has expanded into extensive video production.

Few of his clients know of his other life. Levey, 64, is one of the forgotten men of jazz, a long respected drummer and vibist who, during a 30-year career, worked with every giant from Gillespie and Parker and Monk to Goodman and Kenton.

Until his mid 20s, he had another career, as a fighter. "My father was an automobile dealer in Philadelphia, also a fight manager," Levey said. "So I sort of grew up in the gyms, skipping rope with my buddies the boxers.

"I fought some amateur fights, then when I needed some money I turned pro. Every ethnic group had its own favorites, and I did pretty well as a white Jewish heavyweight. Then I got hurt and it was time to quit."

Meanwhile, other interests had intervened. A youth who had made rhythms with spoons and forks before taking up the drums, he dropped in at a local club one night where Dizzy Gillespie was playing.

"I asked to sit in. At first Dizzy thought it was a joke, but he liked me, and his drummer had just quit, so I got the job—at $18 a week," Levey said. "I was 16. I dropped out of high school and spent my days with my old man, cleaning cars, and my nights at the club. After Dizzy left, I stayed on there until he encouraged me to come to New York."

After he arrived there, Gillespie recommended Levey to the bassist Oscar Pettiford, whose group he joined.

One night on 52nd Street (the famed block in midtown Manhattan where clubs lined both sides of the street), Levey met the already legendary Charlie Parker. "He was a real ragamuffin; his shoes and socks didn't match, his hair went straight up, he had that big gold tooth, and he carried his horn in some kind of grocery bag. I thought to myself, what can all this excitement be about? But then he picked up the horn and it was incredible—like the Pied Piper of Hamelin," Levey said.

"One night at the Down Beat Club, he asked me if I'd like to play. Well, after eight bars, he turned around and gave me that big grin. From that night on we were like bread and butter—inseparable."

Levey and Parker lived together for a while, on 119th Street. "Miles Davis lived above us, and Billie Holiday was in the same building. Bird looked so bad that Dizzy gave him $250 to buy some clothes. I went with him to find his new suit and socks and shirts and I remember feeling a little jealous that he was getting all these new things."

After working with Parker's own band, Levey became a part of the first genuine all-be-bop group to play on 52nd Street: Gillespie, Parker, pianist Al Haig, bassist Curly Russell. "That was a historic group, and I should have been on that famous record date when they made 'Salt Peanuts' and 'Shaw Nuff,'" Levey said. "But Dizzy was paying me $66 a week and I got an offer to replace Dave Tough in Woody Herman's band, for $250, so I had to quit."

By now, Levey says he was aghast at Parker's consumption of everything in sight. "He was a human garbage pail; he'd consume whatever was around, and drink whiskey along with it, and smoke pot. When he was strung out on hard drugs he was pitiful." (Inevitably, Levey fell prey for a while to his roommate's life style, but in due course, cleaned up his act and for almost 40 years has not even smoked cigarettes.)

Levey believes the movie "Bird" treated its subject unfairly. Parker was a "spoiled brat," Levey said. "His mother, whom I met, doted on him. But he was also a genius. One night while we were living together he woke up at 3 a.m., jumped out of bed, and wrote 'Confirmation.' Had he lived he could have been another Duke Ellington.

"He was many faceted," Levey continued. "Here was a man who loved children, who used to play chess with Russians, who could seriously discuss just about any subject, and all they showed in the movie was him climbing into bed with a woman, and using drugs and playing a little music."

LEVEY/ESTRIN

Drummer Stan Levey: "I'm so glad I got out."

Levey hopes the forthcoming Thelonious Monk film will do justice to its subject. "I worked with Monk in the Coleman Hawkins band. He drank a lot of beer and got stoned, and people thought he was crazy, but part of that was a facade; he could be very sharp and articulate. I remember after not seeing him in 20 years I ran into him in San Francisco and he walked up and said, 'Stan, how you doin'?' He looked totally unaware, like a space cadet, but he was aware of everything.

Overlapping with Levey's bop years were some memorable big band experiences. "Benny Goodman was the strangest. He hired me in 1943—Zoot Sims was in the band—and he'd never talk to me or look at me. Even when kids in the crowd shouted out 'Hey, Benny, who's the drummer?' he didn't answer. Finally one of his brothers comes over to me and says, 'Benny says you should go home.' That's how he fired me. I was devastated.

"Now we cut to 1961. My phone rings and a voice says, 'Stan? It's Benny.' I thought it was a gag, but in his mind no time had passed. 'We're coming to California and Stan, I want you to play with me at Disneyland.' Suddenly he knows my name! He was very bizarre, but finally we became good friends."

Levey rose to national jazz fame in the Stan Kenton orchestra from 1952-54. "He was a wonderful man; he'd let you do whatever you were capable of and never stop you, but if you got in over your head, he'd say, 'Hey, forget it.'"

From Kenton, Levey graduated to the security of California and a steady gig with Howard Rumsey's group at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach. During that time he expanded his hobby of photography into professional work; he shot many album covers. Through the 1960s he continued working in the studios, but saw the writing on the wall. "I was doing a 'Mannix' show with Lalo Schifrin and two guys started plugging wires into my vibraphone. On the playback it didn't sound like a vibraphone any more. I could see what was coming. Everything would be electronic and they wouldn't need me to play, just some synthesizers. I said to myself, I'm getting the hell out."

Ironically, on one of his final music jobs, Levey hired his two sons. "I wrote the music for some educational films and I had David playing drums—he's so good Buddy Rich let him sit in—and my other son, Chris, who's a fine bass player. But I made sure they didn't stay in music as a primary source of income. They're both doctors now, and I think that's my finest accomplishment."

Levey is happy to have quit music. "I see fine musicians today standing on street corners in shiny suits, and I picture them at home staring at the telephone. I'm so glad I got out."

But is there no chance that he will ever come back in?

"As a matter of fact, yes. Some records I made in the '50s have been reissued in Japan, and I've been offered terrific money to do a two-week tour of Japan in January with a small band. I figure it'll take me only a couple of months to get back in shape.

"Of course, while I'm over there you know I'll take care of business—by which I mean, I'll take my cameras along." □

Pop Music Reviews

Astor Piazzolla's Success Defies Classification

With several records now released here, Astor Piazzolla is finally achieving in the United States the acclaim he has long enjoyed from his native Argentina to Montreux. His local debut Tuesday at Royce Hall, where a sizable crowd accorded him an uproarious reception, attested to his new-found popularity.

His success is an oddity that defies classification; this group is no more pop or jazz or soul than it is rock or fusion or R&B. In a rhythm-dominated music business, it has no drama. Two men, Piazzolla and Julio Pane, play an instrument unknown to many, a button-key accordion better known as a *bandoneon*.

To compound the problem, the music is all original and mostly unfamiliar, though at least one tune earned the applause of recognition.

Counteracting all the handicaps is the inherent quality of this so-called New Tango idiom, with its unique blend of classical and improvisational elements.

Piazzolla's formidable technique is applied to dense chords, repetitious rhythmic figures, whispering tremolos and the occasional thunderclap finale. For variety, one number may begin with a gorgeous cello solo by Jose Bragato, another with bowed bass by Hector Console. The pianist, Gerardo Candini, tends to floridity and busily turns pages while reading his complex parts.

The tunes were unbilled and unannounced; the leader spoke only once, to recall his role in keeping the tango alive. Actually, though the original rhythm (TUM-ta-TUM-TUM) was used here and there, Piazzolla has taken his works far beyond their simple 1920s Argentine origin to create a music that is emotional and durable ("Adios Nonino" was written in 1959 but has been updated), using the best of South American and European traditions. In a music world dominated by semiliterates who equate energy with talent, it deserves to be accepted with open ears. —LEONARD FEATHER

Chick Corea's Elektric Band Makes Sparks Fly

5/17/89

The principal reason for the superiority of Chick Corea's Elektric Band over many other fusion groups is the technical proficiency of the participants. "Chick Corea Elektric Band," taped mainly at the Pabellon Deportivo del Real in Madrid and airing on the Bravo cable channel at 8 tonight and again at 2 a.m., brings this factor to the forefront.

Most of Corea's tunes rely as much on the rhythmic background as on their melodic lines. "Rumble," on which he plays synclevier, finds Dave Weckl, the brilliant percussionist, keeping up a hypnotic 16-beat pulse. "King Cockroach" is a sensitive collaboration by Corea on Rhodes keyboard and John Patitucci on electric bass. The latter is a formidable presence, doubling here and there on upright bass. Scott Henderson on guitar completes the group.

A questionable inclusion throughout the hour is the use at irregular intervals of four black dancers, dressed in 1940s-style dark suits and performing as if they haven't heard the music; their rhythms don't seem to correspond.

The finale is anticlimactic, as Corea plays "Spanish Way" and encourages a sing-along by the audience. Sound quality is fine, and the camerawork ingenious; on one tune the effect is like looking at a photographer's contact sheet as the picture moves frame by frame across the screen. But this too was expendable; what counts is the cohesion of the four musicians. Their rhythmic-unison passages in "Got a Match?" may remind you of the fan who once told a high-flying musician: "Hold it, man! I can't listen that fast!"

—LEONARD FEATHER

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Los Angeles Times 5/19/89

TV Reviews

Basie Band Plays Second Fiddle to Diane Schuur

One of the great bands of jazz history takes second place to a currently popular singer in "Diane Schuur and the Count Basie Orchestra," airing on the Bravo cable channel tonight at 7 and again at midnight.

Schuur's recording with the Basie band last year was a jazz chart topper and Grammy Award winner; several songs from the record were included when this show was taped at last summer's Montreal Jazz Festival.

Her best moments are heard in "We'll Be Together Again" and "Travelin' Light," both ballads that show her more composed and relaxed side. On faster tunes such as "Only You" and "A Touch of Your Love," she tends to phrase so literally that the notes emerge without any of the subtle variations characteristic of a polished jazz singer.

Schuur's sound is robust and her range impressive, but her vocal and visual mannerisms, such as the throwing up of her arms and the squeals at the end of certain songs, come across as contrived excitement. On "Ev'ry Day" she does a fair impression of the Joe Williams version, with an upward jump of an octave toward the end.

The Basie Orchestra plays one instrumental before Schuur comes on, and two more between her set (the second of which she performs at the piano). The old Ernie Wilkins tune "Basie" finds the men in bristling form, with smart section work and first-rate tenor sax by Kenny Hing.

The drummer, billed as Greg Field, actually is Dennis Mackrel. Frank Foster, the leader, is shortchanged; his sax solos are too few and too short. But the real loser is Carmen Bradford, the regular Basie band vocalist; we never get to see her at all.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Los Angeles Times 5/26

Jazz Reviews

Cooper and Green in Trombone Revival

The use of two trombones as centerpieces for a jazz group seemed to go out of fashion many years ago when J.J. Johnson and Kai Winding went their separate ways. Its revival by Buster Cooper and Thurman Green, who led a quintet at Alfonse's, provided a welcome reminder that such partnerships are as valid now as ever.

This sartorially elegant pair can boast impeccable credentials. Green is best known for his work with Gerald Wilson, Harold Land and Willie Bobo; Cooper played with Lionel Hampton, Benny Goodman and, for seven years, Duke Ellington.

It was immediately evident Wednesday that their decision to work together is more than a one-night-stand throwaway; they had music to provide them with at least a routine of sorts on most tunes. In unison or harmony, they achieved a burnished blend that was further accented by the sympathetic drumming of Pat Sharrod, who seems to know all the ends and outs of these arrangements.

Cooper has long been known for his sly, sliding way with a tune. Tossing notes around like confetti, he is about as instantly recognizable as anyone handling this horn today. Green, though less identifiable, is a strong improvising force who solos on a blues, and the Sonny Rollins standard "Doxy" provided often a welcome contrast to Cooper's explosions.

The dancing lines of Dwight Dickerson's piano and the limber, inventive bass solos by James Leary rounded out the plus factors in this communicative unit, which left no doubt that everyone on the bandstand was contentedly engaged in an act of musical stimulation. Because their work has been largely confined to big bands in recent years (Cooper is most often heard with Bill Berry), it was a pleasure to hear these leaders in a setting that unleashed them in a context of unlimited freedom.

—LEONARD FEATHER

5/21/89

Riding the Sound Waves at Otter Crest

By LEONARD FEATHER

OTTER CREST, Ore.—"You simply have to go to the Otter Crest party. The music is different, and the setting is idyllic."

When one has heard endorsements along these lines from jazzman after jazzman, it eventually becomes embarrassing not to act on their recommendation. As it turned out, the Otter Crest Jazz Weekend was everything that had been promised.

The Inn at Otter Crest, a resort hotel six miles north of Newport and 50 miles northwest of Eugene, is a rambling collection of timbered buildings clinging to the hilly shoreline, surrounded on three sides by hundreds of pine and fir trees, on the fourth by the Pacific Ocean. The beauty and serenity of the setting established a mood that clearly inspired the musicians at the festival, held last weekend.

The various jazz parties that have proliferated since the 1960s tend to become an almost closed shop, with most of the same performers playing musical chairs at Denver, Santa Fe, San Diego, Scottsdale and the rest. Some of them are here too, but counterbalancing this is a healthy contingent of unfamiliar faces, among them six Canadians and a Japanese, along with several artists from the Oregon and Washington State areas who confound the illusion that the term "West Coast Jazz" is limited to California.

"We like to mix it up a little," said Jim Brown, the 62-year-old real estate dealer who with his wife Mary launched the party in 1978. "The first year we had only 12 players and 60 customers; now we have 30 musicians, and we keep a ceiling of 300 patrons to maintain some intimacy. We're sold out every year."

Bill Berry, the Los Angeles cornetist who has been Brown's musical director for the past decade, gives the hired hands total freedom to play with whomever they choose. Certain sets are special: all five bass players playing a special arrangement, or all five tenor sax stars in a collective jam. Saturday evening all six Canadians worked as a unit: the velvet-toned Fraser McPherson on tenor sax, Rob McConnell on valve trombone, the amazing pianist Oliver Jones, guitarist Ed Bickert, Terry Clarke on drums, and Don Thompson on bass.

Thompson may well be the most versatile major talent in jazz today. Still based in Canada, he has toured extensively (five years with George Shearing), but the full range of his gifts is hard to absorb. During a single hour he started with three impeccable numbers on vibes, switched to piano for a duo piece with Bickert, played some of the most phenomenal bass solos ever heard, then showed his talent as a drummer before returning to vibes to close out the set.

Who in the U.S. has heard of Oliver Jones? He has been in this country briefly a few times, but is better known all over Europe and, of course, in Canada. Like Oscar Peterson, he studied with Peterson's sister, Daisy Sweeney, but at Otter Crest he revealed an incredible amalgam of Peterson, Tatum and Garner.

LEONARD FEATHER

Rob Thomas played a rare five-stringed violin in Otter Crest.

All the pianists here, in fact, were astonishing on their own levels: Ross Tompkins of "Tonight Show" fame; Roger Kellaway, the ultimate in wildly swinging eclecticism; and Gene Harris, best known as a hard-driving blues master, though one of the gentlest moments of the weekend was his slow, sensitive reading of "The Way We Were."

Like the Canadians and so many others, Harris is building his fame without needing or receiving much help from the U.S. Starting in September he will take his own big band on a three-month worldwide tour, subsidized by Philip Morris and helped by the State Department. He has many dates in Japan, as well as Moscow, all of Western Europe, Africa, Taiwan, Australia, Egypt, Seoul, and on and on. America? Ah, yes. There will be exactly one public concert in America.

Otter Crest offered us West Coasters a first glimpse of Ken Peplowski, who at 31 plays super-Goodman clarinet and doubles on Ben Webster vintage tenor sax; and Jay Leonhart, who revealed a rare flair for comedy with his own compositions. Singing and playing the bass, he sang "It's Impossible to Sing and Play the Bass." Among his other antic-manic works were a hymn of hate to Robert Frost inspired by his jealousy of the poet; a paean to pork; a paranoid poem called "They're Coming to Get Me." Leonhart is the wittiest jazzman-composer since Dave Frishberg (who was here on the final night to film a segment for the CBS "Sunday Morning" show).

You don't have to go far from Otter Crest to find appealing new sounds. Rob Thomas might be a world-class name if he were not based in Portland. Thomas played a five-string electric violin (the extra string is a low C, enabling him at times to resemble a viola); he doubled expertly on bass. Then there's Jan Stentz, the singer from Tacoma, who traded scat phrases with Jeff Clayton's alto sax, sang her own lyrics to Clare Fischer's "Pensativa" and Ruth Price's words to the Al Cohn tune "High on You."

On the other hand, Otter Crest was quite a hike for Satoru Oda, who brought his tenor sax from Tokyo, and for Jiggs Whigham, the Cleveland-born trombonist who for 23 years has lived in Cologne, where he teaches jazz at the conservatory.

The age span here was unusual; the audience, though mainly up in years, included a number of children. A touching moment was the appearance of Milt Hinton, the distinguished veteran bassist, with Jay Leonhart's 15-year-old son, the trumpeter Mike Leonhart, and a 16-year-old saxophonist, Marc Fendel. "Fifty years from now," Hinton said, "I want them to be able to say that they played with me." Fifty years from now (scientific developments permitting) Milt Hinton will be 129.

Because most of the musicians are fast readers who require little rehearsal, the final evening at Otter Crest found most of the cast assembled onstage for a series of big band charts, written or conducted by John Clayton, Rob McConnell and Bill Berry. The shifting personnel included Spike Robinson, who worked for 30 years as an engineer, gave it up to play tenor sax full time, and is now in demand for several European tours a year. At 59, he's suddenly famous, at least overseas.

The company formed by Jim and Mary Brown to present their concerts is known as Sound Ideas. The name could hardly be more apt. Anyone tired of the hullabaloo of jazz festivals in gigantic auditoriums, of saxophonists trying to outsqueak one another and of synthesizers, one more synthetic than the last, could do worse than dip his soul into the ethos represented by these uncommercialized, altruistically organized affairs. □

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JAZZ REVIEW

Watrous Performs Skillfully at Loa

By LEONARD FEATHER

Bill Watrous, who played at the Loa in Santa Monica Friday and Saturday, is a trombonist whose stature in the jazz world cannot quite measure up to his exceptional talent.

The reasons could be that the trombone is not an instrument greatly in favor at the moment and that it requires some sort of companionship beyond a mere rhythm section. Working on his own, without a saxophone or other horn for counter balance, Watrous did his valiant best to bring cohesion and creativity to what was clearly an ad hoc quartet.

Along with his masterful control of the instrument, Watrous has a mind that constantly explores new improvisational avenues. His opening number, "Just in Time," was an astonishing demonstration of this facility as he ad-libbed no less than four choruses, building up the tension and excitement as every sedulously crafted phrase led logically into the next.

Even more engaging was a similarly extended ballad treatment of "Nancy," ending with a series of high notes, each dazzling in its purity.

Watrous has mastered the art of circular breathing, which enabled him to sustain several notes almost indefinitely toward the end of "Change Partners." He has also delved into multiphonics, as was demonstrated in a long a cappella introduction to "Seven Come Eleven," replete with what sounded like perfectly blended chords.

His accompaniment was less than perfect. Frank Strazzeri, an excellent pianist, seemed to be having trouble hearing himself. Jim DiJulio, though a technically adroit bassist, achieved an amplified sound more notable for quantity than quality. Sherman Ferguson, that most dependable of drummers, completed the group for this regrettably short-lived gig.

IL DIBATTITO SULLE «ETICHETTE»

RICCARDO SCHWAMENTHAL

JAZZ MODERNO? MA CHIAMIAMOLO JAZZ

Nello scorso luglio «Musica Jazz» invitava a una riflessione sul jazz d'oggi e sulle sue correnti. Lo spunto è stato raccolto. Dopo gli interventi apparsi in novembre e in febbraio, ecco altre voci su un tema che evidentemente meritava una così intensa discussione.

di Libero Farné

Ira Gitler, prendendo a prestito un'affermazione fatta da David Himmelstein negli anni '70, ha intitolato «Bebop la musica del futuro» una sua presentazione del festival «Jazbo '90». Un altro consulente artistico della medesima rassegna bolognese, Alessandro Berti Ceroni, durante un dibattito radiofonico, per comprovare l'attualità e la validità delle proposte musicali offerte dal festival ha ricordato fra l'altro che lo stimato critico Giuseppe Piacentino ha firmato su *Musica Jazz* un articolo dal titolo molto significativo: «Jazz moderno? Ma chiamiamolo bop». In entrambi i casi il pensiero di altri è stato decontestualizzato e palesemente strumentalizzato, mentre nel controverso mondo del jazz, piuttosto che ricorrere a citazioni parziali, sarebbe più produttivo affrontare un confronto sereno, ma esplicito, che possa portare a reali approfondimenti: confronto che il nostro mensile sta conducendo molto opportunamente, estendendo democraticamente la consultazione con lo scopo di una disinteressata ricognizione culturale.

A questo proposito l'intervento di Piacentino, apparso sul numero di febbraio, è sicuramente stimolante; io condivido sostanzialmente i suoi contenuti, ma trovo che certi passaggi, quasi categorici forse per vis polemica o forse per mancanza di spazio, potrebbero essere facilmente fraintesi se letti disattentamente. L'autore cioè potrebbe essere accusato «di essere diventato improvvisamente un conservatore», o viceversa gli si potrebbe riconoscere «di scrivere finalmente cose giuste», a seconda dei punti di vista dei lettori più superficiali.

Se mi è concesso di sintetizzare la tesi di Piacentino, come io l'ho intesa, si potrebbe dire che il bebop, considerato non come forma musicale o stile, ma come atteggiamento culturale, ha introdotto un'innovazione che persiste tuttora e che consiste nell'aderenza del jazzista alla contemporaneità con tutta la complessità dei suoi problemi; gli sviluppi successivi (da Mingus, o anche dal cool, fino ai nostri giorni) hanno rispettato questo assunto iniziale e hanno quindi rappresentato un'evoluzione del bop, impedendo che si riducesse a formula sterile.

Nella foto sopra: Thelonious Monk con Charlie Rouse in un quartetto «storico».

lità, humor, e il rapporto tra i due era grande. Quando ascolto cose del genere, mi sento rassicurata: nel mondo attuale, specialmente in fatto di chitarra, non si fa altro che dire: "ma perché non usi il pedale per la distorsione e suoni un po' di fusion?". Ecco, quello che abbiamo ascoltato spiega perché non lo facciamo! Voglio proprio dare il massimo, cinque stelle, anzi cinque e mezza...».

3. CHARLIE BYRD-LAURINDO ALMEIDA: *Don't Cry For Me Argentina* (da *«The Concord Jazz Guitar Collection»*, Concord Jazz).

Prima. «Bellissimo. Sto qui seduta a vergognarmi della mia ignoranza in fatto di chitarristi, specialmente degli ultimi dieci anni. La mia sensazione è che sia Laurindo Almeida con Carlos Barbosa-Llima e/o Sharon Isben-Larry Coryell. So che Sharon, Larry e Laurindo hanno un trio. Nello stesso tempo, non ho sentito che ci fossero tre chitarre fino alla parte centrale, poi ne ho sentito tre.

«Era bellissimo. Ovviamente, era gente preparata classicamente... Caro mio, avrei voluto che, piuttosto, mi si fossero stati fatti sentire dei pianisti! Eccovi qua una ragazza che negli ultimi dieci anni non ha fatto che ascoltare McCoy Tyner e Bill Evans. Per il valore del disco dò quattro stelle, e cinque per lo stile».

Dopo. «Sì, questo è abbastanza ragionevole: Laurindo e Charlie. E io che pensavo fosse Carlos, e che ad un certo punto spuntassero tre chitarre! Certo sembrava proprio così. Era invece un duo di chitarre dal suono veramente ricco».

4. PAT METHENY: *Sueno Con Mexico* (da *«Guitar Music From ECM»*, Ecm). Metheny, chitarre acustiche e basso elettrico.

Prima. «Aspetta un attimo, penso si tratti di Pat Metheny e Lyle Mays. La mia prima idea era che ci fosse un chitarrista a suonare quell'ostinato sullo sfondo, ed era splendido. Pensavo che fosse un chitarrista brasiliano, oppure Pat Metheny che sovraregistrava su se stesso. Azzardavo che si trattasse di Metheny con Toninho Horta, senonché negli ultimi secondi ho pensato a un sintetizzatore, con Lyle Mays a suonare gli accordi. O magari Pat con la chitarra synth. Cinque stelle, assolutamente. Mi è piaciuto. Magnificamente registrato».

Dopo. «Allora era giusta la mia prima impressione, cioè Pat Metheny che si è sovraregistrato. È bellissimo. Non c'è niente, di tutto ciò che quest'uomo ha fatto, che non mi sia piaciuto. È tutto: è genuino, ha dell'anima, ha un gran ritmo, si apre a cose nuove, ha veramente catturato questo spirito brasiliano. Certo che suonava come se fosse stato Toninho Horta. Mi ha messo proprio in allegria».

(Per gentile concessione di «Jazz Times»)

5. ORNETTE COLEMAN & PRIME TIME: *Cloning* (da *«In All Languages»*, Caravan Of Dreams).

Prima. «Mi sto tormentando il cervello per pensare chi questo sia. Non posso riconoscere, per diversi motivi, il sassofonista. Appena l'ho ascoltato, mi sembrava un po' Brecker, ma non può essere. O forse sì? Vedi, sto cercando di ricollegarmi a situazioni in cui, a mia conoscenza, certe persone hanno lavorato insieme, come Mike Stern e John Scofield lavoravano insieme dietro a Miles (Lunga pausa). Guarda, non tirerò a indovinare. Dirò soltanto quel che penso, quel che provo e tutto il resto.

«A me questo disco piace molto, davvero, e mi ricorda le prime cose di John McLaughlin, e *«Bitches Brew»*, ed *«Extrapolation»* specialmente. Io amo John McLaughlin, ed è stato lui a introdurmi al jazz, quale che sia il suo stile. Ho ascoltato lui prima di ascoltare Paul Desmond. Potevo prenderlo come punto di riferimento perché si avvicinava al rock, e potevo capire perché i giovani la pensassero in quella maniera. Mi è sempre piaciuta l'innovazione costituita dalla sua musica. Mi ricorda anche il primo Larry Coryell. E John McLaughlin faceva tutto quello, ed era veloce, con abili melodie e niente tonalità, e ognuno suonava all'unisono di fronte a ogni altro. E quei suoni speciali che la chitarra rock sa fare per dare quel sound da confusione.

«Di chiunque si tratti, questi sono musicisti davvero fortissimi. Mi trovo letteralmente sulle spine a non sapere chi siano. Ma mi piace questo tipo di musica. È vicina all'avanguardia. Quattro stelle».

Dopo. «Così, era Ornette? Bene, lo rispetto, e ho adorato quell'epoca con McLaughlin e Larry».

6. BARNEY KESSEL: *Ah, Sweet Mystery Of Life* (da *«Spontaneous Combustion»*, Contemporary). Monty Alexander, piano; John Clayton, contrabbasso; Jeff Hamilton, batteria. Anno 1987.

Prima. «La mia opinione è che siano Barney Kessel, Monty Alexander, e John Clayton con Jeff Hamilton oppure Ray Brown con Jake Hanna. Certo il pianista è scatenato. E sarebbe imbarazzante se risultasse che ho torto nel riconoscerlo: dopo tutto, sono stata sposata con Monty per due anni...».

Dopo. «Riconosco il tema, mi sembra di averlo già ascoltato. So che Barney ha suonato con Monty, anni fa, quando io studiavo alla Berklee. Sono sicura che sia Barney. Disco bellissimo. Cinque stelle».

7. ROSS TRAUT-STEVE RODBY: *Up On The Roof* (da *«The Great Lawn»*, Cbs).

Prima. «Penso sia Larry Carlton, oppure Lee Ritenour. Ho avuto l'impressione che non si trattasse di un musicista di jazz nel senso tradizionale. Una canzone molto carina, magnificamente registrata. E magnifica era la chitarra. Molto rilassante, buono. Quattro stelle».

LUISA CAIRATI

Un apprezzatissimo duo di chitarre: Emily Remler e Larry Coryell a Dalmine, nel 1985.

Dopo. «Ross Traut? Pensate che io sono andata a scuola con Ross Traut! Al pensionato scolastico e a Berklee. Mi piace moltissimo Rodby, mi è sempre piaciuto».

8. JIM HALL-RED MITCHELL: *Osaka Express.*

Prima. «Jim Hall e Ron Carter. Questo è un solido cinque stelle, non c'è discussione. Il solo dubbio che ho avuto è stato quello di dire, come mia prima impressione, Red Mitchell invece di Ron Carter.

«Non conosco il brano. È grande, e Jim è uno dei miei chitarristi preferiti. Il suo fraseggio è incredibile, nessuno lo fa come Jim. Il suo tempo è impeccabile, e le sue idee sono moderne come quelle della persona più contemporanea che esista. Il bassista è un mostro. Dev'essere proprio Ron Carter».

Dopo. «Bene, almeno il nome di Red Mitchell l'ho detto! E pensare che io ho questo disco. Mi serve per pensare che Red Mitchell non è abbastanza *funky*. Non mi fido mai della mia intuizione. C'è un semplice fatto; non ho mai sentito Ron Carter borbottare, e invece Red Mitchell... lui sì che brontola». ●

LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers; one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this series.

This month's musician: Emily Remler

As was made very clear in her last Concord album, *East to Wes*, Emily Remler now belongs in a pantheon that includes a few of her elders: Joe Pass, Herb Ellis, Jim Hall, Kenny Burrell. Over the years she has racked up credits that include R & B bands in New Orleans, a long association with Astrud Gilberto, and many festival and club dates with her own groups.

As is the custom in this series, during the "before" segments she was told nothing about the records; the "after" segments include her comments after she was given this information.

1. KENNY BURRELL AND THE JAZZ GUITAR BAND. *Raincheck*, (from *Pieces of Blue and the Blues*, Blue Note).

Before: I believe it's Kenny Burrell and Bobby Broom—I think it is, I'm pretty sure it is. I like the tune very much. I don't know who wrote it. But I guess Duke Ellington didn't write it. It's a lot of guitar. It's reminiscent of, like, Joe Pass and Herb Ellis duo. It's guitar duo in the classic jazz sense, I suppose, with a lot of notes blending into another.

I loved the intro; I thought it was very creative. As a matter of fact, I could have listened to that intro for a long time, and I laughed when they went into the tune. I thought that was very clever. I gotta say that I feel the time is funny. I don't know what's so truthful about me lately; although I respect those guys to no end, especially Kenny, and I'm very familiar with his work. I remember the thing he did with John Coltrane, I liked it very much. Although people have told me that I play like Kenny, I never really consciously copy that.

As I said, the time feels funny and that upsets me when I'm listening to something that doesn't really lay down there. I hear major problems with the bass and the drums. Otherwise, it's got a lot of spirit. I think they blend very well, those two guys, one into another. That was very good blending—Phewww! I think me and Larry Coryell could have done something like that—but we never did, not really. But that was a really hip intro.

I'll say four stars for it; no, three. We got to support one another. Do you agree with the time problem? The rushing?

After: Those guys are gonna hate me. Who's playing bass? He must be the problem.

I have a theory; there's basically two schools of jazz guitar playing. Those that stemmed from Django, who play on top of the beat, meaning Barney, Tal, all the guys who are exciting, reaching for stuff and not really laying in the pocket like the others, which is from Charlie Christian, Wes Montgomery, Joe. . . so I'm from that school.

There's something about Kenny, he's in between, 'cause he does rush a bit, but he is a bluesy individual. For some reason, I never really loved him, but I respect him tremendously, and he certainly gets more money than I do for a gig. And I love his solo. . .

2. HERB ELLIS-JOE PASS. *Seven Come Eleven* (from *The Concord Jazz Guitar Collection*, Concord Jazz).

Fantastic! Fantastic: That's it, that's the thing! As I expressed before, I was getting a little confused. I feel it's Joe Pass and Herb Ellis. The only problem is I don't remember them doing a live version of this. I'm wracking my brain; the only other guitar players that could play like this at all would be Bonnie Eschete and Vic Juris, and I don't recall them either recording this or playing together. So it's got to be Joe and Herb Ellis.

Oh, man, the spirit of that was incredible; and whoever is on bass and drums is great too. They didn't miss a trick, and that tem- . . .that's, I guess, what we were talking about before, the guitar duo of this kind of . . . that's the definitive version. And it's going to be really embarrassing if it's two totally other people.

After: I'm going to be playing with Joe soon, in Pittsburgh. I'm going to play an hour of solo, Joe's going to play an hour of solo, then we're going to play together. And it just struck the fear of death in my heart, just hearing that! That was such a fast tempo, and you just don't hear that nowadays.

Not only that, it was clever and humorous and the rapport was great. And when I hear something like that, it makes me feel comforted that in today's world, especially in guitar, the emphasis is on, 'Why don't you use distortion pedal and play fusion?' And really what we heard is why we don't! Five stars—five and a half.

#. CHARLIE BYRD-LAURINDO ALMEIDA. *Don't Cry For Me Argentina* (from *The Concord Jazz Guitar Collection*, Concord Jazz).

Before: This is beautiful. I'm sitting here ashamed of my ignorance about guitarists, especially in the last ten years. My sense is that's Laurindo Almeida with Carlos Barbosa Lima and/or Sharon Isben-Larry Coryell. I know intellectually that Sharon and Larry and Laurindo have a trio. At the same time I don't hear three guitars until the middle section, then it felt like three.

It was beautiful; obviously the people were classically trained. . .Boy, I wish you'd given me pianists instead! Here's a girl who's been listening to McCoy Tyner and Bill Evans for the last ten years. Four stars, and for that style, five.

After: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense, Laurindo and Charlie. And I thought it was Carlos, and I thought there were three guitars at one point. It sure sounded like it. It was a very full sounding two-guitar thing.

4. PAT METHENY. *Sueno Con Mexico* (from *Guitar Music from ECM*, ECM Records). Metheny, acoustic guitars, electric bass.

Before: Wait a minute, I think that's Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays. My first thing was that it was a guitarist playing that background ostinato, which was gorgeous. And I thought it was a Brazilian guitarist, or Pat Metheny overdubbing himself. So my guess was gonna be Pat Metheny with Toninho Horta. . .but at the last few seconds, I guess it's a synthesizer with Lyle Mays playing the chords. Or maybe Pat playing guitar synthesizer. Five, absolutely, I love it. Beautifully recorded.

After: So that was my first guess, that Pat Metheny was overdubbing himself. It's beautiful. There's nothing he did that I didn't like yet. That's all there is to it. He's sincere, he's got soul, he's got great rhythm, he opens up to new things, he's really captured this Brazilian thing. Jeez, that sounded like Toninho Horta. His music just makes me happy.

5. ORNETTE COLEMAN & PRIME TIME. *Cloning* (from *In All Languages*, Caravan of Dreams).

I'm wracking my brain to think who that is. I can't for some reason recognize the horn player. When I first heard it, it sounded like Brecker, but it can't possibly be. Or could it? See, I'm trying to think of situations where I know people were together, like Mike Stern and John Scofield played together behind Miles. (*Long pause*) Look, I'm not gonna guess who this is. What I will say is what I think about it, what I like about it and all that.

I like it very much, I do, and it reminds me of early John McLaughlin stuff, and the *Bitches Brew* record and *Extrapolation*, especially; I really like John McLaughlin and that's how I was introduced to jazz, whatever that type is. I heard that before I heard Paul Desmond. I coud relate to that because it was more like rock, and I could understand why kids feel the way they do. I always liked the innovation of it. It does remind me of early Larry Coryell, also. And John McLaughlin was doing that, which was fast, clever melodies and no tonality, and everybody playing in unison against each other. Those special sounds that the rock guitar can make to give that confusion sound.

They're real powerful musicians, whoever they are; I'm embarrassed not to know who it is. But I really like that kind of music; it's more like avant garde. Four stars.

After: So it was Ornette? Well, I have to respect that, and I did love that era with McLaughlin and Larry.

6. BARNEY KESSEL. *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life* (from Spontaneous Combustion, Contemporary). Monty Alexander, piano; John Clayton, bass, Jeff Hamilton, drums. Rec. 1987.

Before: My guess is Barney Kessel, Monty Alexander, and it's either John Clayton and Jeff Hamilton or Ray Brown and Jake Hanna. Piano player is burnin'.

It will be very embarrassing if I'm wrong about this. After all, I was married to Monty for two years! I really should be sure.

I recognize the tune, seems I heard it before. I remember Barney playing with Monty years ago, when I was at Berklee. I feel sure it's Barney! Liked it very much; five stars.

After: All right! I felt a lack of confidence, but I was right. Monty was burning, wasn't he? Be sure you put that in. Are you going to print everything I say? Anyhow, I'm very relieved that I got that one. On a social level.

7. ROSS TRAUT/STEVE RODBY. *Up On The Roof* (from The Great Lawn, CBS).

I think it's Larry Carlton or Lee Ritenour. I had the sense that it wasn't a jazz player in the traditional way. A very pretty song, beautifully recorded. Guitar sounded beautiful. Very relaxing, nice stuff. Four.

After: Ross Traut? I went to *school* with Ross Traut! To boarding school and to Berklee! I like Steve Rodby very much, always did.

8. JIM HALL-RED MITCHELL. Osaka Express. Jim Hall, guitar, composer.

Before: Jim Hall and Ron Carter. This is a stone five stars, no question. My only problem was thinking Red Mitchell instead of Ron Carter.

I don't know the tune; it's great, and Jim is one of my favorite guitar players. His comping is incredible; nobody comps like Jim. His time is impeccable, his ideas are as modern as the most contemporary person. The bass player is a monster; it has to be Ron Carter.

After: Well, at least I *said* Red Mitchell! Come to think of it, I have this record. It just serves me right for thinking Red Mitchell's not funky enough. I never trust my intuition. For one thing, I never heard Ron grunt, but Red Mitchell. . .he grunts! ■

JEAN-MARC BIRRAUX

album singolo, sarà invece un doppio (e nel febbraio del '91 questo trio girerà l'Europa).

Nella sala Gil Evans, poco dopo, la band di Mike Westbrook propone nella sequenza originaria i brani del mitico album *«Abbey Road»* dei Beatles: approccio filologico, tanta arguzia e grande impatto. Segue l'Orchestre National de Jazz, che per la stagione '89-90 è nelle mani del chitarrista Claude Barthelemy. Dirige in modo decisamente poco convenzionale: incoraggia i suoi uomini affrontandoli con atteggiamenti da allenatore di basket. E l'orchestra sembra seguirlo con divertimento.

Gil Evans e George Russell continuano ad essere due punti di riferimento fissi anche per questa edizione dell'O.N.J., ma gli esiti denotano un procedere un po' farraginoso pur tra spunti di notevole irruenza (come nell'iniziale *Poor Girl Shuffle*) o di ricercatezza formale (la medley *Nebbia-Footprints*). Brillano Michael Riessler al clarinetto in *Mib*, il nostro Luca Bonvini al trombone in *Sowie Es Klingt* e gli altri due chitarristi della big band Serge Lazarevitch e Gérard Pansanel.

L'indomani la sala Chet Baker è colma di un pubblico incuriosito dal primo dei gruppi italiani in cartellone, il quartetto di Pietro Tonolo. Tonolo non è sconosciuto in Francia in quanto periodicamente collabora con Henri Texier e Aldo Romano, ma è davvero una piacevole sorpresa il grande entusiasmo con cui viene accolta l'esibizione del suo gruppo. L'impostazione rigorosa, anche negli arrangiamenti, è uno dei suoi punti di forza. Splendido Roberto Rossi in continua crescita per timbro, fraseggio e controllo dello strumento; affiatatissimi Piero Leveratto e Alfred Kramer come team ritmico, diretti da un Tonolo ormai vicino alla piena maturità di solista e leader.

Subito dopo ci si accomoda nella gremitissima sala Gil Evans. Il quartetto di Aldo Romano, con Franco D'Andrea, Paolo Fresu, Furio Di Castri, gode in questo momento in Francia di un favore del tutto particolare da parte di pubblico e critica. Dopo due album di successo e un videoclip all'attivo (cosa molto rara, come si sa, per un gruppo jazz) i migliori festival si disputano le esibizioni di questa formazione e il pubblico accorre numeroso.

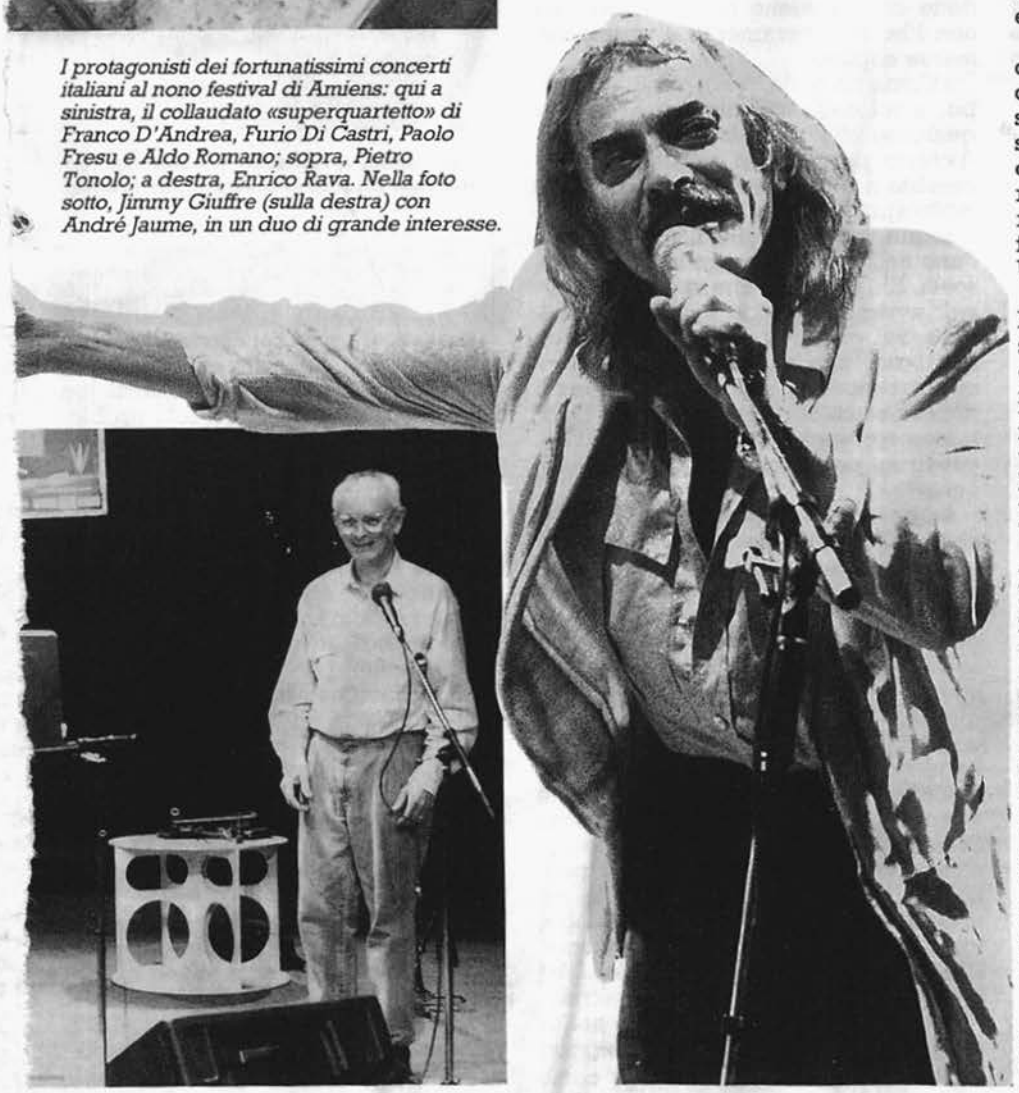
Ad Amiens il gruppo, anche se ostacolato da qualche problema d'amplificazione, ha messo in mostra tutte le sue qualità: sono musicisti della medesima sensibilità, che si trovano ad occhi chiusi, respirano musica insieme rifuggendo la routine. Chi cerca ancora emozione nel jazz oggi è a questa formazione che deve far riferimento. Un trionfo.

Non è stato facile quindi per Enrico Rava salire sul palco subito dopo. Ma sin dalle prime note si è capito che anche il trombettista triestino era in gran forma, come del resto i suoi compagni, Riccardo Bianchi, Marco Micheli e Roberto Gatto. Il gruppo ha fornito un compendio ideale di quello che Rava ha espresso e vuole continuare ad esprimere in musica.

Dal funky teso di *Animals* si è così passati all'intenso e struggente lirismo di *Avarandado* (del cantautore Caetano Veloso) e all'uso pretestuoso di classici come *My Funny Valentine* e *You Don't Know What Love Is*, che in mano al trombettista prendono tinte tutte particolari, mentre i fondali ritmici mutano continuamente. L'ottimo funzionamento del quartetto attuale va attribuito in buona parte al reinserimento del batterista Roberto Gatto che, raggiunta la maturità stilistica in un'evoluzione che può paragonarsi solo a quella attraversata da Peter Erskine, garantisce una gamma espressiva illimitata, una grande precisione ed un apporto ritmico trascinante.

Una lunga e calorosa richiesta di bis (esaudita) ha così concluso quella che potremo ricordare come una serata «storica» per il jazz italiano. ●

I protagonisti dei fortunatissimi concerti italiani al nono festival di Amiens: qui a sinistra, il collaudato «superquartetto» di Franco D'Andrea, Furio Di Castri, Paolo Fresu e Aldo Romano; sopra, Pietro Tonolo; a destra, Enrico Rava. Nella foto sotto, Jimmy Giuffre (sulla destra) con André Jaume, in un duo di grande interesse.



di Leonard Feather

BEFORE & AFTER

AMORE E GIOIA: QUESTA ERA EMILY REMLER

Le parole della validissima chitarrista fanno di questa puntata del «test», svoltasi non molto tempo prima della prematura scomparsa, un commosso ricordo.

Come «Musica Jazz» ha dato notizia nel suo numero di giugno, il 4 maggio scorso è scomparsa a Sydney, stroncata da un improvviso attacco cardiaco a non ancora trentatrè anni d'età, la chitarrista Emily Remler, che in pochi, intensi anni di carriera aveva già acquisito una posizione di primaria importanza tra i solisti di questo strumento. Oggi vogliamo rievocarla attraverso l'incontro che di recente aveva avuto con Leonard Feather per una puntata di «Before & After», di uno cioè di quegli originali test a occhi bendati di cui il grande critico è l'ideatore, e che «Musica Jazz» pubblica per gentile concessione del mensile americano «Jazz Times». Ci è parso giusto che non andassero perdute le schiette parole di Emily Remler che testimoniano tutta la sensibilità, l'amore per la chitarra e per il jazz che la giovane musicista nutriva. Si tratta dunque di un ricordo che tutto il jazz le deve.

Emily Remler a vent'anni, ai tempi del suo clamoroso esordio al Concord Jazz Festival.

Quando Emily Remler, un'altra troppo precoce perdita del jazz, si era sottoposta al nostro gioco di «Before & After», il suo disco Concord *«East To Wes»* aveva confermato la sua appartenenza, a soli trentadue anni, a un pantheon della chitarra che annovera un piccolo gruppo dei suoi colleghi più anziani: Joe Pass, Herb Ellis, Jim Hall, Kenny Burrell. Come è regola di questa serie di test, durante la fase del «prima» non le era stato detto nulla dei dischi che doveva ascoltare; in quella del «dopo» le è stata data libertà di commentare, una volta avute quelle informazioni.

1. KENNY BURRELL AND THE JAZZ GUITAR BAND: *Raincheck* (da *«Pieces Of Blue And The Blues»*, Blue Note).

Prima. «Credo che siano Kenny Burrell e Bobby Broom: lo penso, anzi ne sono sicura. Mi piace molto il tema. Non so chi l'abbia scritto. Non credo sia stato Duke Ellington. C'è dentro tanta chitarra. Mi fa venire in mente, diciamo, il duo di Joe Pass e Herb Ellis. È un duo di chitarra nel senso classico del jazz, suppongo, con tante note che si fondono in altre ancora.

«Mi è piaciuta l'introduzione, l'ho trovata molto creativa. In effetti, l'avrei ascoltata per un tempo ancor più lungo, e sono scoppiata a ridere quando alla fine loro sono entrati nel tema. Mi è parsa una cosa molto abile. E devo dire che ho trovato vivace, divertente il tempo.

«Io non so che cosa sia veramente la mia musica più recente, ma io rispetto infinitamente questi musicisti, specialmente Kenny, e il suo lavoro mi è familiare. Ricordo ciò che ha fatto con John Coltrane. Qualcuno ha detto che io suono come Kenny, ma non l'ho mai veramente e coscientemente copiato.

«Come ho detto, trovo vivace il tempo, e mi colpisce sempre ascoltare qualcosa che non sia troppo statico. Avverto però grossi problemi con il bassista e il batterista. Per il resto, c'è molto spirito. Penso che si fondano benissimo, questi due solisti, davvero l'uno nell'altro. Di sicuro una bella miscela. Eh, sì: penso che io e Larry Coryell avremmo potuto realizzare qualcosa del genere, ma non l'abbiamo mai fatto, non sul serio. Questa era un'introduzione davvero hip. Darei quattro stelle come voto; no, tre. Dobbiamo sostenerci l'un l'altro. Sei d'accordo sul problema del tempo? Quella corsa?».

Dopo. «Adesso questi qui mi odieranno. Chi era il bassista? Dev'essere lui il problema.

«Io ho una teoria: ci sono fondamentalmente due scuole per quel che riguarda il suonar la chitarra jazz, cioè quelli che discendono da Django, che suonano rigorosamente sul tempo, voglio dire Barney (Kessel), Tal (Farlow), e tutti quei musicisti eccitanti, che vanno al nocciolo della cosa, e non sono confidenziali come gli altri, quelli che vengono da Charlie Christian, come Wes Montgomery, Joe (Pass) ... e anch'io sono di questa scuola. C'è qualcosa da dire su Kenny (Burrell): lui sta a mezza via, perché un poco spinge, ma è anche un'individualità *bluesy*. Per qualche ragione, non ho mai fatto pazzie per lui, ma lo rispetto profondamente, e certo guadagna molto più di me per un concerto. E amo questo suo assolo...».

2. HERB ELLIS-JOE PASS: *Seven Come Eleven* (da *«The Concord Jazz Guitar Collection»*, Concord Jazz).

Prima. «Fantastico! Fantastico! Ecco, ecco *la cosa*! All'inizio ero un po' in imbarazzo. Sento che si tratta di Joe Pass e di Herb Ellis, ma il solo problema è che non ricordo abbiano fatto una versione *live* di questo brano. Mi sto rompendo il cervello, ma gli unici altri chitarristi che potrebbero suonare in questo modo sarebbero Ronnie Eschete e Vic Juris, e io non ricordo che abbiano registrato questo, o mai suonato insieme. Così, devono essere Joe e Herb Ellis.

«Oh, senti, questo spirito è incredibile. E chiunque sia al basso e alla batteria, è grande pure lui. Non perdono un colpo, e quel tempo... Questo è, penso, ciò di cui parlavamo prima, un duo di chitarre con questo tipo di stile. Questa è la versione definitiva. E sarebbe davvero imbarazzante per me se si trattasse di due persone totalmente diverse».

Dopo. «Presto suonerò con Joe, a Pittsburgh. Farò un'ora da sola, poi Joe per un'altra ora da solo, infine suoneremo insieme. E sono spaventata a morte, ad ascoltare questa musica! Era un tempo così veloce, che non si ascolta più oggigiorno. Non solo: c'era abi-

5/25

Los Angeles Times

TWO VIEWS OF 'LET'S GET LOST'

Documentary Ignores Baker's Music—It's Not Photogenic

By SHEILA BENSON,
Times Film Critic

"There's a lot of [deleted] attitude's goin' on here," Chet Baker growls, annoyed, during a late-night, late-in-his-life recording session. Amen. "Let's Get Lost" (at the Nuart through June 3) runs on attitude, on surface, on an adoration of beauty and a horrified fascination with the loss of that beauty. It's a phoney Valentine, an exploitation of the ruined old junkie that Baker had become, done with the complete complicity of Baker himself.

Why wouldn't Baker be an accomplice? Here was Bruce Weber, heavyweight fashion photographer and fledgling film maker, Mr. Calvin Klein Ads himself, clearly a worshipful fan. He was able to pour almost unlimited amounts of money—reportedly $1 million—into a documentary portrait whose focus was entirely Baker. Since's Weber's entourage apparently includes the young boxers from his first film, "Broken Noses," as well as nymphet actress-models, there would be a constant, adoring audience to listen to all the old stories all over again. Why hesitate?

BRUCE WEBER

Chet Baker in 1987

Baker didn't. And so we have this gorgeous-looking, creepy portrait: Baker nodding in and out of consciousness, answering these dim interviewers ("Do you find life boring?") or smothered happily between two beautiful women in a 1950s convertible, driving up the Pacific Coast Highway as Weber makes his delirious homage to the cool '50s.

The film *is* gorgeous: cameraman Jeff Preiss's rich, contrasty black-and-white turns the thick palm trees silver as the wind hits them; you think you've never seen them so beautiful before and you're right. Beauty and banality, arm in arm.

We are spared nothing. Baker on the bumper cars. Santa Monica beach at twilight, where the boxers, would-be Baker look-alikes, bop, somersault and preen in white socks and pompadours, yearning for a scintilla of Baker's aura. The long-haired model whirls round and round, as instructed by someone off-camera. It's as vapid and as pointless as it sounds and probably only someone in Baker's state could stand much of it.

And his music? There is that, of course. But in a world centered around image, music takes a back seat to cutting-edge cheekbones. Weber has such little respect for Baker's music that he muscles in on the end of a phrase to have one of Baker's ex-old-ladies rag on another one, a wife or another ex-girl friend. Or Weber overrides the music so we can hear his precious questioner prod: "Maybe you can tell me about your unfortunate encounter and how you got your teeth knocked out. . . ."

A few of the old gang elude this stultifying approach: musician Jack Shelton, as drily hilarious as he ever was, tells outrageous stories from the bad old days, and tall, sandy-haired photographer Bill Claxton describes the camera's affinity for Baker: "He had charisma. This was a new word in the mid-'50s."

Claxton was almost Baker's own age when he took the photographs that cemented Baker into everybody's memory book as *the* icon of jazz, at 22. The Claxton eye is extraordinary; a riffle through his contact sheets makes it clear that the young man with the camera was as arresting a talent as the young man with a horn. (And, shot for shot, a more dynamic artist than Weber, at least in Weber's Greek-god ad work.)

Weber's chloroformed presentation seems to regard the loss of his crazy good looks as the real tragedy of Baker's life. Over and over Weber cuts from footage of Baker at 57 in the most merciless light possible, looking like a seamy con man or a raddled Oklahoma cowboy who's been out in the weather too long, to the blank, undeniable beauty of Baker in his early 20s. He's the perfect idol, whispy, whispery, enigmatic, someone you could project everything onto because there was so little *there* there.

"Let's Get Lost" is a three-layer exercise in betrayal: Baker's casual lifetime habit of letting down anyone near him. As ex-love Diane Vavra says, "You can't really rely on Chet. Once you know that you're OK."

There is Weber and his crew, in Stillwater, Okla., softly coaxing damning admissions out of Baker's mother, Vera, his wife and the kids, having first gotten their trust. Elsewhere, without a touch of empathy, Weber eggs on Baker's other women to bad-mouth one another. He gets Vavra to pose—again in harsh outdoor light—with a huge picture of her loveless love.

Finally in Europe, after the Cannes Film Festival, and a notable performance of "Almost Blue" for the festival goers—"the worst possible crowd"—Baker is his frailest, his very joints seem to grate. In their hotel room, Weber purrs on camera, "I know you're without your methadone, Chet, you're feeling sick and desperate . . . it's been so painful to see you like this." Even the unflappable Baker seems stunned. "This is a big drag and completely unnecessary," he says softly.

Audiences may agree.

Film Portrait Does Jazz a Disservice

By LEONARD FEATHER

Just over a year has passed since the body of Chet Baker was found outside the window of a hotel in the drug dealers' area of Amsterdam. It was speculated that he might have been pushed by an unpaid pusher, but the door was locked from the inside, so it was then assumed he simply nodded off and fell. In any event, there were many who hoped that the violence Chet Baker had done to the image of the jazz musician would finally come to an end. But it was not to be; the image of this perennial junkie has now been perpetuated in "Let's Get Lost," a two-hour movie for the making of which no sensible reason can be found.

That the black-and-white film is technically well made is not in dispute. The irony is that Baker, toward the end, when asked how he has enjoyed making the movie, speaks as enthusiastically as his drug-sodden mind can let him. He does not realize that just as he has spent his life manipulating others, he has been manipulated into putting on film an unsparing portrait of a nasty, sociopathic junkie, a failure as husband (three times) and father and son, without a single redeeming feature—not even his music. He was a limited trumpeter, never responsible for any dramatic musical breakthroughs, and an even less talented singer who got away with it mainly through the James Dean comparisons and the young-white-hope hype.

There is plenty of evidence in the footage here of his early promise and later disintegration. Film maker Bruce Weber switches back and forth constantly between the young, handsome Baker and the ravaged, broken 57-year-old in the recording studio; the fact of his decline did not need to be dealt with so repetitiously.

Thrown out of three countries, his teeth lost in a fight in San Francisco, constantly in search of the next fix, Baker is described by a collection of girl friends, his third wife and various hangers-on in varying degrees of admiration and contempt. Ruth Young, his girl friend for 10 years, leaves an ugly impression of a woman almost as manipulative as Baker himself. Baker's mother, unaware of the manner in which she is being exploited, is interviewed at her home in Stillwater, Okla. (Since the film came out, Baker's family and Weber have reportedly not been on speaking terms.)

Chet Baker had only two loves in his life: music and drugs, and most likely the dope took precedence. Unlike Charlie Parker, a sometimes warm and affectionate man who did make several attempts to break loose from the habit, Baker freely admitted that his life style suited him fine.

One wonders what impression society may receive, 50 or 100 years from today, of the world of jazz in this century. With such evidence as "Lady Sings the Blues," "'Round Midnight," "Bird," and now "Let's Get Lost," it may be impossible to believe that any jazz people lived normal lives. The report that a documentary is being completed on Benny Carter (a healthy, happy living legend at 81) is welcome news indeed; it can't come a moment too soon, and neither can the moment when "Let's Get Lost" gets lost.

6/10/89

JAZZ REVIEW

Cables-Forman: Interactive at Loa

Regrettably, tonight and Sunday will be the last chances, until further notice, to hear one of the most compactly remarkable groups ever to play at the Loa in Santa Monica: the exciting duo of pianist George Cables and guitarist Bruce Forman.

The absence of bass and drums is never a factor; these two could probably outswing a 16-man band. Their togetherness is almost frightening, bordering on ESP. Playing Monk's "I Mean You," they use the main phrase in counterpoint, tossed it back and forth, turning it every which way but tight. Charlie Parker's "Billie's Bounce" was taken at a tempo that demolished an entire 12-bar chorus every 10 seconds, with Forman unleashing single-note lines of unbelievable celerity and Cables matching him in inventive intensity.

Both men are composers of rare merit. "Helen's Song," by Cables, is a work of restrained, elegiac beauty, as is Forman's "Circular." Another Forman piece, "Mutt and Jeff," is a masterpiece of rhythmic and dynamic contrasts, indicating clearly how well the men understand each other's nuances. (They have worked together off and on for four years and have an album on Concord.)

Although both men have fine credentials elsewhere (Cables has worked with Freddie Hubbard and Dexter Gordon; Forman with Richie Cole; both have been sidemen with Bobby Hutcherson), their intuitive interaction as a team outdistances anything else they have accomplished. One could only hope that they will find a way to make their partnership more than a sometime thing.

—LEONARD FEATHER

CRITIC AT LARGE

June 4

Searching for the Appeal of Baker, 'Let's Get Lost'

By CHARLES CHAMPLIN,
Times Arts Editor

Bob Epstein, the respected film and jazz historian and program host at KLON in Long Beach, has written to inquire rather sharply why Calendar ran not one but two devastatingly negative reviews of Bruce Weber's documentary about Chet Baker, "Let's Get Lost."

The answer is that the film seemed to call, as some others do, for two kinds of expertise. It is a work of the film makers' art; it is also the biography of an important jazz figure. The reviews by Times film critic Sheila Benson and Times jazz critic Leonard Feather were, naturally, written independently, and the score could have been 2-0 in favor of the film, a split decision, or 0-2 against. It proved to be the last. Did it ever.

Other critics have praised the film lavishly. "Let's Get Lost" obviously divides viewers, which if nothing else is the mark of a strongly provocative work. My own response was largely negative, I confess, but rather than drive a third nail into Weber's film, let me speculate on why it draws such contrasting reactions.

I've often thought that films, both factual and fictional, can affect viewers so strongly that the contents override even positive assessments of the form. It's the ancient tendency to want to kill the messenger who has arrived bearing bad news.

Whatever his skills as a trumpet player, Chet Baker was a pathetic figure, the unutterably, boyishly handsome young player who looked like a recent graduate of "Leave It to Beaver" but who ended up as a hollow-cheeked, toothless, mumbling, all but brain-dead relic.

Weber, crosscutting between then and now, accentuates this decline and fall, this syncopated rake's progress, because it is the bitter and inescapable fact of Baker's life. It is said to be true, and may well be, that the film was begun in affection and admiration, along with what surely was a morbid fascination.

The trouble is that Baker is dismaying and uncomfortable to contemplate. He is the boy wonder gone awry. The film is no doubt a cautionary tale about drug abuse, although the last thing "Let's Get Lost" is is preachy.

The fact is that it is an angering film to watch. The skills of compilation, investigation and editing together are quite fine. It is just that there is no evidence offered—if in fact there was any—that Baker made any serious effort to kick his habit. He appears to have surrendered to it with an astonishing lack of will. The consequences are horrifying, and they undercut the cautionary aspects of the film because the clear message is, You can't fight it; don't bother.

As I watched the film, I kept thinking of a lakeside amusement park near home which, when I was very young, had a chained bear who lived in fenced enclosure, with a large piece of drainage pipe set in the hillside for his hibernations. He was thin and threadbare and lived mostly on the bottles of pop which tourists threw him and which he could catch, de-cap and chugalug. The diet did him no good whatever and, one year when we arrived for the annual school picnic, he was gone, dead of the sport we all had with him.

In the subjective style of later documentaries—a world away from the didactic certainties of the March of Time, for example—"Let's Get Lost" tries with considerable success to catch the feeling of Baker's world: the larky and kaleidoscopic confusions of lights and movement and boon compan-

Please see CHET BAKER, Page 12

Continued from Page 1

ions and the sweet doing of nothing when you have the spurious feeling the high will last forever.

It never does, and "Let's Get Lost" leaves no doubt that it never does. It is just that, in viewing the remains of a promising young talent who seemed to have the world before him, Weber makes us all voyeurs—forcing us to look not only upon the wasted Baker but into the dark dangers of our own lives. This is instructive but unsettling, and it may reflect a miscalculation by Weber on the impact his film would have.

It is not a tribute but a sorry requiem.

A Portrait of Chet Baker

We would like to respond to film critic Sheila Benson and jazz writer Leonard Feather's dual attack on Bruce Weber's documentary movie "Let's Get Lost," about the late trumpeter Chet Baker (May 25).

It doesn't seem like sound policy for The Times to run two damning reviews of any film. The criticisms were imbued with a petty viciousness that does a disservice to Los Angeles film audiences.

We've come to expect better from Benson and Feather.

NANCY GERSTMAN
EMILY RUSSO
Zeitgeist Films, distributors
of "Let's Get Lost"
New York

Feather's assertion that Baker "was a limited trumpeter . . . and an even less talented singer" is way off the mark and damning to Baker's talent ("Film Portrait Does Jazz a Disservice").

The first time I heard Baker's voice, I said to myself, "That's not singing, that's communicating!" He didn't take over a song, but rather he made it a listener's song.

Baker had a talent to give of himself, like a Nina Simone or a Piaf or a Merle Haggard and damn few others.

Chet Baker is gone and so are his troubles. The important thing is that his legacy lives on.

TOMATA DU PLENTY
Silverlake

I cried when Baker died. Once he made me laugh by playing "Taps" when he heard I was drafted. God bless and keep him.

Yes, Mr. Feather, it's impossible to believe that any jazz people live normal lives.

RAY BABCOCK
Montebello

Too bad Chet was a junkie, but what about his music? When Charlie Parker hired Chet for his band, he warned Miles Davis that Baker was "going to eat you up [musically]." Not bad.

Baker's music needs to be judged on its merits, without preachment.

