

JAZZ



Spring 1983
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The Australasian contemporary Music Magazine



**James Morrison
and the
Morrison Bros. Big Bad Band:
Jazz For The People**

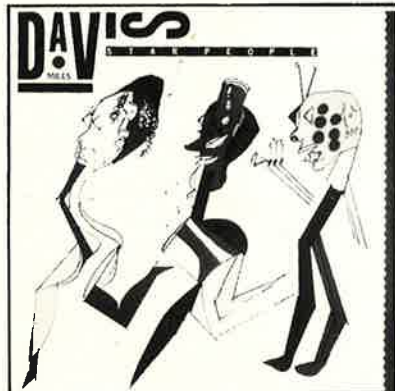
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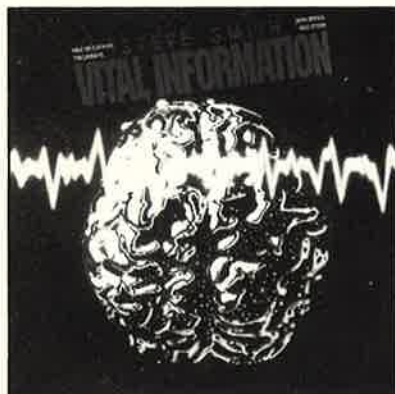
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JAZZ

The Australasian contemporary Music Magazine



JANE MARCH

James Morrison:
He and his brother John
have ambitious plans for
the Morrison Bros. Big Bad Band

6

Volume 3, No. 5

Spring 1983



10

The Morrison Bros. Big Bad Band

by Eric Myers

6

Ted Vining: In The Jazz Wilderness

by Neville Meyers

10

New York, New York!

by Adrian Jackson

13

The Great Australian Bassists: A Survey (Part 2)

by Adrian Jackson, Shirley Horsnell & Neville Meyers

17

Tramping The Festival Circuit

by Lee Jeske

20

Riffin' With The Scotch

by Len Barnard

22

Sydney Jazz Club: Thirty Years On (Part 2)

by Bruce Johnson

24

Ten Years Of The Basement

by Phil Tripp

26

Barry Wratten: New Orleans Resident

by Marele Day

30

Herbie Hancock: Exclusive Interview

by Eric Myers

34

The Recordings of Art Pepper

by Niels Nielsen

57

Also in this edition:

Ian Neil's Grace Notes; the Merv Acheson Story (Part 9); the National Jazz Centre, London; Early Australian Jazz Picture Book; And We've Also Heard, by Dick Scott; concert reviews; record reviews; New Record Releases, by Roger Beilby; Reports from Brisbane, Mildura, Perth & Sydney; Jazz Jottings, by Eric Myers.



22



34

Edit.

The 1983 drought in Sydney jazz appears to have broken. Of course there has been unprecedented activity in the jazz clubs — about 80 performances every week, according to the Jazz Action Society Newsletter, which indicates that jazz is far from dead. But there have been few major promotions this year, very little to inject lifeblood into local jazz.

That was the case until October. Then on October 1, 2 and 3, we had the Manly Jazz Carnival — again a splendid success with about 100,000 people turning out over three days to hear jazz in the holiday atmosphere of Manly Corso on a long weekend. During October we also had the Hilton International Sydney Jazz Festival, a 4-week long event which presented a cavalcade of Sydney jazz talent, along with a sprinkling of interstate musicians and one from overseas.

The organisers of the Hilton event have described it as a success and are planning a major jazz festival in Sydney during 1984 (but not in January). JAZZ Magazine congratulates the Hilton for doing so much to promote jazz, and we wish them well, particularly because they have gone to pains to present groups representing the whole spectrum of jazz in the city.

It was in a discussion with the organisers of the Hilton event that a particular question was raised, and it has to do with how well our local musicians present their product. Of course, this has little to do with the standard of the music. But the organisers of the Hilton event felt that, in some cases, jazz players working in the Marble Bar were not dressed well enough, and therefore were not helping the hotel's image.

In the light of these comments, I would like to draw your attention to a letter we publish from Mr. Chris Welsh, a tireless jazz enthusiast for many years, who lives in Albury. It is obvious from his stay in Sydney recently that he was disappointed in the way our players were presenting their music. His views are food for thought for us all.

Perhaps it is also worth considering the views of James and John Morrison. In our story on the Morrison Bros. Big Bad Band, they state that they see no reason why jazz should not be more popular with the general public. It is simply a question of how the music is presented.

Of course, in jazz circles, there still exists the view that jazz can never be popular — it is too esoteric and advanced for the average listener, and can only be played to a tiny elite of enlightened buffs. I tend to think of this as a 'sad sack' mentality. Proponents of this view tend to go around whingeing about the low standards of public taste and the failure of established clubs to put on more experimental jazz.

However, isn't it possible for musicians of all jazz idioms to present their music a little better, without compromising their art at all? In other words, the music should be presented without fear or favour, but jazz performers could ensure, for example, that they give the names of the tunes they play, and perhaps the name of the composer. There are other minor ways in which jazz performers could improve their presentation. This is something to be considered by all those who are presenting their music to the public.

ERIC MYERS
Editor

Letters

Sir,

Peter Rechniewski sought me out in the Soup Plus and said he wished for me to respond to his article "The Crisis in Modern Jazz in Australia" (JAZZ, May/June 1983).

As I read it, it seemed to me that he and I could not be in closer agreement regarding the unfortunate situation of modern jazz in our culture. I noted that traditional jazz has wider appeal to Australian audiences (JAZZ, December 1982), while he spoke of middle-of-the-road jazz as having greater "popularity", more "drawing power"; the implications for modern jazz are the same in both instances. I was therefore surprised to find that Peter should speak of my own speculations in such virulent and confrontational terms as "absurd", "highly questionable" and, indeed, "false". His grievance sprang from my suggestion that, as he paraphrases me, "... trad. jazz ... communicates better than modern jazz ... in Australian society". But noting the lesser popularity of modern jazz with Australian audiences, he is saying the same thing. So I have to wonder, what is his real complaint? This is unclear, partly because he misreads my own article in a number of ways. He ascribes to my anecdote involving Marty Mooney the putative status of a "proof". No. It was presented as a "demonstration", and Marty's comment as an "observation". There is a recognised and important difference and the anecdote was simply a well focussed convergence of theory and praxis. Peter also asserts that this anecdote was virtually my only evidence. Rather, it seems to be the only "evidence" which he chose to see, and if he chose not to see the rest the first time around, it is unlikely that he would choose to see it if I repeated it here.

More serious is Peter's misreading of verifiable facts. Whatever his argument is, he makes it clear that its cornerstone, "the single most important factor", is that "traditional jazz was the only jazz played here for close on

ten years". Which ten years was that? The Forties, which was the period in connection with which he made that comment? It will come as a shock to scores of dedicated musicians, like Wally Norman, Charlie Munro, Billy Weston, Ron Falson, Charlie Blott, Stewie Speer, Splinter Reeves, Don Banks, Eddie Oxley, Bruce Clarke, the Ralph Mallen Big Band in Sydney, the 18 piece Freddy Thomas Big Band in Melbourne. In fact, the number of musicians playing traditional jazz in the Forties in Australia was a tiny minority of the music population. Read the basic literature on the subject and talk to those who were on the scene. This assertion, which Peter himself presents as his most important one, apart from being disrespectful to a generation of musicians, has no foundation at all. So where does that leave his argument?

I am afraid it leaves it *ad hominem*. The real issue for him seems to be a personal one. He speaks darkly of me being "involved directly with traditional jazz" as though this disqualifies me from liking or understanding modern jazz. In principle the *ad hominem* tactic is logically dubious. But if you want to play on those terms you must know your man. The picture of me as a mouldy fygge gleefully sticking pins into an effigy of modern jazz is contested at every possible level. In my article itself I said, "Anyone who thinks the basic thesis from which I begin is a way of scoring points for traditional jazz at the expense of modern, is simply reading his own prejudices into the matter." Apart from that article, what does Peter know of me to support the image? Most of my reviews for JAZZ Magazine have been of modern jazz, including what I called "the record of the year" (May/June 1983). Most bewildering to me is the fact that the only contact Peter had with me up until the appearance of his article arose from his request for help in organising the recording of some modern jazz performances he was helping to arrange, a request with which I immediately and enthusiastically complied. As with my article, he has chosen to misread me. On radio, in print, and according to my slender talents as a musician,



Bruce Johnson on trumpet: not a mouldy fygge gleefully sticking pins into an effigy of modern jazz ...

JANE MARCH

my involvement is quite visibly with a wide range of the music. The other necessary precaution before taking on the person rather than the issue, is, look to your own credentials. There are established procedures in Cultural Studies, of which Peter seems ignorant. To speak of a speculation as "false", for example, is glibly to confuse scientific criteria with those appropriate to the Humanities. If we wish to have discussion of jazz, like the music itself, taken more seriously than pub philosophy, we should try to become acquainted with the disciplines of, for example, Aesthetics.

Overall, I ask myself why he really wishes to achieve with what he himself concedes in conversation as his acerbity. Looking at the spirit of both articles, I feel what must be remembered is that when it comes to modern jazz, Peter and I agree. No good will be done for jazz if that is allowed to count for less than any grievance he may harbour.

BRUCE JOHNSON
Concord, NSW

Sir,

Please allow me to use your magazine to extend an open invitation to Australia's modern jazz musicians.

Throughout 1983, the Melbourne Jazz Co-Operative, with the assistance of a Music Board grant, has presented a monthly concert series of modern jazz. Unlike many other 'promoters' in this country, we choose our artists purely on musical merit, and not on stylistic categories, established reputations, or commercial appeal. So far, we have presented some of our finest players, in styles ranging from bebop through to spontaneous improvisation and electric harmonologies, with bands including Brian Brown, Onaje, Jeff Pressing's World Rhythm Band, Tony Gould, and Odwala from Melbourne; Bruce Cale, Bernie McGann, Mark Simmonds, Schmoie and Ted Nettelbeck, Ted Vining, The Benders, Jon Rose, and Great White Noise from interstate; and ex-Melbournian Paul Grabowsky (now based in Europe).

The results of this presentation of mainly under-exposed artists have been pleasing attendances, and a great deal of excellent

original Australian music — much of which has been recorded. The concert series has been successful because there is an audience for properly presented modern jazz; and because of the commitment of most of the musicians (especially the 'older' ones, such as Bruce Cale, Ted Vining, and Bernie McGann), who treated it like a special event rather than just another 'gig'.

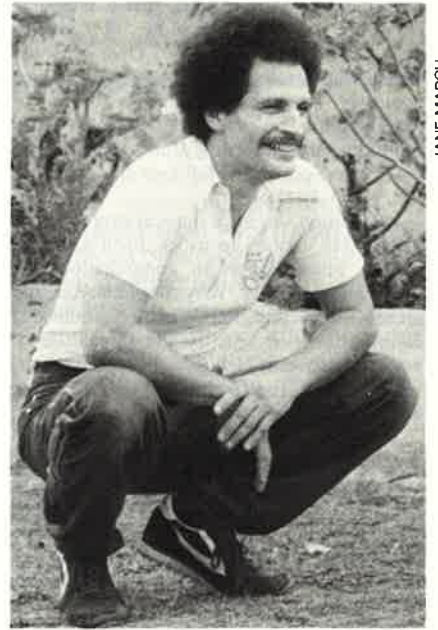
Due to continued generous support from the Music Board, this series will continue throughout 1984. The grant is once again \$5,000 for 12 concerts, which means a tight budget if we try and present interstate artists. However, we have decided once again to make some financial sacrifices for this end, because we believe that the modern scene in this country is only going to develop when we start to pool our resources through some healthy 'two-way' exchanges between all the States, and all the styles. Hopefully our series might convince the Jazz Action Societies and other concert bodies around Australia that the presentation of contemporary Australian music is both desirable and viable. If musicians or any others are interested in this series, they may contact me at 16 Neave St., Hawthorn East, Vic. 3123.

Finally, something which could really benefit the growth of the whole modern scene would be the presence here of the important innovator Charlie Haden.

Despite the fact that Haden was owed money for his 1981 tour here with Old and New Dreams, he is interested in coming here for several months to teach and play with local musicians, as long as he can cover his basic costs. Brian Brown, of the Victorian College of the Arts, and Don Burrows, of the NSW Conservatorium, have both been informed of this, but anyone else interested may write to me, or to Haden direct at: 16916 Bollinger Drive, Pacific Palisades, California, 90272, USA. During the 1981 workshop, I found him to be an articulate communicator, and a concerned and dedicated person who would make an ideal teacher (he actually holds a Master's Degree in Education from North Texas State University). We are lucky that he is still interested in this country, and I hope we can

redress his previous unfortunate experience here.

MARTIN JACKSON
(For the Melbourne Jazz Co-Operative)
Melbourne, Victoria



JANE MARCH

Vince Genova: the most important quality of a good critic is the ability to be objective . . .

Sir,

It would be unfair if artists, and musicians in particular, could not respond to reviews written about them, which contain insufficient, misleading or erroneous information. Case in point: Phil Tripp's review (JAZZ, July/August 1983) of the Genova/Lesmana/White/Nebula concert which took place at the Sydney Opera House on June 25, 1983.

The most important quality of a good critic is the ability to be objective in his or her writing. Unfortunately Phil Tripp does not fit into this category. In this particular review, few facts were presented about the music, including repertoire, most of which were classic jazz standards and easily identifiable

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— especially to someone who is supposed to be a jazz critic.

Instead comments such as "the Recording Hall does not lend itself to jazz" were made. May I suggest that *any place* lends itself to jazz if jazz is performed there, including churches, which provide "cavernous acoustics" similar to the Opera House Recording Hall. Why? Because these acoustics provide a natural source of reverberation, otherwise electronically imitated in the recording studio. The designers of the Recording Hall kept that in mind, Mr. Tripp. Did you?

In addition, jazz is a musical expression to be heard in various acoustics, for it was born among black American congregations indoors and outdoors. Why should anyone put an acoustical condition on its performance? I cannot, however, justify the imbalance of volume between Nebula's band members, which made it difficult to hear the more delicate instruments clearly.

In reference to the "abrupt stops mid-tune". The concert was billed as a recording session, not a concert *per se*. It was also explained to the audience before the session started, so that "mistakes" which may be unnoticed by an audience, did not pass by. Reason: recorded music lends itself to more critical listening. I wasn't embarrassed about stopping "mid-tune". Was Mr. Tripp?

Other comments such as "Lesmana ... outpaced Genova" and "Indra could play faster than Vince", show immaturity and lack of musical understanding on Mr. Tripp's part. Music is not a race or an Olympic sport. If Mr. Tripp could have understood my musical phrasing, articulation and embellishments, he would know they require far more technique, and are more complex, than just "fast playing".

It wasn't because "Indra could play faster than Vince" that the duo got out of tune, either. It's an acoustic problem, Mr. Tripp. When two 9 ft. grand pianos are facing one another, as in the Recording Hall, there is a blocking of sound from one player to the other. That is, sound from my piano blocked Indra's from coming across, and vice versa. We rely on fold-backs to hear each other, and if they are not at the correct volume, as was

the case, we're apt to de-synchronise. This was out of our control and in the hands of the sound technicians.

In relation to my "Oscar Peterson stride form" style: I didn't play any stride that evening, and it's all on tape if Mr. Tripp would like to re-listen. Yes, I studied with Oscar, but I've also studied Bill Evans, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, Keith Jarrett and Art Tatum, in that order. That's my "style". Indra Lesmana's style is primarily influenced by Chick Corea, a style which does not defy "definition of influence". That fact that I studied with Oscar Peterson probably led to a preconception on your part, Mr. Tripp.

Just a few more comments. I enjoyed Sandie White's performance immensely, and the recording reflects both our enjoyment. Although her portion extended over an hour, if you came to listen to the music, it was all there, without hesitation or stops. However, the contrast was intentional. Why should that contrast be condemned by a critic who feels that only one form of jazz should be performed on a given occasion?

I suggest that the critic who wrote this review researches quite a bit more into the field he is writing about so that he can come up with objective criticisms.

VINCE GENOVA
Sydney, NSW

Sir,

How is it that Rosalind McMillan Brown (JAZZ, July/August 1983) takes such umbrage at Adrian Jackson saying in his article on her husband, Brian Brown (JAZZ, March/April 1983), that his band and music in the last few years lack "depth, maturity and power" and as a soloist has been "similarly inconsistent"? How would she know when she is never present at any of his concerts? This is the week in, week out playing, not some big occasion when it's the done thing to be there.

Had she attended these week to week playings as constantly as Adrian, she would realise that out of respect for what Brian has given to music, and friendship, his comments were a kindness rather than a temerity.

As Adrian was born in 1957, he'd be a bit

ahead of himself to review music (and I suppose Ros means jazz) in the 1960s. I don't know how more up-to-date one can get, after going to New York this year for a month to listen to the best jazz musicians in the world. Surely that is being up-to-date as a critic. But pardon me; I'm Adrian's mother!

