

March April 1981

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The Australasian Contemporary Music Magazine

Eric Myers on
DON BURROWS

**TOSHIKO
AKIYOSHI**
talks to Joya Jensen

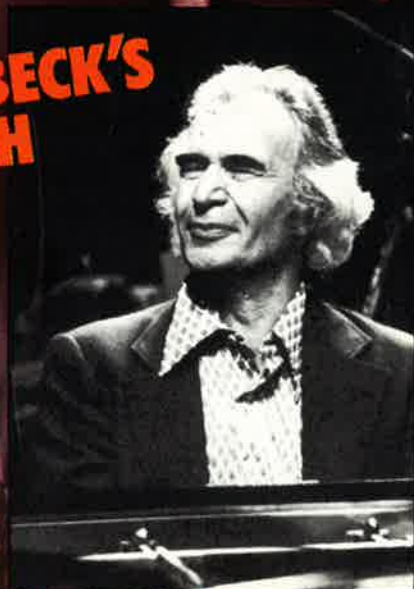
Behind the mike —
PHIL HALDEMAN
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FESTIVAL REPORTS

The Len Barnard Story
(Part 2)

Record Reviews

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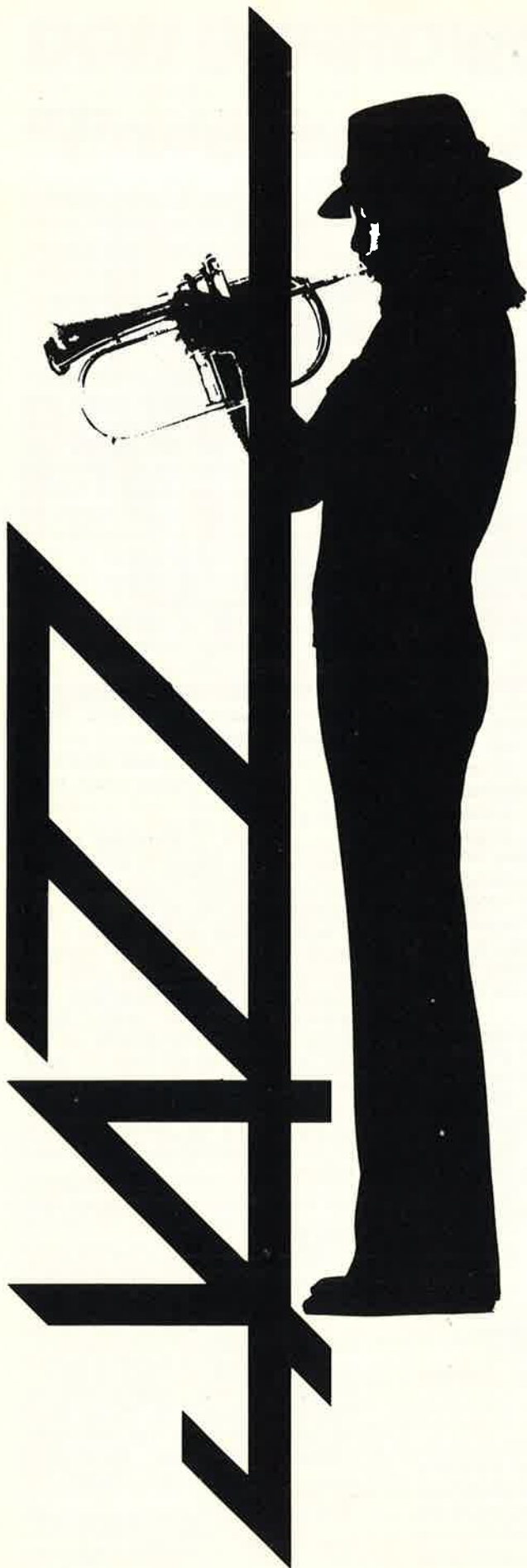


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Edit.

We have just been through the most exhilarating period of music Australia has ever heard.

Every State joined in and the music ranged from blues through mainstream, bop, Afro-Cuban, big band to the most thought provoking of modern sounds.

Yet with all these musical riches I heard criticism of commercialism and sponsorship.

Make no mistake — no festival be it Newport, Montreux, Nice, Berlin or Tokyo goes on without a large in-flow of hard cash.

And the providers of the cash, private or public, require value for their dollar.

So let's bury, once and for all, the old jazz jibe about commercialism.

It is a fact of modern life and without it there would be very few tours by overseas stars and NO festivals.

There may be all sorts of criticism of sponsorship, but provided not one note of music is changed, and I have yet to hear of it, I will be happy to support sponsorship.

Finally, thank you for your support of the first issue, you will find this one every bit as good.

DICK SCOTT
Editor

Letters

Dear Mr. Scott,

I am writing to congratulate you on the first issue of JAZZ — a most welcome addition to the literature about Australian music.

As you know, the jazz scene is always somewhat fluid and it is often bewildering to be caught in the crossfire (no pun intended) of politics and personnel changes. Your aim to transcend these problems will be welcomed by true jazz lovers and performers.

A comment in your first issue on the promotion of the Australian Jazz Foundation's summer clinics has prompted me to add this note: in addition to help from Pan Am and the Music Board of the Australia Council, the Foundation received assistance from the New South Wales Government through the Division of Cultural Activities in the Premier's Department. You would not have known this at the time of going to press. The Foundation also received a grant for workshop/performances for young people, as did the Jazz Action Society. Musica Viva Australia receives assistance for touring in New South Wales — and this includes jazz concerts — and, of course, the Sydney Festival Committee has substantial State Government help towards the January jazz festival.

Your readers may be interested to know that New South Wales non-profit-making groups are eligible to apply for assistance for 1982 jazz-based projects. The closing date for applications is 31 May 1981. Inquiries about guidelines and forms should be directed to me or the Division's Cultural Grants Officer, Richard Alaba.

Very best wishes for future issues.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Colman
Music Officer

Division of Cultural Activities
Premier's Department

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read the article by Eric Myers on Australian jazz, and was especially interested in his comment about many of the contemporary players not performing in regular venues.

I know of at least two more names that could be added to this list — Rex Kidney (reeds) and Dave Clegg (piano) and goodness knows how many more could be found.

Would there be room for a small personal column in your magazine where players could contact each other with a view to getting together and perhaps getting regular work?

PETER BERRIMAN
Bondi, NSW

Thanks for the suggestion. Small personal notices will be carried in future at a cost of \$5 per 25 words or part thereof.
—Editor.

—And more on the subject

Would it be naive to suggest that the answer to his question is that these people are not playing jazz and jazz audiences are not interested in what they are doing. I believe some if not all of the names he mentions have in fact been presented at "regular venues" and if they no longer are, it is because nobody wants to listen to them.

This is not to denigrate what these people are doing as music, but it may indicate that in spite of the word "jazz" having little specific meaning any more, there are still boundaries.

NORM LINEHAN
— North Bondi, NSW

Dear Sir,

It certainly is gratifying to see a serious jazz magazine on the local market. However, I read with trepidation your list of contributors — it would appear on the surface to be wholly biased in favour of modern stylists. Might I suggest that the market for serious discussion and comment on Classic and/or Traditional jazz is very poorly served, not to mention its lack of aural airing, and I'm sure that I need not remind anyone that the music of the 1920's and before is, like it or not, the heritage of all jazz played today.

HERB JENKINS
— Ballarat, Vic.

Dear Sir,

Having been a jazz lover for some 25 years, I was very pleased to purchase your January/February issue.

I was particularly impressed by the stated "Aims of the Magazine" — it is refreshing to know there are still people with integrity who are publishing magazines. Please enter my subscription for one year, commencing with your March/April issue, for which my cheque for \$8.00 is enclosed.

I wish you every success with your venture.

PETER YARRALL
— Willoughby, NSW.

DON BURROWS

"Professor of Jazz"

4 Bassplayers, 3 Singers, 3 Piano Players, 3 Saxplayers,
1 Drummer & Don Burrows.



Pic: Edmond Thommen

Don Burrows took up his appointment as the first full-time Chairman of the Jazz Studies Department at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music in 1980. Twelve months on, Australia's first "Professor of Jazz" speaks about his experiences to ERIC MYERS:

Don Burrows may have taken up his appointment in 1980, but his involvement in the cause of jazz education goes back much further. It was in the early 1970s that he read the text of an address by the then new Director of the Conservatorium of Music Mr. Rex Hobcroft, in which Hobcroft expressed the view that a true Conservatorium should be a place where many musical forms, other than just classical music, might be studied.

Burrows subsequently wrote to Rex Hobcroft, suggesting the establishment of a Jazz Studies program. This came about in 1973, when a course commenced, headed by the American saxophonist Howie Smith. Smith had the position for three years, after which it was taken over by another American Bill Motzig, the trombonist, composer and arranger (and former sound mixer for the group Blood Sweat and Tears) who had been living in Australia for some years. In 1978 his place was taken by the first Australian to head the course, the pianist and saxophonist Roger Frampton. Two years later in 1980 the position was made full-time, and offered to Don Burrows.

Burrows was originally prompted to take up the cause of jazz education because, as he saw it in the early 1970s, there were limited opportunities for young, jazz-oriented musicians to hear and play music.

"All through the 30s, 40s and 50s there had been plenty of big bands around", said Burrows, "even if they were commercially involved in, say, radio and TV shows, or even backing jingles. There was a whole era of involvement for jazz-type musicians."

As early as the 1960s Burrows could see that studio work was on the decline, while dance halls and night-clubs, which used to use big bands, were fast disappearing, and therefore the opportunities for young musicians were shrinking.

"I had grown up through an era in which, even if you went to the movies in town, you saw a big band performing. If you went to the 2GB Macquarie Theatre or the 2UW Radio Theatre to watch a show being put together, it always had a big band.

"So, there were many opportunities for a child with eyes and ears for music to, free of charge, see and hear big bands performing, and musicians doing their thing. Today these opportunities have disappeared. Under-age kids today can't get access to licensed premises, to the RSL clubs, the Leagues clubs. When I grew up, I could see and hear music everywhere".

Burrows believes that the great value of the Conservatorium jazz course is that it provides a structured opportunity for jazz enthusiasts to meet, play and study. "The Con is a place where, on a regular basis all year, jazz-minded young musicians, or older musicians, it doesn't matter, can meet, can play together, can write, can listen, can discuss, can read about jazz, with the advantage of being around professional people who have spent their lives in and around jazz music and jazz musicians."

Burrows feels that the commitment of a Monday through Friday situation is what the present era needs. In past years, there were many rehearsal bands, such as Billy Weston's famous one, where there was a sense of belonging to something, and real dedication to the learning, exploring and discovering involved in the art of jazz.

By the early 1970s, however, most of those bands had disappeared, although Don points to the excellent work done by Warren Daly and Ed Wilson from 1969 to create opportunities and provide a context, in the Daly-Wilson Big Band, in which players could develop their abilities.

Burrows sees the Conservatorium course now as providing a nexus situation in Sydney jazz, and the fact that it is part of a permanent educational institution means that funding is available to provide jazz tuition for many young people who would otherwise not be able to afford it.

"Sure, there are class-room situations, and now there are

DON BURROWS

"Professor of Jazz"

Diplomas, but these are only means to an end," he says. "I get a bit annoyed when I hear people criticise it and say 'who needs a piece of paper to say you can swing?' But they've missed the point. To make this an ongoing, permanent thing, jazz tuition is in safer hands as part of the education system, than left to a single individual or a single entity. I just feel that this will be forever, if we do it properly — there'll always be an opportunity for jazz-type young people to learn the history of jazz, if nothing else".

Most of today's working jazz groups are small, tight combos, says Burrows. The Conservatorium provides opportunities to experiment with other colours and unusual instrumentation — string sections, bassoons, oboes, alto and bass flutes and so on. "All these other textures are laying there waiting to be found, and maybe have something done with them", says Burrows. "The Con can provide that sort of chance, and I'm working hard all the time towards more unification and more interaction between the Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra, the Conservatorium string groups, the choirs, and the Jazz Department, so we can get together and use each other's expertise and facilities, to broaden all our horizons."

Burrows points out that the market-place cannot provide the facilities and opportunities for musicians to learn about these wider areas of music, yet frequently that same market-place demands that jazz musicians know about these things. The Australian film industry, for instance, is now booming, providing opportunities for talented young composers to create film scores. Yet this might require enough knowledge to write for a 50-piece orchestra, says Burrows, and courses at the Conservatorium, in the Jazz and other departments, do provide this knowledge.

"There is a whole world of music, loosely entitled 'jazz', that includes film music and God knows what else, that is not the domain of the classical musician. It is the lot of the jazz-type musician. And it doesn't just mean standing up and playing Opus de Funk to be a jazz musician. Anyone who thinks that is kidding himself. You have to do a certain percentage of jobs that are soul-destroying; you can't always call the shots. But you have to be able to learn from those situations, which can make you more determined to find your own direction".

Don Burrows is, of course, one of the best performers in Australian jazz and his involvement at the Conservatorium naturally means that he is playing less. This is one of the regrettable aspects of the job.

"All my musical life", he says, "has been pretty much a learn-on-the-job situation. Very few of the fellows of my generation have any formal training. We're guys who have done an enormous amount of playing, and that's been our class-room. In other words, we are very much non-academics."

The irony of now being in an academic situation and having to insist, in many instances, on an academic approach to jazz is not lost on Burrows. In fact, it produces a considerable conflict-situation for him, and has unquestionably caused him to do a great deal of thinking about his own basic values.

"In truth, I do believe that jazz music and the discovery of it is not a class-room thing at all", he says. "It's a street music — the streets and the smokey joints are the true class-rooms of jazz, and I would hate to ever have anyone think that I thought differently. They'd be very wide of the mark".

"I wouldn't swap the joints I used to play in, and frequent, and listen and learn in, for any class-room. But times change; the needs of today's jazz musician are a lot different. It's moving into a more intellectual area. That's okay, but I

don't think it should be at the expense of knowing the historical and the theoretical background of jazz. The Con can be a place of discovery, whether it's on headphones or in the library, or reading, or just being around guys of my generation".

I asked Don Burrows what particular values he would wish to import to his students. What sort of fundamental things was he aiming to teach them?

"The first and foremost thing before any other consideration is 'swing' — or time, feel, pulse," he replied. "I don't think there can be any further discussion unless there is an agreement that the ingredients that cannot be done without are time, pulse, rhythm. They're first and foremost. Some of the music has become so intellectual, with so much going on, that the guts of the matter has somehow been forgotten, and that disturbs me".

Burrows has found that many of his young students have to be reminded, almost daily, of these fundamental jazz values. With some students, there is an excessive pre-occupation with such things as speed, technique, range, and so on, at the expense of feeling. "I don't want to be misunderstood here", says Burrows. "I would hate it to be thought that I didn't like Art Tatum, because there's a guy, you could freely say, who had a terrific preoccupation with technique. But not at the expense of 'time', not at the expense of 'pulse'".

"I often find, particularly when students come to playing ballads, they're afraid to leave space. I think those lovely silences are an utterly essential part of the structure of a solo, or even the shaping of a melody, and there's a tendency to fill every corner of every bar with intricate, scale-type notations which very quickly cease to bear any relevance to the intent of the tune. Even the title of a ballad might convey some intended mood or meaning, or sentiment, which is often buried".

Burrows therefore believes that 'understatement' or feeling for space, is an entirely worthwhile musical value to impart to young players.

Another value which Don Burrows is concerned to impart is, ironically, not a musical one: that of 'reliability'. "This might seem a sudden departure from musical considerations," he says, "but I have no time for blokes who turn up when they feel like it rather than when they're needed. They've got to have a total commitment and an awareness of the other guy. I've had a lot of trouble in the last year getting that point across to this generation of players".

"You would be amazed at how many guys, for a 10 o'clock appointment, or class, turn up at 20 past 10, or don't show at all. That, to me, is out. That's really bugged me all year, it's really driven me up the wall".



Pic: Edmond Thommen

I'm telling you, it's a great magazine! Publisher Peter Brendlé with Don.

It is the need to combat this lack of discipline in young players which has been the most worrying aspect of the job for Don Burrows. A sensitive man, he feels bad about having to be the one to pull young musicians into line; it takes a lot of energy out of him.

"For me, this is the worst part of the job", he says, "and I'm going to have to learn to handle it better for my own well-being, or I'll end up in an early grave. It does get to me".

"Of course, it's offset, in many ways, by the guys who don't abuse the privileges, and do have a great attitude, and can be relied upon to give their best at all times. Sure, they make up for the ones who cause me this anxiety."

Burrows is perplexed that these problems should be there at all, and describes many of the excuses offered by young people as "pathetic". A musician might say that he had to play the night before, as an excuse for being late. "It's part of being a musician", he says, "you've got to be able to cope with late nights and early starts. In my career, I've often had to play till 2 or 3 in the morning six nights a week, and be on a 9 o'clock call the next morning, year-in year-out. So, don't tell me your hard luck story, mate. I've been through it. That's part of being a musician, coping with those demands".

One of the newer projects that Don Burrows is working on concerns bringing in older jazz players to the Conservatorium so they can pass on the wealth of their experience.

"I see the Con as a place where, with dignity and meaning," he says, "they can be looked up to and considered important, so they can impart what they've gathered to the next generation of players".

Burrows himself, has, of course, the only permanent position in the Jazz Studies Department. All the other teachers are employed on a casual basis. He would like to see, ultimately, about ten full-time teachers, with the appropriate instrumentation to form a faculty band, which could do workshops and concerts, where talented youngsters might be invited to play alongside the older masters.

"All around Australia", he says, "there are highly respected and qualified jazz musicians who could be contributing, and this could be happening in every capital city."