FRED T. NEWCOMB
Pasadena

All of the Power, None of the Gloss in Blues

'Memphis Slim Live at Ronnie Scott's," airing tonight on the Bravo Channel at 7 p.m. and 2 a.m., offers a glimpse of the blues in a form so basic, so shorn of all latter-day sophistication, that the effect is not unlike going through a time warp to the 1920s, when this music was in its first reign of glory.

The pianist and singer, born Peter Chatman in 1915 in Memphis, began recording in Chicago in 1940. He achieved much of his fame vicariously, as the composer of "Every Day I Have the Blues" which became Joe Williams' passport to fame. In his own right, though, Slim has long been a favorite, particularly in Europe, where he first toured 30 years ago.

The hour begins with a voice-over in which Slim tells us that his life in the blues suits him fine. An a cappella vocal leads to a clap-along as the crowd at the London club joins in the celebration for "Baby Come Home."

From that point on it's blues all the way, whether in the traditional 12-bar form, the 8-bar version as in "How Long Blues," or the 32-bar blues balladry of "Please Send Me

TV Reviews

Someone To Love." He is joined by what is presumably a British group of young musicians, with occasional solos, well attuned to the intense, extrovert mood, by Paul Jones on harmonica and Danny Adler on guitar. A small group of dancers is seen briefly.

Despite changes of tempo, variety is not what one looks for in the blues at this primordial stage. Chord changes, even key changes, are few and far between. Of the 15 tunes, 11 are in the key of C; the others are all in G. Toward the end, during a barrelhouse piano solo, Memphis Slim introduces Slim Gaillard, who joins him for some good-humor, four-hand keyboard work.

All of this might have worked best as a half-hour show, but at any length the *reductio ad minimum* blues piano and lusty vocal appeal of Memphis Slim is an invaluable slice of history.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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5/24 Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEW

Billy Burdin at Westwood Marquis

The cocktail pianist represents a genre that has been around almost as long as cocktail lounges. Billy Burdin, currently ensconced in the lounge of the Westwood Marquis Tuesdays through Saturdays, is about as typical of the breed as anyone around town.

Unlimited technique is no more a prerequisite than originality or creative artistry. What is needed is the ability to keep the music flowing, usually by means of a steady stream of Broadway show tunes, popular standards and an occasional original work.

Burdin does all this, singing on most numbers in a voice for which the best word is utilitarian.

His keyboard work involves occasional fugue-like touches. Harmonically he has much to learn; he seems to be less than completely at ease when improvising a solo.

Herb Mickman's bass kept a beat going throughout, while Burdin, who is blind, seemed unconcerned about the talking that was going on at one table—a distraction with which musicians who work in cocktail lounges must learn to live. With it or without it, he will be here through July 8.

—LEONARD FEATHER

5/28/89

JAZZ

A Vocal Group That Specializes in Jazz

By LEONARD FEATHER

"NEW YORK VOICES." 3 GRP GRD 9589.
★★★★

New jazz-oriented vocal groups are so rare that this ensemble, four of whose five members studied at Ithaca College, must be welcomed as a step in the right direction.

Darmon Meader is the key figure: singer, composer, arranger, tenor saxophonist. The others—Peter Eldridge, Kim Nazarian, Sara Krieger, Caprice Fox—are co-writers, contributing lyrics or music for the originals, which are halfway between profound and trivial.

Their five-way blend is splendid; the instrumental backing, sometimes using synthesizer and sequencer programming, is too aggressive at times, as if the group is a little too anxious for commercial success. "Caravan" has interludes of scatting and polysyllabic vocalese. (The inclusion of printed lyrics was invaluable.)

Of the originals, "National Amnesia" aims at social significance. "Dare the Moon" is one of those cheerful wish-upon-a-star ditties; the wordless "Baroque Samba" with its choral introduction is charming; "Street Party" has a melody too unpartylike for the words. The program closes with the brief, slow, pensive "Come Home."

There are no outstanding solo jazz vocalists in New York Voices, though Fox and Krieger come closest. In any event, this is a most promising debut.

"SPHINX." Allegro Jazz Ensemble. Mobile Fidelity MFCO 898.
★★★★½

Jazz critics in the Soviet Union voted this the foremost jazz group in the U.S.S.R. Clearly the Soviets take their fusion seriously; within this hour-plus of very contemporary music are two suites: "In This World," in four parts, and the three-movement "Legend," followed by the hard-boppish title number and the extended "Portrait." All were composed by the keyboard soloist, Nikolai Levinovsky. Conception, performance and recording are exemplary, with just the right balance of fusion and jazz elements, touches of humor and some high-octane cooking. Igor Butman, the group's tenor saxophonist, has since moved to the United States and recorded with Grover Washington. The use of synthesizers is effective; the bassist, Viktor Dvoskin, is outstanding. Allegro may well trigger a situation that could find American musicians copying their Soviet counterparts.

"ELLINGTON MASTERPIECES." The American Jazz Orchestra, conducted by John Lewis. East-West 7 91423-2.
★★★★★

Is it Duke or is it Memorex? The old ethical question resurfaces as this repertory ensemble interprets 15 works from Ellington's golden age.

Instead of Duke at the piano you have Dick Katz, copying a solo note for note off the original record. On trumpet there is John Eckert, copying a solo from Cootie Williams that Williams inherited from Ray Nance. Loren Schoenberg, better known as a Lester Young disciple, here suggests Ben Webster. And so forth.

A statement in the notes, that Duke's music was "all there in the score," is false. Much of this band's music was in the hearts and fingers and creative minds of Johnny Hodges and all the other giants who were integral to Duke's triumphs. Their solos can never quite be replaced.

Nevertheless, whether or not you are familiar with the originals, be advised that these are masterful re-creations. "Ko-Ko" and "Main Stem" and "Jack the Bear" never sounded better. On "Conga Brava" and "Cotton Tail," Schoenberg does indeed seem to be ad-libbing.

Under Lewis' guidance, the charts (copied off old records, because Duke left few complete written scores) sound magnificent. Heretical as it may seem, I believe this version of "Bojangles" is even greater than the original.

Lewis himself replaces Katz at the piano to play the first three choruses of "Rockin' in Rhythm" in his own style, and it just may be his finest hour.

It boils down to this: Which versions do you prefer, the derivative ones in digital sound, or the originals in mono? While insisting that the creative credit must go to Ellington, it's still possible to take six of one *and* half a dozen of the other.

"THE BENNY GOODMAN YALE ARCHIVES, VOL. 3." Music Masters CIJ 60157 X.
★★★½

Never before released, these 20 tracks stem from a week Goodman spent in Brussels in 1957, with a group that included Zoot Sims (prominent in both big band and small group numbers), trumpeter Taft Jordan and vocals by Jimmy Rushing and the elegant, sadly neglected Ethel Ennis.

Though hoarse and sometimes goofing around with the lyrics, Rushing is his indomitable self; he even does "A Fine Romance" as a duet with Ennis. Goodman's clarinet has its moments, but he seems awkward at times and even fluffs. What makes this an intriguing set is that along with a few old familiar items there are little-known charts by Bobby Gutesha, Sid Feller and even Gil Evans.

"GULA MATARI." Quincy Jones. A & M CD 0820.
★★★

Only four cuts and 34 minutes here, and they are loaded with special effects: a female vocal group here, a quartet of celli there, a bass marimba, a guitarist who whistles while he works (Toots Thielemans), a bassist who sings while he plays (Major Holley). The title tune is somberly dramatic; "Bridge Over Troubled Water" becomes a soul vocal waltz, but the Miles Davis blues "Walkin' " and Nat Adderley's "Hummin' " have a touch of that old big-band sound and moments by Milt Jackson and Hubert Laws.

"SONNY SIDE." Ken Peplowski Quintet. Concord Jazz CCD 4376.
★★★

At 31, Peplowski is another of those rare younger men who lean to jazz traditions. A highly promising clarinetist and a warm, Websterish tenor soloist (he also plays agreeable alto on "Alone at Last"), he is backed by a conservative rhythm section that wakes up in "Half Nelson," a Latinized treatment with good solo work by pianist Dave Frishberg. □

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JAZZ 5/28
By LEONARD FEATHER

Eclecticism will be the keynote at the 11th annual Playboy Jazz Festival June 17-18 at the Hollywood Bowl. For jazz-fusion fans there will be the likes of Stanley Clarke, George Duke and Spyro Gyra, but the cause of unhyphenated jazz will be well served by the big bands of Terry Gibbs and Illinois Jacquet, the combos of Art Blakey and Dave Brubeck, and a rare straight-ahead appearance by George Benson with the McCoy Tyner Trio.

Among the five concerts scheduled for the "Jazz at the Bowl" summer series, the most intriguing is set for Aug. 9, with three big bands: Frank Foster leading the Basie ensemble, Mercer Ellington carrying on his father's legacy, and Louie Bellson with his always exciting ensemble, plus Carmen McRae as guest soloist.

Not all this summer jazz is confined to the stage. Eagerly awaited is the appearance June 23-24, at Catalina's in Hollywood, of an international 17-piece orchestra led by George Gruntz, the Swiss born composer who for many years has been musical director of the Berlin Jazz Festival. This will be the band's first Southland gig.

JAZZ REVIEW 6/20

Pianist Grauer's Intimate Style

By LEONARD FEATHER

Just two blocks farther south on Highland Avenue, away from the *Sturm und Drang* at the Hollywood Bowl, a subtler and more intimate brand of jazz was offered Sunday by the trio of pianist Joanne Grauer.

"Windows on Hollywood" at the Hollywood Holiday Inn is a Sunday brunch series, now in its second year, under the aegis of the Los Angeles Jazz Society. Grauer, a lissome local presence whose influence has been limited by her infrequent recording activity, has a gentle but firm way with the standard repertoire.

Most of what was heard during her first two sets Sunday was based on fairly conventional material; many of the old predictables tended to resurface, from "All the Things You Are" to "Stella by Starlight."

The latter was illuminated by a passage in which John Leitham, the left-handed virtuoso of the upright bass, told a fleetly eloquent story during his solo. He later doubled the melody line with Grauer during Thelonious Monk's "I Mean You."

As Leitham has said: "This is the closest I can get to playing with Bill Evans," and indeed some of the oblique melodic reharmonizations associated with that lamented genius do surface in Grauer's more enlightened moments.

Completing the group was Bert Karl, a drummer from Vienna who performed the discrete function required in a less-is-better unit of this kind. His understatement was a valuable factor in such songs as Victor Young's "Beautiful Love" and the German antique of Dietrich renown, "Falling in Love Again."

All that is missing in a Joanne Grauer performance is a clearer sense of identity, which might well be achieved through the use of her considerable but seldom-exposed talent as a composer.

5/28/89

JAZZ

A Vocal Group That Specializes in Jazz

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SUMMER SPLASH

CRITICS' CHOICES

JAZZ 5/28

By LEONARD FEATHER

Eclecticism will be the keynote at the 11th annual Playboy Jazz Festival June 17-18 at the Hollywood Bowl. For jazz-fusion fans there will be the likes of Stanley Clarke, George Duke and Spyro Gyra, but the cause of unhyphenated jazz will be well served by the big bands of Terry Gibbs and Illinois Jacquet, the combos of Art Blakey and Dave Brubeck, and a rare straight-ahead appearance by George Benson with the McCoy Tyner Trio.

Among the five concerts scheduled for the "Jazz at the Bowl" summer series, the most intriguing is set for Aug. 9, with three big bands: Frank Foster leading the Basie ensemble, Mercer Ellington carrying on his father's legacy, and Louie Bellson with his always exciting ensemble, plus Carmen McRae as guest soloist.

Not all this summer jazz is confined to the stage. Eagerly awaited is the appearance June 23-24, at Catalina's in Hollywood, of an international 17-piece orchestra led by George Gruntz, the Swiss born composer who for many years has been musical director of the Berlin Jazz Festival. This will be the band's first Southland gig.

JAZZ REVIEW 6/20

Pianist Grauer's Intimate Style

By LEONARD FEATHER

Just two blocks farther south on Highland Avenue, away from the *Sturm und Drang* at the Hollywood Bowl, a subtler and more intimate brand of jazz was offered Sunday by the trio of pianist Joanne Grauer.

"Windows on Hollywood" at the Hollywood Holiday Inn is a Sunday brunch series, now in its second year, under the aegis of the Los Angeles Jazz Society. Grauer, a lissome local presence whose influence has been limited by her infrequent recording activity, has a gentle but firm way with the standard repertoire.

Most of what was heard during her first two sets Sunday was based on fairly conventional material; many of the old predictables tended to resurface, from "All the Things You Are" to "Stella by Starlight."

The latter was illuminated by a passage in which John Leitham, the left-handed virtuoso of the upright bass, told a fleetly eloquent story during his solo. He later doubled the melody line with Grauer during Thelonious Monk's "I Mean You."

As Leitham has said: "This is the closest I can get to playing with Bill Evans," and indeed some of the oblique melodic reharmonizations associated with that lamented genius do surface in Grauer's more enlightened moments.

Completing the group was Bert Karl, a drummer from Vienna who performed the discrete function required in a less-is-better unit of this kind. His understatement was a valuable factor in such songs as Victor Young's "Beautiful Love" and the German antique of Dietrich renown, "Falling in Love Again."

All that is missing in a Joanne Grauer performance is a clearer sense of identity, which might well be achieved through the use of her considerable but seldom-exposed talent as a composer.

Los Angeles Times 5/30/89

JAZZ REVIEW

Tuning In to the Music of Central Avenue

By LEONARD FEATHER

THEODORA LITSIOS

Trumpeter Art Farmer, Frank Morgan participating in "Central Avenue Revisited," the last of KLON's "Jazz West Coast" series.

The fourth and last installment in KLON's "Jazz West Coast" series presented Sunday at the John Anson Ford Theater was subtitled "Central Avenue Revisited." Producer Ken Poston came up with several reasonable facsimiles of the tail end of those days.

Marshal Royal's alto sax and Snooky Young's trumpet reached heights that were hard to top. Though their pianist and drummer, Tom Ranier and Greg Field, were born long after Central Avenue faded, they and the bassist Richard Reid were strongly supportive in this most professional set.

Professionalism was in short supply when the so-called Central Avenue All-Stars were on stage. With 11 musicians and no charts, five tenor sax men vying for attention, mediocre vocals and endless blues-blowing, the band gave the lie to a claim by its nominal leader, trumpeter Clora Bryant, that there had been a rehearsal.

After a bland but adequate offering by clarinetist Jack McVea's Quartet, on came the original squealer of the sax, Big Jay McNeely, a sort of prehistoric Kenny G, with overtones of Al Jolson—yes, he did get down on his knees and sing, after which his applause-milking tour of the theater, with a mike tucked in his tenor, drew the predictable noisy ovation.

More deserved was the show-stopping reaction to Ernie Andrews, who has better audience control than ever. His impressions of other blues singers were dead to rights, and his backing, by the superb trio of Gerald Wiggins, Larry Gales and Paul Humphrey (who had just played a flawless set on their own) left nothing to chance.

The Stars of Swing, led by Buddy Collette, fielded some spry solo work by Oscar Brashear on trumpet and Britt Woodman on trombone. Collette's "April Skies," a bop variation of "I'll Remember April," had an almost quaint feeling, but was true to its period, the mid-1940s.

Art Farmer brought on his trumpet, his fluegelhorn and his co-leader, the incomparable alto saxophonist Frank Morgan, aptly recalling the past with two originals by the late pianist Sonny Clark. Because the show by now had run close to seven hours, too few listeners were on hand to realize that Poston had saved the best for last.

JAZZ REVIEW

Hot Wind Blows on Playboy Cruise

Recipe for jazz ambrosia: Take 1,000 fans, place them aboard a 183-foot luxury yacht, add three decks' worth of sounds with equal portions of big-band music, fusion and solo piano, stir gently for three hours off San Pedro Harbor with food and beverage service for all.

That is how it worked Sunday afternoon when the aptly named California Hornblower took off in fine weather on its maiden voyage, with the Capp/Pierce Juggernaut band as the main attraction.

No doubt inspired by this ambiance, the 16-piece ensemble was as hot as it has been in its 14-year history, playing classic charts such as Quincy Jones' "For Lena and Lennie," Neal Hefti's "Whirly Bird" and Jimmy Mundy's "Queer Street."

A dozen gifted soloists were showcased, among them: Marshal Royal in "Souvenir," Snooky Young singing and playing "Tain't What You Do," Bill Green in fine fettle with his soprano sax on "New York Shuffle" and the demonic tenor sax exchanges of Ricky Woodard and Gary Herbig.

There was room to dance; some took advantage of this, but most simply drank in the sounds. Some joined the crowd on the upper deck, where pianist Gerald Wiggins, as befitted the occasion, applied his gentle mastery to "My Ship"; others went down to the main deck, where Brandon Fields' fusion sounds found the leader on saxes and an electric wind instrument, aided by Walt Fowler on fluegelhorn and Dave Witham on keyboard. Fields' repertoire takes in everything from contemporary works to Herbie Hancock.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz Reviews

Kenny Colman Brings Dramatic Ballad to Forte's

When Frank Sinatra calls an album "glorious" and adds that "the singing is in the tradition of Tony Bennett, Bing Crosby and myself," you know that a visit with the singer in question must pay some substantial dividends.

Kenny Colman, who recently earned that rare endorsement, opened Tuesday at Forte's, an Italian restaurant in Encino, where he had a successful engagement a couple of years ago. Unlike the record (not yet released) on which he is backed by part of the London Philharmonic, the club has provided him with only a quartet for company. Even under these conditions it does not take long to recognize that what this Canadian visitor offers is too seldom heard on the pop-music scene today.

Colman likes to call himself the last of the saloon singers. This holds true in terms of his choice of material and his strong, true sound in the classic-pop genre.

Tuesday's show began with "The Good Life" and "Just Friends," both at a bright tempo and leaving no doubt that Colman was in great voice. The problem was, so was the audience. When word gets around to his regular following, who in due course may replace the talkers and the dancers, conditions should be much easier for him.

Colman's long suit is the dramatic ballad, to which he applies his full reserve of vocal strength and emotional power. "When Joanna Loved Me," a superb song by Jack Segal and Bob Wells, remains one of the most moving items in his repertoire. The Placido Domingo hit "I Couldn't Live Without You for a Day" made a similarly compelling impact.

With Steve Donovan on keyboards, Sammy Dee on tenor sax, Sinclair Lott on drums and Jeff Falkner on bass, Colman worked his way from a slightly nervous opening to a potent finale. He will be off Sunday and Monday, returning for another five-night stand and closing June 10.

—LEONARD [illegible]

6/4/89

Gibbs Finds Audience for Big Band Jazz

By LEONARD FEATHER

It's long been common knowledge in the music industry that big bands have had their day. They no longer sell records, so there is no point in recording them. Right?

Well, not entirely. At least one exception to the rule has shown that somewhere out there is a healthy body of big band jazz fans looking for some action, at least on records. The man who has filled this need is Terry Gibbs, the veteran vibraphonist, survivor of the 52nd Street bop era, one-time Goodman and Herman and Buddy Rich sideman, musical director for Steve Allen since the 1960s.

Gibbs at present does not have an orchestra. Few jazzmen do anymore. However, what he does have, and has had for many years, is a collection of tapes, recorded in 1959 when he was leading a big band regularly at a series of Los Angeles clubs.

Fast forward: After 27 years on the shelf, a set of tunes performed by the old Gibbs ensemble was released in 1986. The reaction was strong that a second album had to be assembled, then a third last year. The records are "Terry Gibbs' Dream Band," Contemporary 7647; "Sundown Sessions," 7652, and "Flyin' Home," 7654.

The band, using many of the same sidemen who worked with Gibbs over the years, is being reassembled for an appearance June 17 at the Hollywood Bowl during the Playboy Jazz Festival.

To say that Terry Gibbs is excited about all this would be meaningless, since Gibbs lives in a state of permanent excitement. His conversation is the precise counterpart of his dazzling vibes work; he speaks in 16th notes, and any transcribed interview has to be played back with the tape at half speed.

"It's amazing!" he said the other day at his San Fernando Valley home. "I've been making records for 40 years as a leader, and suddenly, for the first time, I'm on the charts! All three albums have been in Cash Box, R&R and Billboard. The great thing about it is, the disc jockeys now know my name, so my small-group records with Buddy de Franco are getting some attention too."

The story begins with Gibbs' move from New York to California in 1957. "When I came out here I wanted very much to make a big band album; but there was a Musicians' Union rule that you couldn't rehearse for a record date. However, it was all right to rehearse without payment for a nightclub job.

AL SEIB / L.A. Times

Terry Gibbs: "I'm a lucky man. God has been good to me."

"Through a friend, a movie columnist named Eve Starr, I heard there was a club in town that was desperate for some kind of policy change to keep it in business. She got me into this place, the Seville, where I opened with a quintet.

"I said to the owner, 'How would you like to try out a big band one night, for the same money you're paying me now?' He had nothing to lose, so he said OK. I went on Steve Allen's NBC-TV show and he gave me a great plug; on the night of the band premiere the place was packed. We did it again the next week, and wound up working with the full orchestra five nights a week."

The Gibbs band recorded four albums during the next three years, two each for Mercury and Verve, but Polygram, the conglomerate that now owns both those catalogues, has never reissued them. Although some of the tunes are duplicated, the performances on the three Contemporary albums are all previously unreleased.

No band is ever irrevocably dead as long as its library survives. Gibbs has the same time-proof arrangements that gave the band its original, unrestrainedly joyful character: charts by Bill Holman, Al Cohn, Bob Brookmeyer, Manny Albam, Med Flory, Marty Paich and Lennie Niehaus.

With Gibbs' dynamic vibraphone as its indomitable centerpiece, the orchestra became the talk of the town, first at the Seville in Hollywood and later at the Sundown on the Sunset Strip.

The Dream Band drew a celebrity crowd. "Steve Allen was there regularly; so were people like Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Shore, Louis Prima, Johnny Mercer. One night we got George Shearing to sit in, and he said: 'Don't play anything too hard, because I can't read very well.' The guys in the band took him up on the joke by calling out instructions like 'Go to Letter C, George!' but he'd heard the arrangements before and memorized every note."

The band that will be heard at the Playboy bash is composed of men who, with few exceptions, have worked in one or more of the group's previous incarnations. They are, on trumpets, Conte Candoli and Snooky Young (both from the Tonight Show band), John Audino and Steve Huffsteter; on trombones, Randy Aldcroft, Charlie Loper and Bob Enevoldsen; on saxes, Med Flory and Lanny Morgen, altos; Pete Christlieb and Bob Cooper, tenors; Jack Nimitz, baritone; and the rhythm section Lou Levy, piano; Bruce Lett, bass, and Frank Capp, drums.

Gibbs won't succumb to the temptation of taking the band on the road, an economic impossibility. "I may use the Dream Band library if there's a suitable group in some other city—for example, there's a band in Columbus, Ohio, that would knock you out; but for the most part I'll be spending my time traveling with small groups.

"I'm a lucky man," Gibbs concluded. "I saw those great years on 52nd Street; I knew my instrument well, I always knew just who I was, and I got to play with so many great musicians I respect. God has been good to me. And when I die, I'll get to play with Charlie Parker." □

6/15

Miles Davis to Take a Break in San Juan Capistrano

By LEONARD FEATHER

Miles Davis, who over the decades has filled great auditoriums from here to Tokyo, will be facing a more intimate crowd tonight, at the Coach House in San Juan Capistrano.

He doesn't see anything remarkable in this. "I've worked there before. There's nothing wrong with playing a more intimate place once in a while."

The one-night stand will be a passing moment in a whirlwind tour that will see him off to Europe in 10 days. Last week he stopped off in New York to receive the prestigious Governor's Award of the New York Council on the Arts.

"Gov. [Mario] Cuomo gave it to me. There were 12 of us and I was the only musician."

Back at his home in Malibu, Davis had three days for the Coach House gig, Arsenio Hall's TV show and several interviews to promote his Warner Bros. album, "Amandla." The record is dedicated to Gil Evans, whose death last year ended a collaboration and close friendship that had begun in 1948.

"Nobody can ever replace Gil. I have Marcus Miller with me now doing arrangements, but you can't compare them. Marcus plays a lot, which helps him to understand what players need. Gil wasn't that much of a player, but he had an instinct. He could really get into what you wanted."

Evans will play a prominent role in Davis' autobiography, which Simon & Schuster will publish in September. "I've been working on it with Quincy Troupe. We met when he did a magazine interview with me a few years ago.

"It's about a lot of things that happened to me when I was a kid."

Racial things?

"No, just music. Following music around, hearing things that I liked and showing how they led to others. It's really a book about music."

Not about your family?

"Naah," said Miles, "they didn't do nothing." (Davis' father was a well-to-do dental surgeon and land owner. The disclaimer can be taken with a large grain of salt.)

It is clear, however, that Davis has never been a family man. Old friends like Gil Evans have always been closer than blood relatives. Asked about his children and grandchildren, he hesitated a moment before answering: "I guess I have about three grandchildren. One with my daughter Cheryl, and my son Gregory has two, though he may have more by now; he doesn't speak to me. My son Miles IV has none."

Painting, long a Davis avocation, is becoming a profitable sideline. In collaboration with his girlfriend, Jo

Please see DAVIS, Page 7

Miles Davis will be at Coach House in San Juan Capistrano.

DAVIS

Continued from Page 1

Gelbard, he did the artwork for his new album; the cover is an impressive self-portrait using the reds and greens he seems to favor.

"Lionel Richie and some other entertainers have bought my paintings. A magazine called Du in Zurich bought some of my sketches for a special edition they're putting out on me." Some of his art will be seen in a CBS "60 Minutes" segment now in preparation.

Though the Davis sounds of the 1980s represent his taste in personal performance, contrary to popular belief he does not reject his entire past. There will be a reminder of the early, pre-electric Miles when he performs next week at Avery Fisher Hall in New York opposite the Wynton Marsalis group.

"Wynton's good. He's a perfect trumpet player."

Yes, but isn't it true that he's basically playing 1960s Miles?

"Sure, I know."

You don't mind that?

"Uh-uh. There's no problem with Wynton; I think he's good, and Wynton knows he's good."

Asked about a story a couple of months ago in one of the more questionable check-out magazines, claiming that he had AIDS, Davis said: "No, I decided not to sue. It's better to ignore it. I was just in the hospital to have some nodes removed from my throat. You know, I think one of my ex-wives or ex-girlfriends may have started that story."

Miles Davis today is in seemingly splendid health. Living close to Pepperdine University, which has a capacious pool, he took to working out there during a vacation last year.

Do you still work out? Still go swimming?

"I'm leaving right now. Bye."

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JAZZ EDUCATORS JOURNAL SPRING 1989

Ms. Jude Hibler

Leonard Feather (L) and Lennie Niehaus contribute to a panel session on the making of the Clint Eastwood film, "Bird."

Music Photo International

Kenny Hing, Frank Foster and Eric Dixon (L to R) battle it out on tenors with the Count Basie Orchestra.

Grace Bell

The San Diego State Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Bill Yeager, kick off the opening night concert with a roar.

Music Photo International

Jacob Armen, who at 7 years old has already performed on national television with the Tonight Show Band and was recently featured on Incredible Sunday, plays with the U.S. Air Force Band of the Golden West.

The William Patterson College New Jazz Ensemble competes during the "All That Jazz" competition.

Ms. Jude Hibler

The Treasu In San

1989 NAJE

By Leonard Feather

The 16th annual national convention of the National Association of Jazz Educators got under way here January 12 to what was clearly a record-breaking start.

An estimated 3200 visitors converged on the convention's headquarters. "It's amazing," said Bill McFarlin, the NAJE's executive director. "This hotel was sold out long ago, and just about every other hotel in the area is packed."

The participants were men and women who were there to teach, communicate, study or play — in many cases, all four. Jazz education, once a virtual contradiction in terms, is now firmly installed at the school, college and university levels. Among the estimated 350 musicians who came mainly to perform were students, full time professionals, and service bands. It was one of the last group, the U.S. Air Force Band of the Golden West, that produced the first sensation of the three-day event. Sitting in as a guest soloist on "Giant Steps" was Jacob Armen, a drummer. He is not a member of the Air Force, for which he can be excused, since he is seven years old.

Playing a matinee at the Tiki Hut, an open-air spot, Armen lost no time proving he can outperform many drummers four times his age. As Joel Leach, head of Cal State Northridge's jazz department, commented: "Jacob has a natural understanding of every style. We featured him with the CSUN jazz band and he was astonishing."

The Thursday evening concert, held in the Convention Center, opened with a bristling set by the San Diego State University Jazz Ensemble, conducted by Bill Yeager. It has often been complained that the universities produce cookie-cutter jazz, too high on technique and short on soul. Not true; at least, not if this band is a yardstick. Playing straight-ahead big band music alternating with intelligently wrought fusion, the band revealed a major talent in Derek Cannon, a 28-year-old graduate student, whose trumpet solo on a Don Menza arrangement of Henry Mancini's "Moment to Moment" was a study in sheer lyricism.

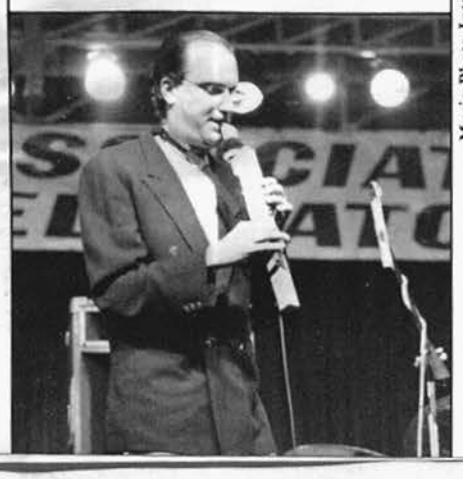
Bill Watrous followed, playing trombone with his unique blend of utter control and creative abandon. He still insists on singing and whistling "in order to improve the way I can communicate with you," as he put it — but no improvement was needed, and none was achieved.

One of San Diego's own, the great alto saxophonist Charles McPherson, showed in a vivid bebop set that this idiom is as vital today as ever, and is the chosen path

Branford Marsalis is caught in an inspired moment as he sits in with the Southern Comfort finalists.

Grace Bell

Michael Brecker displays extraordinary technique on his Electronic Wind Instrument (EWI) as his band brings down the house.



Music Photo International

res Found Diego

Convention

of two generations: his son, Charles Jr., played drums, and his pianist was the phenomenal Harry Pickens, a 6 ft. 9 in. bop giant who in the afternoon had given a most articulate clinic on the topic "Peak Performance — How to Make Inspired Performance a Habit." Like many of the speakers, he was thoroughly versed in practicing what he preaches.

At the sprawling, 33 acre Town and Country Hotel, where panel discussions, classes and live music sessions took place all day long in a dozen of the hotel's venues, Friday's most eagerly awaited event took place in the large Atlas Ballroom, where Frank Foster, leader of the Count Basie Orchestra, presented the premiere of the "Basie Jazz History Suite."

This elaborate, 97 minute production turned out to be mainly a retrospective of the orchestra's most durable hits, linked with a narration read by Joe Williams.

No concert by this orchestra can lack excitement, and such warhorse tunes as "Jumpin' at the Woodside" and "Whirley Bird" (the latter featuring Foster in a greased-lightning tenor solo) found the men in peak form.

In general, the soloists were in dazzling form. The brass section roared, the saxes had one wondrous solo outing.

The concluding 17 minutes, comprising a new three-part composition by Frank Foster, was a skillfully organized series of frameworks to show the band's current and future direction.

Preceding the Basie segment were two small band sets: one by Red Rodney's vigorous, tightly knit quintet, and one by five faculty members from the Southland's Dick Grove School of Music, led by the trombonist Rob Connell, who admitted that the Rodney group was hard to follow.

Earlier in the day, some of the hotel's smaller rooms were filled with the sounds of intimate jazz. From Denver came the vastly underrated Getz-like tenor sax of Spike Robinson, teamed with a soulfully swinging pianist and singer, Ellyn Rucker.

From France by way of L.A. came the Aldeberts, Louis and Monique. After all their years trying to gain a major foothold in Los Angeles, their appearance before a crowd that had never heard of them was a revelation. The two singers (Louis also plays electric keyboard) were a delight in their hour of original songs and adaptations of Bill Evans and Michel Legrand. Singing in English, French and Le Jazz Scat, the Aldeberts were a cool,

Music Photo International

Dan Murphy, Southern Comfort Brand Manager, presents Bob Curnow with a $10,000 check and reinforces Southern Comfort's commitment to jazz education.

Music Photo International

Jamey Aebersold (at podium) receiving the NAJE Hall of Fame Award from NAJE Past Presidents Dick Dunscomb and Herb Wong. Matt Betton (R), NAJE Executive Director Emeritus and the 1st recipient of NAJE's Hall of Fame Award, is pictured at right.

Ms. Jude Hibler

Take Six captured everyone's respect with a blend of jazz harmonies and gospel that earned them a Grammy only 30 days after their NAJE convention appearance.

Grace Bell

Red Rodney leads his quintet from New York in a smokin' set which left us all wanting more.

Grace Bell

Bebop at its finest with alto saxophonist Charles McPherson.

Music Photo International

Rich Matteson solos with the Ashley Alexander Alumni Band during a musical tribute in honor of the late Ashley Alexander.

Music Photo International

Jon Faddis reaches for the sky!

L.A. TIMES 6/11/89

JAZZ

Jacquet, 66, Still Generates Excitement

by LEONARD FEATHER

Swimming against the tide is a task not undertaken without powerful motivation. Jean Baptiste Illinois Jacquet knew that this was precisely what he would be doing when, in 1983, he resolved to form a full-fledged orchestra.

Six years later and four decades after the purported death of the big band era, the Illinois Jacquet Orchestra is still among us, as will be evident when all 17 men, now on their first West Coast tour, show up Tuesday for a five-night stand at Catalina's in Hollywood, followed by an appearance June 18 at the Playboy Festival.

"It's always been sort of a vision for me," said the 66-year-old tenor saxophonist. "As a child I grew up around big bands; I played and danced with my father's band, and with school bands in Houston, so they've always been second nature to me."

The crucial point was reached during his senior year in high school, when Count Basie passed through town. "Basie had these two great saxophonists, Lester Young and Herschel Evans. The whole thing really turned my life around."

From school Jacquet graduated to a territory band led by Milton Larkin, a legendary figure whose sidemen also included Eddie (Cleanhead) Vinson and Arnett Cobb. Another territory band was that of Floyd Ray, with whom Jacquet traveled to Los Angeles in 1941.

"I thought it would be an escape from Texas segregation when I decided to settle in L.A., but it turned out they had two separate musicians' unions out here, so there was nothing I could do but join the all-black local.

"Every Labor Day, they'd have a big parade down Central Avenue, winding up with a jam session at the Union. I was lucky; at that first session I played with the greatest rhythm section imaginable—Nat King Cole on piano, Charlie Christian on guitar, Jimmy Blanton on bass, and Big Sid Catlett on drums. Incredible! Then, through Nat, I met Lionel Hampton, switched from alto sax to tenor and joined his band."

Jacquet's image was established forever when a wild, huge-toned chorus on Hampton's record of "Flying' Home" became what may be the most imitated solo in jazz. Tenor players of every succeeding generation have copied it; it has even been harmonized for a five-piece sax section.

Excitement was a product Jacquet was so adept at generating that he became a key figure in the sometimes bombastic "Jazz at the Philharmonic" tours of which he was often a member. But his orchestral link was never forgotten; after leaving Hampton he played with Cab Calloway's then flourishing band, and later with Basie.

History books have ignored it, but he also had a big band of his own in 1947. At one point his trumpet section included Fats Navarro, Joe Newman and a 20-year-old Miles Davis.

"I got back in the band scene a few years ago," he says, "through an invitation to lecture at Harvard University. They wanted to hear about my experiences coming up in the South. It was stimulating to talk to all these students and educators.

"I was asked to take part in a jam session, the kind where students play along with the masters. Well, the Harvard experience grew into a three year artist-in-residence program. I wound up teaching a group of students to play—I even wrote out blues solos for them, because this was something they didn't yet have in them—and when the orchestra played a concert we got a standing ovation. I said to myself, if I could get the students to do this well, why shouldn't I have a professional band of my own?"

CAROL BERNSON

Illinois Jacquet: "I've done this because . . . the music deserves to be kept alive."

Back in New York, he picked out some of the choice available men—"Some young, some middle aged"—and played a tryout gig in a local club. "We captured some of that real Midwestern flavor, along with the sounds of bands I'd been with. It felt right.

"Max Gordon of the Village Vanguard called me to play with a small group, but I was tired of those jam sessions. Finally, he let us come in with the whole band, and we broke the club's all time attendance record."

During the Vanguard engagement, Ahmet Ertegun caught the action and decided Jacquet ought to be on his Atlantic Records label. The result was "Jacquet's Got It!" (Atlantic 7-81816-2), with such guest soloists as saxophonist Marshal Royal, bassist Milt Hinton and the phenomenal trumpeter Jon Faddis.

The record has done well, but it has been an uphill fight for the band. Outlets for a 17-man aggregation are not what they were in the halcyon years. Despite layoffs the personnel has remained fairly stable. The band has been to Europe twice, worked on a jazz cruise aboard the Norway last fall, and played a triumphant week in Japan in April.

If Jacquet has had his moments of doubt, they have been allayed by his discovery of meditation, now a central force in his life.

It began, he says, in 1985, when he went to a funeral parlor to see a beloved Basie colleague, the drummer Jo Jones. "There were only a few people there, people who hadn't really known Jo that well, and I was really down in the dumps. My manager, Carol Scherick, suggested taking me to a guru she knew, a woman named Gurumayi.

"I had no idea that I would get anything out of it, but Gurumayi kinda took my mind, eased it away from where it was, and gave me some new thoughts to meditate on. Just by listening to her I was transformed into a more relaxed person."

A month later Jacquet and Scherick were on a plane to meet Gurumayi at her home in Ganeshpuri, two hours outside Bombay. "No booze, no telephones, just peace and quiet; it was a little strange at first, but she's helped me often since then, sometimes at her ashram in Upstate New York. Last Christmas we went back to India and spent 3½ weeks with her."

With the interest in Jacquet recharged by publicity surrounding his orchestra, other records have been reissued on compact discs. "Banned in Boston" on CBS Portrait RK 44391 includes some excellent 1962 small band dates, and "The Black Velvet Band" on RCA Bluebird 6571-2-RB comprises several earlier studio sessions, along with a live cut by Jacquet rejoining Hampton's band to revive the "Flyin' Home" glories at the 1967 Newport Jazz Festival.

Then as now, Jacquet's horn revealed a dual personality. Though capable of arousing audiences to a frenzy (as he still does), he has earned respect as a masterful ballad player whose emotions run deep.

The big experience, he insists, is no mere ego trip. "I've done this because I feel the music deserves to be kept alive. I have the personality for it—I sing with the band, and as you know, I used to be a dancer—and I can sense, from the audience reaction in every country we've visited, that this is something people still want to hear. This is what God would have me do, and I'm happier doing it than I've ever before in my life." □

WED. THRU SAT. SU. 6/18

JAZZ REVIEW 6/17

Dirty Dozen at Palomino

You might not expect to find the Dirty Dozen Brass Band at the Palomino, but the excitement they generated at the North Hollywood rock emporium indicated that their message carries the same impact no matter how far they stray from New Orleans.

Never actually more than two-thirds of a dozen, they have now reduced further to seven pieces. Their brassy, blowzy blowing is dominated by the tuba of Kirk Joseph, though the front line includes two trumpets and two saxophones.

From the first bar, there is no doubt that infectious vibes are about to be disseminated. This is strictly a good-time band.

Roger Lewis, a full-blooded baritone sax player, doubled on a squealing soprano sax, playing both at once on one tune, later alternating them in such fast-moving two-bar trades that he seemed to spend as much time switching horns as playing them. Kevin Harris on tenor sax is more orthodox and hard driving.

Along with all the noisy fun Thursday night, there was a menu top-heavy with surprises. After the traditional blues pieces and "St. James' Infirmary," there were pop songs from the Stevie Wonder and Rolling Stones song books and, for a wild finale, a bop medley that began with Thelonious Monk's "Well You Needn't" and segued to Miles Davis' "So What," with the string bass role played by the tuba. Finally trumpeter Greg Davis coaxed the crowd to its feet for "Feet Don't Fail Me Now."

The rhythmic undercurrent of this unique septet is endemic to its success. One drummer, Jenell Marshall, plays snares and cymbals, leaving him free to sing. The other, Lionel Batiste, groans under the weight of a bass drum suspended in front of him, which he bangs incessantly on its right flank.

With no piano and no other chordal instrument, the music at times sounds simplistic, even atavistic; but swing it does, good humor it has, entertain it can and no doubt always will.

—LEONARD FEATHER

65

BEFORE & AFTER

di Leonard Feather

PHIL WOODS FRUSTA SANBORN

Chiamato a giudicare tanto alla cieca quanto ad occhi aperti una serie di dischi, il celebre altosassofonista è stato molto duro nei confronti del giovane collega, dandone qualche definizione sferzante: «Povera cosa» (prima); «Non è jazz» (dopo).

L'intervista a Phil Woods ha avuto luogo nel periodo del suo ritorno al suo club favorito, il Catalina's di Hollywood, dove era alla testa di quello che è probabilmente il gruppo attivo nel campo del mainstream unito da più tempo senza modificazioni d'organico; i suoi membri vi lavorano da un periodo non inferiore ai cinque anni, alcuni anche da quattordici anni.

ELENA CARMINATI

Philip Wells Woods, che per tutto il mondo del jazz è più semplicemente «Phil», è nato a Springfield, nel Massachusetts, il 2 novembre 1931. Si avvicinò alla musica ricevendo in regalo, da bambino, il sassofono contralto di uno zio deceduto. Arrivato nel 1948 a New York, ebbe contatti con Lennie Tristano, ma fu soprattutto assorbito dall'ammirazione per Charlie Parker. Dopo la morte di questi ne sposò la vedova, Chan, e tutta la sua attività parve dedicata al culto del grande modello. In realtà, avrebbe presto mostrato grande personalità, soprattutto nella European Rhythm Machine formata nel 1968 con Gordon Beck, Henri Texier e Daniel Humair e ora, dal 1983, con il fortunatissimo gruppo comprendente Hal Galper, Steve Gilmore e Bill Goodwin, ai quali si è poi aggiunto Tom Harrell: questo splendido quintetto ha vinto il referendum «Top Jazz 88» tra i critici italiani.

1. THE SAXOPHONE CHOIR: *The Saxophone Shop* (Soul Note). Odean Pope, tenore, compositore; altri sette sassofonisti.

Prima: «Non è esattamente il mio genere, ma mi sembra messo insieme con quella specie di approccio musicale basilare, puritano, che hanno i bambini quando dái loro qualcosa da picchiare. È fatto con un piccolo aggancio di due battute (*lo accenna*), che suonano quattro o cinque volte, allo stesso modo in cui si fanno i dischi di pop... una cosina ritmica per far presa, e poi gli metti sopra un gancio. Penso solo che sia una scusa debole per un'improvvisazione, e suona come del fango... Spero che faccia guadagnare un sacco di soldi; semplicemente non mi ha fatto impressione. Mi sembra che ci fosse un sacco di energia, con un sacco di rumore, e poi non ne veniva fuori assolutamente niente».

Dopo: «Il basso li soffocava. No, non li ho mai sentiti. Ci hanno messo otto sassofoni? Beh! Non sapevo se fosse un sintetizzatore, o cos'altro».

2. ERIC DOLPHY: *The Madrig Speaks, The Panther Walks* (Limelight). Dolphy, contralto, compositore; Misha Mengelberg, piano; Jacques Schols, contrabbasso; Han Bennink, batteria.

Prima: «Uno degli uccelli più liberi che abbiano mai suonato il sassofono... era Eric Dolphy . Uno dei miei favoriti. Mi lamento sempre del fatto che troppa gente che cerca di liberare la musica non ha studiato Eric Dolphy. Il suo modo di suonare libero era grande. Lo amavo. Suona come Jaki Byard al piano, secondo me. Cinque stelle per il lavoro di Eric Dolphy. Non ho idea di chi suonasse nella sezione ritmica».

Dopo: «Conosco Han Bennink, il batterista, ma non gli altri. Era anche una bella composizione. Un po' troppo elaborata nelle sue variazioni ritmiche. Non era destinata a far appello ai tuoi istinti più diretti, ma a un tuo approccio sofisticato verso la musica. E loro improvvisavano all'interno di questa struttura».

3. GROVER WASHINGTON JR.: *Can You Dig It* (Elektra). Washington, contralto; Ralph McDonald e William Salter, compositori; William Eaton, arrangiatore.

Prima: «Non c'è niente da giudicare, qui. Non è davvero jazz, perciò non sarebbe giusto giudicarlo come disco di jazz. Credo che sia Grover, e va bene, è simpatico. È un po' insipido: è un dolce alla vaniglia, è un panino con l'hamburger: non è certo un *filet mignon*!»

Dopo: «"Arrangiato?" Vuoi dire che questo signore (Eaton) ha preso dei soldi per fare quella roba? Bah, immagino che sia roba buona nel campo del pop. È prevedibile, non spiacevole; ma certo non è una bistecca con le patate. Mi chiedo spesso cosa avrebbe detto di queste cose Charlie Parker, dal momento che gli piaceva tutto. Sarebbe stato gentile».

4. FRANK MORGAN: *Little Melonae* (Contemporary). Morgan, contralto; Jackie McLean, compositore; Cedar Walton, piano; Buster Williams, contrabbasso; Billy Higgins, batteria.

Prima: «Yeah, un bel disco bebop, un tema di Jackie McLean, forse *Dr. Jekyll*? Non ne ho idea. Per un momento ho pensato che fossero Harrison e Blanchard con Cedar Walton. Ma mi piace, ho sempre apprezzato le sue composizioni. Tre stelle. Non conosco il sassofonista».

LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers; one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this series.

This month's musician: Phil Woods

The Phil Woods interview was conducted during a return visit to his favorite club, Catalina's in Hollywood, where he led what is probably the longest running unchanged mainstream group in jazz; all his sidemen have been with him from five to 14 years.

1. THE SAXOPHONE CHOIR. *The Saxophone Shop* (Soul Note). Odean Pope, tenor sax, composer; seven other saxophonists.

BEFORE: It's not really my cup of tea, but it seems to me that it's put together in that sort of Puritan, basic musical approach that children have access to when you give them something to beat on. It's got a little two-bar hook (*he demonstrates*) which they do about 4-5 times, which is the way they make pop records — a rhythmical thing to catch them, then you put a little hook on. I just thought it was a poor excuse for an improvisation, and it sounded like mud — I hope it makes a lot of money! It just didn't knock me out. It seemed like a lot of energy with a lot of thundering sounds and absolutely nothing coming out.

AFTER: The bass drowned them out. No, I've never heard of them. They've got eight saxophones there? Well! I didn't know if it was a synthesizer or what.

2. ERIC DOLPHY. *The Madrig Speaks, The Panther Walks* (from *Last Date*, Limelight). Dolphy, alto sax, composer; Misja Mengelberg, piano; Jacques Schols, bass; Han Bennink, drums.

BEFORE: One of the freest birds to ever play a saxophone — that was Eric Dolphy. One of my favorites. I always lamented the fact that so many cats that are into freeing up the music haven't really studied Eric Dolphy. His approach to freedom was great. I loved it. Sounds like Jackie Byard on piano, I think. Five stars for Eric Dolphy's work. I have no idea who the rhythm section was.

AFTER: I know Han Bennink on drums, but I don't know the other guys. A nice composition, too. A little more thought out with the rhythmical variations. It wasn't meant to appeal to your baser instincts but to appeal to your sophisticated approach to music. And they improvised within that framework.

3. GROVER WASHINGTON, JR. *Can You Dig It* (from *The Best Is Yet To Come*, Elektra). Washington, alto sax; Ralph MacDonald & William Salter, composers; William Eaton, arranger.

BEFORE: There's nothing really to rate there. It's not really jazz, so it wouldn't be fair to rate it as a jazz record. I believe it's Grover, and it's ok, it's nice. There's a certain insipidness to it. It's 'vanilla,' it's 'Burger King,' man! Not filet mignon!

AFTER: "Arranged?" You mean (Eaton) actually took money for that? Nah, it's good pop stuff, I suppose. It's predictable, not unattractive, but no meat and potatoes! I often wonder what Charlie Parker would think, because he loved everything. He'd be kind.

4. FRANK MORGAN. *Little Melonae* (from *Bebop Lives!*, Contemporary). Morgan, alto; Jackie McLean song, "Dr. Jekyl!" maybe? I piano; Buster Williams, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

BEFORE: Yeah, good bebop record, a Jackie McLean song, "Dr. Jekyl" maybe? I have no idea. I thought for a minute it was Harrison/Blanchard and Cedar Walton. But I liked it, I always have liked his songs. Three stars. Don't know the alto player.

AFTER: Oh, that was Frank Morgan. Yes, they're all people I know. I haven't heard that much Frank Morgan, so I don't know if this is typical of him.

5. CLEANHEAD AND CANNONBALL. *Bright Lights, Big City* (from *Cleanhead and Cannonball*, Landmark). Cleanhead Vinson, composer, vocals; Cannonball Adderley, alto.

BEFORE: I don't know who that was on vocals — it could have been Ernie Andrews — but that definitely was Julian Cannonball Adderley on alto. What can I say except that he is sorely missed. Nobody knows how to play the blues like Cannonball played the blues. Every alto player should be required to study that chorus: concise, neat, sure, sums up a whole tradition for everybody. All this in just two 12-bar choruses — that's no mean feat. Anything he plays has gotta be five stars.

AFTER: Oh, Cleanhead. Yeah, I thought it was Ernie. LF: I thought I might fool you into thinking it was Cleanhead singing *and* playing alto.

6. DAVID SANBORN. *Lisa* (from *Straight to the Heart*, Warner Brothers). Sanborn, alto, composer.

BEFORE: Poor thing! What you oughta know is that I have trouble with records like that. I have no idea who it is. But once again, it's not a jazz record — it's a 'lick' record. It appeals on that level of dance music, and as dance music, I suppose it's fine, but I found the whole thing rather boring. I thought it was Sanborn for a minute, but I don't think so. Nothing really struck my fancy, and the arrangement was rather insipid. I think I'll be kind and say two stars.

AFTER: It's not bad pop music but it's not jazz. The only thing I find is that some of these guys do a 'jazz record' so they consider that they could play jazz, and that they do this just to make money, and then they do a straight-ahead jazz album and that confuses the pop audience, and then they do a pop album and that confuses the jazz audience, and I think it's all meant to make some bread.

I have no objection to making money. I just have strong feelings about jazz, and the fact that so many men have died with this music that I don't like it when they get ripped off. I mean, just call it what it is — pop — you'll probably get the same amount of money, it just isn't fair to call it jazz. Even the players themselves are confused about what to call it — jazz, pop, crossover, so many terms.

7. LEE KONITZ. *Some Day My Prince Will Come* (from *Round and Round*, Music Masters). Konitz, alto (according to label), Fred Hersch, piano; Mike Richmond, bass; Adam Nussbaum, drums.

BEFORE: Well, that was Lee Konitz on a soprano saxophone that sounds like it needs some work. Not the player, but horn sounds like it's out of tune. I prefer Lee on alto, but it's the unmistakeable touch of the master, a wonderful improviser. He always tries to stretch it as much as he can, and I've always admired him for that. In this case, I don't think he quite succeeded, due to the nature of the horn. It sounded like a European rhythm section, but I'm not sure about that. Nice piano solo. I'd rate that three stars.

AFTER: That's not an alto sax; that's a soprano. No way. I would stake my career on it.

8. BOB FLORENCE. *Stella by Starlight* (From *The Limited Edition*, USA). Kim Richmond, Lanny Morgan, altos; Florence, arranger.

BEFORE: Well, if I had to venture a guess, I'd say the Juggernaut Capp/Pierce Band, and I thought it might have been Ted Nash on alto, but I wouldn't bet on it. "Stella *by Starlight" . . . nothing special, but quite adequate. I didn't* care for the arrangement too much. The sequence without the romantic melody was a little strident for my tastes, but a good power house band.

I don't think it's an East Coast band; there aren't that many of them left. Anyhow, three stars for a good alto solo.

AFTER: Well, good sax soloists; I didn't realize there were two different ones. Bob Florence, huh? I'm not familiar with that band. ■

— Thomas C. Burns

Phil Woods

6/18/89

JAZZ

Mixed Doubles in New Jazz Releases

By LEONARD FEATHER

"ASCENSEUR POUR L'ECHAFAUD." Miles Davis. Fontana CD 836 305-2.
★★★★
"AMANDLA." Miles Davis. Warner Bros. 25873-2.
★★★½

Three decades and as many evolutions in jazz history separate these intriguingly contrasted items.

"Ascenseur Pour l'Echafaud," the Louis Malle film released in the United States as "Frantic" and starring Jeanne Moreau, is unique: It's the only movie for which Miles Davis composed (or ad libbed) all the music and recorded it with three French musicians and the American drummer Kenny Clarke.

Taped in 1957, this music includes 26 short cuts; 16 have never been released before. On the final 10, those that were actually used, a regrettable echo was added.

Watching the action on screen in a Paris studio, Davis soloed on a series of out-takes—many abruptly ended—switching from muted to open horn and varying the performances slightly from take to take. On several, he is in a mood that is preclusive of "Sketches of Spain" recorded two years later.

Almost worth the cost of the CD itself is "Motel," which may be the longest continuous Davis solo on record—four minutes of inspired up-tempo jazz with a driving rhythm background.

"Amandla" is typical of the present-day Davis. In a sense, it is almost as much Marcus Miller's album since he wrote most of the music and plays everything in sight (on the first cut alone he plays bass, keyboards, drums, guitar, bass clarinet and soprano saxophone). But there are valuable passages of Davis on muted horn. The title tune is among the more melodic and is the only one to boast an acoustic piano solo (by Joe Sample).

The most unpretentiously successful track is the final "Mr. Pastorius," played simply by Davis on open horn, bassist Miller and drummer Al Foster in a welcomed change from the one- or two-chord monotones that dominate much of the footage.

"CEDAR WALTON TRIO PLAYS THE MUSIC OF BILLY STRAYHORN." Discovery DSCD 955.
★★★★

Miles Davis: Intrigue, contrast

"JAY THOMAS WITH THE CEDAR WALTON TRIO." Discovery DSCD 956.
★★★★★

Walton's piano personality is sensitively attuned to the lyricism of such Strayhorn works as "Chelsea Bridge" (introduced by Andy Simpkins on bowed bass), "Day Dream" and "A Flower Is a Lovesome Thing." This generally successful enterprise is weakened by the intrusion on two tunes of Clifford Jordan's reedy, nasal soprano sax.

Jay Thomas, a Walton protégé from Seattle, is a protean performer. A fluent soloist on trumpet and fluegelhorn, he switches to flute (and Walton moves to an electric keyboard) for "Little Tear," an Eumir Deodato song in which Becca Duran, Walton's wife, makes a beguiling guest vocal appearance.

Five of the 12 performances are enhanced by a trombone quintet. To top it off, the amazing Thomas plays tenor sax, and admirably, on John Coltrane's "Blue Trane." Along with a set of standard tunes, the set ends with two Walton originals, one of which is the delightful "Midnight Waltz," a flute-and-voice hum-along by Thomas. Not for nothing is this label called Discovery. If fame reaches him now, it won't come a moment too soon; he is 38.

"THE WARM MOODS." Ben Webster with Strings. Discovery DSCD 818.
★★★★★
"STORMY WEATHER." Ben Webster. Black Lion 760108.
★★★★

With sublime assistance from Johnny Richards' arrangements for a string quartet, Webster's tenor sax makes every song seem beautiful, whether the task is easy (as in "Nancy," "There's No You," "But Beautiful," "It Was So Beautiful") or near impossible (as in "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi" and "The Whiffenpoof Song"). Recorded in Los Angeles in 1960, this exquisite set alone should establish him among the immortals. Webster's death date is wrongly listed as 1966; he died in 1973.

"Stormy Weather" was taped live at the Montmartre in Copenhagen in 1965. Not even Coleman Hawkins could match Webster's tonal warmth and emotional depth. Niels Pedersen, then only 18, was already an astounding bassist; sympathetic piano by Kenny Drew and drums by Alex Riel completed the group.

"TELL IT LIKE IT IS." George Benson A&M CD 0815.
★★½
"THE OTHER SIDE OF ABBEY ROAD." George Benson A&M CD 0821.
★★★

It comes as something of a surprise to realize how dull the pre-vocal Benson could be. Actually, he does sing on the title tune and a couple of others in "Tell It," but the instrumental material (mainly drawn from schlock pop songs) and the arrangements drag him down, despite sparkling guitar solos. The Beatles song collection, in which he sings more and benefits from Don Sebesky's charts, are only 33 and 31½ minutes; why not combine them?

"UPTOWN/DOWNTOWN." McCoy Tyner Big Band. Milestone M CD 9167-2.
★★★½
"SUPERTRIOS." McCoy Tyner. Milestone 25873-2.
★★★★½

Surrounded by seven brass (including French horn and tuba), five saxes and rhythm, Tyner instills much of his customary personality into the setting. Five of the six compositions are his own, but only two are his arrangements. "Lotus Flower," an exotic oddity, was composed by Steve Turre, who plays trombone and tosses in some eerie sounds on a didgeridoo (Australian aboriginal wind instrument). "Blues for Basie" finds Tyner indulging in his own form of (relative) simplicity in tribute to the Count.

"Supertrios" is a reissue, combining a double LP onto one economically and musically rewarding 77-minute CD with the honors divided among Ron Carter and Tony Williams on the first date, Eddie Gomez and Jack de Johnette on the second. The six originals, and his versions of Duke, Monk, Coltrane, Jobim, et al., add up to optimum Tyner. □

JAZZ REVIEW

Janis Siegel Illumines At My Place

Janis Siegel has not transferred out of Manhattan. She has simply found a productive way to spend her spare time, teamed with the protean pianist Fred Hersch. To follow up their just released album, they took a two-night At My Place gig, with results that indicate a promising future for the partnership.

Siegel does not want to be identified as a jazz singer, and rightly so, since her first show Tuesday drew from many sources. On certain tunes such as Todd Rundgren's "Pretending to Care" and the old Miriam Makeba hit "Love Tastes Like Strawberries," her voice had a folksy charm, as if she were playing Patti with Hersch as a pianistic counterpart of Tuck.

What Siegel avoids is as significant as what she includes. Unlike several newly popular singers, she eschews mannerisms, using melisma very little, scatting only occasionally, and showing respect for the melodies.

Her pure sound and easy range were sensitively backed by Hersch, and on some numbers also by the superlative bassist Tony Dumas. Her mood swings were a joy as she made a quantum leap from a trivial old ditty, "Rhythm in My Nursery Rhymes," to a Brazilian setting in Djavan's "Agua."

For the jazz-oriented there was a fine old Bobby Troup ballad, "The Meaning of the Blues," along with two actual blues, the vocalese "Jackie" (an old Annie Ross-Wardell Gray fable about a be-bop mouse) and Helen Humes' "Million-Dollar Secret." The latter was the only song that seemed lyrically unsuited to her. Siegel drew on the repertoire of Take 6 for the swinging "Goldmine," and of Brenda Russell for a poignant "Piano in the Dark."

Song for song, artist for artist, this most musical hour by three major talents was an utter delight—the kind of performance music industry moguls classify as too good to be commercial. They have already been proven wrong; the Siegel-Hersch album is selling far beyond the record company's expectations.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Los Angeles Times

Jazz Reviews 6/26/89

'Hamp and George Salute Benny' at Carnegie Hall

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—This humid, teeming city was taken over Friday by George Wein—or so it seemed to the thousands of jazz fans who converged on the various halls around town where the veteran producer launched his 18th annual New York Jazz Festival—now known as the JVC Festival.

The annual slings and arrows to which Wein has often been subjected by the media for booking too many "safe" names cannot in all honesty be aimed at him this year. The first weekend offered a fair mixture of mainstream, traditional, fusion and electronic sounds, with the promise of several avant garde events later this week.

"Hamp and George Salute Benny," presented Saturday at Carnegie Hall, paid tribute to Benny Goodman, partly through the use of Lionel Hampton, George Benson and other alumni, but also with the help of an orchestra assembled by Loren Schoenberg, a tenor saxophonist and Goodman archivist who took his band through a slick 45-minute set that ranged from the sublime (Mel Powell's "Clarinade") to the ridiculous ("And the Angels Sing"). The 31-year-old Ken Peplowski relived the clarinet parts with remarkable accuracy.

As soon as Lionel Hampton took to the stage, the evening turned into a jam session, with Benson taking over the old Charlie Christian parts on "Soft Winds." Though Benson's relationship with the clarinetist was tenuous (they made one record session together and a few joint appearances), his participation was both logical and authentic. Except for one brief scat solo, he refrained from singing.

Clarinetist Kenny Davern was clearly reluctant to become a Goodman clone, but he made up in emotion what he lacked in fidelity. Trumpeter Joe Newman was in poor form, and a couple of young additions, Terence Blanchard on trumpet and Ralph Moore on saxophone, seemed hopelessly out of place; despite Hampton's consistently inspired playing the evening finally fell apart. (Georgie Auld, where were you when we needed you?)

If this Saturday's session was the most newsworthy, there were pleasures to spare among the preceding events. The festival was launched at 5 p.m. Friday with a piano solo recital in Weill Hall, a 300-seat room adjoining Carnegie. John Bunch (another Goodman alumnus) is a safe, sedate performer. Leaning often on the compositions of other pianists—Randy Weston, Fats Waller, Jimmy Rowles, Bunch even included a work by Denny Zeitlin dedicated to a third pianist, Bill Evans. The result was a pleasant stylistic mishmash, weakened now and then when Bunch's left-hand rhythms tended to become beats of burden.

What becomes a legend most is a standing ovation simply for walking on stage. This was the greeting accorded to Joe Williams as he opened the Friday evening Carnegie Hall show. It was a triumphant hour for the 70-year-old bass-baritone. His a cappella opening, "Let

CAROL BERNSON

Lionel Hampton

My People Go," had a Paul Robeson majesty, yet 10 minutes into his show, joined by his rhythm section, he brought his unique brand of pop-jazz beauty to Johnny Mandel's "Close Enough For Love," then turned "Every Night" into a hip monologue. By the end of the evening he had dug deep into rip-roaring, single-entendre blues, with the backing of the Count Basie Orchestra.

Joining Williams at the end of his first set was another former Basie singer, Marlena Shaw. A glamorous woman with a jazz-inflected sound, she was less than well served by her two novelty duets with Williams, one of which, the antique Louis Jordan novelty song "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby," had too much of a Las Vegas flavor.

The Basie band has been welded into a stunningly cohesive monolith by director Frank Foster. With drummer Duffy Jackson back in the band, commandingly driving the ensemble, the set was notable for its avoidance of the predictable, cliche material, and for the inclusion of Foster's 17-minute "Basie Remembrance Suite."

The delicate use of piccolo, flutes and bass clarinet in the second movement reminded the capacity crowd that this band has unlimited expressive and dynamic range. Carmen Bradford, the perennial Basie vocalist, was in powerful voice on "Young and Foolish," followed by the blues novelty "Papa Fos," named for Foster.

Please see JAZZ REVIEWS, Page 3

JAZZ

By LEONARD FEATHER

Eclecticism will be the keynote at the 11th annual Playboy Jazz Festival June 17-18 at the Hollywood Bowl. For jazz-fusion fans there will be the likes of Stanley Clarke, George Duke and Spyro Gyra, but the cause of unhyphenated jazz will be well served by the big bands of Terry Gibbs and Illinois Jacquet, the combos of Art Blakey and Dave Brubeck, and a rare straight-ahead appearance by George Benson with the McCoy Tyner Trio.

Among the five concerts scheduled for the "Jazz at the Bowl" summer series, the most intriguing is set for Aug. 9, with three big bands: Frank Foster leading the Basie ensemble, Mercer Ellington carrying on his father's legacy, and Louie Bellson with his always exciting ensemble, plus Carmen McRae as guest soloist.

Not all this summer jazz is confined to the stage. Eagerly awaited is the appearance June 23-24, at Catalina's in Hollywood, of an international 17-piece orchestra led by George Gruntz, the Swiss born composer who for many years has been musical director of the Berlin Jazz Festival. This will be the band's first Southland gig.

JAZZ REVIEWS

Continued from Page 2

Still later on Friday, at Avery Fisher Hall, Wynton Marsalis shared the bill with Miles Davis. Both have played recently in the Southland, but the experience of hearing them on the same bill was educational. Marsalis, in a gorgeously lyrical solo on "Embraceable You" and a stupendous whirlwind muted outing on "Cherokee," left no doubt that he would be a very hard act to follow.