PATRICIA JACKSON
Hawthorn East, Victoria

Sir,

In the August, 1983 edition of *Jazz Journal International*, the editor puts forward the proposition that jazz remains a "twilight" art because too many of us like to keep our heroes to ourselves. Relating that comment to the Sydney scene, I feel that it will remain a "twilight" art because it would seem that the musicians like it that way.

In any other live art form you will find that:

- It's rehearsed.
- There is some form of presentation — in that they already know what they're going to do next and they have intermissions of an acceptable length.
- There is no drinking on stage — can you imagine Dame Joan sipping a scotch while Donald Smith does his solo?

Whilst I was in Sydney recently I saw nine different groups and only one of them satisfied all three of the above criteria. I should mention that I heard some great music and really enjoyed myself, but then, I've been a convert for 25 years. I'm sure that if jazz is ever going to raise itself to the level of the other arts in terms of general public regard, eligibility for greater subsidies, grants and increased financial reward for the performers, then it will be necessary for the jazz community as a whole to smarten up its product. I am sure that my argument is supported by the success, both in terms of public image and income earned, of some musicians who can firstly produce good music and, secondly match the above criteria.

I should mention that groups that I have played in have usually been a brewer's dream and a listener's nightmare, so naturally my comments are directed at the scene in general and not at any particular person or group.

C.W. WELSH
Albury, NSW

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With all due respect to Mr. Adolphe Sax, Coleman Hawkins invented the saxophone.

James Moody. □

Since my retirement from the ABC I've been leisurely wandering, high on nostalgia, the scenes of my boyhood. So after an absence of two issues I'm glad to be putting some notes together again.

In the May/June issue of JAZZ, Dick Scott began his column with a par about The Tribute To Ian Neil concert at the Sydney Musicians Club last March. Regarding that memorable event, I want to record my sincere thanks to Lee Bagwell, who organised the concert, to the Club, the Jazz Action Society of NSW, the many talented musicians — who performed without fee — and to the large audience . . . collectively you made it a tribute indeed. Unforgettable! And I wish you could see the trophy with which I was presented . . . quite unique . . . that's right, the only one of its kind. As well there's *the record*, which Dick and some of his mates from "just up the road" at the Journalists Club made for me. Who needs Logies, Gold Records or whatever! □

It was a magic month, was March! The week before the concert at The Musicians Club, Don Burrows organised a series of tribute performances, over three nights, in the super Supper Club named for him in the beautiful Regent Hotel. The ambience, the music and the hospitality were intoxicating. So, to Don and the other musicians, Ted Wright (The Regent's GM), Nick Brooks (boss of the Supper Club) and his staff, thank you, all, so much. □

William Alexander Greer, Jr., Sonny to you and me, was a co-founder of the Duke Ellington band in the early Twenties, and remained

Ian Neil's GRACE NOTES

the drummer and second-in-command for nearly thirty years. But this note is not about his long tenure with the band nor his dexterity with the sticks and mallets, you see Sonny was also a dab hand with an *aphorism*. He, however, didn't know it. His thoughts just came out that way. Try these:

Pool is like the violin — you've got to play an hour every day. When you're getting ready to lie, don't smile.

Retired people lie under a tree and play checkers, and the next thing you know they're gone.

Not this "people" Sonny. □



Sonny Greer: a dab hand with an aphorism. . .

Swing is black energy brought to music. It has to do with how different people think about rhythm, about time, how they see themselves in space, what they think the body is. It becomes a cultural thing.

Cecil Taylor. □

If the guitar players of the world were laid head to toe how many times would that string of humanity encircle the globe? Well, that sort of question is best left to the "Believe It Or Not" Ripley-types. However, the word *string* in that question prompts the interesting story of the advent of the nylon string. For centuries strings for the acoustic

guitar had been made of silk and gut. World War Two caused a drastic shortage of both commodities for uses other than as sutures. In sheer desperation Albert Augustine, the famous New York guitar-maker, visited a government war-supplies warehouse in search of some oddments, at least, of the precious materials with which to complete his instruments. He was disappointed. But he did see some huge spools of rejected nylon which, even as they days passed, he could not forget. When with his friend Andres Segovia some little time later, he noticed a solitary nylon string on the master's guitar. It had been made by Du Pont and an admirer from the company had given it to him. Also, he told Segovia that Du Pont had canvassed the established stringmakers with the idea only to be told "it won't work". Segovia then confided to Augustine his strong desire to have the first *three* strings of nylon. Later, working on the rejected nylon with a rebuilt binocular grinder (from the same warehouse), Augustine found that though much of it was too rough for his purpose, he could get enough smooth lengths to make some excellent strings. The nylon string, the first real change in string-making in hundreds of years, had arrived. □

Apart from the musicians themselves there is one other person who deserves high praise and a share of the glory so justly earned by the brilliant Pyramid's recent, stunning success abroad. That person is Liz Holtham. She wasn't overseas with the band to share the numbness of apprehension, the tingle of anticipation, the thrill of acclamation and the savour of achievement the boys must have experienced with each crowd-stopping performance. Liz deserved to be there; and, of course, she would have liked to be there. But now only she feels the special reward for her years of selfless devotion to the welfare, promotion and the ultimate success of Pyramid. Liz knows what she did. David H., Roger, Bob, David J. know . . . and I know. Speaking for myself . . . I won't forget. □

THE MORRISON BROS. BIG BAD BAND

By Eric Myers

Since James Morrison burst into prominence in Australian jazz in the late 1970s, he has been a stimulating presence. He is certainly the most dynamic player to have emerged for many years, applauded by both the critics and the general public alike.

He first came to notice as a trombone soloist with John Speight's Young Northside Big Band. As a 16-year-old he joined the group just before it left for the Monterey Jazz Festival, California, in 1979 and with fiery, audacious solos, proved to be one of the orchestra's stars.

Since that time he has had a meteoric rise in Australian jazz. Studying at the NSW Conservatorium of Music he met Don Burrows, who invited the young man to work in his regular groups. Still a teenager, Morrison took his place next to Burrows on the concert stage like a veteran. They have been performing together now for about three years, and Morrison now teaches in the Jazz Studies program at the Conservatorium.

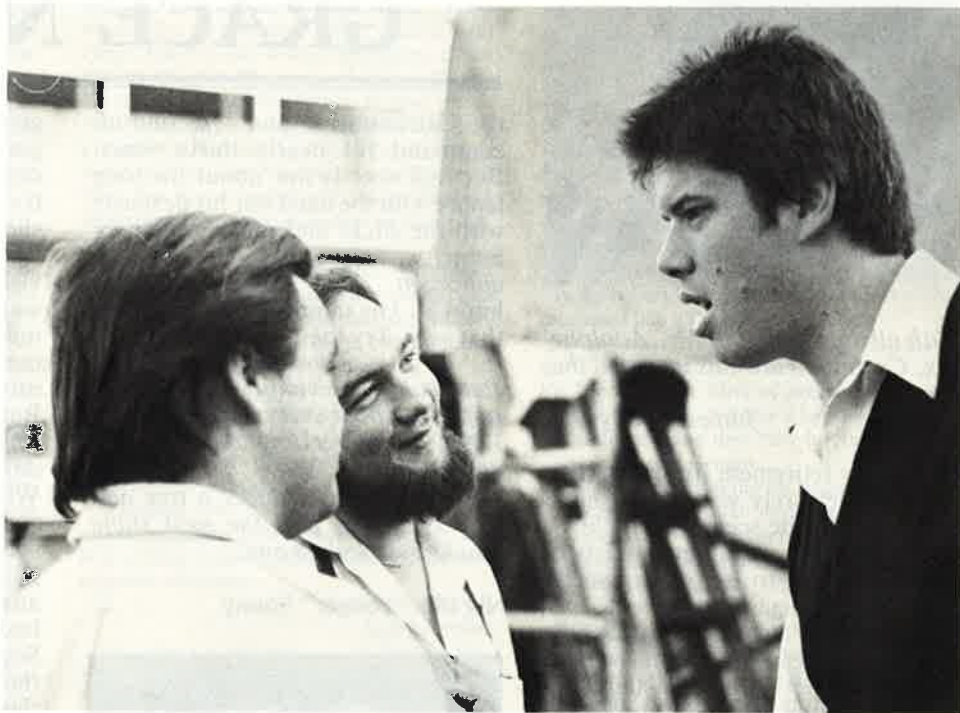
It was obvious from the beginning that Morrison was a natural jazz musician with a wonderful, overflowing talent. But he soon showed that he was also an extraordinary multi-instrumentalist, able to play a great range of instruments (many of them considered mutually exclusive) at a high professional standard. They include trumpet (valve & slide), trombone, alto & tenor saxophones, flugelhorn, piano, bass euphonium, tenor horn, E Flat tuba, flute and guitar.

It is not surprising that James Morrison comes from a musical family. His father George, a technical producer with the ABC, played clarinet, and his mother Jess plays alto saxophone. And of course, there is his brother John, 23, who plays drums, along with a variety of other instruments. John takes a lower profile than does his more celebrated brother, but he is an essential part of the Morrison team.

The Morrison brothers have formed a new big band, and with typical audacity, they call it the Morrison Bros. Big Bad Band. In one swoop they have gathered together the players in Sydney whom they consider the best jazz musicians they have worked with during their (short) careers — players who, they believe, have not only musical brilliance, but also personality.

Other than the Morrisons, the group includes Peter Cross & Warwick Alder (trumpets), Paul Andrews, Jason Morphet & Tom Baker (saxophones), Bob Johnson & Peter Trotta (trombones), Kevin Hunt (piano), Steve Brien (guitar) and Steve Elphick (bass). David Pudney (vibes) has just been replaced by Glen Henrich.

"The reasons for forming the band are twofold," says James. "John and I felt the need to have a band



John Morrison (left), James Morrison (centre) with the saxophonist Tom Baker at the Manly Jazz Carnival: the band feels like a family or a club . . .

that was just how we wanted to play. The other reason was, loving big bands, I felt it was the best way to showcase my playing. There are no big bands around that sound like I think a big band should sound — with lots of solos, and not so much reading a lot of charts. No-one was doing it. I thought the people in Australia would really love to see it. So we thought we'd better get it together."

With their big band the Morrisons have attempted something more than just another gathering of professional musicians reading charts. They are consciously encouraging a friendly, family-like atmosphere in the band. So, the members meet regularly aboard the Morrison yacht *Tiki* for barbecues, imbibing and rehearsals.

"Our band must be more than just a band", says James. "To use the John Hoffman Big Band as an example, or any of the other big bands around today, in the style they play it doesn't matter too much who's on the stand, as long as they can play. They might book me one week, or Bob Johnson the next, for the trombone chair — it doesn't really matter. With our band it matters who's there; it has to be those people, or it won't sound right. What they contribute to the band, personality-wise, is important. We make sure the band feels more like family or a club.

"We'd like to get a larger boat. If we can take the band to the festivals, say to Montreux, the Monterey, the North Sea, and get the band known — get on the festival circuit, so to speak, in the normal way, flying there, coming back — then the next thing will be a larger boat to accommodate the big band and their better halves, and have a room to rehearse and record at sea. Then we want to do the festival circuit by boat, and do a world tour for a year.

JANE MARCH

"All the guys are very keen to do this. So, we've struck a bunch of guys that are all great jazz players, who can all fit well personality-wise together, who all want to carry out this plan with us."

The Morrison Bros. Big Bad Band has appeared at Brisbane's Warana Festival on September 24 at the Manly Jazz Carnival on October 3 and, in their first concert in their own right, at the Seymour Centre, Sydney, on October 27. They will be doing a number of concerts in NSW country areas in November, before going on to a concert at the Dallas Brooks Hall, Melbourne, in December.

The Seymour Centre concert, promoted and produced by the Morrison brothers themselves, was an evening of marvellous, heartwarming jazz, played to a creditable audience of over 200. One of the first things to note was that, despite the Morrisons' desire to make the band entertaining to the general public, there was no skimping on solos. All the soloists were free to stretch out and express themselves at length, over an understated, relaxed, loping feel provided by the rhythm section.

The group is chock-full of splendid soloists, and one would be hard-put to select the most impressive solos played on that evening. However, Tom Baker's baritone sax solo in a rocketing version of *Cherokee* was particularly memorable, as was his ingeniously crafted solo in *Basin Street Blues*.

In *Blue Roller*, a great tune by the black American saxophonist Gene Ammons, there were inspired duels between the trumpeters Peter Cross and Warwick Alder, followed by Paul Andrews, Jason Morphet and Baker for a thrilling tenor saxophone chase. The battle between the last three showed how easily this band incorporates a mixture of styles, from the stomping, swing-style of Baker, through the fluent modern jazz style of Andrews, to the restless, jagged lines of the post-Coltrane style exemplified by Morphet.

The Morrison brothers feel that the quality of the saxophone section has a lot to do with the delightful personalities of the three players. "The sax section is



JANE MARCH

Trumpeter Peter Cross: good to have a man with such a professional experience . . .

probably our most colourful section, having three different styles of player," says James. "Tom Baker, on baritone, needs no explanation; Jason again is another thing, with the type of playing he does with The Benders; and Paul Andrews comes from the more legit thing. I love the sound the sax section gets, with those

three different sounds. Yet they go so well together. Personality-wise, they're all crazy in different ways. Jason is just quite insane and different; he doesn't come out with a lot of funny lines or anything — he's just *weird*. He's more 'modern funny.' Paul is like the classic whingeing Pom stand-up comedian. Tom's the best cook we've ever struck. He cooks for the band. Whenever we rehearse, we have a meal together. Tom's like a big brother to the band . . . He is one of the more mature players and people in the band, and yet he's just as much fun as anyone."

"In the 'bone section Bob Johnson's a lunatic, that's the word for him", says James. "he does the best impressions I've ever seen. He does Warren Daly better than Warren, and everyone else better than they can do it themselves. He's



JANE MARCH

The saxophone section in performance at the Seymour Centre. From left Jason Morphet, Tom Baker and Paul Andrews: all crazy in different ways . . .

berserk, and very very clever. We're going to use him more in our show. So far, he's just a disorganised lunatic, but a great player.



JANE MARCH

The trombones — Peter Trotta (left), James Morrison (centre) and Bob Johnson (right) — at the Seymour Centre . . .

"Peter Trotta on the 'bone is Bob's protege, you might say. He's learning how to be ridiculous as well as how to play the trombone. He's a good bass 'bone player.

"Warwick Alder and Peter Cross are the real 'Australian musician' section", says James. "They're always coming out with the gags. They're both very loose, very tasteful players too — in contrast to me!"

"It's good to have Peter there", says John. "He's got a professional experience, he's well-seasoned, and will pool his experience . . ."

"Steve Elphick has to be the gentleman of the band", says James. "He's so well-mannered. He's just as much fun again as all the other guys, and loves a gag but he's the least crass — nature's gentleman, and a twisted sense of humour to match.

"Steve Brien on guitar is a little vague. Jason Morphett takes the cake for being vague, but Steve comes a very close second. He plays wonderfully, plays all the styles; he can play the 30s style behind Tom or can play very modern guitar styles, and anything in between.

"Kevin Hunt, on the piano, is also insane — but a different insane to everyone else. He's not berserk like Bob Johnson. He's behaving quite normally but according to a whole different set of rules. He writes marvellously well, and the band is still coming up to his arrangements at the moment.

"John Morrison . . . I wouldn't call him insane, or a lunatic, or berserk, or any of those things", says James. "He's just dangerous — only surpassed by myself."

The Morrisons firmly believe that the time is ripe to present jazz to the general public, just as 'popular music' is presented to them. It is not so much a question of what the music is, but how it's presented.

"We're talking about playing jazz and wanting the people to dig it", says James. "It's been so long now that jazz has been only for a small section of the public, while everyone else likes popular music. One of the differences between so-called 'popular music' and jazz is in the way the music is presented. In a popular rock band the most up-front thing is the personalities of the people in it — they're always characters, and they're always selling themselves through the music. To come out playing *A Night In Tunisia* or *Anthropology*, and all the other things we do, is as jazz as you can get, but we will have the personalities of the players up-front. I think people are going to be surprised at how 'commercial' that is. Yet it's not *musically* commercial; it's the way we're presenting it that's commercial. I haven't seen that done since big bands were popular music. We'll play real jazz, but with that personality, and make it popular."

The Morrisons believe that it is a shame that jazz musicians, who generally share a bizarre, subversive sense of humour, are usually so serious and humourless on stage. So, they have made a conscious effort to include humour in their performances. The first hint of it at the Seymour Centre was in the first half, during David Basden's arrangement of the Lalo Shifrin tune *Blues*: smoke began to billow mysteriously from beneath the drums.