Burrows points out that all the current talk about a jazz "boom" pre-supposes that jazz must have been in decline. In his view, jazz never went away; it was always strongly there. Otherwise, people like himself, John Sangster, the Barnards and others would not be where they are today, and they have all enjoyed good livings.

"But I think it's fair to say that not one of us has been the total purist. And whether we're talking about jazz music or fly-fishing, or anything else, total purists bore me to death. You've got to have wider ears. Deep down I'm a jazz musician — it was jazz that brought me into music. But, if I happen to draw comfort from other musical forms, whether it be a piece from Brazil, or a romantic, centuries-

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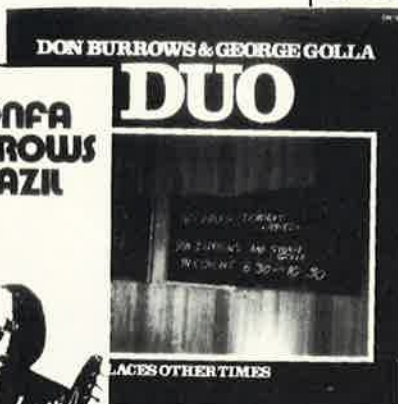
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DON BURROWS

"Professor of Jazz"

old melody from Spain, there's nothing wrong with that. Any jazz musician has been touched by other forms. Charlie Parker himself drew enormous inspiration from ballet music, which is a long way from his bop thing".

Talking to Don Burrows, one derives from him a feeling of restless optimism, that having passed a major turning-point in his career, he is into a new and positive era. And, of course, his career has been a distinguished one, dotted with milestones: the first Australian jazz musician to take his group to the Newport and Montreux jazz festivals; the first Australian jazz musician to be awarded the MBE; the first Australian jazz musician to sell a gold record; the first jazz musician to be offered a creative fellowship at the ANU University, Canberra; and now, the first to occupy the full-time position of Chairman of Jazz Studies at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music.

Unquestionably, his job provides a new and different challenge for a man who has been almost wholly a performer throughout his career in jazz: "With jazz education, there is still such an enormous amount that I've got to learn. I couldn't tell you the number of times in the past year when I've actually said to the students 'give me a go, because I've got more to learn than you guys have'. What I don't know about administration would fill volumes. I'm not trained for it.

"Ideally, I would like to have it so I'm more a musician than a letter-writing, telephone-answering executive. That is not really me, and I don't see, frankly, that I have a great deal to offer through those channels — there are people far more qualified and expert in handling that role."

"So, it almost needs two people — a co-leadership thing there, including someone who is interested in the jazz idiom, understands the people who make it up, but is not such a performer — someone skilled in the running of day-to-day business. I'm not a business type, I'm a musician. I would hate to see myself end up ultimately forgetting how to put the clarinet together".

JAZZ



Pic: Edmond Thommen

Charlie Mariano, Graham Jesse & Don

"Last summer my band, *Gathering Forces*, performed at the Summerpier Festival in New York City. To my initial despair, the sound system they supplied looked like four eccentrically designed hi-fi speakers on poles. This was supposed to handle a highly electrified fusion band with horns and vocals for an outdoor crowd of 2,500! "To my astonishment, it worked. I decided to try those funny little speakers in my keyboard setup. And I've been using them ever since.

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"We're now using two pairs of 802s for our band's PA system, with another pair on my keyboards and a few more as monitors. It used to take a whole truckload of cabinets, amplifiers and crossovers to get the same coverage. And the sound wasn't nearly as good!"

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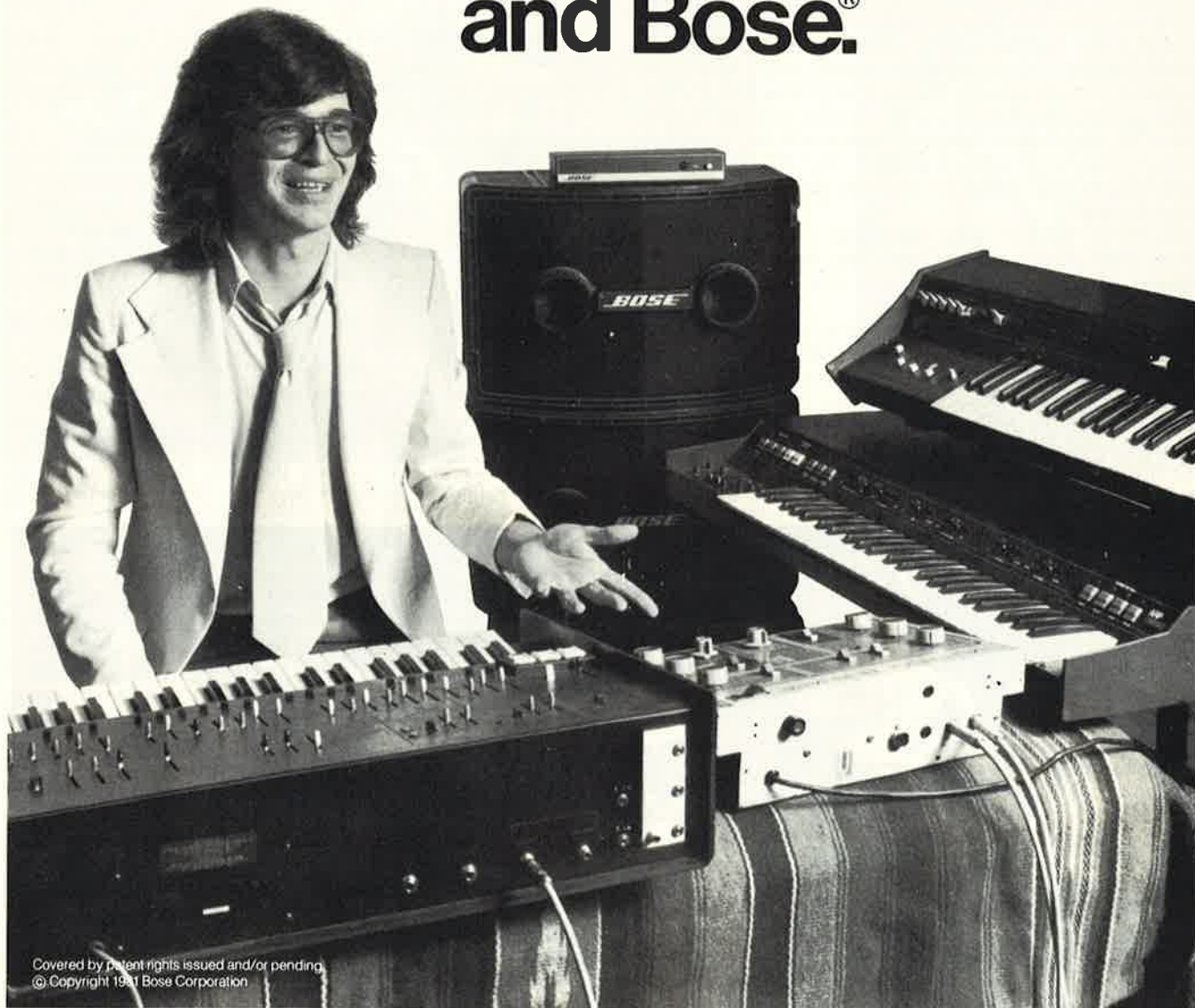
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FESTIVALS ROUND-UP

THE PETER STUYVESANT SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

Let me make one thing clear from the beginning.

There have been comments likening the Sydney International Music Festival to Montreux, Monterey and Newport festivals overseas. This festival is not yet in that league. There are, however, signs that the spadework needed to join the best is being done.

The overall organisation was by far the best of similar events in Sydney. And it was encouraging to see the participation of main performers in venues outside the main theatre — the Regent. Almost all musicians made themselves available both musically and socially, chatting to and playing for jazz lovers in spots around town most notably at the St. James Tavern.

This surely is what a festival is all about.

It is no secret that the formality of a concert hall is not the ideal place to hear such an intimate art form as jazz. Nevertheless, the large venue with the opportunity of volume ticket sales is essential to the financial well-being of a festival.

Milt Jackson and Lew Tabackin headed small groups of locals at St. James while others sat in around town — notably Gillespie drummer Tommy Campbell and drummer James Bradley from the Mangione band at the Basement one memorable night.

The New Reunion Jazz Band and Eberhard Weber's Colours both played at St. James, the latter to two rapt audiences of around the 500 mark. I'm sure there were other instances that I missed.

Yes, that true festival atmosphere is building mightily.

To the main events, Dizzy Gillespie was the drawcard on the Monday and Tuesday nights. To some fans' surprise it was an electric group accompanying one of the developers of bebop. But, it is hardly surprising that an innovator of Gillespie's power would no longer be playing music that, while alive today, is more than thirty years old.

Gillespie's act and presentation are very much a formula.

Indeed some of the gags, like the 'introduction of the group' are almost ritual.

It occurred to me that, at the age of 63, Gillespie is doing a 'Satchmo'. The act was more verbal than musical. But why not? Like Armstrong he has to preserve those chops and again like Armstrong what he did play was brilliant.

In between it was gags, a song 'Hard o'hearing blues', and a serious and at-home Gillespie on congas (He revealed at the airport on his arrival that he had spent the flight listening to tapes of African rhythms); an afro-cuban number with an extended drum solo from Tommy Campbell hidden behind eight drums and four vertical cymbals, not to mention four mikes.

Guitarist Ed Cherry got his chance in one number with a long solo. The sets closed on both nights with Gillespie's own 'Olinga' dedicated to a now dead leader of his religion, the Ba'hai faith.

Jackson's vibes had been left set-up all through causing some anticipation. He came on to join in the last number, which he has also recorded, adding a good deal more tone and depth to the group.

Jackson had earlier played a typically meticulous and thoughtful set accompanied by locals Ed Gaston (bass), Alan Turnbull (drums) and Paul Macnamara (piano). The business-like three piece suits he wore on both nights recalled the care given to appearance by the MJQ. Indeed there is still a lot of that group in Jackson. His trademark must surely be his letting a note hang, then building beneath to tremendous tension.

On opening night the first of many sound hassles was heard.

The sound was well down on Macnamara's piano and Gaston's bass. And only marginally rectified on the second night. Gillespie's mute, a powerful part of his playing, lost all effect because no-one thought to turn up the mike.

The other supports were the New Reunion Band composed mainly of members who first played together some



Pic: Edmond Thommen



Pic: Edmond Thommen



Pic: Jane March

Diz & Bags



Pic: Edmond Thommen

years ago at college. They showed remarkable cohesion for a group that plays together very infrequently. Stand-out player was Jeff Haskell who is head of the jazz department of the University of Arizona.

On Tuesday, it was three-quarters of the original Nolan/Buddle Quartet — Errol, Col and Warren Daly with Clive Harrison on bass. They included one of Buddle's notable arrangements from that time, the music from Samson and Delilah with Buddle on oboe and woodwind besides tenor.

Blues fans had a ball on the Wednesday night with Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee walking on-stage to a tumultuous welcome that barely steadied until the last encore. And talking of encores such was the reception that a further concert was arranged for the Saturday afternoon — some encore! Terry hoed straight into it, seated with legs spread and a bandolier of harps around his waist. McGhee seemed content, in the main, to take a back seat lending tremendous support and the rapport of 40 years together was obvious. They were enjoying themselves and so were the audience.

Behind them, half-noticed, was drummer Styve Honmick, a model of efficiency on the smallest kit of the festival — 1 bass, 1 tom, 1 snare, a high-hat and a cymbal. Incidentally he was using brushes throughout, but with stick handles allowing rim shots etc.

Supports were a solo Margaret RoadKnight, surely our foremost blues singer, who sang numbers from her new album with Judy Bailey 'Out of fashion — not out of style'. And Jay y las Cucarachas with strong South American rhythms led by guitarist Jay D'Oliviera whose composition, 'Flight of the Angels' stood out. Louise Elliott played strong, full-tones flute as well as tenor, and is a player to be looked out for. Others in the group were Walter Figueroa (percussion), Bruce Lanahan (drums) and Ross Grierson (bass).

Thursday night was a night for concentration for full reward. Eberhard Weber and Colours opened with the group tightly set up and well forward. They were greeted with the same rapt attention as earlier in the week at St. James. And with luck the same audience, who would have at least heard them in a good setting. The sound was overpoweringly loud eventually breaking down completely in the second number 'Bali'. We were treated to the sight of four grown musicians ironically silenced by electronics. But the music was tremendous, with Weber sticking to his album compositions.

Weber's solos on his highly individual five string 'thermometer' bass were brilliant and drummer John Marshall and pianist Rainer Bruninghaus were obviously essential

FESTIVALS ROUND-UP

ingredients in one of the most exhilarating groups playing today.

The second half was the Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band of Australian allstars, with Akiyoshi opening solo in front of a gauze hiding the band. The curtain should have risen for the big band opening. Well it just didn't, not at first anyway and what should have been a dramatic opening fizzled. However, by this time, the sound was right.

Akiyoshi is nothing if not generous with her local musicians, giving them extensive solos and paying them the compliment of remembering and announcing their names. It paid dividends — the band played with enthusiasm and skill the complicated works with, of necessity, limited rehearsal time:

Tabackin is by no means the minor partner — his free-flowing tenor is an integral part of all the compositions and, as he did a year ago, he walked fully ten feet beyond the mike to fill the Regent with a gloriously unfettered tenor sound.

Chuck Mangione's group filled the last two nights with no support, I understand at his own request. His performance was well-organised and slick with numbers taken from his now many albums, usually with Mangione opening on



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Diz explains!

electric piano. It was all very well packaged, pleasant and curiously undemanding music — all the things jazz isn't. To call him the Herb Alpert of jazz may sound glib but there were strong Mexican overtones to his music and his unison playing with tenor man Chris Vadala only heightened the comparison with Alpert. Nevertheless, his concerts were very popular and, bear in mind, this was a music festival further borne out by the classical group the Gagliano String Quartet which played every night before the curtain rose.

I suspect next year could see a further broadening of the music, but rest assured the jazz content can only go from strength to strength.

Finally a word of commiseration for a person who took on an onerous task under near impossible conditions. Joe Martin acted as compere. He is of course better known as a comedian/compere, but is a knowledgeable jazz buff. He was asked to announce the festival each night and to fill in between groups, which on one occasion took nine minutes. Too much for even the most professional to handle unprepared with much aplomb.

But enough of the carping — the whole thing was a ringing success. Musically, this was a festival that will take its place with big ones — and sooner than many think.



Chuck Mangione



Lew Tabackin



Toshiko Akiyoshi



Eberhard Weber



Charlie Mariano

Pics: Edmond Thommen



Diz & Chuck

FESTIVALS ROUND-UP



Pics: Edmond Thommen

Woody Shaw

SUMMER JAZZ WEEK A SMASH HIT by Eric Myers

For Greg Quigley, the Summer Jazz Weeks in Melbourne and Sydney must be something like sex: a long built-up, but all over in a flash.

Even so, what a delirious occasion these two weeks must have been for the man who has now institutionalised the annual visit to Australia of a top-flight team of American jazz educators.

All reports indicate that enrolment for the Summer Jazz Clinics exceeded expectation — 354 in Sydney and 162 in Melbourne. They are attracting, not only beginners, but many professional jazz players who now put aside that heady week in January for an annual jazz refresher course.

Most participants agree that the week is extraordinarily stimulating, with enormous energy in the air.

As successful as the clinics might have been for the specialist students of jazz, the week in Sydney would still have had an esoteric feeling, had it not been for the outstanding series of concerts at the St. James Tavern, which effectively took jazz to the wider public.

There is no question that, during the week of *January 19-24*, this venue was the in-place for jazz in Sydney.

Rather than present all the American educators — and, no doubt, many of them must have been dying to have a play — Quigley concentrated on three big-name bands, each of whom appeared on two nights: the *Woody Shaw Quintet*, the *Randy Brecker Quintet*, and the *John Scofield Trio*.

It would not be an overstatement to say that Woody Shaw played the most memorable jazz trumpet that Sydney has heard in years. Hearing him play late with his own band, and jamming with other groups, I was struck by the feeling that we were hearing probably the finest trumpeter in contemporary jazz — comparable to hearing *Louis Armstrong* or *Dizzy Gillespie* when they were at the height of their powers.

Woody Shaw was accompanied by *Steve Turre* (trombone), *Mulgrew Miller* (piano), *Stafford James* (bass) and *Tony Reedus* (drums).

Their precision, intensity and commitment to the music were remarkable. They listened seriously to each other's statements, and showed us that real jazz is an inspired musical dialogue, to be approached with the high seriousness and dignity of classical music. This was jazz as high art.

I will never forget the Friday evening, when *Woody Shaw* sat in with *Randy Brecker's quintet* for the last two numbers, around 2 a.m. They closed the set with *Cole Porter's What Is This Thing Called Love?* *Brecker* (trumpet) and *Pat La Barbera* (tenor saxophone) took brilliant solos, and there was some anticipation as to how *Woody Shaw* would play. When he stepped to the microphone, playing a borrowed flugelhorn, he played, instead of a straight solo, fours with the drummer *Ed Soph*, and then twos with the drums.

Shaw seemed to be gathering himself. He then set out on an extraordinary, blistering solo which stunned everyone. For technical brilliance, I have never heard the flugelhorn played like it. Yet, it also had breathtaking lyricism and warmth. Only a truly great jazz artist plays like that.

The music produced by the *Randy Brecker Quintet* was an interesting contrast. This band was a pick-up



Woody Shaw Steve Turre



Pat La Barbera

group, consisting of *Brecker* (trumpet), *Pat La Barbera* (tenor saxophone), *Hal Galper* (piano), *Rufus Reid* (bass) and *Ed Soph* (drums), so one could not expect them to have the developed, specific concept of the *Woody Shaw group*, which is a professional, working quintet.