Although Davis was well received by the post-midnight crowd, the contrast was striking; the electronic uproar came across as a creative anticlimax, ironically bringing to mind Davis' recent comment that Marsalis is "a perfect trumpet player."

JAZZ REVIEW

Music With a

By LEONARD FEATHER

STANHOPE, N.J.—The annu jazz festival organized in Ne York is by no means a singl city event. For those who pref their celebrations in a more bucol setting, the New Jersey Jazz Soc ety collaborates with JVC, tl main promoter, to offer a weeke of jazz in the grassy acreage Waterloo Village, an hour's dri from the big, bustling apple.

The ambiance here is not unli that of Nice, on a larger scale. F

TV TIPS

CHINA: ABC newsman Ted Koppel's recent visit to China becomes "Tragedy at Tian An Men: The Untold Story," on "The Koppel Report," 10 p.m. (7)(3)(10)(42).

PILOT: "B-Men" are two high-school friends who become bounty hunters, an unsold pilot from CBS, 8 p.m. (2)(8).

MUSIC: "Frontline" interviews U.S. citizens living and working in Japan, 9 p.m.

TONIGHT ON TV

	7:30	8:00	8:30
CBS 2, 8	(2) 2 ON THE TOWN (8) Entertainment Tonight	(cc) **B-MEN** — California high-school pals (James MacDonald, David Arnott) find the solution to their career choice problem when they unwittingly capture a criminal, after which they decide to become professional bounty hunters.	
NBC 4, 36,39	(4) USA TODAY — Medical waste. (36) Cheers (39) (cc) Jeopardy!	(cc) **MATLOCK** — (s) Ben searches for a missing witness capable of clearing his client of the murder of the latter's unfaithful husband. With Andy Griffith. (Repeat)	
5	My Secret Identity	MOVIE✓ "Middle Age Crazy" (1980) Bruce Dern,	
6	STAR TREK (7:00)	MOVIE✓✓ "As Summers Die" (1986) Scott G	
ABC 7, 3,10 42	(7) EYE ON L.A. — Antigua & Guadeloupe. (3) Cheers (10) Win, Lose or Draw	(cc) WHO'S THE BOSS? — Angela agrees to pose as Tony's wife at a reunion of his former team-	(cc) THE WONDER YEARS — Kevin gives a bogus excuse for skipping Paul's bar mitz vah. (Repeat)

JAZZ REVIEW

Music With a N.J. Bounce in a Bucolic Setting

By LEONARD FEATHER

STANHOPE, N.J.—The annual jazz festival organized in New York is by no means a single-city event. For those who prefer their celebrations in a more bucolic setting, the New Jersey Jazz Society collaborates with JVC, the main promoter, to offer a weekend of jazz in the grassy acreage of Waterloo Village, an hour's drive from the big, bustling apple.

The ambiance here is not unlike that of Nice, on a larger scale. For six hours, music radiated from three areas. Blankets, beach umbrellas, picnic lunches and chaises longues were *de rigueur* for some, while others sat in the shade under the main tent, which accommodated most of the 3,000 visitors Sunday afternoon.

Of the five groups in this venue the most distinctive was a quintet led by the organist Jimmy McGriff, one of those hardy souls who seem determined to prove that synthesizers have not rendered the Hammond B-3 obsolete. The sly slide trombone of Al Grey was a featured attraction, sharing the front line with Bill Easley, a gutty saxophonist. Organ groups get along very handily without a bass player, but invariably use a guitar, in this case a promising youngster named Bob de Vos, who lent funk and fire to such tunes as "The Preacher."

In a smaller, open-air garden spot called the Gazebo, sun-baked listeners heard a more conventional group, notable for the presence of pianist John Colianni, whose facility for stating melodies with deft assurance has been in relative obscurity since the end of his two-year tour with Lionel Hampton.

The most intimate of the three settings was a cafeteria, where trio music led by guitarist Harry Leahy was being played. He too had a brief moment in the limelight (with the Phil Woods group some years ago) followed by a long period out of the main scene. He was supported by Gary Mazzaroppi, one of those bass players who leave you wondering how such talented artists can remain virtually unknown.

Back in the main tent the free-wheeling spirit was sustained by a lineup of soloists ranging in age from the youthful cornetist Warren Vache to the saxophonist Al Klink, whose credits go all the way back to the original Glenn Miller band. A trombonist named Dan Barrett vied for attention with a name band veteran of the 1950s, Urbie Green.

If one fact stood out during the day, it was the easy give-and-take that pervaded every rhythm section. Mainstream bands that once had to put up with sluggish rhythm teams can now rely on support that borders on the virtuosic. Typical was a threesome that included Derek Smith, the English-born pianist, Bobby Rosengarden on drums, and the facile Harvie Swartz on bass.

The final set under the big tent was directed by George Wein himself, who has often stated that the burdens of operating festivals around the world are greatly relieved when he can relax at the piano. On this occasion the keyboard in question had a loose key or two, but Wein, unfazed, went through his Teddy Wilson-Earl Hines-Fats Waller motions most handily. His band was embellished by two saxophonists, Harold Ashby, the warm-toned tenor of Ellington renown, and Billy Mitchell on alto.

It was almost, but not quite, worth the price of admission to hear Wein's vocal on "Just a Gigolo." Rarely is an anxious audience treated to the voice of a world-famous impresario raised in song. He sang with the consummate ease of a man who has just heard that both his concerts for tonight have sold out.

Los Angeles Times

6/29/89

JAZZ REVIEW

'Bebop': 40 Years of Musical Idiom

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—"Bebop Re visited," presented Tuesda at Avery Fisher Hall here could as well have been calle "Bebop Still Visiting." Like th man who came to dinner, this idion dropped in on jazz in the mid-194 and never went away.

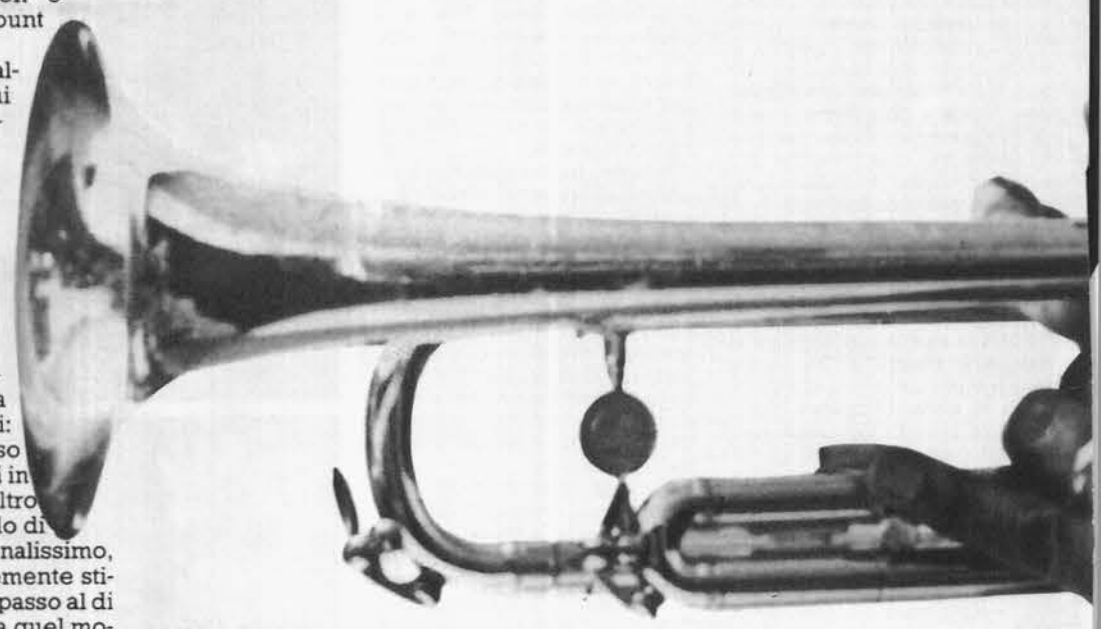
How thoroughly it has beer absorbed into the mainstream o modern music, and how indomita bly some of its pioneers have survived, was intermittently dem onstrated during the evening. Pro duced by the jazz critic Ira Gitler, the program also included a few o the younger artists who absorbed the bop essence as it became the lingua franca of jazz.

A succinct set by trumpeter Red Rodney and alto saxophonist Phil Woods established the mood for the evening. Like many of the partici pants, Rodney and the pianist in this group, Duke Jordan, once played with Charlie Parker, whose shadow hung heavily over the hall. Dizzy Gillespie, in the first of two brief appearances, was added to ward the end of the set, and if his glory years are somewhere behind him, he still did justice, with muted and open horn, to one of his earliest compositions, "Groovin' High."

The teaming of be-bop pianists Walter Davis Jr. and Barry Harris failed to jell. Instead of sounding well contrasted, they were ill matched, with the flamboyant Da vis overpowering the fine-tuned Harris, and the rhythm section (Ron Carter on bass and Roy Haynes on drums) overpowering both. Everything came alive a little more vividly after intermission, with the first and still foremost be-bop vibraphonist, Milt Jackson, in partnership with the mature and harmonically imaginative tenor saxophonist Jimmy Heath (who

di Leonard Feather

"LITTLE JAZZ" UN GIGANTE DELLA TROMBA



Quando Norman Granz, suo amico da quarant'anni, mi chiamò per comunicarmi la notizia della morte di Roy Eldridge, di colpo fui sommerso da un fiume di ricordi e di emozioni (e queste sarebbero state immediatamente accresciute dal sapere che a distanza solo di poche ore, in un ospedale di Los Angeles, si era spento un cugino di Roy, che era quasi esattamente suo coetaneo, essendo nato appena un mese prima, ed era un suo collega: il noto trombettista Reunald Jones senior, che aveva suonato con tutti i grandi del jazz e tra l'altro nelle orchestre di Duke Ellington e soprattutto, per anni, di Count Basie).

In quel momento mi tornò alla memoria quella sera in cui vidi Roy Eldridge per la prima volta. Ero appena sbarcato dal transatlantico che mi aveva portato a New York dall'Inghilterra, e sedevo con John Hammond al Savoy Ballroom per ascoltare l'incredibile musica dell'orchestra di Teddy Hill. Questa aveva, come solisti principali, Chu Berry e appunto Roy, il quale all'epoca era uno sconosciuto o quasi: fino ad allora, non aveva inciso se non un paio di brevi assoli in un seduta di Hill, che peraltro non avevo ancora avuto modo di ascoltare. Così il suo personalissimo, bruciante sound e il suo veemente stile, entrambi chiaramente un passo al di là di tutto quanto avessi fino a quel momento sentito, piovvero come una rivelazione. Ma soltanto quando lui e Chu passarono poco dopo agli ordini di Fletcher Henderson, Roy cominciò ad essere riconosciuto come il trombettista più influente dai tempi di Armstrong.

Il nostro secondo incontro avvenne a Chicago, nel 1938, quando Roy suonava al Three Deuces con un piccolo, incredibile gruppo. Benché ufficialmente fosse in cartellone per un set separato, con lui suonava Art Tatum, e c'erano John Collis alla chitarra, Zutty Singleton alla batteria e, mi pare, Truck Parham al contrabbasso. Quella era musica della Swing Era, per quanto riguarda i complessini, al suo massimo livello. In quello stesso periodo, poi, sentii Roy in uno dei locali della Cinquantaduesima Strada di New York.

Nel maggio 1940 persuasi Milt Gabler a lasciarmi produrre una seduta per la sua Commodore Records, testé lanciata. La «first line» che scelsi vedeva Roy Eldridge, Benny Carter e Coleman Hawkins. E gli assoli di Roy in tre dei brani (*I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me, I Surrender Dear* e il mio *Smack*) sono oggi dei classici.

Durante gli anni Quaranta la stella di Roy Eldridge era in continua ascesa. Io riuscii a metterlo al fianco di Louis Armstrong in quella che fu la loro prima apparizione insieme, il concerto degli Esquire All Stars al Metropolitan Opera House. Il carattere di Roy sembrava sempre allegro e disponibile: fu soltanto dopo le successive esperienze con il pregiudizio razzista che mi resi conto di una sua interiore amarezza creata da un'intensa sofferenza.

Roy fu il solo musicista nero nell'orchestra di Gene Krupa dal 1941 al '43, poi uno di molti neri in un'orchestra all star nelle radiotrasmissioni di Mildred Bailey, per la CBS, nel 1943-44, e fu in seguito l'unico nero nell'orchestra di Artie Shaw nel 1945. Appena lasciata la quale mi raccontò, in un'intervista, le sue esperienze in quei giorni di dura segregazione razziale.

«Fino a che io sarò qui in America — mi disse Roy — non lavorerò mai più in un'orchestra bianca! Tutto cominciò quando andai a suonare con Krupa. Fino ad allora nessun musicista nero era entrato in una band bianca, a meno che non fosse una separata attrazione come erano stati Teddy Wilson e Lionel Hampton con Benny Goodman. E così ero io, inizialmente, con Krupa. Non ero trattato come un membro, a pieno titolo, dell'orchestra. Ben presto però cominciai a dividere la parte musicale di Shorty Sherock, e quando lui se ne andò, lo sostituii. Mi emozionava l'essere accettato come un membro regolare, ma sapevo che gli occhi di tutti mi stavano addosso per vedere se facessi qualcosa di sbagliato.

«Tutti i ragazzi dell'orchestra erano cordiali, specialmente Gene. Senonché partimmo per la California, e qu cominciarono i guai. Si arriva in una c tà, e tutto il resto della band fissa il sto in albergo. Io invece non r nemmeno superarne la sogli

Young Pianist Leaves Mark on Charts

7/2/89

LEONARD FEATHER

Educated, eclectic, articulate, ambitious, intense, inspired: Marcus Roberts is all of ese and, in the view of many who ve heard him, securely in place the route to greatness.

Though still nominally a sideman, as pianist with Wynton Marsalis' group, he has broken through in his own right with a debut album, "The Truth Is Spoken Here" (RCA Novus 3051-2-N), which in late May made an astonishing leap to the No. 1 spot on the Billboard jazz chart.

He is even taking occasional leaves of absence to lead his own group. On July 20 he will start a four-day run at the Vine St. Bar & Grill in Hollywood.

Soft spoken almost to the point of inaudibility, Roberts recently sat in his Hollywood hotel room, conservatively attired in black suit and tie, reminiscing about his meteoric rise.

"I was born in Jacksonville, Fla.," the 25-year-old Roberts said. "My mother was a singer. As a child I heard gospel music when she sang in the church.

"I lost my eyesight early; I had two operations for cataracts, one when I was 5, the other at 15, but nothing was left except light perception. I studied Braille music, which was very useful in my studies of the classical repertoire."

His parents bought him a piano, on which he began nine years of classical studies, including four years as a music major at Florida State University in Tallahassee. The earmarks of success were soon detectable as he won a series of contests.

"In 1982 I entered a contest at the Jazz Educators' Convention in Chicago. Wynton was there with his group. I won the contest, but didn't get to perform with him; however, I did meet his father, Ellis Marsalis, who gave me Wynton's phone number."

The result was a friendship by telephone. "When I called him," he says, "Wynton was very friendly. He was most insistent about my being serious and dedicated. I really learned to admire and respect him, and I followed all his advice. We only actually met three times before I joined his group."

KIRK McKOY / L.A. Times

Marcus Roberts

Marsalis recalls one of those meetings: "Three months before my band broke up I met him, and I found his views and attitudes at least as cogent and impressive as his playing. When I asked him to replace Kenny Kirkland with me, he came to my apartment and I was amazed—he already knew every note of everything we played!

"I had listened to Wynton's records a great deal," says Roberts, "because in some of his work, like 'Black Codes From the Underground,' I heard music that was unlike anything I had known. Before that I had studied mainly Duke Ellington—I was fascinated by his level of elegance and sophistication—and Miles Davis and John Coltrane. During that period of learning Wynton's music I practiced from eight to 10 hours a day."

The Roberts debut album leaves no doubt that along with his respect for Ellington (reflected in Duke's "Single Petal of a Rose" and "In a Mellotone") as well as for Monk ("Blue Monk"), he has developed a compositional style of his own. His five originals show the broad span of his imagination, from the harmonically attractive "Maurella" to the deftly gliding "The Arrival" and the self-explanatory "Nothin' But the Blues."

Like Wynton and Branford Marsalis and others of their generation, Roberts successfully avoids allowing his respect for the past to mire him in the values of yesterday; as he points out, originality and fresh creativity can and should be linked to an understanding of tradition.

What he will contribute in the short term may be made even clearer when he goes to work on his next album for RCA Novus. "It's going to be the first volume of a two-part all-blues series," Roberts said. "I'm writing six compositions in six different keys, major or minor, and for the second volume I'll write six more in six other keys. You gotta deal with them keys."

Given the excitement that has been engendered by the success of his album, how long will it be before the inevitable decision to leave Marsalis permanently and strike out on his own?

"That's hard to answer. My philosophy says that I'll stay here with Wynton until I feel that my contribution to his legacy of music is complete. I have no way of knowing how long that will take, and I don't intend to rush into anything." □

Los Angeles Times

8/3/89

JAZZ REVIEW

KLON's Blue Note Celebration Has Its Share of Problems

By LEONARD FEATHER

Starting a little late (the promoters were no doubt waiting for a larger crowd that failed to show), the first of three concerts in KLON-FM's celebration of the Blue Note Records semicentennial got under way at the John Anson Ford Theatre on Sunday afternoon beneath a blazing sun.

Ralph Peterson, the drummer-composer whose quintet played the opening set, displayed an adventurous musicality in his writing, which leans to odd meters ("Monief" was in alternating bars of 5/8 and 7/8), tempos that slow down and speed up, and structures that are asymmetrical, as in the first piece, "Enemy Within." This was notable mainly for the piano solo by Geri Allen, whose power and sensitivity are the group's most valuable element.

The most accessible piece was a blues, "Bebopskerony," with fine work by the cornetist Graham Haynes (son of the drummer Roy Haynes) and saxophonist Greg Osby. Phil Bowler is an admirable bassist, but Peterson's explosive drumming rendered him inaudible much of the time.

The Blue Note All-Stars was composed of eight musicians who, somewhere along the way (in most cases decades ago), recorded for the label. They played a major and a minor blues, a somewhat ragged ballad medley in which the innovative impulses of trumpeter Charles Tolliver and trombonist Curtis Fuller seem to have been dulled by the heat, and a few bop standards to which pianist Walter Bishop Jr., guitarist Tal Farlow and alto saxophonist Lou Donaldson applied their veteran chops.

TODD ANDERSON

Lou Donaldson, left, James Moody at KLON-FM celebration of Blue Note's 50th.

James Moody broke it up with his "Moody's Mood for Love" vocal and was at his creative, pulsating peak on tenor sax.

The concert, in a half-full 1,300-seat theater, ground to a halt when Wayne Shorter's 5 p.m. set failed to start; his musicians could not be found. Because of a 6 p.m. curfew, his projected hourlong set was, predictably, shorter. At 5:25 he began playing in duo format with pianist Mitch Forman; at 5:30 the bassist and drummer, John Patitucci and Terri Lyne Carrington, were setting up on stage while Shorter's soprano wailed its way through "Stella by Starlight."

What there was of the Shorter Quartet had some valuable moments, particularly during his best-known piece, "Footprints," but it was too little and too late. One can only hope that the next two Sunday concerts, with a strong lineup of names, including Art Blakey, Bobby Hutcherson and Horace Silver, will be better attended and organized.

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Showing Plenty of Pizazz in New York

A look at the state of jazz after an incomparable week of performances

By LEONARD FEATHER

NEW YORK—It is impossible for any out-of-towner to spend a week in New York without drawing the conclusion that jazz in all its ever more diverse forms is thriving.

During the JVC festival that ended last Sunday, no taste was left unsatisfied. On the same evening that found Carnegie Hall packed for the Lionel Hampton-George Benson salute to Benny Goodman, Avery Fisher Hall was filled to capacity for the fusion offerings of Yellowjackets and Steps Ahead. There was not even any sense of competition: three nights later Ray Charles drew his loyal followers at Avery Fisher while Sarah Vaughan and Milt Jackson were attracting a bop-generation audience at Carnegie; meanwhile, a third venue, Alice Tully Hall, presented Geri Allen, Charlie Haden and other ultra-contemporaries in one of a series presented by the Knitting Factory, a downtown avant garde rendezvous.

Well, it may be argued, the festival comes but once a year; what happens during the other 51 weeks?

Plenty.

Consider this: Monday at Carnegie Hall, Duke Ellington's historic first Carnegie concert in 1943 will be re-created, with an ad hoc orchestra conducted by Maurice Peress. Two nights later the same house will present a revival of George Antheil's 1927 "Jazz Symphony," and on Friday it will re-stage the landmark Clef Club concert of 1912, reliving James Reese Europe's first-ever Carnegie concert of all black music by black musicians. Maybe it's not all exactly jazz, but it's part of the family.

Four nights later, the pianist/composer/impresario Dick Hyman will present, at the uptown YMCA, his annual festival—six nights of a ragtime, swing and mainstream. August promises still more delights: an all star celebration, Aug. 8 at Avery Fisher, of the indomitable Benny Carter's 82nd birthday; around that time Wynton Marsalis will be town for an Alice Tully Hall recital of the music of Jelly Roll Morton.

Photos by CAROL BERNSON

George Benson and Lionel Hampton, above, in an SRO tribute to Benny Goodman. Right, Marlena Shaw and Joe Williams in a duet at Carnegie Hall.

No other city can lay claim to a comparable sequence of ongoing major events. Nor is this simply a summer phenomenon; if the concerts subside, there is still the jazz nightclub scene, which, according to most witnesses, is no less healthy on a year round basis.

"The clubs are doing amazingly well," said the festival producer George Wein. "Part of the reason is that some of the big names have been willing to work clubs recently—even Miles Davis and Oscar Peterson. If this means raising the cover charge to $35 to pay the artists, it still works out."

Lew Tabackin, the tenor saxophonist and flute virtuoso, is a little less sanguine. "I think George is talking about the big rooms like the Blue Note, or long established places such as the Village Vanguard." Smaller neighborhood clubs such as Birdland (now at 105th and Broadway and unrelated to the famous Broadway room of the 1950s), and new rooms like Indigo Blues, are having a harder time retaining an audience.

It was at Indigo Blues that Tabackin, the main soloist in a superb orchestra led by his wife Toshiko Akiyoshi, was interviewed. This was one of three clubs that currently feature big bands on Monday nights, the others being Sweet Basil, where the late Gill Evans' orchestra is now led by his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, and the Village Vanguard, where the drummer Mel Lewis still holds the fort.

A healthy proportion of the clubs' business stems from patronage by French, English and of course Japanese fans, some of whom are curious enough to embark on a guided bus tour of Harlem, with the guide offering such wistful comments as "That's where Smalls Paradise used to be."

There has been among some critics a chorus of complaints that the jazz scene today relies too heavily on nostalgia, on tributes to deceased giants. One has only to consider the personnel of the recent festival to realize that this is at best a half truth.

What might be called the Wynton Marsalis Generation, mostly black musicians in their 20s, shows a respect for tradition but presses forward with fresh variations and all-encompassing concepts. These developments have left no doubt that acoustic music, far from reaching a dead end, has discovered a new beginning.

Repertory groups such as the American Jazz Orchestra, directed by John Lewis, have brought new life to old sounds that have proven timeless; an inspired performance of a masterpiece by Duke Ellington is no more grounded in nostalgia than a "revival" of a work by Stravinsky.

There is a cadre of young musicians who do indeed lean toward re-creations of past glories. Typical is Ken Peplowski, who handled the Benny Goodman parts with consummate finesse at the Goodman tribute concert. He is 31, doubles on tenor sax in a Ben Webster vein, and is finding widespread acceptance.

Loren Schoenberg, 30, who led the band at the Goodman tribute, is building a unique career as bandleader, tenor saxophonist and archivist; his orchestra seems equally adept playing old charts from the Goodman and Ellington libraries or delving into newer original material.

Schoenberg reacts with some asperity to critical comments that his band is all white. "It happens that most of the black musicians who are into this kind of music are older guys who can't or won't go on the road, whereas many of the people who have studied Fletcher Henderson and the rest of jazz history are younger white guys. Besides, would you ask Art Blakey why he has an all black band?" (Not the wisest of questions; two of Blakey's present sidemen are white.)

The racial situation is uneasy and at least partially polarized not only here but abroad. Schoenberg recalled working for the black arranger, Buck Clayton, in a band that happened to be all white. When this proved unacceptable to European bookers, Clayton had to integrate his personnel.

Though the Knitting Factory may produce a few trend setters, Wynton Marsalis is the only new artist to have exerted a profound influence in recent years; yet the critics are constantly on the alert for new discoveries.

One of the Knitting Factory artists, Cassandra Wilson, was referred to by a prominent critic as "the finest jazz singer to come along in a decade." Almost the identical comment has been made about Dianne Reeves, Diane Schuur and others, and in no case is the statement necessarily true.

There is, of course, no new Ella Fitzgerald or new Joe Williams, just as there will be no new John Coltrane or new Thelonious Monk. All we can be sure of is that somewhere, without warning, another new and potentially seminal talent will arise, and suddenly, despite all the blasts from the past and all the deadly serious critical disquisitions, jazz will be young and foolish again. □

Los Angeles

Jazz, L.A. Style

The July 9 Leonard Feather article, "Showing Plenty of Pizazz in New York," put into sharp focus the difference between N.Y. and L.A.

In New York, you get to see the top-name jazz artists in intimate indoor places such as Carnegie, Avery Fisher and Alice Tully Hall. Here, you get to see jazz in an 18,000-seat outdoor *ballpark* named the Hollywood Bowl.

ROGER REMICK
Studio City

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7/16 JAZZ

Releases Bracket Hubbard's Greatness

By LEONARD FEATHER

FREDDIE HUBBARD
"Minor Mishap." Black Lion BLCD 760122. ★★★★
"Times Are Changing." Blue Note 90905. ★★★

Here are a revealing pair of releases showing an artist first on the verge of greatness, and then several years past his peak.

"Minor Mishap," originally recorded under the name of the late trombonist Willie Wilson (he is the only soloist on the two ballad cuts), is a brisk hard-bop date, long unavailable and now including five unissued alternate takes. Hubbard, in 1961 a fast-rising youngster new to New York, was almost in the Clifford Brown class. He shares credit with Wilson, also Pepper Adams and Duke Pearson on baritone sax and piano.

The newly recorded "Times Are Changing" reminds us that despite his numerous well-received accomplishments, every few years trumpeter Hubbard decides that the straight-ahead route doesn't pay, and it is time to go where the money is. At times he seems subservient to the drum programming, the electronic percussion and other devices organized by Todd Cochran, who, here, is to Hubbard what Marcus Miller has become to Miles Davis. On "Was She Really There?" the main performer is not Hubbard but a pop singer, Phil Perry. The longest and best track is "Sabrosa," with Hubbard showing his flair for the dramatic and exotic.

JOE WILLIAMS
"In Good Company."
Verve 837 932 2. ★★★★

High on the long list of this album's virtues are Williams' consistently potent sound, the Bird-inspired backing by Supersax on "Just Friends," Marlena Shaw and Williams as a natural pair on the 16-bar blues "Baby You Got What It Takes," and the other guest vocalist, Shirley Horn, singing and playing piano on "Too Good to Be True." The other Horn duet, "Love Without Money," is an empty-suit lyric and melody; the other Shaw duet, "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby," is a dated novelty. Supersax reappears on "Embraceable You." The Williams rhythm section, particularly guitarist Henry Johnson, acquits itself creditably as always.

TUCK & PATTI
"Love Warriors."
Windham Hill Jazz WD-0116. ★★★½

Another well-diversified set by arguably the most economic hit-producing group in music today. The program takes in Braziliana ("Cantador"), Lennon-McCartney, Carlos Santana, Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Wonder and a couple of pop standards, one of which, Gershwin's famed "They Can't Take That Away From Me," is mistakenly credited on the review copy to composers Phillip and Carolyn Cross and a BMI publisher!

Patti sounds a bit out of breath on her original title tune. She has fun with the Charleston-era flavor of "Honey Pie," and contributes the Feelgood Song of the Month with her own "Hold Out, Hold Up and Hold On." Tuck's guitar solo on Santana's "Europa" is modestly effective. As in their previous al-

DAVID BECKER / L.A. Times

Freddie Hubbard with the old and the new.

conservative on all but the free, anything-goes final cut. In fact, at times he suggests a hesitant version of the late '50s Miles Davis. His colleagues, all fellow Ornette Coleman alumni, are bassist Charlie Haden, whose solo highlights "When Will the Blues Leave?," the Texas tenor saxophonist James Clay, who manages to find a new angle on "Body and Soul," and the drummer Billy Higgins, who has "Passing" to himself.

NEW ORLEANS BRASS BANDS
"Down Yonder." Rounder 2062. ★½

Of the four bands presented here, the Dirty Dozen Brass Band is the most in tune and listenable. Regarding the rest, it's mainly a question of whether one has been to New Orleans and wants to relive the experience. The repertoire? "Auld Lang Syne," "The Saints," "The Flintstones," even "The Star Spangled Banner." So these parade people got themselves a record date; more power to them.

GIL EVANS
"Where Flamingos Fly." A&M CD 0831. ★★½

It is a rarity for an artist to explain, in his own notes, what is amiss on a record. The late Gil Evans did so with unsparing eloquence for these 1971 sessions. One cut, with vocals by Flora Purim and Airto, was overdubbed, but "it wasn't in their key, so they had to fake it. . . . The melody is not as strong as it could be. . . . There was a lot taken out, in chunks. . . . There are two fierce splices. . . . The last four bars of the baritone solo is a different baritone player. . . . I don't like the sound when they come in at the last vocal; that sound is terrible. The band is like a trumpet player playing out in the street." And so on. Evans says he likes the record anyway, but his negatives are justified. The jumping of textures, the rock and funk elements, the elongated solos, leave little room for the subtle graces that marked his halcyon years. □

— Colorado Conference on World Affairs —

By LEONARD FEATHER

The 42nd annual Conference on World Affairs is not a musical event; however, its object is to bring together about 100 experts from around the world on every conceivable subject. Jazz has been given generous space in recent years, thanks to the presence on the committee of Elizabeth Weems, an architect and longtime fan whose close friend, the tenor virtuoso Spike Robinson, assembles a concert that brings together local musicians and visiting jazzmen; the latter are here mainly to take part in panel discussions.

This was my third year as an invitee, as it was for Dave and Don Grusin. Another returnee was Frederick C. Tillis, director of the Fine Arts Center and of the Afro-American Music Program at the University of Massachusetts. Though he is virtually unknown as a jazzman, this distinguished professor provided a concert highlight with his unaccompanied soprano sax solo on *Nature Boy*.

Baritone saxophonist Nick Brignola, a first-timer at the conference, was a main speaker at "American Art Forms and the Public Perception," along with Gene Lees and Tillis (I missed this, being tied up with "The New Racism"). Brignola, Lees, Ebert and Tillis were panelists on "Is Criticism in the Arts Useless?" which produced the predictable yes-and-then-again-no responses.

Lees, Tillis and I shared the conversation on "Funding in the Arts," all of us agreeing that NEA and other grants are given capriciously and that the American system is badly in need of overhauling.

Speaking on "Will Jazz Survive the Record Business?" Dave Grusin said: "I don't know how long the independent labels can survive. With the giants swallowing up small companies right and left, one day there may be only two companies, CBS and Warner Bros.—and we'll have to be thankful there are two, not one." There was general agreement that the majors, aside from endless reissues (which cost them almost nothing to put out), are

Bringing Together the Experts

doing very little for jazz. However, as I pointed out, jazz *preceded* the record business by a decade or two, and may well outlive it.

A fascinating matinee, held in a large hall in the music building, was called "Tonal Toys: Playing in the Digital Sandbox." Dave G. stood onstage surrounded by a ton of Roland D 50s, Yamaha DX 7s, Korg M 1s, Kawai Q 80 Sequencers and what not, while he and Don G. and Rob Mullins tried to explain the (to us) mystifying world of synthesized sound.

The surprise of this session was a brilliant unaccompanied solo on acoustic piano by Mullins. Not yet 32, educated at the U. of North Colorado, he settled in Los Angeles two years ago and has been in great demand for studio keyboard work. He studied and played with Oliver Nelson during his teens, has gigged with Dianne Reeves, and will tour Japan in September with Diane Schuur. He has a straight-ahead jazz album due out soon on Nova.

Nick Brignola also provided some marvelously stimulating moments; at the main jazz concert he offered evidence that he may be the premier living jazz baritone improvisor. He was able, too, to show a fast mind and articulate manner on the various panels to which he was assigned.

For the musicians who take part — along with the politicians, scientists, authors, engineers, and poets — the Colorado Conference is a uniquely stimulating event. It proves, among other things, that jazz is just as valid an item for the agenda of such a diverse gathering as any other American cultural or social subject. ■

JAZZ REVIEW 7/27

Triple Treat Takes a Swing

By LEONARD FEATHER

A trio billed as Triple Treat, whose members get together for a couple of months each year, blew into town Tuesday to begin a five-day run at Catalina Bar & Grill.

Triple Treat consists of pianist Monty Alexander, bassist Ray Brown and guitarist Herb Ellis. The latter pair might be counted as a single unit. Because they have been working together off and on since 1953, it has been said of them that they play as if joined at the very hip. Alexander has worked with them both frequently over the past 15 years.

At times, particularly when they played a tear-'em-up standard like "Seven Come Eleven," this implacably swinging group strongly suggested the early Oscar Peterson Trio of which Ellis and Brown were members for five years. However, Alexander, who acknowledges Peterson as a major influence, still shows traces of his Jamaican heritage.

When these men play old songs, they avoid the obvious, leaning to half-forgotten items like "To Each His Own," "In the Wee Small Hours," even a high-flying treatment of the "Flintstones" theme. Nat King Cole, an early Alexander idol, was represented by "I Can't See for Lookin'."

Ellis, a Texan with the blues in his blood, brings a funk-filled vitality to every tempo; after a particularly fiery solo, he may simply tap the guitar, bongo style, to back up a piano solo. Ray Brown brought his 200-proof strength and clarity to rhythm and solo passages alike. Highlights of the set were a 16-bar blues of his own, and Alexander's "Think Twice," an engaging original based on the chords of "Love for Sale."

It is notable that when this group plays the blues, or anything that is blues related, it is always an urban, uptown, upscale blues feeling that reflects the sophistication of their backgrounds and the subtlety of their interaction.

Triple Treat's high level of creative artistry is truly among the seven wonders of today's jazz world. The trio closes Saturday.

LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

This month's musician: Jane Ira Bloom

Since the tentative experiments in her earliest recordings, more than a decade ago, Jane Ira Bloom has moved into a more adventurous realm of spirited sound on the brink of the avant garde, complete with electronic effects. Last year, she was commissioned to compose some works for NASA after watching the Discovery launch. The following interview took place during her most recent engagement at Catalina's in Hollywood.

1. **DAVID LIEBMAN,** *Lady Friends* (from *The Energy of the Chance*, Heads Up).

JIB: That's exciting. You're playing something for me I enjoyed listening to. The first thing that caught my ear was the beautiful use of the orchestration of the melody—between the saxophone, trumpet, tenor, voice—I thought that was a beautiful way to express a melody.

LF: Do you have any thoughts on who it was?

JIB: I have thoughts, but I don't think I feel sure enough to say for sure. I know the piece gave me goose-bumps—I really enjoyed listening to it. I don't really rate things.

LF: I'll tell you who it was: it was David Liebman.

JIB: Oh, how wonderful. I sensed a real thoughtful construction about what was going on with the whole piece.

2. **WAYNE SHORTER,** *Joy Ryder*, (from *Joy Ryder*, CBS).

JIB: My first thought has to do with the production of the sound of this piece. There's an overwhelming sense of a very high treble sound and shimmering sound, not only the instrumentation but the kinds of patches that were chosen and the kind of sound quality, the drumming. I had mixed thoughts about it, 'cause on the one hand it's very new and different to listen to, and the experience I've had is that the soprano sax, being in general such a treble instrument if it is going to be one of the main solo instruments, seems to benefit a lot from being around warmer sounds. I find in this particular cut that the saxophone is much surrounded by treble timbres that conflicted in my ear with what I was hearing from the soprano sax, so that's my timbral critique, I guess.

LF: What about your compositional critique?

JIB: Well, everything is very clean and very well-thought out and well-composed, but it didn't compel me. It was either the rhythm, or perhaps how the soloist decided to play with that rhythm. In a large context of doing a lot of playing over rhythmic vamps, improvisers can think about a lot of things. Sometimes they can think of themselves as floating on top of it and other times rhythmic vamps can be so compelling that it can make you want to provide the same kind of rhythmic energy in your own soloing. That vamp felt kinda good, and I might have chosen to do something like that.

LF: And you don't think this person did?

JIB: Well, it was a different concept of floating on top of it, which is a choice, but it didn't compel me.

LF: Would you rate it fair?

JIB: I don't like to rate things!

LF: That was Wayne Shorter's newest, with Terri Lyne Carrington on drums and Patrice Rushen on piano. Do you like his work?

JIB: Yes, I like him very much as a composer. I guess the thing I find hard to embrace is the overwhelming timbre—the presence of this sound. And I'm not one to disagree with the use of synthesizers or new instruments, but I think a lot of careful thought has to go into what whose patches are, and also what kind of sound you're getting from the overall quality of the music. I don't think this recording did justice to his sound.

3. **STEVE LACY/DON CHERRY,** *Evidence* from the album *Evidence* on Prestige; Lacy on soprano sax; Don Cherry, trumpet; Carl Brown, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

JIB: Well, I'm happy to say that this album is a regular in my own collection—it's nice to hear Steve Lacy and Don Cherry. I suppose the most important idea that comes to me about why I enjoy listening to this is that one

Jane Ira Bloom

of the things I enjoy most about improvisers is hearing the process of creation going on as they improvise. It's like I can *see* it! I can almost see their minds working, and it's just so actively spontaneous. For me, those are some of the most exciting times.

LF: Do you know the tune or the rhythm section?

JIB: Not offhand.

LF: (Tells her).

JIB: Lots of people ask me a lot about my experience listening to him because, of course, they associate the soprano saxophone with Steve's work. I have to admit that I wasn't aware of the soprano saxophone tradition as people may think even in my formative years in high school; there I was preoccupied with other players. But in all honesty, I didn't listen to many soprano saxophone players, and since I've known him and come to love him, yeah, I enjoy his music, but maybe that explains the difference in our sounds and why mine is different; it's because the influences did come from different places other than listening to soprano saxophone players.

4. **ZOOT SIMS,** *The Very Thought of You*, from the album *The Innocent Years*, Sims on straight soprano sax; Pablo.

JIB: Well, the first thing that comes to mind is I guess I'd be willing to put money that it was a curved soprano, just because of the warmth and the forwardness of the sound. And that round quality that makes me feel like it's an alto, but higher pitched. The other strong thought that comes is just fluidity of phrasing, how nice it is to hear that, taking its time, and finding its direction.

LF: Did you know the tune?

JIB: *The Very Thought of You.* The vibrato is a characteristic of the instrument, that wider vibrato is something that's not really in my listening experience. I think it's more common to generations in front of me.

LF: Did you like the piano?

JIB: I wasn't listening strongly for the piano.

LF: The reason I played this is it's one of the very few records on which Zoot Sims plays soprano, and I thought I might have accidentally have tipped you off because I played a few bars of tenor on the other side... It's Richard Wyands on piano, Frank Tate, bass, and Akira Tana on drums, and it was recorded in 1982.

JIB: I think I heard Zoot Sims play soprano a long time ago in New Haven at the Holiday Inn.

LF: You never thought that it might be a tenor player doubling?

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Leonard Feather's Before and After with Jane Ira Bloom

II ▶

JIB: I really didn't put my thoughts on that. Had you told me to watch for that, I might have listened more carefully. In the back of my mind I was thinking of the Stan Getz-like fluid phrasing. . .and I suppose that was close. Five Stars.

5. **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET,** *One/Waltz/Time*, (from *Live At Brooklyn Academy of Music*, Black Saint).
JIB: Saxophone Quartet music. . .two altos . . .usual setup is soprano, alto and tenor and baritone. I don't know what it is, something about the timbre of. . .having had a lot of listening experience to classical as well as sax section listening, I've got a problem of sonority of listening to two altos, a tenor and a bari. I wonder if a string quartet player would tell you the same thing. . .there's a certain resonance that's missing for me. Maybe it's also because I'm a soprano player, and I'm missing the top. I don't know how to put my finger on it.
LF: Do you know this group?
JIB: I'm sorry, I don't.
LF: Did you notice the absence of a rhythm section?
JIB: Oh, sure; I relate to it as I'm listening to a saxophone quartet. For me that kind of listening is informed by both listening to sax sections from big bands, and maybe from more classically-oriented French saxophone quartet playing.
LF: It's the World Saxophone Quartet.
JIB: Oh, a couple of the guys play soprano. . .

6. **JOHN COLTRANE,** *The Invisible*, (from *The Avant-Garde*, Atlantic).
JIB: I guess that must be a cut from the Coltrane and Don Cherry album. Just give me the first letter. . .it's driving me crazy. . .I play this tune all the time. . .I'm nervous, I can't think of the title.
LF: It's one word. . .
JIB: Yes, and it's two syllables. I don't have this in my collection, but I've heard it; it's John Coltrane and Don Cherry.
LF: And who else?
JIB: I'm less knowledgeable about the rhythm section. Anyway, I enjoyed listening to it. It's one of the harder heads that Ornette wrote during the earlier part of his writing style. It's an extremely difficult tune to play. And the players seem to navigate in a real beautiful way, a combination of keeping track of the harmonic pulls of the piece, because they're there, and drifting around them in a slightly freer way, which to me is kind of interesting. And it's a hard thing to do. I only say that from having tried to play this tune a lot. If I had my horn, I'd play it to you. . .(she vocalizes the notes of the tune).
LF: It's called *The Invisible*.
JIB: AAAGGGHHH. . .I know!
LF: And it's Percy Heath on bass, Ed Blackwell on drums. Recorded in 1966. How old were you when Coltrane died?
JIB: I was born in '55. . .I was about 11 or 12 when he died, and I learned about him through his records. I remember, going to school, *Love Supreme* and *Ascension* were very important albums.

7. **SIDNEY BECHET,** *The Mooche* (from *The Blue Bechet*, RCA Victor).
LF: Have you heard that before?
JIB: Yes, I have. Is it *Creole Love Song*?
LF: It's from that era; it's by Ellington. . .
JIB: Well, the saxophone was working in concert with the section. There are very few recordings of Johnny Hodges playing soprano. . .trying to figure out who I was listening to.
LF: That's the era it sounds like?
JIB: Early, early, early Ellington. I'm afraid I'm not familiar with the saxophonists supreme before Johnny Hodges. I suppose my enjoyment of this music is more curiosity than an intuitive, heartfelt placement in this musical sound. I'm aware of how important it was to the beginning of where this music came from. But because that was never really in my experience, it's something I learned about, as opposed to something I felt when I grew up. So perhaps my reaction to it isn't as heartfelt as someone who grew up with it. But. . .yeah, they're in tune!
LF: That was a tune of Duke's called *The Mooche*, and it was Sidney Bechet on soprano, with a small group, recorded n 1940.
JIB: He wasn't particularly featured on that piece.
LF: Not really, but enough so you could tell. That wide vibrato. You didn't comment on that.
JIB: Well, sure that was there, to me, that's a part of the way I associate with that early part of the music. You know, if you're talking tone, you know I've taken a different tack.

8. **PAUL HORN.** *Prisms* (from *Jupiter 8*, Golden Flute).
JIB: My first thought was the soprano player certainly played the instrument well, and if I could sum it up quickly, as Charlie Haden would say, I don't feel close to this music. That's all I can say.
LF: In terms of conception?
JIB: And feeling. But I think my ears are fatigued, and so is my mind. I could take guesses, but. . .
LF: This is somebody you wouldn't expect to be playing soprano. It's Paul Horn. You know of him?
JIB: Sure, I know of the old Taj Mahal. . .But this doesn't compel me to want to keep listening. ■

JAZZ REVIEW

Words, Music at Society Brunch

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Los Angeles Jazz Society offered a double-header of sorts Sunday, at the weekly brunch in the Hollywood Holiday Inn: words (provided by the society, announcing this year's award winners) and music (by the Cunninghams and the Marty Harris Trio).

Saxophonist Bob Cooper, this year's main honoree, was on hand, as was Vi Redd, the educator, saxophonist and singer, who received the society's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Joel Leach of Cal State Northridge was named Educator of the Year. One of his students, 25-year-old guitarist Steve Gregory, received the Shelly Manne Memorial New Talent Award. Southland-based Horace Silver was selected as this year's composer/arranger.

The recipients will be honored at a Sept. 10 awards dinner and tribute at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Information: (213) 469-6800.

Don and Alicia Cunningham, the vocal duo, are a tall, striking couple who leaned toward the traditional in their choice of material. Alternating between lyrics and scat versions, they tackled Ellington, Basie, Harry (Sweets) Edison (who was in the room when they sang their version of his celebrated blues "Centerpiece"), and Charlie Parker, represented in vocalese treatments of "Yardbird Suite" and "Confirmation." Their version of "Lush Life" was a uniquely moving treatment of the 50-year-old Billy Strayhorn masterpiece.

Don Cunningham, who doubles on alto sax now and then, also got into a high-spirited carnival groove playing congas on "Tristeza."

Pianist Marty Harris led a sympathetic accompanying unit; Harris could hardly be blamed for the fact that the piano was sorely in need of tuning. John Leitham, the southpaw bassist, was his usual supple, swinging self; Mel Lee on drums completed the backup. Trumpeter Al Aarons added his horn for a couple of numbers.

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Pianist Marcus Roberts Makes His Local Debut

On a temporary leave of absence from the Wynton Marsalis Quintet, the widely praised 25-year-old pianist Marcus Roberts made his local debut as a leader Thursday at the Vine Street Bar & Grill, heading his own acoustic quintet.

Like Marsalis, Roberts has elected to pattern himself along the lines of the 1960s hard-bop groups, using mostly conventional instrumentation and material, with trumpet, saxophone, bass and drums for company.

If Roberts has not yet found a strongly individual route to follow, he compensates through his often ingenious incorporation of a variety of early keyboard styles.

Three pervasive elements of the set were the blues, John Coltrane and Thelonious Monk. Of the six tunes, four had a blues basis, beginning with Roberts' own "Country by Choice," continuing with Monk's "Blue Bolivar Blues" and ending with the quirky "Raise Four." A Todd Williams original entitled "For Coltrane" (also a blues) showcased well-crafted soprano and tenor sax solos by Herbert Harris III, whose other feature, "I Wish I Knew," is a 1945 pop song best known through Coltrane's recording.

Completing the group were the capable Scotty Barnhart on trumpet, and two young musicians from St. Louis, Maurice Carnes on drums and Chris Thomas on bass. The latter pair had a little trouble establishing the steady, sympathetic pulse that could have given the rhythm section a fuller measure of cohesion.

Surprisingly, only the opening "Country by Choice" was excerpted from Roberts' successful debut album. He would be well-advised to use more items from that diversified collection. We bow to no one in our admiration for the blues, but isn't four of six a trifle excessive?

Roberts closes Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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L.A. Times July 23

The Latest Word From the French

By LEONARD FEATHER

PARIS—The other day, at the Ministry of Culture, a group of American musicians gathered to be honored by the Department of Arts and Letters for their services to music over the years. Individual medals went to Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Stan Getz, Phil Woods, Jackie McLean, Hank Jones, Milt Jackson, Percy Heath and singer Billy Eckstine. That evening all the instrumentalists took part in a widely praised concert in the Grande Halle at the suburb of La Villette.

Honors for U.S. jazz musicians, first unofficially and later on a more formal level, have been a tradition in France since the 1930s. Those were the days when visitors from the States, invariably accorded more respect in Europe than on home turf, joined forces with the best France had to offer. In a series of sessions for the French company Swing Records (one of the world's first jazz labels), Benny Carter and Coleman Hawkins shared solos and souls with Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli in a Paris studio, creating classic performances that have been reissued time and again.

Today in Paris, the scene is vastly different. Most of the American jazzmen in town have already made their names back home; jazz is no longer a private, esoteric preserve but a high-priced commodity.

The bicentennial celebration of the French Revolution seemed to have very little impact on the jazz community, and much of that was negative. "I'm getting out of town just in time," said Mike Zwerin as he cleaned up his apartment here before taking off for a jazz-free vacation in Yugoslavia. The influx of tourists and consequent traffic jams sent many Parisians fleeing.

Zwerin is one of a kind: The only American jazz artist in Europe who makes his living primarily as a journalist. New York-born, he earned early success as a trombonist, playing with Miles Davis' "Birth of the Cool" band before it began its recording career. By 1960 he was leading a triple life: Businessman (he was president of the Capitol Steel Co.), musician (with Claude Thornhill and Maynard Ferguson), and writer for the Village Voice. After touring the U.S.S.R. in 1966 with Earl Hines, he settled in Paris, where he has been a regular, witty and respected columnist for the International Herald Tribune. Stateside readers can find him in Spin magazine.

"I'm still playing too," he added. "In fact, June was a good month; I worked half a dozen gigs, and most of them were in small clubs where all we had to do was remember the changes to songs like 'I'll Remember April' and 'All the Things You Are'—no rehearsal needed. There's still a fair amount of that kind of work around. But my best assignment recently has been writing a piece, for the German edition of Esquire, about this fabulous German trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff."

Stephane Grappelli

Michel Petrucciani

Asked about the current club and concert scene in town, Zwerin said: "There's plenty going on, but I can't take you to hear anything of consequence that you haven't caught in New York or L.A. I mean, why come to Paris to listen to Miles Davis?"

True, though for the typical French fan these are exciting times. A weeklong festival sponsored by a beer company got under way 10 days before the bicentennial, at the Tuileries. The line up included Chick Corea, Michael Franks, Michel Camilo, Stanley Clarke with George Duke, Cab Calloway, the Yellowjackets and Lionel Hampton. (Ironically, while Hampton made his Tuileries appearance, another big band, led by the French pianist and composer Claude Bolling, was on the bandstand at Le Club Lionel Hampton, in the Meridien Hotel.)

One of the most popular jazz rooms here is the New Morning. A recent week's schedule began with a night by the McCoy Tyner Trio, followed by Eddie Harris, Joe Williams, Astrud Gilberto and Stanley Jordan for a night each—a sequence most American clubs might envy. Around the same time there were concerts at the Grand Rex by Michael Brecker and Larry Carlton among others.

Most of the French jazzmen are spread far and wide. France's most famous living jazz artist, the octogenarian violinist Stephane Grappelli, had left before my arrival, to take part in a *jour de gloire* celebration in Washington. (While he was headed for the States, the soprano Jessye Norman was en route to Paris for the Bastille Day extravaganza, following President Mitterrand's speech with her noble version of "La Marseillaise." It seemed like a fair enough exchange.)

Only two Frenchmen have earned any true measure of jazz distinction during the 1980s. They are the diminutive pianist Michel Petrucciani and the Gypsy guitarist Bireli Lagrene, who emerged a few years ago amid critical plaudits, hailed as a sort of reincarnated Reinhardt. Both men are now well enough established to spend much of their time on the international concert and festival circuit.

Frank Tenot, who helped launch Jazz magazine 35 years ago and is now its owner, summed up the impressive domestic situation: "This summer there are at least 60 jazz festivals all over France. We've had the Grande Parade du Jazz at Nice, which has been going on annually since 1974—an open-air affair at the Jardins des Arenes de Cimiez. This week they have so many big names that one wonders whether anyone is left to play the jobs in America."

Talking to French critics, musicians and fans, you get the feeling that they have a proprietary, if vicarious, interest in jazz, having given it serious attention since 1930, when a magazine called Jazz Tango Dancing offered regular monthly reviews of U.S. records, several years before any ongoing coverage appeared in an American publication. In 1934 the magazine Jazz Hot began publication (it's still around, though the founder, Charles Delaunay, died a couple of years ago); a gathering of cognoscenti was organized, known as the Hot Club of France, and the quintet named after the club, with Grappelli and Reinhardt as the world's first non-American jazz virtuosos, soon achieved global renown.

"Le Jazz Hot," Hugues Panassie's book, was the first authentic and scholarly work of its kind and was duly translated into English. The various writings and promotions of Panassie and Delauney ultimately enjoyed a worldwide impact.

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Despite these developments, France over the decades has produced fewer seminal jazz artists than Japan or England. On the level of the printed word, however, the French continue to maintain their lead. This has become obvious yet again with the publication of "Dictionnaire du Jazz," co-edited by Philippe Carles, best known as the editor of Jazz magazine.

"It took two or three years to put the book together," said Carles, "and we had 54 writers contributing the biographies. I think we included a lot of useful information."

That is an understatement. It is fascinating to compare the "Dictionnaire" with another recent work, the "Grove Dictionary of Jazz," which appeared a few months ago in England and the United States. The Grove work contains a great deal of valuable information, but its price ($295) is prohibitive and its errors of omission are appalling. American critics such as Gene Lees, editor of the Jazzletter, termed it "a disaster" and listed 94 important musicians who were omitted from Grove.

Whether one looks for information about blues pioneers such as T-Bone Walker, major jazz/pop artists like Peggy Lee, figures of the 1980s including Jane Ira Bloom, or the critic/musicians Mike Zwerin and Don Heckman, one finds none of them in Grove, yet all, along with many others similarly missing, can be looked up in the "Dictionnaire," which seems to have crammed as much useful material into its succinct 1,200-page paperback edition as Grove did in its bulky hard-cover two-volume set.

Since names and dates and song titles require no translation, the "Dictionnaire" can be helpful even if one's knowledge of French is limited. It can be obtained for $20 from the publisher, Robert Laffont, 31 Rue Falguierre, 75015, Paris.

It's a supreme irony. Almost 55 years after Hugues Panassie launched the first valuable chapter in the literature of our American art form, the French once again seem to be showing us all how to document the music in significant words. □

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L.A. Times 7/30/.89 (syndicated)

2 Expatriates Do It Their Way in Britain

By LEONARD FEATHER

LONDON—*Expatriate* is a confusing word, carrying as it does overtones of renounced allegiance to one's native land. According to Webster's, however, it can simply refer to anyone who lives in a foreign country, no matter what the reason.

The other evening two distinguished expatriates could be found—one onstage, the other in the audience—at Pizza on the Park, one of this city's more attractive rooms, where the quality of music and pizzas alike is usually of a high order.

Marion Montgomery, currently winding up a three-week run here, was on the verge of American success when she left the United States. Born in Natchez, Miss., she lived in Southern California for a few years, recording for Capitol with such musicians as Dick Hyman and Kenny Burrell, and earning encomiastic reviews. ("She is dynamite," said Down Beat.)

American fame did not ensue, mainly because Montgomery met and fell in love with an Englishman, the composer and pianist Laurie Holloway, and settled down to a domestic life in England. Now the mother of a grown daughter, she is back on the British scene, working sometimes with her husband, but currently with the American pianist and singer Richard Rodney Bennett, who occasionally flies over to team with her.

Her mixture of pop, jazz and cabaret, with Bennett joining in for a few vocal duets, is so engaging that one wonders how her life and career might have evolved had it not been for that chance encounter more than 20 years ago.

A vastly different case is that of the woman who sat in the audience. Adelaide Hall has at least two claims to fame: She has been singing professionally longer than anyone else now living (her famous recording of "Creole Love Call" with Duke Ellington's orchestra was recorded in October 1927, just after her 23rd birthday); and she was responsible for bringing out of obscurity a man who was arguably our greatest jazz instrumentalist, Art Tatum.

Still a striking woman and still active at 84, Hall explained how the Ellington connection came about:

"I was touring the RKO theater circuit, closing the first half of the show, and Duke's band was opening the second half. One night, standing backstage, I heard him playing "Creole Love Call" and began humming to fill in those spaces in the melody. Duke heard me and after the show said: 'Hey, I like that! Let's keep it in!' A few days later he had me in the recording studio, singing that tune and another wordless vocal on 'Blues I Love to Sing.'"

Marion Montgomery moved to Britain after marriage.

Adelaide Hall at age 84: "I never stopped working."

Though she never joined the orchestra, Hall's name has been associated with the Duke's ever since. She has appeared in Ellington tribute concerts over the decades, but had an independent career that included visits to London and Paris with the show "Blackbirds of 1928."

In 1932 she was working in Cleveland when word reached her about an extraordinary pianist in Toledo. "At that time I was using two pianists to back me. I sent for this young fellow, Art Tatum, and after listening to him I asked if he'd like to travel with us.

"He joined me and my other pianist, Joe Turner, and the two of them recorded a couple of songs with me in New York; the date was August 10, 1932. Of course, Art soon went out on his own, and the rest is history."

During the 1930s Hall's international career flourished. She married Bert Hicks, worked for a while in Paris with the bands of Willie Lewis and Ray Ventura, and then, in 1938, settled in London, her home base ever since. She has long been a British citizen.

In Hall's case, expatriation was due partially to work opportunities, but as had been the case with countless black Americans ever since Josephine Baker abandoned the States in 1924, the immense difference in social attitudes, and the almost total absence of overt racism in most European countries, had to play a part in bringing her the security she sought. It was not hard to give up the black traumas of 1930s America for the green pastures of England and the Continent.

"I never stopped working. I recorded with Fats Waller playing the organ when he came here in 1938. I sang with some of the English bands—Sid Lipton, Joe Loss—and I had my own club in London for a while."

Her husband died in 1962. Hall remained active, returning to the United States now and then for visits. "George Wein brought me over a couple of years ago for some concerts, and I went to New York in '83 to celebrate Eubie Blake's 100th birthday. But I'm still happy here in London, and this is where I'm going to stay."

When Ellington died in 1974, Hall sang at a memorial service in the church of St. Martin's in the Fields. Her gentle, high-pitched voice was heard again only months ago when the American saxophonist Bob Wilber, now an English resident, staged an Ellington tribute concert.

Last April Adelaide Hall was the centerpiece for a documentary TV concert filmed at a studio in Hammersmith. Entitled "Sophisticated Lady," it features as guest artist another great expatriate, one who outranks even Hall in age, the saxophonist Benny Waters, long a Paris resident, who has lived for almost 40 years in Paris. He was born in Brighton, Md., on Jan. 23, 1902. □

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JAZZ REVIEW

Seven Trombones at Alfonse's

By LEONARD FEATHER

Alfonse's in Toluca Lake became Trombone City when the bandstand was given over to an 11-man ensemble by that name. Dave Wells, a vastly underrated trombonist and arranger long active on the local scene, has done the impossible. How can an orchestra sustain any level of interest when it consists of nothing but seven trombones and a rhythm section?

Wells has found several solutions: Write for the horns as if they were two or three different sections; use two bass trombones to provide a broader tonal span; hire soloists who lend their personal touch; bring the back-up members—piano, guitar, bass, drums—in and out in every conceivable permutation.

These devices produced results Monday night that were as stirring on the up-tempo works—such as Wells' "Goin' All Out"—as they were original and ingenious on the ballads. An arrangement of "Here's That Rainy Day," opening with a gentle guitar solo by Joe Jewel, moved into a tricky passage that found Wells' rich seven-pile carpet of sound treading fearlessly through bars of 3/4 and 4/4.

Most of the trombonists, aside from their impeccable teamwork, are first-rate soloists, particularly Wells himself and Louis Bonilla, who delivered a long and phenomenal outburst in Wells' arrangement of a Bob Florence tune, "Carmelo's by the Freeway."

An original by the band's fleet pianist, Paul Moer, oddly entitled "Song of the Centzontle," provided a relaxed Latin beat for solos by Alex Iles and Roy Wiegand.

Wells has long maintained a library for this band (including a five-movement, 40-minute suite), but this is his first public appearance with the group in five years. Judging by the results Monday, and the audience reaction, he would be wise to keep it together and find a record deal.

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JAZZ

Milt Jackson: a top talent at top of his form.

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JAZZ REVIEW

Standards, Blues by Jackson Quartet

Milt Jackson continues to divide his time contentedly between two groups with the same initials but contrasting styles, the Modern Jazz Quartet and the Milt Jackson Quartet. The latter opened Tuesday at Catalina Bar and Grill for a two-week run (off Monday, closing Aug. 13).

The principal difference between the vibraphonist's own group and the quartet led by John Lewis remains what it has always been: Jackson as a leader allows for a loose, free-spirited quality, with a minimum of preparation, and a reliance mainly on standard tunes and blues.

These are not differences of quality but simply of character. Cedar Walton's piano tends toward density and chordal complexity where Lewis, in solos and accompaniment alike, is more understated. In "Every Time We Say Goodbye," Walton added harmonic nuances that Cole Porter, for all the song's inherent beauty, did not provide. Walton also contributed an attractive original, "The Holy Land."

Jackson's use of grace notes, his slow vibrato speed and his affinity for the blues were all in eloquent evidence. On Randy Weston's "Hi Fly" he engaged in a mutually inspiring series of four bar exchanges with the bassist John Clayton, who played bowed solos with his customary elan. The Charlie Parker blues "Au Privave" involved a similar sequence of trades with drummer Billy Higgins.

Whatever the setting, Milt Jackson remains what he has been since the dawn of the be-bop era, the preeminent artist in an instrumental category that has produced very few geniuses. To claim that he is playing better than ever would be to imply, unfairly, that there was room for improvement.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JOSEPH GARCIA

Milt Jackson: A top talent since the dawn of the be-bop era.

"Satchmo," an "American Masters" program, examines the life and times of Louis Armstrong.

TV REVIEW

'Satchmo' Is Long Overdue Tribute to Beloved Trumpeter

By LEONARD FEATHER

At long last, 18 years after his death, the life and times and gifts of Louis Armstrong have been intelligently recorded. "Satchmo," the 90-minute "American Masters" program to be seen tonight at 9 on Channels 28 and 15, leaves no aspect of his personality unexamined.

Even his real birth date (Aug. 4, 1901, not July 4, 1900, as he had always claimed) is documented by the church record. Armstrong's childhood in New Orleans, his early years with King Oliver and Earl Hines, could not be shown because there is no live footage of him from that time, but the use of file shots, of contemporaries reminiscing about him and the script by Gary Giddins (who also co-directed) cover the period in riveting detail.

The stereotyping to which he was subjected is illustrated, perhaps to excess; it is enough to hear him dealing with the lyrics of "Shine" and "Sleepy Time Down South" without having to watch a degrading caricature of him in the "You Rascal You" animation.

Nevertheless, the overall quality and quantity of the film clips are magnificent. Everything is there, from a big-band movie in Copenhagen in 1933, through the All Stars in the 1950s and '60s, and memorable duets with Jack Teagarden ("Rockin' Chair"), Dizzy Gillespie, Bing Crosby, Barbra Streisand and Billie Holiday.

Wynton Marsalis, who was just 9 when Armstrong died, tries to pontificate, but the warmest and most valuable words come from those who really knew and loved him: Milt Hinton, Arvell Shaw, Bud Freeman, record producer Milt Gabler and, most frequently and most effectively, Tony Bennett, who tells a hilarious anecdote about Satchmo at Buckingham Palace, and

Please see 'SATCHMO,' Page 5

'SATCHMO'

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Continued from Page 1

who analyzes his impact and significance as a world figure.

Armstrong's racial sensitivity is dealt with in welcome detail. Critics who have called him an Uncle Tom (among them some ill-informed young radicals) need to be reminded of his role as a spokesman, as the man who attacked President Eisenhower's reluctant stand on civil rights, who refused to tour the Soviet Union for the State Department because of the way his people had been treated. Armstrong was a pioneer for blacks in many hidden, subtle ways; the comedy and clowning, a product of his time, join with his artistry to earn him and his country friends by the tens of millions.

Only a few passages are painful: The appearance of a burned-out Dexter Gordon, telling a pointless joke about Armstrong's love of pot, is pathetic and should have been dropped. But there is so much detail here—even home movies taken during a party at Satchmo's Long Island home—that it seems churlish to quibble. That Armstrong was one of this century's most influential and most durable figures, as trumpeter, singer, entertainer and good-will ambassador, is brought out with loving conviction.

"Satchmo," produced by Toby Byron, will play a belated and valuable part in reaffirming his miraculous contribution.

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JAZZ

Sunny Sue Raney Sings Mancini

By LEONARD FEATHER

SUE RANEY
"Sue Raney Sings the Music of Henry Mancini Trend TRCD 557
★★★★★

Is Sue Raney a jazz singer? Does it matter? The elements brought together here are her impeccable diction, her lyrical sensitivity, Mancini's consistently rewarding melodies, and the arrangements by Alan Broadbent, whose adventurous use of a bank of flutes (doubling on clarinets and saxes) is a key factor.