Later the two Morrisons plus Tom Baker and Paul Andrews sang *By The Light Of The Silvery Moon* in barbershop quartet style. At the beginning of the second half, James and John arrived on stage in mid-air, suspended by ropes from the ceiling. The highlight of these off-beat antics was the rendition of *Bugler's Holiday* with nine of the players on trumpet, introduced and conducted by Paul (Whingeing Pom) Andrews. It was hilarious, and in no way detracted from the music.

Of course, James Morrison himself confirmed his reputation as the most exciting young musician in Australian jazz. Principally, he played the trumpet and trombone throughout the evening — an unlikely combination of instruments, considering that both require a completely different embouchure or lip position. But Morrison reinforced his extraordinary multi-instrumental talent by playing the tune *Out Of Nowhere* on the piano, in a pumping, individual style, accompanied by Steve Elphick on bass and John Morrison on drums. He received a great ovation.

The Morrisons look to the future with an infectious optimism. "I have the feeling that, played just right, we could have the makings of what we've all been wanting, and that is to have jazz become popular", says James. "The real thing is to have the public sitting there and going through the improvisations with the soloists. *Jazz* audiences sit there and they play the solos with the musicians, through the moods and shapes of the solo; I'd like to see the general public open to that. In the end, why do we want the general public to like jazz anyway? Because it's great music. At the moment the music they're listening to — popular music — doesn't take them on that sort of journey, doesn't give them that sort of cultural experience."

"That's all on the public side. For the band itself, the philosophy *there* is: to perform properly, we must be in a certain mood or atmosphere. Our aim is to keep the guys as worry-free as possible, keep it so they feel good when they get on the stage. In the dressing-room before a concert we try to have a good time, so that by the time we get on, it's really taking the party onto the stage. If so happens that the partygoers are quite capable of playing jazz." □

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TED VINING: In The Jazz Wilderness

by Neville Meyers*



BILL MCCARTHY

Ted Vining: striving to create an environment for change . . .

Talent, and high-powered creative drive, can be self-alienating qualities. Blessed — or cursed — with them, the artist stands apart, adopts a critical stance, and inevitably comes into conflict with his or her artistic environment.

The conflict may out of sheer frustration cost you an ear (Van Gogh), thrust upon the artist a self-protective cloak of stark eccentricity (Monk), or in much less dramatic fashion — in the case of Ted Vining — manifest itself in striving to create an environment for change.

The desire for change — allied with a deep commitment to strenuously push jazz forward as an evolving art form — are obviously deeply embedded in the Ted Vining personality.

But change, the drummer will tell you, is not what the Brisbane jazz scene — in Vining's terms, the jazz wilderness — is all about.

Says Vining: "Brisbane is a jazz wilderness because many people feel lost here. The lost feeling comes from critically looking at the musical environment, noticing a lack of professionalism, and seeing in many of its

musicians on stage, lack of reason for being there."

"I really worry about Queensland because, right now, it doesn't have much to say as a jazz producer. Here, jazz has become predominantly concerned with Dixieland music, which is just a pick-up from every other Dixieland band in Australia or around the world, compromising itself to the people, playing down to the people. In effect, songs for people to go to the pub, drink beer, and talk over the music.

"There are people who have tried to change that direction years before I came here — the initial impulse has nothing to do with me — but lost. And they'd lose again, as anyone would, unless there's a fundamental change in Brisbane attitudes."

Harsh words these, but coming — indisputably — from someone who cares greatly about jazz; coming, moreover, from someone who's developed, and earned, as far as musicians are concerned, a considerable amount of respect at home and abroad in modern jazz circles.

Since coming to Brisbane two years ago Vining has also built up a reputation for saying what's on his mind calling, too often for some, a spade a "bloody shovel".

As one musical colleague noted: "With Vining it's black and white rather than shades of grey. Ted's attitudes on musical tastes and musical abilities are uncompromising. It's not too difficult to pick up what the man's saying, and those smitten with sensitive skins should not get too close. Subtlety is clearly not one of Ted's strengths."

Bob Sedergreen: "As a person Ted has many, many emotions. He's very complex. People around him see only the well-to-do sartorial dresser, the super-confident guy. Frankly, it's bewildering to ask me about Vining — I could wax on for hours."

My own view, after almost a year's observation, is that Vining in his own field is as open-mouthed as Sinatra in his. He is not slow to be critical, can trample over other people's feelings, but is capable at the same time, of unbounded generosity, both musically and personally. And the man obviously, and sincerely, cares about music.

Few, if any, would detract from Vining's positive attempts to ginger up the Brisbane jazz scene.

Since his arrival in Brisbane he has played a variety of gigs in both Brisbane and Melbourne; become Queensland Jazz Co-ordinator for the Music Board of the Australia Council, and highly active as musical director for the Queensland Jazz Action Society; wheeled and dealt to bring major jazz artists to Brisbane and to establish the Community Arts Centre's Jazz Spot (currently the city's only venue dedicated to bebop-and-beyond modern jazz explorations); lastly, given vital encouragement and practical assistance to younger jazz players.

If Vining were to leave town tomorrow, the Jazz Spot alone would stand as a symbol of what he is about.

The club's free-wheeling environment, favouring experimentation — that any style or approach can be daringly tested — is particularly appealing to Vining.

The club moreover has filled a void left by the recent demise of Mileham Hayes's Jazz Cellar.

The Jazz Spot is also the birthplace of Vining's free-form jazz players Musiikki Oy: Peter Uppman (trumpet), Ian Chapman (reeds), and bassist Peter

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Walters, all of whom, under Vining's encouragement, have become part of the cadre of Brisbane's most promising young musicians.

Bassist Walters: "It's scary just to step up and play off the top of your head. But Vining's both encouraging, and pushing, all the time. It's the risk involved which gives Oy its edge and flavour. Sometimes a great rapport is felt; when that happens, all is possible."

Rapport and tight feel are what Vining sees as the most important elements in group playing.

"Good groups are hard to find in Brisbane, for that matter, in Sydney and Melbourne, too," he says. "There are too many changes, the groups can't sustain themselves, to develop effective rapport. You have to find the right people, get dedication from them. It's as much personality as musicality. The group should be so tight as to say: 'Hey, we're good, we're going to grab you by the balls'."

But even the best groups can let you down.

Vining, recalling the L.A. Four's Perth concerts:

"We — the Brian Brown Quintet — played the same festival. We had every opportunity to see and hear Almeida, Brown, Manne and Shank. They were boring. Four separate musicians, all top artists, but lacking that group feel. Similarly, in Brisbane and other capitals, you get plenty of competent players but few tight, really tight, groups.

"My ideal of course is the John Coltrane Quartet with McCoy, Jimmy and Elvin. But most groups, if they stayed together long enough, were dedicated enough, could develop that greater empathy."

Certainly the Ted Vining Trio, with Bob Sedergreen (piano) and Barry Buckley (bass), during its July, 1983 Brisbane gigs seemed to embody 'feel'; obviously *en rapport* as soon as they met; sounding, according to veteran jazz programmer/writer Jim Barlow, "more like one musician than three."

Part of the problem in Brisbane and elsewhere, Vining feels, is the lack of experienced leaders. According to Vining's dictum, the leader must be seen to be right.

"At the same time, the leader simply says: this will be the general direction. Individuality must be allowed to flow towards that direction."

Vining is a leader; strong-willed; he likes to call the shots.

"Yes, ego can get in the way. There is at the same time humility. Even the leader must listen, as well as be listened to. The other person's point of view must be respected if not, in the leader's view, acted on. There must however always be a legitimate leader."

If leadership is defined by length and breadth of experience — including actual playing experience with the jazz greats — then Vining is legitimate.

His musical vitae is, to say the least, impressive. Name a leading Australian jazz figure, and somewhere along the way, Vining has played with him. In addition the drummer's mixed and played with several of the overseas greats — Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Brubeck, Max Roach, Freddie Hubbard, Elvin Jones, Ornette Coleman, and many more.

He's also recorded twelve LPs, the last four of his own trio. In 1977-79 Vining was director and producer of the Melbourne Moomba Jazz Festival featuring such talents as Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie, and top Australian groups.

Not least important, Vining will tell you, was his participation in the growth of contemporary jazz in the Melbourne jazz scene.

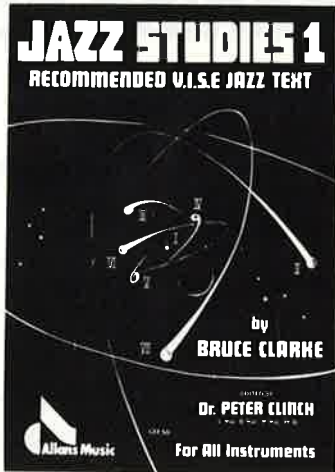
Vining: "In the early 1960s, when jazz started really



Vining at the drums, pictured with the distinguished Czech-born conductor Walter Susskind and the saxophonist Brian Brown, at the Fat Black Pussycat club, Melbourne circa 1964.

JAZZ STUDIES 1

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to matter to me, I was able to mix and play with people I very much care for — Keith Hounslow, Brian Brown, Bob Barnard, just to name a few. In Melbourne in those days there was an environment for experimentation. For a start, we had Jazz Centre 44, Horst Liepolt's club. Love or hate Horst, he at least had the balls to do something that was different. Horst encouraged experimentation. Keith Hounslow, Brian Brown, and many others, participated. It produced something Sydney never had until Sydney got Horst."

Not least significant was the emergence, in the early 1970s, of the Ted Vining Trio.

Pianist Bob Sedergreen, a stalwart of the Trio since its inception, recalls: "I remember the first time I met Ted. 'Listen, kid,' he said to me. 'There're only three drummers in the world — Elvin, Philly Joe and me!' Only people close to Ted would know what he meant. I took it seriously then, still do . . ."

Bassist Barry Buckley, another of the remarkable musicians associated with Vining, Brown and Sedergreen: "Vining's unique. No one can come up to

Ted's approach to jazz and time-playing. He demonstrates so much warmth and feeling in his approach to jazz percussion. Although in some ways not a modern player — Ted plays orthodox-style drums — he's an extremely strong, solid, pulse player."

Brown himself, an acknowledged leader of the Melbourne modern jazz movement, says: "Ted's drumming, in its time-keeping, offers beautiful simplicity. He's unbending when the going gets tough. What do I like best about him? When the mood is right Vining's capable of the most sensitive contributions to any creative performance. He's also the best-dressed drummer I know, uses the most-expensive after-shave, and plays a triangle exquisitely!"

But all of that, Vining will tell you, is secondary to the drummer's major goal: to play with, and encourage, anybody who tries to do something new and interesting with total energy and little compromise.

In researching this article I spoke to Brisbane musicians and jazz-observers most of whom acknowledge, and respect, Vining's position.

As representatively expressed by one Brisbane observer: "Ted's hallmark is his sustained enthusiasm — and, of course, his talent. No one could ever doubt his ability to lead a group. The man also has a highly ambitious streak, never lets an opportunity go by to push his barrow, or to present his group — and he'll wheel and deal to achieve those goals."

It's not all roses, and Vining has at times been on a collision course with, as one observer put it, "the laissez-faire attitude of local musicians who won't, or can't, help themselves. Vining's doing something, always pushing — some resentment must naturally flow from that."

Vining is, in another sense, also an angry drummer: the anger is borne out of a personal frustration stemming, in turn, from some constraints of his present musical activities.

And, at times, the anger comes out, sometimes injudiciously, sometimes arrogantly, to anyone within earshot, regarding what he sees as an almost total lack of innovation in the Brisbane jazz scene.

He remains fiercely dedicated to diversifying, and improving the standard of, Brisbane jazz; but often the fierceness is more reminiscent of an angry Viking about to lop heads than of a friendly guru seeking converts to a new musical faith.

Vining: "Too much music in this town is foot-tapping, beer-drinking crap. It's almost monstrous that we have three or four big bands all playing, on the whole, recreated, or appropriated, Goodman or Miller music. Every group — every player — should be striving for a style uniquely theirs. If you simply want to please the people, then all you have to do is join the people, drink as much slops as they do, and play exactly what they want. But where are *you*?"

The answer or alternative, according to Vining, is quite simple: each group should be good enough to warm people, to make them listen, to make them come across from the other side of the fence.

It's a philosophy that Vining's own group Musiikki Oy has put into practice, winning, at most inter-group sessions, as much sincere applause and equally sincere plaudits as the tried and tested traditional and mainstream players.

"There's no reward, really, except in personal terms," the drummer says. "I mean fame in the end is stuff-all; so is money. The real thing is to be totally honest, totally committed to your endeavour, with the music."

Ted Vining's faith is unshakeable. He's still pushing. □

NOTE TO OUR READERS

Jazz Magazine is now a quarterly, beginning with this Spring 1983 edition, which will be our last edition for 1983. Our next magazine will be Summer 1984, to be published in February 1984. Readers will notice that this change enables us to produce a bigger, better, more comprehensive magazine. All subscribers will have their subscriptions adjusted accordingly, thereby receiving four editions per year. Further enquiries to the editor. Phone (02) 560 4449.

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NEW YORK, NEW YORK!

By Adrian Jackson*

When I was planning a trip to the USA this year, I consulted JAZZ Magazine's New York correspondent Lee Jeske about the best time of year to visit. His advice was to go in late June — early July, because not only does the Kool Jazz Festival offer an abundance of events with some of the biggest names in jazz, but the clubs around New York tend to present some fairly big names at the same time. If any readers are considering a trip to the jazz capital of the world, I would agree that the summer weeks leading up to and including the Kool Jazz Festival are the ideal time to be there.

This year's Festival met my expectations based on what I had read about those of recent years: the programming of artists was essentially conservative, but plenty of well organised performances were staged, featuring plenty of first-class jazz artists. I did not attend Festival events on each of its ten nights, partly because many of the packages weren't too exciting for me, and partly because I was keen to catch some of the bands playing clubs.

The Solo Piano series took place in Carnegie Recital Hall, from 5 - 6 pm on most nights of the Festival, which ran from June 23 to July 3. The first pianist I caught was Ralph Sutton, who gave a very confident display of the stride style, appropriately playing several Waller compositions; it was a pleasure to listen to.

Ellis Marsalis played fluent, elegant solo versions of such standards as *Little Niles* and *Lush Life* as well as several worthy originals.

Michel Petruccianni, a twenty-year old Frenchman who has been dwarfed by bone disease, played with remarkable technical strength and fluency, and also with unmistakable spirit and feeling. His originals were attractive and, like *All The Things You Are*, gave Petruccianni the basis for some inspired improvisation.

Don Pullen, one of the most underrated piano masters in contemporary jazz, gave a brilliant performance of original music, deftly combining the extremes of drama and romance, playing with both great power and a rich sense of colour.

Makoto Ozone, a twenty-year-old Japanese, proved to be a virtuoso who has no idea of what he wants his music to say. He played some originals, some standards, all with flourishing ease; there was a lot of Corea, a little Garner, a lot of notes, but no space, and no emotion.

Bebop veteran Walter Bishop Jr. played a varied programme of jazz standards dedicated to Parker, Powell and Monk, among others. It was pleasant enough listening, but I felt that Bishop would have sounded a lot more impressive and in control with the help of a rhythm section.

The loft venue Soundscape was used to present a New Music series. This struck me as a bit of a token effort, as few really important artists in the vanguard were presented. The concert I caught, in fact, presented two relatively conservative stylists. Pianist Hilton Ruiz, like his bassist Major Holley, is a real crowd-pleaser, and he won a lot of applause with his eager, grooving style. The other members of the band were Pat Patrick on tenor and Walter Perkins on drums.

Cuban altoist Paquito D'Rivera played an energetic Latin jazz set, featuring fervent solos from the leader

and special guest, trumpeter Lew Soloff. The highlight of the night came later, when David Chertok screened some footage from his collection of jazz films, including performances by Parker, Miles, Coltrane, Mingus, Stitt and Holiday.

Toshiko Akiyoshi and Lew Tabackin have moved to New York and formed a new big band there. Its debut was part of the Festival, at Carnegie Hall. It was mostly a display of average big-band writing and playing, apart from a few good solos by Frank Wess on alto and Tabackin on tenor or flute. Akiyoshi's penchant for exotic sounds was at its most effective on *Kogun*, but her long work, *Two Faces Of A Nation* was pretty boring.

The most exciting prospect on the program for me was the pairing of Miles Davis with VSOP II; so I went to both concerts to get a good taste. Although both bands played almost identical programs, I found it a worthwhile chance to study how Miles plays onstage, and to enjoy the sheer quality of VSOP II.

Davis's set was a tightly-recited jazz-funk brew, quite enjoyable, and fairly interesting. Following Miles's trumpet, keyboard or hand signals, the band worked its way through a series of themes, ranging in mood from slow, floating blues to fast, throbbing funk. Miles's sidemen — Bill Evans on tenor and soprano, John Scofield on guitar, Tom Barney on bass guitar, Al Foster on drums and Mino Cinelu on percussion — performed their roles efficiently, with Scofield scoring well with some of his solos, but Miles was definitely the star. On the faster passages his trumpet playing was admirably agile and emphatic, but he was at his best on the slower blues feels, proving that he can still play



JANE MARCH

Branford Marsalis: very canny solos on tenor and soprano sax . . .