Brecker's music was, therefore, a brilliant and powerful blow on jazz standards. It differed from *Woody Shaw's music* in a number of ways: it was busier, heavier and louder. This is not to say that it wasn't enjoyable, nor a stunning display of American jazz. *Randy Brecker* showed unequivocally that he is a great jazz trumpeter, which makes nonsense of the view that he is good only for jazz/rock fusion.

Still, the difference between the two quintets again suggested the essential dichotomy between black jazz and white jazz. It is now quite unfashionable, of course, to suggest that there is any difference between the two. The point is, however, that *Woody Shaw* and his quintet played music that was distinctive for its varied exploration of sound, its emotional depth, and the gentle and subtle expression involved.

On the other hand, the levels on which we admired the music of *Randy Brecker* and his quintet were more those of intellectual force and technical brilliance.

During all of this, the performances of various Australian groups tended to be overlooked. On the opening night, the *Barry Duggan Quintet* began proceedings without making great impact. In the crowded St. James Tavern, their music was too soft to be heard clearly.

I gather this had something to do with the sound system, with the sound technician still in the process of finding the right levels. Also, *Barry Duggan's* desire to play acoustically is commendable, but this is counter-productive if the audience cannot hear the music, or if the sound has no real edge to it.

FESTIVALS ROUND-UP



Randy Brecker

With his *Summer Jazz Week in Sydney*, Greg Quigley showed clearly that, as well as increasing interest in jazz education, there is still a large market for what we might call cellar jazz, or small club jazz, starring outstanding overseas artists.

The Americans play with such authority, and with such an air of cultural superiority, that they invariably come up with the goods as performers. With these players, there is rarely such a thing as a bad night. Also, unlike many Australian jazz musicians, they take themselves and their music seriously.



Pics: Edmond Thammen

THE QANTAS INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL: AN OVERVIEW by Eric Myers

The Festival of Sydney seems to have a chronic problem finding a permanent venue for its main jazz festival. This year it was at the Capitol Theatre — a poor choice, in my view. In 1980, it was at the York Theatre, Seymour Centre, which is a splendid auditorium for jazz. In 1979, it was held at the Sydney Town Hall, which has appalling acoustics for jazz.

I would like to see the Festival of Sydney determine on a regular venue, if possible, so that the jazz festival has a semblance of continuity year-by-year, as the Sydney International Music

Festival has established with the Regent Theatre.

The star of the Qantas Festival was the 61-year-old American singer Anita O'Day and her trio, Norman Simmons (piano), Shelley Burger (bass) and John Poole (drums).

In the days before the festival opening, Anita O'Day cut a swath through various Sydney journalists and broadcasters. By the time of her first appearance at the Capitol, Miss O'Day had developed a reputation as a difficult and temperamental artist, if not as a thoroughly unpleasant old lady.

Her stage performances prompted diverse reactions. Many musicians were horrified at her tuning, although I tend to regard those comments sceptically.

Intonation is often the last refuge of the musical scoundrel. Certainly, a great number of people thought her a magnificent stylist.

I found Anita O'Day's singing on the opening night erratic and uncertain. For an artist who is billed as a "definitive" jazz vocalist, her improvisations were surprisingly tentative. I rarely had the feeling that she brought anything off well.

Her backing trio had great trouble hearing adequately on stage, which may explain their moments of uncertainty, particularly when Miss O'Day went into double tempos. This was only the first of a number of sound problems which were a constant irritant throughout the following nights.

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FESTIVALS ROUND-UP

To give one example, the relevant microphone was invariably off when compères emerged at the end of performances to make the appropriate announcements.

The David Martin Quintet with Norma Martin struck the first note of the festival, and very capably indeed. Other than David Martin (piano) and Norma Martin (vocals), this group included Dale Barlow (flute & tenor saxophone), James Morrison (trumpet, trombone & euphonium), Darcy Wright (bass) and Alan Turnbull (drums).

This performance was marred slightly by the volume level of the piano, making it strident and jarring in some areas of the theatre. However, this was not a debilitating factor.

The quintet's set was remarkable, particularly for the playing of the young James Morrison, whose improvisations were marked by that exceptional, indefinable element of jazz artistry which even middle-of-the-road audiences recognise.

As the performance went on, the audience was increasingly wanting to hear his statements in particular, even if he was surrounded by excellent players. It would probably not be an overstatement to suggest that, if this young musician fulfils his early promise, he could become, in future years, a rarity in the jazz world — a popular drawcard.

Lester Bowie and his group From The Root To The Source created great interest at the Qantas Festival. Other than himself on trumpet, Bowie's group included Hamiet Bluiett (baritone saxophone), Amina Myers (piano), Reginald Workman (bass) and Phillip Wilson (drums). There were also two gospel singers, David Peaston and Martha Bass, who were accompanied by Johnny Barker on keyboards.

The quintet played music that was generally unstructured and impressionistic. Even their versions of tunes like Bobby Timmons' 'Moanin'' and The Great Pretender — milestones in the history of black music — were highly surrealist, evoking the spirit of the originals, but going on to redefine them.

Their instrumental music could not be considered in terms of conventional jazz idioms. On a sensual, emotional level, it was rewarding, and Lester Bowie helped us along with the occasional sermon. "Music is feeling", he stated, with the air of a man announcing a new discovery.

The popular appeal of Lester Bowie's music would have been much less had it not been for the gospel singers David Peaston and Martha Bass, who appeared



Lester Bowie

Pic: Jane March

to have brought their songs straight out of the Church. Both sang with towering magnificence and considerable inspiration. It was a reminder that, in black communities in the United States, the Church has long been the centre for artistic and intellectual activity.

Lester Bowie's performances were important, not so much for the music itself, but in their suggestion of the cultural processes which produce black music in the United States. He and his colleagues plainly feel that "great black music" as they pompously describe it — which goes back thousands of years, has a distinguished heritage and a unique spiritual dimension. They present it with great pride and evidently believe strongly that it has much to say to people all over the world.

On the occasion of Lester Bowie's first concert, the Serge Ermoll's jazz suite in seven movements, Dedication To Horst Liepolt.

This performance was marred to some extent by sound balance problems. As in earlier performances of this group, the string quartet was inadequately amplified, and when the whole orchestra played ensemble passages the sound was curiously monolithic, with little of the delineation between sections which is achieved on the LP of this music.

Still, the energy and vigour of these players was infectious, and Serge Ermoll himself was a iconoclastic as ever at the piano, blazing a trail through the music and, to some extent, outside the music.

The third overseas attraction at the Qantas Festival was the redoubtable German solo pianist Joachim Kuhn, whose second and final performance I heard. Although some people in the audience reacted hysterically to his playing, I met no-one who actually enjoyed his music.

Kuhn played with an extraordinary intensity, building the sound always to thunderous levels. This in itself would have been quite acceptable, had he been able to balance that heaviness with some delicacy and tenderness. But he appeared to be content to locate

his playing at that aggressive level.

It may be said that Joachim Kuhn is not, after all, a jazz pianist. He is an exponent of "contemporary European piano music", reputed to be a fusion of classical, jazz and rock music. Yet, he has been voted No.1 European Jazz Pianist seven times by the International Jazz Federation since 1968. This further reinforces the fact that so many diverse musical approaches can now be incorporated under the heading of "jazz", that the term is becoming increasingly meaningless.

The Joachim Kuhn evening was opened by the Keith Stirling Quintet, with the leader on trumpet, Steve Brien (guitar), Jay Stewart (piano), Craig Scott (bass) and Matt Dilosa (drums).

This quintet played three relaxed Horace Silver compositions and, with the sound excellent, it was a beautifully paced performance of some 50 minutes. Stirling was very much at his best, even if there was a feeling that he was playing well within himself.

Jay Stewart (piano) appeared to be perfectly at home in the Horace Silver context, playing some brilliant, funky solos. In my view, the Keith Stirling Quintet confirmed its status as the most capable and stimulating of Sydney's modern jazz groups.

Overall, the Qantas International Jazz Festival did not have the sense of occasion which it achieved at the Seymour Centre in 1980. The Capitol Theatre is dreary and depressing, particularly when there are empty seats — and there were many on the nights I attended.

One great oversight was the lack of a printed program, which meant that numerous Australian musicians and groups performed with most members of the audience only vaguely aware of who they were.

The Festival of Sydney needs to give a great deal more thought to many aspects of this jazz festival — programming, choice of venue, and, critically, sound — if it is to continue successfully next year. Otherwise, it may find that the more commercially-oriented and professionally-run Sydney International Music Festival at the Regent Theatre will corner the market for big-concert jazz in January.



Anita O'Day

Pic: Jane March



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AUSTRALIAN JAZZ CONVENTION 35TH 1980 FORBES

Forbes, NSW, pop. 7800, had its accommodation facilities strained to the limit from 26th to 31st December 1980 when about 1000 musicians and enthusiasts registered for the convention.

With the town's ten hotels and four motels were fully booked, many stayed in caravan and camping parks, the student accommodation at Red Bend College a few miles out of town was used, and some stayed at Parkes about 20 miles away. This did not deter the Forbes people from turning on perhaps the warmest welcome the Convention has yet seen.

Most of the shops (and the solicitor's and insurance agent's) had welcome messages painted on their windows and many featured a jazz theme in their window display. The Services Club made its auditorium available for public concerts and Convention visitors were able to use the Club's other facilities, as formal dress regulations were abandoned for the week. Streets were gazetted closed for the Street Parade and the New Year's Eve party.

The program listed 72 bands, from all states except Tasmania, some being professional working bands, some semi-pro, but many put together specially for the Convention. As usual some did not appear, some were incomplete, and others turned up without having registered, but judicious juggling of the program ensured that anyone who wanted to go on, did, and there were no blank spots at the public concerts. These were held in the Services Club and the Town Hall, each band being given a 30 minute bracket in both halls.

The welcome night was at the golf club who also offered their hospitality during the week but Forbes being as compact as it is, and the Club on the other side of the railway line and away from the centre of activities, I think not as many people used it as might have done, not realising it was at most ten minutes' walk away.

The jazz breakfast was at the Bowling Club and about 200 people were there, other visitors being absent for a number of reasons of which perhaps the 8 a.m. start was the most cogent.

There was a church service in Victoria Park on Sunday morning, arranged at short notice by Doug Peters, the Forbes C. of E. minister, and Mick Potter of Melbourne who as well as being a dedicated jazz enthusiast is an ordained minister of religion, which gave people with religious obligations to fulfil the opportunity to do so the accompaniment of appropriate music played by jazz musicians.



Clare Hansson (Brisbane) a joyous lady at the piano



Welcome sign in Forbes solicitor's window



Cal Duffy (Melbourne)

I think that a lot of people with no religious propensities enjoyed it just as much as they, as I did myself.

Following this there was a picnic at Jemalong weir where the food and drinks were organised by the Committee but the music was not, this being left to the musicians themselves, so that at one stage I stood at what seemed to be the quadrophonic centre of four bands.

Sunday evening was free and developed into blowing sessions in the town's hotels. In fact this was common during the week, there being so many musicians not on stage that it was rare to walk into a hotel without finding some music there.

The street parade started from the Bowling Club after the jazz breakfast, and was a stirring sight as it moved along Lachlan street, around the corner into Court street, and into Victoria Park. The TV crew from Orange were delayed by rain and arrived after the parade had finished, so they staged a re-run and the parade was on the Orange TV that night.

After the parade the musicians assembled in and around the rotunda and with perhaps 30 or 40 trombones played "Lassus Trombone" and "Ory's Creole Trombone".

The original tunes competition, one entry per composer,

attracted 19 entries and produced equal winners "Christina Stomp" by Ken Evans and "Eclipse" by Paul Furniss. The judges said that all of the tunes were very good and it was not easy to reach a decision.

So many good bands played at the Convention that it would be difficult to list them all, and in any case I did not hear them all, and those I did were chosen on personal liking as well as musical merit.

The Final Concert however was selected, initially on musical merit and included Toowoomba Jazz Society, Cascades Ragtime Ensemble with Lyn Thomas on piano, Graeme Bell All Stars, John Pickering's Convention Band, Banjos Unlimited, and the San Francisco Jazz Band.

Also at the Concert we were able to assemble eight musicians who had been at the 1st Convention in Melbourne in 1946, these being Graeme Bell, Roger Bell, Geoff Bland, Jack Connelly, Dave Dallwitz, Ken Evans, Nick Polites and Bob Wright, who formed two groups with some instrument swapping, and I am not sure how good the music was but it was a nostalgic and heart-warming experience to see these founders of the Jazz Convention on stage together.

The most exciting music I heard during the Convention was played by a Convention band in the truest sense, Canary Conference, with Paul Furniss and John McCarthy on various reeds, Clare Hansson piano, Harry Harman bass and Geoff Proud drums, and all I have to say is that while most bands, at Conventions anyway, take the first half-hour to warm up and would happily go on for longer, this one fired right from the start and had they had another half-hour might have collapsed from their own excitement.

Apart from musicians, people who need mention are John Clarke, secretary, and Lester D'Ombain, publicity officer, who worked through the week with apparently unlimited sources of energy and good humour, and Bill Haesler who having done the programming in the first place spent the week ensuring that blank spots in the program were filled and bands that turned up at the last minute were given an opportunity to play.

These things are perhaps to be expected but something that may have passed un-remarked was the amount of time and concern given by president Tony Howarth to the tuning of the pianos during the week, which cannot have been easy in the temperatures that prevailed. Indeed Tony's task as president during the year cannot have been easy, with his time divided between Forbes and Sydney, and I hope he and his committee, hard-worked as they must have been, derived as much pleasure from having put on such a successful Convention, as we did being on the receiving end of it.

Norman Linehan



John McCarthy and Paul Furniss
"Canary Conference" (Sydney)

Pics: Norm Linehan

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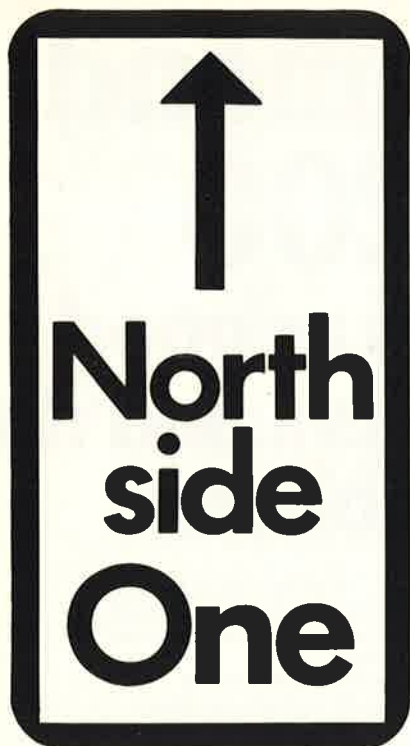
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North side One

By MIKE WILLIAMS

The Young Northside Big Band is in the process of being re-formed. The dozen or so who have graduated from its ranks into professionalism will form the nucleus of a showpiece outfit.

The Young Northside Big Band proper will carry on with the remainder plus recently recruited musicians, whose main attribute at the moment is their enthusiasm.

In addition, director John Speight has another band, the Warringah Stage Band for beginners.

Says Speight: "We now know there are at least 40 bands in high schools in NSW and at the moment I am getting together with Jim Holbert, who teaches music at Newington, and a couple of other high school teachers, and we are going to form a stage band association."

An impressive catalogue of achievement and it is mainly due to the enthusiasm and dedication of one man — Speight, school teacher and part-time pianist.

"I'm a teacher at Harbord primary school where I've been for the past 15 years. For the past 10 or 12 we have produced a musical show each year, My Fair Lady, that sort of thing. In other words modern as opposed to Gilbert and Sullivan," he said.

"One day Cary Bennett, who was 16, at Manly Boys High School, and who remembered my part in the shows, came to me and said he wanted to start big band music at his school.

"His music master at the time was Murray Holmes, now of Riverview College, who also staged yearly productions. He told Cary he didn't know anything about big band music but would be happy to provide some funds and a place to rehearse.

"Cary really had no jazz influence on him at the time. The only real influence was having heard the Daly-Wilson Big Band. He was a particularly unusual kind of 16 year old. He was much older than his years and even now, at 22, he gives you the impression he is about 35.

"Cary decided there weren't enough players at Manly Boys High so he put up notices at all the local high schools. At the end of the year, 1975, he'd got rather a mixed bunch of everything from flutes to an accordion whose one aim was to play like the Daly-Wilson fellows.

"He left school and asked the Harbord Diggers Club if he could use a room for rehearsal. At that time Cary came to me and asked me would I go down and listen to them.

"I was a little bit stunned because there were about 25 to 30 players, girls and boys, all different shapes and sizes, ranging from about 15 to 17, with no idea how to perform what they were playing in a jazz sense. They had charts of In The Mood and Mr. Anthony's Boogie, charts that came from the '40s era and were written for experts.

"But I was so impressed with the enthusiasm that I went home and talked it over with my wife — and she said I should get in and try to help get things going.

"I went to see a local musician named Les Sands, his kids were at Harbord. He was musical director for Rolf Harris and Harry Secombe. He came down and talked to the band about intonation — which I didn't know a lot about, to be honest, because I was only a part-time musician with no experience of big bands.

"I was sort of blazing a trail without any knowledge — very dangerous, although I knew it was dangerous. That's why I went to people for help.

"Well Les gave us a few charts, popular things he had written for Brenda Kristen and people like that."

Every Saturday afternoon the band would rehearse, wet or fine. And the kids kept on coming. . .

"After a few weeks I said to Cary that the charts were too difficult and that the drummer was no good, he was a rock and roll drummer. Next week Cary had bought a set of drums and was sitting behind them."