There are moments of indisputable jazz: the wordless passages by Raney on "Charade" and "Whistling Away the Dark," Broadbent's piano solos, the warmly sympathetic fluegelhorn of Carmen Falzone.

"Bye Bye" turns out to be a rare lyricized version of the "Peter Gunn" theme, a driving performance in contrast to much of the album's light mood. "We" is performed with a gentle Latin beat. The concluding "Moon River" is backed by Broadbent only.

A beautiful woman with a rare talent, Raney deserves fame (and in-person exposure) more than the press-agent-touted big sellers now dominating the jazz charts.

GEORGE BENSON
"Tenderly" Warner Brothers 9-25907-2
★★★★½

This is the George Benson we all knew had never really gone away. He is backed mainly by the trio of pianist McCoy Tyner, who adjusts himself splendidly to the context, with unobtrusive string or brass arrangements by Marty Paich.

Benson plays on every track but one, the exception being Gordon Jenkins' exquisite "This Is All I Ask," to which he does full justice. He sings wordlessly in unison with his guitar on "You Don't Know What Love Is" and "At the Mambo Inn."

Though a bit melodramatic at times, Benson is in good enough vocal shape to bring new life even to "Stardust." Of the three instrumental cuts, "Stella by Starlight" has the best Benson and Tyner solos; "Tenderly" is an understated guitar solo, and "I Could Write a Book" with its extended ending cooks implacably.

BILL HARRIS
"The Fabulous Bill Harris" VSOP

Please see Page 60

Feather

Continued from Page 60

heavy-handed drumming of Clif Leeman complete the quintet Some of the announcements are b Eddie Condon. Good, informativ notes by producer Hank O'Neal.

HERB ELLIS & RED MITCHELL
"Doggin' Around" Concord CCI 4372.
★★★

Given the tonal limitations of guitar-bass duo, this live session a the Loa in Santa Monica comes of unpretentiously well. Except for one cut on which Mitchell scats the blues, it's all instrumental, using conventional standard tunes. The conversation piece will be Gary Larsen's cover drawing for which he reportedly took guitar lessons from Ellis as part of his payment. The tune "Doggin' Around" is not included; that title refers to the performing dogs on Larsen's bandstand. □

JAZZ

Feather

Continued from Page

66 CD (Box 50082, Washington, D.C. 20004)
★★★½

The Washington based Harris, who died last year, was called an unsung hero by Kenny Burrell. Certainly he was the most eclectic and intrepid of guitarists. Unaccompanied on all but one tune, he starts out singing, whistling, yodeling and strumming the blues, recites a poem about Ma Rainey, plays a long, awkward version of Django Reinhardt's "Nuages" (his harmonic ear was flawed), then tackles Bach's Prelude in D Minor arranged by Segovia (whom he met and performed for, supposedly pleasing the maestro). Culled from live shows in 1957, 1982 and 1986, the collection winds up with Harris' "Wes Montgomery Suite." A curiosity mainly of interest to fellow-plectrists.

THE AL GREY QUINTET
"The New Al Grey Quintet" Chiaroscuro CRD 305 (SOS Productions, 830 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003).
★★★½

Hank O'Neal's Chiaroscuro label is a welcome addition to the CD scene. He will record new material, such as this, as well as reissuing some gems from the old LP catalogue.

This could be called a "Three Sons" group. Mike Grey joins his father to make it a two-trombone front line; J.J. Wiggins, son of pianist Gerald Wiggins, plays bass, and Joe Cohn, an exceptionally promising guitarist, plays on such tunes as "Tain't No Use" and "The Undergone" written by his father, the late Al Cohn. Completing the quintet is Bobby Durham on drums.

Because the arrangements are neatly crafted, and the material (originals and standards) well diversified, this improbable instrumentation works well. It is impossible to tell which Grey, father or son, plays which solos, so similar is their approach.

Cohn comes close to stealing the show. In "Rue Prevail" he doubles briefly on trumpet. Wiggins is in fingerpopping form on "Night and Day." All in all, a promising debut.

■ **JAZZ LISTINGS:** Page 97

DON PULLEN
"New Beginnings" Blue Note CDP 7 91785 2
★★★★½

Heard in the 1970s with Charles Mingus, and with the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Pullen is a primary force in the piano avant-garde. He is capable, within the framework of a five-minute composition, to mix good humor and explosive tone clusters, waltzing buoyancy and rhythmic game playing. Of his six works here, only the final, overlong "Silence-Death" lapses into chaotic, unswinging pretention. His power is fortified by the presence of Gary Peacock on bass and Tony Williams on drums. Consonance and dissonance are seldom mixed with the skill Pullen brings to this provocative collection.

BOBBY HACKETT
"BOBBY HACKETT LIVE AT THE ROOSEVELT GRILL" Chiaroscuro CRD 105
★★★★

Louis Armstrong was an admirer and close friend of Hackett; this 1970 session offers eloquent evidence of the cornetist's unique lyricism. Vic Dickenson's trombone is a major force throughout, especially on his own compositions, "Alone" and "Constantly," and on "You're Gonna Hear From Me," André Previn's only jazz standard. Dave McKenna's piano, Jack Lesberg's bass and the sometimes

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Wearing Two Hats in Harlem

BLUE NOTES UNDER A GREEN FELT HAT
by David Ritz
(Donald I. Fine: $18.95; 244 pp.)

BLUE FRUIT
by Adam Lively
(Atlantic Monthly Press: $16.95; 136 pp.)

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

Although they have in common a partial involvement with the world of jazz, these novels are about as similar as a comic book and The Atlantic Monthly.

The curious title of "Blue Notes Under a Green Felt Hat" derives from the no less curious contrivance by which the author brings together the disparate worlds of his characters. The main participants are Danny Klein, a philandering Damon Runyon type who is torn between his love of hats and his passion for jazz; Myron Klein, his philandering father, a famous hatmaker who wants his boy to go into the business; the philandering Mama Klein, who is involved with the family doctor ("He's a wonderful man, and his children's complexions have improved a hundred per cent") and Danny's possibly philandering sister, who has fallen for a jazz critic, Winthrop Carrington. When Winthrop opens his pompous mouth he seems to have swallowed an encyclopedia of jazz clichés.

On the other side of the fence is Clifford Summer, a black singer and pianist who loses two fingers during a 52nd Street shoot-out. Danny befriends Clifford and will see to it that he makes more money playing with eight fingers than he ever did with 10.

How will these two protagonists' lives converge? How can Danny stay in the family business while retaining his interest in jazz? Why, simply by wearing two hats—he opens a shop in Harlem that sells hats and records, and gets it under way by inviting Billy Eckstine to autograph both during the grand opening.

Along the way, Danny finds himself in the Deep South visiting Clifford's mother, a wise-old-woman type who spouts such memorable advice as: "It's not knowledge that serves the heart, Danny, it's wisdom." With this in mind, Danny will be able to unload plenty of fedoras.

Adam Lively

His romantic problems are an ongoing thread in the tangled narrative: Shall he stay with the stripper from New Jersey, or the intellectual who takes him to readings at the New School? And how will he adjust to having a jazz-history-spouting brother-in-law?

Ritz builds to a not-unpredictable trick ending, one at which he has dropped a few detectable hints along the way. By peppering his story with a wealth of informed jazz references, and by equating profanity with authenticity in the dialogue, Ritz attempts to create a genuine *Zeitgeist*. He even wants to convince us that a song by Clifford ("Up in Harlem where swing's the thing, be-bop blues is the newest thing . . . Be-bop blues really rocks and rolls") could have become a major hit in 1949, when much of the action takes place.

The main problem, trivial ditties aside, is that David Ritz is to literary grace what Robin Leach of TV infamy is to vocal style.

Ironically, though Adam Lively's "Blue Fruit" makes no attempt to simulate reality, it captures the reader immediately through its fantasy-based premise and sensitive narration. This is the first novel by a London-based 26-year-old author, educated at Cambridge and Yale.

The story is a latter-day "Gulliver's Travels." In 1787, John Field, a young ship's surgeon in the South Seas, finds himself lost and is put ashore in what turns out to be 20th-Century Harlem.

This chance-taking premise works out delightfully. Meeting a black man in this strange new world, he asks him: "Are you a slave?" Totally lost in his new environment, he is taken in by a black family and befriended by a young saxophone player. Somehow the two men forge a common bond, not only socially but in music: A classically trained violinist, Field transcends two centuries of musical evolution and is able to express himself creatively at a jam session with the saxophonist's group. In due course, however, he is confronted with the realities of race relations and the tensions of the sophisticated world in which he has inexplicably landed. (The exact time frame is never clarified, though certain references such as a mention of the Clef Club would seem to indicate a period not long after World War I.)

In this haunting, almost hallucinatory tale, we are not told enough about Field's reactions to some of the technical realities of our century: We never learn, for example, how he feels on first seeing an automobile. But the areas Adam Lively does cover are subtly pinpointed; the sequence in which he tries pot for the first time is richly developed, in contrast to a similar episode in the Ritz story.

"Blue Fruit," with its mix of fantasy, history and cultural contrasts, is a strikingly original work that presages for Adam Lively a future worth watching.

Feather is The Times jazz critic.

8/14

JAZZ REVIEW

Flanagan, the Musicians' Musician, Draws a Full House

By LEONARD FEATHER

Playing for a full house liberally sprinkled with admiring fellow pianists, Tommy Flanagan opened Friday (and closed Sunday) at the Loa.

At 59, Flanagan has reached a level of acceptance as the musicians' musician. His professorial mien belies his often bop-directed style, understated yet always authoritative.

He leans toward lesser-known songs mainly by the be-bop pioneers: J. J. Johnson, whose "Lament" was a high point; Tadd Dameron, represented by "Our Delight," and Tom McIntosh, whose "With Malice Toward None" gave Flanagan a chance to display his harmonic ideas as well as subtle dynamic shadings.

Sudden bursts of upsweeping chords sometimes lent an element of surprise, with a nimble left hand offering graceful filigree fills.

He is technically flawless but never humorless, as witness the sly quotes from "Salt Peanuts" in his version of an old Gillespie piece, the quasi-Cuban "Tin Tin Deo."

Flanagan's manner on-stage is reserved; his announcements are often barely audible, though he was heard paying tribute to Benny Carter, whose "When Lights Are Low" was the opening song.

Flanagan's bassist, George Mraz, is as remarkable a partner as he could hope for. Educated at the University of Prague, he has developed an astonishing command that turns every solo into a model of creative artistry. During one tune Flanagan suddenly began playing at twice the tempo, so that for Mraz it became a double-Czech stomp.

Mraz and the young drummer Kenny Washington function as a formidable team, working with Flanagan to present neatly crafted arrangements. In terms of the warmth and unity established by the three, it was, to quote a Thad Jones song played during this luminous hour, like old times.

Fireworks at Bowl, but None on Stage

Never mind the music—the fireworks were great.

That, at least, was the view of one curmudgeonly critic to whom Gene Evans, a pyrotechnics master who designed the final 10 spectac-

'89 Los Angeles Times

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Henry Mancini piece, "Ohio River
Boat," provided surcease, with
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How, though, to argue with success? This show drew 17,598 on Friday and upped the ante to 17,910 Saturday. —LEONARD FEATHER

'89

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The present Dukes bear little resemblance to the 1950s band that included the Assunto family from Louisiana: Fred, Frank, and their father, Papa Jac, all long dead. The name was acquired by a new group. These are trained musicians, two with college degrees and one a well known New Orleans jazz historian,

10

present neatly crafted

ular minutes Saturday at the Hollywood Bowl, was the one outstanding artist of the evening.

During his show, many of the colorful explosions were synchronized to the beats of the bar in a Sousa march medley by the orchestra. It was compensation enough for almost two hours of dreary effusions by the Dukes of Dixieland and the Philharmonic conducted by Erich Kunzel—separately and, alas, together.

If ever two groups belong apart they would be a loose, uninhibited improvising Dixieland band and a stiff, orchestrated symphony ensemble dripping with strings. At the worst moments, and they were frequent, it was like tuning in two radio stations at once.

The present Dukes bear little resemblance to the 1950s band that included the Assunto family from Louisiana: Fred, Frank, and their father, Papa Jac, all long dead. The name was acquired by a new group. These are trained musicians, two with college degrees and one a well known New Orleans jazz historian, but with the orchestra running interference (and with Kunzel just standing there looking awkward much of the time) it was hard to detect any significant level of musicianship.

Only the leader, trombonist Harry Watters, had anything of value to say in his solos. The clarinetist Mike Waddell and trumpeter Jim Donovan do not seem to have reached maturity; even such trite-and-true material as "The Entertainer" and "Clarinet Marmalade" were too much for them to handle.

The works played separately by the orchestra were as forgettable as the Dukes' selections were predictable. It would take a genius to make something fresh out of a Stephen Foster medley, and genius was not at work here. Only the Henry Mancini piece, "Ohio River Boat," provided surcease, with harmony that was beyond Foster's wildest dreams.

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KIRK McKOY / Los Angeles Times

Wayne Shorter, some of whose best LPs were made for Blue Note in 1960s and '70s, with Ruth Lion, widow of founder of the label.

Concert Series at Ford Theatre to Celebrate Blue Note's 50th

By LEONARD FEATHER

Blue Note Records is undoubtedly the oldest continuously active jazz company in the world and is not in the least shy about admitting it. In fact, it is being shouted from the rooftops of New York to a mountaintop in Japan.

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, a whole season of concerts was lined up featuring past and present associates of the label. Three have taken place in New York, Montreux and Nice; three more will be presented locally by KLON-FM on successive Sundays, starting this Sunday at 2 p.m. at the John Anson Ford Theatre.

The program will be a cross-section of then-and-now Blue Note achievements. The Ralph Peterson Quintet, a new group whose recent debut drew five-star accolades, will open, followed by an eight-piece ad hoc band with James Moody, Lou Donaldson and Tal Farlow. Wayne Shorter, some of whose greatest LPs were made for Blue Note in the 1960s and '70s, will wind up the show, leading a quartet with Teri Lyne Carrington on drums, Mitch Forman on piano and John Patitucci on bass. Ruth Lion, whose late husband Alfred Lion founded the company and who herself was active in its operation in the early years, will be on hand as a guest of honor.

Shortly after the final Hollywood concert Aug. 20, a large contingent of Blue Note stars will head for Japan, the virtual adopted land of jazz, where they will celebrate the 50th anniversary at the annual Mt. Fuji Jazz Festival. Sales in Japan have played an increasingly significant part in Blue Note's success.

A commemoration more permanent than the concerts is "The Blue Note Anniversary Collection," a 58-track, five-CD set (BM92547) tracing the company's story from Sidney Bechet's "Summertime" in 1939 to Bireli Lagrene's "Timothee" in 1988. This valuable anthology could make a fine starting point for any tyro collector. (Blue Note's only major goofs: It never caught up with Dizzy Gillespie or Charlie Parker.)

"We're keeping up a heavy schedule of reissuing many of our jazz classics—Art Blakey, Bud Powell, Horace Silver—along with the development of new artists," said veteran pop and jazz producer Bruce Lundvall. "We think it's working."

His claim has been justified by the success of Stanley Jordan, the most original new guitarist of the decade, and singers Bobby McFerrin (who will divide his time between pop records for EMI and jazz releases for Blue Note) and Dianne Reeves.

The Blue Note story began when Alfred Lion, a refugee from Nazi Germany, arrived in New York in 1938. Inspired by John Hammond's legendary "From Spirituals to Swing" concert at Carnegie Hall, he decided to start recording. His first session was a boogie-woogie piano duo date with Albert Ammons and Meade Lux Lewis on Jan. 6, 1939. Over the next decade he moved from pianos to small groups and from traditional jazz to swing to be-bop.

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photo: Pawel Brodowski

SUMMIT

ting in Brussels, Belgium, the new Board of the Federation discussed a number of fresh projects ehensive European jazz survey, a series of English- devoted to jazz scenes in various countries, the Jazz Archives Division, organization of interna- nd major events, such as the EEC 1992 Jazz Fes- was hosted by Frankie Rose and Paolo Radoni Jazz Musicians Association, better known as Les e. Seated around the table are (clockwise from nderlich (West Germany), Tomasz Tluczkiewicz and land), Kjell-Ake Svensson (Sweden), Charles Alexan- ain), president Arnvid Meyer (Denmark), Leonid Union), Luca Cerchiari (Italy), Steinar Kristiansen Solothurnmann (Switzerland), Annette Hauber (West imo Vähäsilta (Finland).

the "Ella" award (a lifetime ent trophy) from Clint East- whose rambling remarks were ning's only awkward moments. houghtful gesture, Joe Williams ong Fitzgerald wrote back in her ebb days, *You Showed Me the* Manhattan Transfer reprised r they had once performed *How High the Moon*. Mel ought down the house with ed version of *Ella Be Good*, w includes a chorus sung in George Shearing and Torme of Dizzy Gillespie's *Anthro-* earing, before playing with rned brilliance, reminisced 52nd St. days, when he was n intermission pianist play- Ella, in 1948.

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es from hard bop. s Max Roach. In Prosenik started his called That's Jazz. as often performed esse clubs and its nsists of hard-bop oody Shaw, Freddie iles Davis, Wayne Sonny Rollins. Pro- t includes some of new talents on the ene: pianist Oliver 69; bassist Johannes 0; saxophonist Martin trumpeter Karl Ejan

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from hundreds of advertisements by wealthy well wishers in the souvenir program. Many well to ywood and Beverly Hills glamour were on hand; in fact, the as covered not in the music ut by gossip writers in the columns. But that's Hollywood

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KIRK McKOY / Los Angeles Times

Wayne Shorte
in 1960s and '

Concer
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By LEONARD F

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FEDERATION

Published bimonthly by the International Jazz Federation and the Polish Jazz Society.

Editor-in-Chief: **Pawel Brodowski**

ELLA'S BIRTHDAY BASH

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Tributes are a dime a dozen in Los Angeles, where sentimentality is a form of urban blight; yet it would take an incorrigible cynic to deny that the Society of Singers' tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, staged April 28 (three days after her 71st birthday) at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, was one of the most heartfelt events of its kind, and by all odds the best organized and most musically satisfying.

The affair was planned down to the most minute detail; even the dessert was served in a little yellow basket, in memory of Fitzgerald's *A Tisket a Tasket* hit of 51 years ago.

The two hour presentation was a succinct cornucopia of solo and group singing, witty emceeing by Bill Cosby, a minimum of windy speechmaking (Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley's comments were knowledgeably nostalgic) and film clips, some of which came close to stealing the show — except that this show was truly theft-proof.

It was fascinating to see Fitzgerald in her first movie, an Abbott & Costello comedy called *Ride 'em Cowboy*, in 1942; then in her singing and acting role in Jack Webbs' *Pete Kelly's Blues* (1955), and later, a superb TV duet with Frank Sinatra. But the climactic moment was the appearance onstage of the honoree herself, clearly trembling as she accepted the "Ella" award (a lifetime achievement trophy) from Clint Eastwood, whose rambling remarks were the evening's only awkward moments.

In a thoughtful gesture, Joe Williams sang a song Fitzgerald wrote back in her Chick Webb days, *You Showed Me the Way*. The Manhattan Transfer reprised a number they had once performed with Ella, *How High the Moon*. Mel Torme brought down the house with his updated version of *Ella Be Good*, which now includes a chorus sung in unison by George Shearing and Torme to the tune of Dizzy Gillespie's *Anthropology*. Shearing, before playing with his accustomed brilliance, reminisced about his 52nd St. days, when he was the unknown intermission pianist playing opposite Ella, in 1948.

A risky segment was "The Ladies Who Sang with the Bands," for which half-forgotten vocalists from the 1930s and '40s were introduced by Marilyn McCoo and Carol Burnett, then stood up at their respective tables around the big room (packed with some 1100customers at the dinner tables) and sang the songs that made them famous.

The gamble paid off because these women — particularly Kay Starr and Fran Warren — have defied time, sounding and looking as if they were ready to jump back on the band bus. The others were Helen O'Connell, Helen Forrest, Martha Tilton, Kitty Kallen, Bea Wain and the Clark Sisters, also known as the Sentimentalists of Tommy Dorsey fame. It all came off well enough, but it was hard not to miss two of the greatet women who ever sang with the bands, Sarah Vaughan and Carmen McRae. Where were they?

Another inexplicable omission was the absence of four musicians who have played a vital part in Fitzgerald's career over the years; Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Ray Brown (her ex-husband and still a friend) and her regular pianist, Paul Smith. Fortunately the Frank Capp-Nat Pierce Juggernaut band did such a flawless job of backing all the acts that there was no time to worry about who was missing.

The band had even bought along a few of Ella's charts in case she decided to sing. She had not been scheduled, but as the evening neared its end, after she accepted her award, Cosby whispered in her ear and talked her into performing. Her band-backed vocal on *Honeysuckle Rose* was magnificent, a sort of born-again Ella recapturing all of her pristine glory.

Striking a contemporary note were the vocals by Marilyn McCoo and Dionne Warwick. Arthur Duncan, seen recently in the film *Tap*, provided a touch of contrast with his dance-and-vocal number.

After the Fitzgerald finale, the stage was invaded by a wall-to-wall bank of singers joining forces on *Dream*, followed by *Happy Birthday*. If the star had difficulty controlling her emotions, hers were not the only moist eyes in the house as this memorable soiree came to its climax.

The Society of Singers, formed in 1983 to aid singers in professional and financial trouble, wound up taking in a whopping $600,000 for the evening, some of it from hundreds of advertisements placed by wealthy well wishers in the bulky souvenir program. Many well to do Hollywood and Beverly Hills glamour figures were on hand; in fact, the event was covered not in the music pages but by gossip writers in the society columns. But that's Hollywood for you.

ANNOUNCING THE 6TH INT'L CONTEST

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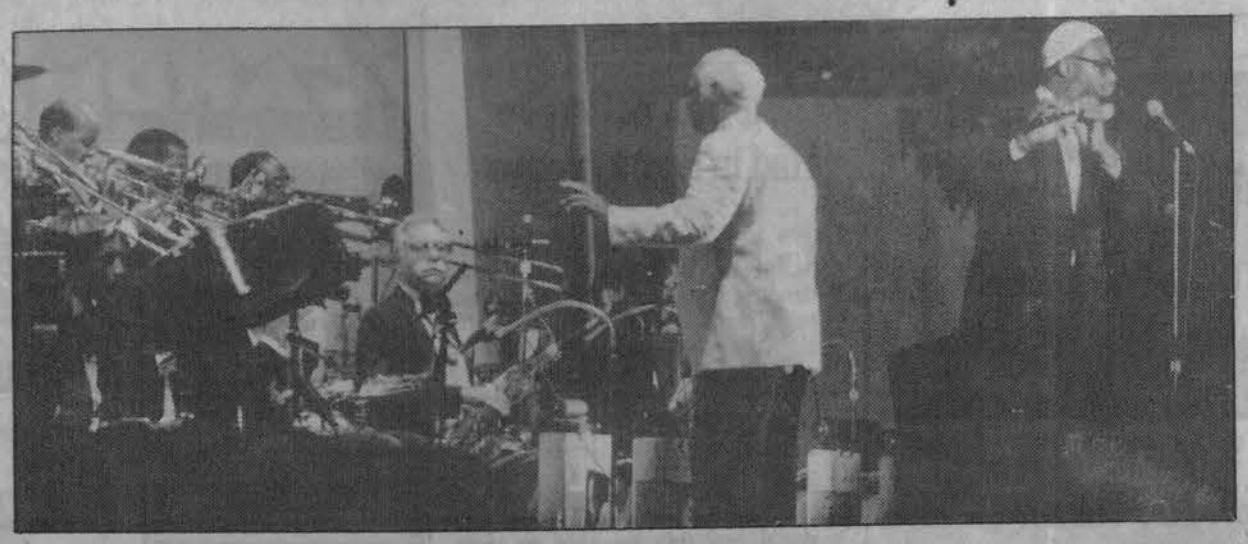
79

8/11

Los Angeles Times

MARISSA ROTH

Carmen McRae sings with the Count Basie Orchestra at Bowl.



Mercer Ellington conducts his father's orchestra with soloist Sayyd Abdul Al Khabyyr.

JAZZ REVIEW

Big Bands Are a Big Draw at the Bowl

By LEONARD FEATHER

So big bands are dead? Tell that to the 15,145 fans who converged Wednesday on the Hollywood Bowl for a concert by the orchestras of Mercer Ellington, Frank Foster (leading the Count Basie Band) and Louie Bellson.

The Ellingtonians were the most adventurous by far, in instrumentation (three percussionists) and material. Even when Mercer plays father Duke's tunes something fresh is added.

The use of steel drums on "Queenie Pie" with its reggae beat was delightful. Barrie Lee Hall's trumpet on "Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me" and Shelly Paul's tenor sax had a personal touch, and the flute of Sayyd Abdul Al Khabyyr provided moments of exotica. His son, Muhammad, contributed two elegant trombone solos.

At the piano, where his eminence the Duke once sat, was the charming Suzuko Yokoyama, whose solo on "Satin Doll" was an expression of her own boppish personality rather than a mirror image of her predecessor. Another powerful force was Tina Fabrique, whose flawless negotiation of the hard-to-sing "Something to Live For" was followed by an ebullient "Just Squeeze Me."

"Ballet of the Flying Saucers," originally part of the suite "A Drum Is a Woman," found Yokoyama at the electric keyboard among other innovations, again reflecting Mercer Ellington's determination to make an individual place for himself in musical history.

The Basie ensemble, in its more past-oriented way, was equally effective, though a stronger pianist than Ace Carter would be helpful. The "Count Basie Remembrance Suite," reviewed here earlier this year, was repeated. Carmen Bradford, a distinguished singer, was confined to one tune; no doubt this was due to the presence of another Carmen, who used the band for her own set.

Carmen McRae's vocals are rarely heard in an orchestral setting. Thanks to sensitive arrangements by John Clayton, she was in splendid form; her "For All We Know" displayed the depth of her emotional conviction.

Following directly after the Ellington set, Louie Bellson's band was a sort of continuum, since he is a celebrated Ellington alumnus (he also played briefly with Basie), but it seemed strange that he devoted so much of his set to works by the Duke and doubly debatable that he wound up with "Cotton Tail" and "Caravan," both of which the Ellingtonians had just played.

The best of Bellson could be found in the ensemble precision and in solos by Bob Cooper and Don Menza on tenor sax, Steve Huffsteter on trumpet, Thurman Green on trombone and Bill Green on soprano sax, with the leader climaxing it in his drum workout. But Bellson is a talented composer; why couldn't he have offered us at least two or three of his own pieces instead of those ducal duplications?

8/19

JAZZ REVIEW

Clayton Works Wonders With Loa Orchestra

No crystal ball is needed to determine that John Clayton has an extremely promising future as a major force in jazz. With his two partners, brother Jeff Clayton on saxes and drummer Jeff Hamilton, he took the 17-piece Clayton/Hamilton Orchestra through a collection of his own brilliantly crafted arrangements, receiving a thunderous ovation Thursday from a jam-packed house at the Loa.

While drawing on his roots, Clayton blends them with contemporary concepts of his own. Certain passages in "Raincheck" were drawn directly from the original Billy Strayhorn version, but with new passages and voicing that added the Clayton touch. There was even an evocation of Jimmie Lunceford when trumpeter Snooky Young sang and played "Tain't What You Do" out of that band's legendary book.

Clayton employs certain sounds that are rarely heard in jazz ensembles: an oboe (Jeff Clayton), a rhythm guitarist doubling as jazz soloist (Jim Hershman). Contrasts in styles abounded: Herman Riley and Ricky Woodard on tenor saxes, George Bohanon and Ira Nepus on trombones, Young and Oscar Brashear on trumpets, the latter building from a dainty theme (his own) to a wild climax in "Sashay." Impressively individual, too, is pianist Sydney Lehman, who made her debut with the band recently.

Most valuably, the solos, instead of going on endlessly with just rhythm backing, were succinct, often enveloped in Clayton's skillfully written sectional or tutti pas-

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...'6...ne of that small band of fans from other countries who emerged, during the late 1930s and early '40s, to make a profound impact on jazz. His death on July 15 at age 71 robbed us of a valuable friend.

We met in London in early 1939 and both settled in the U.S. soon after; he moved here because his father was the Turkish ambassador. In Washington, with his brother Ahmet, he defied local segregation practices by staging interracial jam sessions.

He moved to Los Angeles, established a record shop specializing in traditional jazz, taught one of the earliest jazz history courses (at UCLA) and most significantly was associated with the late Les Koenig in the pioneering Contemporary label. Eventually he moved to New York to join Atlantic, the company his brother had founded in 1947.

Nesuhi's tastes evolved rapidly. Originally a so-called moldy fig, he espoused the causes of the MJQ, Mingus, Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and countless others. It was a great loss to jazz when his talent as a businessman led to his giving up the creative aspects of the record business. After Warners acquired Atlantic, Nesuhi launched WEA International, a network of record companies with billion-dollar sales.

During his final two years, though, he went back to his first love, the music itself; he formed East-West Records and again recorded people like the MJQ.

Nesuhi had many other interests. A soccer nut, he founded the New York Cosmos Soccer Club. He had a great collection of surrealist paintings. But above all, this small man with big ideas about jazz was a vital contributor to the art form when it had precious few effective catalysts. He will be missed by all of us who knew and admired him for his enthusiasm, his warmth, his passion.

■ LEONARD FEATHER

...es.

Clayton, a pe...able conductor, had Herb Mickman playing bass, but picked up his own bass for two bowed solos, and on the concluding "Captain Bill" indulged in an Alfonse-and-Gaston two-bass exchange, with both men plucking away cheerfully.

Though he is often heard in other, smaller settings, John Clayton owes it to the jazz community to try to keep this mighty orchestra together. It may not work often, but it works wonders.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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L.A. TIMES 8/13/89

JAZZ

Monty Alexander's Life on the Run

By LEONARD FEATHER

Despite the elements common to West Indian music and American jazz, very few musicians from the Islands have achieved any measure of prominence in the United States. Among those few, pianist Monty Alexander has made the most significant and durable impact.

The charming Jamaican accent he brought with him when he arrived in the U.S. in 1961 (he had just turned 17) has never left him, but the Caribbean flavor in his music ebbs and flows according to the company he keeps.

"I still like to get together with musicians who are into that whole Caribbean experience," he said recently during a visit to Los Angeles. "I've been doing this thing I call Ivory and Steel, working with steel drummers. And I toured Europe recently with a wonderful bass player named David Williams, a full-fledged Trinidadan who grew up among Calypsonians like Lord Kitchener and the Mighty Sparrow. But I have an equally good time with this group."

"This group" is the trio known as Triple Treat, the other two thirds being bassist Ray Brown and guitarist Herb Ellis. Working with

night haunts, Alexander met Steve Stark, whose father, Herman Stark, had been one of the original operators of the Cotton Club during its Duke Ellington glory days. "Steve thought I had potential, but I needed a green card to work. Well, we went to New York and visited Duke's office.

"He told Duke my situation and had me play for him. Duke wrote and signed a letter saying I was an outstanding talent and I should be important in the United States. I wish I had a copy of that letter. Anyhow, thanks to Duke the immigration people were satisfied. Today I'm a citizen."

The aura of Nat King Cole and Cannonball Adderley, both natives of Tampa, and Sam Jones, Adderley's bassist, made a heavy impression on jazzmen in Florida. "We had some real heavy, swingin' roots going on down there. But when I got a job on the road, it was with a dance band—Art Mooney, who had a big hit with 'I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover.' He had a hotel in Hollywood, Fla., where I was accompanying a belly dancer—oh, never forget Princess Naila—when he decided I should leave her and go with his band to Reno."

After the job ended in Reno, it was a desperation time for a while. "I could play bass, so I borrowed some guy's Fender and took a job on cruises, backing up a singer. Then I went to Las Vegas, where I was at a loose ends when one night at the Thunderbird and here come Frank Sinatra and his friend, Jilly Rizzo. "I had met them before in Miami. Jilly said, 'You're the guy I saw in Florida. We've got to get you to come to my club in New York.' Well, I thought maybe it was just late night chatter, but a week later, there was a plane ticket in the mail."

The move turned out to be a wise one as word spread about the prodigious young pianist from the Islands. Alexander met drummer Mickey Roker, who sent vibraphonist Milt Jackson to hear him; he met Ray Brown, and one night during a spell in Hollywood got to play with Brown at the end of a long night of jamming.

"It was like magic—from the first moment we started playing, we got that thing going, you know?" He snapped his fingers to demonstrate. "After just one tune, we got off the bandstand and Ray said, 'Where are you gonna be in July? I want you to come and play with me and Milt Jackson.'"

From that point on, Alexander circulated among the big boys, in fact became one of them. He played several summer seasons with Jackson and Brown, led his own trio for a European tour in 1974 and recorded regularly.

His partnership with Brown and Ellis has continued off and on since 1982, when they taped a live album at a Tokyo club. When Triple Treat is not working, he may be reminding himself of his Jamaican roots by composing such tunes as "Happy Lypso" and "Reggae-Later" or working out arrangements of folk songs such as "Sly Mongoose" and "Linstead Market." His original "Accompong" was dedicated to the Maroons, runaway slaves who escaped from British soldiers and settled in the Jamaican town of Accompong in the 18th Century.

On these works, his recordings feature the steel drums of Othello Molineaux and Len (Boogsie) Sharp, both natives of Trinidad.

A third aspect of his career finds him paying tribute to Nat King Cole; he has worked out a night club set in which he sings and plays tunes associated with Cole's early years and his own childhood.

"Today," he says in summation, "I'm as busy as I can be, as a traveling musician. I feel a need for variety in my work, and I'm lucky to be in a position where I can pick and choose." □

8/29

REVIEW

Jazz Series Back on Bravo

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Jazz Counterpoint," a 1985 series of half-hour presentations with host Billy Taylor interviewing fellow pianists, is being rerun on the Bravo channel. Two of the more interesting shows, with Teddy Wilson and Tommy Flanagan as guests, are running tonight and Friday respectively at 9:30 p.m.

A swing-era pioneer, Wilson came to prominence as a member of the Benny Goodman Trio. His poised, symmetrical style became a model for many pianists in the late 1930s and through the '40s, but over the decades he showed signs of physical and musical deterioration, and his performances suffered. The program was taped a year before his death.

As the close-ups make clear, Wilson apparently had lost the use of his right forefinger, perhaps due to arthritis. He gets through a "Porgy and Bess" medley pleasantly, but on the other tunes Taylor tactfully helps him out by dueting with him, offering needed rhythmic support. The conversation about Wilson's background and influences goes smoothly; predictably, Earl Hines, Art Tatum and Fats Waller are mentioned as his sources of inspiration.

Both Taylor and his guest are more at ease on the Flanagan program. The veteran soloist, an orchestrally inspired stylist, plays with typical grace and harmonic beauty on his own "Minor Mishap" and Tadd Dameron's "Smooth as the Wind." Ironically, he speaks of Teddy Wilson as a major influence, though his technique and harmonic development are clearly more fully fleshed out.

Taylor's own solo contribution, "Willow Weep for Me," is a highlight. The two keyboard giants join forces for "Our Delight," "Ornithology" and a closing blues.

A new series of "Jazz Counterpoints," introducing some of the many important artists who have risen to prominence since 1985, would be welcome, with Taylor, one of television's most articulate and musically gifted hosts, again in charge.

8/25

JAZZ REVIEW

Nostalgia Night at Bowl Tribute

Nostalgia hung like dew in the August air Wednesday at the Hollywood Bowl, where a crowd of swing fans paid tribute to music that was itself tributary.

Clarinetist Walt Levinsky and the Great American Swing Band saluted the Benny Goodman orchestra; Nancy Wilson dedicated her set to Cannonball Adderley. Buddy de Franco and Terry Gibbs paid homage to Goodman's small group sound with "Airmail Special"; then there was Mel Torme's tribute to Mel Torme.

Even Torme closed his set by playing Gene Krupa's original drums, backed by Levinsky and the band in "Sing Sing Sing," vintage 1938, followed by a free-for-all blues with Gibbs and Torme on vibes, Levinsky and De Franco on clarinet. (The contrast afforded by the latter's strong, compelling sound was striking.)

Torme's set, for which he was backed mainly by an 11-piece ensemble with estimable Marty Paich arrangements, was a delight from top to bottom. Looking good for his 13th year at the Bowl, he was introduced by Harry Anderson. As always, he showed the same taste in his choice of material as in his interpretations, from a beautiful 1941 Harold Arlen melody, "When the Sun Comes Up," to a witty piece by Donald Fagen, "The Goodbye Look."

Levinsky never quite captured the Goodman sound himself (he seemed most at ease when simply playing Levinsky style, backed by rhythm only, on "Here's That Rainy Day"). The band read the charts well, but the magic sense of swing stayed hidden. Two superior Mel Powell originals, "Clarinade" and "Mission to Moscow," were played just fast enough to lose the groove.

Nancy Wilson sang songs from an album she made with Adderley in 1961. Except for an opening medley (arranged by Jeff Clayton, who played the Cannonball role on alto), the quintet had no chance to re-create the old Adderley sound, though with Oscar Brashear on trumpet and Adderley's original drummer, Roy McCurdy, it could and should have done a set of its own.

Gibbs and De Franco were in fine fettle, particularly on the ballads,

—LEONARD FEATHER

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Los Angeles Times 8/20/89 JAZZ (syndicated)

The Report: Busy Days Ahead for Shorter

By LEONARD FEATHER

The 15 years Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter spent together as co-leaders of Weather Report established them as guiding forces in the first and most influential group in what might be called the electronic jazz/rock fusion genre.

Since the two came to a parting of the ways in 1985, Zawinul has continued, first using the name Weather Update and more recently the Zawinul Syndicate. But what, in the meanwhile, has happened to Wayne Shorter?

"I'm doing a lot of different things, mainly because long tours, back to back, are too rough on the health," Shorter said. "So I'm getting work that keeps me close to home."

The breakup, he says, was amicable. "Joe and I sat down and talked about whether we should spend another 15 years together or just move out and be our own selves. As a group, we had undergone a certain amount of pulling this way and that. There were essentially three of us—Joe and I and the bassist, originally Miroslav Vitous, later others including Jaco Pastorius. So people were only getting one-third of me, one-third of Joe and of the bassist."

There was speculation at the time that Zawinul, as the more aggressive figure, had dominated the group, leaving Shorter in a lesser role both as saxophonist and composer. According to Shorter, the instruments themselves were responsible.

KIRK McKOY / L.A. Times

Saxophonist Wayne Shorter

"The synthesizer is a very dominant instrument; everything winds up sounding as if it were written by the keyboardist. The next instrument that covers a wide range of acceptability is the bass." Shorter, playing mainly soprano sax, seemed at time to have about as much impact as a piccolo. So, he says, "We decided that to be fair to ourselves, we would not continue for another 15 years."

The friendship has endured. "I had dinner at his home recently. We fax letters and music to each other; we like to look back and talk about the things you and I are talking about now."

The best development in Shorter's career since the separation, he says, is the probability that he will compose for a movie. "I had a call from Island Pictures about a film tentatively titled 'Aunt Julia,' with Peter Falk and Barbara Hershey. It takes place in New Orleans in the 1940s and '50s. I'm supposed to get together soon with the director and the musical director."

Although he took part in the film "Round Midnight" (ironically, a blues solo on the sound track won him a composer's Grammy, though it was ad-libbed rather than composed), Shorter has never really written music directly for a feature film. Herbie Hancock, one of three musicians who shared credit for that award, now wants to involve him in a new project.

"A producer asked whether Herbie and I would collaborate on the sound track for a film starring Tina Turner. I'm reading the script now; it's called 'Vida' and it has a nightclub atmosphere. So I'm hoping these film deals will keep me busy for quite a while," Shorter said.

This will be a welcome change. Shorter was on the road with one group or another during almost all of 1985-87. "I was everywhere—all over Europe, and of course Japan, Hong Kong, you name it," he said. "We toured the Far East as part of a show with Miles' (Davis) group and three other bands. It got pretty hectic at times.

"I had some good people in my bands, but there's no complete recording of any one of them," Shorter said. "Terri Lyne Carrington was my drummer for a year or so, including three European tours. Marilyn Mazur, the percussionist from Denmark, who worked with Miles Davis, has played with me, but not on records."

Since leaving Zawinul, Shorter has floated freely between straight-ahead and fusion situations, as well as between jazz and pop assignments. "There's a single on the air now called 'The End of the Innocence,' which I recorded with Don Henley; and I just recorded a cut with a group called Go West, from England," he said.

Helping him to spend more time off the road is Shorter's fast growing popularity as a composer. Some of the pieces he wrote during his years with Miles Davis (1964-70) are becoming standards. "The song most recorded by other people is 'Footprints,' and I guess 'Nefertiti' would be next. I recorded them with Miles in 1966-67."

A student in Alabama who has been working on a doctoral thesis analyzing Shorter's contributions, estimates that at last count, there were 159 recordings of his originals. Some, like "Speak No Evil," Lady Day," "Adam's Apple" and "Miyako," were introduced on some of his many Blue Note albums as a leader, overlapping with his Davis incumbency.

Shorter's decision to concentrate on writing will not preclude occasional outside ventures. "Right now," he says, "Carlos Santana and Herbie Hancock and I are talking about doing something together in the spring of 1990.

"Not long ago, Carlos and I did the so-called jazz circuit—10 days in the U.S. and three weeks in Europe. We played to record crowds—up to 20,000 people in places like Pori, Finland.

"We overheard some of the managers saying this would never work, that Carlos was going to jeopardize his own audience by slicing into the jazz world. But it wasn't true; in fact, it was so great that we're eager to do it again.

"Nobody needs to infringe on anyone's territory. It all has to do with self-help. That and self-expression, yes; selfishness, never." □

Jazz Reviews

Blue Note Tribute Ends on a High Note

The three-concert tribute to the Blue Note record label presented by KLON-FM at the John Anson Ford Theater ended Sunday on as high a note as any horn player could hope to reach. It was the best attended, the best organized, and brought to Los Angeles the most exciting small band in jazz today: the latest edition of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers.

The implacable drummer, who will turn 70 in October, now heads a septet, most of whose members were not alive when the first Messengers recorded. They are so much alive now that every minute of their hour on stage bristled with creative energy.

Frank Lacey, Blakey's musical director, played incessantly (and mostly alone) during his 15-minute spot, earning what no other soloist on his instrument may ever have earned: a standing ovation for a performance of wild virtuosity on the trombone.

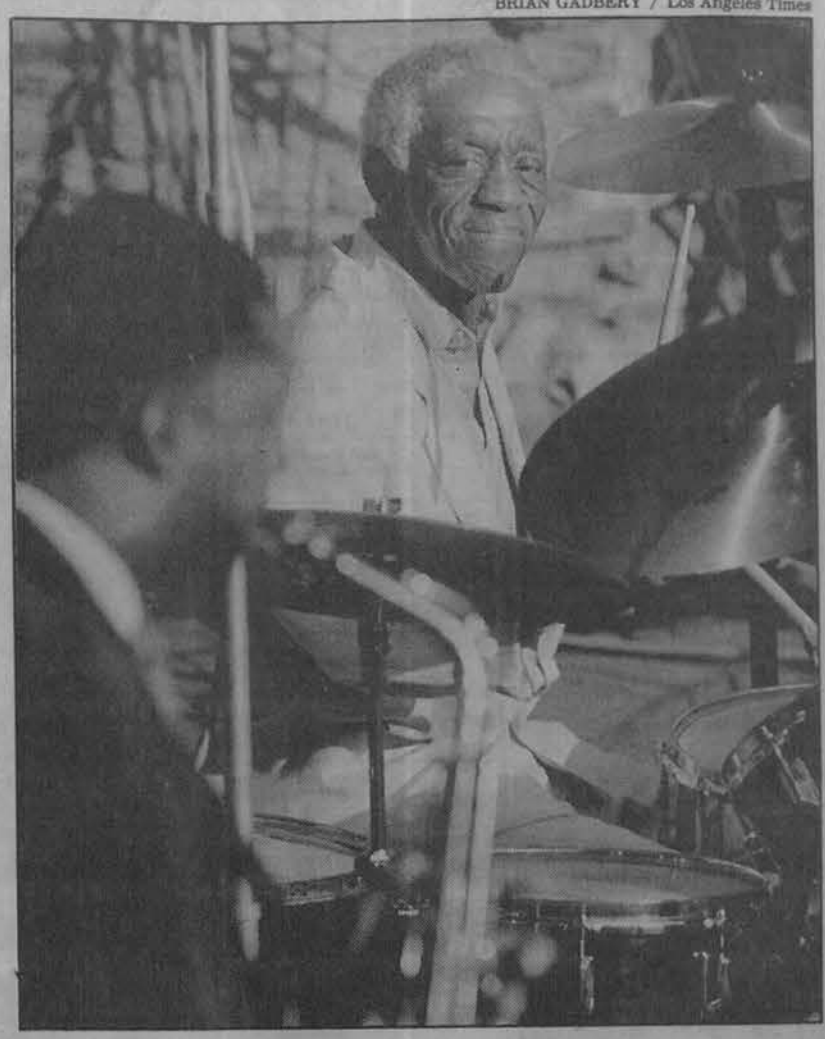
Glissing and gliding, jumping between alternate octaves as if he were a trombonist and a bass trombonist, tossing in off-the-wall quotes, Lacey kept the crowd spellbound. The core was an actual tune, J.J. Johnson's "Lament," but improvisation was the keynote.

The other messengers—Don Harrison on alto and Javon Jackson on tenor, Brian Lynch on trumpet, Benny Green on piano and Essiet Essiet on bass—were all superb, backing up each other's solos with vigorous riffs. For an encore, Blakey brought out pianist Horace Silver to sit in on "Mayreh," one of his early tunes from the days when Blakey and Silver co-founded the Messengers circa 1954. Silver had just played a typically personal set with his own group.

The rest of the show, with one exception, went swimmingly. Freddie Hubbard and Bobby Hutcherson lit up an all-star group; Stanley Turrentine was in casually elegant form in his set on tenor sax. For starters there was a quintet from Tokyo led by one Koji Fujika ("the Benny Goodman of Japan," we were told, though he sounded more like the Pete Fountain of Japan). This incongruous interlude was good for a chuckle when Fujika brought on his tall, willowy singer, Chaka. As if "I Wanna Be Loved by You, Boop-Oop-E-Do" was not enough, she followed with "Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen." If anyone can break the listener's Hebraic heart with this song, Chaka can.

—LEONARD FEATHER

BRIAN GADBERY / Los Angeles Times



Drummer Art Blakey leads the Jazz Messengers at the Blue Note record label anniversary Sunday at John Anson Ford Theater.

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—LEONARD FEATHER

Hamp and George

"Hamp and George Salute Benny," at Carnegie Hall, paid tribute to Benny Goodman partly through the use of Lionel Hampton, George Benson and other alumni, but also with the help of an orchestra assembled by Loren Schoenberg, who took his band through a slick 45-minute set that ranged from the sublime (Mel Powell's *Clarinade*) to the ridiculous (*And the Angels Sing*). The 31-year-old Ken Peplowski relived the clarinet parts with remarkable accuracy.

As soon as Hampton took to the stage, the evening turned into a jam session, with Benson taking over the old Charlie Christian parts on *Soft Winds*. Though Benson's relationship with the clarinet was tenuous (they made one record session together and a few joint appearances), his participation was both logical and authentic. Except for one brief scat solo, he refrained from singing.

Clarinetist Kenny Davern was clearly reluctant to become a Goodman clone, but he made up in emotion what he lacked in fidelity. Dick Hyman played superbly as always. Trumpeter Joe Newman was not in top form, and a couple of young additions, Terence Blanchard on trumpet and Ralph Moore on saxophone, seemed hopelessly out of place; despite Hampton's consistently inspired playing the evening finally fell apart. (Georgie Auld, where were you when we needed you?)

■ **LEONARD FEATHER**

Lionel Hampton at the Mayor's Residence.

BEFORE & AFTER

di Leonard Feather

FRANK MORGAN RITROVA GLI AMICI

Chiamato a riconoscere alla cieca una serie di brani, il «redivivo» altosassofonista pone l'accento, nel commentarli, sui significati umani della musica. Ma Sun Ra e l'Arkestra lo mettono in imbarazzo.

Frank Morgan guarda al 1989 come al più felice fra tutti gli anni che gli è toccato di vivere. Rientrato in scena dopo una lunga serie di guai, aveva suonato a New York per la prima volta in assoluto nel dicembre '86, al Village Vanguard. L'anno dopo si era trasferito a New York dalla California, imbarcandosi anche nel primo di molti trionfali tour in Europa. E nel frattempo è passato da moduli parkeriani chiaramente derivativi a uno dei più originali stili d'oggigiorno. Dopo numerosi e notevoli album per la Contemporary, di recente ha firmato per la Island Records. Ecco ora Frank Morgan accanto al nostro giradischi.


ROLLER

Frank Morgan è nato il 23 dicembre 1933, ma iniziò la professione di altosassofonista, a soli quindici anni, in California, dove il padre si era trasferito per gestire un club frequentato dai più famosi jazzmen. Dell'intensa attività degli anni Cinquanta non esiste che una testimonianza discografica a suo nome, «Introducing Frank Morgan», registrato nel 1955 per la Gene Norman Presents. La sua carriera fu infatti interrotta dalla tossicomania e da lunghi periodi di reclusione, tra l'altro nel penitenziario di Saint Quentin. Liberato negli ultimi anni Settanta, tornò faticosamente alla musica, registrando soltanto nell'85 il suo secondo disco, «Easy Living», al quale, sull'onda di uno straordinario successo, immediatamente numerosi altri seguirono, con ripetuti tour anche in Europa. Vedere l'articolo-intervista in «Musica Jazz» del novembre '87.

1. BENNY CARTER: *Another Time, Another Place* (da *«In The Mood For Swing»*, Musicmasters). Carter, sax contralto e compositore; Dizzy Gillespie, tromba; George Mraz, contrabbasso; Louie Bellson, batteria; Roland Hanna, piano.

Prima: «Oh, bellissimo pezzo, che gioiello d'un pezzo! Credo sia uno di quelli di Benny Carter. Ci scommetterei la testa che sono Benny Carter e Dizzy Gillespie che suonano insieme. Non perdono un colpo, loro. È tutto così spontaneo.

«Sul resto non sono altrettanto sicuro. Potrei azzardare l'ipotesi che si tratti della gente della Pablo, magari Niels Pedersen. C'è un magnifico assolo al basso, e tutta la sezione ritmica è grandiosa. Piacevolissimo.

«Uno dei grandi momenti della mia recente vita è stato il primo viaggio in Europa. Ero in Olanda per il North Sea Festival. Entrando in sala da pranzo, nell'albergo in cui erano ospitati tutti i musicisti, c'era da sbalordire (era il mio primo grande festival): dovunque girassi lo sguardo, ecco Miles, ecco Benny Carter. Benny si alza e mi dice: "Frank! Sono fiero di te. Stavo venendo ad ascoltarti". Quando, a quattordici anni, arrivai in California, avevo chiesto di studiare con Benny Carter, e fu lui a indirizzarmi al mio insegnante, Merle Johnson. Quello è stato il mio unico maestro di sassofono. Il clarinetto l'ho studiato con Buddy Collette.

«L'altro personaggio elettrizzante di questo disco è Dizzy Gillespie, che una volta, a Chicago, mi venne ad ascoltare con il suo magnifico bassista, John Lee. Dovrei dare al disco quattro stellette e mezza proprio per Dizzy e Benny».

Dopo: «George Mraz, oh no, ma non è una sorpresa. E un pensierino su Louie l'avevo fatto, sai? Con Mraz ho suonato al Lincoln Center, e sta sulla lista dei miei contrabbassisti favoriti. Mi piacerebbe fare ancora qualcosa con lui».

2. DAVID MURRAY OCTET: *New Life* (da *«New Life»*, Black Saint). Murray, clarinetto basso, compositore; Ralph Peterson jr., batteria; Baikida Carroll, tromba.

Prima: «Ehilà! Quando è incominciato pensavo: vuoi vedere che mi capita l'occasione di ascoltare la Brass Fantasy di Lester Bowie? E quando è entrato il clarinettista mi sono detto; "Be', questo è Eric Dolphy!". Ma il disco sembra più recente. Questo è un grande suonatore di clarinetto basso. Il tema era molto originale. È un buon disco. Non necessariamente il mio genere, ma di sicuro c'è qui dentro qualcosa anche per me; non è fuori dell'ambito dei miei ascolti. Darei tre stelle e mezza».

Dopo: «Pensavo che potesse essere David Murray. Di Ralph Peterson ho sentito parlare molto. Baikida Carroll, già!

«A me piace molto il World Saxophone Quartet. Andai ad ascoltarli al Cal Arts, subito dopo essere uscito di prigione. Ho anche ascoltato Horace Tapscott in una performance di solo piano. Mi ha rafforzato nell'intenzione di tornare in scena».

3. SONNY STITT: *I Remember Bird* (da *«I Remember Bird»*, Catalyst). Stitt, sax contralto; Dolo Coker, piano; Allen Jackson, contrabbasso; Clarence Johnston, batteria. Registrazione 1977.

Prima: «Cinquantacinque stelle! Sonny Stitt che suona il tuo pezzo, Leonard Feather, *I Remember Bird*. Grande sezione ritmica. Accidenti, questo è quasi vicino al più perfetto disco che uno possa ascoltare. Avevo già ascoltato il tema, ma non questo disco. Lo sentii anche eseguito da Phil Woods con l'orchestra di Oliver Nelson. In un college suonai con la band

Los Angeles Times 8/20/89 JAZZ (syndicated)

The Report: Busy Days Ahead for Shorter

By LEONARD FEATHER

The 15 years Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter spent together as co-leaders of Weather Report established them as guiding forces in the first and most influential group in what might be called the electronic jazz/rock fusion genre.

Since the two came to a parting of the ways in 1985, Zawinul has continued, first using the name Weather Update and more recently the Zawinul Syndicate. But what, in the meanwhile, has happened to Wayne Shorter?

"I'm doing a lot of different things, mainly because long tours, back to back, are too rough on the health," Shorter said. "So I'm getting work that keeps me close to home."

The breakup, he says, was amicable. "Joe and I sat down and talked about whether we should spend another 15 years together or just move out and be our own selves. As a group, we had undergone a certain amount of pulling this way and that. There were essentially three of us—Joe and I and the bassist, originally Miroslav Vitous, later others including Jaco Pastorius. So people were only getting one-third of me, one-third of Joe and of the bassist."

There was speculation at the time that Zawinul, as the more aggressive figure, had dominated the group, leaving Shorter in a lesser role both as saxophonist and composer. According to Shorter, the instruments themselves were responsible.

KIRK McKOY / L.A. Times
Saxophonist Wayne Shorter

"The synthesizer is a very dominant instrument; everything winds up sounding as if it were written by the keyboardist. The next instrument that covers a wide range of acceptability is the bass." Shorter, playing mainly soprano sax, seemed at time to have about as much impact as a piccolo. So, he says, "We decided that to be fair to ourselves, we would not continue for another 15 years."

The friendship has endured. "I had dinner at his home recently. We fax letters and music to each other; we like to look back and talk about the things you and I are talking about now."

The best development in Shorter's career since the separation, he says, is the probability that he will compose for a movie. "I had a call from Island Pictures about a film tentatively titled 'Aunt Julia,' with Peter Falk and Barbara Hershey. It takes place in New Orleans in the 1940s and '50s. I'm supposed to get together soon with the director and the musical director."

Although he took part in the film "Round Midnight" (ironically, a blues solo on the sound track won him a composer's Grammy, though it was ad-libbed rather than composed), Shorter has never really written music directly for a feature film. Herbie Hancock, one of three musicians who shared credit for that award, now wants to involve him in a new project.

"A producer asked whether Herbie and I would collaborate on the sound track for a film starring Tina Turner. I'm reading the script now; it's called 'Vida' and it has a nightclub atmosphere. So I'm hoping these film deals will keep me busy for quite a while," Shorter said.

This will be a welcome change. Shorter was on the road with one group or another during almost all of 1985-87. "I was everywhere—all over Europe, and of course Japan, Hong Kong, you name it," he said. "We toured the Far East as part of a show with Miles' (Davis) group and three other bands. It got pretty hectic at times.

"I had some good people in my bands, but there's no complete recording of any one of them," Shorter said. "Terri Lyne Carrington was my drummer for a year or so, including three European tours. Marilyn Mazur, the percussionist from Denmark, who worked with Miles Davis, has played with me, but not on records."

Since leaving Zawinul, Shorter has floated freely between straight-ahead and fusion situations, as well as between jazz and pop assignments. "There's a single on the air now called 'The End of the Innocence,' which I recorded with Don Henley; and I just recorded a cut with a group called Go West, from England," he said.

Helping him to spend more time off the road is Shorter's fast growing popularity as a composer. Some of the pieces he wrote during his years with Miles Davis (1964-70) are becoming standards. "The song most recorded by other people is 'Footprints,' and I guess 'Nefertiti' would be next. I recorded them with Miles in 1966-67."

A student in Alabama who has been working on a doctoral thesis analyzing Shorter's contributions, estimates that at last count, there were 159 recordings of his originals. Some, like "Speak No Evil," Lady Day," "Adam's Apple" and "Miyako," were introduced on some of his many Blue Note albums as a leader, overlapping with his Davis incumbency.

Shorter's decision to concentrate on writing will not preclude occasional outside ventures. "Right now," he says, "Carlos Santana and Herbie Hancock and I are talking about doing something together in the spring of 1990.

"Not long ago, Carlos and I did the so-called jazz circuit—10 days in the U.S. and three weeks in Europe. We played to record crowds—up to 20,000 people in places like Pori, Finland.

"We overheard some of the managers saying this would never work, that Carlos was going to jeopardize his own audience by slicing into the jazz world. But it wasn't true; in fact, it was so great that we're eager to do it again.

"Nobody needs to infringe on anyone's territory. It all has to do with self-help. That and self-expression, yes; selfishness, never." □

OTTER CREST JAZZ PARTY

By LEONARD FEATHER

The Otter Crest Jazz Party is different. Many of these events tend to use the same musicians in a sort of musical chairs game; great as they are, you wonder why more new names don't get a chance.

Jim Brown, the real estate agent who started Otter Crest in 1978, believes in mixing it up. This year, at the 12th party, he had six Canadians, a tenor player from Japan, trombonist Jiggs Whigham from Cologne (he has lived there for 23 years and teaches at the Conservatory), along with several artists from the Northern West Coast, reminding us that the term "West Coast Jazz" doesn't stop at the California-Oregon border.

The ambiance at the Otter Crest is unique. This resort hotel, three hours' drive southwest from Portland, is a rambling group of timbered buildings clinging to the hilly shoreline, surrounded on three sides by tall trees, on the fourth by the Pacific Ocean. In this serene and lovely setting the musicians were truly inspired.

Bill Berry has been the party's musical director for 10 years. Under his guidance, the musicians work in compatible combinations, with occasional surprise groupings such as a set by all the bass players: Milt Hinton, John Clayton, Jay Leonhart, Don Thompson and Rob Thomas, who doubles on a five-stringed violin.

Another set found all the Canadians together: Fraser McPherson, a splendid tenor player from Vancouver; Rob McConnell on valve trombone; Ed Bickert, one of the premier jazz guitarists; Terry Clarke on drums, the amazing Don Thompson (who later, in a set of his own, played bass, piano, drums and vibes), and Oliver Jones, a pianist who by now ought to be world famous. His

• More Festival News on pg. 28

— Leonard Feather

Bob Thomas

solos revealed an amazing amalgam of Peterson (with whose sister he studied in Montreal), Garner and Tatum.

All the pianists broke it up: Ross Tompkins of *Tonight Show* fame, the wildly swinging Roger Kellaway, Dave Frishberg (who was here to tape a segment for the CBS *Sunday Morning* show), and Gene Harris, equally moving on his super-blues forays and in a sensitive ballad reading of *The Way We Were.*

Jay Leonhart provided delightful comic relief with his own songs. Singing and playing the bass, he sang "It's Impossible to Sing and Play the Bass."

A touching moment was the performance of Milt Hinton, 78, with trumpeter Mike Leonhart, Jay's 15-year-old son, and a 16-year-old saxophonist named Marc Fendel. "I'd like them to be able to say, 50 years from now, that they played with me," said Milt.

Another relatively young musician who acquired himself most creditably was Ken Peplowski, 31, whose tenor suggests Ben Webster, but who can play super-Goodman clarinet.

Since most of the invitees were fast readers who required *little* rehearsal, Bill Berry arranged for a *big* band session on the third and final night, with McConnell, John Clayton and Berry as arrangers/conductors. Even Spike Robinson, who doesn't read, was able to put in a guest shot with this band on a blues chart.

Jeff Hamilton, Joe Beck and a few others made up the complement of some 30-plus musicians who contributed to this sensibly organized weekend. Jim Brown, who started the party here with 12 players and 60 customers, now keeps the crowd to a ceiling of 300 ("We have to maintain some intimacy"). He is sold out way in advance every year. If you're interested (and if it isn't too late), write to Sound Ideas Inc., 155 Myers St. So., Salem, OR. 97302. ■

— Leonard Feather

Spike Robinson

JA

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della scuola, e loro avevano un arrangiamento del pezzo. Era la prima volta che lo ascoltavo.

«Sonny Stitt ha tutto. Non gli manca nulla di meglio. Ha il sound meraviglioso, la meravigliosa scelta delle note, il meraviglioso ritmo, meravigliose concezioni, meraviglioso *soul*, e meravigliosi il tono strumentale e l'autorità. È della classe di Bird, il che è naturale in lui. Io non penso che lui abbia fatto quel che ho fatto io, cioè cercar di suonare come Parker. In lui, penso, è stata una cosa naturale» (L.F.: quando i due si incontrarono, notarono di suonare ciascuno come l'altro, ma non si erano mai ascoltati prima d'allora).

«Quando ho sentito Stitt, anche se all'epoca non suonavo ancora il sassofono, ebbi la sensazione di ascoltare la mia voce, e il modo in cui immaginavo che mi sarebbe piaciuto suonare. Ero un chitarrista, allora, ma sentii che *dovevo* diventare un sassofonista, perché quella era la mia voce! Sonny Stitt mi rende felice d'essere al mondo».

Dopo: «Dolo Coker, un vero pianista bebop. Questa è tutta gente splendida, davvero. Allen e io abbiamo fatto quattro serate insieme: lui era con Kenny Burrell e Art Farmer quando noi eravamo al Kimball's East. Non suonava così bene. Clarence è un bravissimo musicista di gruppo. Mi spiace non aver mai potuto suonare di più con Dolo. Il mondo è migliore grazie a gente come questa».

4. JIM SNIDERO: *Blood Count* (da *«Mixed Bag»*, Criss Cross Jazz). Snidero, sax contralto; Billy Strayhorn, compositore; Benny Green, piano; Peter Washington, contrabbasso; Jeff «Tain» Watts, batteria.

Prima: «Oh, che bello! Non so chi fosse, ma era un meraviglioso sassofonista. Penso che il tema fosse *Blood Count* di Billy Strayhorn, una cosa molto seria, molto bella. Chiunque fosse al sax, ha compiuto un eccellente lavoro nel leggerla. La sezione ritmica era molto, molto d'aiuto. Ottimo. Cinque stelle».

Dopo: «Sono miei amici. Benny ha lavorato con me a New York, in realtà è stato lui a cercarmi. Non avevo mai sentito parlare di Jim Snidero. È davvero meraviglioso. Sento che farei meglio ad andare a casa a esercitarmi».

5. SUN RA ARKESTRA: *King Porter Stomp* (da *«Sunrise In Different Dimensions»*, Hat Hut). Incisione del 1960.

Prima: «Oooh! Sembrava proprio che si stessero divertendo. Vorrei fare un solo commento, tale da togliere di mezzo le stelle e il resto: vorrei soltanto dire che il bebop vive! Questo non è cosa per me. Penso che sia swing alla sua maniera. Sembrava che si divertissero, ripeto, e quando questo avviene, il fondamentale scopo dell'arte è raggiunto. E qui pareva che tutti se la godessero. Non facevano swing come piacerebbe a me, ma lo facevano. Non saprei che voto assegnare».

Dopo: «Avevo riconosciuto il tema, ma non ne sapevo il titolo. Non ho mai incontrato Sun Ra, solo di tanto in tanto mi sono imbattuto in uomini della sua orchestra, e sarei ansioso di conoscere anche lui. Nemmeno adesso potrei dare un voto, per la semplice ragione che non penso di essere qualificato a farlo».

6. ORNETTE COLEMAN: *Embraceable You* (da *«The Best Of Ornette Coleman»*, Atlantic). Coleman, sax contralto, Don Cherry, pocket trumpet; Charlie Haden, contrabbasso; Ed Blackwell, batteria. Registrazione del 1960.