*Adrian Jackson is a freelance writer, and has been jazz critic with the Melbourne Age since 1978.

muted or open trumpet with wonderful conciseness and feeling.

VSOP II climaxed both concerts with some truly magnificent jazz. Pianist Herbie Hancock, bassist Ron Carter and drummer Tony Williams sparkled individually, and also shone with their marvellous teamwork as a rhythm section, combining and communicating with the sort of understanding that only comes from so many years' work with each other. And the young Marsalis brothers proved themselves worthy of billing with such distinguished jazzmen. Branford played very canny solos on tenor and soprano sax, only at times bringing Wayne Shorter to mind; and Wynton was breathtaking, showing that he's already just about got everything it takes, including logic, inspiration and taste. They played Monk's *Well You Needn't* and several originals, and thoroughly earned their standing ovation.

Oscar and Bags at Carnegie Hall was both an impressive concert and a disappointing one. Oscar Peterson displayed plenty of his imposing virtuosity in his opening solo set, and in a trio set with Nils Pedersen on bass and Martin Drew on drums; but there was simply too little of special guest Milt Jackson for my liking. Oscar and Bags offered some superb, playful duets before interval, and were joined by Pedersen and Drew to finish the concert with *Stella By Starlight* and a blues; their collaboration produced some superior jazz, with the vibist as brilliant as usual, and making the pianist work. There should have been more of it, to make the concert really memorable.

The Modern Jazz Quartet and Betty Carter provided a most satisfying concert at Carnegie Hall. Miss Carter opened, singing with superb grace, mostly eschewing flashy acrobatics in favour of more subtle improvisations, savouring the melody as she stretched it and slid around it. She impressed me as a real jazz singer, with a style that is both stimulating and satisfying.

The MJQ was in excellent form, the best I have heard them. The empathy within the band was outstanding, its unique brand of elegant vigour most enjoyable. The program was similar to that of their Australian tour earlier this year, except that Ray Brown stayed backstage, and the encores were *Willow Weep For Me* and *Bags' Groove*.

The other concert I saw at Carnegie Hall paired Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra with Philly Joe Jones' Dameronia. Jones' nonet, which includes such fine players as Frank Wess and Cecil Payne on saxes, Benny Powell on trombone and Walter Davis on piano, with trumpeter Don Sickler its MD, is devoted to the music of the late bebop bandleader Tadd Dameron. The music was attractive, solid bebop, sparked by the leader's excellent drumming, which was as appropriate as it was flamboyant.

Haden's group boasted a stellar line-up, with the leader on bass, Paul Motian on drums, Stanley Cowell on piano, Mick Goodrick on acoustic guitar, Randy Brecker and Baikida Carroll on trumpets, Craig Harris on trombone, Sharon Freeman on French horn, Bob Stewart on tuba, and Jim Pepper, George Adams and Ken McIntyre on saxes and flute. Their repertoire included several folk songs associated with political liberation movements in such countries as Spain, Chile and Angola, and the musicians performed the themes with the required amounts of pride and passion. Adams and the leader were outstanding in a group of strong soloists.

The final concert of the Festival was the best of the lot: Gil Evans — A Retrospective at Avery Fisher Hall. The first half was played by an all-star orchestra,

reviving some of the music that the great orchestrator created between the mid-40s and the mid-60s. *Yarbird Suite* and a chart of *The Maids of Cadiz* which was written for, but never used by, Claude Thornhill, kicked the show off, featuring attractive solos from Hank Jones, Lee Konitz and Gerry Mulligan, and admirably displaying Evans's early concern for delicate colours and shadings in his ensemble writing.

Konitz, Mulligan, trombonist Jimmy Knepper, tubaist Bill Barber and trumpeter Lew Soloff were among those who recreated the Miles Davis Nonet of 1949 with a lightly swinging *Boplicity* and a lovely rendition of *Moondreams*. The Evans-Davis classics of the '50s were also revived with a medley of *Gone*, *Saeta* and *Summertime*. Jon Faddis excelled himself as the trumpet soloist, and it was a treat to hear this magnificent music performed live. Another treat was *La Nevada*, presenting superb solos from Knepper, Johnny Coles on flugelhorn and Budd Johnson on tenor, while the final number, *Struttin' With Some Barbecue*, featured Knepper, Konitz and Ricky Ford on tenor.

The second half opened with some film of Miles Davis performing some of the material from the *Miles Ahead* LP with an orchestra under Evans's direction. Then Evans himself was onstage, playing an aimless duet with Lee Konitz before being joined by the members of his current orchestra: Lew Soloff, Shunzo Ono and Miles Evans on trumpets, Tom Malone on trombone, Dave Sanborn and Chris Hunter on saxes, Pete Levin on keyboards, Hiram Bullock on guitar,



George Adams at Sweet Basil with the Gil Evans Orchestra: terrifically inventive and exciting . . .

ADRIAN JACKSON

Alex Blake on bass guitar and Adam Nussbaum on drums. The music, including a couple of Jimi Hendrix songs, was very different from the music on which Evans's reputation rests. Instead of the fine attention to detail and the exquisite array of colours that were so well presented in the first half, the emphasis was on looser, more energetic themes, rhythms and improvisations. The music had a good deal to offer in terms of excitement, and showed that, while Evans's tastes have changed and he is content to thrust more responsibility onto his soloists, his imagination remains vivid. □

While the Kool Jazz Festival enabled me to hear a lot of excellent jazz, I derived most enjoyment from listening to musicians at greater length in the more intimate atmosphere of the small jazz clubs. Among those I caught were . . .

At the Village Vanguard: Elvin Jones was playing with all the savage power and grace I was hoping to hear, cooking on a fairly standard program with help from Frank Foster, in masterful form, on tenor sax, Pepper Adams on baritone, Kenny Kirkland on piano and Richard Davis on bass.

Jim Hall played guitar with delightful subtlety, improvising with care and feeling in a liquid tone on both standards like *My Romance* and *Stella By Starlight* and some originals.

Johnny Griffin, leading a new young rhythm section, burned through tenor solos on bebop staples with typical drive and guile.

At Sweet Basil, where Horst Liepolt is now music coordinator: I caught the Gil Evans Orchestra several times, and got to appreciate just how loose and potentially exciting Evans's current approach can be. The charts are very open, and any player can push the band in a new direction — be it a reggae groove, raunchy rocking or wild blowing — and with such gifted soloists on hand as the ever-resourceful trumpeter Lew Soloff and the terrifically inventive and exciting tenor man George Adams, the results were generally very stimulating.

James Moody blew some solid, straight-ahead bebop with fine help from pianist Harold Mabern, bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Kenny Washington. As well as being a real bebop master, Moody is a brilliant entertainer; something of a rich man's Richie Cole.

Benny Carter, 'The King', held court for a week, delighting full houses with his creamy tone, elegant phrasing and unfaltering sense of swing. He would often solo on both alto sax and trumpet on most numbers and, assisted by pianist Norman Simmons, left no-one doubting his ability to concoct some superior slow blues.

At Lush Life: Two of the classic stylists of the hard bop era, pianist Red Garland and drummer Philly Joe Jones, co-led a quartet with Marshall Ivery on tenor and Larry Ridley on bass. Both were in splendid form, Garland quietly recasting the songs in his solo intros before settling into a firm groove, kicked along with typical flair by the drummer. Woody Shaw sat in for the night, and played the standard repertoire brilliantly.

Vibist Bobby Hutcherson, with the benefit of a first-class rhythm section in pianist Cedar Walton, bassist Buster Williams and drummer Billy Higgins, proved himself to be an interesting and individual stylist. The interplay between the four on the standard repertoire was fascinating.

Pianist Sharon Freeman led a fine trio, with Cecil McBee on bass and Victor Lewis on drums, through some interesting exchanges and insistent grooving.



ADRIAN JACKSON

George Coleman at Swing Plaza: in mighty form . . .

Pianist Tommy Flanagan, with George Mraz on bass and Billy Higgins on drums, gave a definitive display of tasteful, graceful, swinging trio piano playing.

Drummer Andrew Cyrille led his quintet through a loose set that contained as much thought as energy, but still seemed to lack direction for most of its duration.

At Fat Tuesday's: McCoy Tyner led his sextet (John Blake on violin, Gary Bartz on alto, John Lee on bass guitar and Wilby Fletcher on drums) through a well-balanced program (each set featured the pianist solo, in a duet with Blake or a quartet with Bartz). Tyner displayed the expected muscle as well as detail in his solos, which incorporated a sense of urgency as well as unquestionable order. The band sounded good, too, especially Bartz's striving alto solos.

Big Joe Turner, with a little help from piano master Jay McShann, proved that there is still a lot of life in the legendary Kansas City bluesman, as he shouted and crooned his way through a set of alternately rocking and swinging blues. I doubt you'd ever hear him in a better setting than that provided by pianist Jay McShann, with Major Holley on bass and Oliver Jackson on drums.

At the Village West: Flip Phillips, aided by the guitar of Cal Collins and the delightfully happy bass of Milt Hinton, proved himself to be a sadly underrated tenor master as he rhapsodised on several ballads and swung some others with impressive poise and logic.

Clark Terry, accompanied by bass and drums, showed off his gorgeous tone and witty turn of phrase

on both trumpet and flugelhorn.

At The Blue Note: The Heritage Hall Jazz Band from New Orleans struck me as a professional, enjoyable outfit that had too much mainstream in its style to be 'authentic', and not enough drive to be exciting.

Drummer Panama Francis's Savoy Sultans, a 9-piece band, did a fair job of bringing back the swing era with lively versions of such numbers as *Castle Rock* and *Clap Hands Here Comes Charlie*. Trumpeter Irvin Stokes was the best of a fairly average bunch of soloists.

Pianist Ramsey Lewis was as showbizzy as I'd feared.

At the Village Gate: Woody Shaw's Quintet was solid enough, but did nothing to inspire me on the night I caught them.

Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers played some fairly typical Messengers' fare, with young trumpeter Terrence Blanchard outstanding for the bright warmth of his sound and the sureness of his solos. The two young saxophonists were only occasionally impressive, but the veteran bandleader was a marvel, displaying unflagging energy and unerring swing.

At Mikell's: Milt Jackson led a dream quartet with Ray Brown on bass, Cedar Walton on piano and



ADRIAN JACKSON

Jaki Byard at the Jazz Cultural Centre: a delight to hear . . .



**THE
38TH AUSTRALIAN
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CONVENTION**

Dec. 26th - Dec. 31st, 1983
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Mickey Roker on drums. Tone, time, feel, feeling, subtlety, abandon, humour, wit, inventiveness, interplay, blues, authority, groove, what more can I say?

At Swing Plaza: a Benefit Night for the ailing Jo Jones turned out to be a nine-hour marathon that I loved a lot of. Among the drummers paying their respects were Max Roach, who MC'd and played a hi-hat solo; Michael Carvin, who played a kit solo; Philly Joe Jones, who took the helm during a memorable meeting of two tenor giants, Archie Shepp and George Coleman, who were both in mighty form; Mel Lewis, who performed with Gerry Mulligan and Joe Newman; Panama Francis, who played some stomping swing with Percy France and Ram Ramirez; Joe Chambers and Andrew Cyrille, who both performed with jam-session line-ups; and Billy Higgins, who shone in an excellent set by the Cedar Walton Sextet, which climaxed with an Archie Shepp sit-in.

At the Jazz Cultural Centre: I caught Jaki Byard's big band, the Apollo Stompers. Apart from the leader (piano and occasional tenor sax), the band didn't have any great soloists, and it was a little loose, but it played some very interesting charts, including a ragtime march by Byard, and got a lot of enthusiasm happening. Byard, of course, was a delight to hear.

At Underground Fest '83 in Chicago: I caught the World Saxophone Quartet, which was an exciting combination of the rich timbres and imaginations of David Murray, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake and Hamiet Bluiett, who played strutting, swelling ensembles and swirling, soaring solos over a firm rhythmic foundation.

They were followed by the Pharoah Sanders Quartet. Pianist John Hicks, bassist Walter Booker and drummer Idris Muhammad laid down a solid groove for Sanders' exciting, full-blooded tenor solos; his gorgeous, yearning ballad performance of *After The Rain* was truly memorable.

Finally, on the way home, I caught altoist Charles McPherson playing fine bebop in a quartet with George Cables on piano at Keystone Korner in San Francisco.

And some people ask me if I heard much music while I was in the States.

THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BASSISTS

An Australia-Wide Survey (Part 2)

Melbourne's Derek Capewell



JANE MARCH

Derek Capewell is an admirably steady bassist. I don't mean that as a backhanded compliment. What I mean to say is that, while Derek is not likely to dazzle anyone with exceptional agility on the instrument, he certainly takes care of what must be the bassist's primary role in a rhythm section: he lays down the rhythm firmly, with a good sound, flawless time, and that essential ability to swing, with taste and feeling.

Derek is heard at his best with Peter Gaudion's Blues Express, of which he has been a member (except for a few months in 1981) since the band was formed in 1978. Like every other member of the band, Derek really pulls his weight, stoking the groove and fitting in with the other players superbly. He can also be heard anchoring vibist Alan Lee's Quartet at the New Orleans Tavern on Monday nights.

Derek was born in London in 1938, and came out to Australia in 1957. He recalls, "Skiffle was popular at the time, so I started playing guitar, and got a skiffle band going. When the bass player quit, I took over the payments on his instrument, so I became a bass player that way.

"I began listening to jazz, and got into playing jazz before long. I listened to records by Ray Brown, Paul Chambers and Charlie Mingus, and

I'd go and see Barry Buckley playing with Brian Brown. That's how I learned to play bass.

"I used to play with Max Collie and Stewie Speer at The Capitol, that was a trad gig, and Brian Brown heard me there, and asked me to play with various rehearsal groups, with him or guys like John Lee and Mike Martin, so I started doing a bit of playing, and I got a job with Alan Lee at Jazz Centre 44. Ted Vining was in that band, and the pianist was a very good player named Grant Jones.

"After that, I did a gig with Graham Lyall, and did various spots around town with Ted Vining and Bob Gebert. That was in the mid-'60s. Bob and I spent a few months in Adelaide and opened the Jazz Cellar, with Joe Richardson on drums.

"Back in Melbourne, I got the job at The Embers when Darcy Wright left, so I played with Ted Nettlebeck and Alan Turnbull six nights a week.

"Gradually I got into session work, and did a bit less jazz playing. With all the reading, I took lessons with Marion Broget to brush up on the classical technique.

"I played for a while with Brian Brown when he was at the Prospect Hill Hotel, with Ted Vining and Tony Gould. It was mostly originals, and after playing the song, we'd break into a lot of free stuff.

"I got very busy with commercial work, and I had some other problems, so I dropped out of jazz for a few years, and only got back into it when the Blues Express was formed. I'd earlier played with a few big names like Cleo Laine and Carmen McRae and, in the last few years, I got to play with Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel, Phil Woods and Jimmy Witherspoon, which was great.

"I'm really enjoying myself now. I'm flat out trying to provide a backing for the front line. That's the most important thing, to keep the time and try to kick it along, and get the rhythm section to listen and play together."

Fellow musicians testify to Derek's skill in doing that. According to Ted Vining, "Derek's a superb time player, he plays tremendous time and lines with a

good sound." And Bob Sedergreen explains, "Derek loves to weave in and out of the chord changes, especially in 4/4. He knows all the turnarounds and substitutions, and he can and will adapt what he plays to follow the piano player's chords. And, his time is impeccable."

Asked about his own favourite bass players, Derek says, "Well, Nils Pedersen's fantastic, but I suppose Ray Brown is still my favourite." As for future plans, Derek admits to being happy with his current workload, but admits, "I would like to get back into trio playing, with a piano or guitar, and play a few more solos. One day."

Adrian Jackson

Sydney's Chris Qua

Chris Qua was brought up in a household saturated with jazz and with a family background of strong musical talents. His maternal grandparents played with the SSO. His parents, Jack and Pat Qua, were both heavily involved in the traditional jazz scene in Sydney, after moving from Orange. His mother, in between schoolteaching duties, played piano with various trad bands, Chris and his brother Willie grew up always around jazz musicians, and going to Jazz Conventions.

Chris's first musical love was



JANE MARCH

Louis Armstrong and he began his musical experience on trumpet. He learnt from Harry Berry and was helped by Geoff Bull. Then a friend introduced him to more modern jazz — Miles Davis, Brubeck, Oscar Peterson. He took up bass when he heard Ray Brown and Eugene Wright. "I just wanted to make the same noises . . . seemed like a good idea at the time." He took to the bass with such enthusiasm and progressed so well, that he started gigging around and sitting in while still at school. In fact he was only fifteen when he got his first professional job with Alan Lee. Not long after he met Tom Hare. The end result of all this was, of course, his involvement in the evolution of Galapagos Duck and the opening of the Basement in 1973. A new era of Australian jazz began.