Speight entered into the project wholeheartedly. He wrote to 22 northside musicians — and got replies from Tommy Tycho and Ken Bennett, pianist brother of drummer Laurie. He invited them to rehearsals.

"There was an American baritone player with them named Jim Holbert, who was a teacher at Newington. Jim and I got to talk and I found that there was a wealth of music available from America, on graded levels, for stage bands. So I started to write away and he helped by giving me charts," Speight said.

By this time the band had settled down, and by changing instruments began to get the line-up they wanted. At the end of 1976 they decided to give a show along with Holbert's stage band from GPS schools, who took the first half.

Said Speight: "They went on and performed some very testing stuff. But the point was our half was a real presentation. We had a compere and hired tuxedos. We did an Andrews Sisters routine with three girls and finally wound it up with In The Mood and One O'Clock Jump.

"And Cary did Drummer Man with a beautiful Gene Krupa solo — considering he had been playing drums for only a year, you would be amazed how he had caught the spirit of the whole thing.

"That night really put the band on the map, because there were 500 people who came to see us and the local papers wrote us up."

Then Tommy Tycho invited them to take part in his Golden Era Of Big Bands at the Opera House.

"They blacked out the place at the end of the show," Speight said. "The drums started and our people marched in playing, and his band, with Burrows and all those people, were sitting behind them. And at a certain point they joined in. It was quiet spectacular — a Tycho masterpiece."

That was in 1977 and at the end of the year the Young Northsiders put on their Big Band Special '77.

"By this time we had arrangements by John Holman, who helped terrifically, and Tycho had given us a charity of I've Got You Under My Skin. We attracted a lot of attention and there was a big press coverage."

"Round this time the personnel started to sort itself out. A few had started to drop out for study reasons and the chairs were filled with other people.

One was Dale Barlow, who was 16. I had gone to see his father who runs a music supply business and I

took over a tape of the band. Dale, who was a very good flute player and at Trinity Grammar School heard it — and joined the sax section. Even then he had a beautiful facility on his instrument — a flowing quality which was exactly what I was looking for.”

The band cut their first record, *Quiet Breaker*, for the 44 label. Phil Haldeman of Radio 2KY took a tape and gave it to Count Basie who was then in Sydney for a triumphant appearance at the Opera House.

“Basie liked it and rang me at school saying he’d like to meet the band and were they coming to see the show. I took the opportunity to present him with a record and he took it back to the States with him. I believe he’s a good friend of Jimmy Lyons who runs Monterey.

“The next thing was that we got a letter of invitation to the jazz festival there, through Horst Liepolt, who produced the record.

“Before I accepted there were many things to think off. For a start it was a professional festival and we were an amateur band,” said Speight.

“I finally discussed it with Julian Lee and Tommy Tycho and they said: ‘You must go. It is an opportunity that mustn’t be missed. It is something important for Australian music if you can go. And we will help.’”

So Speight sent off an acceptance and set about raising the \$25,000 estimated costs. Local, State and federal government grants provided about \$11,000, the rest came from car washes, raffles, dances.

Says Speight: “Since 1976 we had been rehearsing every Saturday afternoon from about 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. I invited musicians along to help. I had people like Warren Daly who came away for a weekend to a national fitness camp with us, which was marvellous.

“Les Sands came along with charts. Whenever I needed help I only had to pick up the phone and ask Tommy Tycho. Bob Chalker; who was with Billy Burton’s band, used to take the saxes. When we set out for Monterey I enlisted the aid of George Brodbeck, Julian Lee, Roger Frampton and John Hoffman — so that we should have some Australian stuff to play.”

By this time Cary Bennett had given up the drum chair to Andrew Gander and was playing congas and trombonist James Morrison had come into the band, as had trumpet player Steve Williams and saxist Paul Andrews. With all the money raised, the band flew out to Monterey in September 1979.

“On the Friday before Monterey we performed at an American high school where there was a Japanese in charge of music. I confessed to him that I was really concerned because the band wasn’t of sufficient standard to match the Californian High School All-Stars who were going on before and after us.

He heard our band play and said: ‘You’ve got absolutely nothing to worry about. I don’t know whether you knew it, but I rehearsed the California band for two weeks because the director was sick. I think your band will go very well because it is very musical. You’ll find the music of the other band is more powerhouse.’

“That really boosted us a bit.

On the day, our band arrived and the California band was playing onstage — I could see the hearts of our fellows go down. I knew there was only one way to succeed — if we started well.

“So I went to Andrew Gander and said: ‘It’s up to you. Are you nervous?’ And he said he had no nerves, which I believed.

I said: ‘Fire it up from the word go, because if you don’t nothing will happen.’

“We were rushed onstage and the curtain went up. There were 7000 people in front of us — and the band really fired.

“The first number got mild applause. The second number was

Queen Bee and we got good applause for that. And the third number was James Morrison’s feature, *Here’s That Rainy Day*, and he walked onstage without a dot of music in front of him and the audience really loved it. He had the gut-bucket approach.

“The upshot of the concert was that wild applause went on for several minutes.”

The band returned home in triumph to make their record of *From Manly to Monterey* and to work as support act with the Mercer Ellington Band at the Opera House and there were many who thought them superior to the American band.

Last year 13 musicians who had passed through that band had joined the ranks of the professionals. Dale Barlow, James Morrison and Paul Andrews had established themselves as up and coming stars. The band had borne fruit.

“The main ingredients for success is your own enthusiasm, your organising ability, and the fact that you are not frightened to ask anybody for help. Speight says.

“Pros will say I did it all — and without me it probably wouldn’t have existed — but their help was invaluable.

“I tried to sell music to the public by dressing it up and presenting it properly.”



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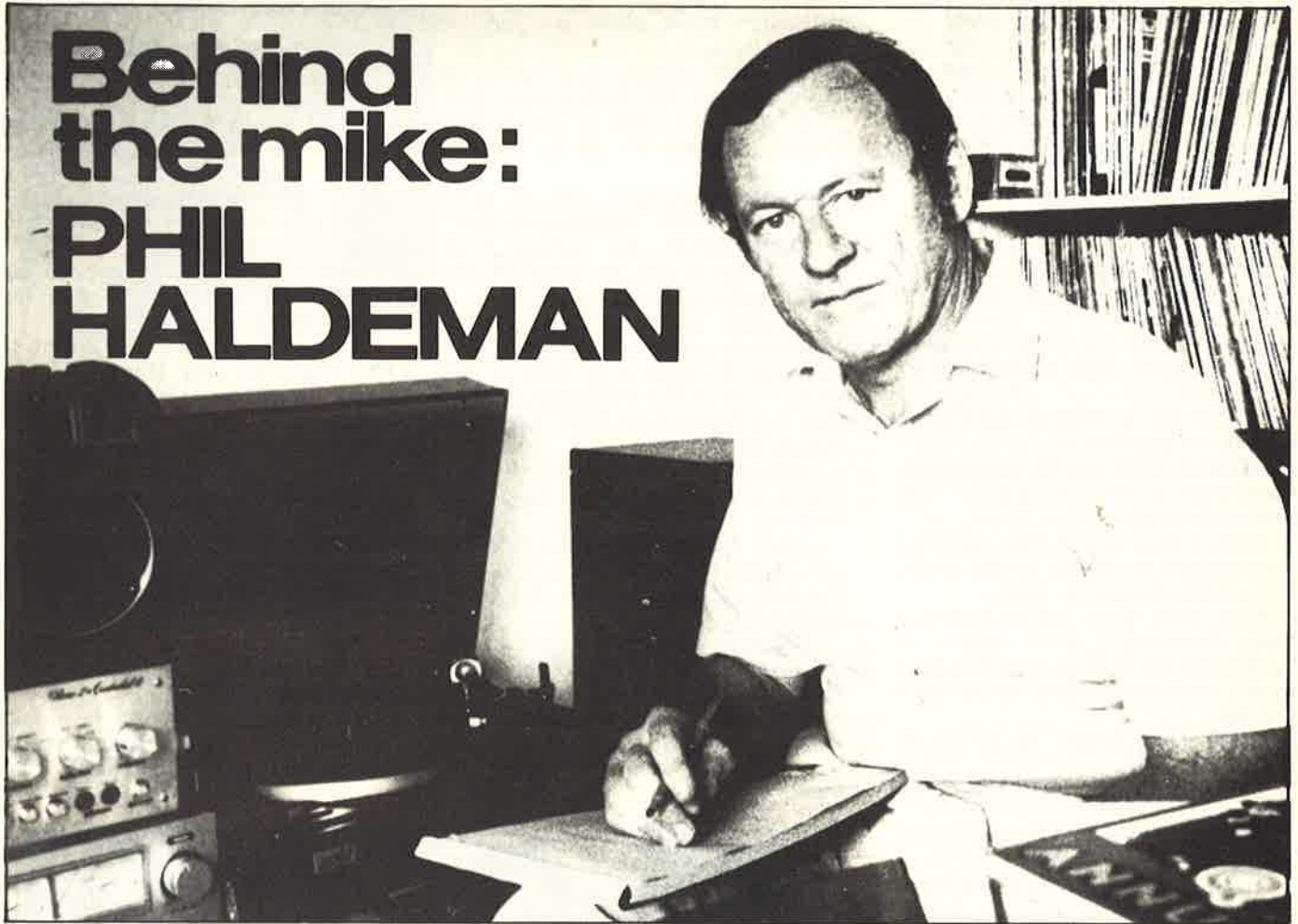
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Behind the mike: PHIL HALDEMAN



Pic: Jane March

Commercial radio in Australia is, in general, part of a giant music marketing conspiracy.

They are in business to make money and in a free enterprise economy no-one begrudges them this.

Where there is room for objection, however, is the manner in which they go about it.

They rely heavily on the gurus of the second half of the 20th century — the marketing men.

And like other primitive peoples, they accept unquestioningly the words of the media witchdoctors.

Go forth and select your target area — be it the 12–16 year olds, the 18–24 year olds, the acquisitive 20–35 year old market and on and on.

Having chosen your market segment, preferably one not already successfully occupied by another station, capture it by playing the kind of music you think they like.

Is it to be teeny-bopper pap for the littlies, soft rock for the young trendies, middle of the road for the wrinklies (those over 35)?

Having decided what type of ephemeral nonsense will best satisfy your victims, you then solemnly announce your choice to the world as your 'music policy'.

Next you make up a restricted play list and plug it to death so that the poor people out there in consumerland actually believe they must be listening to something good — after all, they are hearing it three to five times a day.

If your ratings stay put or improve then stick with it — if not, start all over again.

That, my friends is the philosophy of commercial radio.

It is a philosophy that is unadventurous, even cowardly, leaving no room for innovation, experimentation — and, most importantly, for diversity in musical presentation.

So no extended heavy rock, no top quality album music, no classics and — this is where we come in — NO JAZZ!

But wait. In Sydney one commercial station and one guy have made a breakthrough.

The station is 2KY and the guy is Phil Haldeman.

The station's transmission range is limited to about 150 miles and Phil's session is six hours on a Sunday, so the audience is limited to Sydney and environs, for a few hours a week.

But at least it's there — an oasis of jazz and other good modern music in a desert of recycled limited — life-

time crap.

We in Sydney love it and if any of you out-of-towners are in Sydney on a Sunday take it in — and have a whinge to your local stations when you go home.

To see what made Phil and his program tick, I spent a day in the studio with him several weeks ago.

It was a doubly auspicious occasion — being Australia Day eve he played Australian records only and Dizzy Gillespie, in town for the highly successful Sydney International Music Festival, dropped in for a studio interview.

It was a fascinating experience, slipping in quick questions while Haldeman selected and played records, had terse, monosyllabic conferences about the program, took phone calls and kept track of Dizzy's progress — the plane was half-an-hour late.

First question: "How would you describe your show?"

First answer: "I'd say it was a totally varied musical show".

First real answer: "It's really a sneaky way of getting jazz into commercial radio. We use the other areas to let us slip in the jazz".

At last, the 42 year old announcer who has been a jazz buff all his life has achieved an ambition nurtured

for the 25 years he has been in radio.

It all came true three years ago when 2KY, Sydney's Labor-controlled station, gave him the program he wanted and more or less a free hand in running it the way he wanted.

Discussing the program, called Phil Haldeman's Weekend World, Haldeman puts its philosophy in a nutshell.

"I'm trying to do what the other bastards should be doing," he says.

"I'm not preaching to the converted, but trying to get people to listen to the music.

"I don't play any really avant-garde stuff. We don't want to frighten the listeners off.

"I just try to play pleasant music and slip the jazz discs in".

Haldeman plays only his own records, taken from a collection he has built up over the years.

Until now, I've had Phil Haldeman more or less to myself in the studio, but now the distractions start.

First there is a call to Alderman Doug Sutherland, Lord Mayor of Sydney, to see if he is organised for a weekly three-minute spot due to begin that day.

That's O.K. Doug's to go on air just after 12.30.

On goes another disc. Time for another question.

No way. Producer Chris Fletcher enters.

Fletcher is not only Haldeman's producer: he is a life-long friend.

"Are we playing any Julian Lee today?" he asks.

"Yeah, we'll probably play Cornucopia".

"Well, he's on at the Basement tonight. Maybe you could mention that".

"O.K." And later on he does just that.

Haldeman always tries to play as much local content as possible. Today, Australia Day eve, the program is as xenophobic as the most ardent flag waver could wish.

Try this list for size (and it's not complete, by any means).

Don Burrows and George Golla, Errol Buddle, John Sangster, Clair Bail, Mike Hallam's Hot Six, The Young Northside Big Band, Kerrie Biddell and Compared To What, (from the past) Les Welch, Edwin Duff, Paula Langlands, Noel Crowe's Jazzmen, Norman Erskine, The Contemporary Jazz Ensemble, Bob Sedergreen, The Harbor City Jazz Band, The Ted Vining Trio, and – for light relief – Fred Dagg.

How's that for a line-up of Aussie talent on a medium which largely ignores the local product for the safety first method of copying the U.S. Cash-box and Billboard specials – already guaranteed success in a larger, tougher market.

During this six-hour display of Australian talent, there are constant interruptions.

The Lord Mayor, in Canberra on business, does his three-minute spot. Then there's a cross to the Sydney Cricket Ground for Doug Melton's cricket up-date.

Constant telephone calls, to which he answers "Phil Haldeperson here".

Robin Moore, the Sunday news-reader who is also an excellent jazz singer, wanders in and out.

So does producer Chris Fletcher, who checks orders for a Chinese take-away lunch which later earns a free plug: "This is Phil Haldeman speaking over a Chinese meal from the Dixon Restaurant".

Having eaten my share; I don't feel in any position to ask how it was financed.

There is a call from Peter Brendle, one of the two organisers of the Music Festival, to announce that the Diz is running late.

Bad news for Phil, but good for me as I can flesh out the Haldeperson background a bit more.

Born at Sydney's Neutral Bay in 1938, Phil had one of those Hollywood fairytale entries into show business.

He was working as a panel operator at 2SM in the mid-50's and learning announcing in his own time.

One night an announcer was too drunk to go to air.

There was no-one else in the building capable of taking over so Phil was told to hang on until the station could call someone else in.

They couldn't, so Phil carried on for the entire half-hour.

Management was so impressed they immediately gave him an hour-long Sunday afternoon show.

Thus, at the grand old age of 19, Phil Haldeman was launched into a career which has taken him to the heights as Sydney's once top ranking breakfast announcer and probably our best known voice-over man on TV, radio and film documentaries.

Along the way he married his wife, Joan, in 1958 (he describes her as "a good bird") and they have two children – Vivien, a 21 year old law student, and Tony, 19, an advertising man.

Probably the most traumatic experience to happen to him was a motor-cycle accident in 1969.

He spent three months in hospital and lost two inches from his hip, leaving him with a permanent limp.



Pic: Edmond Thommen



Pic: Jane March



Pic: Jane March

He makes the point that if you speak of a dynasty you must consider them all and suggests that Clifford Brown, Roy Eldridge and King Oliver should also be crowned kings of the trumpet.

Dizzy also speaks of the historic importance of the Massey Hall concert in 1953 and the influence of bop on jazz in general.

And the whole is interspersed with some great Gillespie tracks.

The interview over, Dizzy and his entourage leave for other appointments and, probably not surprisingly, a good deal of the jazz feeling leaves the program.

The big moment over, it's time to find out more about Phil Haldeman.

"The main thing I'm trying to do is sneakily infiltrate the western suburbs," he says.

(He and everyone else. The western suburbs are Sydney's ultimate target area. In terms of sheer population, they are now the heart of the metropolis. And they have the highest disposable income per household in the entire metropolitan area).

"I want to let them know we have some really good artists we can all listen to".

Impressed with the telephone response to his Australia Day special, Haldeman vows to do it more often, regardless of the date.

What about his personal tastes in jazz?

Phil expresses a leaning towards American West Coast jazz of the late 1950's - Shorty Rogers, Bob Brook-

meyer, Shelley Mann and such.

Is there a cut-off point in his liking for jazz?

"Well, you know what the Duke said: 'It don't mean a thing'"

Who are his favorite singers - male and female?

Without hesitation he names in order Mel Torme, Mark Murphy, Frank Sinatra for the fellas and Dardenelle, Kerrie Biddell and Cleo Laine among the ladies.

Has he ever been a musician?

"I am the world's worst Kazoo player" he says. "I play with Nat Oliver's Sheik Music - a Sydney send-up group".

On his role in jazz: "As much as the world needs musos, it also needs people to present them to the public.

"Imagine if everyone in the world was a muso and there were no listeners".

On trends: "I'm glad to see there is a movement back to acoustic jazz".

How does he see his future?