Prima: «Questo dovrebbe essere Ornette con Bobby Bradford. Che sia Ornette sono sicuro, ma non penso che il trombettista sia Don Cherry, perché suona differentemente. Ornette è Ornette, è unico nel suo genere. Ho molto rispetto per lui. E ammirazione, e amore. Penso che tutto quel che lui fa sia degno di seria attenzione. Classificherei il disco con cinque stelle se si tratta di Ornette, semplicemente perché nutro quei sentimenti nei suoi confronti.

«Il brano era *Embraceable You*. Lui lo ha riscritto, che è poi tutto lo scopo della musica, non ti pare? Di sicuro lo ha reso proprio».

Dopo: «Don Cherry è un mio vecchio amico. Frequentò anche lui la Jefferson High School. Quando io feci la mia prima apparizione al Vanguard, registrammo dal vivo. Ebbene, mentre suonavamo *All The Things You Are*, e il nastro girava, dopo il mio assolo entrò una tromba. Sapevo che non poteva essere Johnny Coles, perché aveva già suonato prima di me. Era Don Cherry, che si era infilato sul palcoscenico. Ed era ottimo. Cercai di convincere Richard Bock a lasciarlo nel disco, ma non volle».

7. PHIL WOODS: *Johnny Hodges* (da *«Here's To My Lady»*, Chesky). Woods, sax contralto; Tommy Flanagan, piano; George Mraz, contrabbasso; Kenny Washington, batteria.

Prima: «Sembra Phil Woods. Un magnifico sassofonista, uno dei migliori di sempre. Ho avuto il piacere di suonare con Phil in giugno a Parigi: era la prima volta ed è stata una grande esperienza. È un uomo delizioso. Non so quale fosse il gruppo, ma si notava una certa affinità, sembrava il suo gruppo. Un tema davvero bello, anche. Quanto ai voti, vorrei dare cinque stelle a tutto ciò che lui fa».

Dopo: «Il titolo è *Johnny Hodges?* Già, ho notato che Phil stava suonando qualcosa di *A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing*. Mi ha ricordato il mio desiderio di ricominciare a suonare quel bellissimo pezzo.

«Quando a Parigi ho fatto quelle cose con gli archi, tra i primi a venire dietro le quinte prima del concerto fu Phil. Lui e sua moglie vennero a incoraggiarmi». ●

ELENA CARMINATI

Frank Morgan sulla scena del Ciak per l'ultimo festival di Milano, nel marzo 1989, con il pianista Hugh Lawson e il bassista Cameron Brown (alla batteria c'era Ben Riley).

Los Angeles Times 8/28/89

Norman Granz and the Pablo Jazz Jam

By LEONARD FEATHER

How and when can a single three-day festival yield 15 compact discs and 12 hours of superior music? When the talent is supplied and the records are produced by Norman Granz.

The entire Granz family of Pablo Records jazz giants was on hand during a weekend in Montreux, Switzerland, in July of 1977.

The CD versions include several additional tracks that were not on the original LPs.

The joyous informality of the occasion led to many overlaps of personnel. Oscar Peterson is heard as leader or sideman on six records, Ray Brown on five, Niels Pedersen and Lockjaw Davis and Clark Terry on four, etc.

Perhaps it was something in the mountain air, or just the mutual good vibes among mature and dedicated musicians; whatever the cause, the results varied from acceptable to exceptional—more often the latter, as the ratings will reveal.

OSCAR PETERSON AND THE BASSISTS Pablo Live OJCCD 383-2 ★★★★★

OSCAR PETERSON JAM OJCCD 378-2 ★★★★

PABLO ALL STARS JAM with OSCAR PETERSON, MILT JACKSON, CLARK TERRY et al OJCCD 380-2 ★★★★½

MILT JACKSON/RAY BROWN with CLARK TERRY et al JCCD 375-2 ★★★★

Peterson's collaboration with the world's greatest bass players, Brown and Denmark's Pedersen, was a summit meeting without precedent. Except for brief passages on a blues, the bassists do not play together, but a play-by-play rundown makes identification easy. Peterson was doubly inspired; Brown and Pedersen, each in his own way, are formidable both as soloists and rhythm players.

The Peterson Jam, with Gillespie and Terry on trumpet and Davis on tenor, rises above its program (the tunes are predictable) to provide inspired moments. Terry has the first solo on "Just in Time" and Gillespie on "Bye Bye Blues."

The Pablo Jam is notable for the inclusion of a rarely heard soloist, tenor saxophonist Ronnie Scott (better known as owner of London's famous jazz club), who suggests early John Coltrane. Milt Jackson and Joe Pass are airborne throughout "Samba de Orfeu," as is Peterson in "Pennies From Heaven."

Monty Alexander replaces Peterson on the Jackson/Brown jam, notable for a stealthy minor Brown blues called "Slippery." Inconsequentially diverting is a blues vocal by Jackson and Terry.

ELLA FITZGERALD with TOMMY FLANAGAN TRIO OJCCD 376-2 ★★★★½

TOMMY FLANAGAN TRIO OJCCD 372-2 ★★★★½

Ella cuts a swath from "My Man" (introduced by Mistinguett in 1920) to Paul Williams and Stevie Wonder. Her indigo finals to "I Ain't Got Nothing but the Blues" is reward enough in itself. Flanagan, the ideal accompanist, is also the *soigne* soloist, dealing elegantly with Gillespie, Parker, Ellington and Berlin.

COUNT BASIE BIG BAND OJCCD 377-2 ★★★★★

MONTREUX JAM SESSIONS with BASIE, PETERSON, GILLESPIE, JACKSON, et al ★★★

Just how much Basie's piano meant to his band is vividly displayed, along with a personnel only four of whose members are still in the orchestra (the maestro and five others have died). Originals by Sam Nestico, Neal Hefti and Quincy Jones are as timelessly compelling as big band jazz can be. "Basie Jam" has a few surprises: trumpeter Roy Eldridge using a Ben Webster "Cotton Tail" solo; he also sings the blues. Superb tenor by Zoot Sims. "Montreux Jam" is a pickup album of leftover tracks by groups heard on four of the other CDs. Three consecutive cuts (running over a half hour) are based on the blues. *Un peu trop, n'est-ce pas?*

Oscar Peterson's collaboration at Montreux was a high note.

DIZZY GILLESPIE JAM OJCCD 381-2 ★★★½

ROY ELDRIDGE 4 OJCCD 373-2 ★★★★

Three generations of trumpets are heard: Gillespie, 59, and Jon Faddis, 23, on the first; Eldridge, then 66, and the link between Armstrong and Gillespie. As in several of these CDs, Granz neglected to give solo credits where there are instrumental duplications, but it's probably Dizzy muted and Faddis open on "Girl of My Dreams." The ballad medley "Once in a While" sounds like Dizzy, but Faddis applies his youthful power to "Here's That Rainy Day."

The excitement, unique raspy tone and incredible tension of Eldridge are so well represented that for those unfamiliar with his work (he stopped playing after a 1980 stroke, and died this year), this may be a good place to start.

BENNY CARTER 4 OJCCD 374-2 ★★★★★

EDDIE (LOCKJAW) DAVIS 4 OJCCD 384-2 ★★★★★

Carter's alto sax is a model of form and tonal beauty; as a bonus, he plays the first chorus of "Body and Soul" on trumpet with the same exquisite lyricism. Davis (1922-1986) had a tenor sax sound that was mordant, almost indignant; here he tears into some well-selected songs: "The Breeze and I," "I Wished on the Moon," "Angel Eyes." Flawless backup by Peterson, Brown and Jimmie Smith.

JOE PASS OJCCD 382-2 ★★½

RAY BRYANT OJCCD 371-2 ★★★

Pass must be judged by his own five-star standards. This was supposed to be an all-blues album, but after 20 minutes of blues, presumably bored, he switched to old songs. He has many solo sessions that came off far better. Ray Bryant, in a solo piano set, runs smoothly enough through standards, blues and the like, though his attempt at gospel ("If I Could Just Make It to Heaven") never reaches that Ray Charles plateau. (Note: Fantasy Records at 10th and Parker, Berkeley, CA 94710 is the distributor for Pablo, founded and formerly owned by Granz.) □

Part VI / Thursday, August 31, 1989

JAZZ REVIEW

Brown's Youthful Enthusiasm at Vine St.

Oscar Brown Jr. is back at the Vine St. Bar & Grill in Hollywood, doing what came naturally to him when he first stepped onto a stage: namely, singing anecdotal songs in his own highly personal lyrical and melodic terms, and acting them out with the visual grace of a dancer.

At 62, he still brings much of his young enthusiasm to bear on the stories he tells. If his vocal timbre is not as consistently strong today, the emotion he brings to his compositions invariably delivers the message. His opening number, a long humorous story about Adam and Eve, was done virtually as a recitative. Some of his material has been long familiar, but his audiences no doubt would refuse to let him leave the stage without such standards as "The Signifyin' Monkey" and "Afro Blue," both of which he recorded 30 years ago.

During the first few tunes, Brown's background of guitar, bass and drums seemed to offer rather vague support, as if the pianist had failed to show up; but when Oscar Brown III began to assume the spotlight, as bassist and in a couple of vocal duets with his father, the show came more fully into focus.

What the senior Brown's material may lack in sophistication it makes up for in folkloric wit. Several of the songs stem from shows he has put together over the decades, or from a new one on which he is now working, based on the story of Zora Neale Hurston, the writer who came to prominence in the 1920s.

If his messages are not deep, they are invariably entertaining and they never fail to swing. Brown will remain at Vine Street through Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

9/1/89

An Evening With Cleo La at the Hollywood Bowl

Spending an evening with Cleo Laine and John Dankworth, even outdoors at the Hollywood Bowl, is not unlike sitting by the fireside, admiring its beauty and being warmed by its glow.

"Come In From the Rain," Laine sang, and that was the feeling you had as she told the graceful story of this song by Melissa Manchester and Carole Bayer Sager.

Stunning in a gown of brilliant colors, she zeroed in on her main target: songs by women composers. From "I Love You Truly," written in 1910 by Carrie Jacobs Bond (and fitting with a boppish waltz counter-melody by Dankworth), she sailed through the decades to "My Favorite Year," a haunting song by two Los Angeles writers, Karen Gottlieb and Michele Brourman. She even brought her own transatlantic blues touch to Billie Holiday's "Fine and Mellow."

Laine's unique and ever-amazing voice ranges from low and sultry to treetop high, with Dankworth as her constant companion: playing alto saxophone in unison or counterpoint to her wordless passages (she has given the art of scat singing a different dimension), embellishing each song with his discreet voicings.

Through it all Laine British essence; someh matter that "we live *drahma*" doesn't quite "Stars Fell on Alabama all these years, she is s *chahnce* on love.

The opening medle half of her show, using "star" in the title and ing" tunes, seemed a trary. The collective th best was a group of Ste heim works, including, one from "Into the Woo was her big hit sho Angeles earlier this year

The Dankworth com the two halves with pl strumentals, but it was for his wife, using sopra flute or tenor sax and alto guitar work by Larry K piano by Larry Dun brought out the sextet's v

It is doubtful that a husband-and-wife mus has ever dovetailed with instant empathy as thi mind-reading couple. G radiated everywhere du thoroughly musical ever not just on stage but also a 9,444 witnesses.

—LEONARD FE

Laine and Dankworth: Together

By LEONARD FEATHER

MARIO CABRERA

Jazz singer Cleo Laine and husband, composer John Dankworth.

If the careers of Cleo Laine and John Dankworth were ever made into a motion picture, it might well be called "Divided Lives." Or "United Lives," according to which aspects of their multifarious activities are inspected.

When Laine and Dankworth are not working as a team (as they will be tonight at the Hollywood Bowl), she may be busy with her stage career as a dramatic actress, whose credits extend back to 1958 (the year they were married), while he lays aside his saxophone and clarinet to resume his other life as a symphony conductor, composer/arranger, and occasional writer of film scores.

"It's been going surprisingly well," said Dankworth. "The contrast between England and the U.S. is striking; pops concerts, which are so popular here now, have had a real struggle over there, but at last I'm securely fastened, it seems."

Dankworth, who has also been principal guest conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Pops since 1987, is constantly in demand for other symphony appearances. "I conducted a date with the Rochester Philharmonic featuring Dizzy Gillespie," he said. "We did symphonic arrangements of several of Dizzy's best known compositions."

It was with the Rochester Pops that Dankworth conducted (and played saxophone) for "Echoes of Harlem," one of the most successful incursions into symphony-cum-jazz territory, with trumpeter Barry Lee Hall of the Ellington orchestra as the other principal soloist, on ProJazz(cq) Records, a subsidiary of the ProArte label to which he is now under contract.

Meanwhile, Laine recently completed "Woman to Woman," consisting of music and lyrics by female composers. Several songs from that album will be heard this evening. RCA has also just reissued her classic "Porgy and Bess" album with Ray Charles, which Norman Granz produced in 1977.

The divided lives of Laine and Dankworth extend to their residences. At their home north of London they host the Wavendon All Music Plan, presenting everything from string quartets and jazz to opera and Indian music during

about 150 concerts a year. Occasionally they retreat to a home they bought a few years ago up north in Sonoma, Calif.

For John Dankworth, the surprise of the year was an announcement that out of 31 applicants for a new radio channel in London, a group applying for an all-jazz station (with Dankworth and other jazz notables on the committee) was the winner.

Dankworth's enthusiasm for the jazz project is a reminder of his loyalty to the idiom that was his basic background. It seems probable that he will take part in the venture with an occasional program of his own; and it is not hard to guess which Grammy winning jazz-pop-musical comedy-opera singer will be his first guest.

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TOMMY WHITTLE
A Profile

Saxophonist Tommy Whittle became a regular member of the PizzaExpress All Stars on February 22nd. He has, of course, appeared many times before at the Pizza Express, with his own groups and with Americans such as Al Cohn and Sweets Edison. "They've always been complimentary, and I suppose you pull out all the stops for the occasion", he says modestly.

Tommy has been a leading light of the London scene ever since he moved down from Scotland as a lad. Despite much involvement with session work, he has kept playing jazz continuously and relishes its unpredictability. "You can be feeling it's going too good and you play badly - other times you thought you couldn't be bothered, and you surprise yourself by playing well."

As an instance, he recalled an occasion with Harry Haye's band while still in his teens. "We were working at Churchills and, after finishing at 3am, we were driven all the way to Blackpool to play on Harry's stand at a trade fair. I did a quartet set with George Shearing, who was also in Harry's band, and it was very well received and written up in the press. And I still meet people who were there and remember it! Looking back, it seemed a good introduction to my career."

Tommy's favourites on saxophone include all the big names up to and including Mike Brecker. "Hopefully it seeps into the brain and, as you get older, it comes out with something of yourself." To find the results on record, there's the STRAIGHT EIGHT album (Miles Music) and two with his wife Barbara Jay on their own Tee-Jay, for which he's also planning a quartet album.

For live appearances you need go no further than the ubiquitous Pizza All Stars. Of them Tommy says, "I'll be in good company, although its not the easiest job by any means. They play a highly skilled cross-section of mainstream music."

•Brian Priestley

PizzaExpress All Star Jazz Band
Personnel: Alan Ganley, drums; Len Skeat, bass; Brian Lemon, piano; Tommy Whittle, tenor; Dave Shepherd, clarinet/ leader; Colin Smith, trumpet; Roy Williams, trombone.

SCREEN JAZZ
Sounds of Surprise

Reviewed by Geoffrey Smith

Channel Four has yet again earned the gratitude of jazz lovers, this time with *Sounds of Surprise*, a season of excellent documentaries. Every Saturday night at nine o'clock has brought a close encounter with a master of the art, playing, talking and being talked about. Naturally, the most successful films have been those that offered the most footage of the star in question. It was illuminating to see Gil Evans at work, coaxing his patented loose, spontaneous structures out of a group of French musicians, while delivering some pithy observations along the way. "Every outstanding player has to have a *cry*," he said, as Gil himself obviously did.

In an amusing bit, Evans recalled Charlie Parker saying that playing a solo was just a matter of editing, making choices as you went along: "yes, yes, yes, no, no, yes, no ..." That quote would've brightened up *Bird Now*, which on the whole didn't convey a very strong sense of its subject's presence. Bird's wife Doris (who was left out of the Eastwood Biopic) made a touching witness, but it was hard to compensate for the simple dearth of Parker on film. The same difficulty beset the Art Tatum feature, though the few clips fully registered just how effortless that amazing technique was.

Arguably the most effective film was *Art Blakey: Jazz Messenger*, with the master up front as leader, soloist, tireless jazz publicist and mentor to young musicians. It was an act of homage to a man who's always practised his basic principle: "the most important thing is to keep going." Shots of him breaking in a new generation of British stars at the Camden Festival showed him as much in the thick of things as ever, and a galaxy of former Messengers paid tribute to the head Messenger of them all. It was a model documentary, a perfect blend of music and reminiscence. And there's more to come, until April 1st, including the surprising sounds of Loose Tubes, Fats Waller and Ben Webster.

Sounds of Surprise: 'Keeping Love Alive' - a self portrait of Elizabeth Welch.

Sounds of Surprise: 'A Tribute to Gil Evans'

AMERICAN • NEWS

Leonard Feather

■ The Lionel Hampton School of Music, the only major conservatory named after a jazz musician, held a major festival for three days in late February. The school is part of the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho. Taking part were Hampton and his orchestra, Phyllis Hyman, Wynton Marsalis, Carmen McRae, Doc Cheatham, Ray Brown, Gene Harris, Stan Getz, Kenny Burrell and as many as 100 college bands from around the country in a contest judged by a panel of jazzmen. There are now over 200 music majors at the school.

■ An album by a group calling itself the Charlie Parker Memorial Quintet will be recording soon for the new Donte's record label. It will feature Charles McPherson on alto, Jon Faddis on trumpet, Pete Jolly on piano, Brian Bromberg on bass and John Guerin, drums and leader. The group will be the opening attraction at Donte's when the club finally re-opens. After many delays it is now reported due to open its doors in late March.

■ Barrie Lee Hall, the trumpeter and arranger who joined the Ellington orchestra a year before Duke died and is still with the band under Mercer Ellington, is featured with John Dankworth on an album made by the British saxophonist-composer with the Rochester Philharmonic. Dankworth is also collaborating with the same orchestra for an album with Dizzy Gillespie.

■ Terri Lyne Carrington, the 23-year old drummer who has been working with Clark Terry and many other name groups in New York since her early teens, has moved to California to become a regular member of the house band, led by Michael Wolf, on the nightly TV series starring comedian Arsenio Hall. She also has a new album out on the Verve Forecast label with an all star personnel including Wayne Shorter (with whom she toured Europe), Grover Washington, Patrice Rushen, Gerald Albright, Carlos Santana and John Scofield.

■ Clint Eastwood, whose movie *Bird* earned him a victory as Best Director in this year's Golden Globe Awards, is also executive director of *Straight No Chaser*, a documentary about Thelonious Monk produced by Bruce Ricker and Charlotte Zwerin, in which Monk's son, his patron the late Nica de Koenigswarter and his managers Harry Colomby and Bob Jones talk about Monk's personality, Monk's long illness, it is implied in the interviews, was tantamount to manic-depression.

■ Paquito d'Rivera's long fight to bring his son out of Cuba ended happily in January, when the Cuban government relented and allowed the son and d'Rivera's ex-wife to emigrate to the US.

■ The Candid label, for which an excellent series of sessions was produced by Nat Hentoff in the early 1960s until the company went out of business, has been revived. Just released on Candid is an album made by guitarist Ray Crawford in 1961 but never released. With him were Johnny Coles, Cecil Payne, Junior Mance, Ben Tucker and Frank Dunlop.

■ Lennie Niehaus, who earned great admiration for his musical supervision of the soundtrack for *Bird*, has been set to oversee the music for *The Hot Men*, supposedly a story about the alleged love-hate relationship between Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa, with Abe Most and Jack Sperling doing the sound tracking for the two swing stars. In a typical Hollywood gesture, two white musicians, Charlie Shoemake and Mike Lang, will play the musical parts for Lionel Hampton and Teddy Wilson.

■ Ellis Marsalis, who had been teaching at a Virginia College, will return to New Orleans in September to begin a new program of jazz studies at the Univ. of N.O. His 23-year old trombonist son Delfeayo Marsalis, who will graduate soon from the Berklee College of Music in Boston, has been invited to join an all star group in September on the Regent Sun jazz cruise, along with Nat Adderley and Red Holloway.

■ Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio will be the scene of a ten day educational jazz festival April 6 to 15, dedicated to Duke Ellington. Mel Lewis will be an artist-in-residence, along with Art Farmer, Henry Threadgill and pianist Renee Rosnes. There will be a jazz vocal day with Janis Siegel of Manhattan Transfer, a concert by Sarah Vaughan, and appearances by Clark Terry and Louie Bellson (both Ellington band members in the 1950s), the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, John Abercrombie and Paul Motian.

■ The all-British version of the vocal group known as the Swingle Singers, organised in 1984, is set to open in New York at the Village Gate.

■ Marlena Shaw and Shirley Horn did two guest vocal appearances each in a forthcoming album by Joe Williams; also in the album will be Supersax. Both Williams and Ms. Shaw are to take part in a jazz festival cruise on the Regent Sun, in September, sailing from Vancouver to LA.

■ Leon Petties, the drummer who recorded with Harold Land for Blue Note and had been based for some time in the San Diego area, died February 1 in that city. He was 60.

■ Gene Quill, 61, the alto saxophonist best known for his work in tandem with Phil Woods in the late 1950s, died in early January in Atlantic City, where he was born. He had been ill and inactive for many years, having been paralysed after suffering a beating.

Thelonious Monk (left) with Howard McGhee, Roy Eldridge and Teddy Hill outside Minton's Playhouse in 1948.

L.A. TIMES 9/3/89

JAZZ

George Benson Returns to His Jazz Roots

By LEONARD FEATHER

George Benson is the Nat King Cole of the 1980s. Like Cole, he earned fame as an instrumentalist before reaching world renown as a singer.

Now, just as Cole did late in his career, he has made an album that reminds the public of his origins. "Tenderly" (Warner Bros. 25907), in which the eminent jazz pianist McCoy Tyner plays a major role, entered the jazz chart Aug. 6 and has already leaped to the No. 1 spot.

The guitarist, whose vocal personality made a fortune for him, plays on almost every track; three are strictly instrumental and the title cut is a guitar solo.

"Even my pop fans like it," he said, just before leaving for a week in Brazil. "They like the ballady things. My wife fell in love with 'This Is All I Ask.' But what knocked me out was that my mother's favorite was 'I Could Write a Book,' which is strictly a jazz thing. And my stepfather, who taught me how to play ukulele and then guitar, starting when I was 9, now says that his faith in my playing is reaffirmed! He was always very helpful but sometimes very critical—told me I was playing too fast and he couldn't follow me. But when he heard this album he said, 'Boy, that's what I call guitar playing!' "

Benson, who will appear at the Wiltern Theatre Sept. 22-25, using his regular sidemen and an orchestra, recalls that his collaboration with Tyner came about by sheer chance. "Last year, on my way to the Blue Note Club in New York, I was listening to a jazz program on the radio and they played a tune from an old Johnny Hartman album. When they said McCoy Tyner was the pianist on it, I said to myself, 'He must have been a baby back then!' But he was already musically mature." (The album was made in 1963 with John Coltrane and Tyner, then 24, accompanying Hartman.)

An idea occurred to Benson. "I realized how well McCoy plays behind vocalists, and of course we're both instrumentalists. I decided to get in touch with him. Our sons are close friends—they're both together now. The next day, McCoy's son was over at my house and I said 'Get in touch with your pop and ask him if he'd like to make a record with me.' His father called back from Europe and said he would."

ART WILKINSON

George Benson's "Tenderly" leaped to No. 1 on jazz chart.

Aware that record companies, when confronted with noncommercial projects, react as if they have been asked to commit suicide, Benson went into a studio and produced the first five songs on his own. "The Japanese booked us as soon as word reached them that we were in the studio! Then George Wein got word of the record and set us up with a European tour."

Having launched the idea, Benson got in touch his producer, Tommy Li Puma. "Tommy then contacted the record company and got them real excited. Even Mo Ostin, the chairman of the board at Warners, called and said, 'George, this is a gutsy move, to do an album like that at this time in your career.' "

The three-week European tour lived up to everyone's expectations. "We had a lot of fans who came because they'd heard my name, but many of them knew McCoy's name and were curious to see what was going to happen."

Coincidentally, Benson found himself involved in several other jazz partnerships. "I guest-starred with Dizzy Gillespie in Europe. Boy, was he packing them in! I like working with the old-timers because that's really where I learned to play; in fact, when I was growing up, I always wanted to get into that bag. My first recorded attempts at that kind of music were for Columbia, which is why John Hammond liked me, I guess." (The late John Hammond recorded Benson in a series of strictly instrumental small group sessions in 1966-67. "The George Benson Cookbook" is still available only in cassette form on CS9413.)

Japan, typically, offered Benson and Tyner the most wide-ranging chances to stretch out. "Over there, we had additional help from Freddie Hubbard on trumpet and Joe Henderson on saxophone. That exciting horn sound gave us even more of a jazz flavor," Benson said.

In 1966, playing in the Newport Jazz Festival's Guitar Workshop, Benson was hailed by Down Beat as "a young guitarist with roots in Charlie Christian and a wonderful beat." The reference to Christian, who revolutionized jazz guitar in his 1939-40 recordings with Benny Goodman, came to mind again last June when Benson was teamed with Lionel Hampton in a Carnegie Hall concert, "Hamp and George Salute Benny." "That was the greatest honor in the world," he says, "sitting in for Charlie Christian and bringing back the tunes he and Benny and Lionel played back then." (Benson played and record-

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"...THE BREEZIEST, SEXIEST, MOST LITERATE YOUTH-ORIENTED MOVIE AROUND..."
— James Verniere, THE BOSTON HERALD

"...bright picture containing some acute observations about young love, first love and the passage of time."
— Liz Braun, THE TORONTO SUN

"...a film that rides on its spitty cleverness, it's swift wit and smart talk."
— Hal Hinson, WASHINGTON POST

Wednesday, September 6, 1989 / Part VI 3

Kelly—whose new L.P. "Some Other Time" (Chase Music Group) is due out at the end of September and features arrangements conducted by Garvin—is happy with her current direction. "It feels totally right," she said. "And it's creative. It's not like I'm only doing [pieces like Ellington's] 'Satin Doll.' I do some contemporary mainstream jazz tunes too, like some by Chick Corea. Overall, I've found it to be a much more creative area."

Garvin will be at the keyboard behind Kelly when she offers mainstream material on Sunday in a program dubbed "Ladies Sing the Blues," where all four singers will do individual sets, then group together to do two tunes as a finale. "My set will have Miles Davis' 'All Blues,' threading all through it," said Kelly, an Oakland native who lived in Los Angeles for nine years, "but I'll also do older tunes like 'Royal Garden Blues' and Bobby Troup's 'The Meaning of the Blues.' "

ahead genre he comes from struck a chord with me. I've been concentrating on that ever since."

Musicians everywhere should be lastingly grateful for the immense volume of work for which he has been directly or indirectly responsible.

party annually from London, preceded his solo numbers with bits of antic anecdotes.

well Smith and Ross

JAZZ REVIEW

Young, Old Mix It Up at Gibson's Party

By LEONARD FEATHER

CHUCK BIGGER

Phil Woods, left, Marshall Royal and Benny Carter play alto sax together at the 27th annual Dick Gibson Jazz Party in Denver.

DENVER—Jazz is the art of renovation. At the 27th annual Dick Gibson Jazz Party, held here Saturday through Monday in a ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, there was rewarding evidence of the degree to which musicians mature with age, while the younger ones, listening and learning, pick up on their ideas and expand them.

As always, Gibson hired the 60 musicians individually, dispersing them into dozens of combinations that changed every 45 minutes. At one symbolic point Sunday evening, a round-robin on "Lady Be Good" led directly from clarinetist Ken Peplowski, at 30 the youngest musician here, to a chorus by the trumpeter Doc Cheatham, 54 years his senior.

While the sounds have broadened, tradition still plays a great role. Pianist Ralph Sutton has attended every party but one; Milt Hinton, the bass virtuoso, has been here every year since the third party. Josh Gibson, who this year helped his father organize the event, was present at the first party in a sense: His mother, Maddie Gibson, gave birth to him two days later.

Performance, not repertoire, is the essence of the jazz party's success. Common-denominator songs are inevitable for an ad-hoc group, but some jazzmen do get weary wearing the shame shabby songs. Phil Woods escaped from the stricture by passing out parts to a bassist and pianist for his own "Goodby Mr. Evans," a poignant elegy to the late pianist Bill Evans. Flip Phillips and Scott Hamilton had the 554 fans in an uproar as they played preset routines from an album they had recorded.

Other escapes from the commonplace were the occasional waltzes, such as "Answer Me My Love," a perfect vehicle for the lyrical trumpet of Joe Wilder, and "Charmaine," an elegant Dave McKenna piano feature. Howard Alden, the promising young guitarist, even reached back into corn country to find ways of sublimating "Tico Tico."

Always, too, there is the blues, in every mood and tempo, whether for a funky piano duet by Jay McShann and Ralph Sutton or a riff for a 10-piece band.

Southern California was well represented. Paul Smith and Ross Tompkins were among the seven pianists. Bill Watrous played the trombone with incredible clarinet-like facility. Ray Brown, John Clayton and Jim DeJulio were the L.A. bassist contingent. Curtis Peagler from San Diego, not a party regular, showed style but had trouble with a squeaky reed.

Innovations don't always work here. The drummer Panama Francis drew eight men from the pool, rehearsed briefly, then offered a set of music by the Savoy Sultans, a relief band often heard at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom in the 1930s and '40s. The charts sounded dated and the soloists, ironically, were too modern: The be-bop alto saxes of Red Holloway and Dick Johnson had all the relevance of a jet engine on a railroad train.

Clarinetists proliferated: Peanuts Hucko, Bob Wilber, Kenny Davern, Dick Johnson and Ken Peplowski—all capable, even admirable, but more representative of Gibson's personal taste than of any resurgence in the instrument's popularity.

Good humor always abounds. At one point, five horn players, not known for their singing, erupted into a unison bop vocal chorus on "Perdido." No party would be complete without Milt Hinton's vocal on "Old Man Time." George Chisholm, the trombonist who flies to the party annually from London, preceded his solo numbers with bits of antic anecdotes.

Gibson himself saved his own vocal, as always, for the final hours on Monday, singing "I Ain't Got Nobody" in his stentorian baritone and earning an encore.

Standing ovations, not uncommon here, reached a peak with the wild reaction to Lew Tabackin on tenor sax and Phil Woods on alto as they interwove their way through "Love for Sale."

At the Monday evening session, even such exquisite ballad performances as "We'll Be Together Again" by Bob Cooper on tenor sax and violinist John Frigo's "Estrellita" were rapturously received.

The final set Monday was mysteriously billed by Gibson as "The Great American Youth Movement Jazzband." It turned out to consist of Doc Cheatham, 84, with Benny Carter, 82; Milt Hinton, 79; Marshall Royal, 76; Flip Phillips, 75; Jay McShann, George Chisholm and Sweets Edison, 74; John Frigo, 71; Panama Francis, who will turn 71 in December, and the baby of the band, trumpeter Snooky Young, who won't turn 71 until February. Nowhere else in the arts do the participants have the longevity and perdurable talent that jazz displays.

Since Gibson put on the first jazz party at Aspen, Colo., in 1963, he has given rise to 57 other such affairs. Musicians everywhere should be lastingly grateful for the immense volume of work for which he has been directly or indirectly responsible.

Herald Examiner 9/7

Critic lacks all that jazz

Regarding the Aug. 15 review, "Five-pianist exercise salutes Bill Evans," by Tony Gieske, a Herald Examiner jazz writer.

Gieske obviously has no understanding of the word tribute. He begins with the phrase "Five Pianists in Search of an Essence." By the time I got done reading his article, it was evident that he has no understanding of the word essence, either.

My biggest criticism is that Gieske had the audacity to say Joanne Grauer "did not attain Evans' economy of means." Who was trying to? Who is he to make such a rotten comment? Certainly not a top critic of jazz or Bill Evans, that's for sure. The use of "demure" also was a bad choice and obviously portrays Gieske as a male chauvinist — something we don't need in the jazz world or anywhere else.

Gieske also expressed that Grauer portrayed "weakness of beat" in her music. I remember when I was a student at the Dick Grove School of Music. In Mr. Grove's keyboard program, he told us Grauer's innovative style and finesse portrayed the influence of Evans and that we should listen to the way she phrased — how her improvisational lines were unmistakably influenced by an Evanslike quality. Notice I said "quality" not "quantity."

In contrast to Gieske's review about Grauer's ability to "cover the ground" as a jazz pianist, he may want to look up the article on her by top jazz critic Leonard Feather of the L.A. Times for the "Women In Jazz" series.

I am a graduate student at the University of Southern California majoring in jazz studies, and I am aware that criticism is to be expected in all walks of music and is very healthy for our learning experiences. But Gieske has made a beautiful tribute to a brilliant person into a comparison contest. He offended me and a lot of other people.

This performance at the Musicians Union Hall on Vine Street was a tribute to Evans, who was one of the most harmonically innovative pianists in the history of jazz. Everyone who performed that evening was giving of their talents to honor him, and I can be very sure that none of them would ever want to try to play like him.

GAYLE SERDAN
Laverne

PATRICK DOWNS / Los Angeles Times

Billy Taylor, left, pulls a surprise and George Shearing mixes bop and stride at Hollywood Bowl.

JAZZ REVIEW

Unbalanced Penultimate Program at Bowl

By LEONARD FEATHER

The penultimate program in the "Jazz at the Bowl" series attracted 10,285 fans to the Hollywood Bowl Wednesday, but this was by no means a triumphant occasion. The planning was odd—two pianists in the first half and a slapdash seven-piece band in the second.

Though Dizzy Gillespie's name was attached to this closing group, it was not his regular ensemble and, despite the presence of several respected artists, the whole was considerably less than the sum of the parts.

Part of the trouble lay in the balance. During the first tune it seemed as though drummer Mickey Roker and bassist Ray Brown were on different planets; moreover, the alto sax of Phil Woods and the microphone never connected.

Conditions improved later when Woods reprised "Goodbye Mr. Evans," which he had played so exquisitely at last weekend's Denver jazz party. The rest of the program consisted of Gillespie standards that had their best days (and performances) decades ago. Dizzy might have been better off leading his organized group.

Bobby Hutcherson's vibraphone and Cedar Walton's piano were saving graces. Slide Hampton, the left-handed trombonist, contributed a well-defined solo on "Night in Tunisia."

The evening's opener, Billy Taylor, pulled a surprise out of his keyboard with a version of "Take the A Train" that sounded like the early morning local; the pace was slow, but the mood was inspired. He was backed by drummer Bobby Thomas, who had the predictable

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Los Angeles Times

Moody Saxophone in Good Spirits

James Moody, a San Diegan these days, came to town Tuesday for a stint at Catalina's. Any visit by the veteran saxophonist, who won his be-bop spurs with Dizzy Gillespie, is an occasion for rejoicing, and on last opening night he was in particularly good spirits, playing "Happy Birthday to You" for his daughter and dedicating the set to his wife.

Moody is one of a handful of artists who can claim equal proficiency on three instruments. His opener was a masterful investigation of "Sweet and Lovely," the title number of his latest album, played with vigor and much double-time inspiration on alto saxophone.

For "Autumn Leaves" he switched to tenor, his main medium of expression during the early years. His solo outing was lengthy and intricate, with serpentine lines that gained slowly in intensity. Jimmy Robinson, subbing for Moody's regular drummer, became a little too obtrusive, though his overall performance was beyond reproach.

The only problem in the quartet was Marc Cohen's excessive use of the synthesizer. Though it served well backing Moody on a melodic statement, its employment for solos rapidly became tiresome and reduced the quartet's rhythmic impact. Todd Coolman on bass helped to pick up the slack.

Moody's virtuosity on flute, which was a later addition to his artillery, was sensitively displayed as he eased into "Confirmation" at a tempo slow enough to remind us what a basically charming melody Charlie Parker wrote.

Flute fever raged again on

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Los Angeles Times

JAZZ REVIEWS

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"Cherokee" with Cohen in better form as he took two choruses on piano, the first in half-time. Cohen also contributed the only original composition, "Skippin'," with the leader back on tenor.

If the group backing him at Catalina's does not represent the ultimate in settings, it is still worthwhile to investigate a five-star Moody with a three-star band. He continues through Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

'THE BOWL'

Continued from Page 10

solo workout on "Caravan," and bassist Victor Gaskin, who once worked with George Shearing. A pleasing note was Taylor's dedication of Clare Fischer's "Morning" to the composer, who is recovering from a serious accident.

Shearing, as always, intermingled entertainment and superlative music. He told the inevitable joke, offered a version of "I Didn't Know What Time It Was" a la Ravel and lent his pleasant if tremulous singing voice to "Every Time We Say Goodbye." He effectively mixed bop and stride in his version of "Donna Lee" (composed not by Charlie Parker, as he announced, but by Miles Davis). The bassist Neil Swainson played this, and Bud Powell's "Celia," in impeccable unison with the piano. This, in fact, might have made a better closing act than the ad-hoc band, but maybe that's not show business.

Dizzy Gillespie draws from signature standards, but alongside a different group at the Bowl.

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Marsalis Reaches Back With 'Majesty'

By LEONARD FEATHER

WYNTON MARSALIS
"The Majesty of the Blues." Columbia CK45091. ★★½

The opening title tune and the second cut, "Hickory Dickory Dock," are played by the regular Marsalis sextet, with the leader reaching even further back than has been his wont. There are suggestions of early Ellington, along with touches of inspired Marcus Roberts piano.

The balance of the album, 35 minutes, is devoted to a three-part work, "The New Orleans Function," for which a more traditional instrumentation and sound are employed to recapture the spirit of the funeral: Danny Barker, the 80-year-old New Orleans guitar player, here switching to banjo, and Dr. Michael White in some antic clarinet effects.

The dirge in the first movement and the exhilaration of the third are convincingly carried out, but the whole effect is vitiated by the middle section, a 16-minute Philippic written by Marsalis' Boswell, Stanley Crouch, and protesting too much and too long and repetitiously that the noble art of jazz has been ruined by commercialization.

There are unpleasant overtones here: Significantly, the text in the booklet reads at one point: "The moneylenders of the marketplace have Never Ever known the difference between an office or an auction block and a temple." But on the record the words "and a temple" have been mysteriously excised. Did someone at CBS decide that this was carrying the offensiveness a little too far?

Wynton Marsalis: With suggestions of early Ellington.

SMITHSONIAN
"Jazz Piano." RD039 (Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560).
★★★★★

The evolution and glorious diversification of jazz piano throughout this century is admirably represented in another classic Smithsonian collection. The time span runs from Jelly Roll Morton in 1924 to a Tommy Flanagan/Hank Jones duet in 1978.

Martin Williams, the one-man committee who made these selections, was careful in his choices, as well as in his priorities: Art Tatum is accorded five tracks (including, of course, "Get Happy" and "Sweet Lorraine"); Bud Powell and Earl Hines have four each; Fats Waller, Teddy Wilson, Erroll Garner, Thelonious Monk and Bill Evans have three apiece, and several others, among them Nat King Cole and Duke Ellington, are represented twice. Duke's "The Clothed Women" is an amazingly avant-garde rarity.

Williams' Achilles' heel is his indifference to Oscar Peterson, who is omitted entirely except for a two-minute snippet from a Fred Astaire record. But the inclusions are generally wise, taking in such underrated talents as Avery Parrish (in his legendary blues "After Hours"), Jimmy Rowles (his own tune "The Peacocks"), Dodo Marmarosa and Randy Weston.

Available in a four-CD set, "Jazz Piano" includes a 72-page booklet with scholarly notes by Williams, critic Francis Davis and the pianist Dick Katz.

Biographies and a bibliography complete this invaluable set.

JUDY CARMICHAEL
"Trio." C&D Productions (unnumbered; 21 East 4th St., New York, N.Y. 10003).
★★★½

Well established as one of the younger and most dedicated pianists in the stride tradition, Carmichael here keeps what might seem like strange company: No bass, no drums, just Michael Hashim on alto and soprano saxophones and Chris Flory on guitar. Because of her strong, self-sufficient left hand and the sympathetic participation of her colleagues, it works out surprisingly well.

Carmichael tends to choose compositions by other pianists: Ellington, Basie, Fats Waller and James P. Johnson are all represented, but so are Django Reinhardt (an attractive reading of his early "Swing '42"), and Harry (Sweets) Edison ("Jive At Five"). Flory's fluency and Hashim's consistent sense of swing are helpful, but in the final analysis the main credit goes to Carmichael for a performance rich in confidence and energy.

CAROL SLOANE
"Love You Madly." Contemporary CCD14049-2.
★★★★½

This is at once a superior vocal album and a first-rate jazz instrumental set. Sloane is backed by guitarist Kenny Burrell on two tunes, and on "Norwegian Wood" by Richard Rodney Bennett, who also wrote the simple, functional arrangements for the group cuts with Art Farmer, Clifford Jordan and Burrell.

Sloane understands every melody, knows just how many liberties to take in phrasing and alteration; she senses the inner feeling of each lyric. In short, she is a consummate jazz singer to whom the likes of Diane Schuur and Betty Carter could advantageously devote some serious listen-and-learn time. The choice of tunes, too, is first-rate: Wilder's "While We're Young," Armstrong's "Someday You'll Be Sorry," Blossom Dearie's "Inside A Silent Tear."

STEPHANIE NAKASIAN
"Comin' Alive." V.S.O.P 73CD (11 Lochness Court, Rockville, Md 20850).
★★★★

"Inside A Silent Tear" reappears here, in a no less appealing version by another splendid, almost unknown jazz singer, who toured a few years ago with Jon Hendricks. Her two-part counterpart with pianist Hod O'Brien, the solos by Phil Woods on alto, Warren Chiasson on vibes and Wayne Andre playing some gutbucket trombone all contribute to another vital, life-affirming collection, with several little-known songs such as the Marvin Fisher-Jack Segal "May I Come In."

HOWARD RUMSEY'S LIGHTHOUSE ALL STARS
"Jazz Invention." Contemporary CCD14051-2.
★★★½

Although Rumsey, now retired, gave up the bass long ago (Monty Budwig takes his place here), he is the guiding light behind this reunion of men who worked for him at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach during the 1950s and '60s. The session was taped live at the nearby Civic Theatre.

Bob Cooper is the main figure, as composer of the title track, tenor saxophonist, arranger and musical director. Surrounded by old friends (Bud Shank, Conte Candoli, Bob Enevoldsen, Claude Williamson, John Guerin), he has created a nostalgically agreeable revival of what were, to many Southern Californians, the golden years. The tunes are mainly standards ("Topsy," "Billie's Bounce," "Lover Man," "Broadway"). The amusing and affectionate liner notes are by Sleepy Steim, who in those days was the popular KNOB disc jockey. □

JAZZ REVIEW

Count Basie Ballroom Opens With Bill Berry Band

You lose one, you win one. Less than 24 hours after the Loa Club in Santa Monica closed its doors for the last time, the Count Basie Ballroom opened Sunday in Compton.

Actually part of the soon-to-be-opened Lazban Hotel (which will include another venue, the Indigo Jazz Club), the ballroom, easily accessible off the Redondo Beach (91) Freeway, opened with the strongly Ellington-oriented orchestra of Bill Berry. In deference to the room's name, however, Berry included in his first set the Ernie Wilkins arrangement of a Basie chestnut, "Moten Swing."

Though Berry encouraged the audience to dance, and a few customers took him up on it, this is basically music for sensitive ears rather than fancy footwork. Such tunes as "Isfahan" and "Warm Valley," both with Jackie Kelso on alto sax, are carefully translated treatments of works born in the Duke Ellington library.

Pianist Art Hillery, normally associated more with the bop idiom, attuned himself admirably to the Ellingtonian requirements of the occasion. With Frank De La Rosa on bass and Frank Capp on drums, the rhythm section furnished an inspiring undercurrent for such up-tempo romps as Lanny Morgan's alto excursion on "Cherokee."

Sandy Graham, poised and attractive, is a valuable addition to the band. She too devoted herself mainly to Ducal works, blending wordlessly with Slide Hyde's trombone on "Mood Indigo" and lending her jazz-honed vibrato to "Just Squeeze Me" and "Solitude."

The brass section, as is always the case with Berry, topped off the sounds with a flourish. Frank Szabo reached for the stratosphere on "Rockin' in Rhythm," Conte Candoli was in a lyrical mood on "I Got It Bad," and the leader himself was heard, though all too infrequently, on cornet. Buster Cooper, like Berry a former Ellington sideman, added his perennial touch of ebullient humor on trombone.

The Basie Ballroom will continue to present jazz ensembles every Tuesday and Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

BEFORE & AFTER

di Leonard Feather

MONTY ALEXANDER E IL «RASTA BEAT»

Il pianista giamaicano, nell'individuare «alla cieca» un gruppo di colleghi, pone come qualità primaria il ritmo, che ha assorbito nella sua infanzia. Ma il suo vero idolo è Nat King Cole.

Tocca, questa volta, a Monty Alexander, il pianista nativo della Giamaica, che oggi opera in tre aree principali: come membro del Triple Threat, con Ray Brown ed Herb Ellis; come leader di un gruppo che riflette la sua origine, allineando degli *steel drummer* (maestri di quei tamburi metallici tipici delle Antille) del valore di Othello Molineaux; e inoltre in uno show dedicato a Nat King Cole, in cui suona ed anche canta i temi che furono legati al suo idolo giovanile. Anche se è su altri pianisti che si basa il nostro gioco «a occhi bendati» con lui, il nome di Cole comparirà immediatamente nel suo discorso.

LUISA CARATI

Montgomery Bernard Alexander, ma per tutti (anche ufficialmente) «Monty», è nato il 6 giugno 1944 a Kingston in Giamaica, dove aveva incontrato fin da bambino la musica e dove aveva iniziato assai presto un'attività paraprofessionale, già indirizzata verso il jazz (grazie ai dischi di Armstrong e poi dei bopper) più che al locale calypso. Le sue doti di pianista garbato, simpatico, seducente, gli avevano permesso di approdare appena diciassettenne a Miami e di entrare praticamente subito nel circuito statunitense. La sua carriera è stata da allora molto intensa, facendo base in California ma estendendosi anche all'Europa (dal 1975) e al Giappone. Nei concerti e nei dischi la sua formula prediletta è quella «classica» del trio, anche se non ha mancato, soprattutto nelle tournées per Norman Granz, di affiancarsi a grandi strumentisti in organici più larghi.

1. EARL «FATHA» HINES: *You Can Depend On Me* (da *«Another Monday Date»*, Prestige). Incisione del 1956.

Prima. «Be', questo era Earl «Fatha» Hines, uno stilista, in quanto ha creato il proprio stile. Penso che possa essere il più misconosciuto di tutti i pianisti, uno insomma di cui la gente si dimentica quando parla di pianisti. In effetti, quando si ascolta uno dei miei pianisti preferiti, Nat Cole, si nota lo stesso tipo di approccio di Hines. Era un musicista efficacissimo, aveva un continuo swing, e c'era in lui quell'esuberanza che a me piace tanto. Il tema suonato qui? Non saprei ricordare il titolo, ma conosco la melodia. Mi azzarderei a dire che è qualcosa di un venti, trenta anni fa. Non l'ho ascoltato molto in brani da solo, perché nei tempi in cui era Art Tatum a suonare in solitudine, Hines era in questa o quella band, e ne aveva anche una sua. Penso che la sua carriera abbia avuto un rilancio quando si ripresentò negli anni Sessanta, così sono tentato di dire che la data del brano sia quella».

Dopo. «Eh già, per l'uomo di raro genere che egli era, pieni voti. Sì, diamogli cinque stelle».

2. OLIVER JONES: *Just Friends* (dall'album omonimo, Justin Time). Clark Terry, flicorno e tromba; Dave Young, contrabbasso; Nasyr Abdul Al-Khabyyr, batteria.

Prima. «Ecco uno dei miei favoriti tra i trombettisti e flicornisti, che svolge il suo lavoro di alter ego: Mister Terry! Ogni nota è così chiara, e il ritmo è come avvolto nel suo stile. Quanto alla sezione ritmica, è un gruppo davvero swingante. Non sono sicuro di sapere chi siano i suoi componenti. Dovesse lavorare con me, non vorrei che il basso suonasse come se fosse amplificato. Ma è un bravo strumentista, un *bebop cat*.

«E veniamo al pianista: non sono certo di averlo riconosciuto. È un musicista di gusto. Voglio dire che potrebbe essere uno come Kenny Drew, ma a volte non sono molto bravo a indovinare. Un brano molto gradevole. Oddio, devo proprio dare un voto? Quattro stelle».

Dopo. «Nasyr Abdul Al-Khabyyr, naturalmente, quello che era con Dizzy, figlio di quell'altro che suona i sassofoni. È buffo, io ero con Oliver la settimana scorsa, ma questa è la prima volta in cui io lo possa ascoltare bene su disco. Potevo sentire l'influenza dello stile di Oscar Peterson, ma non capivo che si trattava di lui. È un eccellente pianista. In effetti al festival di Montreux, a quanto ho sentito, ha fatto qualcosa con l'orchestra sinfonica locale, e ne è venuto fuori un evento importante».

3. ADAM MAKOWICZ: *Interface* (dall'album omonimo, Gazell). Palle Danielsson, contrabbasso; Jon Christensen, batteria.

Prima. «È il mio amico Adam Makowicz! Ti sorprendi perché l'ho riconosciuto? È perché lo conosco come persona, e l'ho ascoltato suonare. Quando conosci uno, e ti piace come uomo, tu ne riconosci il suono della voce, anche nelle piccole cose. Io di Adam conosco il tocco e anche la sua fenomenale abilità con entrambe le mani. Il suo rispetto per Art Tatum è così evidente che egli possiede l'indipendenza nella mano sinistra per far tutte quelle figure che usa, e nello stesso tempo è libero di fare quanto vuole con la destra! In campo armonico, poi, è ardito.

«In un negozio di dischi ho visto un album fatto da lui assieme ad altri musicisti con i quali non lavora di solito. E

validità musicale del suo concerto è in discussione. Dovrebbe riesaminare le proprie intenzioni creative. Attenzione: la voce della Hasler è ricca in estensione e in colori, ed è usata con un controllo squisito; io l'ho trovata complessivamente positiva. Basta chiudere un occhio in certi momenti.

Magni Wentzel è una raffinata stilista. La vocalità controllata, lo scintillante fraseggio, il sapiente senso musicale danno a ogni sua interpretazione il segno della qualità. La sua musica abbraccia jazz, bossa nova, samba e altro. *Someday My Prince Will Come, Limehouse Blues, Up A Lazy River* sono stati piacevolissimi. La Wentzel è un'ottima chitarrista, e il proprio accompagnamento con lo strumento classico costituiva un rilassante contrasto ai mostri elettronici di altri gruppi. Il suo pianista, Egil Kapstad, ha rivelato un notevole virtuosismo nel brano interpretato in solitudine, *Autumn Waltz*. Il gruppo era completato da Terje Venaas al contrabbasso e Tom Olstad alla batteria.

Sadao Watanabe, alla sua seconda esibizione a un Jazz Yatra, ha nuovamente entusiasmato il pubblico di Bombay. Il sassofonista giapponese e il suo gruppo suonano una musica a cavallo dei generi, legata al pop da un indiavolato ritmo funky. La musica è confezionata in modo troppo superficiale, le improvvisazioni sono tortuose e senza significato.

È una buona idea che ad ogni Yatra ci sia una partecipazione locale, ma si può discutere l'idea dello sponsor di proporre il gruppo Azure Hades. Certamente i suoi componenti, Shrikanth Sriram (basso e flauto), Sanjay Wandrekar (piano e tastiera) e Dennis Coehlo (batteria), sono giovani e ancora in evidente fase di formazione. Un brano basato sul canto vedico «saman», *Jazz Veda*, rivela il potenziale di questi giovani. Un altro tema, *Sun & Earth*, era interessante. D'altra parte *Take Five* metteva in evidenza i limiti, tecnici e artistici del trio, che deve chiarire e sviluppare idee più chiare e imporsi una direzione positiva.

La musica più provocatoria di questo Yatra è venuta dall'olandese Willem Breuker Kollektief, un gruppo che sfida le categorizzazioni. Il suo jazz forte e libero ha lasciato spazio ad ognuno dei dieci componenti. La musica del gruppo è una mistura di Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Gershwin, atonalismo, honky-tonk, barrelhouse, smaglianti ritmi latini e la scrittura minimalista di John Adams, Philip Glass e Steve Reich. Le bizzarrie dei musicisti apparivano stantie, a volte bizzarre. La musica che producono è solida come una roccia e le clownerie non aggiungono nulla al suo eccellente livello.

Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand), col suo gruppo Ekaya, e il chitarrista Joe Carter erano gli altri musicisti provenienti dagli Stati Uniti. Di Ekaya facevano parte, oltre a Ibrahim come pianista, arrangiatore e compositore, Mark Taylor (corno), Howard Johnson (sax baritono, tuba e *penny whistle*), Willie Williams (sax tenore e soprano), Joe Ford (sax contralto e soprano), Phil Bowler (contrabbasso) e Newman Taylor Baker (batteria).

Ibrahim utilizza le differenti combinazioni strumentali con fantastica abilità e crea trame sonore affascinanti. Sudafricano di nascita, il pianista era profondamente emozionato per i recenti fatti avvenuti nella sua patria, in particolare la liberazione di Nelson Mandela, ed ha eseguito un bellissimo brano di grande cantabilità per celebrarli. Ekaya ha ricordato Duke Ellington suonando *Come Sunday* e un brano originale, *The Duke 1988. Chocolat*, dalla colonna sonora del film omonimo, rivelava in pieno le capacità dell'Ibrahim compositore; la fusione di piano, basso, flauto e baritono produce un timbro molto interessante. Il monkiano *Skippi* ha infine consentito a ogni musicista di esprimersi nel modo migliore.

Joe Carter ha aperto l'ultima giornata di Yatra con il bassista Manfred Brundel (del gruppo di Gabriele Hasler). I due hanno offerto una notevole dimostrazione di quello che musicisti ben dotati possono ottenere, anche al primo incontro, accrescendo l'esperienza di noi ascoltatori. *All The Things You Are* e *Someday My Prince Will Come* sono stati suonati come gioielli dalle molte facce, impregnati di lirismo; in *Birks Works* l'equilibrio tra i due strumenti era perfetto.

La reazione del pubblico a certa musica è stata chiaramente espressa da uno spettatore sfrontato, che ha gridato «adesso fateci sentire un po' di jazz!» mentre suonava il quintetto di Peter Schärli, con Glenn Ferris come trombonista ospite. Il virtuosismo di ogni interprete li spinge verso le improvvisazioni più rischiose, verso acque meno sondate. La loro musica, come quella di Breuker, incrocia gli stili e ha lasciato la maggior parte del pubblico in preda a un più che evidente sconcerto.

Il quintetto del francese Jean-Marc Padovani univa vari elementi graditi al pubblico in una musica fresca e vitale. *Rome-New York* era una semplice e affascinante composizione lenta con un'ottima parte di basso, eseguita da Hèlene Labarrière. *Pablo* ha una struttura squisita e il quintetto ne ha sviluppato l'architettura con grande senso musicale. *Roget* era un brano molto divertente, sul quale tutti i tremila astanti hanno gridato a piena volce il ritornello, «ROGET!».

Yatra 1990 è terminato con i suoni familiari del Dixieland. Ma questo non veniva dai bordi del Mississippi, bensì da quelli della Neva: era proposto infatti dalla Leningrad Dixieland Jazz Band. Sotto l'abile direzione del sassofonista Oleg Kuvaitsev il gruppo, otto elementi, ha portato il proprio senso dello swing fin nel cuore degli appassionati di Bombay. Nessuno saprà mai perché sia stato incluso nel repertorio *It's Been A Long, Long Time*; ma *Tin Roof Blues, Darktown Strutter's Ball, Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of This Jelly Roll* e altri classici hanno entusiasmato il foltissimo pubblico, che ha chiesto in coro il bis; i musicisti di Leningrado, inevitabilmente, hanno attaccato *When The Saints Go Marching In*, sfilando tra la folla e mandando contenti a casa i fedelissimi. Tra i solisti è spiccato Boris Ershov, geniale banjoista, che con uno stile scattante e palpitante ha dimostrato quanto questo strumento ormai negletto possa ancora fare.

L'organizzazione Jazz India sta svolgendo un superbo lavoro per portare in questo paese nuovi stimoli. La riuscita di Jazz Yatra è stata resa possibile dalla dedizione di pochi fedeli appassionati; l'aiuto ottenuto da Air India, dal Consiglio indiano per le relazioni culturali e dal maggior sponsor di questa edizione, gli orologi Titan, assicura che Yatra si è ormai conquistato uno spazio, e non trascurabile, nella scena musicale. ●

9-10

Is He Blue? Lou Rawls Back to His Roots

By LEONARD FEATHER

Lou Rawls has nothing to sing the blues about—precisely because that is what he did on his new album.

His album "At Last" (Blue Note 91937), liberally sprinkled with the blues and jazz elements that marked his entry into the record world almost 30 years ago, is riding high. Last week it was No. 5 with a bullet on the contemporary jazz chart. On Wednesday he will be one-third of the "Hollywood Bowl Full of Blues" concert along with Joe Williams and Etta James.

Back home in Los Angeles last week after his second Japanese tour in two months, he explained how the apparent change of direction came about.

"I knew Bruce Lundvall when he was the head of Epic and I was with an affiliated label, Philly International. Later on Bruce went with Manhattan Records. He told me, 'I'm taking over Blue Note, which is part of the Manhattan group. Would you have eyes to do something there?' I said sure, so he put me together with the producers, Michael Cuscuna and Billy Vera, and we started picking out material."

The change was not made casually; Rawls had been studying the market and felt the time was right. "There is a real resurgence as far as jazz and blues and good music are concerned. The jazz market hit the dust when they went avant-garde in the '70s. A guy would get up and play for 20 minutes and he'd say, 'That was "Blue Moon,"' and you didn't even know it! But now you've got your Wynton Marsalises and people like that who are bringing it back to basics.

"As for the blues, it's never been away. The B. B. Kings and Albert Kings and Bobby Blands will always be around. And lately I've noticed that when I would reach back and sing some of the things out of my old Capitol Records days like 'Tobacco Road' and 'Black and Blue,' the crowd would go wild. In fact, at Capitol, which is now part of the same family as Blue Note, they're repackaging my old 'Stormy Monday' album with Les McCann."

Rawls makes a valid point that the teen-agers of the 1960s, when these albums were current, are now adults with children of their own who grew up around those sounds. "The kids have gotten to

LARRY DAVIS / L.A. Times

Lou Rawls . . . singing the blues again—and loving it.

the point where the electronic bombardment has reached its peak. Of course, your teeny-boppers are still into that wild, frenzied heavy-metal stuff, but the older ones from 17 or 18 up are ready for a difference, a release and they're finding it in some of these sounds they used to hear their parents play."

This is Rawls' second step back into the area that first nurtured him, but the first to be released. "I made a blues album, with a small jazz group backing, for MGM Records in 1973, but Mike Curb was in charge there, and after I'd done it, can. After that I left MGM—and Mike Curb left to become a politician." (The MGM catalogue now belongs to Polygram.)

Beefing up the potential for the new album was a galaxy of guest artists. Rawls had no trouble securing Ray Charles for their duet cut ("That's Where It's At"), since this was a quid pro quo. "I did a number on Ray's last album, called 'Save the Bones for Henry Jones,' so he was happy to do this for me. As for George Benson, we'd been talking for years about doing something together, so it was a kick for both of us to have him singing and playing on 'You Can't Go Home.'

"In fact, most of the people I have as special soloists, like the saxophonist—Stanley Turientine, David Fathead Newman and Bobby Watson—as well as the vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson—really jumped at the idea of being part of this. If I'd told them it was going to be a Philly International commercial thing, they might not have gone for it."

Along with all these soloists, Rawls had a fellow Blue Note artist, Dianne Reeves, who was in rare form joining forces with him on the title tune, as well as on the old Nellie Lutcher novelty song "Fine Brown Frame."

In addition to the Japanese tours (which included a nostalgic reun- with his old Capitol compadre, vals—the kinds of dates where he might have seemed out of place during his "commercial" days: Montreux, the North Sea Festival, the Grande Parade de Jazz at Nice.

The public response has been so strong that next year Rawls expects to work the full jazz festival circuit. His only problem has been resistance from some American radio stations. "We've had people saying, 'Oh, that's jazz, we can't use it'—and they haven't even listened to it.

"When you come right down to reality, I've tried to maintain my identity through everything I've done. Sure, I've had strings and full orchestrations on a lot of things, but my style of delivery hasn't altered.

"The stories that songs tell are pretty much alike—about your heart being broken or you can't pay the rent or whatever. You think country and Western is gonna change? No! Blues ain't gonna change, jazz ain't gonna change—well, they tried to change it with that avant-garde and you see what happened.

"It's weird, man, but it's fun. I'm having a good time. I've been called a jazz singer, blues singer, folk singer, rock singer, pop singer, message singer, soul singer, fusion singer, and now I'm a jazz singer again. Full circle!" □

Los Angeles Times 9-28-89

Jazz Reviews

George Benson Concert Drowns in Loudness at Wiltern

Crash! Bam! Boom! Slam! Sock! Pow! Thud!

Those were just a few of the sound effects that dominated too much of the George Benson concert Friday at the Wiltern, the first of two evenings supposedly devoted to the artistry of the vocalist/guitarist.

To those for whom ear-splitting volume and a terrible sound mix are no problem, it was a glorious evening. For others, who may have hoped that Benson might re-create the good vibes of his recent album with McCoy Tyner, it was a bitter disappointment.

For most of the first half in this two-hour, intermissionless presentation, the sound was so loud on Gerry Brown's drums, and on the rest of the rhythm backing, that the listener was lucky to understand every 10th word of Benson's vocals.

Obviously the Tyner experiment was just an aberration, an indulgence Benson does not think he can afford to duplicate in public. He did, however, offer a couple of numbers out of that album, "Mambo Inn" and "Stardust," that were among the better moments of the evening, though David Garfield replaced Tyner.

Benson still sings "Moody's Mood for Love," with the female vocal interlude charmingly supplied by percussionist Kate Markowitz. He paid his respects to Nat King Cole, singing "Unforgettable" pleasingly

LARRY GUS / Los Angeles Times

Guitarist/singer George Benson in 2-evening Wiltern gig.

to a forgettable arrangement that used the 23-piece string ensemble. "Here, There and Everywhere" and "The Greatest Love of All" also were effective in showcasing Benson's engaging vocal personality.

There were a few delightful guitar passages, especially those in which he sang and played in unison. As the show neared its close the inevitable early hits reared their aging heads: "This Masquerade" and "On Broadway," the latter involving a drum solo that elicited pandemonium from the audience.

Given his unquestionable financial security, it is surprising that Benson still feels the necessity to make so many concessions to the marketplace. Regrettably, the "Tenderly" LP turned out to be a flash in the pan.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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se non mi inganno, riconosco il drumming di Al Foster. Bisogna conoscere la gente di persona...così ora sarei sicuro che si tratti di Al. Il bassista non lo conosco, ma era un brano *freaky*, e lui se lo divorava. Adam è un pianista fantastico. Cinque stelle!».

Dopo. «Siamo di fronte a una storia umana. Sono dei profugli, Adam e sua moglie. Vengono da tempi duri. E ce li hanno addosso».

4. OSCAR PETERSON: *Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You* (da *«With Respect To Nat»*, Limelight). Herb Ellis, chitarra; Ray Brown, contrabbasso; Peterson, canto e pianoforte.

Prima. (Ridendo e cantando). Ascolta: *What Can I Say...* Già: che cosa posso dire? Quando sento chiunque rifare la musica di Nat King Cole e suonarla così magnificamente, ridiventa un bambino.

«Non so come spiegarlo, ma Nat King Cole mi ha toccato con una straordinaria profondità, appunto come capita a un bambino che cresce. I momenti più felici della mia fanciullezza sono stati accompagnati dalle canzoni e dalla personalità di Nat. La sua musica ha allietato la mia infanzia, così come qualche tempo prima avrà fatto per Oscar. Io avverto un'affinità musicale più con Nat Cole che con Art Tatum, quando ascolto Oscar Peterson: parlo di concezione, e di tutto il resto, perché è stato Nat a *inventarlo*. Pur essendosi ispirato pianisticamente a Earl «Fatha» Hines, è a Nat che va attribuito il diritto d'autore per la propria personalità, e per l'idea di presentare tre strumenti e di farne uno swingante gruppo da camera. La sua effervescenza... E poi, sentire Oscar fare tutto questo con il suo senso del ritmo! Perché questa è una delle cose che io ascolto innanzitutto in un pianista: non tanto le note e gli svolazzi. Il ritmo di Oscar è differentissimo da quello di Nat, eppure c'è un filo che li lega.