Chris was with Galapagos Duck for seven years. The saga of the Duck is well-known — tours in Asia as well as Australia, performances at Montreux, several albums. "There have been all sorts of different Ducks — it was continually evolving. The Duck is now entirely different," says Chris.

He left the Duck about three years ago. "We were all in a rut really . . . all getting a bit high and working too hard with not much reward . . . financially as well. It costs so much to run."

He played flugelhorn as well as bass with the Duck, but doesn't use the flugelhorn much on gigs now, playing it mainly at home. "I'm known professionally as a bass player. I enjoy playing both acoustic and electric bass. It depends on the circumstances and format. Double bass is best for certain modern jazz, for inspired sort of adventurous jazz, and it has more scope. And it's the one to use for a singer out front, in a trio backing a singer doing Ella or Carmen McRae songs. On gigs doing about 60% electric bass, I'd rather use the electric bass all the time rather than jump up and down."

I asked Chris about the effect of amplification on the acoustic bass. "A good bass player's a good bass player with or without amplification. Amplification has made it easier to play . . . it's made it a faster instrument, more of a solo instrument . . . it's put the bass in the front line for a lot of jazz singers."

He disagreed with the belief of some musicians that the bass had made more strides in the last ten years than other instruments. "That's a grandiose statement. The most rapidly advancing are the

synthesizers . . . they give a fantastic amount of scope."

I remarked that I had often heard it stated that there are only about ten good bass players in Sydney. He disagreed energetically. "There are a hell of a lot of young good bass players in Sydney, particularly electric bass players."

This led to a discussion about the difference in technique between acoustic and electric bass playing. "Electric bass playing — that's an axe of its own . . . different horses for courses. There's more difference than between acoustic and electric piano. There's a couple of new techniques which have evolved which can't be done on the double bass . . . it's not so much difficult adapting but a mental conception."

How did he see the future of the bass in jazz? "I don't know where music is going from here if anywhere. I haven't bought a record in years. It all sounds the same to me. Like everything else, the bass has become more technical, but the technique is taking over. I went to hear Eberhard Weber when he came to Sydney. Fast, crazy. But I was bored. I went to sleep. I'd rather go to a pub and listen to a good dixieland band like Bob Barnard's."

Chris has done some teaching from time to time. He is not keen on teaching individuals. "A lot of people want to play but somewhere missed the call. They're more in love with the image of it, the longing rather than being any good."

He does, however, like group teaching. "I try to teach enthusiasm. I don't like the way music's going these days, particularly at the Con . . . I don't dig any of this academic crap at all . . . to me there's no basic enthusiasm . . . there's no lifestyle in it. They might as well be going to law school and learn the technicalities of *that*. When I was starting off I used to like jazz people. I liked the difference of the lifestyle in the jazz world to the rest of the world . . . the good sense of humour, sense of the absurd and ridiculous, outrageousness, the joy of music, but this academic thing that's crept in . . . why these bloody so-and-so's . . . they don't even *drink!*"

The keynote to Chris Qua's bass playing is his laid back approach to life and his joy in and love of jazz. Since leaving the Duck, he has played in such diverse groups as the Johnny Nicol Trio, the Tom Baker Quartet, and the Stuart Livingstone Trio. As well he has done some club work, the most recent stint being support group to Paul Williams. He

is currently rehearsing with the Daly-Wilson Big Band, which will tour in New South Wales in late 1983.

Shirley Horsnell



Brisbane's Peter Walters

Peter Walters, 24, is Brisbane's youngest and most promising electric bassist combining, already in his playing, signs of technical maturity and originality.

Ted Vining, leader of Musiikki Oy, Brisbane's free-form jazz players, says:

"Peter is surprisingly creative, keeps good time, plays good patterns. He makes the electric bass - as music to my ears - sound like an acoustic bass!"

Walters, largely self-taught, still vividly remembers the day when someone asked him to listen to Ray Brown.

"I was so jazz-raw then I thought they meant the singer! In any event Brown's playing made a great impression - so correct melodically, endearing simplicity."

Chicago's Peter Cetera was also an early important influence.

Walters: "At a time when most guys were floundering in a sea of rock, Cetera at least was playing melodic bass within a jazz-rock style."

Other bassists Walters listens to most are Eberhard Weber, Jaco Pastorius, Steve Swallow and Ron Carter.

"On the other hand I really play

by and for myself, try to isolate myself from too many influences. Still, you can't ignore your favourites in which I'd also have to include Keith Jarrett, Wayne Shorter, Miles Davis, Gary Burton, Weather Report and Joni Mitchell."

Peter Walters is currently dividing his time between two bands — Musiikki Oy and Hollow Men — each of which adds a particular stimulus and challenge to his playing.

"Hollow Men is a seven-piece band leaning towards commercial tastes. Still, we're working hard to add sophistication and originality with lots of humour. Trying to combine elements of big band jazz, jazz-rock and bizarre reggae, and other things, the challenge is to create a simpler and more identifiable sound."

He finds Musiikki Oy, by contrast, as a free-form group, more spontaneous, less calculated. The pulse that drives 'Oy' — that any style of approach can be daringly tested — is particularly appealing to Walters.

"It's scary just to step up and play off the top of your head. But Vining's pushing all the time. It's the risks involved which give this band its edge and flavour. Sometimes a great rapport is felt and - when that happens - all is possible!"

Walters' perception is that the bass pulse must hit you in the feet and chest.

"I play an old Hagstrom bass with the frets removed. I put in some Fender Pickups. It's got a warm, fat sound that really sings.

"I have no set formulas, except to lock into a feel and expand it. I go for simple feels that get straight to the point."

What is the biggest obstacle Walters sees to the further development of his technique?

"My own capriciousness! I should be more disciplined. I'd like to develop more speed and accuracy, but this is not an overbearing responsibility. At least in Brisbane the jazz pace is less frenetic than in Sydney, and there's less conformity in playing. Here, you can develop at your own pace."

Neville Meyers

Melbourne's Gary Costello

Bob Sedergreen's assessment of Gary Costello's strengths is, as usual, very perceptive: "Gary's an extremely gifted soloist, whose solos can be



played with amazing speed and dexterity. In fact, they don't sound like bass solos so much as horn solos. The way he constructs his bass lines is to make them travel very quickly, and be light and buoyant. He's a real bopper."

Gary has played in plenty of varied situations, and although I believe he has shown his greatest potential in more open situations — with Onaje or Brian Brown, or the concert he played with Mal Waldron — he is obviously most comfortable, and very commanding, in a straight-ahead situation, such as concerts he played with Richie Cole and Bobby Shew, or when working with Ken Schroeder's bebop-oriented quartet.

Now 31, Gary recalls he began playing electric bass some 15 years ago, "I played bass in a few bands. I was really into rock and roll then, especially people like Jimi Hendrix. I suppose the best-known bands I played in were Daisy Clover and Kush. As I got more into professional work, I found myself playing more standards, or being involved with horn players who wanted to just have a blow. So I got into a few rehearsal bands, became interested in jazz that way. It was a process that led to my mind being open to jazz, and me being really interested in playing it, and then listening to it.

"At first, I was mainly interested in playing like Stanley Clarke, then my interests became broader, and I got more into the hardcore of jazz. Even though I was still working jobs on the electric, I became more interested in playing the acoustic bass. About '73, I had classical lessons, which continued for a couple of

years, and then I had lessons off Murray Wall [a Melbourne bassist now resident in New York].

"That's when I really discovered other areas of jazz. Listening to Charlie Parker, and people like him really had a very large effect on my playing, in the sense that I decided that melodicism is the most important part of improvising. I was influenced by bass players who I feel play in a very melodic manner such as Sam Jones, Nils Pedersen; my favourite is Red Mitchell, he has a real musical quality that really comes through to me. It's not just a choppy exhibition, it's very musical, what he really feels.

"I first played with bands at LaTrobe Uni, with Jeff Pressing, and got some experience in a band situation. I got my most valuable experience playing duets with a guitarist named Steve Gunther, not on gigs, just playing at his house or my house almost every day. That's really how I learned to play. From there, I played with innumerable bands, with Suzie Dickinson, with Bruce Clarke, Jeff Pressing, Brian Brown, and some concerts with some of the Americans, and Don Burrows, which was great.

"The most important bands for me have been Onaje and the Ken Schroeder Quartet, which are pretty much different from each other. In Onaje, there's a lot of freedom, and a lot more open to you. With Ken's band, it's a different freedom, within certain boundaries. The boundaries are a lot less obvious in Onaje, you could almost play anything, and just relate it to what the other players are doing. With Ken, you can't get away from the fact that you're playing standards, but I really enjoy trying to break down the restrictions. To do that requires the skill to find some freedom within those confines. Both bands have been a really good source of knowledge, especially playing with someone like Bob Sedergreen or Allan Browne."

On his attitude to playing in a band, Gary says, "I love playing the role of the bass in any situation, but I also love playing the role of the melodic player, so I have the need to experience that rather than just the role of the bass player. So, playing solos is very important to me. Also, I try to make my bass lines as melodic as possible. I know it's essential to lay down really good time, even if you're breaking it up somewhat, but I don't think that should be the sole responsibility of

continued page 25

TRAMPING THE FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

By Lee Jeske*

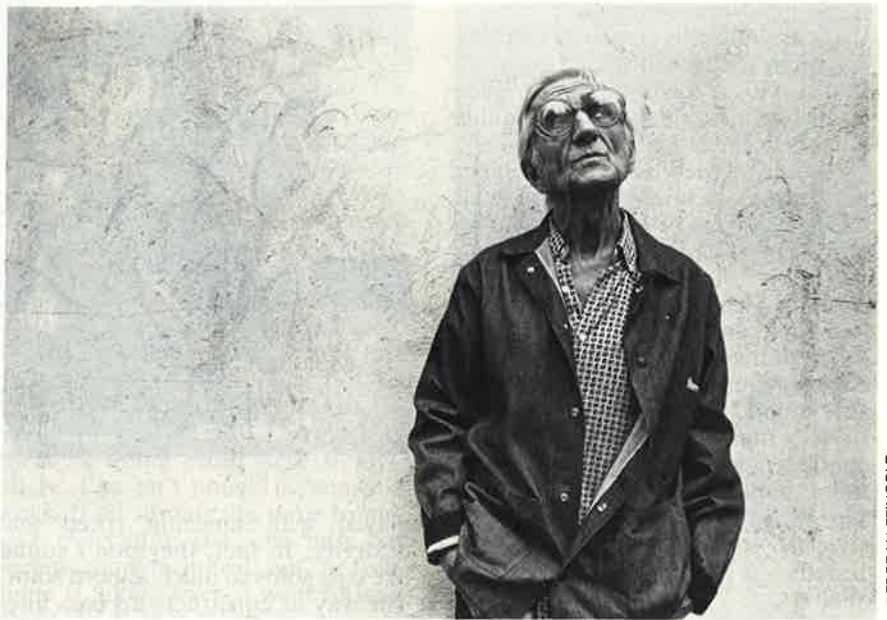
On July 22nd, at about midnight Italian time, I sat listening to Cecil Taylor play some typically percussive, though atypically lovely, solo piano in a Roman amphitheatre in Sardinia.

On June 23rd, at about 10 pm New York Time, I sat listening to Bob Wilber's Bechet Legacy swing through the 1919 ditty, *Down In Honky Tonk Town*, in that Greenwich Village basement barn, the Village Gate.

In between, I sat through more music than most human beings absorb in a couple of years of steady club-going. For 30 days, with only four days off, I spent about six to ten hours a night listening to jazz and related musics at four consecutive jazz festivals. Sometime before Cecil Taylor's short set, I had become too tired, too full of music, to listen to another note. Yet each night, when the sounds were good, my head cleared, my eyes brightened, and my pen etched yet more adjectives into my notebook.

The four festivals I attended were, in order, Kool/NY, North Sea, Umbria Jazz, and Jazz In Sardinia. Surprisingly, each one was quite different from the others and the duplicate sets I heard were few. Now I won't go describing *all* the music I listened to — this would turn into the *War And Peace* of jazz articles — but I'd like to record some general impressions about jazz festivals and their relationship with each other and the real world.

The hard-core, heavy-duty, nitty-gritty, summer circuit works something like this: Kool/NY lasts for ten days and takes advantage of the fact that most musicians are going to Europe via New York City; the first week of July almost the entire jazz community heads for Kennedy Airport and the literally dozens of jazz festivals and thousands of dollars (lire, francs, pounds, guilders, etc.) awaiting them in Europe. The scene in Europe is unbelievable, like something out of the *Twilight Zone* — jazz musicians criss-cross the continent like insects, often arriving at a festival within hours of playing and leaving only hours later. Sleep becomes, at times, only a luxury, as musicians spend their



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Gil Evans: his tribute sparked both in its repertory section and its finale . . .

evenings in hotel lobbies, feeling it's better to stay up than catch the hour-and-a-half of sleep that's available before the next flight. Yet, oddly, these people are, above all, professionals — not to mention extremely competitive — and, for the most part, the music to be heard in Europe is not tired or second-rate: on the contrary, it's usually alive and burning. Why is this? Perhaps the lack of sleep de-intellectualises the music and more of it comes directly from the guy; perhaps the fact that there are a lot of musicians around listening to each other gives everybody a once-a-year chance to show-off before their peers; perhaps the knowledge that the audience is going to hear a *lot* of music this week, and is going to make comparisons, gets the juices flowing. I'm not sure, but I do know that I saw a lot of tired faces and heard a lot of excellent music.

Okay, the festivals themselves:

Kool/NY: An urban festival. Ten days, indoors, each concert a separate admission. This makes prices almost unaffordable (I'm talking five or six *hundred* bucks for a pair of tickets to everything). It also puts the pressure on the promoter to put together hot-shot, or safe, shows. So what we have are a lot of the guaranteed sellers — Ella, Sarah, Spyro Gyra, Torme, Mangione — doing evenings that

are nothing more than their regular shows. Nothing festive about that. This is balanced with a number of "tribute" shows — all-star affairs that try to sell tickets based on a large collection of medium-to-small sellers. This year the tributes were to Bill Evans, Gil Evans, Coleman Hawkins, Duke Ellington, Kai Winding, and Charles Mingus. The trouble with this is that there is too much pressure — pressure on the artists to do a lot in a short amount of time (two choruses per soloist per night is not uncommon), added to the pressure put on by the audiences who are sitting in 20 dollar seats. There is little chance for experimentation at Kool/NY, little chance for surprise (it must be added, of course, that there are other venues involved — Soundscape, for example, but nothing happens there during Kool week that doesn't happen there any good weekend of the year). It is a safe festival, at this stage, and that frequently translates as boring. It is, for all involved, an unfestive festival, but a point must be made: almost all the European festivals are heavily sponsored by governments and cultural organizations. Kool/NY is only sponsored by its cigarette company, and that only goes so far. The bottom line — Kool/NY must sell tickets, it must turn a profit.

Adrian Jackson delivers a report

*Lee Jeske, who lives in New York, is JAZZ Magazine's US correspondent.

on the festival elsewhere this issue, so I'll just list a couple of highlights from my standpoint. A trombone summit featuring J.J. Johnson, Bob Brookmeyer, Slide Hampton, Eddie Bert, Wayne Andre, Steve Turre, Dick Griffin, and Curtis Fuller was all it should have been (especially J.J., exceedingly rare in these parts); VSOP II was nothing short of phenomenal (especially Tony Williams); Ron Carter, George Mraz, Eddie Gomez, and Miroslav Vitous tore up *Haitian Fight Song* with Mingusian spirit at a dull tribute to its composer; Michel Petrucciani cooked like hell on solo piano — he's *the* cat to watch on the instrument, folks; a tribute to the mighty Bean was mighty (with Illinois Jacquet's *Body And Soul* worthy of the tributee); a Gil Evans tribute sparkled both in its repertory section and its finale, with the grandfatherly Evans leading his jazz/rock big band through some Monk and Bird charts; and Joe Williams and Betty Carter were both in fine form at their respective shows.