Waving his arms, he says loudly: "I want on my gravestone: 'HERE LIES PHIL HALDEMAN WHO DIED OF EVERYTHING'."

It's a joke and we all laugh, but my first thought is: "We need not fewer Phil Haldemans, but more of them - particularly in commercial radio!"

Stick around, Phil Haldeperson, others might learn something from what you are doing.

by Jack Kelly



It's now getting close to Dizzy's scheduled arrival time, and Phil knows a guy who has some "Trumpet Man Gillespie" T-shirts.

Tries to organise one so he can wear it when the Diz arrives. No luck.

Then, a call of nature and maybe his last chance before the solid half-hour interview.

He puts on a record and announces, "I'm the fastest gun in the east". Out of the door like a flash, a sprint down the corridor and back.

I have the clock on him and he's back at his desk in 1 minute 38 seconds - with 1 minute 50 seconds of the record still to go.

It's 1.25 p.m. and eyes keep darting to the closed-circuit TV which monitors the glass front doors.

Within seconds the Gillespie party appears on the studio screen and someone is sent to let them in.

Phil slips on a promo tape Dizzy made especially for the interview. "Look out now, this is the Diz and I've got something here for my pal Phil Haldeman, whose Weekend World I'll be on next Sunday. Be good, Phil".

With Dizzy are Peter Korda, Joe Martin, who is to comper the festival, and a couple more Jazz Magazine people, including editor Dick Scott.

Phil starts the program (who wouldn't) with Anthropology. Then follow 27 minutes of intelligent, knowledgeable question and answer, with a lot of humor from the Diz.

He takes issue with a statement in the last issue of Jazz Magazine in which it was claimed there have been only three great trumpeters in jazz - Gillespie himself, Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis.



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The Cane Report The Cane Report The Cane Report



Firstly, thank you to the many folk who took the time to contact me following the first edition of JAZZ it was interesting to note how many agreed with me, particularly some of my colleagues in the record industry.

As the editor of JAZZ noted at the top of my first Report, I'm never backward in putting forth my opinions, good or bad, on the industry. So here goes once again, but keep in mind — I do not make these comments to belittle those I have worked with over the years, nor am I biting the hand that feeds me . . . damn it all . . . in these days of self-service if I'm biting any hand it will probably be my own.

Where does the record customer stand when it comes to buying records by his favourite artist? Not in a very good light, I'm afraid, when it comes to jazz. Over the past 8 years, there has been more interest shown by local companies, but nowhere near enough. Is it because the mass market is an easier field to deal with, or are those that make the decisions on what will be released no longer in touch with what people ask for?

To digress for a moment, I once applied for a position as sales manager with a large record company: I talked about the years I had worked in retail (at that time about 20) and which included a stint in radio programming and production. I also mentioned the record reviews I had written for various magazines.

My interviewer asked had I had any experience in territory work (did he mean had I worked in the Northern Territory?). No. He meant had I any wholesale experience with controlling the various territories that the reps had to cover. When I said — No — the reply was most surprising — "That's a pity Peter, because that's the most important thing. The rest you can learn like any business as you go along."
BULL!

What I've learned over the years is most important to me, and anyone that I can assist. What the interviewer said was the sort of thing one would tell a junior on his first job, and there aren't many juniors being employed as sales managers The point I'm making is — how can an industry grow, if he is indicative of the overall attitude to the business.

There are many independent labels overseas that no Company handles in Australia, and yet with more and more artists starting their own labels, it's a great pity when you can't buy albums by them. Two recent examples of this are Anita O'Day and Norman Simmons, her pianist on the recent tour. Both these fine artists have their own labels, which are not distributed in Australia, and yet customers want to buy their records.

Why can't somebody look into bringing more of these small labels into the country? The demand is there, so no-

one is going to burn his fingers. Some labels that record only jazz are imported and distributed locally, but often, if a retailer misses out on the initial consignment, then forget it. it's months before titles turn up again if, in fact they ever do.

This is not good enough — the demand is still there but the supply isn't

To be fair about the overall problem, let's look at another aspect, where those interested in jazz are not catered for. . . .
RADIO.

One of the central characters of the movie "THE WIZARD OF OZ" was the lion, who lacked courage . . . are the lion and radio related (I speak now of Sydney radio, but I'm not sure the problem is the same across the country).

Many years ago, when I first worked in radio, I almost succeeded in convincing the station I worked for to play only jazz oriented music. However, my efforts were halted, at top level mainly because of the vast knowledge of the manager, who said, and I quote — "Peter, I've been meaning to speak with you about the music that your department is programming. you seem to be playing a lot of black female vocalists, like Peggy Lee and Mel Torme" — unquote.

Recently, I spoke with an executive of a Sydney radio station who shared my beliefs that a radio station in this city could play nothing but jazz and make a success of it, but, like my colleagues, whom I mentioned at the start the position he holds is not big enough to influence the top brass.

Twice a week on 2KY, I do my best to add jazz to the air waves of Sydney radio, as does Phil Haldeman on the same station, but as far as commercial radio goes, there isn't much more in the offering. . . . how about a little courage, Sydney Radio, and give my idea a go . . . if I'm wrong, it wouldn't be the first time that a Radio station had tried a new image and then changed boats in mid-stream.

Following the recent Jazz Festivals where crowds flocked to the Regent and Capitol Theatres to hear both local and overseas jazz greats is fair indication that there is an audience.

After all the promoters and sponsors of these festivals would have surveyed the potential with such a venture and there are more jazz concerts scheduled throughout the year.

reporting from... ... Adelaide

Congratulations on the first issue of "Jazz". Having seen over the years the birth and decline of many periodicals on the subject, including "Jazz Down Under" and my own modest part-time effort "Jazz Review", I wish "Jazz" every success.

It was sad to hear of the death recently of Sinclair Trill, one of the pioneers in the field as founder and former editor of the English "Jazz Journal", probably one of the best and longest running magazines of its kind in the world.

Since last contributing these jazz jottings activity on the jazz scene has slipped into top gear with the appearance of Milt Jackson, Chuck Mangione, Woody Shaw, John Scofield, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Eberhard Weber, and Oscar Peterson — with visits by the New York Jazz Giants and Old and New Dreams scheduled for March.

I will leave aside critical comments for others to make but what impressed me as being important for the future of jazz were the remarks of Shaw, Scofield, and bassist Steve Swallow in the brief conversations I had with them.

All agreed with me that jazz neither ended with Charlie Parker nor began with John Coltrane. As Woody Shaw put it: "If it wasn't for Louis Armstrong I wouldn't be playing trumpet".

In my ignorance I hadn't realised that Steve Swallow had played with "dixielanders" like Jimmy McPartland and Pee Wee Russell — "... a great, great musician". John Scofield chipped in with a story concerning a session combining the old and the new with veteran vibes player Red Norvo teaming up with Gary Burton. Norvo suffers these days from something of a hearing loss and in the discussion prior to the performance thought the selected tune was "Indiana" while Burton had it down as "Cherokee". So that after Gary's solo ("Cherokee") Red launched into a vigorous rendition of "Indiana" — I don't know how they resolved it but it must have led to some interesting improvisations!

Milt Jackson held a somewhat more pessimistic view concerning the direction some modern jazz is taking — "... nothing you want to tap your foot to". Well there was plenty to tap your foot about when he joined forces with local musicians

30 JAZZ — MARCH/APRIL, 1981

Ted Nettelbeck (piano), Jerry Wesley (bass), drummer Laurie Kennedy and, on the final bracket, tenor man Bob Jeffery. The concert put on by the newly re-formed Jazz Action Society played to a capacity house at the Tivoli Hotel and attracted a large number of new members.

Welcome as the visits of overseas jazz musicians are, even more encouraging for local jazz enthusiasts, and players, is the establishment of three regular jazz venues, catering as they do for differing areas of the jazz scene.

The Southern Jazz Club is the longest established of these and features mainly trad jazz, with the odd infusion of mainstream. Centred at the Highway Inn it has weekly shows on a Thursday night at which the best local and interstate bands are featured.

The youngest addition is Martinis Jazz 81 which also operates weekly at the Marryatville Hotel and which has a musical policy which is mainly mainstream. February 18 saw their highly successful opening venture featuring the Bruce Gray Six plus guest artists Bob Barnard which drew a large audience.

The Jazz Action Society with headquarters at the Tivoli Hotel presents concerts on the first Tuesday of the month. President David Rigby says the J.A.S. will be promoting all forms of jazz even although the initial programming is modern. Scheduled for April 7 is a youthful group "Small Hours" who by all accounts are something out of the box.

March 17 sees the visit of Old and New Dreams, followed on March 20 by the New York Jazz Giants. Both groups will be conducting workshops while in Adelaide and details can be obtained from John Bermingham, 73 Conyngham Street, Frewille. S.A. 5063 (Phone: 795399).

Over the years jazz, like business, has its booms and slumps, let us hope the present boom continues.

These notes have been penned in haste. In the next issue a listing of jazz venues, jazz on radio, and the beginning of a series on jazz musicians in the Sunny South.

With kind regards to Boyd Senter, I remain, Yours in jazz.

DON PORTER



Chuck Mangione



Oscar Peterson

...Brisbane

LETTER FROM THE NORTH

Mileham Hayes

The best news for ages is that Toowoomba is going to host the 1982 Australian Jazz Convention.

Toowoomba is a delightful place known as the 'Garden City'. It's some one hundred kilometres in from Brisbane on the Great Divide and hence quite cooler. Like Katoomba is to Sydney.

This is only the second time the Australian Jazz Convention will have come to Queensland and it's great to see it being decentralised away from Brisbane.

Venue will be the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. On-campus accommodation will be provided for 300 and the remainder will be booked in at hotels, motels and caravan parks.

Main thrust of the Toowoomba Jazz Society in the intervening period will be to promote jazz more thoroughly in Toowoomba and increase membership of the local society.

Information on membership of the Toowoomba Jazz Society can be obtained by writing to P.O. Box 943, Toowoomba.

The Queensland contingent to the Forbes Convention all came back with glowing reports — not a wingeing dag amongst them — what a refreshing change from the petty in-fighting one seems to encounter in some other places (if the cap fits wear it).

Sadly a few Brisbane venues have folded or changed: The Melbourne Hotel which once boasted jazz five or six times (or was it

four or five times) a week has now become a Theatre Restaurant.

On the plus side, the new "in" shop for women, Bozarts, which also boasts a restaurant is having a jazz month and Clare Hansson has her trio there every Wednesday night with guest artists, Sue Wighton then Frank Tyne, Rick Price and Ted Wallace.

Clare has built up Bonaparts on Friday nights to a charming success.

The real phenomenon was at the Queensland Jazz Club — Cellar where on alternate nights in one week Milt Jackson, John Scofield Trio and Woody Shaw Quintet and the Eberhard Webers' Colours performed to record crowds.

This gives great hopes for March 19 when the New York Giants, Frank Forrest, Nat Adderley, Slide Hampton, will give workshops and concerts. Enquiries (07) 341 5544.

The Cellar now has jazz seven nights a week with the successful Monday night debut of The Caxton Street Jazz Band which includes that great stalwart 'Tich' Bray on clarinet.

'Tich' now teaches music for the Education Department and is in fine form playing clarinet, alto and soprano saxes.

The Jazz Action Society got off to a flying start with its first Sunday for 1981 and welcomed home Graham Strachan who left Brisbane a drummer to return a pianist. Next meeting — second Sunday of each month at 2 p.m., Campus Club,

Queensland Institute of Technology.

The school scene seems very healthy under the guidance of Roy Theoharris and John Callaghan. They are forming an Australian Jazz Youth Orchestra which will hopefully one day tour internationally, — after all the Queensland (classical) Youth Orchestra just toured Europe and the United Kingdom.

Finally an objective outsiders view of the Sydney Festival. The music, I'm sure, will be reviewed elsewhere but as a minor plea or constructive criticism, there was too much and too much at the same time.

Was it Pan Am or Qantas, Bose, or Yamaha? Joachim Kuhn was here whilst Randy Brecker was there, and no-one could possibly cover the lot, which was a great pity. But this is only a minor criticism; it was lovely to wallow in a surfeit of jazz from 9 a.m. to 4 a.m.!



Claire Hanson at the piano. A hit at the Forbes convention and in her home town of Brisbane. She built up a great following on Friday nights at Bonapartes. Claire will be featured on Wednesday nights during March at Bogarts Restaurant. She is seen here backing Scott Hamilton at the Peter Stuyvesant Festival with John Harrison on drums and Ian Coching on bass.

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VINTAGE JAZZ SOCIETY

... Canberra

In Canberra, contemporary jazz has begun to bask in the rays of acceptance. We saw it at the University Arts Centre recently when Community Radio Station 2XX presented the highly imaginative group "Colours" (Eberhard Weber, bass; Rainer Bruninghaus, piano; John Marshall, drums; Charlie Mariano, saxophone, nagaswaram).

As part of its highly successful Australian tour sponsored by the German Goethe Institute, "Colours" played fabulously to enraptured audiences in Canberra, both indoors and outdoors (a free concert was given by the lakeside in Commonwealth Park). The "Sunday In The Park" concert had notes leaping from the grassy amphitheatre to a sun-drenched audience which was captured after the opening selection — Weber's pensive bass under full control of a musician who is obviously intent on trying to search for new musical ideas, in order to avoid becoming stale; the brilliant pianist from Cologne, Rainer Bruninghaus; "Soft Machine" drummer John Marshall, who nailed audiences to the wall with some amazing solo sets; and Charlie Mariano who flashed signals as rapid as radar to the others while contributing some beautifully articulated sporano and flute.

"Colours" was an elegantly presented ensemble of the likes never seen before in Canberra, which demonstrated both grace and instrumental dexterity which would leave even the most electric-oriented audiences astonished.

After "Colours", the sky was just a shade bluer, and everyone went away a shade brighter.

The month of February promised, and delivered, a veritable avalanche of jazz in Canberra (Dizzy Gillespie, Eberhard Weber, Chuck Mangione) as no doubt other cities have experienced to their joy.

The Bad News & The Good News

First the bad news the summer jazz festival explosion is almost over. That probably means no more international jazz in the open in Commonwealth Park. No more musicians "dropping in" during the Sydney festivals. And very little live contemporary jazz for the rest of the year. "What can the Canberra jazz community do to get itself more together", I ask. (We could have seen a wealth of other visiting talent, but we only scored a hand-ful).

More concerts and festivals featuring local talent with visiting artists would help. Also, the Canberra community needs more exposure to the music. Many people tend to put jazz down before they ever hear it. Perhaps because they don't fully understand the music, or consider it dated, or obscure, or atonal, or, or . . . a thousand other "ors". If they would just come out, to a concert and just participate with their ears (as many of the jazz uninitiated did at the "Colours" concerts), the music would get through the barriers.

I think jazz and this city go well together. This city's so beautiful. Jazz is such beautiful music that I think they ought to coincide. However, Canberra will remain with slim pickings unless more people are prepared to assist in nurturing that latent desire for new musical experiences.

Now the good news

It doesn't matter too much if you spend the next few weeks lamenting the passing of our International jazz phase for 1981, watching Canberra's leafy avenues grow colourful, or waiting for the ski season. There's plenty of good music to be heard around town:

"The Fortified Few" are now back at the Federation Lounge of the Hotel Dickson from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. every Saturday, as part of the activities of the Canberra Jazz Club.

The Club recently staged its first Sunday evening concert for this year with the founding bassist from the Galapagos Duck, Chris Qua, and colleague Len Barnard (frequent visitor to Canberra) with local perennials Graham Coyle and Greg Gibson. Coyle is a fine pianist who has played solo and in groups in Canberra for a number of years, and toured Europe last year with the Bob Barnard band before going into semi-retirement.

Marilyn Mendez and "Nightmoves" (Ross Clarke, piano; Carl Witty, drums) play the Contended Soul (Woden Town Centre) on Saturday afternoons (4-7 p.m.). This English Tavern also resounds to the beat of Pierre Kamacher's Hot Four each Thursday and Friday evening from 8.30 p.m. (Pierre Kamacher, reeds;



[Lee Ritenour, guitar; Ernie Watts, saxophone; Abraham Laboriel, bass; Alex Acuna, drums; Steve Forman, percussion; Don Grusin, keyboards].

JAZZ NEWS



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...Hobart

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Look for the Charlie Russel Duo (Charlie Russel, piano; Sally Sallis, vocal) on Friday and Saturday evenings at the Park Royal Hotel (Silver Grill), while Bogart's Restaurant/Nightclub regularly feature the Stirling Primmer Quartet (Stirling Primmer, piano; Tony Heatherington, bass; Tony Thomas, trumpet and vocals; Peter Robinson, drums). Trombonist Jim Hilson leads the Jerrabomberra Jazz Band in occasional gigs about town although precise details are not at hand at this time.

The Australian National University Union presents regular jazz in the bar once the University term resumes in March. Details in the next issue.

Jazz guitarist Dave Kain does a number of gigs, with most recent appearances at "Sunday in the Park" which is organised by the Arts Council of Australia (A.C.T. Division).

The Canberra Southern Cross Club (Phillips) reintroduces its "Jazz At the Cross" Thursday evenings, beginning February 26th with the ubiquitous Galapagos Duck. Graham Bell and the Allstars are booked March 12, Bob Barnard March 19, Dick Hughes' Famous Five April 9, and Mike Hallam's Hot Six April 23. The package comes at an all up cost of \$20, or \$5 per concert.

Jazz on Public Radio

Try the jazz on 2XX (1008KHZ) which is presented twice weekly.