«Per me, è grande cosa, soprattutto, ascoltare Herb e Ray con Oscar. Conosco a malapena questo disco, ma so che nel corso degli anni Oscar ha sempre ricordato, nella sua musica, quanto ha fatto Nat King Cole».

Dopo. (*L.F.:* Hai capito subito che non era Nat a cantare?) «Oh, subito, subito».

5. GEORGE SHEARING-HANK JONES: *Oh Look At Me Now* (da *«The Spirit Of 176»*, Concord Jazz).

Prima. «Questi erano Hank Jones e George Shearing. Non li avevo mai ascoltati prima, ma avevo saputo che di recente avevano registrato per la Concord, e ricordo di avere rabbrividito.... con un sorriso, perché sapevo che quei due si sarebbero divertiti molto, dato che molto hanno in comune. Sono due artisti assolutamente unici, ognuno con il suo senso del ritmo, ma sono vicinissimi. Sono entrambi musicisti *meravigliosi*, e fanno *cantare* le note. Fanno cantare il pianoforte, lo accarezzano. Tutti e due, non questo più dell'altro! Se vuoi divertirti, guarda i loro piedi mentre suonano. Il modo in cui George usa i pedali: è una continua lezione su come certi suoni del pianoforte possono aiutare quel che viene fatto dalle dita. E lo stesso è per Hank Jones: quando sta seduto là, così solenne, al suo strumento, i suoi piedi sono *sopra* il posto giusto, sul pedale forte e su quello della sordina. C'è un grande rispetto per il suono, e naturalmente c'è quel comune denominatore che è Art Tatum».

Dopo. «Mi è piaciuto di rado ascoltare due pianisti ma questa è una delle pochissime occasioni. Sì, devo dare cinque stelle non soltanto per quello che i due hanno fatto qui, ma anche per quanto hanno sempre fatto!».

6. DON PULLEN: *Jana's Delight* (da *«New Beginnings»*, Blue Note). Tony Williams, batteria.

Prima. «Eh, caro mio, è dura; verrebbero da dire due milioni di cose. Ma penso che dovrò sceglierne una. È quella che... in Giamaica non dicono *"rhythm"* ma pronunciano *"riddim"*. È la cosa che più interessa a me, e ha una tal qualità di feeling che io vorrei sentire in certa musica giamaicana, il «Rasta beat». Questi qui non suonano tutte quelle percussioni, ma il feeling della musica era un ritmo con il quale io ricordo d'essere cresciuto.

«Non sono sicuro di sapere chi sia il pianista. So che gli piace infrangere le regole facendo del "pugno di ferro", come io lo chiamo. Questi uomini sono capaci di creare un'atmosfera e mi piaceva molto il ritmo. Riconosco il contributo di Ahmad Jamal, il significato di creare una tensione particolare. Nel fare tutto questo Mr. Jamal è un re.

«Penso di stare ascoltando Al Foster alla batteria, perché è così "grasso"! E forse Don Pullen, al quale piace fare il "pugno di ferro" e diventare selvaggio. Quasi dei ritmi "rastafariani".

«Il voto? Povero me! Proprio perché mi ha fatto battere il piede, e con buon gusto, gli darò quattro stelle e mezza».

Dopo. «È un tipo affascinante, c'è in lui molto della musica di chiesa, e rispetto per Duke Ellington, per la vecchia tradizione, ma c'è anche il selvaggio, che va contro le norme, il che a me piace. È gradevole».

7. CHICK COREA: *Bessie's Blues* (da *«Chick Corea Akoustic Band»*, GRP). John Patitucci, contrabbasso; Dave Weckl, batteria.

Prima. «Un blues in Do che finisce in Mi! Ti dirò, io so chi sono questi, perché sono tornato di recente dall'Europa e ci siamo incontrati, abbiamo fatto una conoscenza personale più approfondita. Questi tre individui sono semplicemente grandi, e Chick Corea è senza dubbio uno dei più bei musicisti d'oggi. È uno che va oltre, ma ha conservato molto rispetto per la tradizione. Quanto a me, penso di essere un tradizionalista, in fondo all'anima. Sentir lui che prende un blues, per poi cambiarlo e stravolgerlo, è una goduria. È Chick Corea, con il suo omaggio a Thelonious Monk e al McCoy Tyner di molti anni fa. Questo è il suo punto di riferimento. E poi mi piace particolarmente il bassista, un meraviglioso uomo e un grande strumentista, John Patitucci, e Dave Weckl alla batteria».

Dopo. «È bello sentirli suonare il blues in quella maniera, come Monk, cioè non andando sull'accordo che ci si aspetterebbe. Cinque stelle!». ●

ELENA CARMINATI

Da destra: Monty Alexander, Charnett Moffett ed Ed Thigpen in concerto a Milano nel 1986.

(Per gentile concessione di "JazzTimes")

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LEONARD FEATHER'S

Before and After

It has long been obvious that musicians have two different sets of reactions and comments on recordings by their peers; one when they are unaware whom they are listening to, another after learning the artist and what they have heard. That is the premise for this series.

This month's musician: Monty Alexander

Monty Alexander arrived in Miami from his native Kingston Jamaica in 1961; he was 17, had studied extensively, and soon went to work in local clubs. Later discovered by Jilly Rizzo, he worked at the latter's New York club and soon moved into the jazz mainstream.

Today, he works in three main areas: as a member of Triple Treat, with Ray Brown and Herb Ellis; as leader of a group that reflects his heritage, featuring such steel drummers as Othello Molineaux; and in a show dedicated to Nat King Cole, in which he sings and plays songs associated with his early idol.

1) **EARL "FATHA" HINES.** *You Can Depend On Me* (from *Another Monday Date*, Prestige.) Recorded 1956.

BEFORE: Well, that was Earl "Fatha" Hines, a stylistic man, he created his own style. I think maybe he's the most misunderstood piano player of them all—somehow people leave him out when they talk about piano players. In fact, when you listen to one of my favorite players, Nat Cole, you hear the same kind of approach that Fatha Hines had. And Nat will be talked about *more* than Fatha Hines by piano people; I don't understand why. He was a very positive player, he was swingin' along, there was that exuberance that I like so much.

LF: Did you know the tune?

MA: I can't say what it was but I recognize the melody. I'd be tempted to think it was from about 25, 30 years ago. Because I didn't hear much of Earl Hines as a solo player, back when Art Tatum was playing solo—he was in bands and he had a band. I think he had a renewed career when he came back in the early '60s, so I'm tempted to say that's when it was.

AFTER: Well, for the unique kind of man that he was, full marks. Yeah, five stars.

2) **OLIVER JONES.** *Just Friends* (from *Just Friends*, Justin Time.) Clark Terry, fluegelhorn and trumpet; Dave Young, bass; Nasyr Abdul Al-Khabyyn, drums.

BEFORE: Well, that's one of my favorite trumpet players, fluegelhornists, doing his alter ego routine, Mr. Terry. Every note is so clear. That rhythm is all wrapped up in it—real positive stuff. As far as the rhythm section, it's a real swingin' group of guys. I'm not sure who they are. Probably if it was a session I was involved in, I wouldn't want to [illegible] sounding as amplified. But he's a good player, bebop cat.

[illegible] player, I'm not so sure! He's a tasty player. I want to say it might be somebody like Kenny Drew, but I'm not so good at guessing sometimes. A very enjoyable track. Oh God, do I have to rate it? Four stars.

AFTER: Nasyr Abdul Al-Khabyyr—of course, he was with Dizzy—the son of the guy who plays the saxophone.

It's funny, I was with Oliver last week, but this is the first time I've ever really heard him play on a record. I could hear the influence of Oscar's style but I wouldn't really have known it was him. He's an outstanding player. In fact at the Montreux festival a few weeks ago, I understand he did something with the Montreux symphony, it was a presentation that was just an outstanding event.

3) **ADAM MAKOWICZ.** *Interface* (from *Interface*, Gazell.) Jon Christensen, drums; Palle Danielsson, bass.

BEFORE: Well, that's my friend Adam Makowicz.

LF: How did you know that?

MA: Because I know him as a person, and I've heard him play. When you know someone and you like the person, you know the sound of their voice—little things about them. I know his touch and also his phenomenal two-hand ability. His respect for Art Tatum is so evident that he has an independence in his left to play those figures and yet be free to do anything he wants with his right! And he's adventurous with harmony, and the construction of that tune was not your average walk down the street stuff, that was some "Giant Steps" kind of movement, you know?

I had seen a record in the record shops with him and some other players he wouldn't usually be working with. And if I'm not incorrect I recognize the drumming of Al Foster. You get to know people personally...I'd almost be sure it was Al. The bass player I don't know, but it was a very freaky tune, and he just eats it up. Adam is a fantastic pianist. Five stars!

AFTER: You're talking about a human story. They're refugee people, Adam and his wife, came from hardship. They stuck with it.

4) **OSCAR PETERSON.** *Gee Baby, Ain't I Good to You* (from *With Respect to Nat*, Limelight.) Herb Ellis, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; Oscar Peterson, vocal, piano.

BEFORE: (Laughter) Listen — (Sings) "What can I say..." What can I say? When I hear anybody play Nat King Cole music and play it so beautifully, I just turn into a little kid again.

I can't explain it, but Nat King Cole touched me in a way that was so profoundly wonderful as a kid growing up, the happiest moments of my childhood were accompanied by Nat's songs and being, because we sang those songs around the house. I like to feel he made my life happier. And obviously, in some way at an earlier time, he did the same thing for Oscar Peterson. I hear more of a musical relationship to Nat Cole than Art Tatum, when I hear Oscar Peterson, concept and everything, because Nat *invented* it. He got it from Earl "Fatha" Hines pianistically, but his person, the whole business of taking three instruments and making a swinging chamber group out of it, Nat wrote the book on that. His whole effervescence—and to hear Oscar do this with his sense of rhythm—'cause that's one of the things I listen to in a piano player right away, not so much the notes and the licks but there's a feeling about the rhythm that I can identify with, especially if they're swingin'. Oscar's rhythm is so different than Nat's, yet there is such a lineage there.

For me, it's great especially to hear Herb and Ray playing with Oscar; I just happen to know this record, and I know throughout the years Oscar has reminisced in the workplace about Nat King Cole.

AFTER: LF: Did you know immediately that it was not Nat singing?

MA: Oh immediately, imm diately.

5) **GEORGE SHEARING AND HANK JONES.** *Oh Look at Me Now* (from *The Spirit of 176*, Concord Jazz.)

BEFORE: That was Henry Jones and George Shearing. I had not heard it, but I knew they had recorded for Concord recently, and I remember just bristling...with a smile, because I knew that those two men would have a lot of fun, they have such a lot in common. They're two totally unique artists, with their own sense of rhythm, but they're close to each other. They're both such *beautiful* musicians, they make the notes *sing*. And they get a tone...away from their vocabulary and repertoire, what they do with a piano is make the piano sing, they caress it. Both of these men! Not one more than the other. Look at their feet when they're playing, just for fun. The way George pedals—he's constantly reaching for certain tones in the piano to help along what he's doing with his fingers, and the same with Hank Jones — when he's sitting there so dignified at his instrument, his feet are all *over* the place with the loud and the soft pedal. There is that respect for sound, and of course the whole common denominator of Art Tatum. I must tell you, I have not heard many duo piano things that I liked. I personally run away from them because there's always too many notes and it's so cluttered that I can't enjoy it.

AFTER: I've rarely enjoyed hearing two pianists, and this was one of those occasions when I did. Yeah, I've got to say five stars not only because of what they did here, but what they've always done!

6) **DON PULLEN.** *Jana's Delight* (from *New Beginnings*, Blue Note.) Tony Williams, drums.

BEFORE: Well, boy, it's hard, you want to say two million different things. I'll just have to pick one, I guess. That one—in Jamaica they don't say "rhythm," they say "riddim." The thing about that one that sticks out to me, it has such a quality of a *feeling* that I would hear in some Jamaican music, the Rasta beat. They weren't playing the various devices but the feeling of the music was a rhythm I remember growing up with.

I'm not sure who the guy playing the piano is; I know he likes to break the rules by doing some knuckle-dusting, as I call it. It was fun to listen to it! Those men are about turning up a groove, and I liked the rhythm of the tune a lot. It was a unique piece. I recognized the contribution of Ahmad Jamal, the meaning of laying down a vamp. The king of vamping, Mr. Jamal.

Once again, I think I'm hearing Al Foster play the drums, just because it was so greasy! And maybe Don Pullen, he likes to do some knuckle-dusting and get wild there. Almost Rastafarian rhythms.

Rating! Oh gracious me. Just because it made my foot to tappin', tastefully so, I give it four and a half. The trick is to take that rhythm, then leave it maybe and do something else with it.

AFTER: He's a fascinating guy, there's such a lot of church in him, and respect for Duke Ellington, the old tradition, but the wild man is in there too, breaking some rules, which I love in a way. It's enjoyable.

7) **CHICK COREA.** *Bessie's Blues* (from *Chick Corea Akoustic Band*, GRP.) John Patitucci, bass; Dave Weckl, drums.

BEFORE: A C blues ending in the key of E! Well, I tell you, I know who these guys are, because I just came from Europe and we did some good hanging out—got more personally acquainted. Those three individuals are just great; Chick Corea is without question one of the fine musicians today. He's a guy who's experimented with the beyond, but he's kept a lot of respect for the tradition. I guess I'm a traditionalist at heart. To hear him take a blues and then bend and twist it, it's really a kick. It's Chick Corea and his homage to Thelonious Monk and McCoy Tyner of many years ago. That's his point of reference—and I especially love the bass player too, who is a wonderful guy and a great bass player, John Patitucci, and Dave Weckl on drums.

AFTER: It's good to hear them playing the blues in that certain kind of way, like Monk, not going to the expected chord. Five stars! ■

JAZZ TIMES Oct. 1989

Jazz King and Queen ...of the Oceans

— Leonard Feather

Hank O'Neal — Shelley Shier

By LEONARD FEATHER

Hank O'Neal and Shelley Shier are the jazz king and queen of the oceans.

In six short years they have become to seagoing jazz what George and Joyce Wein are to landlocked festivals, or Dick and Maddie Gibson to jazz parties.

Ms. Shier is president of HOSS Inc. (an acronym made up of their initials), a wide-ranging entertainment and production company. She has been Mrs. O'Neal since 1985.

They met in 1982 and produced their first floating festival aboard the Norway the following year. This year has been one of vast expansion: in addition to upcoming festivals on the Norway (Oct. 21-28) and the Seaward (Oct. 29-Nov.5) they booked a different jazz group every weekend from April 29 through Oct. 14 on the Royal Viking Star to Bermuda (two days to get there, three days ashore, two days sailing home); they took Benny Carter and others on an 11-day Alaskan cruise in July; they helped put together the jazz festival in Oslo, and they are currently planning their first west coast ventures, a month of jazz out of San Pedro (Los Angeles) on the Southward next February and a month of big bands in April-May.

To top it all off, this year O'Neal acquired back the rights to his Chiaroscuro catalogue and has 14 albums (reissues and new material) ready for release.

It's a daunting schedule for the Texas-born ex-CIA agent and the former actress from Toronto. O'Neal, of course, has been involved with jazz projects for over 20 years; Shier is a comparative newcomer.

"I worked in the theatre in Toronto," she said over a recent dinner in New York. "I did a little bit of everything—acting, producing, set design, stage managing; later, after moving to New York about 14 years ago, I did the same thing. But I was always around jazz.

"My father, Harry Shier, brought a lot of jazz to Toronto in the '50s; he worked with the Town Tavern and the Colonial and the Friars. So I grew up listening to Billie Holiday and all kinds of wonderful musicians."

O'Neal, from Kilgore, Texas, grew up in Fort Worth and then in Indiana; his father, a professional soldier, retired and became a school superintendent.

"I spent my high school and college years in Syracuse, N.Y., then went right out of college into the CIA, where I met Squirrel Ashcraft, a legendary jazz fan who knew all the musicians."

By then O'Neal had begun to acquire his now gigantic collection of records. "I worked in a record store in high school. The first LPs I acquired were *'I Like Jazz'* on Columbia and *'Jazz of Two Decades'* on EmArcy, both of which gave me a comprehensive picture, so that for me Bessie Smith was a contemporary of Clifford Brown."

"We still have zillions of records piled up everywhere," said Shier. "We really need a warehouse."

In Washington, O'Neal and Ashcraft began putting out records for fun—"Mainly old things from the '30s, plus stuff from the sessions we staged. Then I moved to New York in 1967, got to know Eddie Condon and Marian McPartland, and through Marian I met Sherman Fairchild, who used to stage piano parties, and we began recording them."

Fairchild died in 1972; O'Neal continued recording, built his own studio, and by 1976 had a catalogue of 15 items and had written extensively about jazz.

"I finally went to the CIA and said, 'Fellas, I've done this long enough,' and I wrote them a charming letter of resignation. I went into music full-time, but sold Chiaroscuro in 1978. A couple of years later I joined forces with John Hammond and we launched Hammond Music Enterprises."

The Reagan recession, O'Neal says, ruined his financing in 1981-82; he closed down his studio and seemed to be at a low ebb when he met Shelley.

"We met at a very boring dinner in New York and started talking," Shier recalls. "Soon we began working on promotions, and then a PR firm called to ask us if we could put together something that would help sales on a cruise ship."

"We had only two months to do it, O'Neal added, "so that first Norway cruise was a panic. It was amazing how many musicians turned us down; we had to beg and plead, but finally rounded up some good people."

By 1985 they had expanded to four weeks on the Norway, plus smaller-scale jazz shows on three other Norwegian Caribbean Line ships. "We were dealing with maybe 300 people including the wives," said O'Neal. "We wanted to make it as pleasant for the performers as possible, and in most cases they wanted to bring their wives along. Sure, they are hired to play, but they're also passengers and honored guests, and we like them to feel special."

The feeling works both ways, since the passengers have the unique pleasure of seeing their idols on the bandstand at night and sharing meals or drinks or the hot tub with them by day.

The O'Neals have taken special joy in bringing out of jazz retirement such people as Mel Powell (now a classical composer at CalArts but still a superb pianist) and O'Neal's old Texas friend Ray McKinley.

"There are so many special memories," says Shelley. "Like the time Dizzy Gillespie and Buddy Rich did a duet in the Saga Theatre. And the birthday parties for Dizzy—usually he's on the Norway during that time. One year Joe Williams wrote a special birthday lyric to *'Night In Tunisia,'* and it wound up with everyone—Woody Herman, Maxine Sullivan, George Duvivier, Jonah Jones—and the whole audience standing up and singing.

"One of the last things Zoot Sims did was a week on the Norway in 1986. He was very ill, but he rose above it and played beautifully."

Such is the amiable ambiance on board that at least one famous feud ended. "Buddy Rich and Flip Phillips had been feuding for 30 years." said Shelley. "We were worried about their running into each other. Well, I was sitting on deck chatting with Buddy, and Flip walks up. Silence. Buddy gets up. Long pause. Then they run to each other and embrace. Tears and all this stuff. 'Do you still love me?' They wound up playing together that night at the Club Internationale."

As O'Neal pointed out, the informality of the cruises is part of the special delight for musicians and passengers alike. "We may have Dick Hyman set up to play a set, but perhaps we'll wind up with Hyman *and* John Eaton *and* Tommy Flanagan. Sure, we have a schedule, but we leave it very flexible."

For anyone who is unable to sail on one of these trips, an important consolation prize may be in the works. There are plans to present, on Chiaroscuro, some of the taped highlights of these seaborne years. That way, Hank O'Neal and Shelley Shier will be able to combine the best of their two increasingly active worlds. ■

JAZZ

Milt Jackson

Continued from Page 63

in New York and we could hear him in San Francisco or Dallas; and Sid McCoy came out of Chicago on NBC. Why is jazz being sabotaged?"

"Sabotage" is perhaps an overly strong word, but it is true that most disc jockeys have rock stars in their eyes and that virtually all the jazz television specials are seen via cable or public TV. Serious treatment of jazz on the three major networks is a hair short of nonexistent, with a few notable exceptions, such as Dr. Billy Taylor's interviews with musicians on CBS' "Sunday Morning." True, David Sanborn has his own series, but it leans heavily toward pop-jazz and fusion artists. The latter is another area about which Jackson has strong negative feelings.

"We experimented briefly with electronics in the Modern Jazz Quartet, and I hated it; I was so relieved when we abandoned it," he said.

"You have to be pure at heart and very dedicated to play our kind of music. Consider the music Miles Davis is playing today, compared to that beautiful music he played 30 years ago. Of course, he has a reason; he probably got some big advances from Columbia Records and wanted to make some records that would pay back those advances. You can't do that by making jazz albums."

Charlie Parker remains Jackson's principal hero, as he was when they played together on some of the early Dizzy Gillespie classics. "He was an amazing man, and there is a side of him that I never saw put in print—the fact that he was very well versed in art, literature, philosophy, history. I talked to him at length and was astonished at his knowledge. There was a fine line too between his genius as a saxophonist, which we all knew about, and the other side of him, the drug addict; more people ought to know what a brilliant human being he was.

"I am so dedicated to people like Bird, as well as Coleman Hawkins, Wes Montgomery, John Coltrane and, of course, Dizzy. I would come back from my grave to play with any of those giants at any time—just tell me how to get back to the planet!

"Acoustic music is my kind of music; I like the natural sound, the melodic content and the lyrical beauty. And, until the people we play for get tired of listening to it, that's the type of music I will always play." □

MODERN JAZZ QUARTET
"Fontessa." Atlantic 1231-2.
★★★★½

Milt Jackson's famous blues composition "Bluesology" is heard here in its pristine 1956 version, recorded when the Quartet and Jackson were winning annual jazz polls as No. 1 in their respective fields. An extended version of John Lewis' title tune and chamber-jazz treatments of such standards as "Over the Rainbow" and "Angel Eyes," helped establish this as one of the MJQ's preeminent sessions.

JAZZ REVIEW

10/4/89

Modern Quartet Skips Fusion and Scores With an Old Formula

By LEONARD FEATHER

Where is the *modern* in the Modern Jazz Quartet?

They play jazz—no doubt on that score; and they are a quartet. How modern they are remains subject to question, as the quartet made clear at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena.

Fortunately, pianist John Lewis and vibraphonist Milt Jackson, once looked on as young radicals in the revolutionary bop band of Dizzy Gillespie, have proved beyond question that modernity is not an essential component of their music; on the contrary, their aim in recent years has been the conservation of qualities all too scarce in the wake of the fusion era.

The values they hold dear are best represented by their collection of tributes to Duke Ellington, which took up most of Sunday's program. In addition to arrangements inspired by Ellington works of the 1930s and early '40s, there were two original tributes: Lewis' "For Ellington," with its sublime evocation of the Duke's quasi-gospel mood in his later years, and Jackson's "Maestro E.K.E.," a languidly effective theme with easy interplay by Jackson, Lewis and bassist Percy Heath.

"Ko-Ko," a minor blues, one of the all-time Ellington masterpieces, came to life vividly with an often exact duplication of the original recording. Another partial blues, "Sepia Panorama," similarly managed to capture with the four men what Ellington had expressed through a 15-piece orchestra.

The only flaw in a generally inspired afternoon was the occasionally colorless drumming of Connie Kay, whose tendency to underplay now and then weakens the impact. On the slower works, however, notably the exquisite "Django" (played as an encore), all four men achieved the magic blend that established this group back in the early 1950s.

Jazz is sometimes called the sound of surprise. What emerges at a Modern Jazz Quartet concert is geared not to surprise but to subtlety, serenity and sensitivity. The formula still works as well as it did in the formative days when this group provided an invaluable alternative in the already hectic world of jazz.

10/7

Musical Salute to Columbus Day a Strange Mishmash

"In Performance at the White House," airing Sunday at 8 p.m. on Channel 28, is a strange, unsettled program based on a theoretically uplifting but ultimately unsatisfying premise.

Ostensibly a Columbus Day celebration, this 57-minute mishmash brings together an odd assortment of artists, most of whom represent the immigrant American experience. "We've all come here from somewhere else," says Britain's Lynn Redgrave—a questionable point, since the Benny Carter Quartet consists of four native-born Americans.

Redgrave's vocal rendition of "I've Got to Get Back to New York," which might best be described as parochial/patriotic, leads to a series of heavy-handed reminders that this is a truly global presentation. Carter's group plays "Around the World," with elegant solos by the leader on alto sax and pianist Dick Hyman, who doubles as musical director.

A series of dramatic readings about the immigrant experience enables Redgrave and F. Murray Abraham to display their control of a variety of accents; this aside, the stories too often fall flat and end abruptly.

Teresa Stratas, after informing us that her father tended goats barefoot in the mountains of Crete, sings a Puccini aria. Ray Price, who seems nervous, is accorded three numbers in the country-Western and country-blues idioms, aided by part of the United States Marines Band.

In a devastating anticlimax, everyone files on stage to sing "Christopher Columbus," mixed in with a medley of songs that contain "world" in their titles.

President and Mrs. Bush are frequently shown enjoying the show; to top it off, the President, quoting Carl Sandburg, talks about the rich heritage of our land.

It is indeed rich enough to overcome the impact of this embarrassing show, in which good intentions lead only to awkward inventions.

—LEONARD FEATHER

9/24/89

JAZZ

One Jackson Divides Into Two Jazz Quartets

By LEONARD FEATHER

Milt Jackson lives a double life and would not object to enlarging that scope to triple or quadruple.

Since 1981, when the Modern Jazz Quartet reunited after a breakup that lasted almost seven years, Jackson has divided his time between MJQ tours with his long-time companions—John Lewis, piano; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums—and dates with his own quartet.

(MJQ returns to the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena with its "Homage to Duke Ellington" Oct. 1 at 2 p.m.)

"We started with the MJQ in February of 1952," he recalled recently during a visit to Hollywood with his group. "For all but three of our years together, we've had the same personnel—Connie Kay replaced Kenny Clarke in 1955. That's an all-time record in music. And we've performed with 36 different symphonies, most notably the Stuttgart; we played with the Juilliard String Quartet, and recently we did a television show with Itzhak Perlman.

"When the Modern Jazz Quartet takes off, I do these various other projects. I'm not one for long vacations—I'm like Duke Ellington, who never wanted to take time off. There's only two other workhorses like that—Dizzy Gillespie, who has no children and likes to keep traveling; and Ray Brown, who works constantly—so much so that when we were together for a while, I had to tell him, 'Man, put a break in there somewhere; you can work yourself to death but you're not going to carry me with you!' "

Two other aspects of the vibraphonist's career that have been neglected in recent years are his composing and singing. "People forget that my first profession was as a singer. I did the vocals on a whole album for Norman Granz in 1978, on Pablo, and there are two songs in there for which I wrote the

Vibraphonist Milt Jackson: "Acoustic music is my kind of music."

and 'For Someone I Love.'

"The best compliment ever paid me was when Quincy Jones said I could make a fortune as a composer and lyric writer. I haven't done much writing lately, but I'm in the process of getting a new idea together. I have to talk to Arif Mardin about it--he's sort of taking over at Atlantic records since we lost one of our great producers, Nesuhi Ertegun."

One item on the Jackson agenda is a return bout with Ray Charles, his partner on a unique album some years ago. Another is a small combo sound for which he would like to do some writing, featuring Jimmy Heath on soprano saxophone—"I love the sound he gets on that horn"—and James Moody on flute. Both, like Jackson, are veterans of the bop years with musical antennae much like his own.

As successful as he has been, Jackson feels that he and his contemporaries are still being held back by the media, particularly TV and radio.

"How often do you hear the MJQ, or any good jazz, on TV? Or on radio?," he said. "I can remember when Symphony Sid was broadcasting live on ABC out of Birdland

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10/7

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—LEONARD FEATHER

MILES
The Autobio
by Miles Dav
Quincy Troup
Simon & Sch
22.45; 416 p

Reviewed by Le

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02

Oct. 1 '89

The Homecoming of a Black Preppie

TROUBLE THE WATER
by Melvin Dixon
(University of Colorado Press: $18.95; 194 pp.)

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

African-American literature, particularly at the fiction level, has been enjoying a healthy renaissance during the last decade. To the names of Alice Walker and Toni Morrison must now be added that of Melvin Dixon. In this, his first novel, he reveals a sensitivity and conviction that are riveting in their realism.

The setting is a hamlet in North Carolina named for the Pee Dee River. In the early chapters the principal protagonist, Jordan Henry, is a young boy living with Mother Harriet, actually his grandmother; his mother, Chloe, is dead, and the father, a hard-drinking wanderer named Jake Williams, who impregnated Chloe when she was 16, then walked away from her just before the birth, is only vaguely aware of the son's existence and is repelled by Mother Harriet when he attempts to see the youth. Dixon sets the Southern locale with evocative imagery: "Drunk with thaw from the Carr Mountains, the Pee Dee River raised its muddy arms and hugged the shore. Drunk with spring the river was still drinking. Ripples on its surface arched into blue-black lips that puckered and belched with every swallow. As the river swelled, hilltops along the Blue Ridge Mountains seemed to shrink. A low, thick fog inching out of the North Carolina morning hung a veil of heat over all and narrowed the horizon. Under a silver-green sky the water glistened like a bolt of wrinkled satin. But when it rose, the river became as sloppy and inebriated as molasses."

Jordan soon escapes from the South, makes his way to Philadelphia and, through a scholarship, enters Groton, where he was expected "to bring honors to the fledgling basketball team or at least be musical or entertaining in the class play." But spurred on by greater ambitions, he goes to Harvard, where he meets the struggling poet who becomes his wife.

The world of Phyllis Whitehead, Jordan's bride, differs vastly from his own background; her father, the most prominent black lawyer in Boston, wanted her to join the family's legal practice, but she pursues her literary objectives.

Jordan, who has studied the colonial past of New England

Melvin Dixon

and is now a rising young professor, seems to have achieved success, but his life and values are shaken, first by a cross-burning on the green of his campus, then by the news that his grandmother has died back home.

Jordan's Northern experiences symbolize the subtle humiliations endured by blacks in white American society. Courses in literature and history rarely mention the contribution of blacks; black theater majors are not offered major parts in campus productions.

Jordan recalls vividly his days at Groton when the film club showed "Birth of a Nation" and "how he cringed in his seat, trying to hide. And how he laughed himself silly along with whites as they viewed 'Song of the South' and afterwards imitated big-lipped Uncle Remus. And he recalled the dumb wonder of his roommates when he applied Vaseline to his scalp and brushed his short hair to a crisp shine."

Dixon's story gathers in intensity as Jordan and his wife head to Pee Dee to claim the legacy of the grandmother's farmland. Interwoven with his hegira is that of Jake Williams, who has been living in New Orleans with Mam'Zilie, the gold-toothed, spell-casting, Creole-French-speaking conjure woman. Jake is determined to make his way back to Pee Dee along with Mam'Zilie, whom the spirits have told that she and Jake can claim the land.

The contrasts between the black experience in New England, New Orleans and the South are brought to a head as Jordan begins to sense that he may have been living a lie. He is back home now: "He studied the presence of the wind and the road. Was it telling him to leave now just as he arrived? Or telling him to stay just long enough to feel the redness of the earth again, the redness of his own brown skin? Something out of the ground was speaking to him. Jordan was checking it out, holding."

Just as Jordan finds himself inexorably drawn to the sights and sounds, the smells and memories of his Southern childhood, the initial awkwardness between Phyllis and the strangers she meets down South is soon resolved.

Though Dixon's narrative is liberally interlarded with flashbacks and reverie-like interludes, the continuity never suffers. Jordan, his cousins and Jake and Mam'Zilie are brought into ever sharper focus as the story reaches its less than completely predictable climax.

The dualities and contradictions inherent in African-American life, in its folkloric background and its contrasting cosmopolitan sophistication, are superbly captured in a tale that has already won kudos for Dixon, who is currently a scholar in residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and a professor at City University of New York and Queens College. "Trouble the Water," which has already won the first Excellence in Minority Fiction award from the University of Colorado, is bound to set its author (already established through numerous short stories and poems) more firmly on the way to an illustrious career as a novelist. ■

Feather is a former vice president of the Hollywood-Beverly Hills chapter of the NAACP.

OCT. 15

An Ugly Jazz Story

MILES
The Autobiography
by Miles Davis With Quincy Troupe
(Simon & Schuster: $22.45; 416 pp.)

Reviewed by Leonard Feather

As if the biographies and movies dealing with the narcotics problems of Billie Holiday, Art Pepper, Hampton Hawes, Bud Powell, Anita O'Day, Charlie Parker and Chet Baker were not enough, we are now confronted by the dreary, drug-ridden story of Miles Davis, which he had assured us public would be a book about music.

As it turns out, the grinding monotony of these pages too often relegates music to secondary consideration, while interminable passages deal with the women he has beaten up, the musicians and managers he has fought with, and his off-on-off-on-off-on relationship with cocaine, heroin and other mind-altering impedimenta.

What has long been an open secret is now in print: "From 1975 to early 1980 I didn't pick up my horn," Davis says. "Mostly during those four or five years . . . I just took a lot of cocaine [about $500 a day at one point] . . ." He also had sex with "all the women I could get into my house. I was also addicted to pills, like Percodan and Seconal, and I was drinking a lot . . . mostly I snorted coke, but sometimes I would inject coke and heroin into my leg; it's called a speedball and it was what killed John Belushi."

Clearly it did not kill Miles Davis, but over the years dope ruined his health, his career and his marriages. Yet there is not enough *mea culpa* to sound a cautionary note; he gladly admits that he "really enjoyed" getting high on champagne, beer, Cognac and cocaine.

"Miles" begins as the story of a black boy who grew up with advantages that were unusual for any musician. His father, an oral surgeon in East St. Louis, prospered even during the Depression. His mother wore mink. While other black kids were struggling to escape from the ghetto, Miles Dewey Davis III was riding horses on a large family estate, or serving on the golf course as a caddy for his daddy.

His parents sent him to study at Juilliard, but after a year there he preferred the company of beboppers. Barely out of his teens, on tour with the Billy Eckstine orchestra, he began using cocaine and heroin, starting a 5-year descent into a hell from which his father tried to rescue him.

The irony is that Davis' work, with its scurrility and pragmatic sensationalism, will reach the best seller lists. Moreover, it will be praised for its "painful honesty," though in fact it is riddled with major and minor factual errors that indicate dishonesty and sloppy research. Typically, after lambasting the promoter Monte Kay for making money off black people, he says that "today he's a millionaire living in Beverly Hills." Kay never lived in Beverly Hills; also, he died in May 1988. In another instance, Davis claims that many white musicians, after working for black leaders and being nobly treated by them, go out on their own and use only white sidemen, and that the late pianist Bill Evans was one such white man. The truth is that Evans, after leaving Davis, used the black drummer Philly Joe Jones, the black bassist Rufus Reid, and recorded with several other black artists.

This is, in fact, an often untruthful, frequently ugly book without the slightest redeeming value as literature. Its almost inevitable acceptance in the marketplace bodes ill for the future documentation of musicology.

Jazz critic Feather writes frequently for The Times.

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18-1-89

Gene Harris Sitting on Top of the World

By LEONARD FEATHER

Newly organized big bands are such a rarity on today's jazz scene that the 18-man ensemble organized by Gene Harris is unique on several levels—the quality and fame of the musicians, the money invested and the duration of the just-launched tour.

Harris, who played one date at New York's Town Hall before taking off for the first overseas dates in Rabat and Casablanca last Tuesday and Wednesday, will have visited every continent before his unprecedented tour ends Dec. 11 in Taiwan.

The itinerary for Gene Harris and the Philip Morris Superband, as it is called, includes dates in Budapest, Cairo, Paris, Istanbul, Ankara, Moscow, Bern, Warsaw, Genoa, Turin, Milan, Bologna, Rome, Munich, West Berlin, East Berlin, Seoul, Manila, Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Taipei.

"Whew! It's an unbelievable schedule and an unbelievable band!" Harris said as he rattled off the cities, as he phoned from his home in Boise, Idaho, where he has spent much of the past decade in semi-retirement as music director for a local hotel.

"What makes it so great is that they're not rushing us. We have five days in Seoul but only two concerts, five days in Cairo and three concerts, one of which will be right at the pyramids."

Most significant is the stellar roster of names. There are bright young soloists like James Morrison, the 26-year-old trumpet and trombone virtuoso from Australia; Ralph Moore, the 32-year-old English-born tenor sax star, and Michael Philip Mossman, who came to light in 1985 as a member of a youth group know as "O.T.B." (Out of the Blue).

Along with them are such veterans as trumpeters Harry (Sweets) Edison, 74, and Johnny Coles, 63; trombonist Urbie Green; Frank Wess on tenor sax and flute—all Count Basie alumni—and Jerry Dodgion, whose alto sax enhanced the bands of Oliver Nelson and Thad Jones/Mel Lewis.

In the rhythm section with Harris are Herb Ellis on guitar, Jeff Hamilton on drums and Ray Brown on bass. There will be vocals by the Los Angeles favorite Ernie Andrews; for the New York concert only, Ernestine Anderson was added.

Most of the musicians had worked with Harris when he played a few dates last year to cash in on the success of a Basie-inspired album recorded in 1987 for Concord Jazz.

MARK THIESSEN

Gene Harris and band will have hit every continent by end of tour.

The spare-no-expense Superband venture was masterminded by the kind of jazz fan musicians are always hoping to find in high places with full pockets. One such guardian angel is Andrew Whist, senior vice president of Philip Morris International, who heard his first jazz when Don Redman visited his native Norway in 1946, and was hooked for life. Redman's was the first big band to tour Europe after World War II.

"I was in Lausanne five years ago," he recalls, when I went to see Dizzy Gillespie. He had James Moody on saxes and this terrific, bluesy, swinging pianist Harris. I kept my eye on last year sent him to p group dates in Paris and Then the decision was m something with Gene on grand scale."

Harris commissioned rangers, Frank Wess a Clayton, to write the lit him. "We're doing 'Slee Down South' to feature 'Porgy' as a bowed bass fe Ray Brown; Herb Ellis w song he wrote called 'I Told You I Love You, Now Get Out,' and I'm playing a little-known original by Erroll Garner, 'Creme de Menthe,' as well as Neal Hefti's 'Girl Talk.' All the guys will be heard in the album—we arranged to record the first concert at Town Hall for Concord Jazz."

Though he has been well known in jazz circles since 1956, when he formed a trio known as the Three Sounds, Harris has never before been involved in a venture guaranteed to establish him as a world-class name. Born in 1933 in Benton Harbor, Mich., he was mainly self-taught as a pianist, learning to play boogie-woogie in the style of Albert Ammons and Pete Johnson.

He put in three years with an

After leading other groups, tiring of the rigors of the road and now married to a Boise woman, Harris settled there in 1977. It was not until the past three years that he began to emerge from semi-obscurity, earning renewed critical attention when he played such jazz rooms as the Loa in Santa Monica and the Blue Note in New York.

Though his experiences at the head of a large group have been limited, Harris is elated at the sudden acceleration of his success and the size of his setting.

Asked whether he hopes to keep the orchestra together for domestic dates after the world tour is over, he hesitated for a microsecond before replying: "Darn right I'll try to keep it together! With an incredible band like this, and after getting off to such a fantastic start, who wouldn't?" □

10/16

JAZZ REVIEW

Neville an Unlucky Choice for Lazben Opener

Friday the 13th was about as good a day for the Compton Lazben Hotel as it was for the stock market. It would have been hard to find a more inept choice for an opening attraction at the hotel's Indigo Jazz Club, which opened its doors on that fateful date, than Charmaine Neville and her four backup musicians.

The fault wasn't simply that this is not a jazz act. By any standards, this group lacks the basic necessities on any level. The singer is the daughter of Charles Neville of the Neville Brothers; she and her accompanists all hail from New Orleans. But the Neville Brothers are not the Marsalis Brothers, and being from New Orleans is no automatic guarantee of musical quality.

An eager young woman who tried her best to display some sort of personality, Neville strutted around the stage, banged a cow bell and ran through a series of novelty songs, most of them decades-old and none the better for age. One was "The Right Key But The Wrong Keyhole," which was considered risque when it was published in 1923.

On most numbers, Neville was teamed with Reggie Houston, who played saxophone and joined in the vocals. He didn't help. Meanwhile, the pianist and drummer kept jumping up and down on cue as if on pogo sticks. To say that this might have gotten by as a Las Vegas lounge act would be an insult to Las Vegas lounge acts.

Ironically, when Neville sang a superior song, "Lush Life," the crowd noise level had grown so high that the song went by almost unnoticed. In fairness to the Compton Lazben, it should be pointed out that the veteran tenor-saxophonist Teddy Edwards, playing happy-hour warm-up sets, provided a genuinely satisfying jazz element.

Neville & Co. close Tuesday, to be followed Thursday by a real jazz show featuring the guitarist Kenny Burrell and singer Clea Bradford.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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Reverse-Crossover: A New Jazz Trend?

By LEONARD FEATHER

DAVID BENOIT
"Waiting for Spring." GRP GRD 9595.
★★★★

Over the years there have been countless instances of artists who have crossed over from pure jazz into broader pop and fusion areas, in search of greater sales glory. A reverse trend is manifesting itself.

Chick Corea now has a hit with an acoustic group. George Benson has recorded with McCoy Tyner. Pianists such as David Benoit and Rob Mullins (see below) are shifting gears into reverse via straight-ahead jazz albums.

Whether their motives are simply a change of pace or critical respect, the consequences are welcome. Benoit's articulation, his improvisational flair and his compositions make it hard to believe that this is the same performer who gives those conservative concerts.

His long-expressed debt to Bill Evans is reflected in two Evans originals and in his own composition, "I Remember Bill Evans," a pensive waltz.

He is in powerful company, with Emily Remler's guitar featured extensively, Peter Erskine on drums and Luther Hughes on bass (replaced on two cuts by John Patitucci). The boppish blues "Cabin Fever" and the Brazilianesque "Some Other Sunset" exemplify Benoit's talent as writer and soloist.

ANDRÉ PREVIN
"After Hours." TelArc CD 83302.
★★★

In another form of reverse crossover—classical back to jazz—Previn proves that he has not lost his touch. This is his first jazz release in six years (he recorded with Ella Fitzgerald in 1983). With Joe Pass on guitar and Ray Brown on bass, he cruises through an unspectacularly agreeable set composed of three Ellingtons, two Kerns, a Fats Waller and two Harry Warrens. "All the Things You Are" and "Limehouse Blues," taken at slower than normal tempos, and an ad-lib "Blues for Bunz" stand out in a collection that could be ideal balm as cassette music during freeway gridlock.

Rob Mullins . . . from synthesizer to jazz piano

ROB MULLINS
"Jazz Jazz." Nova 8918-2.
★★★½

Better known for his synthesizer work in the studios, Mullins makes an impressive jazz piano debut, succeeding both as composer (the dainty, impressionistic "Breakthrough," the fittingly chaotic "Parking in Westwood") and improviser. He is well served by the drummer Joel Taylor, the virtuoso bassist Brian Bromberg, and, here and there, Brandon Fields on soprano sax. Of the three standards, "Body and Soul" in double time works well, as does "Lover Man" (but who needs a drum solo in a ballad?).

MILES DAVIS
"Aura." Columbia CK 45332.
★★★★★

This is a strangely belated but still quintessential release. Recorded in Copenhagen in 1984 when Davis went there to receive the prestigious Sonning Music Prize (previous recipients were Leonard Bernstein and Stravinsky), this suite was composed for him by Palle Mikkelborg and recorded with a large ensemble that is almost all Danish (exceptions: John McLaughlin on guitar and Davis' nephew, Vincent Wilburn, on electronic drums).

Obviously there is no invitation to foot-tapping; the work, each movement of which was named for one of the seven prime colors, is very complex metrically, often easing in and out of 7/8 time. Mikkelborg's point of departure, in the serial manner, was a 10-note theme based on the letters of Miles Davis' name, from which grew a chord, and in turn a scale that supposedly led him through the composition.

Examples of Davis in his most inspired contemporary mood can be found throughout, particularly on the two "Red" movements (open horn on "Red" and muted on "Electric Red"), as well as on the haunting "Violet." "Indigo" is a curiosity; Davis does not play, yielding the solo spotlight to acoustic piano by Thomas Clausen and bass by Niels Pedersen.

There are references in the notes to Olivier Messiaen and Charles Ives, but it is Gil Evans whose shadow hangs most conspicuously over "Aura." This being Davis' first fully orchestrated work since the Evans era (early 1960s), it is of rare significance and reflects great credit on Mikkelborg's sensitive impressions of the Davis persona.□

Jazz Reviews

A New Jazzbird Joins the Strong Female Quintet

By LEONARD FEATHER

The unique quintet known as Jazzbirds has finally secured a regular job. Now heard every Sunday at the Rusty Pelican in Glendale, the group also played last Friday and Saturday at Chadney's in Burbank.

One significant change has been made since Jazzbirds was last reviewed: Joanne Grauer has taken over the piano chair. Her contributions Friday indicated that she is a valuable addition both as soloist and rhythm section component. In this setting, Grauer manages to convey her perennial lyricism along with a rare harmonic sensitivity, as was particularly evident in "You've Changed."

The latter was a vehicle for the serenely attractive singing style of Betty O'Hara, who co-leads the group with Stacy Rowles. O'Hara normally plays valve trombone, doubling on bass trumpet and cornet; she also composes works in a neatly tailored hard-bop manner, as the engaging "Aubergine" and the eponymous "Jazzbird" demonstrated.

Rowles has long shown her debt to such trumpet or flugelhorn masters as Clark Terry, Clifford Brown and Art Farmer. Her sensitive solo on Brown's own "Daahoud," in fact, was a highlight of the set, along with an ingenious rearrangement of "Night in Tunisia," of which Dizzy Gillespie would have approved heartily. Rowles also sang, in a charming little-girl voice, on "I Fall in Love Too Easily."

Mary Ann McSweeney remains one of the Southland's most underrated bass players. Though not feeling well Friday and replaced during the second set by the equally adept Nils Johnson, she was on hand long enough to display her strong sound and wealth of ideas. Jeanette Wrate's drumming rounded out the group effectively, particularly when a Latin undercurrent was called for.

With the Jazzbirds now fittingly set for the Pelican, can Birdland West be far behind?

Charlie Haden's Quartet Takes High Road

Charlie Haden's Quartet West, which closed Sunday at Catalina's, covers so much territory in a single set that its slogan might well be "Around the World in Seven Tunes."

Haden, the composer and bassist who rose to fame in the 1960s with Ornette Coleman, shares the credits with three equally skilled musicians: Ernie Watts on tenor sax, Alan Broadbent on piano and Larance Marable on drums.

These are not your everyday be-boppers—though the opening number might have given that impression—because it was an old Charlie Parker line, "Passport," for which Watts assumed the melodic responsibility before plunging into the first several choruses of hard-driving extemporization.

The idiom changed as the group wrapped itself around Pat Metheny's "Hermitage," with a minor key and a Latin beat, and with Watts in a more subdued mood.

Haden's all-embracing scope took a turn for the basics with his simple and charming calypso, "Child's Play," during which the brilliant, harmonically imaginative Broadbent supplied sensitive chording. Marable, in a long but rarely boring solo, went through some interesting motions with sticks on his high-hat cymbal.

Haden himself was the key figure in a long freedom excursion, displaying his customary finesse, telling stories in long lines and occasional chords. Watts took some uncivil liberties with his horn, and the whole thing, despite a splendid Broadbent interlude, went on so interminably that the next number, a bop line on "All the Things You Are," came as a much-needed contrast.

What is most impressive about Quartet West is its sense of unity. Having worked together off and on for two or three years, these men are thoroughly attuned to one another's innovative ideas. If they do stumble now and then in their global circumnavigation, the passages of smooth sailing make the journey worthwhile. —L.F.

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OCT - 15

Haden and Watts: They Lead 4 Lives

By LEONARD FEATHER

Time was when most leading jazz musicians had a particular job, as leader or sideman with a given band. Today the more typical artist is busy shuttling between gigs with an orchestra, playing in a small group, composing or teaching—or all four.

Charlie Haden and Ernie Watts represent this current breed. They were recently at Catalina's in Hollywood as leader and featured soloist, respectively, with the group Quartet West.

Haden, a soft-spoken bass virtuoso, is best known for his long association with Ornette Coleman's quartet, as well as for his own 13-piece Liberation Music Orchestra, which he formed in 1969 and has recently reorganized. Watts works at times with a small R&B fusion unit called the Meeting; he also has his own more straight-ahead jazz quartet, has played with and composed for the guitarist Lee Ritenour since 1977, and is still nominally a member of Doc Severinsen's "Tonight Show" band.

Haden, 52, has accumulated so many credits that last July the Montreal Jazz Festival devoted eight successive nights to a series of "This Is Your Life"-style tributes; on each night, he worked with a different group drawn from his past and recent experiences. Saxophonist Joe Henderson one night, cornetist Don Cherry the next, pianist Geri Allen III and a reunion with Paul Bley, the Canadian pianist who was his colleague in a prehistoric group with Ornette Coleman in 1958. On the final night, Haden reassembled the Liberation Music Orchestra. "It was the best experience of my whole life. It was all recorded every night, so you'll hear it soon."

Watts' background is no less impressive. Born in Norfolk, Va., in 1945, he spent his teen years in Wilmington, Del., before winning a Down Beat scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where a fellow student was a young pianist from New Zealand, Alan Broadbent, currently his colleague in Quartet West.

Two years with the Buddy Rich band gave Watts all the road experience he wanted; settling in Los Angeles, he became an NBC staff musician. Between the studio scene and the night club and concert circuit, he was able to rack up credits with everyone from Quincy Jones and Rickie Lee Jones to the Rolling Stones.

PATRICK DOWNS / L.A. Times

Ernie Watts, left, and Charlie Haden represent a "new breed."

"Ernie and I met," Haden recalls, "when I heard him playing a Michel Colombier piece with an orchestra at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. He knocked me out; I went backstage and introduced myself."

"We did a few concerts with the West Coast edition of the Liberation Orchestra," Watts said, "then we began doing the quartet things."

Haden hastened to add that he still has the Liberation Orchestra, known for its reflection of his aggressive political stance. The original album, indicative of the leader's strong anti-racist and anti-fascist leanings, included songs inspired by the Spanish Civil War, using such material as "Song of the United Front" (words by Bertolt Brecht, music by Hanns Eisler), as well as Haden's "Song for Che."

The orchestra will play the last week of 1989 and will break-in 1990 at New York's Village Vanguard. "We'll be playing material from a new record that will include the African National Congress' anthem, and a spiritual piece I wrote for Martin Luther King. There'll also be a composition by Carla Bley set to a Langston Hughes poem, 'The Dream Keeper.'"

Because of their interest in developing a positive attitude toward music, both men are deeply disturbed by the treatment jazz has been accorded in movies and television.

"I've done a lot of sound-track recording," Watts said, "everything from 'The Color Purple' and 'The Karate Kid' to 'Tootsie' and dozens more. I did one for Dave Grusin, 'The Fabulous Baker Boys,' that was just released. But what I haven't been involved in yet is a production that gives music a positive image—as opposed to 'Round Midnight' and 'Bird.' Why can't someone make a film about Louis Armstrong or Duke Ellington, something that will be uplifting and help to a better understanding?"

Coincidentally, there may be just such a film if a conversation between Charlie Haden and the Canadian film maker Brigitte Berman leads to the expected consequences.

"She is the woman who produced two marvelous documentaries about Bix Beiderbecke and Artie Shaw," Haden said. "When she heard about this great tribute they did for me in Montreal, she showed me the Bix and Shaw films, and I was greatly impressed; as a result, we're planning to do a film together. It won't be a documentary and it won't be a feature film—look for something completely new and different."

The stories about Watts and Haden seem to lead to an important and gratifying conclusion: Here are two musicians who, despite the temptations of the commercial marketplace, are now doing exactly what they want, leading lives that are rich with fulfillment. □

JAZZ REVIEW

Bohanon Leads Group at Webster's

George Bohanon, a spirited and inventive trombonist, is leading the regular Thursday night group at Webster's, a restaurant at Grand Avenue and 9th Street that is becoming known as a new gathering place for jazz aficionados. The room offers jazz from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays as well as Sunday sessions from 5 to 9 p.m.

Bohanon was supported Thursday by Bennie Maupin, a powerful tenor saxophonist known for his work with McCoy Tyner and Herbie Hancock. Together they formed an impelling front line on such familiar standards as "Walkin'," "Blue Bossa" and that seemingly ubiquitous jam session standard, "Softly As in a Morning Sunrise."

Impressive though the two were with their hard-bop excursions, and despite admirable support by Richard Reid on bass and Harold Mason on drums, the scene-stealer was Eric Reed, an amazing pianist who recently graduated from Cal State Northridge.

Nineteen-year-old Reed not only has formidable techniques but also the knowledge and bop-rooted sensitivity to back it up. At times he almost suggested a reincarnation of Bud Powell, the seminal bopper who died four years before Reed was born. At other points his two-fisted chordal approach indicated a personality that transcends imitation.

Reed will be back at Webster's Sunday leading his own quartet, under the aegis of the International Assn. of Jazz Appreciation. His is a name that is bound to reach prominence very early in the 1990s.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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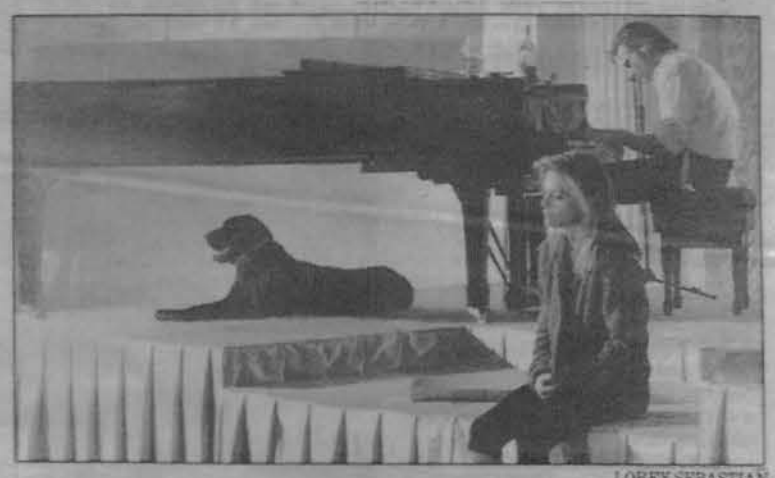
JAZZ

Films Jazz Up Sound-Track Albums

By LEONARD FEATHER



LOREY SEBASTIAN

Michelle Pfeiffer, Jeff Bridges in "The Fabulous Baker Boys."

The proliferation of movie sound-track albums in recent months has included a substantial number of jazz-related scores. Following are some items of particular interest.

THELONIOUS MONK

"Straight No Chaser: Music From the Motion Picture" Columbia CK45358. ★★★★

Thelonious may have been the mad Monk of music (his erratic behavior is recalled by his son, Thelonious Jr., in one of this admirable movie's most poignant sequences), but "Mad Genius" might be a more fitting characterization.

The film includes 27 songs, all but six of which were composed by Monk. In the CD, however, only 11 numbers are heard, among them three seriocomic, sometimes stumbling versions of old popular songs. While many of the tunes are heard in the film only in bits and pieces, or hidden by voice-overs, on the record most are presented in their entirety, with a few brief verbal statements by saxophonist Charlie Rouse, Monk Jr. and Monk's protector the Baroness Nica De Koenigswarter.

The idiosyncratic Monk piano style has been heard in many previous versions of the same works, but this is a valuable set for Monk completists. Regrettably, two of the finest passages of piano artistry in the film, the duets by Tommy Flanagan and Barry Harris on "Well You Needn't" and "Misterioso," are omitted.

BILL LEE

"Do the Right Thing" sound track. Columbia CK, 45406. ★★★½

Spike Lee's father, Bill Lee, composed and conducted the original music for his son's controversial picture. It's an odd mixture, with a 40-piece string ensemble and a small contingent of first-rate jazz soloists, principally Branford Marsalis on saxophone. Some of the Lee themes have old-timey, almost Stephen Fosterish charm. Other plus factors are the trumpet of Terence Blanchard and the alto sax of Donald Harrison. The score is a generally pleasing alternation of symphonetta style and jazz chamber music. Note: A pop-oriented album of music from the movie, has been released on Motown.

DAVE GRUSIN

"The Fabulous Baker Boys" sound track G.R.P. G.R.D. 2002. ★★★½

In view of the basic premise involving two cocktail pianists, this is a most improbable sound track album. Nowhere are the piano duetists heard, but Dave Grusin, who dubbed the piano for Jeff Bridges, composed and played in several jazz originals, with spirited solo work by the muted Miles Davis-like trumpet of Sal Marquez, Ernie Watts on saxes and Lee Ritenour on guitar. Most of this, however, is unheard in the movie. Of Michelle Pfeiffer's numerous vocals, only two are retained here. She sounds just like the slightly-above-average lounge singer her character is supposed to represent.

ART BLAKEY

"Les Liaisons Dangereuses" Fontana 812017-2. ★★★

With the revival of Roger Vadim's 1959-60 movie, the release and transfer to CD of the sound track takes on renewed interest. The parts recorded by Thelonious Monk were never put out on record; instead, there are too many duplications of tracks (two takes of "Valmontana," as well as four versions, two jazz and two Latin, of "No Problem"). This edition of Blakey's Jazz Messengers included the brilliant trumpeter Lee Morgan and the Nice-born saxophonist Barney Wilen. Because there are many available Blakeys of equal or superior merit, this disc has limited appeal, strictly to those who have seen the film. □

Jazz Reviews

Pianist Camilo Vivid, Volatile at Catalina Bar

Michel Camilo blew into Hollywood's Catalina Bar and Grill on Tuesday from the islands. The pianist, born in Santo Domingo but now a New York resident, began his set with "Island Stump," a heavy-handed helping of Caribbean overkill.

His approach to the keyboard is busy, boisterous, blistering; also vivid, volatile and vital. Though now well into his 30s, he seems not yet to have learned to use space. He is, however, a composer of unquestionable talent. Almost every work had a Latin flavor of one era or another, from updated merengue or bambo to latter-day samba.

Several pieces began unaccompanied before bursting into tempo with Michael Bowie on bass and Cliff Almond on drums, who match him in unrelenting intensity. Camilo's use of parallel unison lines, and fast-moving octaves in the right hand, is phenomenal, but one yearns for relief, which came just twice: in a gentle and beautiful ballad, "In Love," simply stated in single note lines, and in the only non-Camilo piece, the seemingly inevitable "Softly As in a Morning Sunrise," delivered in a welcome, straight, swinging four-beat.

The West Indian territory often invaded by Camilo was staked out years ago in a more discreet manner by Monty Alexander; but Camilo, whatever his excesses, is a brilliant and controversial artist who deserves serious attention,

which he receiving throug

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L.A. TIMES 10/22/89 JAZZ

Jim Hall Lets His Guitar Do the Talking

By LEONARD FEATHER

Jim Hall speaks softly and carries an electric guitar. If he has never attained the fame many fellow musicians feel he has earned, it could be due to the lack of any aggressive trait in his personality.

He is nevertheless secure, having been sought out by some of the most eminent soloists in jazz. At present he has his own quartet, has managed to bring it with him from New York, and will be appearing tonight at McCabe's in Santa Monica.

"I'm happy with this group," Hall said during a recent visit to Los Angeles with his wife, Jane, a psychoanalyst. "Gil Goldstein, who plays piano and synthesizer, was the synth player in Gil Evans' last band. Terry Clarke is a drummer from Canada—I've worked with him off and on for years—and Steve La Spina is an incredible bass player. We have an album out on Concorde." ("All Across the City," CCD 4384.)

When Hall talks about himself, you have the feeling that he might rather be dealing with some other topic. Tennis, for instance, inspired some of his compositions ("Cross Court," "Down the Line" and, on the new album, "Drop Shot"); among his friends he numbers Don Budge and several other kings of the court, as well as the cartoonist Gary Larson, who took guitar lessons from him all summer and became a good pal. ("We're going up to see him in Seattle—he's doing the cover for a new book I'm writing, a combination instruction and personal reflection book.")

When the conversation drifts to musicians, he finds succinct comments on some of the giants with whom he has worked.

■ On Ben Webster, the legendary ex-Ellington saxophonist: "I was living out here in Los Angeles; Ben didn't have a car and was a bachelor. I was the only other bachelor in the group and always had to chauffeur him around, which was an honor. The others were Jimmy Rowles, Red Mitchell and Frank Butler; in fact, Contemporary just put out an album we made with that band." ("Ben Webster at the Renaissance," OJCCD 390-2).

■ On pianist Bill Evans: "He was a friend of mine in New York and was a big influence on my playing before he made that duo album in 1959."

■ On Paul Desmond: "He was one of our closest friends. He used to come over and play Scrabble with Jane all the time, and he was just as brilliant at that as he was playing the saxophone. I just sat there and watched them."

■ On saxophonist Lee Konitz: "I did some duet work with Lee, which at times was fantastic, but at other times it was difficult, because if he didn't feel like playing he'd just stand there and pout. But it was a great experience."

■ On Sonny Rollins: "Joining Sonny was probably the best move I ever made. During that year and a half with him a lot of people came to accept me who might not even have heard me otherwise. I came to the attention of Art Blakey, Max Roach, people like that who put their stamp of approval on me. John Coltrane used to come in; he influences me tremendously with his use of thematic material, his ability to take a tune apart and just sort of examine it. But Sonny himself was a prime force—an incredible virtuoso."

■ Art Farmer: "I was with Art right after I left Sonny. He had just switched from trumpet to fluegelhorn. I loved Art's lyricism, just as I did Miles' playing."

"Which Miles do you mean?"

Hall laughed. "Well, let's say especially the group he had with Coltrane, Bill Evans and Cannonball Adderley. I worked opposite that band at one time and had wonderful opportunities to appreciate what they were doing."

To these names, Hall added those of Chico Hamilton, the drummer in whose unique chamber jazz quintet he played in 1959, and Jimmy Giuffre, of whom he observes: "Jimmy was a sort of father figure to me. He helped me in many ways, influencing my phrasing, showing me how to blend with his sax or clarinet, and how to get rid of picking noises."

Hall has often been compared to Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt, whose records he listened to as a young man in Cleveland. Not surprisingly, he still attempts to achieve a sound quality that is not hampered by electronics.

"I still have my old Gibson guitar and my old tube amplifier. I try to keep that sound going, but it gets harder all the time, because the equipment falls apart and the engineers' ears have changed.

"It's so rough to go into a studio—and this happened to me in Argentina just as it happens here—and find some emissary coming out from the control booth and saying 'Can't you get more highs on that amp?' That's just the opposite of what I want, of course."

In one small Italian town, he says, at an attractive hall that had been built for intimate recitals, "we walked in and found these stacks of speakers on the stage hissing away. It was like defiling the place. I just said, 'Get those things out of here!' and we wound up doing the concert almost acoustically."

Another contretemps was avoided when Hall went to Rio two years ago. "There was an ironic touch here, because it was advertised as 'Free Jazz Festival,' and of course I assumed they expected to hear me play free jazz; but that turned out to be just the name of the cigarette company that was sponsoring what was actually a rather loud, electric fusion kind of festival. Well, I just came onstage with my guitar and my little amp, and I think I won the critics over with a sort of reverse psychology.

"In general, I love Brazilian music; one musician I greatly admire is Egberto Gismonti, the guitarist, composer and pianist. I love Bill Frisell's work, too; and there are a couple of students at the Parsons School of Design in New York, where I'm a teacher, who show great promise.

"Overall, I'd say yes, I have hope for the future, including my own. It's sort of come full circle, to where I'm learning from the younger guys; and that's fine with me."

□

THEODORA LITSIOS

Jim Hall: "I have hope for the future, including my own. It's sort of come full circle, to where I'm learning from the younger guys; and that's fine with me."

JAZZ REVIEW L.A. TIMES 10-21-89

Burrell, Bradford at Indigo Club

The Indigo Jazz Club at the Compton Lazben Hotel is now presenting—surprise!—jazz. With guitarist Kenny Burrell and singer Clea Bradford sharing the bill, the show is doubly delectable. It's a needed change of pace after last week's false start with Charmaine Neville.

Burrell has long been the epitome of fluency and taste. Whether stringing out imaginative lines on "Secret Love" or indulging in rich chordal sequences on "Autumn Leaves," he reflects many influences while remaining his own man.