North Sea: Another indoor festival, but quite unlike any other. For three days a large multi-halled centre in the Hague goes bananas with jazz and all its relatives. I mean, 9 stages, 11 hours a day, with nary a pause and, amazingly, hardly a snafu. Ticket prices are reasonable (ten bucks or so covers you for the day) and the hardy really get to hear a lot of music. Now, I've heard this festival called a jazz supermarket, etc., etc., but I'd like to state that, without doubt, this is my favourite festival in Europe. Why? Because an old jazz-head like me gets a chance to hear a lot of different things. Blues, for instance. I never go to hear blues in New York, but in this one weekend in the Hague, I heard Willie Dixon (the hands-down winner), John Lee Hooker, Albert Collins, John Hammond, James Cotton, Sugar Blue, and Luther Allison. I also like North Sea because there are always a number of fine European bands on hand. To that end I heard Albert Mangelsdorff (a trombone genius, pure and simple), George Gruntz's superb orchestra (featuring mostly Americans, but including Ernst-Ludwig Petrowsky, the East German doyen of free-jazz saxophone, Seppo Paakkunainen, a renowned Finn who can play *two* flutes up his nose at the same time, Palle Mikkelborg, the fine Danish trumpeter, and Charlie Mariano, who isn't European, but might as well be), Waso (a mediocre Belgian

gypsy band), Georgie Fame (smooth, boozy, and fun, for a short time), and a lousy Swedish orchestra called the Hudik Big Band. I also got to hear oddball things at North Sea — Irakere (I don't suspect they'll be back in the US too soon), a gospel "extravaganza", Al Rapone and his Zydeco Express, and the best thing I heard all weekend — Celia Cruz, the queen of salsa and an amazingly powerful and spirited belter from the old school. And, believe it or not, I still found time to hear Dick Wellstood and Dick Hyman play stride duets; Bennie Wallace's hot trio with Dannie Richmond and Mike Richmond; Dizzy Gillespie, both in a good set with Jon Faddis and Paquito D'Rivera and in a sloppy, listless trumpet session with the dream line-up of Clark Terry, Sweets Edison, Wild Bill Davison, Warren Vache, Doc Cheatham, Ack Van Rooyen, and Faddis; a Shelly Manne jam session; Slam Stewart and Major Holley buzzing through some duets; another trombone summit — this one with Mangelsdorff, Fuller, Al Grey, Britt Woodman, and Julian Priester (a corker!); Ornette Coleman & Prime Time; Stephane Grappelli; and the Decoding Society. A lot of music, a lot of jostling, and, all-in-all, a lot of fun.

Umbria Jazz: Held in the medieval Italian town of Perugia, and a different can of worms altogether. *This* is a festival. The schedule went something like this: 11 am, jazz history lecture by Dan Morgenstern; 12 noon, individual classes for

instrumentalists (taught by Paul Jeffrey, Kevin Eubanks, Terence Blanchard, Harold Mabern, and others of the same ilk); 3 pm, jazz films from David Chertok's endless and brilliant collection (I mean, where else are you going to see Bird, Trane, Dolphy, Pres, etc.?); 5 pm, a concert by one of the many American bands who were on hand for the entire week (an excellent and innovative idea — it gives everybody a chance to watch somebody really work. George Coleman, Jack Walrath, and Ray Mantilla, bands in tow, were involved); 7 pm, free outdoor concert featuring an Italian band (best band by a mile — bassist Giovanni Tammaso's unit featuring the rootin'-tootin' altoist Massimo Urbani, a post-bop natural with a big sound); 9.30 pm, main concert, in a big tent (with shitty sound) for a couple of dollars or outdoors for free (best were Jackie McLean/Bobby Hutcherson; a Texas tenor rave-up — Jacquet, Tate, Cobb, and Co.; VSOP II; a jam session featuring the week's teachers; and Woody Herman's Orchestra. Worst was Herbie Mann (despite the presence of guest Freddie Hubbard).); 10.30 pm, a cheap concert at an outdoor theatre featuring one of the full-week bands; 12 midnight, George Coleman (usually) with guests, in a hot, crowded little club. All this every day for a week!

Perugia's a nice place to spend a few days and the clinics, films and use of various venues definitely make this festival something a little different and something a little



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

Dollar Brand: a mesmerising two-hour set, filled with bright-eyed beauty . . .

special. Personally, I would have preferred to hear more Italian bands than the one a night, but that's a small complaint.

Jazz In Sardinia: An old-fashioned kind of festival. One concert per night, outdoors in a stunning amphitheatre, tickets a mere pittance. Aside from the fact that Sardinia is beautiful, with pretty beaches (something I needed by that point), this festival had a purpose: to *showcase* Italian musicians alongside the Americans and to try to somehow bring ethnic music into play. So each concert featured some excellent Italian bands, with the occasional twist — an African percussion group, Africa Djole, and Luigi Lai, a master of an ancient Sardinian instrument called the *launeddas* — three double reeds played simultaneously while circular breathing — were on hand. Lai played a set with Gianluigi Trovesi, an excellent freeish Italian reedman, and tore the house down with his *launeddas* — sounding at times like three John Coltranes; Africa Djole was teamed with the quartet of Franco D'Andrea, a first-class pianist/composer who welded nicely with the African instruments. Other Italians worth mentioning are bassist Marcello Mellis, a good, deep-voiced bassist and a sneaky composer; Antonello Salis, whose piano is chameleon-like and strong; and soloists Danilo Terenzi (trombone), Paolo Fresu (trumpet), and Stefano Lestini (piano). Of the American bands, kudos to Dollar Brand's mesmerizing two-hour set, filled with bright-eyed beauty. The Bronx cheer, however, is reserved for Max Roach, who, scheduled to play with his double quartet (his four and a string quartet), arrived late, tired, and testy, had a fight with the soundman and decided to go on solo. After 20 minutes of solo drums, the Sardinians booed Max off the stage with cries of "sciemo" ("fool"). Max had to be protected by police, lest the audience tear him to shreds. Very unprofessional, and very disappointing for all concerned. The promoters made up for it the next night, however, when, after a rousing set by the Art Ensemble, they pulled Cecil Taylor out of their hats as a surprise guest. A terrific, easy little festival.

So that's it. I am now back in New York where I'm on a jazz vacation — no clubs, no concerts, no press parties, nothing for a couple of weeks (except movies, television, and baseball). By next issue, however, I'm sure I'll have scads to report from the New York jazz beat.

RIFFIN' WITH THE SCOTCH

By Len Barnard*

Upon arrival in New York 24/8/83, we checked in at the Woodward Hotel, corner of 55th and Broadway, and, although a reasonable remove from Harlem, it evoked the feeling of Ellington's *Harlem Air Shaft* when the slow, recalcitrant lift didn't work. This made me use the stairwell — grimy window-panes, cig butts from ancient times, the peculiar pervading smell of dry coal-dust or asbestos, black room-maids (always very fat), wafer-thin towels, pocketa-pocketa air conditioner needing eyebrow tweezers to regulate it as the bakelite knob was missing — but very cheap!



Bob Barnard: given an arm-chair ride by Ralph Sutton . . .

Despite exhaustion after the flight, we went to Hanratty's Bar to meet Ralph Sutton and Jack Lesberg. It's a beautiful, darkly wooded old room with Dick Wellstood at the piano. Ralph, who was drinking Finlandia-on-rocks, insisted on paying the tab. Thence to Eddie Condon's. Good, but lack-lustre band led by Red Balaban, the new owner and *not* the bass-player's bass player. Ruby Braff and John Bunch were there saying hello, and Harry Edison was at the bar. \$3.50 for all drinks, beer or spirits — no cover charge. Sleep.

At noon next day Bob and I picked Ralph up to go to Jimmy Madison's recording studio on West End Avenue. Milt "The Judge" Hinton was already there, a very black, round, gentle man, comfortable to be with. I had to sit in a cramped booth with a window which allowed eye contact with Milt and Ralph — somewhat tattered Gretsch kit and "gremlins" in the recording equipment made me feel quite at home. Milt having problems with his bass pick-up and wanting "lots more drums" in his headphones. We ran *Slow Boat to China* as a loosener. Smiles all round — "feels good — think we'll have a nice day —" says Ralph. Mark Hewitt rang from Sydney to check that all was well. He had organised this quartet session, and booked Ralph and Milt months in advance. Then some more tracks and an hour's break for food during which I produced a duty free bottle of Bowmore single-malt whisky — smooth — and Milt kept leaning out of his booth to say "this whisky of yours has been keeping the right company." Finished about 6.30 pm which meant that the whole album plus three "spares" was put down in just 4 hours.

Ralph's lovely solo excursion on *In The Dark*, Milt's slap-and-tickle on *Digga Digga Doo* and *Swing That Music*, the romping feel in the rhythm section that gave Bob an arm-chair ride, as he put it. Horst Liepolt called in to hear the odd

*Len Barnard is the ageing, but still swinging, drummer with the Bob Barnard Jazz Band.



The Barnard band at the Caledonian Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland, recently. From left, Bob Barnard, Al Casey, Earle Warren, Len Barnard, John McCarthy, John Costelloe . . .

playback and said: "It's straight ahead stuff, man, with no bullshit." And as for Bob and me, it was an honour and a pleasure.

The next morning to London, where we were met by Skip and Di Humphries. Skip is my old friend from Brisbane days, when he opened Storyville in 1955, probably Brisbane's first jazz venue. He got most of the impressive pile of gear (we took *everything!*) to Kings Cross Station and trolleyed to the platform.

An hour of extreme affability followed as we quaffed pints of that peculiar but palatable British ale. Thence to Edinburgh. A wonderful train, great countryside, saw Yorkminster from a distance, a great looming shape reeking of history. At Edinburgh, our mentor-driver Sue Scott began a frantic search for lodgings and tried the Caledonian Hotel (where Acker Bilk was staying). Some of us were a bit frayed at the edges by this stage, and Sue shouted "I've got all these tired Australians with me who need beds." Not the happiest choice of entreaty, as the well-tailored men of reception looked us over with cool, blue, Caledonian eyes: "Sorry, full up." Finally got in at The Eglinton. There is a fine edge of exhaustion which calls out for sleep, but brings on that curious delirium that requires more alcoholic comfort. So to the bar for pickled eggs, a new one on me, which seemed delicious.

The next night we began playing at 2 am in a huge sports stadium with booming acoustics. Mike Hart

was the organiser, and it was not his fault really, as the slated venue mysteriously became "not available" a week before. American guests were Doc Cheatham (trumpet), Earle Warren — lead alto with

Basie's greatest band, Al Casey — guitar on all the Fats Waller recordings, and Benny Waters — 81 year-old tenor man who played with everyone. We played a memorable session at the above mentioned Caledonian Hotel with Al Casey and Earle Warren.

Bob's band was a wow in every way. Most of the bands were extremely traditional with banjo-tuba good-timey propensities and they (including the American trad groups) played everything fast and loud, like a cavalry charge. This can cause an audience's attention span to shorten somewhat, so that when we came on it was so different in approach and volume that we won them immediately, as did Humphrey Lyttelton. A lunch time concert at the Albany Hotel was, to me, the stand-out of the whole festival. The room was packed and they hung on every note. It certainly makes one play.

Then, after 6 days of three, sometimes four shows a day, we went to Newcastle for another three-day festival — more new friends and hectic bustle — and on to Berwick-On-Tweed, the walled border town, and a mayoral reception at the Town Hall. It was a one-nighter and a sell-out. Tremendous enthusiasm. There had been little or no rest so far and the next two nights were concerts in London at Australia House and The Pizza Express. Greg Gibson turned up with his baritone and it was an adrenalin evening with the spirit overcoming the tiredness. Very sternly indeed.

The final leg was to Eindhoven, Holland for the Jazz Dagen Festival. Earle Warren came with us as guest star for three days. The Dutch people know how to enjoy themselves and there was an air of spontaneous gaiety, which was not at all spurious. On the final night we did two concerts in the beautiful Philips auditorium with Earle, whose alto style is spare, frugal, and hard-boiled with the quirks of phrasing that captivate. Two Germans from Dusseldorf were recording these concerts, and to my surprise, two excellently balanced tapes arrived recently.

Back to Sydney via New York again. A strange but not altogether irrelevant afterthought is that during the entire tour, we didn't encounter one yobbo or yahoo. I'm afraid this country is still very young in ordinary decent manners. Anyway, that's a study for more patient minds than mine. □

THE OLD PUSH: HOME OF BOB BARNARD

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THE SYDNEY JAZZ CLUB: 30 Years On

(Part 2)

By Bruce Johnson*

This is the second of two brief articles written on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Sydney Jazz Club, probably the oldest surviving jazz club in Australia.

The sudden decision to close the Club functions in the Ironworkers in the face of increasing violence was the beginning of something of a period in limbo for the Sydney Jazz Club. For a while it was neither defunct nor visibly very active. Club President Eric Richards and Treasurer Geoff Gilbert were looking for new premises, and a number of places were tried. As a stop gap measure the Suzy Wong in King St. was booked for a month of Wednesdays, beginning May 18, 1967. Memories of the trouble at the Ironworkers surfaced in the Club's announcement of the opening, which carried the warning that visitors must be signed in by members and that "Members are asked to take full responsibility for their visitors." One problem was to find a place big enough to be able to pay for itself yet not so big that matters could get out of hand, as had happened at the Ironworkers. A place was found at the back of a chemist shop on the corner of William and Bourke. The Club opened here on three nights a week on Nov. 27th, having bought a second hand piano, tables and chairs. Various bands played here, according to different recollections: Ross Collins with a rhythm section, Bill Haesler, Geoff Bull, Gary Dartnell. One object was to provide a basic rhythm section, beginning about 9 pm, to be augmented as musos dropped in after the pubs closed at 10. The attendance dwindled, however, and after perhaps about 18 months, the place folded. There was also a brief spell, ~~Friday and Saturday nights, at the~~

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Bill Haesler

premises of the Sydney Models Association on Elizabeth St., but this apparently lasted even less time than the William St. venue.

It was during this period of wandering in the wilderness that the legal status of the Club was altered. Some members of the Committee felt that if a license could be obtained it would be an advantage, but for this the Club would have to be incorporated by law. Such a move would also have the benefit of limiting the liability of Committee members in the case, for example, of a patron injuring himself at a Club function. With the help of the accountant and Committee member John McInerney, Sydney Jazz Club Cooperative Ltd., was set up and for a while this existed alongside the original SJC, and shared Committee members/Directors. The situation was stabilised at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the SJC on 11/12/67. A motion for the form-Cooperative Ltd. was set up and carried, and the next day the Secretary of the SJC (unincorporated) circulated a statement in which he made it clear that, while the two organisations

had been existing simultaneously, it now seemed suitable that the SJC be wound up in accordance with its own constitutional provisions and that its assets be passed on to the SJC Coop. Ltd. At that time the SJC consisted of 102 associate members, 6 founder members, and 3 honorary life members. Its "elected committee" consisted of Eric Richards*, Geoff Bull*, Geoff Gilbert*, John McInerney*, Peter Neubauer, Bob Doyon*, Jim Young*, Doc Fowler, Norman Linehan, Bill Haesler, and Roy Longman*. When it came to the Coop., the law limited the number of Directors to 7. The "(self-elected) board" was made up of those whose names I have starred. As it turned out, the change of status did not produce the desired result. None of the breweries approached showed much interest in sponsoring such a small organisation, and the SJC Coop. Ltd., has never to this day had its own license. Nonetheless the change was to have serious though unforeseen consequences.

The Club continued in its efforts to locate a weekly venue to replace the Ironworkers. For a while in the early Seventies it held functions at the Musicians Club in Chalmers St. on Thursday nights. More recently there were late night sessions at the Graphic Arts Club with the house band led by Mike Hallam. Neither these nor the intervening experiments achieved either durability or stability. Even so, the Club maintained a number of vigorous if less frequent activities. The newsletters throughout the Seventies list Harbour Cruises, occasional special concerts, as for example that of Little Brother Montgomery, a brief series of events at Watsons Bay Hotel, special balls and parties. In 1976 Record Evenings were begun on a weekly basis at the Dept. of Anthropology, University of Sydney, and in September 1977 the Jazz School was restarted. Both of these faded out during 1979. The *Quarterly Rag*, which had last appeared in June 1967, was revived in April 1976 at the instigation of the then President, Ivor Graham "Iggy" Kellaway, and has continued to be published since then. In the 70s, the most durable Club activities were the Motts and

the Berry Island Picnics. The Friday night Motts at their height were roistering, even Rabelaisian, BYO events which sometimes continued to 3 am. But when pub hours were extended, in some cases to midnight, the attractions of an after hours venue were substantially diminished, especially as its official closing time of 1 am was observed with increasing frequency. The fall in attendance was aggravated by the oddly timed decision of some of the musicians to draw the Union's attention to the rather informal arrangement regarding band rates. The end of the regular Motts was announced in *Quarterly Rag* July 1979. Perhaps more than any other variation in fortune, this seemed to signal the end of an era, and it set in motion the most radical re-evaluation of the Club's function since it had become a Coop. Coincidentally, attention centred on the same matter. Some members felt that, with the altered circumstances in which traditional jazz could now be heard abundantly in Sydney, the SJC had outlived its usefulness. Amid some acrimony, Bill Haesler and David Walsh introduced a motion to wind up the Coop. and place its assets in trust, at the Annual General Meeting on 23/3/81. It was carried. But this was by no means the end of the matter. Incoming President Neil Steeper was to discover that since the Club had been incorporated in 1967,

certain legal niceties had gone unnoticed. In particular, departed or otherwise inactive members were still on the books and, as shareholders, represented a potential claim on the Club in excess of its assets. It would be difficult to close down the Coop. without first removing what might be called dead wood.