Phil O'Rourke presents traditional jazz, or Dixieland, each Sunday (8.30 p.m. - 10.30 p.m.) while I present the more contemporary offerings, designed to appeal to lovers of Keith Jarrett, Ron Carter, Lee Ritenour, Pat Metheny, James Moody, Chick Corea, Art Pepper, Jaco Pastorius, Colin Walcott, Cedar Walton, John Serry, Bobo Stensen, Grover Washington, Jr., etc. etc.

Incidentally, my jazzpick of the month is Arthur Blythe's "In the Tradition". Check it out.

Also receiving unique airplay at present is Soft Machine's "Land of Cockayne" featuring the drummer from "Colours", John Marshall. Watch for it!

Early in March, the "Colours" Canberra concert will be re-broadcast in its entirety on 2XX Wednesday night jazz.

So there's hope folks

Chris Deacon

HOBART

Jazz activities in Hobart for 1981 have opened on a bright note with two nights' performances by Bob Barnard, backed by local group, Pearce-Pickering Ragtime Band. Bob's visit was sponsored by the Jazz Action Society, as was the Eberhard Weber and Colours concert. The next activity from Jazz Action will be a "New Orleans" night early in March, with the assistance of local musicians and Geoff Bull and Gary Walford from Sydney.



Eberhard Weber

Pic: Jane March

Hobart bands have moved around recently with the Pearce-Pickering Ragtime Band moving to the St. Ives Hotel, Sandy Bay, on Friday and Saturday nights. They have been replaced at Tattersalls Bar and Bistro by the Alf Properjohn Trio (mainstream jazz). A new venue has come to light in Hobart since December - at Stoppy's Tavern, Salamanca Place. A new band, the Whaling Company, playing mostly modern jazz (Parker, Jarrett, Jobim, Golson, Miles Davis) is currently playing Friday night and Saturday afternoon. The Dog and Partridge Hotel has unfortunately dropped its Saturday afternoon jazz session.

Jazz education in Tasmanian schools will be taking a step forward this year, as a number of Tasmanian school music teachers took the trouble to attend the Australian Jazz Foundation's Summer Jazz Clinics in Melbourne and Sydney. All have expressed a desire to make jazz an integral part of their schools' music activities from now on, which is certainly a step in the right direction.

The Australian Jazz Foundation is at present in the process of organising a jazz clinic in Hobart, which will be held during the school holidays, first week in June. The week-long clinic will be the same format as the recent Summer Jazz Clinics, and proposed tutors from the United States are David Baker, Ed Soph, Todd Coolman, Jim McNeily, Steve Erquiaga, as well as some well known jazz musicians from Sydney. More information can be obtained by contacting Allan Brown on Hobart 28 2254.



Ed Soph

Three overseas record labels which have had minimal distribution in Australia in the past will now be available nationally through a new company, based in Hobart - "Another Record Distribution" (G.P.O. Box 236C, Hobart, 7001). The three labels concerned are from the United States - Contemporary Records, which has albums by Art Pepper, Woody Shaw, Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor to name a few - and from Japan "Next Wave" and "Three Blind Mice". Apart from the obvious roster of Japanese musicians, both labels include works by more familiar names such as Hank Jones, Eddie Gomez, Al Foster, Richard Davis, Jon Faddis and others.



Woody Shaw

...Melbourne

SUMMER JAZZ AT THE MET:
Review by Adrian Jackson

From a jazz point of view, Melbourne really burst into life at the end of January, via ten nights of international jazz at the Met. Every night saw this friendly basement-room packed with fans — the atmosphere was great, with the audiences' appreciation of the music being returned in the bands' performances.

First, three nights of good vibes with Milt Jackson. Local pianist Bob Sedergreen, bassist Gary Costello and drummer Allan Browne working hard to provide the compact groove over which Jackson wants to weave his web — effortless swing, relaxed yet driving; elegant lyricism; each solo a masterpiece. Jazz at its happiest.

Then, Summer Jazz Week, six concerts featuring teachers and performers in town with the Summer Jazz Clinic. David Baker and Jamey Aebersold, in their sets, did nothing to alter my opinion of both as

admirable jazz teachers with little to offer as performers. Trumpeter John McNeil played some clean, interesting original material in a quartet with Steve Erquiaga on guitar. Vibist Dave Samuels — playing with Pat La Barbera on sax, Rufus Reid on bass and Ed Soph drumming — contributed two fine sets of jazz with an attractive, open sound. Admittedly, his sound and style were rather reminiscent of Burton and Hutcherson, but he displayed a good deal of spirit in his own playing, and also drew some excellent, committed playing, especially on soprano sax, from LaBarbera.

Unfortunately, when LaBarbera (along with Reid, Soph and pianist Hal Galper) performed with Randy Brecker, he withdrew into polished but calculated playing, full of second-rate Trane plagiarisms that left me cold. Perhaps Brecker's choice of material, all chestnuts from



Rufus Reid













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the '50's, was the downfall of his sets: I for one felt as though I'd heard it all before, especially when every player had to take a long solo on every number. Still, there was some fine playing, especially from Brecker, who left no doubt that he is a very gifted trumpet technician with sound jazz instincts. It's a pity he didn't put as much thought into the organisation of his sets as he did into his solo's. I must say, however, I'm glad I caught Brecker and co. playing the insides out of "Green Dolphin Street" in one of their sets.

If Brecker's band could be criticised for sounding like a pickup band, the same charge could hardly be levelled at the two working groups that were on hand. In the John Scofield Trio's sets, there was a fascinating interplay of conflict and cohesion between the different elements in the band — Scofield's thoughtful and energetic guitar playing. Adam Nussbaum's intelligent aggression on drums, and Steve Swallow's alternately graceful and dirty bass guitar lines. They played original music, with real character and nerve. Oh yes, Scofield's solo

version of "Monk's Mood" was well-constructed, and provided a nice contrast.

And the star band of the week was, not surprisingly, the Woody Shaw Quintet. They showed why they have become one of the top bands in the USA with a full-blooded, though carefully presented, delivery of an infectious brand of jazz that updates the best features of the '50's Hard Bop approach. Young drummer Tony Reedus and pianist Mulgrew Miller did their jobs well, but it was the mighty bassist Stafford James who really set things alight in the rhythm section; trombonist Steve Turre (he also did some very good work on conch shells and didjeridoo) played some exciting and inventive trombone solo; but it was Woody Shaw who provided the magic, his trumpet voice shining brilliantly through every powerful, inspired solo. The great playing of Woody Shaw, and the firstclass jazz of his Quintet, really electrified the crowd. The last time that sort of thing happened in Melbourne was, let's see . . . when Sam Rivers played at The Met. Can't wait for the next time.



Sam Rivers

... Newcastle

by John Armstrong

Jazz continues to be in a healthy state in the Steely City, thanks to B.H.P. workers and others giving their support to regular musical presentations in both Traditional and Modern styles.

At the time of writing, the audiences attending the City's various outlets for jazz were holding up well, even picking up, despite the long distances which have to be travelled to attend some of them.

Summarising the groups which can be heard where and when, and the regular presentations:

Saturdays: Newcastle Rugby Club — The Newcastle New Orleans Jazz Band . . . 5 pm to 7 pm.

Saturdays: The West End Hotel — The Silver Bell Quartet . . . 4.30 pm to 7 pm.

Sundays: The Royal Motor Yacht Club, Toronto — The Maryville Jazz Band . . . 5 pm to 7.30 pm.

Alternate Tuesdays: The Oriental Hotel, Cooks Hill — The Silver Bell Quartet . . . 7 pm to 10 pm.

Fridays: The Lemon Grove Hotel, Wallsend — The Silver Bell Quartet . . . 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm.

Approximately every six weeks . . . Waratah/Mayfield R.S.L. Club — Overseas and Sydney jazz leaders, presented by the Contemporary Jazz Society.

On an occasional basis . . . Nelson Bay, Port Stephens — concerts by stars from Sydney, presented by the Port Stephens Jazz Club.

In addition the University of Newcastle's FM radio station, 2NUR, is providing great support for jazz with several shows a week compered by voluntary presenters.

With the first months of the New Year slipping quickly past, the Contemporary Jazz Society will follow up the appearance of Milt Jackson late in January with two concerts featuring Judy Bailey and John Sangster, and Serge Ermoll.

The performance by Bailey and Sangster (with supporting musicians) will be given at the Waratah/Mayfield R.S.L. Club on March 9.

The next venture by the Society will highlight Ermoll's Quartet on a Monday night in April.

The Contemporary Jazz Society has indisputedly gave Modern Jazz a new lease of life in Newcastle. After the original organising committee was formed in 1976, there was a long period in which leading jazzmen gave sessions at Belmont 16ft Sailing Club. However, in 1979 transfer was made to Waratah/Mayfield R.S.L. at Mayfield.

The activities conducted by the Society, which has identical aims and objects to those of the Jazz Action Society, have included concerts by Johnny Nicol, Kerri Biddell, The Galapagos Duck, the Bob Barnard/Don Andrews Quartet, Errol Buddle, Phil Woods, Jimmy Witherspoon and Milt Jackson.

Presently providing a firm base for Modern Jazz in the Hunter Region, the Society's attendances are increasing. For example, a recent performance by Buddle, Keith Sterling, Col Nolan, Clive Harrison and Len Barnard drew nearly 300 people, while Milt Jackson, playing on a bad night *during the holidays), had a house of 220. Members of the C.J.S.'s committee should feel proud of the progress made and indications are that 1981 will be a vintage year.

Libby Sanders, the A.B.C.'s morning announcer on 2NC, and Bob Smith, Secretary of the W.E.A., resigned from the Committee recently. Libby (Chairman since 1976) got married and Bob, who had been a tower of strength since the Committee reconstituted itself in 1978, had a well deserved rest.

Steve Britt is the new Chairman. Steve is a counsellor with the

Education Department and Gary Jones, a librarian at Newcastle University, now handles the Treasurer's duties.

The remainder of the Committee: Errol Collins (Vice-Chairman), Ken Wilkinson (Secretary), Chris Hawken, John Egan, Andrew Smith and Barry Hutchinson.

The Secretary of Waratah/Mayfield R.S.L., Ken Conway, is very warm to the Society's endeavours and extends special assistance.

The C.J.S. will conduct a second-hand jazz recording stall as part of its future jazz concerts. In return for 50 cents, members of the Society will be able to sell unwanted jazz discs.

The Rugby Union Club continues to join with well-known New Orleans music lover Jack McLaughlin to offer the Newcastle New Orleans Jazz Band on Saturday afternoons.

This gig is popular with musos who like to sit in and, consequently, the NNOJB is experiencing growing pains. What is normally a quartet, or a quintet, now becomes a sextet, made up of:

Jack McLaughlin (reeds) leader, Jim Lyons and Mark Jackson (trumpets), Bluey Newton (trombone), Guy Thompson (bass), Mike Hawkins (drums) and Phil Clare (banjo and vocals).

McLaughlin has put together a hot, flamboyant band suitable for Newcastle television and commercial promotions. Shoeys, a grocery store chain, uses McLaughlin's Men, as do shopping complexes, sporting bodies and affairs like the Port Stephens Oyster Festival. For these jobs McLaughlin avails himself of extra resources, including ex-Graeme Bell Band sousaphone player, Harry Harmon, who has retired in Newcastle, Hedley Pearson (trombone), formerly with Nick Boston's group and the Lighthouse Five, and such appurtenances as a vintage motor truck.

The durability of the Maryville Jazz Band's job at the Royal Motor Yacht Club, Toronto is noteworthy. This is one of the best pure New Orleans bands in Australia, as demonstrated by their appearance at the Australian Jazz Convention at Forbes.

The Royal Motor Yacht Club has been hosting the band on Sunday evenings for more than two years. The players who venture out to Toronto on the shores of Lake Macquarie are Eric Gibbons (trombone), Peter Buckland (reeds), Harry Cantle (banjo), Peter Hogan (drums) and John Vernon (bass), who have been joined by visitors like Butch Thompson and Geoff Bull

in the not too distant past for bright sessions of N.O. musicmaking.

The M.J.B. has worked together since 1971 and have made a great fist of recreating the true music of New Orleans.

Eric Gibbons forms a link with a second N.O. group that plays regularly in Newcastle — The Silver Bell Quartet, which blazes away at the West End Hotel on Saturday afternoons.

The personnel of the group:

John Wilson (trumpet), Tom Tyler (banjo), Warren McCluskey (drums) and Gibbons.

Port Stephens Jazz Club, with 20 members, has existed since 1974. Club gatherings take the form of record nights featuring special programmes devised by members, addresses by visiting jazz enthusiasts, visits to local jazz presentations and picnics.

A recent major venture for the Club is a programme of concerts by Sydney jazz musicians at Nelson Bay — Kerri Biddell and Compared To What, The Galapagos Duck, Nancy Stuart and, just prior to Christmas, Johnny Nicol. It is intended to continue the Jazz at "The Bay" series, using such perennials as the Errol Buddle Quartet and the George Golla Trio.

The Club also presented jazz picnics at such salubrious locations as Fingal Bay and Salamander Bay. The President of PSJC is Ken Newton, a pharmacist, and Greg Maguire, a marine biologist, is Secretary.

So then, that's the situation in the Hunter Region, where, in addition to industrial sounds, the sound of jazz can cause the adrenalin to flow.



Johnny Nicol

... Perth

by Ron Morey

THE WHO'S WHO OF PERTH JAZZ
Who: Elvie Simmons and Ragtime

The night in question when I caught this group they were performing at the Perth Jazz Society's Monday session at the Hyde Park Hotel.

Certainly the Escape Haven at the Hyde Park is a near-perfect forum for the presentative of live jazz in almost all its forms. It's a big, roomy place, but not so big as to be barn-like. Despite being able to hold three or four hundred people it has warmth and an atmosphere of coziness. Carpeted throughout and acoustically good, together with a nice, in-tune piano, it's the home-from-home that the Jazz Society has sought since its inception, eight years ago.

Musically, the combo under scrutiny could just as easily have been called Bluestime, for there's perhaps more emphasis on blues than on ragtime. As well there's a fair proportion of popular song from the first couple of decades of this century, coupled with the purely instrumental classic New Orleans jazz laid down by the accomplished backing quartet.

Elvie is essentially a blues singer in the hallowed tradition of Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey (her idols). Melbourne-born, she began her singing career in that city just over 20 years ago, accompanied by such notables as Max Collie and Bob Barnard. Five years ago she moved to Perth, bringing a wide vocal experience that included a three-year stint in the U.K during the early 60's.

The present group was formed late in 1979 to perform at the Jazz Convention, and has gained sufficient popularity to keep afloat. Ragtime consists of four of this city's most seasoned traditional jazzmen. On clarinet and saxophones is Ross Nicholson,* surely one of this country's finest New Orleans-style musicians; John Beaton (old Cookbook himself) handles the keyboard chores with aplomb; the ubiquitous John Healy is the rock-solid bassist; Richie Bryant (local namesake of Acker Bilk's drummer) takes care of the percussion department. All have been at one time or another, members of the West Coast Jazzmen.

The group's repertoire is considerable and varied. There are obscure but delightful ragtime songs from around the turn of the century (and Elvie tells me they're working

on more and more of these); blues, of course, such as Empty Bed, Careless Love and Beale Street (it's extremely difficult for a white singer to perform the blues credibly, but Elvie comes close to complete believability. Lacking the power of

Helen Matthews at her bluest, she nonetheless has done her homework well, and has a keen feeling for a down-home lyric). Then there are the evergreens like Sister Kate, and the equally joyous instrumentals, such as Shimme-sha-wabble, executed with polish, panache and pizzazz.

The often risqué lyrics of some of these ditties had the appreciative audience grinning and calling for more, while the strains of this "sinful rhythm music" impelled no less a personage (among others) than PJS Prez, Graham Fisk, to trip the light fantastic on more than one occasion. If you have yet to hear Elvie Simmons and Ragtime, I urge you to do so without delay — they're a happy, gratifying experience. **Since replaced by Jim Cook, Ross has gone to Europe.*

... Sydney

The Jazz Action Society (NSW) will hold its annual general meeting at the Australia Music Centre on Saturday, April 4.

So what? you say. Well, although the organisation's membership runs into hundreds, the last two AGMs were postponed through lack of a quorum.

Laziness, apathy, leaving it to somebody else to do — the reason is probably a combination of all three.

The JAS is dedicated to promoting Australian jazz and jazz in Australia.

The two main activities are monthly concerts and Saturday workshops.

Last year an ambitious course of instruction for schools — with expert tutors — was mounted, but this has had to be scrapped. So we start again.

Now the committee intends to turn to lobbying private industry to back the music. And that means a well-planned campaign.

The committee can act only if it has the organisation behind it. And you can show that support by turning up at the AGM.

Now, with better economic days ahead, is the time to interest those multi-national companies — intent on getting their names emblazoned

throughout the country — to invest in jazz by backing the JAS.

It has lived through the recession days and is still fighting. Now that the outlook is better is the time to join that battle, to persuade those companies that jazz presents an excellent medium for their publicity.

With active support of members, The Jazz Action Society can increase its activities. It's up to you.

...New Zealand

Being a small country with a small population, New Zealand is able to support only a spasmodic, fragmentary jazz scene at best. The opportunities to hear and play jazz have always been relatively few and far between, in spite of laudatory efforts to combat this by various promoters, club owners and jazz organisations. There is still a strong resistance amongst the people here against going out to hear the local product. It's still the occasional event rather than the regular gig that draws the enthusiasts out from underneath

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their record collections.

While I was away in Boston last year, studying & playing at Berklee I heard that the opening of a club in Auckland, Ramsay's, had given a much-needed lift to the local scene. Unfortunately Ramsay's was to close after less than a year, followed by two other short-lived ventures; Jazz Alley, with Frank Gibson's Space Case as the resident band, failed to attract a large regular audience, as did Darcey's later in the year, with bassist Andy Brown at the helm. The demise of Darcey's coupled with the news that jazz imports were about to be severely curtailed and the next batch of ECM records, at 18 dollars each, were likely to be the last for a while, brought little seasonal cheer at the end of the year.