His sound is clean and clear, though when he switched to acoustic guitar for "My Ship" there were problems with the sound equipment. For those sitting close enough to ignore the mike, this graceful Kurt Weill melody took on a rejuvenated luster.

"Mood Indigo" was a particularly apt choice in view of the club's name and Burrell's decade-long tenure as teacher of Duke Ellington's music at UCLA. During the second chorus Clea Bradford joined him in a happy collaboration that continued through the end of the set.

A tall, commanding presence, long absent from these parts—she now lives in Washington—Bradford moved seamlessly from smoky contralto tones to unexpected high-note finales. Her phrasing and use of dynamic contrasts are exceptional. She is, in effect, a human volume control.

The Burrell-Bradford partnership continues through Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

11/5/89

NOV. 5, 1989

JAZZ

This Is the Spawning of the Age of Marsalis

The Marsalis brothers create some of the most important music of the decade; there are other musical brothers not yet heard from

By LEONARD FEATHER

It is becoming increasingly clear that the 1980s will go down in jazz history as the Marsalis decade.

Wynton Marsalis rose first to fame, followed rapidly by his brother Branford. Their father, Ellis, was a long-respected teacher and pianist in New Orleans. Now it appears that another brother is about to make a swift rise to acceptance. He is the trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis, who graduated recently from the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Not long after, he found himself in fast company, working on a jazz cruise with a band headed by the veteran cornetist Nat Adderley. Playing with world class musicians, he earned an uproarious ovation at every show, displaying a style marked by technical expertise, swirling melodic lines and frequent touches of humor.

"I'm the fourth oldest," he said during a rest between sets. "Branford is 29, Wynton's 28, Ellis III is 25. Ellis was married in September, and for the first time in many years the entire family got together.

"I was born July 28, 1965. My younger brothers are Mboya, who's 19, and Jason, who's 12 and plays drums. At first I wanted to play electric bass, but it hurt my fingers, so while I was in the sixth grade I figured I'd be like big brother and pick up a horn."

Oddly, his father did not encourage Delfeayo. "He saw that I wasn't too interested in practicing, and he knew the level of proficiency that Branford and Wynton had attained, so he tried to persuade me to be a writer."

Unfazed, the youth went on to Tanglewood, playing classical music, but his technical ability was not matched by a talent for improvising, until he went to Berklee.

"I studied with Phil Wilson and all the other trombone teachers there, but my ideas about jazz playing really came from the records of J. J. Johnson."

Armed with the albums of that bebop pioneer, Delfeayo Marsalis honed his skills, though for the first three of his six years at Berklee he was mainly involved with learning record production. "While I was in the fifth grade, Branford showed me how you could create a tape loop, and from that point on I was fascinated with tape recorders. I was 17 when I produced my first album, 'Syndrome,' a piano session my Dad made."

Though he also put together and played with a band composed primarily of fellow Berklee students, Delfeayo remained unknown as a trombonist while racking up an imposing series of producer credits.

"I've done four albums for Branford: I produced Harry Connick Jr.'s first album when he was 19; I made 'Crystal Stair' for Donald Harrison and Terence Blanchard and 'The Truth Is Spoken Here,' [pianist] Marcus Roberts' debut album."

LEONARD FEATHER
Trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis lays it down.

These were all New Orleans musicians, but there have been other credits: He assisted on a session for the Polish pianist Adam Makowicz and has produced two albums for the British saxophonist Courtney Pine. ("My Dad played on the new one—it's due out soon.")

"I did the acoustic sound track for Spike Lee's 'Do the Right Thing,' and lately we've been working together on his new movie, 'A Love Supreme.' It's a story about a jazz trumpet player; he's portrayed on the screen by Denzel Washington, with Terence Blanchard dubbing the trumpet parts and Branford's band featured as well."

Last January Delfeayo's Berklee group competed in the national college band contest held by the National Assn. of Jazz Educators in San Diego. The band won first prize, and those of us who heard the young trombonist were convinced that his career could never be limited to producing.

He agrees. "I want to do more playing. I haven't worked in my brothers' groups. I

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When Branford Marsalis speaks his mind, the listener has the impression that he is doing so out of deep conviction, and not because he desires to flaunt his erudition.

The 29-year-old saxophonist who has

JOSE GALVEZ / L.A. Times
Branford Marsalis: saxophonist, composer, actor.

enjoyed even more credits than his brother Wynton—as saxophonist, composer, movie actor, touring soloist with pop groups and recording artist in both jazz and classical settings—has no hesitation in letting a few chips, falling where they may, cause a touch of irritation.

It has struck some observers as remarkable that the group he now heads consists entirely of former Wynton Marsalis sidemen, including himself. "I don't think Wynton resented it at first," he says, "because I never lured them away from him; his own music was going in a different direction. But now that he may be changing his style again, he's gonna be hard pressed to find musicians.

"This is really a dream band for all of us. I went to school with the drummer, Jeff [Tain] Watts; the pianist, Kenny Kirkland, is an old friend and always wanted to work with me. Bob Hurst, the bass player, went with Wynton after Kenny and I had left, but he worked with Tony Williams just before joining us."

To the casual observer or first-time interviewer, the attitudes of the two senior Marsalis brothers seem sharply contrasted; Wynton seems to verge on arrogance and to avoid any comment that might be construed as racially incorrect.

Branford, on the other hand, when asked about the possibility of recording works by black classical composers, had no hesitation in replying: "There aren't that many for any instrument, let alone for the saxophone. William Grant Still, judging by what I've heard of his work, is not in the same class as Stravinsky or any of the great composers. I don't want to sound mean, but if he were white he wouldn't get any mention at all! There's a lot of instances where people have gotten credit because they were black.

"Being black can work to your advantage: if you have somebody that violently disagrees with you, whether it's in music or the political arena, all you have to do is holler 'racism!' and they'll back off."

When it was suggested to him that this attitude seemed antithetical to Wynton's, he replied: "You think so? He would never make a remark like that, but he *thinks* it. I'm sure he knows there's such a tremendous amount of anti-black racism in this country that he doesn't want to give anyone a chance to say 'You see? Racism works both ways.'

"It's hard to explain the differences between me and Wynton. I agree with the majority of things he says, but our deliveries are different. The best part of his message is the musical part.

"Music means a lot more than just music to him, I think, whereas music to me means music. I'm not trying to prove anything to anyone with my music—at least, not politically or socially; only musically. I do have social observations that differ from Wynton's. Mine are more comfortable for people, while he, I believe, enjoys making them squirm."

Branford would just as soon make people laugh. He has impressed millions with his screen presence, first in "Bring On the Night," which some feel he stole from Sting, then in "Throw Mama From the Train" and most recently in Spike Lee's "School Daze."

He was offered a lead acting role in Lee's current production, "A Love Supreme," but turned it down because it would have meant putting his band on hold while he spent time in the studios. "I wrote three tunes for the sound track and my band played on it; that seemed more important to me than the acting. It's going to be a real

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Delfeayo

Continued from Page 8

did road-manage Branford on a couple of his gigs, but I'm not interested in that type of work; I really want to play.

"They are much more advanced, and being my older brothers they have a different perspective on life. But I'm fortunate to have had an opportunity to see their mistakes, observe what they were doing correctly, and use that as a guide in making my own decisions."

His career may not be confined to playing and producing. As his liner notes for the recent Branford Marsalis album "Trio Jeepy" revealed, he is a literate and knowledgeable writer who may yet justify his father's original ambition to see him take up journalism and criticism. He has written a number of unpublished poems and short stories.

"I enjoy writing. I want to get some columns into the papers, and I hope eventually to document enough material for a couple of books. It seems to me important to get someone from this generation—musicians of our age group—to provide written information on how they think and feel about the music."

Yet another direction in which he will aim is composition. "Whenever I tour with my own band, I do some sporadic composing and arranging. I've been working on a new concept in which the trombone is playing the melody underneath the harmony, instead of writing the melody on top of the harmony as everybody usually does."

Clearly there is no limit to the potential successes of this brilliant youth. As knowledgeable as brother Wynton, friendly and outgoing like Branford, tall (almost 6 feet) and good looking, with a rare improvisational talent on an instrument that has been too long on the sidelines in jazz, he seems ready to take on the world. It is safe to predict that within a year or two, the name Delfeayo Marsalis will be as well known and respected as that of his two older brothers. □

Branford

Continued from Page 8

hard-core jazz movie too—unlike 'Bird,' which I thought was awful. I didn't like the technique they used to drown out the other musicians and dub in new ones who backed up Bird. They threw in a lot of crowd noise so that it sounded more like a rock concert than a jazz club."

Miles Davis, whose absence from "Bird" was the subject of much speculation, has given Branford Marsalis food for considerable thought.

"I think Miles has done as much damage to jazz music as he has done good. He reminds me of stories I used to hear about [the late trumpeter] Lee Morgan, where there was some fear of being considered a nice person, so you try to show how tough you are and you curse at everyone and turn your back to the audience.

"Miles would rather be considered famous than important. The only reason he switched to pop music was that he thought people had stopped going to see jazz. When the Village Vanguard was no longer the in place to play, he didn't want to work there any more.

"His last record, 'Amandla,' is fantastic, but you know why? Because of Marcus Miller, who is one of the baddest pop writers and producers out there. It's ironic to see Miles reduced to being, in effect, a sideman on his own record; in the old days he put his own personal stamp on every album."

Marsalis has no objection to Davis' change of musical orientation. "I'm not saying he should still be playing jazz. Not at all. Especially after he's played with every great musician known to mankind. Once Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter and Tony Williams and Ron Carter left him, who was he gonna play with—us? That's a joke to me, man.

"It's just not right for Miles to take so much undue credit and put so many people down. I heard one interview where he said Freddie Hubbard can't play the trumpet. Before I was asked to join his band, I was just "a great musician," but when I didn't join him, in the next interview he said I can't play social music. Well, I grew up with social music, as he calls it; it's a product of the generation I represent. There's a difference between not being able to play it and choosing not to. All these guys of his age would talk about funk—I resent that, because funk also is a product of *my* generation, not theirs."

Another source of resentment: The New York critics who, as Marsalis puts it, "believe that Miles invented air. They seem to feel that *he* was the guiding force behind Herbie and Wayne and the rest, although the only smart thing Miles did was hire them in the first place.

"Years from now, how would it sound if I went around saying I taught Jeff Watts how to play the drums, or Kenny Kirkland how to play the piano? People might be dumb enough to believe it, but that's not fair to the musicians you hired—and it's not fair to history."

The many and varied achievements of Branford Marsalis over the past year have provided a fair indication of what history holds in store for him. Last winter he was the national spokesman, and one of the judges, for the National Assn. of Jazz Educators college band competition. In May, taking part in a Carnegie Hall concert with Sonny Rollins, he earned an extraordinary endorsement from the tenor sax veteran, who said: "I've played in competitive situations with some of the giants, and Branford may be the next giant." Soon after, Rollins invited Marsalis to play on his record session.

Another staunch admirer is Dave Grusin, on whose latest release, "Migration," Marsalis plays three cuts. Perhaps coincidentally, the bassist on all three, and the composer on one, is the above-mentioned Marcus Miller. This is a GRP release, but Branford remains under contract to CBS for his own albums.

Given the wide range of his activities and the growing respect in which he is held, it would seem likely that not only will Branford Marsalis be fair to history, but history will be eminently fair to him. □

that violently disagrees with you, whether it's in music or the political arena, all you have to do is holler 'racism!' and they'll back

Jazz Reviews

11/10/89

Cheryl Bentyne Covers Wide Range at Le Cafe

Cheryl Bentyne perched on a high stool next to the piano, tossed back her mane of red hair, sighed and launched into the verse of Billy Strayhorn's "Day Dream."

This laid-back mood at Le Cafe in Sherman Oaks marked the start of another of her occasional one-nighters away from her home base, home being Manhattan Transfer. More than ever before, she demonstrated her exceptional talent as a purveyor of a wide range of songs, from Gershwin and Ellington to Ivan Lins.

For well over an hour Tuesday evening, she kept an intimate group of fans entranced as she wove her way through familiar standards and newly lyricized instrumentals. In the latter category were Dore Caymmi's "Love's River" and Michel Legrand's "Les Enfants Qui Pleurent."

Her sound is pure, her phrasing indicative of a jazz sensitivity, with Corey Allen's understated but rhythmically compelling accompaniment as her solo and totally adequate support. At times Bentyne would offer surprising evidence of her considerable range, as she did in a sudden, unpredictable upward thrust toward the conclusion of "My Funny Valentine."

Le Cafe could have been a New York Eastside lounge in the 1960s as she applied her velvet timbre to "Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most" and "Blue Prelude." During the Brazilian interlude Allen switched to electric keyboard to supply soothing organ harmony. Later he had his own solo spot, bringing gentle intelligence to his treatment of "That's All." He co-wrote with Bentyne the brief and engaging final tune, "Good Friends." By the end of this magic set the French had clearly extended to everyone in her small but delighted audience.

—LEONARD FEATHER

Billy Harper Quintet

Billy Harper, the Texas-born tenor saxophonist who opened Tuesday at Catalina Bar and Grill in Hollywood, is a powerful, hard-driving performer whose quintet places an almost unrelenting accent on energy and high tension.

Well known for his work with Gil Evans and Art Blakey, Harper is said to have been inspired by Sonny Rollins. However, it was the image of John Coltrane that hung over the group as it made its way through a series of modally inclined original compositions. Although the thematic statements were brief, the extended solos seemed to indicate that such words as *succinct* and *terse* are not in these artists' vocabulary. By the time the third tune ended a full hour had elapsed.

Harper's control of the horn is impressive, but when one is literally playing as many as a dozen notes per second, it is no easy task to relate any of them to the beat of the rhythm section. Thus swinging in the normal sense becomes impractical.

Eddie Henderson's trumpet, Clarence Seay's bass and the powerhouse drumming of Newman Taylor Baker make up a unit well geared to Harper's requirement. The group closes Sunday. —L.F.

JAZZ REVIEW 11/18

Cheathams Revere Old-Time Values

The blues blew into town Thursday (and will blow out again tonight) in the persons of Jimmy and Jeannie Cheatham with their Sweet Baby Blues Band.

Of the original group that made its record debut in 1984, only the leaders, saxophonist Curtis Peagler and drummer Ironman Harris were on hand at Vine Street Bar and Grill in Hollywood. The substitutions, however, were more than adequate. Nolan Smith on trumpet had that old time plunger-muted spirit down to a T, and Charles Owens, a tenor saxophonist with wide-ranging credentials (you can't get much righter than Frank Zappa and Horace Tapscott) brought his warm sound to "I Can't Get Started," the only non-blues piece of the set.

Basically, of course, this eight-piece band focuses on the pianist/vocalist and her husband, who plays bass trombone and writes the neat, well-tailored arrangements. You can still hear echoes of the Baptist church in Jeannie Cheatham's vocal tributes to the 12-bar idiom, just as her piano, whether shuffling its way through "What Goes Around Comes Around" or getting down to 8-bar basics with "Cherry Red," evokes memories of South Side parties and Kansas City joints, of rent parties and evening trains.

Jimmy Cheatham's muted bass trombone is a model of eloquent simplicity. Peagler's alto sax at times became too shrill and busy to sustain the blues essence, yet his best moments dug deep into the tradition.

The Cheathams seldom stray far

Please see CHEATHAMS, F8

CHEATHAMS

Continued from F5

from their old-time values and don't seem to mind if two consecutive tunes, "Rock Me in Your Arms Tonight" and "Meet Me With Your Black Drawers On," are all but identical, even to the rhythm of those two titles. The audience didn't seem to mind either.

—LEONARD FEATHER

LOS ANGELES TIMES 11/16

This Vocal Quintet Definitely Has a New York State of Mind

■ **Jazz:** New York Voices tackles music ranging from John Coltrane to Aretha Franklin, which is just fine with its leader.

By LEONARD FEATHER

JUDY GRIESEDIECK

The New York Voices and their musicians: from left, bassist Chuck Bergeron, Sara Krieger, leader Darmon Meader, Kim Nazarian, Peter Eldridge, Caprice Fox, pianist Jon Werking and drummer Tommy Igoe.

New York Voices, the quintet playing at Catalina Bar and Grill in Hollywood through Sunday, has lofty ambitions. Sure, the singers interpret jazz classics from Monk's "Round Midnight" to Ellington's "Caravan." Granted, they mixed Bach with bossa in the wordless "Baroque Samba" and have dipped into pop with words to the Yellowjackets' "Top Secret."

Can they have it both ways? Which audience are they aiming at? Why do their lyrics range from socially significant ("National Amnesia") to utterly bland ("Come Home")?

Ask Darmon Meader, the group's leader. As composer and arranger of much of their material, vocal improviser and saxophonist, he plays a significant role in determining the quintet's direction.

"We all have different backgrounds," he said. "Consequently you hear various influences and styles at work. I'm at one extreme with my experience as a jazz instrumentalist. Caprice Fox has done a lot of R&B, also some workshops with Bobby McFerrin. Peter Eldridge had classical training, but his background is ridiculously wide, from early classics up to rock 'n' roll. Kim Nazarian and Sara Krieger both have had theatrical experience. You add those up and you kind of get what we do."

The fivesome is logically named. All the members except Krieger studied at Ithaca College in Upstate New York. In the summer of 1986, the school was invited to take an alumni vocal unit to play at such European events as the North Sea Jazz Festival.

"I was well prepared. For a few years after graduating I'd done resort gigs and explored the vocal jazz idiom as a performer and writer," said Meader. "We were a big hit in Europe, and back home, four of the six of us decided to form a similar group. We needed one more female voice, and Sara, who had been doing her own thing in New York City for 10 years, joined us in the fall of '87."

A contract with GRP Records set the quintet on the road to public awareness. Their first album, released last May, has moved slowly but surely up to the Top 10 on the Billboard jazz chart; meanwhile, as calls for dates improved, the quintet went to Europe last month.

"The Berlin Jazz Festival was a great experience," said Meader. "We'd been accustomed to playing mostly smaller clubs, so it was nice to be part of something on a grand scale, at the Philharmonic, along with people like Mel Tormé and Abbey Lincoln. The reception over there is amazing. They can be very demanding and very critical, but when they like you it's truly exciting."

Unlike the precedent-setting Lambert, Hendricks & Ross trio, New York Voices generally avoids the customary practice of setting words to what were originally recorded jazz solos. In "Caravan," for example, Meader has a long improvised passage that resembles just such a solo, though in fact he devised the melody himself.

"As a saxophone player I base some of the writing on my own improvisational style," he said. "We don't want to duplicate what Manhattan Transfer did on the 'Vocalese' album."

New York Voices is evidently finding its own avenue to success. New arrangements include John Coltrane's "Giant Steps," Tadd Dameron's "Lady Bird" and Aretha Franklin's "Chain of Fools."

Are they or are they not a jazz group at heart? The answer can be found in those titles: Jazz, it would seem, is a New York vocal state of mind.

Eric Reed: Accomplished Musician at Any Age

At 19, Eric Reed is two years younger than Harry Connick Jr. and 20 years wiser. Appearing Friday at the Biltmore's Grand Avenue Bar, this phenomenal young pianist offered new evidence of the advances he has made since he performed, only months ago, as a student in a college band at Cal State Northridge.

Though his technique is formidable, he rarely lets it run away with him; in fact, during "Lover Man," the only ballad of the set, there were moments of bare-bones simplicity, followed by an intriguing passage of block-chords style during which both hands moved in lock step.

Capably supported by Tony Dumas on bass and Chuck McPherson on drums, Reed drew on the lore of the great post-bop compositional masters, starting with Wayne Shorter's "Yes and No" before moving on to the works of Cedar Walton, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk. For the Monk segment he played unaccompanied, bringing something of the composer's own quizzical dissonances to "Ruby My Dear" and "Crepuscule for Nellie."

That Reed was able to concentrate and play as impressively as he did was doubly remarkable in the light of the room's noisy conditions, for this was a typically rowdy Thank God It's Friday crowd. By the end of the set, closing with a B-flat blues that straddled several decades with its Earl Hines tremolos and lightning runs of 16th notes, he had the listeners truly paying attention.

Reed's hands and feet are firmly planted in the rhythmic, harmonic and modal roots of the 1980s. By the year 2000, perhaps much sooner, he will have become one of the most valuable new contributors to this century's final decade.

—LEONARD FEATHER

11/20

17/12/89

Overcoming the String Shortage

By LEONARD FEATHER

The evolution of string groups in jazz has been a checkered story. The trouble usually is that you can lead a fiddle to the jazz group, but you can't make it swing.

Except for the occasional violin soloist (Joe Venuti, Stuff Smith, Stephane Grappelli and a dozen others), string players (except, of course, those who played string bass primarily in its rhythm function) have shown themselves largely incapable of capturing the improvisational essence common to the great horn artists.

During the past few years several promising steps have been taken to correct the problem. The albums reviewed below are significant cases in point.

UPTOWN STRING QUARTET
Philips 838-358-2.
★★★★

An offshoot of Max Roach's Double Quartet, this group includes his daughter, Maxine Roach, on viola. She and the two violinists and cellist clearly have the qualifications to establish a jazz feeling when it is required. Working without a rhythm section, the foursome glides rather than swings, with an unconventional repertoire that includes "Jelly Roll Rag" and "Easy Winner," both achieving a quaint turn of the century flavor; arrangements by Bill Lee (Spike's father) of traditional African-American songs, and originals by Max Roach (arranged by Maxine) and Oscar Pettiford among others. Though the emphasis is on well phrased ensemble playing, there are enough solo touches to establish each members' individual credentials.

WARREN VACHE AND THE BEAUXARTS STRING QUARTET
"Warm Evenings" Concorde Jazz CCD 4392
★★★½

There is no attempt to use this quartet for purposes other than elaborate window dressing for a superior soloist, but this tradition goes all the way back to Charlie Parker with strings. The charts by Jack Gale support Vache's coronet in a set of standards, but the third and fourth cuts are mood-breakers in which he has only a rhythm section for backing. Vache has the right lyrical touch for Gordon Jenkins' "This Is All I Ask," in which the strings help him sublimate an already superior melody.

Associated Press
Dizzy Gillespie strings along with the Rochester Philharmonic.

JOHN HANDY WITH CLASS
"Centerpiece"
Milestone MCD 9173-2.
★★★½

Handy's alto saxophone blends beautifully with three versatile colleagues: Julie Carter, Tarika Lewis, Sandi Poindexter. All three play the violin, sing, hum and scat—on two cuts they even play and sing simultaneously, without overdubbing. Handy and another male singer joined the vocal proceedings here and there, but primarily this adventurous unit wins points, despite occasional intonation lapses, for the ingenious blending (in Handy's own arrangements) of his horn with voices and/or violins. Four of the eight tunes are based on the blues.

DIZZY GILLESPIE
"The Symphony Sessions" ProJazz CDJ698
★★★

Gillespie's regular quintet is surrounded by the Rochester Philharmonic, with John Dankworth conducting. The seven pieces are compositions he wrote 20 to 46 years ago, some recorded in earlier versions that left no room for improvement. Nevertheless, Robert Farnon's arrangement of "Con Alma" and Mike Crotty's interesting treatment of "Fiesta Mojo" (with logical use of the strings) rise above the general level, as does the long, quasi-symphonic treatment by J.J. Johnson of "Night in Tunisia," composed in 1943. Gillespie's horn, though not always in optimum form, does eloquent justice to "Brother K.," his lyrical tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King. There is generally good solo work by Ron Holloway on tenor sax and the somewhat poorly recorded guitar of Ed Cherry.

ART PEPPER
"The Complete Galaxy Recordings" Galaxy GCD-1016-2.
★★★★★

Strings play a minor role here, but on one of the 11 sessions Pepper was backed by a violins-and-celli ensemble for eight songs (five of which are heard additionally in alternate takes). Bill Holman and Jimmy Bond each wrote four of the arrangements, providing for Pepper what was clearly an inspiring harmonic cushion. On one of the Holman charts, "Blues in the Night," Pepper switched from alto saxophone to clarinet. The rest of this 16-CD set, selling for a mere $225, consists of Pepper's combo dates from 1978 through April 1982, seven weeks before his death. His choice of sidemen, and of songs, was impeccable. The pianists were George Cables, Stanley Cowell, Hank Jones and Tommy Flanagan. It would be hard to ask for anything more. □

Davison service celebrates his life, music

By Ronald W. Powell
News-Press Staff Writer

The rich, resonant sound of a cornet echoed through the august sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church Saturday.

It blended with a piano, a bass, a trombone and a guitar, creating lovely jazz melodies that washed against the tabernacle's high ceiling and imposing stained glass windows.

Many among of the 100 listeners recognized it was the kind of music that William "Wild Bill" Davison lived to play. And at a memorial service for the internationally-known cornetist, they tapped their feet and applauded in celebration of his considerable musical legacy.

Davison died Tuesday at Cottage Hospital after suffering a heart attack. He lived the last 10 years in Santa Barbara with his wife Anne. He was 83.

Crowned king of the Chicago-style cornet, he made his first recording in 1923. He leaves behind an 800-record discography.

"I know Bill's music will live on because all I've got to do is put a needle down on a turntable, or play a little tape, and he's there," said Fred Hall, a friend and radio broadcaster whose "Swing Thing" radio show is nationally syndicated.

The defiant horn man from Defiance, Ohio, was remembered as a jazz pioneer who honed his chops the old-fashioned way — playing inexhaustibly.

"He grew up in rough-and-tumble times," Hall told the crowd. "Bill spent time with (jazz great) Bix Biederbecke; he used to jam with him. They'd pile into an old touring car and jam all night."

Davison was an innovator, known for coaxing growling, bending notes from his instrument. As has been the way with many famed jazz artists, he lived fast and hard.

But unlike John Coltrane, Charlie Parker and others who perished under the weight of jazz greatness and substance abuse, Davison survived. He played right up to his final days.

"He used to laugh about the amount of hard liquor he consumed," said Hall. "But he never let it get in the way of his music."

Cottage Hospital Chaplain Fred C. Pattin told those assembled about receiving a phone call from a friend of Davison's shortly after his death. The caller wanted him to know Wild Bill did not believe in organized religion, "but he surely had faith."

After the service, acclaimed jazz critic Leonard Feather said Davison was one of the last of a special breed of musicians who studied

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Rafael Maldonado/News-Press

Los Angeles jazz critic Leonard Feather talks about William Davison, pictured in photograph, at the memorial service.

Davison

Continued from Page B 1

and played an American-made idiom.

"He was one of the last of a really definitive generation that came out of the '20s and '30s and kept going and expanding," said Feather who also remembered Davi-

'He grew up in rough-and-tumble times.'

FRED HALL

son's talent for creating miniature railroads.

"Louis Armstrong once said he was glad that when he went, Wild Bill would be around to continue," Feather said.

"Bill survived Louis Armstrong by 17 years."

Davison first toured Europe in 1957, and over the years, his popularity there has not diminished.

Following the service, Santa Barbara artist and painter Wayne Hoffman said he first heard Davison's music as a 14-year-old in Memphis, Tenn. What struck him even then was "the quality and integrity of the music."

Hoffman shook his head.

"It's a tragedy that there aren't more people here," he said. "In Europe, he's a legend. It's sad because we invented jazz in the U.S."

In brief remarks during the service, Feather recalled seeing Davison's artistry in many venues in many cities: Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Paris, Berlin. The writer recalled conversations with Davison in which he made but two requests: That he not be called a living legend, and that he not be described as a Dixieland musician.

"I'll always remember him as I did the day before he went in the hospital and said it was really nothing," Feather said. "I'll admire him for his talents, his spirit, his pride and for his courage."

In the sanctuary, a picture of Davison stood before the altar, flanked by brilliantly-hued flowers of red, orange, pink, yellow and rust. He was nattily dressed in a dark suit, a white carnation in his lapel, a shiny gold cornet pressed to his lips.

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LOS ANGELES TIMES 11/17

Jazz pianist Thelonious Monk: subject of an audio-visual study.

MOVIE REVIEW

'No Chaser': A Glance Behind Monk's Veil

By LEONARD FEATHER

"Thelonious Monk: Straight No Chaser" (at the AMC Century 14) breaks the mold that has long been evident in movies about jazz artists. Unlike the fictional and heavily downbeat "Round Midnight," or the fictionalized facts of "Bird," or the depressing Chet Baker documentary "Let's Get Lost," this is a superbly crafted mixture of old and new footage. (Monk died in 1982 at 63.) There is virtually no reference to drugs, a common element in all the others, and no apparent objective except that of presenting an honest audio-visual portrait.

Though Monk seemed too esoteric to reach out to a mass audience, the manner in which he and his music are presented here, sandwiched between narrations by his manager, his saxophonist Charlie Rouse and others, could break through the barrier that limited him in his lifetime.

What manner of man was Thelonious Monk? Part of the answer is supplied in footage acquired from a 1968 German TV documentary. Here he is in a recording studio, or a London theater, alone or with a quartet or octet, playing some of the works that have become standards. He seems preoccupied; now and then he leaves the piano and, while the others continue to play, revolves slowly *in situ*, or performs a dance as quirky as his music.

An off-screen narration by Samuel E. Wright, who played Dizzy Gillespie in "Bird," outlines Monk's early years. The musician's troubles with the police—he lost his right-to-work New York cabaret card for an offense he said he did not commit—are discussed by his manager, Harry Colomby.

As the moment neared for his first chance at mass exposure via a Time magazine cover story, Colomby noticed an increasingly erratic pattern of behavior. Monk's son, Thelonious Jr., offers a poignant analysis: "[There were] tremendous fits of depression and euphoria, very schizophrenic type thing . . . we had to hospitalize him . . . it's a startling thing when you look your father in the eye and you know that he doesn't exactly know who you are."

There are light interludes: Monk making small talk in a recording studio, trying half coherently to communicate with a waiter in some airport restaurant, yet coming up with a perceptive reaction to a journalist's foolish question.

Monk's wife, Nellie, is seen only briefly, though the couple's closeness is eloquently recalled by Charlie Rouse. The Baroness Pannonica de Koenigswarter, Monk's patron, discusses her ejection from New York apartments because of her musician friends.

Helped by commendable sound and camera work, such Monk tunes as "Pannonica," "Round Midnight," "Ruby My Dear" and "Crepuscule With Nellie" are perfectly accessible with their incisive statements, idiosyncratic runs and engaging dissonances. If "Ugly Beauty" seemed like an apt title for one Monk song, a more orthodox beauty is expressed when "Well You Needn't" and "Misterioso" are played exquisitely as piano duets by Tommy Flanagan and Barry Harris.

The final tune, "Sweetheart of All My Dreams," is one of those banal ditties that Monk took delight in playing, perhaps tongue in cheek. What he intended by the use of such material may always remain a mystery, but given the enlightened comments, and the sensitive direction by Charlotte Zwerin, who co-produced "Straight No Chaser" with Bruce Ricker, we are granted a closer glance behind the veil of this half-hidden, exotically gifted figure than could ever be observed during his sadly aborted career.

ELENA SEIBERT

Monk in the documentary "Thelonious Monk: Straight No Chaser," left. Above, Thelonious Monk Jr. with producer Bruce Ricker and director Charlotte Zwerin in the Thelonious Monk Circle in New York.

Spreading the Jazz Gospel of Thelonious Monk

THE MOVIE

Clint Eastwood persuaded Warners to come up with a fistful of dollars for poignant film on legendary pianist

By LEONARD FEATHER

The story of the making of "Thelonious Monk: Straight No Chaser" took a lucky turn about two years ago, when a pair of documentary makers hooked up with one of the most powerful men in the movie business.

"I was in Kansas City, doing research for the film 'Bird,' " jazz fan and one-man film industry Clint Eastwood recalled, "when I happened to see a poster on the wall at the Musicians' Union, advertising a film called 'The Last of the Blue Devils.' I went to see it, and was very much impressed by all this classic footage Bruce Ricker had put together with Count Basie and other musicians of the Kansas City era.

"I contacted Bruce and asked if he'd be interested in my helping with the distribution. I got Warner Bros. to release it in France and other places where it had never been seen. Later on, Bruce came to me and said, 'We have this astounding material on Thelonious Monk; would you like to see it?'

"I had never seen Monk in person, but of course I knew his records and had followed him through those same years of which Bird was a part. I liked what I saw so much that when it turned out Bruce and Charlotte Zwerin needed financing, I went to Warren Lieberfarb, who's the head of Warner Home Video, and told him I thought this was a worthy project."

Eastwood became executive producer of the project, and Warners came up with $400,000 to purchase the footage and to pay for the music rights.

The result: a poignant new 90-minute film about the legendary pianist and composer. Already a hit in New York, where it has been running for eight weeks, "Straight No Chaser" opened Friday at the AMC Century City 14.

Thelonious Monk was a brilliant, eccentric and enigmatic figure who worked only sporadically and whose best known tunes were all written in the 1940s (" 'Round Midnight," "Well You Needn't," "Ruby My Dear," "Straight No Chaser"). In 1964, he enjoyed his 15 minutes of fame with a portrait on the cover of Time magazine.

The film, which inexplicably neglects to make use of the title tune, brings the man and his music into sharp focus, from live performances to poignant comments by his son and others about his frustrations, his international successes, and his bouts of deep depression and hospitalization.

Since Monk's death Feb. 17, 1982—at the end of a decade of near-total retirement and seclusion—there has been a flood of recordings of his tunes by other artists, along with countless reissues of his own albums. With such honors as an international piano competition named for him and

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THE LEGACY

At Duke University, the legend lives on as the next generation of musicians is exposed to Monk's musical ideals

By MARK I. PINSKY

DURHAM, N.C.—Long identified with tobacco and—since the movie "Bull Durham"—with minor league baseball, this city is moving to become a major jazz mecca with the drive to build the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, affiliated with Duke University.

"We've become one of the more talked-about places in jazz," said Paul H. Jeffrey, a saxophonist and longtime Monk associate now teaching at Duke. Despite his role as a driving force in the jazz explosion, the astonished Jeffrey said "I don't know how that happened myself."

Monk, the gifted pianist and composer known as "the High Priest of Bebop," died in 1982 at the age of 63. Best known for " 'Round Midnight" and "Brilliant Corners," he is the subject of a new 90-minute documentary, "Thelonious Monk: Straight No Chaser."

When plans for the institute were announced in 1988, Thelonious Monk Jr., 39, a Brooklyn, N.Y., drummer, characterized the project as a step toward "collectively carrying on the sincere commitment that Thelonious Monk made to young musicians. It is historically appropriate that the institute be located in Durham, and affiliated with Duke, for Thelonious was born less than 100 miles away in Rocky Mount, N.C."

The ultimate goal of the institute, said Thomas R. Carter, the executive director, is nothing less than producing "a whole new generation of jazz musicians."

"We're looking to turn out *players*," Monk said. Together with the institute and the documentary, he said, his father's music has recently enjoyed "almost a second, cult coming. He was always seen to be a conduit, a center of the universe. People always seemed to pass through Thelonious Monk on their way to higher ground—and the institute is just a natural extension of that."

The Monk Institute will be a four-year, independent institution accredited by the National Assn. of Schools of Music and will grant performance degrees, according to Carter. The first class of 35-40 students is scheduled to enter in 1992. Earlier this week, Monk and Carter met with USC officials to explore the additional possibility of having Monk Institute students spend a year of study in Los Angeles.

Current plans call for a three-building complex in Durham, one of which is a 70,000-square foot academic facility, including classrooms, a library with Monk's papers and a museum with his instruments, rehearsal halls, a recording studio and 500-seat performance hall. The remainder of the $12-million complex would be a

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JAZZ

Monk the Man

Continued from Page 8

a conservatory for jazz studies under his name now in the planning stages, Monk, like Charlie Parker, is more fully recognized posthumously than he ever was in his lifetime.

"I began thinking about the Monk film when he was still alive," said Charlotte Zwerin, who directed the film and co-produced it with Bruce Ricker. "I didn't realize how ill he was in those last years. But then there was a lucky accident. In 1981, Bruce Ricker bumped into Christian Blackwood, who mentioned that he and his brother Michael had all this early footage on Monk. Bruce was shocked. He called me, and we started trying to raise money for this project."

A music lover since childhood, Zwerin collaborated with Albert Maysles and Susan Froemke on "Horowitz Plays Mozart" and recently on "Jessye Norman Sings Carmen." She co-directed the acclaimed feature length documentary "Gimme Shelter" which examined the Rolling Stones' 1969 concert at Altamont. A few years ago, during a stint at NBC, Zwerin produced a 20-minute film called "Woody Herman, Road Father."

"I had just finished making 'The Last of the Blue Devils,' about Kansas City jazz," Ricker said, "when I found out that in 1967 and '68 the Blackwood brothers had followed Monk around on the road for six months, in the studios, at home and in various cities, for a German documentary. They shot 14 hours of film and edited it down for a *cinéma vérité* special on West German television. It was shown just once in Germany and had been lying around unused and forgotten ever since. I worked out an agreement with Christian and Michael, then brought Charlotte into the picture."

The search for funding was an arduous problem that began in 1983. The National Endowment for the Arts came through with a $50,000 grant in 1985, but more money was needed. There were unexpected difficulties, one of which was the discovery that the Monk family had sold the rights to the name for a film called "Music in Monk Time," in which Monk did not take part.

To the Blackwoods' documentary material was added a series of interviews with Monk's longtime saxophonist Charlie Rouse; with his personal manager, Harry Colomby, his road manager, Bob Jones, and with the Baroness Nica de Koenigswarter, the wealthy patron in whose home in Weehawken, N.J. Monk spent the last decade of his life (but wife Nellie Monk visited him there often and was with him when he died).

"This is an instance of something done by people who had their heart and soul in it, and when that happens, you know they're going to give it their best shot," said Eastwood. "They did a fine job and it was fun for me to be involved."

One of the very few faults in the movie is its failure to seek out from other musicians who worked with Monk and knew him well, most notably Art Blakey, Milt Jackson and Sonny Rollins.

Nellie Monk, anguished over the death in 1984 of her 30-year-old daughter, was reluctant to be involved with making the film and did not want to be interviewed; however, she trusted her son, Thelonious Monk Jr., to take care of the family's interests in the movie.

The younger Monk, a 39-year-old drummer who worked with his father from 1970 until his final public appearance in 1976, wound up becoming a moving force behind the picture. "Charlotte and Bruce did a bang-up job," he said. "I told them a lot of things that I and my mom would like to see in it, and they put everything in the proper perspective.

"This film will provide a great opportunity, particularly for people who never saw Thelonious. He always inspired people; now he can continue to inspire them, even though he's not here." □

JAZ

Monk's Legacy

Continued from Page 8

student dormitory and living accommodations for visiting faculty. An architectural design competition for the institute is under way at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and ground is scheduled to be broken within 18 months.

Durham city and county have enthusiastically embraced the institute, appropriating $750,000 to purchase a 1.62-acre site in the downtown area earlier this year. Mayor Wib Gulley called the institute the city's "crowning touch" of artistic activity, complementing a new arts center near the site, which includes the restored, 1,200-seat Carolina Theatre, nearby convention center and Omni Hotel.

An endowment of $50 million, enabling many of the estimated 150 students to attend tuition-free, is also planned. Most of the funds will come from private and corporate sources, said Jeffrey, who also serves as vice chairman of the institute's academic council, but additional help from the city, county and state, as well as Duke, are also expected. Between $500,000 and $1 million has been raised so far, school officials say. Proceeds from this year's 3rd annual Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition held this weekend in Washington, D.C., are earmarked for the conservatory.

Last January, a concert at Duke to "introduce" the institute to the community featured Steve Allen and Jayne Meadows, Clint Eastwood—executive producer of "Straight No Chaser"—Clark Terry, Percy Heath and Thelonious Monk Jr. Three months later, a fund-raising concert at the Omni featuring Dizzy Gillespie and Wynton Marsalis and hosted by Bea Arthur and Rue McClanahan of NBC's "Golden Girls" drew 900 people to the campus.

Beginning this January, the institute will be kicking off a two-year series of fund-raising concerts in New York, Los Angeles, London and Tokyo, Carter said. The goal, Monk said, is to raise money from the corporate and private sector, including the broader community of jazz lovers.

A partial list of members of the institute's advisory board reads like a Who's Who of jazz aficionados from the worlds of music, sports, entertainment and politics: Art Blakey, Wynton and Branford Marsalis, Jimmy and Percy Heath, Herb Alpert, Dizzy Gillespie, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bill Cosby (honorary chairman), Debbie Allen, Billy Dee Williams, Marla Gibbs, U.S. Sens. Robert Dole and Wyche Fowler, former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young and Martin Luther King III.

"By getting the community outside the musicians excited, the musicians have become excited," Monk said. "It has snowballed. It has become so real in the minds of the artists in this medium. It's important for America . . . When we came up with the idea of building a school it just seemed to be appropriate to absolutely everyone. There was a tremendous hunger out there for something like this. We have structure. What we're doing is unlike a lot of things in jazz. It's become believable. It seems doable, plainly do-able to everyone involved."

The idea of a jazz conservatory, Jeffrey said, grew out of an observation read at Monk's 1982 funeral by jazz historian and critic Ira Gitler, that Thelonious Monk's stature in the jazz community paralleled that of Beethoven in classical music, because he was a maverick genius.

That observation piqued the interest of

SARAH M. BROWN

Thelonious Monk Jr., standing, and Thomas R. Carter, executive director of the Monk Institute.

Durham's

Unlike New Orleans, which is considered the cradle of jazz, Durham is more closely identified with the blues. Piedmont, N.C., is the old stomping grounds of Brownie McGee and Sonny Terry, Blind Boy Fuller and the Rev. Gary Davis, many of whom got their start singing around Durham tobacco warehouses during market days.

It is also where gospel great Shirley Caesar serves on the city council, and is the home of Rounder Records, which specializes in traditional and folk music, and Ladyslipper, a women's music label. More recently, the city has been the summer home of the American Dance Festival. There are jazz connections: Durham is the birthplace of drummer Grady Tate and pianist Nicky Tucker.

Mayor Wib Gulley believes that locating the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz here is a natural fit to the growing musical mosaic, including a downtown cultural and performing arts center, and one worthy of the city's financial backing.

"We see this as an investment both in our quality of life and in our economic future," Gulley said in an interview.

lined up key local allies. Chief among these was heiress Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, a Duke family descendant and university trustee, as well as the strong-willed fairy godmother of nearly every good cause in North Carolina.

"She never let up," Carter said. "She brought in a very heavy lobbying effort," including Republican Gov. James G. Martin and Democratic U.S. Sen. Terry Sanford, who is also a former Duke president.

Semans, whose foundation helped underwrite both the cultural center and jazz festival named for Mary Lou Williams, then arranged a meeting with Duke's president, H. Keith H. Brodie, for herself, Jeffrey, Monk and Carter, where the group had quite a surprise.

"We literally fell out of our chairs," Jeffrey recalled, when Brodie said that he was familiar with Thelonious Monk's music. "He named a particular record and said that that was one of the records that started him listening to jazz," Jeffrey said.

Brodie assured them that he "wholeheartedly supported the project," Jeffrey said. "He said that presidents like to leave a legacy. He said he would like to, as his legacy, be able to say that the first jazz conservatory—full-fledged jazz conservatory in this country—was affiliated with Duke University."

"Duke University really wanted it for the right reasons," Monk said. "Some institutions wanted it because of the high profile, the glitter. But this thing is really about education. That's what Duke and Brodie were interested in."

Another thing that made Durham attractive, Carter added, was that it was away from the potential distractions of too many clubs and agents in some big cities like Los Angeles.

"It was more of a Tanglewood environment," Carter said, referring to the summer music festival in Massachusetts, a place that "would enable the students to totally concentrate on their music."

"Duke University is perfect," Monk said. "The Carolinas are perfect. If you want to learn you have to be in a learning environment. We have to create the kind of environment where you eat and sleep jazz . . . It's important to us that we had a place where our students couldn't be immediately whisked away by the industry. You don't want to lose your students before they graduate."

The details of the relationship between Duke and North Carolina Central University—a historically black state school in Durham—have yet to be worked out, but as Jeffrey envisions it, Monk students could take non-music courses at Duke and North Carolina Central, and Duke students could take non-performance courses at Monk and at North Carolina Central.

"I feel very comfortable landing in Durham," said Monk. "Thelonious was born in North Carolina. I know that sounds corny, but the setting is right. The respect begins sometimes with the location. It's a wonderful educational environment. The environment is ideal." □

11/24

Dearie Blossoms on 'Jazz Counterpoint'

Billy Taylor's "Jazz Counterpoint" series on Bravo continues Saturday with a half hour at 4 p.m. (repeats Wednesday at 6:30 and 11:30 p.m.) dedicated to the singer and pianist Blossom Dearie.

Long a fixture on the New York scene, Dearie is best known for the curiously high pitched, little-girl quality of her voice. The sound, though utterly at odds with her mature appearance, brings a gossamer charm to much of her work. Her self-accompaniment is polished and appropriate, though here and there, as in "Everything I've Got Belongs to You," Taylor joins in to provide a well meshed two piano blend.

Taylor chats with Dearie fall below his normal standard. Instead of raining compliments on her he might have asked who wrote the lyrics to Dearie's melody for the song "I'm Hip." Since the words brought this piece what success it has enjoyed, the failure to discuss Dave Frishberg, who wrote them, is conspicuous.

There is a pleasant Ellington interlude, with Taylor playing "In a Sentimental Mood" and Dearie singing and playing "Sophisticated Lady." The final song is a delightful waltz by Dearie, "After Me," for which she does credit her lyricist, Jack Segal. Taped in 1985, this rerun still makes for agreeable viewing and listening.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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Jazznost Hits a High Note With Soviet and U.S. Musicians

By LEONARD FEATHER

While Richie Cole was playing "Meadowlands" and "Bublitchki Bop" for his fans in Tallinn, Estonia, on Tuesday night, Igor Bril and his All-Star Soviet Jazz Quartet were showing off their repertoire, from "Body and Soul" to blues by Bird, at Bon Appetit in Westwood.

It was a fair exchange, part of the two-way proliferation that has seen avant-garde and Dixieland groups from Moscow and Leningrad on American turf while touring U.S. jazz men in growing numbers discover with amazement the extent of their fame in the Soviet Union.

Traveling with the Bril quartet, which played three Bay Area dates over the weekend, is Alexei Batashev, the Soviet Union's foremost spokesman for jazz, who was on the scene when Benny Goodman, breaking a longstanding sound barrier, brought an all-star orchestra to the Soviet Union in 1962 (the premier performance was attended by then-Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev). Batashev wrote the first Soviet history book on the subject, emcees concerts, travels around the world festival scene, and has his own TV show (something no American jazz expert can claim).

"The changes are fantastic," Batashev said. "Moscow, where for years we had only one jazz club, now has half a dozen, all with different programs daily.

"There are now 10 annual jazz festivals in the Soviet Union, and almost all of them are international. Recently we had one in Tblisi featuring Freddie Hubbard—he has a terrific following in Russia—as well as Art Blakey, Eddie Harris and Jimmy Smith.

"Last month, Gene Harris' all-star big band stopped in Moscow during its world tour and played to two sold-out houses. A great orchestra, with world-class names like Ray Brown, Herb Ellis, Harry (Sweets) Edison. I introduced them, and they got a tremendous reception."

Asked how seriously the once-banned art of jazz is now taken in his country, Batashev said: "It is greatly respected. Of course, many musicians still are inspired by listening to Americans, first on record and now more frequently in person. But today, jazz is officially taught in many Soviet colleges and conservatories."

Bril has been a part of the Soviet jazz scene for more than 20 years, having made his debut as a so-called "lyrical romantic" at the Moscow "Jazz '65" Festival. He wrote the first Soviet textbook of its kind, "The Basics of Jazz Improvisation."

MIKE MEADOWS / Los Angeles Times

Pianist-composer Igor Bril, leader of All-Star Soviet Jazz Quartet.

Now on his second visit to these shores but his first to California, pianist and composer Bril is represented by a recent CD, "Live At the Village Gate" (Mobile Fidelity MFCD 861). With him on the harrowing two-day journey (Moscow to Shannon to Havana, then three stops in Mexico and finally San Francisco) were Alexander Oseichuk, a prominent Soviet saxophonist; Victor Dvoskin, a bassist who has topped the Soviet Jazz Critics' Poll for the last 10 years, and Eugene Ryabol, 35, who in Moscow circles is considered the best drummer of his generation.

Oseichuk is regarded as his country's most versatile saxophonist. "He started out, of course, as a Charlie Parker fan," said Batashev, "but now he's an admirer of Phil Woods. He is *au courant* with all the latest jazz trends, but he is also a gifted classical musician."

The Bril quartet's predominantly mainstream repertoire mixes original works by the leader with some of the orthodox jazz standards.

Where once the tours were all arranged by government officials in both countries, today many musicians visit the Soviet Union independently. "We had a big band from Oregon, a fine American college ensemble," Batashev said. "It is no longer a problem getting to hear American jazz live."

The rosy picture presented by Batashev left one lingering doubt: Can the Soviet scene have changed so drastically that there are now no difficulties at all?

"Oh, sure," Batashev said, "we have problems—with instruments, with equipment, and with the economic realities the audiences have to face. It's no big fun going to a concert when you may miss an opportunity to stand in line for milk."

JAZZ REVIEW 12/8

A Guitar Showcase at Ambassador

The group billed as Great Guitarists, presented Wednesday at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, seems to have floating personnel. One local paper heralding the event showed Charlie Byrd and Barney Kessel alongside Herb Ellis, but identified Ellis as Tal Farlow. As it turned out, neither Ellis nor Farlow took part; Bucky Pizzarelli played the role of the third man.

Almost any three guitarists of this caliber would have worked out well. The program was carefully split up to give everyone a single showcase. Along with several solo numbers there were guitar trio pieces, and quintet items for which Monty Budwig's dependable bass and Ralph Penland's discreet drums were added.

Although all three guitars were amplified, there were distinct contrasts in the instruments used and the respective timbres. Byrd, though a capable jazz soloist, seemed most at ease when he played a medley of Brazilian songs by Antonio Carlos Jobim, a reminder that it was he who virtually introduced bossa nova to the American public 27 years ago.

Pizzarelli's sound, slightly heavier than Byrd's, made nimble use of chords on his ballad interlude, "Passion Flower," a lovely Billy Strayhorn song, cried out for an arco (bowed) bass accompaniment, but Budwig just kept on plucking.

Byrd offered a verbal tribute to Charlie Christian, the Oklahoma-bred genius who inspired everyone in his wake. Three Christian originals provided the evening's most inspired moments. Kessel (who is leading his own trio at St. Mark's in Venice tonight and Saturday) was all but airborne in his full-toned solo flights on "Benny's Bugle," "Airmail Special" and "Seven Come Eleven." What is it about these Oklahomans that enables them to swing with such effortless ease?

—LEONARD FEATHER

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Mark Murphy Wins the Waiting Game

Jazz: His stance on vocals forced him into exile for a decade. 'If you don't make it at first,' he says, 'you make it at last.'

By LEONARD FEATHER

Mark Murphy has devoted a long career to singing the hippest music with the best musicians, and the economic consequences be damned.

Consider the company he has kept on records: in the 1960s, Clark Terry, Dick Hyman, Roger Kellaway. In the '70s, David Sanborn and the Brecker Brothers. In the '80s, Frank Morgan, Richie Cole and the Azymuth Trio. Consider the jazzmen to whose instrumental works he has sung lyrics: Sonny Rollins, McCoy Tyner, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Charlie Mingus, Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter.

Though he has enjoyed greater acceptance lately on his home turf, Murphy's uncompromising stance as a jazz singer forced him at one point into expatriation; he was based in London from 1963 to 1973.

"It was a bad time for all the boppers," he said, in a call from his San Francisco home. "All the undergrounders had surfaced in the late '50s and early '60s, then we had to scatter again and wait."

Murphy's approach to the vocal art has involved straight ballad singing, scatting, humming, whistling and occasional ventures into songwriting. He has been a chance-taker; sometimes the gambles haven't paid off, artistically or financially, but more often, especially during the past few years, he has ended ahead. If his version of "Take the A Train" involves silly quotes from "Mairzy Doats," it also entails wild wordless interludes that will recall for some a manic singer of the '40s named Leo Watson.

"People don't realize," said Murphy, "that in jazz, to borrow a phrase from Colette, you don't make it at first, you make it at last. It's a waiting game. Sometimes a record will be released and it may surface months or even years later. It's because of the complexity of the material, or maybe the disc jockey just had a stomach ache when he received it and didn't get around to listening for a while."

Born in Syracuse, N.Y., to a family of musicians, Murphy studied piano at the age of 7, played and sang with an older brother's dance band, began touring, and made his first album in 1957. An early and influential supporter was Steve Allen, who then had "The Tonight Show."

By the early 1960s, he was earning critical plaudits from expert observers: Gene Lees, then editor of Down Beat, became an ardent champion. But the decade of the Beatles was upon him, and Murphy found that critical approval didn't translate into cash. Ironically, an album he looks back on fondly as one of his best ever, "That's How I Love the Blues," was released just before he left for Europe.

Over the past two decades he has built a commendable backlog of albums, among the most notable being a splendid collection of Ivan Lins songs, "Night Mood" (Milestone), produced in 1987 by the late Richard Bock. Next week he will have two important credits: a four-day stint at the Vine St. Bar & Grill in Hollywood, opening Wednesday, and a new album, "Then and Now—Kerouac" (Muse).

A belated sequel to his 1981 "Bop for Kerouac," the new release includes a monologue taken from "On the Road," about driving frantically

BONNIE KAMIN

Jazz vocalist Mark Murphy: His career spans three decades.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

MURPHY

Continued from F6

first-ever vocal version of Billy Strayhorn's elegiac "Blood Count," with words by M.E. Stillman.

Whenever his schedule allows it, Murphy devotes time to teaching. "I have about a dozen students, and I do occasional clinics—I did one recently at Berklee College in Boston. Next spring I may go and teach at a school in Graz, Austria, where Sheila Jordan has been a jazz vocal instructor."

The Graz connection came about through a job Murphy took last year with George Gruntz, the Swiss composer and pianist, who toured Europe and the U.S. leading a large orchestra. In Hamburg, Murphy recorded an album of Gruntz's music. "That was a most interesting group to work with," he recalled. "Gruntz's music is somewhere between Gil Evans and Carla Bley. While I was over there Sheila, who was also with the orchestra, told me about the school."

Indoctrinating foreign students in the art of jazz singing should be no more difficult than teaching Americans—and no easier. "Sometimes," he said, "I simply have to say, 'Look, you are just not right for this, but if you like I can still help you.' Jazz can be very difficult, very taxing to the vocal cords. In fact, it's the hardest music to sing correctly, outside of grand opera. I have to drum a lot of technique into them.

"It's rough to teach people to develop an ear for music or for improvisation. It's better if they start out with some knowledge of an instrument like guitar or piano. When I'm doing a clinic, I'll take them through several choruses of a tune like 'Green Dolphin Street' until eventually they really are familiar with the song and what they can do with it."

Presumably Murphy must also teach his pupils what he has learned the hard way: patience, and the realization that neither a perfectly honed talent nor a successful career will come easily. In his own case, he can finally say that Colette was right: After more than 30 years of striving, he didn't make it at first but has made it at last.

JAZZ REVIEW 12/1

Ed Shaughnessy Quintet Opens

The Ed Shaughnessy Quintet opened a four-day run Wednesday at St. Mark's, the restaurant at 23 Windward Ave. in Venice where a jazz policy was recently instituted.

The group has several advantages by virtue of its very nature: It is acoustic, mainstream, has a first-rate upright bass player, features mainly original compositions and boasts a well knit two-horn blend consisting of Shaughnessy's colleagues from the "Tonight Show" band, Tommy Peterson on tenor saxophone and Bruce Paulson on trombone.

To top it all off, the leader is a sensitive and a discreet drummer who managed to get through an entire set without playing a single solo—an achievement that must be considered nothing short of heroic.

The opening, "Seaward," named for a ship on which the group recently played a jazz cruise, was composed by the pianist Tom Ranier, who distinguished himself throughout as a fleet soloist and resourceful arranger. His rewrite of "Just Friends" was an admirable example of teaching old melodic dogs new tricks. Ranier had the stage to himself for a medley of a ballad, "Don't Take Your Love From Me," and an engaging original, "Harpo."

Peterson, somewhat lackluster at first on tenor, came to life in his own Latinesque "Another Time, Another Place." Paulson, a schooled and inventive trombonist, shared top honors with the exemplary bassist John Leitham.

Because of the room's odd construction—it is shaped like an inverted U, with the bandstand in the northwest corner—there are problems with sound and audibility. Ranier's solo spot went almost unnoticed because of audience buzz. With such restrained artists as Barney Kessel and Joe Pass on the schedule, St. Mark's will have to take prompt steps to deal with this difficulty.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ REVIEW

Second Set of Swingle Singers Shines

By LEONARD FEATHER

The news that the Swingle Singers launched their American tour Saturday at El Camino College may bring such reactions as "The What Singers?" or "Are they still around?"

Well, yes and no. The French group formed by Ward Swingle in Paris in 1962 broke up in 1973. Swingle, moving to London, formed a new unit of English singers. Though he no longer sings, he has stayed on as adviser and shares most of the arranging chores with the current musical director, Jonathan Rathbone.

Though the present octet (four men, four women) looks so young that several may not have been born when the original Swingles first swung, the basic premise has changed little. This is not a jazz choir, but an a cappella group that performs brilliantly crafted rhythm-based arrangements. Such jazz devices as syncopation and blue notes are rarely employed.

There are some wordless numbers, such as the opening Bach E-minor fugue, but these do not truly qualify as scat singing. They are planned down to the last note, and planned to perfection.

Everything about the Swingles is flawless, from the spiffy green-and-blue uniforms to the careful choreography, but above all what counts is the superb arranging by Swingle and Rathbone, with their rich, broad harmonic blends, the uses of counterpoint and the various permutations of the voices.

The solo passages are secondary, though Nikki Sharkey's high soprano and the bass voice of David Porter Thomas stand out. The group's Beatles medley sublimated the material beyond the capacity of their originators. The only flaw Saturday was the overwhelming preponderance, with November not even over, of Christmas songs, accompanied by plugs for a Christmas album on sale in the lobby.

for 12/8

see a/r 11/22

JAZZ Los Angeles Times 12/3/89 (syndicated)

The Joint Is Jumpin' at Boston's Berklee

By LEONARD FEATHER

The recent death of veteran cornetist Wild Bill Davison led to the by now familiar expressions of gloom heard at memorial tributes: The giants are passing on, the line grows thin, and who, if anyone, will be around to replace them?

These pessimistic reflections are not justified by the facts, according to Gary Burton, the award-winning vibraphonist who is in a unique position to foresee the future. Burton is an 18-year faculty member and currently dean of curriculum at Berklee College of Music in Boston. He was a student there in the early '60s before going on the road with George Shearing and Stan Getz.

"We have over 2,800 students at Berklee," said Burton, "divided into those who are interested in pop music and those concerned with jazz. The jazz players subdivide into various contemporary and traditional styles. You might think that a young player would go for what is new and contemporary, but many of them are attracted to the jazz of the 1940s and '50s. This trend toward diversity is very healthy and augurs well for the future of the music.

"Movies like 'Round Midnight' and 'Bird' and Monk's 'Straight No Chaser,' as well as people like Wynton and Branford Marsalis, have stimulated a revival of interest in straight-ahead jazz. Today, Gerald Wiggins, and Joe Cohn, a brilliant guitarist whose father was the saxophonist Al Cohn. Terry Gibbs, who played a vibraphone duet session with Burton, had his 25-year-old son Gerry on drums.

Burton's own Berklee-trained sidemen seemed to bear out his optimistic beliefs. All in their 20s, they included Greg Gisbert, a trumpeter who at 22 looks about 15; Gildas Boclas, a bassist from France; Renato Chicco, a Yugoslav pianist still studying at Berklee and, most remarkably, Don McCaslin, a 23-year-old tenor saxophonist who amazed the audience one night by virtually stealing the show in a saxophone jam featuring such seasoned pros as Red Holloway, Phil Woods, David (Fathead) Newman and Flip Phillips.

Along with the educational advantages and incentives offered by Berklee and a growing number of institutions partly or exclusively devoted to jazz, a factor that has all but assured a thriving future is the internationalization of the music. Jazz courses are now held in many countries, a number of them in the Soviet Union. Still, Berklee remains the best known school and has produced a stream of promising alumni. A recent breakdown of the student body revealed that there are over 600 foreign students from nations around the world, including Aruba, Iceland, Ethiopia and Malaysia.

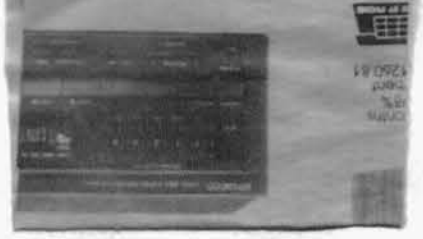
The foreign list is headed by Japan, with 138 students; Canada has 58, Israel 36, West Germany 24, Brazil 25, France 34.

Asked why students flock to Berklee from around the globe to study jazz, Burton said: "If you were into Japanese haiku, your dream would be to go to Japan and study with one of the masters. Jazz is one of the most popular music forms wherever you go."

Burton remains firmly convinced of a healthy outlook. "I tell my students to keep an open mind, to move ahead with the music, the way the people we hold in most reverence did—the Miles Davises, the Duke Ellingtons.

"The men in my group have a broad range. They play demanding original pieces; they play standards and know the whole repertoire. My drummer plays a lot of rock gigs as well as jazz jobs. That kind of diversity will serve them well.

"No matter how the music evolves, whatever they feel is important for them to play, they'll have the tools and the variety of experience to be a vital part of it as they move into the 21st Century." □



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di Leonard Feather

BEFORE & AFTER

MILT JACKSON NELL'IMBARAZZO

Posto, alla cieca, di fronte ai dischi dei suoi colleghi, il celebre vibrafonista del Modern Jazz Quartet fatica a riconoscerli tutti. E spiega: «Il nostro è uno strumento difficile, molto limitato nelle possibilità di personalizzarlo».

Milt Jackson è stato di recente sulla Costa Occidentale per un ingaggio di due settimane al Catalina's di Hollywood. Dirigeva un gruppo decisamente straordinario, con Cedar Walton, John Clayton e Billy Higgins. La musica ricordava quella di tutte le formazioni che Bags ha diretto, nel corso di tanti anni di intermittenti leadership: swingante in modo sfrenato, creativa, unitaria.

È strano, ma Milt spende oggi una gran parte dell'anno esattamente allo stesso modo in cui lo faceva nel 1952: suonando con John Lewis nel Modern Jazz Quartet. L'unico cambiamento in tutto questo tempo è stato il passaggio della batteria da Kenny Clarke a Connie Kay, nel 1955. Benché il MJQ si sia sciolto nel 1974, principalmente perché Bags desiderava procedere per proprio conto, il gruppo dal 1981 in poi si è riunito molto spesso.

Bags oggi suona bene come sempre; non posso dire «meglio che mai» solo perché l'espressione darebbe, scorrettamente, l'idea che ci fosse qualcosa da migliorare. Ora gli chiedo qualche opinione sui dischi dei suoi colleghi vibrafonisti.

1. BOBBY HUTCHERSON: *Recorda-Me* (da *«Color Schemes»*, Landmark). Hutcherson, marimba.

Prima: «Somigliava a Bobby Hutcherson; oltrettutto è uno dei pochissimi che hanno registrato con la marimba. Cal Tjader *potrebbe* esser un'altro, non ne sono sicuro. Era per caso il brano che aveva fatto Kenny Dorham anni fa?» (L. F.: te lo dirò tra un minuto. Mi stavi accennando al fatto che anche tu stavi per suonare la marimba, ma poi hai cambiato idea?).

«Oh, io *ho* suonato la marimba! Il mio professore, al liceo, mi aveva incoraggiato a provarla, per darmi qualcosa da fare in classe. Avevo terminato il mio corso di batteria e mi mancava ancora mezzo semestre. È così che ho cominciato a interessarmi al vibrafono. Ma quando stavo per incidere un disco con la marimba è saltato fuori Bobby con un suo disco nel quale la suonava. Così non l'ho fatto, perché mi sembrava che sarebbe parso un po' banale: ci sono dei limiti a ciò che puoi fare con quello strumento, e Bobby suona praticamente tutto quello che è possibile fare».

Dopo: «Così era un brano di Joe Henderson, non di Kenny Dorham? D'accordo, si vede che l'ho sentito suonare da Horace. Meritava cinque stelle, senza dubbio».

2. VICTOR FELDMAN: *Bebop* (da *«The Arrival Of Victor Feldman»*, Contemporary). Feldman vibrafono; Scott La Faro, contrabbasso; Stan Levey, batteria. Inciso nel 1958.