During the year or so it took to do this, the current Committee felt that it detected a renewal of support for the Club, provided that it offer new kinds of service. As a consequence, on its 30th birthday the Sydney Jazz Club Cooperative Ltd. stands at yet another crossroads. Before he stepped down, Steeper did indeed clear away the obstructions to dissolution. But some see his clean up as equally opening the way to a new and revitalised Club, still promoting traditional jazz, but in new ways not already covered by other bodies. Current President John Clifford believes in this alternative. He sees the SJC as having new and in a way larger functions — as an educational force in the schools, as a record producer, as a publisher, as a sponsor of specialised jazz events. Its Cooperative status also entitles it to apply for grants in order to undertake more ambitious projects. The Club has survived some violent traumas during its 30 year history. There is some disagreement over the propriety of its next steps. But it is not simply a rhetorical flourish to

say that the mood of the present Committee suggests that it has a strong and significant future. □

Sources

(names in alphabetical order):

Interviews and conversations: John Clifford, Kate Dunbar, Geoff Gilbert, Patti Graham, Ron Gray, Bill Haesler, Harry Harman, Dick Hughes, Norman Linehan, Neil Macbeth, Neil Steeper.

Photographs and documents

(in addition to my own):

Kate Dunbar, Harry Harman, Norman Linehan, John Roberts, Peg Starkey.

Articles:

Harry Harman, "History of the Sydney Jazz Club" *Quarterly Rag*, Oct. 1976.

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Fred Starkey, "History of the Sydney Jazz Club" in five parts:

Quarterly Rag Jan. and July 1977, April 1978, Jan. and July 1982. Where my account contradicts these articles it is because I have found more reliable documentary evidence.

This two part review has been published in conjunction with the special pictorial issue of *Quarterly Rag* in July this year, and with a programme on 2MBS-FM at 4 pm on Monday, September 5, featuring the work of musicians who have been associated with the SJC.

COSTELLO continued from page 19

the bass player or the drummer, it's up to everyone in the band."

At present, Gary is working Friday and Saturday nights with the Vince Jones Sextet at the Tankerville Arms Hotel, Fitzroy. He is also working Wednesday nights at the same hotel with McCabe's Bones, featuring a front-line of five trombonists and alto.

Even though Onaje doesn't get many jobs and Ken Shroeder is overseas for the rest of this year, Gary is quite content with his present playing activities.

But, as far as ambitions go, Gary simply states, "I want to become the best bass player I have it within me to be."

Adrian Jackson



Mike Hallam: late night sessions at the Graphic Arts Club . . .

TEN YEARS OF THE BASEMENT

By Phil Tripp*

How does one appropriately describe a venue that has struggled through ten years of changes — not all of them voluntary, survived in spite of a limited appeal to the mainstream lounge lizard crowd, and still has that undefined ambience that lures one time and time again to leave cares at the door and partake, mingle, enjoy?

It's tough to describe The Basement and the environment that it has evolved into after its most recent changes. As a recent emigre to these shores, it has provided me with the relief and sense of 'home' that few clubs, cabarets, nightspots, venues, pubs, restaurants, or dives could yield. I've only had two years' acquaintance with The Basement but perhaps by sharing the initial experiences that I had might help put the place in perspective.

After a month on the Oriana escaping the Reagan regime, the thrill of floating through the Heads and landing beside the Opera House were sensory stimulation galore, but there was still a feeling of being a stranger in a strange land. Knowing no-one here and landing at a lonely time, Christmas week, I took the advice of my muso mates on board and headed for that quayside night-spot that so many of them had talked about as we approached Oz.

Maybe it was the descent underground that set me at ease at first but in the first few minutes while waiting for that first Fosters I realised that I was HOME! Fears of alienation vanished as I surveyed the crowd gathered to pay homage to Kerrie Biddell and realised that the club and patrons could just as well be in the Big Apple or SF or LA as in Sydney. And as the band pumped out the first few bars and Kerrie leapt to centre stage, a laid-back feeling returned, the drink took its effect, and the music put me in that universal place of togetherness with my surroundings.

And in the last two years, I have become a regular — put down my roots, y'see. People need a place to go to that approximates their fantasy of what they would like their living room to be if they could have it as a club. And as a city boy, I have that



KATE BLACKMORE



KATE BLACKMORE

Two old Ducks: Tom Hare (left) who is still with Galapagos Duck, and Marty Mooney, playing in The Basement as it was before the 1978 renovations . . .

need to have a home away from home that gives me the comfort and connection of music and mateship and The Basement has been the place.

Oh there have been some magic moments there. Hubbard, Guitar Night, many doses of Kerrie and the Duck — in all maybe fifty trips for Tripp. It's odd because never has there been an unpleasant moment, no rowdies, no hassles, even single women seem at ease there, not defensive nor stiff in anticipation of being hit on.

There is a unique quality to The Basement and that is probably its key to survival. The timeless quality, the consistency of it in entertainment, food and drink is somewhat like McDonalds — you may not admit to liking it but you keep going because there is always that same standard of service and product.

One of the main reasons for its survival has to be the food. Having travelled the world with jazz musicians, most clubs that feature jazz seem to think that they have the right to gouge the patron due to their featuring upmarket music. Not so here.

One of the most pleasant experiences of dining at The Basement is getting the tab . . . seldom surprising, it is amazingly low for the quality of food served. And again, it has been consistent through the past couple of years. And the menu changes

often enough to not get bogged with the same choices.

But the real secret is the music. Through the years, the club has been setting trends rather than following them and at the same time has presented music that doesn't stray so far from general public tastes that it alienates the audience. Over the years, The Basement has served as a launching pad for many burgeoning jazz artists as well as being a 'home' for some of the best exponents of funk, fusion, and farther reaches of the genre.

After all, it started with musicians and for musicians. When Bruce Viles and Tom Hare first decided to open a jazz venue, they were drawn to this eerie abandoned print shop that was in need of being pumped out, shored up, and outfitted. Through the diligent sweat of the original members of Galapagos Duck and friends, the black hole soon evolved into a reasonable facsimile of a jazz club and the opening was as low key as the location.

As they built the place with their hands and hammers, the Duck soon built a following, playing every night for little more than pocket change and food. A narrow doorway and slim stairway was the first taste of a smallish, minimalist subterranean hot spot that soon built a reputation for its musical and culinary fare.

*Phil Tripp is an American refugee who escaped the Reagan regime and is now resident in Australia.

Seating 120 and with 60 standees, it was always crowded on the weekends and soon the necessity for expansion seemed imminent. But it was not a choice to expand but the prodding of the local lawmakers that forced changes. The regulations governing clubs, fire laws, and hours evolved into a stricter code that soon saw The Basement in violation of the rules. There were no real hazards, but the law forced the first improvements rather radically. As Chris Richard, manager for the past eight years recalls, "With the water problem we've had, our patrons stood a better chance of drowning than perishing in a fire." Chris outlined the changes as making a new entrance, moving the bar and stage, knocking a large hole in the floor for the expanded dining area and bar upstairs and conforming to the new array of regulations that had to be adhered to.

Five years later, the rules changed again forcing the present renovations that have altered the appearance of the club at the same time as preserving the environment. But the recent upgrading has taken its toll in the finances of the club since it could not charge admission without obtaining two new licenses. Over the past six months, The Basement has had to rely on food and drink to pay the bills, but in the tradition of the club, it hasn't skimped on the entertainment. Rather, it has expanded a few areas with a view to bringing in more overseas and interstate performers in the future as the licensing problem becomes past history.

Although overseas artists have been at best a break-even proposition for The Basement in the past, Chris Richard says that they are considering several possibilities for next year. "There are very few jazz promoters who have survived here and we can't bring in overseas artists on our own but through partnering tours with other venues or going with a promoter who is already bringing an act in, we may be able to expand that part of our programming." Georgie Fame is scheduled for a return visit, having been a popular attraction for the past three years. Other artists featured in the past include Freddie Hubbard, MJQ, Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel, John Scofield, Les McCann, Steve Erquiaga, Charlie Byrd and Art Pepper. The Basement has been careful not to stray too far beyond the bounds of average taste at the same time having little to choose from other than artists brought in for the Sydney Jazz

Festival and through other promoters. One area that they intend to make up for this is by expanding the number of frequency of visits by interstate jazz artists. Vince Jones has played The Basement previously and is likely to return when the licensing situation is resolved allowing a return to paid admission. Chris has been considering artists from Melbourne, Brisbane and even Perth noting, "We think there is a place for them but they don't make the circuit touring unless there are venues that will book them and to a degree, that has been our problem in the past. But I think we'll have more in the next year in addition to our regular talent."

The main stable of talent for The Basement has consisted of Galapagos Duck, Kerrie Biddell, Errol Buddle, Crossfire, and others including Rivers and Co., Nebula, and assorted one-off nights with John Hoffman's Big Band and other concept specials.

But it has been Galapagos Duck who have remained the mainstay at the club. Starting out ten years ago at six nights a week then down to four and now regularly performing Thursday to Saturday, The Duck has seen many incarnations and has always managed to stay in touch with a changing audience and fluctuating tastes in music. Chris states, "If it wasn't for the Duck and Tom Hare, there wouldn't be a Basement. They truly made the club."

The history of Galapagos Duck would make another article but suffice it to say that they, more than any other performing band, have managed to expose more people to

various forms of jazz than any other group in Sydney and possibly Australia. And their regular appearances at the Basement helped keep it afloat as well as giving them the freedom to experiment with new music on a regular and sophisticated audience.

The Basement is experimenting too. Recent shows by Renee Geyer were a variance from their traditional music policy but they were extremely well received, leading to thoughts of expanding the musical styles offered there. As Chris projects, "We'd like to try some cabaret style performers in the room and arrange more special concept nights centering around individual instruments, artists or groups of artists even including reunions of groups that have disbanded."

The major visible change in The Basement is the interior. The bar downstairs has been relocated to the centre of the back wall facing the stage giving better sightlines for patrons at the bar as well as giving the rear part of the room more space. Another entrance/exit has been added to conform to the new licensing regulations, and a general upgrading of furnishings, seats and odds and ends has been incorporated into the renovation.

What hasn't changed is the atmosphere ... the other wordly quality that is unique to the room. The posters are still in place, the stage when empty gives an air of eager anticipation and when the place is in high gear with music and performers bouncing around the room, it is still the same ol' comfort station — an oasis in the heart of the city. □

THE BASEMENT

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JAZZ JOTTINGS

By Eric Myers

The distinguished Australian jazz violinist Don Harper, who carved out a distinguished musical career in England over the last 25 years, is now settled back in Australia, living at Wombarra on the South Coast of NSW. But he is by no means retired. His group, the Australian Chamber Jazz Ensemble has already recorded an LP called *Sydney Sunday*, which will be released soon, hopefully with support from the Music Board of the Australia Council. The group includes Harper (violin), his nephew Steve McKenna (guitar), Alan Gilbert (drums), Ed Gaston (bass), with special guest Julian Lee (piano), Don Harper will make an appearance in concert at the Don Burrows Supper Club, Regent Sydney Hotel, on Tuesday December 6, with the Col Nolan/Steve McKenna Trio. □



Don Harper: by no means retired . . .

It looks like full speed ahead for the establishment of a jazz studies program at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music in 1984. Final approval is still pending but that should be through by the end of November. JAZZ Magazine understands that the hot favourite for head of the program is the ex-American (and ex-Sydney) trumpeter Ed d'Amico. Another in the running: broadcaster (and writer for JAZZ Magazine) Niels Nielsen, in line for a position teaching jazz history. Also, gossip has it that the controversial Dr. Mileham Hayes might well be teaching in the course next year. It seems that, in jazz as in politics, *anything* can happen in Queensland. □

The Don Burrows Sydney Conservatorium Jazz Ensemble appeared recently at the Eighth Festival of Asian Arts, held in Hong Kong from October 28 - November 2. Along with Burrows (flutes, clarinet and saxophones) the group included James Morrison (trumpet and trombone), Paul McNamara (piano), Craig Scott (bass) and Alan Turnbull (drums). The visit formed part of the Australian Government's Cultural Relations Program and was assisted by the Hong Kong Government Urban Council and the Music Board of the Australia Council. As usual, the tour was managed by Musica Viva Australia through their International Co-ordinator Peta Williams. The visit involved three performances and a lecture/demonstration. □

John Howell, who was mentioned briefly in our story on Keith Stirling (JAZZ, July/August, 1983) as the owner of Adelaide's Cellar jazz club, now lives in North Queensland. He believes that an Australian Jazz Festival to be held at Kuranda, near Cairns, would be a viable proposition for September/October 1984. "Cairns, as the location, has a great deal to offer", he says. "Our new international airport opens in March 1984 and this part of Australia, on the Tropic of Capricorn with the Great Barrier Reef and the rainforest wilderness, is rapidly becoming an international and Australian tourist destination. Cairns can offer everything and *more* than Newport". John feels that Kuranda could be a superb centre for an annual jazz festival. It has its amphitheatre, an excellent open-air venue surrounded by rainforest, where jazz musicians such as Bob Bertles, Alan Turnbull and Don Burrows have already performed. Says John: "I see a tent-city for a budget package and top hotel/motel accommodation also offered. A 10-day holiday to the tropics, with a jazz theme, packaged, should attract 2,000 fans without too much trouble if promoted properly." John Howell would like to discuss sponsorship with an airline, a tobacco company and/or a brewery. "An annual jazz festival is much needed", he says, "providing jazz in Australia with a much needed



John Howell: an Australian Jazz Festival is needed . . .

injection." He would be prepared to co-ordinate and promote such a festival, if there is enough interest in the idea. People interested in this concept should write to John Howell at POB 254, Kuranda, North Queensland 4872. □

The Rainbow Club, for non-smokers only, has a jazz appreciation circle which is growing steadily. Once a month a suitable venue is selected and advertised in the Club's magazine *Grapevine*. Earlier this year over 40 members and friends gathered one night at the Soup Plus restaurant to hear the James Morrison Trio. Recently, the Joe Allen Trio hosted 60 members at the Weinkeller Restaurant and, we're told, over half of them were ladies. "At this rate", says Geoff Innis, the Club's President, "we'll soon be hiring our own jazz musicians and venues". One night the Club group attended the Don Burrows Supper Club at the Regent Hotel and were delighted to hear that Johnny Nicol, Col Nolan and Harry Rivers, who were performing that night, were all non-smokers. It appears that, with a growing awareness of the dangers of smoking, non-smokers are moving to satisfy their interest in jazz while, at the same time, avoiding smoke as much as possible. Eric Wilson, from

the Rainbow Club's jazz committee, suggests that we all remember the premature deaths of Nat King Cole and Errol Garner. Eric points out that the Nat King Cole Cancer Ward is a permanent facility at New York's State Hospital. Jazz is an important interest for Rainbow Club members, but there is a wide range of other smoke-free activities. Further information on the Club's activities is available from Geoff at 411 5814 and Eric at 665 7459. □

Roger Frampton's quartet Intersection will be in Asia in January for a tour which is part of the Australian Government's Cultural Relations Program. Funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and managed by Musica Viva, the tour will cover Bangla Desh (January 8-13), India (January 14-28) and Sri Lanka (January 29-30). Other than Frampton on saxophones and piano, Intersection includes Phil Treloar (drums), Lloyd Swanton (bass) and Guy Strazullo (guitar) who has just replaced Peter Boothman. The Indian segment of the tour will include a performance at India's Jazz Yatra, the biennial jazz festival held in Bombay, which is the largest arts festival in Asia. □

Speaking of Jazz Yatra, Niranjan Jhaveri, Secretary-General of Jazz India, advises that, for the 1984 festival, the accent will be on big band jazz. He is expecting the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra from the US, the Radio Cologne Big Band (Westdeutscher Rundfunk) from Germany, the George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band from Switzerland (13 of the 18 players are American, including the singer Sheila Jordan), the Vienna



Ronnie Scott: his quintet has been invited to Jazz Yatra . . .