1981, however, has already seen a number of fine international artists and groups taking the plunge into New Zealand's normally stagnant waters. The surprising success of the sell-out concert by the Sam Rivers Trio last November has encouraged promoter Charlie Gray to continue to liaise with Peter Brendle in Sydney and present concerts by artists from the ECM label. Eberhard Weber's Colours played to packed houses in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and even gave a clinic or two on the way. Sam Rivers is returning soon and the Old and New Dreams Band are due here in March. This is the group made up of Ornette Coleman's sideman; Don Cherry, Dewey Redman, Charlie Haden and Ed Blackwell - four musicians of almost legendary status. Also in the pipeline is a visit from Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition.

Another promoter with faith in the jazz audience is Phil Warren. At his 'Ace of Clubs' he has already put on Kenny Ball and his Jazzmen for a sell-out season and Milt Jackson came over for one night, ably supported by a local trio. Phil is also hoping to bring over altoist Art Pepper and his quartet, which is already stirring up some excitement in jazz circles here. Add to this the New York Jazz Giants with Nat Adderly and Slide Hampton at the Mandalay in March, and the concert scene looks the healthiest it's been for years.

Two recent organisations have helped to boost the interest in jazz both in Auckland and Wellington. Formed last year, the Jazz Action Group, which as president Anna McDermont put it, 'grew out of the attendance at last year's Tauranga Jazz Festival of a group of Aucklanders... who decided to do something positive to complement the effort Tauranga has been putting into jazz for so long, and to try to strengthen the Tauranga-Auckland link! Jazz Action has held two concerts and several Sunday jams, underwritten a Dick Hopp Sextet album to be released soon on Ode, and taken two busloads of Aucklanders to the 1980 Tauranga festival. It is arranging even bigger support for 1981's festival.

Meanwhile in Wellington, jazz musician and educator Colin Hemmingsen has formed the New Zealand Jazz Foundation whose aims are to encourage the performance of jazz by promoting the teaching of the music in schools and universities, by fostering return visits by leading expatriate N.Z. musicians for per-

formances and teaching, by organising concerts and teaching clinics (such as the National Jazz Clinic, with Jamey Abersold, David Baker, Woody Shaw and 20 other Americans, who have just given their second annual week-long workshop in Wellington & a concert in Auckland), and by publishing a newsletter and a magazine, the first issue of which is just out. It's called Jazz N'Z' and, complete with glossy cover, is a professional-looking magazine. Well worth subscribing to - anyone interested should write to N.Z.J.F., 34 Alexandra Rd., Wellington. 3.

Also doing his bit for jazz is record producer Terence O'Neil Joyce, whose Ode Records is the only N.Z. label issuing albums by local artists. Soon to be released, in addition to the Dick Hopp disc, is 'Frank Gibson and Friends' in which drummer Gibson is joined on a variety of tracks by guest artists Milt Jackson, Bobby Shew, John Scofield, Mike Nock and Brian Smith. Also planned is an album of original material by myself and trumpeter Kim Paterson.

Mention must also be made of the 'Cotton Club', who are continuing to present their traditional-based concerts at the Mandalay to capacity crowds. First up this year is a return visit to these shores by Sydney-based pianist and trumpeter Julian Lee who has persuaded several old-but-seen-too-rarely local faces to join him in concert.

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Getting to first Bass

By Ron Morey

By curious coincidence all three of Denmark's major exports share the colour blue — Danish blue-veined cheese, pornography (blue movies), and bassist supreme, Niels-Henning Orsted-Pedersen, who often plays the blues.

So much for an arresting opening paragraph! Niels Pedersen, as he is known, for obvious reasons, shouldn't need much of an introduction, as his many superb recordings over the past decade attest to his utter supremacy as the greatest jazz bassist of all time. The sad fact, however, is that he is not generally recognized as such. His current Australian visit with the Oscar Peterson Quartet should set things to rights, though — at least as far as this country is concerned.

Anyone with ears to listen can discern that Niels possesses tone, technique, time, taste and ideas that place him head and shoulders above any other jazz bassist, living or dead.

Pedersen is still a young man of 34, and his story began in Copenhagen in 1946. His career in music started with piano lessons at the age of six, giving him a classical grounding. Some time later several well-known Danish jazz musicians began to play with Niels's brothers, and they eventually formed a band. Finding that they had three pianists, young Niels borrowed a bass, and that's where the story really begins.

He says "One day I was going to buy my own bass, and the guy I was going to get it from was playing at Vingarden, a club that was then (around 1960) the centre for modern jazz in Copenhagen. So I went there (I was thirteen years old at that time), and they asked me to sit in, and in no time I became a member of the leading Danish modern group, Jazz Quintet '60. I was still going to school, and it was not easy task to become a professional musician so young. You are playing with people who are much older, so naturally there exists a human gap. You're just a kid — it can create a false balance. You live your whole youth in the presence of other people watching you, and they will remember if you make a mistake, or behave stupidly. Playing jazz means very often that you live a night life, which has certain built-in risks for a young person. You get established long before your mentality is ready to cope with it."

At that time the two main influences on the young Niels were Walter Page,

bassist with the pre-war Count Basie band (from whom he learned the importance of time and swing) and the enormously gifted youngster, Paul Chambers, who was one of the rhythmic sparkplugs of Miles Davis' greatest combos in the latter half of the Fifties.

Niels continues "During the early Sixties I was very lucky; I had the opportunity to work with all the visiting musicians that came to Copenhagen. I worked almost every night at Club Montmartre, and there I learned a lot. Especially my long association with Dexter Gordon and Kenny Drew helped me in my formative years. They didn't school me, but due to their strong personalities they can force you into confrontations that will result in positive solutions."

The young Pedersen's recordings during this period are particularly interesting. I'll cite three examples, each a quartet date from the "Montmartre", and led by U.S. expatriate tenor sax giants, Don Byas, Ben Webster and Gordon. The earliest, from 1963, finds the 17 year old bassist playing like a remarkably mature Ray Brown. The next, from '65, with Webster (a series of three albums) shows increasing

proficiency and an already awesome technique, while the Gordon sessions (two LPs) from '67 present the fully-fledged 21 year old as the equal of any jazz bassist then playing.

For much of the past decade Pedersen has toured and recorded with that most demanding of leaders, Oscar Peterson, and has proved to be that super-pianist's equal in every musical way. Though the field of modern-mainstream jazz is the bassist's more usual stamping (stomping) ground, he is just as much at home when playing with old beboppers like Kenny Drew or somewhat more outre people like Paul Bley, Anthony Braxton and Philip Catherine. Add to that the fact that still-questing, semi-legendary figures like Stan Getz and Lee Konitz keenly seek his services, and you should have proof positive of the unassailable position that Niels Pedersen commands in the world of jazz.

In the twenty years since NHOP, as he is known by his adoring countrymen, was a schoolboy of "promising talent" (at 15 he was asked to join Count Basie!) he has now become the greatest Dane since Hans Christian Andersen. No one is more deserving of the soubriquet, The Great Dane.



TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI

The Lady is a champ



Pic: Jane March

Some two years after World War II ended, a pretty, young, Japanese girl was passing a club which displayed the sign, "Pianist Wanted." She walked in and was immediately hired. As she modestly explained to me, "All over Japan, the clubs were short of musicians — that got me the job." However, the fact is, she was already playing American jazz standards, and dug Bird, Dizzy, Bud Powell and others.

The girl pianist was Toshiko Akiyoshi the Manchurian-born daughter of Japanese parents, who is now the Queen of Big Band Jazz. Voted Number One in *Down Beat*, the band she co-leads with husband, Lew Tabackin, also holds the same position in "Jazz Forum" and in "Swing Journal" (Japan). Her compositional and arranging skills are becoming legendary, not to mention her work as a pianist. But there's much more to Toshiko Akiyoshi than winning polls.

During a recent visit to Sydney for the prestigious Peter Stuyvesant Sydney International Music Festival, we talked one afternoon over some Perrier water. The lady proved delightful company, with an engaging sense of humour, shy but friendly, and displaying the same quality of integrity that is inherent in her music.

Did Oscar Peterson discover you in Japan, and arrange to get you recorded?

Yes. Oscar had the trio at that time, and Norman Granz brought all his artists to Japan. I think it was probably

first time an American jazz group came to play for the Japanese public. When Oscar Peterson recommended me to Norman Granz, Norman Granz told me I could use Oscar's rhythm section.

Ray Brown and Herb Ellis?

Yes. And they decided I should have a drummer — so it was J.C. Heard.

I know you went to America on a Berklee Scholarship, and, during the Sixties, you produced your own concert in New York. This must have presented problems.

Yes, it did. I went to the States in 1956, and, if you know anything about the Japanese character, you will know always on New Year's Day they think about what happened last year, and make a goal for next year. So, in 1966, on New Year's Day, I was thinking, "I've been in this country ten years, and what did I contribute?" And I felt I hadn't done anything. So I thought maybe I would do something to justify myself for being here ten years. I would produce a concert — the first part solo piano, then piano trio, then may have a Big Band play my music, which I hadn't done up to that point. It took a year to prepare all these things, so actually the concert was in 1967, in October, at the Town Hall, in New York.

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI

The Lady is a champ

Your visit to Japan with J.J. Johnson — that was actually before the New York concert.

In 1965. I think it was Japan's first real big jazz festival. It was part of an all-star jam session kind of thing. (LAUGHS) J.J. Johnson, Clark Terry and Sonny Stitt were the horns, and myself, Jimmy Cobb and Paul Chambers.

That's a great combination for a sextet! Rather different from your Big Band set-up, that's for sure. Incidentally, how do you feel, having a whole orchestra at your disposal to play your own music?

It's a lot of work. And — well, it is a funny thing, but a number of times when we've played a concert, some lady will come along and say it must be wonderful to be a woman, and be leading all these men. And this lady misses the whole point. The fact is, that has nothing to do with being male or female.

Toshiko, it's almost exactly a year since we last talked together. What would you say was the highlight of the last twelve months for you?

Well, I think this has to be the Carnegie Hall Concert at the Newport. I have been in America for 25 years, and lived in New York for 13 years, but I had never played in Carnegie Hall. And last year, National Public Radio honoured me with a solo concert engagement. I played with a small group with guest players like Dizzy Gillespie, Phil Woods, George Duvivier, and Jack De Johnette. Then the last half of the program with, of course, our current band. I was so worried about it — you know, that place holds more than 3,000 people.

And the concert was sold out. That must have been a thrill.

Oh, yes, a great thrill. The last time we played at the Newport Jazz Festival was in 1977, when our band appeared with Charles Mingus.

Did you tour Japan in 1980?

Yes, we were in Japan in October and November.

With your trio?

Just the piano trio. We did concerts in small towns only, and we were very well received. So I'm going back this year with my trio at the end of May, and Lew is going with his own trio before then. The Band is going to Japan again, Spring 1982.

You must have a whole lot of fans in Japan.

I hope so. But you know, contrary to what a lot of people think, there are not very many jazz fans anywhere — not jazz fans, you know. But I would like to reach all of them specially in the small cities where the Big Band hasn't played before, and where there are some jazz fans. Perhaps these people will be happy to see us.

Do you enjoy touring?

Oh, yes. Last year the band travelled about 16 weeks, and this year it will be a little more.

As we know, Duke Ellington could write anywhere in a car travelling to or from a gig, and so on. Can you do this?

No, I can't do it. I could never do it. I'm amazed time and time again at what enormous energy he must have had.

Incredible. He was quite extraordinary.

And of course, in the old days, I think it was harder.

Didn't you write some lullabies for children? Or did you adapt them?

Both. When I had my baby at the hospital in Japan, the music they played there was the music I heard when I was a little girl. I thought, "This is not right, you know. All the toys are different now, why not the music?" So I thought it might be fun to write and record something for these children. I think the title should have been, "Lullaby for Hip Mother and Hip Children"! But it was called "Toshiko's Lullaby". I wrote a lullaby for my baby daughter and took different songs from various countries and recorded them.

Your daughter's voice is heard on the "Insights" album. Does she play an instrument?

She's studying flute. She's seventeen-and-a-half years old now, and she says she's serious about becoming a musician, but I'm not quite sure.

Does she practise?

Well, that's the problem. It's up to her. If she wants to be a player, she'll have to put a lot of time into it.

And time is always running out on us. As Bud Powell wrote — and you recorded — "Tempus Fugit". I suppose you don't have time for hobbies.

I used to go fishing a lot when I was young. I'd spend all day long going fishing and catching nothing. Al Cohn said fishing gives you a sense of doing something, but you're not doing anything. All that time I wasted! I could just kick myself. When I was young I wasted so much time, and it took me a long time to realize that Time is so precious. I was just very, very bad.

Do you push yourself to make up for time lost?

I can lose myself in writing that sometimes seems to be doing well. All of a sudden, I'll find my daughter and Lew both standing at the side of me at the piano and they say, "When are we going to have dinner?"

What about endurance?

This subject came up not too long ago, and somebody said that the definition of a genius is one who has infinite patience and endurance. That is quite true — or nearly quite true. We say "genius" very lightly, but then we hear from the people who knew them. Bird — I could say how hard Bird practised — he was practising all the time. Even Thomas Edison — he did not invent something just from nothing — went fishing and came back and said, "Here, I've invented something".

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI

The Lady is a champ

No way.

So — much time has to be spent. One has to have the infinite patience and endurance.

Would you say you have it?

No, I do not. But I think Lew has it. Danny Banks, the multi-woodwind player who plays very well once said, "I'm a master flutist, but Lew is a genius."

When we're touring with the band, we move every day. It's pretty tiring, and when we get to the hotel, I just like to relax, but as soon as we get there, Lew will pick up the flute and put it to his mouth — he's already warming up! He has that kind of dedication — it's a kind of endurance.

It shows in his playing, that's for sure. And how about Toshiko the pianist?

Piano-playing now is one part of my music. My music is a whole orchestra, and I, as a pianist, am a part of it — just a little portion of it.

Listeners to my radio program have often told me they love the Big Band, but they say they don't get to hear enough of Toshiko soloing on piano.

I take that as a compliment. I must say — I can't lie — it really makes me happy, because I have a feeling that I don't play quite as well as I used to, and that makes me feel very insecure. Every once in a while, I get a compliment, and that really makes me very happy.

You've been likened to Duke Ellington — writing for individual soloists and having your own band to play your compositions, and so on. Duke Ellington drew from his heritage in writing his music — you do this too, don't you?

Well, that inspiration, I must say came from Duke. That was my greatest inspiration — that fact that he was so proud of his race. It shows in all of his music, and I like to believe that perhaps I can also draw something from my heritage when I make my contribution to jazz.

Nobody who knows anything of your music could think otherwise, I'm sure.

We are offering something that people don't need. People don't have to have Art. They have to have a house and clothes, and food, and — to some degree — entertainment. But Art is a luxury. That's what we're offering — we're offering a luxury. Therefore, it has to have quality...

Anyone hearing the music of Toshiko Akiyoshi, whether it be a composition, an arrangement, or the sound of the Big Band or the Trio, will surely agree that quality is a vital component of whatever she delivers. She has rightly been likened to the Ducal King, Edward Kennedy Ellington.

The King is dead — long live the Queen!

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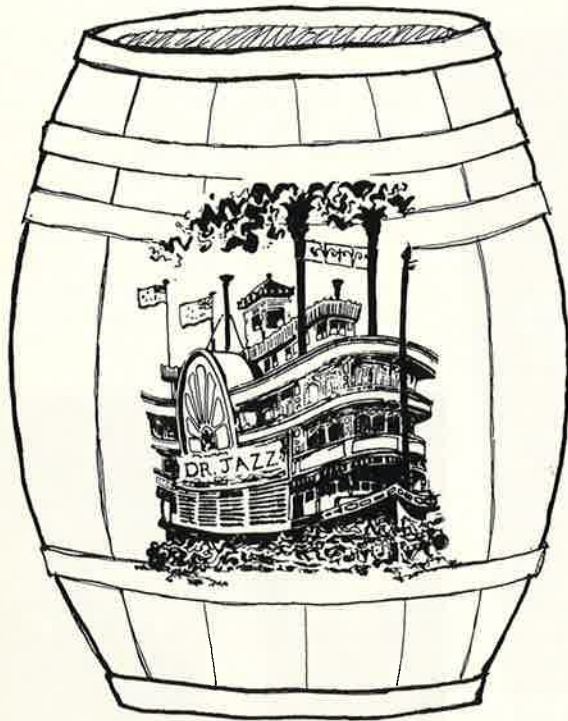
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Pic: Edmond Thommen

Dave Brubeck

And still they come. Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the old record collection after all the great sounds in January, and into February in most States, there is a mini flood of unmissable names on their way. First up there is THE trio Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass and Niels Henning Orsted-Pedersen. They have added a drummer and had played most States by the time we went to press starting in Adelaide at the end of Feb, but they'll be at the Sydney Opera House for two concerts on March 4th, then the Dallas Brooks in Melbourne on the 7th and finally Canberra (School of Music) on the 8th.

Coming up for his ninth trip in March will be Dave Brubeck plus Chris on bass and trombone, Gerry Bergonzi on tenor and a newcomer to Australia Randy Jones replacing drummer Butch Miles who toured with the quartet just over a year ago. Venues are Adelaide Town Hall March 12th, Melbourne Dallas Brooks 13th, Canberra Theatre, 14th and Sydney Regent Theatre on the 16th. Incidentally, the new quartet appears on a new album Tritonis on Concord through Festival Records (L37476).