Prima: «Me l'hai fatta, non conosco questo musicista. Le parti d'insieme ricordano un po' Gary (Burton), ma non gli assoli. Chi altro può suonare così velocemente, Dave Pike? È davvero difficile identificare il suono, lo stile, di un artista a questa velocità.

«È un bel brano. Gli darei tre stelle e mezzo. Il bassista è bravo, tiene un bel tempo veloce!».

Dopo: «Oh, sì! Non avevo pensato a Victor. Così il batterista era Stan Levey. È uno dei pochi che hanno cambiato mestiere, fa il fotografo adesso».

3. JAY HOGGARD: *Pleasant Memory* (da *«The Young Lions»*, Elektra Musician). Hoggard, vibrafono, balafon, compositore.

Prima: «Certe parti suonavano molto astratte, quello che io considero delle forme libere, non so». (L.F.: Ti sembrava tutto composto, o tutto improvvisato, o cos'altro?). «Certi momenti erano molto melodici. Credo semplicemente di essere un po' bloccato da alcune cose. Mi piace la musica con una certa forma; questa è un po' carente nel disegno complessivo. Due stelle, forse, a causa di questo».

Dopo: «Oh certo, conosco Jay. Abbiamo suonato insieme in uno o due concerti, quando serviva un *summit* di vibrafoni. Ne abbiamo fatto uno all'Apollo un paio d'anni fa. Lui sa suonare anche precise strutture, perciò il mio non è un giudizio limitativo. Semplicemente volevo dire che preferisco la musica che riesco a capire fino in fondo, se è possibile».

4. TERRY GIBBS & BUDDY DE FRANCO: *Giant Steps* (da *«Chicago Fire»*, Contemporary). Gibbs, vibrafono; De Franco, clarinetto; John Campbell, piano; Todd Coolman, contrabbasso; Gerry Gibbs, batteria.

GIUDITTA DI PIAZZA

Milton Jackson (più comunemente Milt, oppure «Bags» per gli amici più intimi) è nato a Detroit, nel Michigan, il giorno di Capodanno del 1923. In quella città lo ascoltò nel 1945 Dizzy Gillespie, che lo portò a New York per inserirlo nella sua big band. In questa formazione Jackson (il quale nel frattempo aveva peraltro suonato e inciso anche con Thelonious Monk, Fats Navarro e altri) incontrò il pianista John Lewis, e con questi formò nel 1952 quel fortunatissimo Modern Jazz Quartet, con in quale i due (e Percy Heath e Connie Kay) suonano tuttora. Sono state però numerosissime, in ogni momento, le altre collaborazioni di Milt Jackson fuori del quartetto, da Coleman Hawkins a John Coltrane. Caposcuola autentico e indiscusso del vibrafono moderno, è pure buon pianista, e in Italia, molti anni fa, incise anche un disco in cui si produceva come garbato e insolito cantante.

Prima: «Era Terry (ride). Conosco il suo modo di suonare. È con Buddy De Franco. Nel 1949 presi il posto di Terry nell'orchestra di Woody Herman. Lui non suonava con relax, quando interpretava una ballad: partiva semplicemente in quarta!!! Quésto è il brano più rilassato che gli abbia sentito fare in tanti anni.

«Buddy De Franco. È strano. Abbiamo lavorato insieme nel 1948 in un club di Filadelfia, insieme a John Levy e Tal Farlow. Buddy è sempre stato un buon musicista. C'è per caso Lou Levy al piano? Non so chi fosse il pianista.

«Era un bel pezzo, da quattro stelle. Finalmente qualcuno suona lentamente questo brano, così si possono sentire i cambi d'accordo. Quando Coltrane lo registrò la prima volta era così veloce da rendere difficile seguirli. Ma naturalmente lui ci sguazzava dentro, come se nulla fosse».

Dopo: «Beh, non conoscevo il resto dei musicisti, ma il gruppo suonava molto bene insieme».

5. BENNY GOODMAN: *Limehouse Blues* (da *«Seven Come Eleven»*, Columbia). Goodman, clarinetto; Peter Appleyard, vibrafono; Hank Jones, piano; Joe Venuti, violino. Inciso nel 1975.

Prima: «Ecco una di quelle buone vecchie cose, come si usa dire, con Red Norvo che suona con Benny Goodman. Non ho nessuna sicurezza sugli altri, ma sono Benny e Red. Mi piace il disco. È dei giorni lontani dello Swing, prima che arrivasse il bebop. Era la musica sulla cresta dell'onda. Si merita quattro stelle, mi piace la musica che ha swing».

Dopo: «*Aveva* il suono di Hank! Ma non ne ero sicuro. Conosco anche Peter. E pensavo che ci fosse anche Joe Venuti, perché l'unico altro violinista che c'era nei paraggi allora era Stuff Smith e sapevo che non era lui. Joe prende il secondo assolo, dopo Benny».

6. GARY BURTON: *Was It So Long Ago?* (da *«Times Like These»*, Grp). Michael Brecker, sassofono tenore; Burton, vibrafono, compositore.

Prima: «Non riconosco nessuno, me l'hai fatta di nuovo. Comunque il disco mi piace, e la melodia era molto graziosa; come sai, non riesco a essere imparziale quando sento una bella melodia. Ho pensato che somigliava a Gary, ma in effetti era difficile da capire. L'unico altro vibrafonista che so riconoscere con sicurezza, a parte Bobby Hutcherson, è Cal Tjader. Ha uno stile molto personale. Ma bisogna, dire, prima di tutto che non è facile trovarlo, lo stile. È uno strumento molto limitato, dal punto di vista di come farlo suonare». (L. F: Puoi modificare solo il vibrato, vero?) «Esatto. Per me è il vibrato che dà allo strumento la sua ragione d'essere. Lo sai, è una cosa che viene anche dal canto.

«Gli darei tre stelle e mezzo, per la melodia. Non ho fatto molto caso al tenore».

Dopo: «Michael Brecker? Non ho familiarità col suo modo di suonare».

7. LIONEL HAMPTON: *Cherokee* (da *«Hamp And Getz»*, Verve). Stan Getz, sassofono tenore; Hampton, vibrafono; Lou Levy, piano; Leroy Vinnegar, contrabbasso; Shelly Manne, batteria. Registrato nel 1955.

Prima: «Ah sì, questo è l'originale, naturalmente: Lionel Hampton. Insieme a Stan Getz. Il suo stile è assolutamente inconfondibile». (L.F.: Hai idea di quando potrebbe essere stato registrato?) «Non dev'essere stato *troppo* tempo fa, perché non ricordo che abbiano registrato anticamente. Direi che è abbastanza recente, forse degli ultimi quattro o cinque anni. La sezione ritmica suonava proprio bene, ma non li riconosco.

«Stan suona ancora in modo grandioso. Abbiamo suonato insieme al festival dedicato a Charlie Parker, a Parigi, con Hank Jones, Percy e Max Roach». (L.F.: La volta in cui avete preso tutti una medaglia?) «Sì. Una circostanza davvero simpatica. Dicono che Stan è malato, ma per me sta suonando meglio che mai».

Dopo: «Beh, ancora oggi suonano tutti molto bene. È una dimostrazione di quel che dicevo...La musica che suonavamo al contrario di quella astratta, suona sempre fresca. Ho una cassetta che mi porto in giro, con il gruppo che avevamo io e Dizzy nel '47 al Down Beat. Quella musica è fresca come se avessimo appena finito di suonarla». ●

ELENA CARMINATI

Il Modern Jazz Quartet: Milt Jackson è il primo sulla destra; seguono, nell'ordine, Connie Kay, Percy Heath e il prestigioso leader John Lewis.

BILLBOARD 12/9/89

QUINCY JONES 40th Anniversary

QUINCY AND JAZZ: LIGHTNING STRIKES WHEN GIANTS PLAY

By LEONARD FEATHER

Despite his phenomenal successes in other areas—as pop record producer, arranger, talent scout, as movie producer and music publisher—the jazz world, of which he was a central part for the first two decades of his career, has always remained close to Quincy Jones' heart.

"The connection's always there," he said during a recent session of reminiscing. "It's always leaking through your music—in fact, musicians like Toots Thielemans and Herbie Hancock and Freddie Hubbard still work on dates with me. Then there are people like Jerry Hey, who are in the pop camp today, but in their hearts they're beboppers."

During his Seattle years (he lived there from age 10 until he left at 18 to study in Boston), Jones took his first trumpet lessons from Clark Terry when he was in town with the Count Basie band. While studying at Schillinger House in Boston (later famous as the Berklee College of Music), Quincy visited New York for the first time with Oscar Pettiford and dropped in at a record session I was producing with Mercer Ellington for our Mercer Records label. It was the first time he had been in a recording studio. Very soon afterward, in May 1951, he was in the studio as a performer, having just joined Lionel Hampton's band.

"Lionel was and is a superb vibes player," he says. "He has the drummer's percussive approach to the vibes. That was basically the first rock 'n' roll band!"

During his two years on the road with Hampton, Jones was surrounded by jazz giants: Men like Milt Buckner on piano, Jerome Richardson on saxophone, Al Grey, Jimmy Cleveland and Benny Powell on trombones, and most memorably, alongside him in the trumpet section, the ill-fated Clifford Brown, who died in 1956 in a car accident.

"Brownie really touched my soul every night," Jones recalls. "He was an astounding musician; he had it all—the science, the technique, the soul, the imagination, the freshness. I haven't heard him beaten yet. My idols are Clark Terry, Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie, and Clifford's aura is still something I feel."

After leaving Hampton, Quincy stopped playing trumpet and concentrated on arranging on record dates, mainly jazz sessions for producer Bob Shad at Mercury. "Those were great years. I did dates with Sonny Stitt, Art Blakey, Helen Merrill, Milt Jackson, Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington—and some Ella Fitzgerald dates for Norman Granz.

"In those dates the arrangers were in effect doing the producing. I'd call up Bob Shad and say, 'Bobby,

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QUINCY JONES 40th Anniversary

QUINCY AND JAZZ

(Continued from page Q-12)

there's an alto player and a trumpet player just in town from Florida who will blow your mind. You've got to hear them.' Bob would say, 'I don't need to hear them. You write 10 arrangements, call the musicians, book the time, and I'll see you at noon on Tuesday.' And that was Cannonball and Nat Adderley!"

In 1956, in a precedent-setting move, the U.S. State Dept. decided to send a jazz orchestra, led by Dizzy Gillespie, on tour of the Middle East. Quincy was assigned to put the band together. The tour was so successful that another one was planned for Latin America. Quincy resumed playing trumpet for these trips, in a band rich with stars: Melba Liston and Frank Rehak in the trombone section, Phil Woods on alto sax, Lee Morgan on trumpet, and Benny Golson on tenor.

After the Gillespie venture, Quincy left for Paris to spend 18 months arranging and conducting jazz and pop dates for Barclay Records. "You had to go to France to get the experience to learn how to arrange strings," he says. "Before Paris, as close as I ever got to 12 strings was two guitars!" Back in New York, he resumed his heavy schedule of freelance assignments, writing originals for Count Basie and many others. In late 1959, at the suggestion of John Hammond, he was hired as musical director for the Harold Arlen blues opera, "Free And Easy." He assembled a super-band of heavyweights and the show premiered in Amsterdam before touring the continent.

"What a band that was," Quincy recalls. "We were all onstage for the show, dressed in period costumes. We had Clark Terry and Benny Bailey in the trumpet section, Melba Liston and Aake Persson on trombones, Budd Johnson and Phil Woods on saxes, Patti Bown on piano, and Julius Watkins on French horn.

"It was such an incredible orchestra that when the show fell apart, I decided to keep it together—which turned out to be a terribly costly move, but I don't regret it, because we had some great times."

Having exhausted the possibilities of keeping the band alive, Quincy again stopped playing, and in May 1961 was appointed to an A&R job at Mercury, where he became a VP in November 1964. Until that time, he continued to front a band from time to time, appearing in prestigious jobs, such as Basin Street East with Peggy Lee, Billy Eckstine and Johnny Ray.

By this time, though, his various other careers had begun to impinge on his jazz time. He wrote his first movie score, for the Swedish film, "The Boy And The Tree," in 1961, followed by a series of American movies.

Though his main associations in recent years have removed him from the forefront of jazz, it has never been far from his thinking, or even from his studio activities. "Not many people noticed it," he points out, "but if you listen to Michael Jackson's 'Bad'—the single record—you'll hear a solo in there by the organist Jimmy Smith. Most artists might say, 'Are you kidding? Why put a bebop solo in the middle of my hit?' But Michael loved it—and that's one of the many things I love about Michael."

Looking back over a chameleonic career, Quincy pays tribute first and foremost to Duke Ellington, with whom he was involved in producing a TV special a year before Duke's death. "He is *the* figure—he has always been the mother ship, the culmination of everything that was important to me in jazz. From composition to orchestration to solos and attitudes and images—nobody has done anything comparable before or since.

"People like Duke, Basie, Jimmie Lunceford, Benny Goodman, were like the rock stars of their time. They were the Stones, the Beatles, the U2 of their day. They produced some of the true giants of all time, and that's something I'll never forget."

Suppose, I asked him, he could make as much fame and fortune, with a band such as he had in the '50s, as with what he has accomplished in the last few years. Would he trade it?

"No, I wouldn't. I like *all* of it. But I'm thinking about doing a tour in 1990—a world tour, I hope—that will be like a retrospective. The whole gamut, man,

(Continued on opposite page)

QUINCY AND JAZZ

(Continued from opposite page)

from 1953 to 1990. That's the kind of concert you can do in Japan. The last time I was there we played old jazz things of mine like 'Stockholm Sweetenin',' as well as movie things and funk things and everything, and people applauded in all the right places. The musicians enjoyed it because it was a 360 degree experience for us all.

"So when I do my world tour—which will include England, where I've never played—it will be along those lines; and I just hope I can get away with it."

12/10/89

The Jazz Aficionado's Holiday Wish List

By LEONARD FEATHER

Traditionally, this space has been reserved, as the holiday season approaches, for gift recommendations of records or books. As a rule, they are dealt with separately, but this year the proliferation of jazz literature and CDs has made it possible to suggest several matched sets, in which a given artist is well-represented both on record and in a recent addition to the bookshelf.

"The Benny Goodman Yale Archives, Vol. I." Music Masters CIL 60142Z.

"Benny Goodman and the Swing Era" by James Lincoln Collier (Oxford University Press: $22.95).

Three days before his death in 1986, Benny Goodman donated his memorabilia and many master tapes to the music library archives at Yale. Vol. I is of rare interest, spanning 1955-86 and taking in live sessions (at the Rainbow Grill, Basin Street East and the Brussels World's Fair) along with several studio groups. Aside from two pieces by Bobby Gutesha, a Yugoslavian composer, these are mostly retreads of material Goodman recorded often before, but the great diversity of personnel provides for constant surprises: next up may be Teddy Wilson or Roland Hanna or Dave McKenna on piano, Flip Phillips or Zoot Sims or Paul Quinichette on tenor, etc. The maestro is in generally impeccable form.

The Goodman biography succeeds, despite the extensive shelf of material already available, in shedding new light. Collier has done his research well. Moreover, he deals very fairly with Goodman's strange personality and evokes the Zeitgeist of the pre-swing and swing eras. This is far superior to his too often negatively slanted Armstrong and Ellington studies, and may well stand up as the definitive Goodman reference work.

"Mostly Blues." Lionel Hampton. Music Masters CIJD 60168 K.

"Hamp" by Lionel Hampton with James Haskins (Warner Books: $19.95).

Because Hampton is seldom heard in an intimate setting, the two 1988 quintet dates here are of special interest. The title is misleading; only three of the nine cuts are actually blues, but Hampton's unflagging energy and inspiration are consistently on display. The rhythm sections are not up to his requirements, despite some generally helpful piano by Bobby Scott.

The problem with ghost-written autobiographies is that the authors seldom seem to read them. Haskins reconstructs Hampton's childhood in Louisville and Chicago, his early bandleading career and subsequent discovery by Benny Goodman, but his research is badly flawed. He has Hampton saying, "I played vibes on 'Evil Gal Blues' and 'Salty Papa Blues'" (with Dinah Washington), when in fact he played nothing on either. Worse, Haskins has Hampton making LPs with his own band in 1944, five years before LPs existed. Still, the story of Hampton's late wife steering him relentlessly and acquisitively into fame and millions (which he has since multiplied) makes for fascinating reading.

"At the Jazz Band Ball" Eddie Condon/Muggsy Spanier/Bud Freeman. RCA Bluebird 6752-2-RB.

"Crazeology" by Bud Freeman as told to Robert Wolf (University of Illinois Press: $15.95).

Starting with two early, obscure Condon cuts (with Jack Teagarden as vocalist), the traditionalist CD proceeds to the classic 1939 sessions by cornetist Spanier, among them the blues "Relaxin' at the Touro," named for the New Orleans hospital where he came close to death in 1938. Even more interesting are the final four cuts by Bud Freeman's Summa Cum Laude octet, with Pee Wee Russell, Condon and Max Kaminsky. Freeman's was the only tenor sax sound to achieve, in those days, a sound and style as distinctly personal as Coleman Hawkins'. "The Eel," his original blues, is a miniature masterpiece.

Freeman's use of a ghost writer is curious, since he had already written two books without help. With a foreword by Studs Terkel, he tells his story succinctly (only 90 pages of actual text), recalling frankly and incisively everyone from Bix Beiderbecke and Louis Armstrong to Benny Goodman ("Working for Benny was the most miserable experience of my life"). Freeman, the world traveler, now back in his native Chicago, is still playing at 83.

"New Life (Dedicated to Max Gordon)" Thad Jones/Mel Lewis. A & M CD 0810.

"Barney, Bradley and Max" by Whitney Balliett (Oxford University Press: $19.95).

The reissue of an album made in 1976, when the Jones/Lewis band was at its creative zenith (aided on some cuts by a French horn section and tuba), offers a reminder of how valuable Max Gordon was in keeping this ensemble alive through a

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of it. But I'm thinking

JAZZ REVIEW

12/11/89

Schulman's Four Winds Provides Inspirational Sax at Linda's

What is so rare as a sax team in harmony? The use of four reed experts as the centerpiece (at times the entirety) of a jazz group can produce inspired and refreshing results. This was handily demonstrated by Ira Schulman when he brought his Four Winds group to Linda's on Melrose Avenue on Saturday.

Leading on soprano saxophone, Schulman heads a foursome that includes Ann Patterson on alto, Buck Gardner on tenor and Charles Owens on baritone. Backed on most numbers by Larry Gales on bass and Mel Lee on drums, they blend with an elegance that is due in large measure to their team spirit, but also to an unconventional library of arrangements.

Some of the tunes are standards, such as "Broadway" and "It Don't Mean a Thing," deftly rearranged by Allen Heinz. Others are older pieces once used by a 1950s unit known as the Hollywood Saxophone Quartet. Unison, harmony and counterpoint are subtly interwoven, and at times the solo work—notably by Patterson and Owens—measures up to the level of the ensemble.

Occasionally the band undergoes a change of habit, shedding its saxes for flute (Schulman), oboe (Patterson), clarinet (Owens) and bassoon (Gardner). Playing a delightful short sweet by Spud Murphy entitled "Sunset Limited" and an original by Heinz, "Blues for Ann," they discarded the bass and druma. As these experiments revealed, they are probably at their best without a rhythm section, perhaps because they can hear one another better and achieve more accurate intonation.

This splendid outfit, heard mainly at clinics in Southland schools, deserves more regular jazz club exposure. Schulman & Co. will return to Linda's Jan. 13 and every fourth Saturday thereafter.

—LEONARD FEATHER

CINEMAS 7

JAZZ REVIEW

Brazilian Music Finds Fresh Talent in Estevao

By LEONARD FEATHER

Although three decades have passed since the film "Black Orpheus" with its unique musical score triggered a worldwide explosion of Brazilian music, such artists as Eliana Estevao, now at La Ve Lee in Studio City, reminds us of the idiom's ongoing infusion of fresh talent.

Tall, dark, reed-slim and contagiously cheerful, Estevao has toured the world with the musical show "Oba Oba," serving up a repertoire that spans early and contemporary samba. In fact she does more, since her opener, "Faschiacio" (better known here as "Fascination"), dates back to 1915. Opening a cappella, she was sparked from the second chorus by a trio to the bossa born: Valtinho Arid on keyboards, Eduardo del Signore on electric bass and Aziz Bucater on drums.

The Brazilian traditions inform every song as she mines the rich resources of her country, from Jobim's "Aguas de Marco" and Marcos Balle's "Deixa O Mondo e O Sol Entrar" to more recent works like Ivan Lins' "Comecar do Novo" ("The Island") and Djavan's "Capim." Her sound is strong yet never overpowering, her rhythmic sense innate but owing little to American jazz.

Estevao works mainly seated on a high stool, yet she gives the concert impression of being physically involved. Only one song, "Fragile," was in English.

A couple of times she announced in English, reading (no doubt phonetically) from a script. She assured her audience that there is much more to Brazilian music than the basic samba, and that certain songs deal with social problems.

Such is her grace and charm that language barriers crumble as they do when a Vaughan or a Fitzgerald visits some remote outpost. The message of Eliana Estevao is a bolder and much-needed update of what was nervously offered when Astrud Gilberto told us, a quarter-century ago, about the Girl From Ipanema.

Estevao will remain at Le Ve Lee Wednesdays through Saturdays for at least another two months.

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JAZZ REVIEW 12/11/89

12/17/89 JAZZ

Horns of a Dilemma: Jazz on the Radio

By LEONARD FEATHER

During the past quarter century, jazz and radio have had what has often seemed to be an adversarial relationship. Live music shows are down to a precious few; all-jazz disc jockey stations are so rare that even New York City had none for several years in the early 1980s.

While the Southland has been better off than most major urban centers, as of Jan. 1 there will only

COMMENTARY

be one FM jazz station in the area—KLON, 88.1, in Long Beach. KKGO, switching to all-classical, will move its jazz format to an AM outlet, KKJZ.

The KLON story is not simply that of a radio station. Increasingly, it represents a force for the propagation of innovative live events. Even listeners outside the station's range (the 1,200 watt power has limits, though some as far away as San Diego and Santa Barbara can hear it) are aware of it because they have attended some of the dozen major concerts presented under its auspices this year.

"These are extremely gratifying times for us," said Ken Poston, the concert coordinator. "Our concert reuniting the legendary Lighthouse All Stars in Hermosa Beach came out recently on an album. In August we presented four concerts at the John Anson Ford Theatre celebrating the 50th anniversary of Blue Note Records. We've had other concerts at Eldorado Park during the summer, a blues festival on campus at Cal State Long Beach, and on Dec. 6, 500 fans came aboard the Queen Mary for our party featuring Terry Gibbs.

"Sure, there's an audience out there for the best in mainstream-modern music. During 1990, we hope to include, in our live shows, a West Coast version of the Charles Mingus celebration at New York's Town Hall."

All this is heady stuff for what began modestly in 1981 on a station that had been known less for jazz than for polka, opera and bluegrass. "Three of us who were there from the start are still on the air," says program director Ken Borgers. "I'm on in the morning, my sister Helen in the afternoon, and Bob Epstein does a traditional jazz show on Sundays."

TONY BARNARD / L.A. Times

KLON's concert coordinator Ken Poston watches Terry Gibbs rehearse at the Queen Mary.

A non-commercial station, KLON keeps itself afloat through corporate donations and memberships (presently 7,800 members pay $40 a year). The ongoing battle to increase the station's power to 30,000 watts finally seems close to resolution.

How does a jazz radio station survive without making commercial compromises? Isn't the tendency to lean to fusion and jazz/rock all but irresistible?

"We like to play two or more new releases per hour," says Helen Borgers, "along with two numbers by our respective featured artists of the day. We each have our favorites; I believe in keeping people aware of the roots. Roy Daniels, whose show precedes mine—he's on from 9:30 to 1:30—is more into hard bop. But in general, middle-of-the-road companies like Concord Jazz, who record Gene Harris and so many mainstream people, are our life's blood."

Bubba Jackson, who handles the 6:30 to midnight shift, takes a dimmer view: "We're four or five years behind the times. By not having Dave Grusin, Hugh Masekela or Miriam Makeba in our library, we're ignoring the changes in the music industry. We're failing to serve a younger generation. I don't go out of my way to buck the general policy here, but Luther Hughes' new show will help."

Hughes, a reputable bass player, will host one of three new programs set to start in January. "Sure, I'll include some of the better fusion things," he said. "I can show how we got from Dizzy and Bird to where we are today. I have some very contemporary guests lined up: David Benoit, John Patitucci, Eric Marienthal." Hughes' show, "Jazz Today," will kick off Jan. 6 from 9 p.m.-midnight, continuing every Saturday.

Latin jazz also must be recognized as integral to any overall jazz coverage. "Jazz on the Latin Side," which supposedly will present strictly jazz-oriented Latin music rather than salsa, will air Sundays at 9 p.m. with Jose Rizo in charge.

A welcome returnee to the airwaves, though less felicitously spotted, is Howard Lucraft, the British-born journalist (mainly for "Variety"), composer and guitarist, who will lean toward nostalgia in a Saturday series from 5-8 a.m., presumably aimed at whoever stayed up very late on Fridays. His early subjects will include the veteran clarinetist Abe Most and the late Kenton singer Ann Richards.

The blues idiom, which has enjoyed a healthy renaissance during the last five years, will be acknowledged by a near tripling of the time allotted to Bernie Pearl's "Nothin' But the Blues," which will air Saturdays and Sundays from 2 to 6 p.m.

Clearly, there is no united front in jazz. The schisms among opinion-holders are as irreconcilable as ever. One can still come across a die-hard who assures you that nothing of real value has been created since 1940. The bop innovations of Gillespie and Parker, though still unacceptable and "too modern" for these antiquarians, are regarded by many observers today as part of a tradition.

Other aficionados, all of them decades younger, will not even recognize the names of anyone who lived before the flowering in the 1960s of John Coltrane.

Nevertheless, a middle ground can and must be found. Those who complained that they heard "too much fusion" on KKGO failed to recognize that this was a commercial station fighting for viability. If KLON (operated by Pacific Public Radio, a nonprofit corporation) can pick up the mantle and maintain a modicum of integrity, it may become more than ever a valuable force in a too often fragmented musical community. □

contemporary samba. In fact she does more, since her opener, "Fascinacio" (better known here as "Fascination"), dates back to 1915. Opening a cappella, she was sparked from the second chorus by a trio to the bossa born: Valtinho Arid on keyboards, Eduardo del Signore on electric bass and Aziz Bucater on drums.

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12/24

Christmas Songs With Inner Voices at Cinegrill

Until recently, the group that now calls itself Inner Voices was known as the Christmas Singers. The four members devoted their time exclusively, and still concentrate mainly, on getting together to celebrate this season in literal and figurative harmony. Friday and Saturday they performed for a captivated audience at the Cinegrill.

Inner Voices consists of Morgan Ames, who writes most of the arrangements, and her three colleagues: Darlene Koldenhoven, Carmen Twillie and Clydene Jackson. Because most of those songs are performed a cappella, Ames, after making the announcements (most of them with a welcome—of dry humor), checked the first note by using a pitch pipe. A few numbers employed a taped piano track, but much of this group's success is due to its ability to build and sustain a mood without instrumental accompaniment.

All four members worked regularly as studio singers. Their Christmas repertoire was a joyous and perfectly intoned blend of standards from "Ave Maria" to "White Christmas" (including the seldom-heard verse) and original works. For variety, there was a Cataland folk song in Spanish and English, a variation on "What Child Is This" with new lyrics by Ames, and a Koldenhoven original, "The Angel Sang." Jackson added a touch of the blues with "Merry Christmas Baby."

From Koldenhoven's pure, high

12/27

Phil Woods Quintet Fills Catalina Bar & Grill

No doubt as insurance against the pre-Christmas slump, Catalina Popescu brought Phil Woods to her Catalina Bar & Grill for a run that began Tuesday. Judging by the business on opening night, the ploy worked well.

The Woods group has changed slightly in its tonal character. With the departure of trumpeter Tom Harrell, it was decided to replace him with a trombonist. Woods could hardly have made a better choice than Hal Crook, who fits the quintet admirably.

Crook's horn blends with the leader's alto as they weave in and out of unison, harmony and counterpart. The trombone having been in decline as a small band voice, a prominent soloist of this caliber can do much to restore its popular acceptance. Crook plays with Swiss-movement precision, but without sacrificing emotion, as he detonates chorus after agile chorus.

Woods' own "All Bird's Children" was predictably peppered with oblique references to Charlie Parker, not without any actual quotes from Bird solos. The follow-up, a more restrained "My Man Benny," was a salute to his other alto idol, Benny Carter, with whom he recently recorded an album.

Switching to clarinet, with Crook using a plunger mute, Woods set up alternately relaxed and mock-Dixieland moods on an early Carter work, "Just a Mood." Crook's value as an arranger was established with his treatments of "From This Moment On" and "The Best Is Yet to Come," both whimsically disguised with revamped melodies and improbable tempos.

As always, Woods' rhythm section supported the horns well; Steve Gilmore's bass and Bill Goodwin's drums were totally attuned to the charts and the soloist. Hal Galper's generally compatible piano tended to floridity on "Porgy," which was mainly a solo showcase for Crook in his elegant ballad style.

Woods & Co. close Sunday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

JAZZ

WYNTON MARSALIS

In May of 1981, at a long-forgotten Los Angeles club known as the Maiden Voyage, Wynton Marsalis emerged with Art Balkey's Jazz Messengers. He was promptly hailed as a 19-year-old discovery and potential star of the 1980s; but there was more to it than that; more, in fact, that he had already accomplished.

The teen-aged wonder, we soon learned, had racked up several years of classical and jazz credits in his native New Orleans; moreover, he was a member of a unique family, three of whose members have since become nationally celebrated: father Ellis Marsalis, older brother Branford, and his younger brother Delfeayo.

Wynton Marsalis has become a symbol of a musical life style of the 1980s. He has helped, more than any musician who preceded him, to break down idiomatic boundaries that had too long existed in music. At the same time he has spearheaded a move toward acoustic, unhyphenated jazz at a time when fusion seemed to be taking precedence.

—LEONARD FEATHER

DAVID SANBORN

Though it has been said that he practices "safe sax," David Sanborn has proved sufficiently accessible to the general audience to assure him of a substantial following. As a consequence he now reaches millions through an after-midnight television show, hosting the syndicated "Night Music" Sundays (actually around 12:30 a.m. Monday on KNBC Channel 4) on which he introduces guests from every walk of music life.

Sanborn's eclecticism has enabled him to win Grammies in three categories, two for R&B, one for jazz and one for fusion.

Because of his popularity with younger audiences, he appeared two years ago on a TV special honoring Benny Carter, one of his early idols on the alto sax. On Feb. 12 he'll be a sideman in Carter's orchestra at a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald at Lincoln Center. That he is able through such gestures to draw attention to the giants of jazz history attests to his importance as a spokesman along with his success as a best-selling musician.—

L.F.

NEW AGE MUSIC

The individual accomplishments of musicians like Wynton Marsalis and David Sanborn had their collective counterpart in the story of Windham Hill Records and the New Age music it represents. The main musical architect in this ground-breaking venture was William Ackerman, a guitarist who played on the company's first releases in 1976.

Almost a decade ago, in 1980, George Winston's first album for the label was released. Next came an album by Shadowfax, a highly original electronic group that made its debut with an eponymous album in 1982. As the Windham Hill family grew, with artists such as Mark Isham and Scott Cossu reflecting every idiom from Asian and African to Middle Eastern and South American Indian culture, along with classical, jazz and Latin touches, it became clear that the music could not be given any existing label.

Along the way, the term "new age" was born—not a phrase dear to the hearts of most of the artists, but one that has stuck. In fact, because so many products were being arbitrarily assigned to jazz or pop, it was decided by the recording academy in 1986 to add New Age to its burgeoning list of subdivisions.

L.F.

12/31/89

JAZZ

David Benoit: Straight Ahead to the Top of the Jazz Charts

by LEONARD FEATHER

A strange thing happened to David Benoit earlier this month. He woke up one morning and found he was No. 1.

To be at the top of a Billboard jazz chart was a new experience, even though for more than a decade the 36-year-old pianist and composer had been enjoying an increasingly successful career as a recording artist. Doubly surprising was the nature of the album that did the trick: unlike his previous efforts, which had been praised in the music industry for their pop appeal but where often ignored or condemned by critics, this was a straight-ahead jazz album ("Waiting for Spring," GRP 9596), with the guitarist Emily Remler as featured soloist.

"It was a total surprise to me," said the amiable Benoit (pronounced Ben-wah). "It was just an album we had fun doing, and I had no real expectations as to how it would sell."

Given the rigidly profit-oriented nature of the record business, ventures of this kind usually are viewed by executives with alarm, or at best are accorded grudging acceptance. Invariably it is the artist rather than the company that comes up with the idea. This was the pattern in the cases of Grover Washington Jr., George Benson, Chick Corea and Rob Mullins, all of whom have made side ventures from pop to jazz during the past year or so.

Benoit's situation was typical. "I went to Larry Rosen, who's the R in GRP Records, and he was a bit surprised; I had to do some persuading. He thought something like this might confuse my audience, but finally he said, 'Well, if it doesn't cost too much, and if you can knock it out in one day, go ahead.'

"So I called the drummer, Pete Erskine, and the bassist Luther Hughes, and we actually did almost the whole album in one day, just straight through to two-track, live and spontaneous. We didn't have quite enough music, so I went in on a second day and made two more tunes, with John Patitucci on bass."

RANDY LEFFINGWELL / L.A. Times

A more traditional album has landed David Benoit a No. 1 ranking.

The participation of Emily Remler, who has a career of her own with several albums on Concord, was simply the result of Benoit's fan-like enthusiasm. "I called Concord one day to ask for her phone number; I just wanted to call her up and tell her how much I admired her. But when she got to Los Angeles and opened at Vine Street Bar & Grill, she was excited about my idea of having her on the record."

Jazz and Benoit are by no means strangers. His father, a former guitarist who earned a doctorate at USC and became a psychology professor, had taught Benoit many of the jazz and pop standards when he was a teen-ager. Living in Hollywood, the youngster played at Donte's and other jazz rooms, mixing contemporary sounds with the Songs-My-Father-Taught-Me repertoire. But after signing with AVI records, a small independent company, he was steered in a more commercial direction.

"I pursued the fusion thing pretty heavily, and it was nice to know that I was getting so much acceptance with the kind of music I had been recording, but all the time I missed the fun and the freedom of playing regular 4/4 jazz."

Nevertheless, his career moved ahead on the commercial level as he switched from AVI to GRP, the powerful Dave Grusin-Larry Rosen label. By now he had been experimenting with synthesizers, had conducted for Diane Schuur and other singers, and usually confined his orthodox jazz work to an occasional cut buried in a fusion album.

Once he had completed "Waiting for Spring," the reaction within the music business was inconsistent. "When Larry Rosen heard the tape he got all excited. But my manager, when he first heard it, said 'What is this? You're recording straight-ahead jazz? I'm nervous about this.' I said, 'Well, let's put it out and see what happens.' "

What happened was that in short order the managers and attorneys and other business types got around to appreciating Benoit's work, which included seven of his own compositions (among them the lyrical "I Remember Bill Evans"), along with two compositions by the late Bill Evans, who was his early idol, and a few standards, "Cast Your Fate to the Wind," "My Romance."

■ JAZZ LISTINGS: Page 82

The most enthusiastic supporter of Benoit's new career turn is his father, Bob Benoit. "I asked him to come to the session, because Emily was going to be on it. At the end of the day I said, 'Dad, did you bring your guitar? We really should play one of the tunes we did together when I was a kid.' He hadn't brought his guitar, but Emily said 'Borrow mine,' which he did, and that's my Dad playing rhythm guitar on the last cut, 'Secret Love.'

"The odd thing is that Dad recently began studying guitar again, and his teacher is a young guy struggling to get into the music business. One day he said to Dad, 'Here I am giving you lessons, and I'm knocking on all these doors trying to get a record deal, and meanwhile you're playing on the No. 1 jazz album in the country!' And the funniest part of it is that this is the only time in his life my Dad has been on a record."

Benoit's success with the jazz album has not connoted any abandonment of his other activities. "I was involved in writing for the 'Happy Anniversary Charlie Brown' sound track album that GRP put out, and then I was called in to do the orchestral writing, including 20 strings, for the Charlie Brown TV special, which will be aired during January.

"I have an exciting new band that I'm putting together for a visit to Japan in February. Emily will be with me, and Eric Marienthal on alto sax, Steve Bailey from the Rippingtons on both acoustic and electric bass, and David Derge on drums. So with these versatile musicians I'll be able to incorporate some of the things from the album."

Perhaps the most ironic aspect of Benoit's new-found jazz acceptance is the typically condescending attitude reflected in some of the reviews by East Coast critics, who, as he points out, have a very traditionalist viewpoint and have blasted him in the past.

"One review started off by saying, 'David Benoit is the king of Fuzak, or marshmallow melodies; he's a joke in the be-bop community . . . however, "Waiting for Spring" is a pleasant surprise.'

"I don't quite know how to react to a heavily qualified statement like this, but I guess after all the knocks I've taken over the years I should take it as a compliment!" □

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12/29/89

JAZZ REVIEW

Aldeberts Exude Special Charm

Monique and Louis Aldebert, on permanent loan from France for the past two decades, have become as familiar a part of the local landscape as the room that has been housing them lately, the Smoke House in Burbank.

Their special brand of charm still has Gallic overtones, though at their first show Wednesday the Anglicization seemed to have been stretched a little too far. It was a welcome change of pace when they got around to singing "One Note Samba" in French.

Nevertheless, the elegant essence remains. Monique Aldebert handles the lead role in her pure, gentle voice while her husband hums an occasional obbligato, joining her once in a while for a boppish unison, as in the wild and mostly wordless workout on Lester Young's "Tickle Toe."

His main function is that of accompanist; in addition to furnishing sympathetic piano backing, he has sequenced certain passages that enabled him to simulate an orchestra with useful synth effects. If there were problems with the amplification, was it ever any other way in a typical restaurant experimenting with music?

The synth was helpful in establishing a mood on "Try to Remember." The Aldeberts reversed their roles as Louis took over the lead voice for their own composition "Home Is Where the Heart Is." Another, newer original, "Music Is a Love Affair," reflected their special talents in the creation of music and English lyrics.

Understatement has always been a keynote of the Aldeberts' offerings. If this means they are swimming against the tide, so be it; too often on today's vocal scene the waves in the other direction seem overwhelming.

They close Saturday at the Smoke House but will continue their other gig, working Thursdays through Sundays from 3 to 7 p.m. in the Observation Bar aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach.

—LEONARD FEATHER

LOS ANGELES TIMES 12/30/89

Miles Davis Hits Highs, Lows in Golden Feather Awards

By LEONARD FEATHER

Pardon us for mixing our metals, but next month marks the silver anniversary of the Golden Feather Awards. The first of these surveys were for the year 1965. So much has changed during this momentous quarter-century that it seems fitting to start with a few retrospective thoughts before tackling the 1989 agenda.

As 1965 came to a close, Wynton Marsalis had recently turned 4. Two members of the vocal group Take 6 were yet to be born; the oldest was 3. (Their 1965 counterpart was the long-since-defunct Double Six of Paris.)

Riding high, triply triumphant that year, was John Coltrane: Hall of Fame winner in Down Beat as well as musician of the year and creator of the record of the year, "A Love Supreme." Coltrane would die 18 months later, but so enduring is his legacy that "A Love Supreme" is the title of a Spike Lee movie now in production.

Other winners of that poll have left us: Paul Desmond, Gil Evans, Charles Mingus, Duke Ellington. But some things remain constant: then as now Gerry Mulligan was the No. 1 baritone saxophonist, J.J. Johnson the victorious trombonist, Milt Jackson at the head of the class on vibraphone and Jimmy Smith the pre-eminent organist.

As the 1990s loom, today's jazz differs vastly from that of the 1960s. Fusion, as we understand the term today, was all but unknown, as were most of the electronic instruments. More than ever, jazz now is a pluralistic society that allows space for a multitude of idioms. Who in 1965 could have foretold the various jazz/rock mixtures? The blues revival? Who knew New Age?

In 1989, for the first time, a jazz artist, Bobby McFerrin, won Grammy awards for song of the year and record of the year (for composing and singing "Don't Worry, Be Happy"), as well as two male vocal awards. Take 6, Manhattan Transfer, Chick Corea and Roger Kellaway all were winners in one category or another.

This was the year when jazz literally toured the world, as pianist Gene Harris led his Philip Morris Superband on an unprecedented five-continent hegira. Domestically it was a year that saw an amazing effusion of jazz on compact discs—hundreds of new releases along with countless reissues of classics.

Are jazz fans wealthier than most other record buyers? It would seem so. This month's "Brownie: The Complete EmArcy Recordings of Clifford Brown" consisted of 10 CDs priced at $150. The nine Bill Evans Fantasy CDs went for $140. Both were bargains compared to the "Complete Art Pepper" on Galaxy, 16 CDs at $225.

Though LPs are obsolescent, loyalists still exist: Mosaic Records has released, on a 23-LP set, a second volume of treasures from the Commodore Records catalogue, by mail only at $217, including shipping.

In general, then, a heavy year, with more records, more festivals, more jazz parties, more international exchanges, even a little more jazz on TV.

Onward and upward to the 25th annual Golden Feather Awards:

■ Record of the Year: "Aura." Miles Davis (Columbia CK 45332). Although Davis' recent "Amandla" has been more widely and less justifiably publicized, this Copenhagen recording finds him back at a level of achievement close to that of his palmiest Gil Evans days. The compositions by Palle Mikkelborg are at times evocative of Evans' best work, and Davis' horn is in his most inspired contemporary mood. One can understand his anger at CBS for delaying by almost five years the release of this invaluable album.

■ Reissue of the Year: "Jazz Piano" (Smithsonian A4 21010). The four CDs encompass almost everything from James P. Johnson and Fats Waller to Keith Jarrett and Herbie Hancock, with multiple representation of the true giants (Art Tatum, Earl Hines, Bud Powell).

■ Vocal Album of the Year: "Love You Madly." Carol Sloane (Contemporary CCD-14049-2). The ideal combination: a singer who thinks and feels like a musician; a backup group that includes Art Farmer, Clifford Jordan, Kenny Barron and Kenny Burrell; arrangements by Richard Rodney Bennett; a banality-free choice of songs.

■ Book of the Year: "The Swing Era—The Development of Jazz 1940-1945" by Gunther Schuller (Oxford University Press). A magnificently researched volume by a brilliant musician, this is the logical successor to Schuller's seminal "Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development" (Oxford, 1968).

■ Movie of the Year: "Thelonious Monk—Straight No Chaser." Produced by Charlotte Zwerin and Bruce Ricker. A unique assemblage of old, live footage by the pianist and his group, along with recently taped comments by friends about his rough-hewn career.

■ Television program of the Year: "Satchmo." Gary Giddins and Toby Byron put together this 90-minute documentary as a counterpart to their similarly titled book. The early clips of Armstrong's film appearances alone qualify this as a historically important production.

□

On the other side of the coin, there were several outstanding negatives that fall, as always, into the wilted-feather category:

■ Forgettable Movie of the Year: "Let's Get Lost." A totally unnecessary and tasteless look at the self-destructive life of an overrated talent, Chet Baker.

■ Regrettable Book of the Year: "Miles—the Autobiography" (by Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe). Not unnecessary, but unnecessarily sensational, vulgar, obscenity-packed and unworthy of a long-admired performer.

■ Most Embarrassing TV Moment of the Year: Harry Reasoner trying to interview Miles Davis on "60 Minutes."

■ Second Most Embarrassing TV Moment of the Year: Arsenio Hall trying to interview Miles Davis.

■ Blue Notes of the Year: We lost Wild Bill Davison, Freddie Waits, Lu Watters, Bill Barron, Irv Cottler, Will Bradley, Julian Adderley Sr., John Green, Woody Shaw, Arnold Shaw, Nesuhi Ertegun, Max Gordon, Arnett Cobb, Tiny Grimes, Roy Eldridge, Reunald Jones, Eddie Heywood Jr., Phineas Newborn Jr., Lud Gluskin, John Audino and others too numerous to list—and in many cases too young to leave us.

MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 1990

Jazz Reviews

Cedar Walton Trio Closes Out 1989 at Catalina's

Closing out the old year with appropriate brio, Catalina's presented over the weekend the inspiring trio of pianist Cedar Walton, augmented by the tenor saxophone of Harold Land.

Never one to pull punches, Walton opened his first set Friday with his vivid perennial "Cedar's Blues," spinning myriad variations at uptempo on the age-old 12-bar pattern. Drummer Billy Higgins, a Walton regular, showed his customary wit and alacrity in a series of nimble breaks.

The more tempered but no less compelling aspect of the pianist's personality came to the fore with J. J. Johnson's "Lament," to which he brought lush harmonic embellishments. "Holy Land," an infectious Walton theme, ended the trio's segment, after which Land took to the stand.

Land, who continues to grow in creative scope, proved an ideal foil for Walton and a composer whose "Dark Mood" (in 3/4) and "Short Subject" were dynamic vehicles for them both. Tony Dumas, the bassist, shone in both solo and sectional capacities; his sound is firm, his intonation flawless.

"Born to Be Blue" was Land's ballad specialty, done with a little too much ornamentation. The highlight of the set was "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes." This 1948 song by an obscure writer from a forgotten movie of the same name, has a strange fascination for improvising jazz men. Land and Walton dealt brilliantly with its provocative chordal lines.

Finally there was Walton's own "Bolivia," with its intoxicating vamp and imminently playable theme. Throughout the quartet portion of the performance, the four artists presented a commandingly united front.

Walton will be on hand again Wednesday through Sunday at the Indigo Jazz Room in Compton, with the same trio backing another saxophonist, Clifford Jordan.

—LEONARD FEATHER

S ANGELES TIMES 1/2/90

Wilson Will Make Music With NEA Grant

LEONARD FEATHER

Gerald Wilson: "With this award, I can do a few things for the orchestra that I haven't had the opportunity to do—things I hope will be of lasting interest.

It sure is a nice way to start the decade," said Gerald Wilson, who has just received a $20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts under the American Masters Fellowship program. "Not just for the money, but because I'm happy to be of service by making some fresh music available to the community.

"With this award," the Southland composer said, "I can do a few things for the orchestra that I haven't had the opportunity to do—things I hope will be of lasting interest.

"Last year I went out on a tour, conducting various college orchestras—Rutgers, Berklee and several others. After leading the college orchestras I donated 10 or 12 of my original compositions to their libraries."

One of Wilson's stops, at the New England Conservatory, found him sharing a concert with George Russell, another grant recipient. Russell, 66, is a teacher at the Conservatory. Pianist-composer Cecil Taylor, 60, the third award-winner, has long been active as an avant-gardist and teacher at several Eastern colleges.

Armed with the music he plans to write under the funding, 71-year-old Wilson will expand his activities this year, taking his own band to leading jazz festivals across the country. Meanwhile, he is set for two weekends at Marla's Memory Lane starting Feb. 2 and a concert at the Wadsworth Theater on Feb. 4.

Originally prominent as a trumpeter and arranger with the Jimmie Lunceford Orchestra, Wilson settled in Los Angeles in 1942 and formed his own Big Band two years later. He found out, the hard way, that keeping an 18-member band together in the post-Swing Era was as simple as juggling 18 balls in the air. But because he wanted a showcase for his uniquely original, highly personal music, he never gave up.

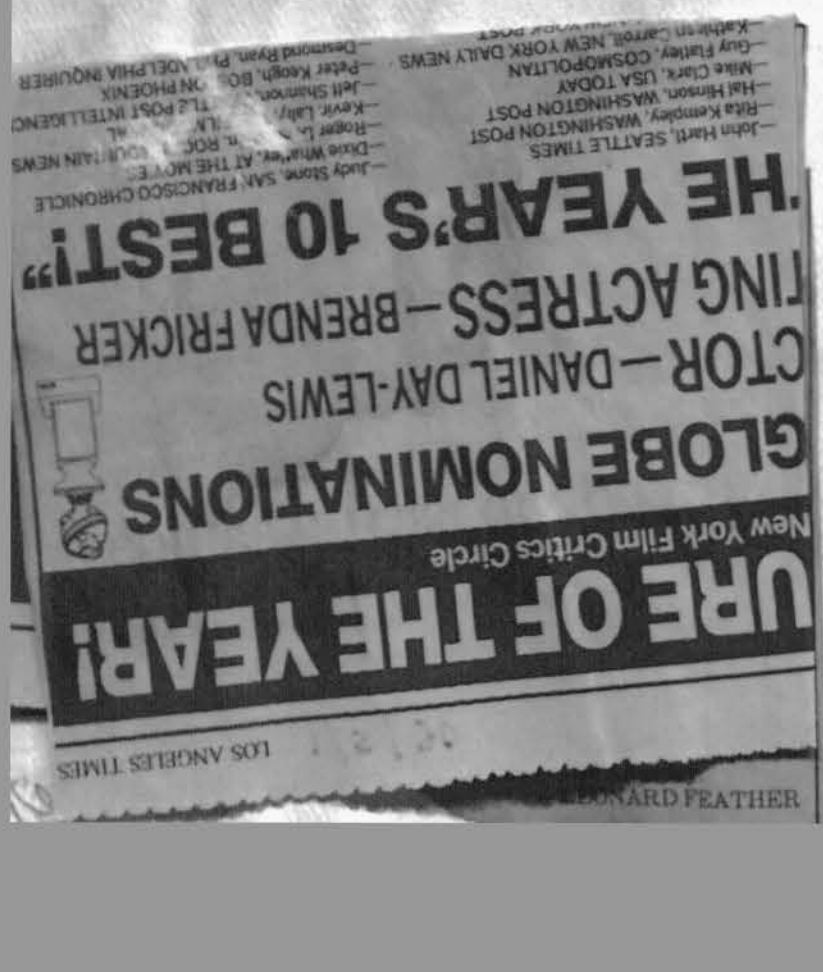
"I've been able to keep my music out there," he said, "with the help of Albert Marx, who's produced all my albums since 1961—first for Pacific Jazz, and now on his own Discovery Records. But I've been lucky enough to do quite a few other things."

When band dates wore thin, he spent several years as the host of a record show on KBCA (now KKGO). From 1969 he taught jazz history at Cal State Northridge. Since 1983 he has been a part-time professor at Cal State L.A. In 1972 he composed the first of eight works performed at the Music Center by Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic with a large gospel choir.

With his own ensemble, he recorded such colorful, often Mexican-flavored hits as "Viva Tirado," "Josefina" and "The Golden Sword."

"It's a great honor," summed up Wilson, "particularly since this is not something you can apply for."

Previous winners of the endowment fellowships have included Count Basie and Dizzy Gillespie—in both of whose bands Wilson played in the late 1940s—and Ella Fitzgerald.



MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 1990 F11

JAZZ REVIEW

Veteran Musicians Wiggins, Simpkins Spice Up Maple Drive

By LEONARD FEATHER

Jazz in Beverly Hills has long been an oxymoron. Nevertheless, nestled in a residential area on Maple Drive at Alden, the Maple Drive Restaurant has been presenting, for the last three months, the superlative mainstream music of pianist Gerry Wiggins and bassist Andy Simpkins.

This large dining room and bar is not the quietest spot in town, but a seat reasonably close to the bandstand will assure a steady flow, from 7:30 until 11 p.m., of aural balm on a consistently high level.

Playing a first-rate Yamaha, Wiggins straddles the decades in his selections, showing respect for the melodies in his opening choruses before offering his own tasteful, non-radical variations. His touch for the most part is gentle, his time sense laid back; there is neither urgency nor complacency as he explores time-tested songs from "Lullaby of the Leaves" and "My Foolish Heart" to such blues-inflected works as Benny Goodman's "Soft Winds" and the Ahmad Jamal perennial "Night Mist."

Simpkins, who has spent much of the last decade on the road with Sarah Vaughan, has found his perfect niche as Wiggins' full partner in this compact unit, which displays his rhythm and solo propensities to optimum effect. He picked up his bow just once, for the theme from "On the Beach," but every pizzicato solo was marked by his full sound, flawless intonation and creative melodic sense.

Because Wiggins and Simpkins between them must know at least a thousand songs, there's a sense of unpredictability in every set. Decisions on what to play are made on the spur of the moment. It would be impossible to hear the same performance twice if you caught this duo at every performance for a month—which, by the way, would be a splendid way to spend a month. They will remain here indefinitely from Wednesdays through Saturdays.

LOS ANGELES TIMES 1/24/90

Wilson Will Make Music With NEA Grant

By LEONARD FEATHER

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LOS ANGELES TIMES 1/5/90

Trombonists Steve Turre, left, and Robin Eubanks with Charnett Moffett on the upright bass open a four-night gig at St.

JAZZ REVIEW

Turre-Eubanks: On Cutting Edge

The Vine St. Bar & Grill took a daring and commendable chance in booking the Steve Turre-Robin Eubanks Quintet for a four-day run that began Wednesday.

Nothing about this group is conventional. The leaders both play trombone, an instrument not generally in favor on the jazz front in recent years; their material consists of adventurous original works.

Well known for his several stints with the late Woody Shaw, Turre was at his most eloquent in a ballad dedicated to the trumpeter, "Specially for You," played on an open horn. In other numbers he resorted to several variations, among them the use of a mute and plunger. On one tune, he doubled on three conch shells of different sizes and shapes, producing an odd variety of sounds. Eubanks blended effectively with Turre in the ensembles. As a soloist, he was somewhat the more extroverted of the two, playing with a wild abandon that extended the tradition of the instrument as he took it into uncharted areas.

The true scene stealer was Charnett Moffett. This 22-year-old is a phenomenally gifted master of the upright bass. Playing in the ensembles, he was a virtual one-man rhythm section, although pianist Kei Akagi and drummer Gene Jackson were potently supportive.

Moffett's solos generally told a cohesive melodic story. Only in one number, when he switched to electric bass and Akagi played synthesizer, was the tension suspended as the band reached the border of boredom.

Turre and Eubanks, both on the cutting edge in the evolution of their instrument, have found a logical partnership in this spirited unit. They close Saturday.

—LEONARD FEATHER

MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 199[illegible]

F11

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1/7/90

A Quintet of Young Players for the '90s

In the past few years, there has been a definite rejuvenation in acoustic jazz—particularly of the mainstream persuasion, where the music's true roots reside, but also in the avant-garde. Some artists have managed to concoct styles that invigoratingly and inventively blend the two styles. Calendar's jazz writ- have selected the following indi- 's as those most likely to have act in this revitalized area in ing decade.

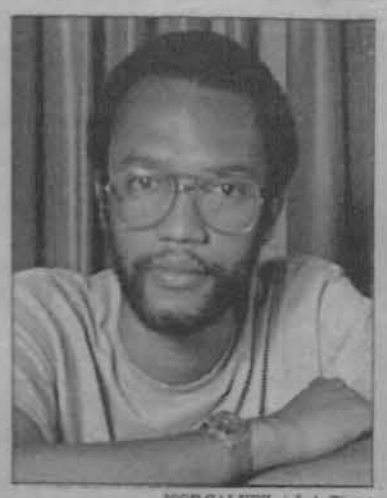
Ma Roberts

A gr believer in the jazz tradition, arcus Roberts may be one of the t bets for its survival through the ext decade. His work as pianist and orchestrator for Wynton Marsalis has revealed a deep commitment to the mainstream values of harmonic improvisation, melodic creativity and rhythmic swing.

As an improviser, Roberts finds inspiration in the musical conceptualizing of Duke Ellington, the disjunct rhythms and off-beat harmonies of Thelonious Monk and the spirituality of John Coltrane—not a bad combination of influences.

His soloing—best typified on his Novus recording "The Truth Is Spoken Here"—flows easily from the familiarity of the blues to the eccentricities of the avant-garde. And it is part of Roberts' considerable skill that he manages to do so in completely seamless fashion, connecting the past to the present without the trace of a misstep.

—DON HECKMAN



JOSE GALVEZ / L.A. Times

Billy Childs: following in the footsteps of Herbie Hancock.

Billy Childs

The youthful Los Angeles keyboardist Billy Childs is well on his way to creating a singular voice in jazz as an instrumentalist and improviser, as a composer and as a bandleader—just as his chief influence, Herbie Hancock, did early in his career. Classically trained, Childs couples formidable technique with musical situations that challenge him, resulting in a player who grows and grows. "Twilight Is Upon Us," Childs' second Windham Hill Jazz release, is replete with thought-filled, exciting modern music that reaches for the future yet remembers jazz's noble, swinging past. Already widely respected locally and nationally among his peers—he's played with Freddie Hubbard, Gerry Mulligan, J.J. Johnson and Branford Marsalis—Childs should establish an international reputation in the next decade.

—ZAN STEWART

Ralph Moore

Tenor saxophonist Ralph Moore, like Childs, has chosen the less-traveled road of individuality. Though the New York-based hornman reveres the late John Coltrane, rather than mimicking his idol's style, he has melded some of Trane's warmer aspects with his own lyrical concept, resulting in an approach that stands out from, rather than fades in with, the crowd. With his crying, human sound, his ardent sense of swing and his ear for pretty notes, Moore, more than many of his contemporaries, authentically captures the best values of jazz's '50s and '60s—where indigo-hued melody and crackling drive reigned. And with a current interest in returning to those earlier jazz forms being adopted by many young jazzmen, Moore will certainly be one of those standing at the forefront of the rekindled mainstream movement. His recent "Images" LP (Landmark) is one of the most rewarding and listenable jazz releases in past memory, and Moore's February Los Angeles appearance—his first here as a leader—will get the local jazz decade off to a rousing start.

—Z.S.

Delfeayo Marsalis

Delfeayo Marsalis is a name that has appeared on a substantial number of record labels during the past five years, yet the credit line never listed him in the capacity that may yet establish his fame—as a trombone player.

Marsalis has produced albums for his father Ellis and his brother Branford, as well for Harry Connick Jr., the quintet of Donald Harrison and Terence Blanchard, and the Polish piano wizard Adam Makowicz. Among all these albums, he was never heard playing a note, though those who have heard him are aware that he may well emerge as the outstanding new trombonist of the decade to come.

The main reason for the delay is that during his six years as a student at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Delfeayo Marsalis spent the first half of that period studying record production. It was only later that he began to take up the trombone seriously, with several Berklee teachers as his guide but with the records of J.J. Johnson (the so-called father of bebop trombone) as his spiritual mentor.

Graduating from Berklee last spring, Marsalis was heard on a few gigs, then moved back to the family home town of New Orleans, where he wants to continue working seriously on perfecting his craft as an instrumentalist. Recently, calling from New Orleans, he stated that he plans to organize his own group next April. Dedicated, intensely creative yet easygoing, Marsalis at 24 seems to have no obstacle in his path en route to a brilliant future.

—LEONARD FEATHER

■ JAZZ LISTINGS: Page 78.

Geri Allen

Pianist Geri Allen's music is in some senses an overview of the sounds that can be expected to typify the 1990s. Drawing from every available source—she grew up in Detroit listening to Motown and James Brown and the recorded legacy of Charlie Parker—she reflects the breadth of her education along with the diversity of her vision.

Though a member of the avant-garde-leaning M-Base collective from Brooklyn, Allen has not forgotten her mainstream origins. Touring with Charlie Haden on bass and Paul Motian on drums, she hewed strictly to the jazz tradition, just as surely as she eased into the mood of "Bebopskerony," composed and played in a Blue Note album by a quintet under the direction of the vital young drummer Ralph Peterson.

Her talent for composition has been evident since she began her recording career, originally for the German label Minor Music. Her latest album, "Twylight" (JMT), is variously meditative and vivid as she explores the colors to be found in keyboards, synths, congas, acoustic bass and, at one point, vocal effects.

—L.F.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

A Turning Point in Careers of Charlie, Sandi Shoemake

■ **Jazz:** The teachers will make a local appearance tonight. But soon they plan to leave the area.

By LEONARD FEATHER

TONY BARNARD / Los Angeles Times

Charlie and Sandi Shoemake plan to sell their Sherman Oaks home.

The career of Charlie Shoemake has been divided into

opportunities. "Wherever I am, I can go to colleges and do concerts and clinics. I can come back to L.A. to work clubs, and whatever studio work comes up. I was on the sound track of 'Bird' for Lenny Niehaus, and I've since worked on another film project, also with Lenny."

He admits that among his students have been many hundreds who will never play professionally. "There are others who are really good, but conditions don't allow them to display their talent.

"Music today is one of the few areas of life in which mediocrity is not only accepted; it's actually rewarded, even cherished. This is the worst time for music in the history of the century.

"Look at classical music. In the early decades we had Bartók, Ravel and Stravinsky; now we have the minimalists. In the first half of the century we had Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker, Art Tatum; now we have fusion. And in the first part of the century for pop music we had Gershwin, Arlen, Kern; now we have rock."

Not that Shoemake and Sandi are despondent about their own future. She will expand her activities as a vocal teacher; he will continue to do much of what he has been doing all along. "Living in a beautiful area by the ocean," he says "having more time, and with only students that are very special—I can't imagine a happier scene for either of us."

JAZZ REVIEW

Carroll Offers Graceful Set at Westwood Marquis

Barbara Carroll, who opened a six-week engagement Tuesday at the Westwood Marquis, has credits as a pianist that go back to the 52nd Street era. In those days, she was strictly a be-bopper, probably the first woman to embrace the new movement of that time.

She has since settled into a more conservative style in which grace and delicacy have taken over where energy and drive once dominated. Harmonically, however, she has developed to the point where she can bring out all the richness of a Gershwin or Sondheim melody.

Three numbers into the set she began singing. The balance of her show was divided about equally between vocals and instrumentals. Carroll lays no claim to her mastery as a singer. If she has a vibrato it is imperceptible, since she never holds on to a note long enough to need one. Yet her treatment of the antic humor in "I Wish I Were in Love Again" managed to fit the material perfectly. Her attempt to sing a Billie Holiday blues was entirely too dainty.

That Carroll is a talented composer came to light late in the set, when she offered a touching waltz, "Too Soon," in tribute to the late Bill Evans. More original pieces along these lines, and fewer like the dull Cy Coleman songs from the new Broadway show "City of Angels," would be welcome.

So too would a bass player. Though she prefers to work alone, there can be little doubt that a strong bassist would help immeasurably in bringing to Carroll's performance a swinging essence that was not too often noticeable. The loneliness of the long-distance pianist was never more obvious than in the final number, "Cute," with all those empty breaks.

Nevertheless, just as she has found a perfect niche in her regular job at the Carlyle Hotel in New York, Carroll seems well attuned to the requirements of the Westwood Marqu
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The career of Charlie Shoemake has been divided into three segments: One as a studio and jazz sideman in Los Angeles, from 1955-66; another as a touring vibraphonist with George Shearing, 1966-72; and a third, since 1973, as arguably the most successful music teacher in the Southland, with an aggregate of 1,500 students taking classes in jazz harmony, theory and improvisation over the past 17 years.

Now Shoemake and Sandi, his vocalist, assistant teacher and wife of 31 years, are bringing that phase to an end. Their appearance tonight at Le Cafe in Sherman Oaks may be their last for quite a while. Their house is being put up for sale next week, and the only question is whether they will move northward to Cambria or south to Carlsbad.

"We've lived in this house in Sherman Oaks for 25 years," said Sandi Shoemake, "and it's time for a change."

"I've lived all my adult life here," Charlie Shoemake added, "since the week after I turned 19. But it was totally different then. A young musician with talent could make a name and become established. Today, at least in Los Angeles, he can't do that without selling out. He's going to have to do something less important, like fusion, or something that's not important at all, like rock.

"There is less going on in Los Angeles than there is in Portland, Ore.; Sandi and I just did some college concerts up there, and our young pianist, a student of mine named Randy Cannon, was so besieged by job offers that he's already moved to Portland.

"But that's not the reason we're moving. I still want to teach, but I'll only deal with those students who are dedicated enough to drive a few hours to their lessons. That will enable me to spend time writing some books about the playing of jazz."

Also set for publication in due course are transcriptions of solos by famous jazz men.

Shoemake's best-known alumnus is Ted Nash, now a successful free-lance saxophonist in New York. Dick Berk, the drummer, hearing a group of Shoemake's students, formed his entire Jazz Adoption Agency group out of Shoemake pupils.

Shoemake's decision to move was not related to any lack of local opportunities. "Wherever I am, I can go to colleges and do concerts and clinics. I can come back to L.A. to work clubs, and whatever studio work comes up. I was on the sound track of 'Bird' for Lenny Niehaus, and I've since worked on another film project, also with Lenny."

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