Two eagerly awaited groups New and Old Dreams and the New York Jazz Giants both have extended seasons in March, most of which will be in a workshop format but there will of course be concerts. Jazz Giants are made up of Frank Foster (reeds), Michael Carvin (drums), Slide Hampton (t/bone), Nat Adderley (horns), Walter Booker (bass), Mickey Tucker (piano) and Ted Dunbar (guitar). New and Old Dreams is Don Cherry (trumpet), Ed Blackwell (drums), Dewey Redman (tenor) and Charlie Haden (bass) and if you miss any of that lot don't blame us. Let's get the concerts out of the way first Sydney for the Giants is the Uni Theatre, Sydney Uni on 12th and 13th March, and for Dreams same venue on the 10th and 11th. Melbourne concerts will be at the Dallas Brooks with Giants on the 4th and Dreams on 5th. Adelaide is at the Town Hall on 20th for Giants and 17th for Dreams.



Joe Pass

Now for the workshops and they are just too numerous to list here but the Sydney set for Giants will be at the Paradise Jazz Cellar 14th to 16th March (contact Dave Martin on 929 8652 for details). Melbourne at the Victorian College of Arts 7th-8th (contact Barry Veith on 862 2869) and Adelaide, the College of Arts and Education, 21st-22nd (contact Fiona Guthrie, bus: 22 34333 ext 2961 or ah 44 4814).

Dreams workshops will be at the same venues and with the same contact. Dates are Sydney 7th-9th, Melbourne 14th-15th, and Adelaide 18th-19th March. Individual instrument sessions are \$10 with \$15 for master classes with the whole group and there is private tuition available.

Add to that little lot the fact that Johnny Griffin is rumoured to be on his way and also guitarist Lee Ritenour looks like dropping in after his current tour of Japan. Ritenour could be touring with Crossfire later this month although no firm arrangements have been made.

All that is only what's happening in March, we have no forward information on April and on that note could we ask promoters, tour organisers etc. to let us have advance information as early as possible?

As reported recently in the National Times the Perth based group Mantica will be the focal point of a new music series on the ABC. It reads as though the programme could be confined to WA but let's hope some enterprising Eastern Stater picks up the programme for airing. Mantica are a very good group, and have featured on Jim McLeod's Jazztrack on ABC FM.

And on the subject of radio - Sydney's 2CH is presenting big band music Mondays-Fridays at 10.10-11 pm and 2KY is picking up the vacant Saturday spot. Yes, folks, the commercials are gradually, ever so gradually, coming round.

Brains and driving force behind the Young Northside Big Band, Johnny Speight, looks set to go into the promotional side of the business. He will be looking after the Manly 1981 Jazz Festival over the October long weekend. At least that was the announcement at the end of last year's festival. Now word is going round that another well-known jazz figure is handling the show. Would someone please clarify the situation? Jazz promotion is no longer an amateur affair and if we have to take sides we plump for Speight whose work with the YNBB speaks volumes.

Publisher of Jazz, Peter Brendle, is off to the States to start arrangements for next year's Sydney International Music Festival of which he is also a Director. He'll also be sorting out details of Bob Barnard's organised tour of top jazz spots put together by Pan-Am and travel agents Kuoni. We thought we might give him something to do as well. He will be talking to a world-renowned jazz writer who could well be contributing for us - more details later.

Sydney's Gas Lane Restaurant opened on the 6th January and has taken a few short weeks to become the top room in the country.

Quite a claim, but consider this - fully air-conditioned, it seats more than 250 and the bar area will hold a similar number. And, all but a very few of a potential 500 audience can see and hear (\$20,000 worth of sound equipment) all that happens on a stage that can accommodate a big band. Restaurateur Bruce Viles and Galapagos Duck leader Tom Hare literally put the whole thing together themselves, taking what had been a car park and turning it into a first class venue from scratch. Naturally they called on their experience at the world-famous Basement.

And the new venue has very much the feel of its older 'brother' - lots of wood panelling and the now familiar red ceiling. Already overseas artists, particularly those in town for the festivals in January have compared the room with the best in the world - the most common comparison being with Ronnie Scott's in London. Galapagos Duck plays there on Fridays and Saturdays, Quill's Folly on Wednesdays and Thursdays and other groups featured are Kerrie Biddell and Compared to What, and Crossfire. Overseas musos have sat in, Kenny Ball has just finished a very successful fortnight season and there are extensive plans for visiting stars in the very near future.



Young Northside Big Band

Record Reviews

"IM MEMORY OF MINGUS"

by
Joya Jenson

In January last year, during the first International Music Festival, I talked with Lew Tabackin about his career, which naturally led to discussing the Big Band he co-leads with Toshiko Akiyoshi, and he played me a tape of the sessions the Big Band had just put down in Los Angeles.

What I heard knocked me out — tracks from "Farewell" by the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band, the new (and first) album to be released on the leaders' own label, Ascent Records (Ascent ASC 1000). The title piece, "Farewell" is a dedication to the late Charles Mingus whom Toshiko worked for in the Sixties, and whom she greatly admired. She has done Charles Mingus' memory proud. Toshiko takes a compelling piano solo on this track, demonstrating her remarkable technique, although it is the soulful, beautifully controlled, warm tenor of Lew Tabackin that completely enthralled.

The twain do musically meet on the exquisite "Autumn Sea", with its Oriental/Western textures showcasing the flute solo flights of Lew Tabackin. Nobody in the field can match his artistry on the instrument. These two pieces, incidentally, were among those played by the Big Band of Australian musicians under the direction of Toshiko Akiyoshi during the recent Sydney International Music Festival. The Australians rose to the occasion admirably, ripping through the complex charts like nobody's business. But that's another story.

Their American counterparts here show their mettle and musicianship in crisp, fast-moving dynamic ensembles, or when called upon to lay down slow, lush foundations for the soloists to build upon.



All five tracks on the album are Toshiko Akiyoshi's compositions and arrangements, and all point up the brilliance of both her writing and her execution. It's "Farewell" to Mingus, yes, but for Big Band fans here, it's a wonderful Hello to the greatest Big Band in the World.

Out Of Fashion .Not Out Of Style, by Margret RoadKnight (Infinity L 37538)

It's a joy when you hit on a record where an artist really arrives, gets it all together — especially when they have been around for some time.

Margret RoadKnight's name is listed on the sleeve as co-producer, along with Warren Barentt's, and that's probably one of the reasons for the album's success. She seems to be singing exactly what she wants away from the dictates of commercialism. That means six or seven shades of blue.

With each change of shade, the voice alters subtly, so we get the whole range of her personality. There's woman as demon lover in the classic numbers — Ma Rainey's Misery Blues and Perry Bradford's Ain't Gonna Play No Second

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Fiddle — and the innocent pride of love in I'm Gonna Try.

Much of the credit must go to Judy Bailey, whose piano shares the accompaniment with Chris Qua's bass, Willie Qua's drums and Steve Murphy's guitar on most tracks. It is marvellously unobtrusive — and just right. It ranges from the rippling ornamentation on Young Girl Blues to full-blooded walking left hand on Waltzing Matilda.

On All Blues she stabs out chords over Willie Qua's insistent drums as Margret RoadKnight wafts hauntingly over the top. On Ode to Billy Joe, a tremolo at the height of the drama immeasurably increases the tension.

And there is the masterfully light, tight backing by guitar, bass and drums on Two Ways.

On a couple of tracks Margret gets the help of American Ellen McIlwaine and Graham Lowndes or Bob Hudson and Sandy Kogan, which switches the focus to a more folksy sound.

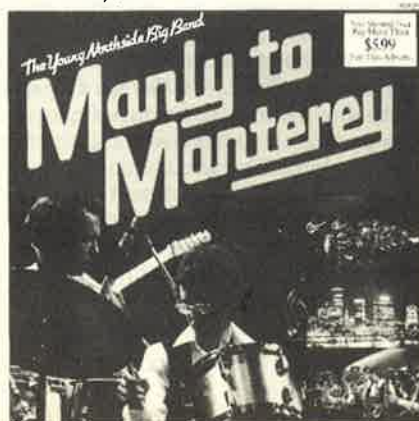
It all adds up to one of the early successes of 1981.

Mike Williams

"A SWINGING JOURNEY TO MONTEREY"

by
Joya Jenson

From the very first bar of the up-tempo "My Foolish Things" on the Young Northside Big Band's recent album, "From Manly To Monterey" (Seven Records MLM 379) we're taken on a mighty, swinging journey. The Big Band era will never come back, the pundits tell us. If it's true, more's the pity. There's an exhilaration and an incredibly powerful excitement generated when you get seventeen or more musicians playing together with a big, full sound, and get to hear the harmonic structure all at once. It hits you where it does the most good. The raunchy trombone of James Morrison on "My Favourite Things" and "Tall Cotton" is a joy, whereas his solo on Jimmy Van Heusen's lovely ballad, "Here's That Rainy Day" typifies the beauty and sadness of this theme and of the Johnny Burke lyric, "... funny how love becomes a cold, rainy day — funny, that rainy day is here." And the John Holman chart captures this feeling admirably.



Dale Barlow's remarkably effective tenor work is heard on "Things" and "Invitation To Monterey", the George Brodbeck original written specially for the YNBB's Monterey Jazz Festival appearance in 1979. This track also features the tenor of Paul Andrews who shines on Sam Nestjco's "Game Plan", the Julian Lee composition and arrangement, "Cornucopia", and on the delicate Roger Frampton piece, "Precious Air".

Drummer Andrew Gander kicks the Band along with a driving know-how that belies his years. The drum chair is of supreme importance to a Big Band, and Gander is no goose!

I'd like to hear more from the other soloists — and who was the pianist leading us into "Game Plan"? But there's no doubt the future is in good hands (and lungs!), and as for the present, get yourself a copy of the album. All in all, a marvellous Invitation To Monterey, and one you simply can't refuse.



Michael Franks with Crossfire Live (WEA 600084)

Crossfire gets equal billing with Michael Franks — and that's just the way it should be. If ever singer and accompanying group were made for each other, this is it.

Franks, the essence of smart hip-dom is one of the most subtle singers around, and on each of the eight long tracks he gives plenty of solo space to the band.

The record is a companion piece to a TV documentary, It's Okay, I'm With The Band, shot during their tour of Australia and New Zealand last September and it shows Crossfire at their top.

Band and singer have such an affinity that the vocals just seem to be part of the band's textures — from Tony Buchanan's warmly expressive sax to the lyricism of Jim Kelly's guitar and Mick Kenny's piano, which have the common quality of leaving notes hanging in the air.

On B'Wana — He No Home, the band get a wonderful feeling of down-home funk with Phil Scorgie's bass scuttling around and Ian Bloxson's hand-drumming. Then Kelly enters, soaring and swooping, dipping and diving.

Chain Reaction starts as a straightforward finger-snapper, with Steve Hope's tight drumming. Then Scorgie bursts into the open at full bore with a bravura solo. Franks finishes this one off, repeating the words 'Love Is A Chain', gradually altering the emphasis on each word.

'The Lady Wants To Know' — familiar to fans of Harry Rivers — features Kelly's guitar in full flight, then soprano sax takes over as the urgency of the band builds.

Perhaps the top track is 'Antonio's Song', a classic bossa nova dedicated to Jobim. On this one Kenny takes full advantage of the beautiful piano in Auckland's town hall to play a solo of sweet sadness, giving way to the guitar, elegantly caressing.

Great Franks and great Crossfire.

Mike Williams

The Len Barnard Story (Part 2)



Bob Barnard, Smacka Fitzgibbon, Lynette Thorpe and Len at the Mordialloc Carnival, Christmas Eve 1949.

“the three best sounds were cornet, clarinet and trombone”

During the war there were shortages of petrol, beer, clothing, butter and sugar. Most commodities were rationed, and cars were laden down with charcoal burners for fuel. The Champ discovered that a strong cleaning fluid called Eon mixed with kerosene got us about. Melbourne was full of American soldiers and Marines – Yes, I was bludging Camel cigarettes at an early age – Artie Shaw’s Navy Band came to town with Rocky Cullucio on piano – exquisite chord changes, and Dave Tough on drums. I loved Dave’s beautiful footwork and the way he shifted the tension and colour behind each soloist. He always had a sort of male nurse with him to keep him off the gin. At this time, I had “The Sheik” by the Benny Goodman Sextet B.R.C. (Before Ride Cymbals). Nick Fatool on drums opened up my world with his insistent half-closed hi-hat rhythm which generated a hurtling excitement. Brother Bob and I spent hours listening, and absorbing the heady stuff.

Occasionally The Champ would stick his head round the door and shout – “No use listening to Benny Goodman and all those fellas. You’ll never be any good unless you practise. You’ll be a pair of billy-goats –”.

At age 13, Bob was in the local brass band under Charlie Smith, a champion cornettist who used to bite on several corks to keep his loose dentures in place while he played. My aunts used to cry when they saw Bob marching with the band and tooting “Tiberius” or “Semper Fidelis” in his little blue uniform and cap. Records were all 78 r.p.m., and we devoured everything. My favourites were “All Too Soon” by Duke Ellington, featuring Ben Webster, a performance of grave, cat-like charm, and “Ring Dem Bells” by Lionel Hampton, which would still be in my “desert-island-ten”. The earth revolved merrily with four nights a week playing gigs through schooldays, football, cricket,

and swimming. Mum’s band – Kath Barnard’s Orchestra – played stock arrangements mainly by Skip Martin, Spud Murphy and Johnny Warrington. I longed for some killer-diller charts by Jimmy Mundy, who wrote steamers for Lunceford and Goodman, but they were unobtainable.

I played with Fred Holland’s Band on Saturday nights and he had some “atmospheric” charts by Raymond Scott – “Twilight in Turkey” – “The Toy Trumpet” etc.

In that band was Jack Butler, a clarinetist who had hollow cheeks, deeply sunken eyes, a hypnotic stare, and a high-pitched barking voice. He had very bad teeth, and when he spoke, he always held his hand in front of his mouth, coughing slightly, like a ham actor playing a diplomat. He wore red socks with his tuxedo, and always wowed the crowd with “slap-tongue” clarinet solos.

All my equipment in those days was inferior. Good sticks and brushes were scarce and Zildjian cymbals just weren’t about – I had a bastardized ill-matched kit and drawing sounds from it required the utmost ingenuity. Good basic experience.

The Champ played a Buescher tenor sax, and often had a handkerchief stuffed in the bell, blowing cigarette smoke through the neckpiece and intoning mournfully – “Look – bloody thing’s leakin’ all over the place –”. But we managed somehow, The Champ shaving his own reeds out of perspex. A friend who worked in an aircraft factory would bring him offcuts from fighter-plane cabins. The war ended in a burst of cheering, as all wars do, and in 1948, Bob and I switched allegiance from swing to “classic jazz”. It was “Doctor Jazz” by Jelly Roll Morton’s Red Hot Peppers that did it.

Here was the true essence, the unalloyed “hotness” for which we had subconsciously craved for years. So a band had to be formed to spread this wonderful message, and with



Eric Toohey, The Champ, Howard Plummer with Len on drums and Kath Barnard at the Mentone City Hall.



Eric Toohey, The Champ and Howard Plummer with the Kath Barnard Band at Mentone City Hall.



At back: Bob Fredrickson, Tick Bray and Bob Barnard. In front: Len, Smacka Fitzgibbon, Fred Whitworth and Doc Willis rehearsing at Smacka's house in 1949.

crusading zeal and perhaps absurd pretension, we plunged into the maelstrom.

The two main bands in the revival were Graeme Bell and Frank Johnson, but I wanted a hot New Orleans style band with a different approach to the idiom than had — to my knowledge — hitherto been attempted in Australia. Our early efforts were full of piss and vinegar and not much artistry, but the band always stomped. I was on piano when Smacka Fitzgibbon joined, and Bob was blowing with great fervour. The influence was Armstrong's Hot Five, and we secured our own half-hour radio show on 3KZ every Friday at 7 p.m., compered by Philip Gibbs. Frank Traynor came in on trombone, I switched to drums, and Tich Bray played clarinet. Smacka did the vocals. When the band finally jelled it was all crimson, magenta, and vermilion, or so it seemed at the time.

We made our first record for Jazzart in 1949, "Ory's Creole Trombone" and "Clarinet Marmalade" for Bob Clemen's Jazzart label. It didn't set the jazz world on fire then and it certainly won't now. Bob was causing lots of comment at the age of 17 and the band was becoming popular. We were reading the novels of Frederic Brown — "The Fabulous Clipjoint" — "We All Killed Grandma" — and "Here Comes A Candle" which were peopled by off-beat characters with names like Yehudi Smith. I always thought that the three best smells in the world were new-mown grass, fresh tar, and vanilla beans.

But, at the start of the 50's, the three best sounds were cornet, clarinet and trombone playing collective polyphony. I don't think we ever got over those first kicks, and we entered the new decade ready to conquer the world.

We were very young.



next issue: May/June 1981



The Young Lions: *Dale Barlow and James Morrison*

The Small Labels: *A look at the small jazz labels.*

The Len Barnard Story: *Part three of a very personal music history.*

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Bob has had several successful tours to jazz clubs around the United States and plans to follow the same principles in September this year. However, this time he is inviting jazz lovers in Australia, to join him.

50 JAZZ - MARCH/APRIL, 1981



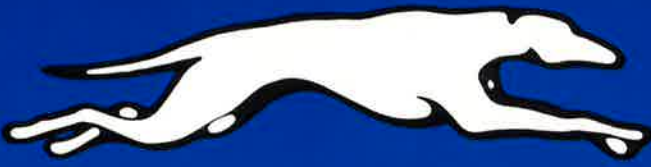
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