Art Orchestra led by Mathias Ruegg, the Bitter Funeral Beer Band from Sweden, Robert Laneri's Big Band from Italy, the Eurojazz European Youth Jazz Orchestra, and a big band from the Soviet Union. Small groups who have been invited include the Bob Wilber & The Bechet Legacy and the Henry Threadgill Sextet from the US, the Ronnie Scott Quintet from the UK, and the Eiji Kitamura Sextet from Japan. Also, there could be one or two groups from Africa, playing 'juju music' or 'highlife', plus one or two groups from Eastern Europe. □

I wonder if people in the jazz world sufficiently appreciate the work done by the Jazz Action Society of NSW. It is not only a matter of its monthly concerts at the Musicians Club in Sydney, which are always interesting events; there is also the energetic activity of the Society's committee members and a number of other enthusiasts who are always out and about around town as enthusiastic listeners, and are prepared to write down their thoughts and views in the Society's newsletter, edited by Kevin Casey. In the November newsletter there are pieces on local jazz written by George Anning, Shirley Horsnell, Peter Newton, David Stevens and John Christian, and very valuable writing it is — documenting what happened in jazz (if it were left to the newspapers, jazz would be almost completely forgotten) and also offering opinions which can stimulate a dialogue about the music. Keep up the good work, folks; you make the JAS Newsletter a lively journal —

something to look forward to every month. □

Latest news of the Australian Jazz Convention, to be held in Forbes this year: President Lester D'Ombra reports that things are going well. The organisers are pursuing avenues for additional caravans and billets, and would like all potential visitors to know that there is still accommodation available in neighbouring Parkes. Four motels have vacancies, and Parkes is only 20 minutes road travel from Forbes, connected by an efficient bus service at a cost of \$1 per round trip. The organisers envisage at least eight round trips per day. So, don't give up the idea of going to the Convention because of 'grapevine' rumours — there is still accommodation available! The Convention Committee is looking for a company to film the Convention on video. This would be a lucrative contract for an enterprising film-maker, as many participants in the Convention and spectators will be interested in buying film clips. Strad Music has been appointed as the official recorder at the Convention. All enquiries to the 38th Australian Jazz Convention, PO Box 433, Forbes NSW 2871, or phone President Lester D'Ombra (086) 52 1450 or Secretary Pam Steane (068) 52 1131. □

Plans for a special tour to the 15th Annual New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, to be held in April-May, 1984, are being made by the organiser of the 1983 successful tour. Phil Tripp, writer and former production manager with the Festival, will be leading astray another group of jazz enthusiasts for two weeks of music, food and urban adventures in "the city that care forgot". The group will fly Pan Am with a day's stop-over in LA before immersing themselves in the Crescent City's jazz gumbo. Accommodation will be in a hotel in the heart of the Garden District, as in 1983. An added bonus is a package that includes 30-60 days unlimited travel in the US for a nominal extra charge. Also, the 1984 World's Fair starts at the conclusion of the Jazz Fest, which will prompt some tour participants to stay on a while longer. For information and bookings contact Phil Tripp at GPO Box 2977, Sydney NSW 2001 or call (02) 337 6030 or (02) 211 1100, voice call 700. □

MARGARET SULLIVAN



India's Niranjan Jhaveri: the accent will be on big band jazz at the Yatra . . .

BARRY WRATTEN: New Orleans Resident

by Marele Day*

BARRY WRATTEN began playing clarinet in 1962 when he was 16 in a band he named the Black Eagle band in tribute to George Lewis. He moved from Melbourne to Sydney in 1968 to join the Geoff Bull band with whom he subsequently toured in Europe in 1972. In 1973 he returned to Europe and played in Dusseldorf with fellow Melbourne musician, Chris Deutscher. Back in Sydney in late '74 he played with local bands including Geoff Bull's band again and was finally encouraged to go to New Orleans which he did for the first time in 1980. He has now settled in New Orleans and has his own band there. Whilst on a recent trip back to Sydney in August, 1983 he spoke to MARELE DAY:

MD: Do kids in New Orleans grow up in a more musical environment than kids, say, in Australia?

BW: Essentially you are dealing with a black culture and despite the fact that their origins have been lost to all but a handful of them, they are Africans and they carry that African joie de vivre. It's a naive and racist assumption that those darkies have got rhythm but that's the one that tourists coming to New Orleans fall for time and time again. It's very unpleasant but the blacks can deal with it because they've sufficient sophistication to understand that those people are misinformed.

How do the blacks react to that tourist prejudice?

They play on it very much, it's all hype. They know the tourist thinks they're good jolly niggers so they act like good jolly niggers. It's a way of putting money in their pocket. But they're not totally cynical, there's always been a wonderful tongue-in-cheek attitude that Afro-Americans have and it comes across in their music, it's immediately apparent in the subtleties and wry twists of their music, in the humorous quality that's always present.

OK, that's their attitude to the tourists. What about the exchange with white musicians?

In the clubs it becomes a little more sophisticated. Off the streets and away from the tap dancers and shoeshine kids it becomes a more sophisticated interplay of manners. I don't think it's a wrong generalisation to say that by and large most of the black musicians I've heard tend to play with more sheer energy and depth of . . . whatever. Stay out of the metaphysics, keep to the practical: they play with better tones, better rhythms, bigger, stronger, fatter sounds.

Where do you think that comes from?

They're Africans. It's their roots. On the one hand you must be careful not to fall for the "they've all got rhythm" idea and on the other hand it becomes very apparent when you see the best of those people playing. They've got something that white people will never have no matter how hard they try to duplicate it.

Is it solely their origins, or their experience in America because of that?

A lot of it is that. They're driving themselves to get out of the situation they're in. For a lot of them it's either music or unemployment.

What about your own experience of New Orleans? Did you have a job lined up before you went there?

First of all, I was going there on holidays every year



Barry Wratten: fell in love with New Orleans immediately . . .

and it was only in the last three or four years I've been able to afford to take a holiday like that. 1980 was the first time I went to New Orleans and I fell in love with the place immediately. Then I grew out of one particular aspect of the infatuation and into another. I discovered a New Orleans that was so rich in its musical diversity: Cajun music, blues, even the young white garage bands are funny, fascinating to watch.

Cajun music comes from the Creole people of Louisiana. Do you hear much of that in New Orleans?

I'm not by any means an aficionado of Cajun music; I've only discovered it myself in the last couple of years. My only knowledge of it outside New Orleans were records of Clifton Chenier, who's developed a high profile and become known throughout the world. His music has tailored itself accordingly; unwittingly he's gotten away from the more delicate, prettier, older rhythms, the 3/4, 6/8 rhythms and into a boogie-woogie, very up-beat fast boogie-woogie ripping style and away from the subtle aspects of the music which first brought him to attention. It's happened to a lot of bands that have left New Orleans and been influenced by what the audience about them expects, misconceptions of the audience and what they expect from the band. Sometimes it can become a positive force, for example when the George Lewis band rapidly emerged into prominence in the early '50s after being "discovered". They could never understand all this talk of revival. There was nothing to revive, it was very much a living culture. The George Lewis band went north and immediately tightened up its style of presentation into a very fast tempo approach in a lot of

*Marele Day is a freelance writer.

respects which produced some very exciting results but is definitely only one aspect of their ability to perform: to play in such a fast driving manner and yet be so totally relaxed at the peak of that frenzy. In New Orleans they tend not to need to extend themselves like that very often. They tend to take it easy with their music. Bourbon Street is the exception: the tourists expect it to be very loud and very fast.

And so they play it that way . . .

And so they play it that way because that's what the tourists want. It is very hard to do night after night, five hours a night. If you look at it positively, it can give you good chops, good technique.

Are they playing the sort of music they want to play?

No, not really. They can do it which doesn't mean they want to play it. Most musicians in New Orleans have had to do it at one time or another; some of them choose to do it all the time because it's lucrative. Others do it because they've nothing else just at the time. Most of the more sensitive intelligent musicians don't really care too much to play on Bourbon Street for any long period.

What about yourself?

I'm very lucky after my first year there to have got myself two nights a week, Friday and Saturday, in a nice little open-air cafe setting on the edge of the French Quarter, between the Quarter and the river, in a place called the Gazebo. I employ a quartet of trumpet, piano, clarinet and drums. Over the period of the last few months I've been able to hire some of the most talented old-time musicians in the city and have them on the job.

You've just made a record . . .

Yes. We've just made some tapes. It's being edited at the moment then we'll present it to a couple of different studios. It's an interesting series of tapes inasmuch as it is of Sadie Goodson, from a very famous family of musical sisters who all seemed to play the piano. She



Kid Sheik: a New Orleans institution in his own right . . .

played in the remaining years of the great legendary trumpet player Buddy Pettit; she was his piano player right at the end of his life. By then of course he had begun to drink heavily and very quickly declined, but you talk to the old timers now and they say Buddy Pettit had this beautiful tone; they always talk about tone, it's the most important thing to them. Good tone is more important than flashy technique and everything else. We sat in the studio for five hours with this lady. She was just warming up at the end of five hours; we could have done another five hours probably.

Who else did you have with you?

A couple of Europeans who've settled in New Orleans in the last few years: Andrew Hall on drums, Pete Savari on trombone, the very wonderful Frank Fields on bass, and Kid Sheik on trumpet. He's a New Orleans institution in his own right, in his day an excellent parade trumpet player and also a fine small dance band musician; he's on the record with Sadie. The record is called *Miss Sadie Meets The Sheik*. They were in love, living in rented rooms in Bourbon Street having a honeymoon at the tail end of what would have been for both of them a very happy life. It was wonderful to see them together. Some people criticise me for using Sheik on the record. Well, he's a little bit past it and so on, but I wouldn't have considered using anyone else on the trumpet. There are things more important than technique, like tone for example, even if he does miss the odd note here and there sometimes. Mind you, it was all fresh material because we didn't do the things he was used to. Sadie was really making him work. She was pulling all these songs out of the hat which Sheik hadn't played in years if he'd played them at all. Sadie is 80. Sheik is in his late 70s; it will be an interesting archival document more than an example of classic New Orleans music at its best in a technical sense. It will be New Orleans music at its best in an emotional sense.

You're going back to New Orleans shortly; what does the future hold in store?

Lots more hard work. I intend to stay there at least while the remaining heroes of my youth are alive. There's still plenty to learn from them and they still play beautifully, and as long as they're there I'll try to gain as much knowledge as I can from them. Then after that it's up for grabs because once they're gone the music enters the realms of the cerebral, the recorded disc. New Orleans will just rock on, the tourists will still go there because that's where jazz was born. It's all still there; people like Bill Russel, Don Marquis, Al Rose can point things out to you just off the cuff. You may be walking down the street with Dick Alan for example and he'll tell you some hilarious story about someone's house, or that was where Tennessee Williams wrote *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, or where Truman Capote used to drink, or where Truman Capote used to drink, or the Huey P. Long scandals of corrupt government in 30s and 40s. It's all history and it's all there. I miss New Orleans because of the raw energy that exists there. It's a dirty, dangerous place to live. It's very polluted, it's the bottom of the Mississippi which is a sewer for mid-America. Obviously you don't subject yourself to all these ills of the environment and dangers to the person unless you really think there's something to be gained from it.

And what is that for you?

I'm playing with top black musicians whom I'm learning from, learning from their attitude as much as anything else. They're not narrowminded in their choice of material and they're craftsmen through and through, with everything they play and approach. And the tone. It's just big and strong. Always. □

EARLY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ PICTURE BOOK

As in our last edition (JAZZ, July/August, 1983) we publish photographs provided by the Melbourne film-maker NIGEL BUESST, who accumulated a large and fascinating collection while researching his film *Jazz Scrapbook*. We publish them with much pleasure, as a tribute to the lively and irreverent personalities who were part of the first golden era of Australia - jazz, circa 1935-1955.



▲ The Wentworth Hotel, Sydney 1930. From left, Billy Doyle (pno), Joe Watson (trt), Benny Featherstone (drs), Vic Wilson (bjo/gtr), Lenny Milven (tba), Dud Cantrell (tbn), Jock Burnett (sax.)

▼ The Australian Jazz Convention, Melbourne 1947. This picture includes Wocka Dyer (tbn), Keith Hounslow (cornet), John Malpas (bjo), Ken Evans (tpt), Laurie Howells (dms).



▲ Graeme Bell (at the piano), with his Australian Jazz Band at the Supraphone recording studio, Czechoslovakia, 1947. From left Ade Monsborough (tbn), Roger Bell (tpt), Lou Silbereisen (bs), Pixie Roberts (clt), Jack Varney (bjo), Russ Murphy (drs).



▲ The Len Barnard Band, 1950. Back row, Bob Barnard, Greg Clarke, Frank Traynor. Front row, Tich Bray, Len Barnard, Peter Cleaver. Bill Fredericksen took the picture.



Willie "The Lion" ▶ McIntyre with the pioneer jazz collector William H. Miller, during the 1940s.



◀ Roger Bell at the Jazz Club Ball, Melbourne 1959.

Frank Traynor (tbn), Bob ▶ Barnard (cornet), Tich Bray (clt). Down Beat concert, Melbourne Town Hall, early 1952. This was the night Bob came down from Nasho especially for the concert.



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HERBIE HANCOCK: AN INTERVIEW

By Eric Myers*

HERBIE HANCOCK was born on April 12, 1940 in Chicago, USA. He studied classical piano as a child and, at the age of 11, performed Mozart's D Major Piano Concerto with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He went to New York in 1960 and first came to prominence as the composer of the latin hit Watermelon Man. In 1963 he began a five and a half year stint with Miles Davis, where he established himself as one of the most distinctive keyboard players in jazz. With Davis, he pioneered the use of electric keyboards in jazz, and later went on (to the horror of critics and jazz purists) to musical idioms described variously as R & B, electro-funk crossover, jazz/rock fusion, disco/pop etcetera. Meanwhile, he retained his interest in acoustic jazz with VSOP (with Ron Carter, Tony Williams, Freddie Hubbard and Wayne Shorter) and VSOP II (with Wynton and Branford Marsalis substituting for Hubbard and Shorter). In an exclusive interview Hancock recently spoke with ERIC MYERS, at a time when the new Hancock LP Future Shock, a disco/pop album, was shooting up the American charts:

EM: I'd like to ask you about your record Future Shock which is now here in Australia. Do you believe that that sort of music can be enjoyed by the people who like the sort of acoustic jazz you play with VSOP?

HH: Okay, let me straighten this out a little bit. I don't expect anyone who listens to acoustic jazz to be able to get into a record like Future Shock. But if they do, well that's fine. I am basically an acoustic jazz musician; that's where my roots are and I'm continuing to do that even up until today. In the second half of my professional career, I've added the electric work that I have done, and I happen to like many types of music, and I don't think I stand alone. So, I hear something in it. I suppose other people who like acoustic jazz could hear something in it, although I don't expect it.

Do you resent the sort of criticism you've had from jazz people because you've been into this sort of music over the last ten years or so?

I haven't gotten much resentment from jazz people; it's only been from critics, the people who make their living in this business. Most of the people I run into hardly ever object to anything I do. Even if they don't like the music, they don't object to me doing it. It's only critics who object to me doing it.

I think of all the major figures in jazz, you are certainly one of the most eclectic in that you're actively involved in so many different types of music. I was wondering what makes you so interested in such a variety of musics?

I'm very much interested in people. I'm the kind of person that, if I go to a party, not just for musicians but for people of all walks of life, I won't just stand in the corner and wait for someone to come up and ask me about myself and my career. I'll go and sit down and talk to people about what they do. It doesn't matter what they do — to me it's interesting. I'm always intrigued as to why people have the jobs they have . . . I try to ask them about their jobs, to find out what they could get out of it besides the pay cheque. Anyway, it's people I'm interested in. Also, I've been in music for about 36 years and many many years ago I decided that I wanted to develop variety as far as my own playing is concerned. This happened even in the mid-60s when I was only playing acoustic jazz and became known in New York as a very versatile musician.

I suppose I ask this because I get the feeling listening to your music and also reading about you that you are into personal growth and development. You're not the sort of person who finds one means of expression and does that for the rest of your life . . . I've seen you in many different situations: in London playing acoustic pianos with Chick Corea, and in New York with Wynton Marsalis, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. I'm aware of your funk albums and of course I heard you when you were with Miles Davis. You seem to be involved in so many different sorts of music that I wonder what sort of person you are — what drives you to participate in so many different things.

Well, I think one important thing is the fact that I'm interested in people. The second thing I am interested in is developing to become a



human being. Okay, we're all born human beings, granted. But to really become a human being is something that we have to work on for the rest of our lives. This is what I'm always trying to do. I examine myself and try to find out where my little quirks are and my weaknesses, and try to work on them and change them into strengths. That also requires a lot of wisdom at the same time. For the past 11 years I have been practising Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism. That has really helped me immeasurably to work on some path for my own self-development. Not from a selfish standpoint, but my whole interaction with the environment I live in, including the people. My whole influence on other people is a very important part of what I am as a human being.

Where does music come into this? Do you feel that music affects your interaction with people, helps you to communicate?

I was in music long before I started practicing Buddhism. I started when I was seven years old playing the piano. I didn't get into music to communicate with people: I got into music because of something I personally felt and it's the same now, although now I see communication being one of the by-products of playing music, not the motivation behind it. As far as my growth in music is concerned, I am interested in growing, but I don't get into areas just to find out about them; I get into areas because I like them to begin with and then, if I like it, I may want to explore it. That wasn't so true in the 60s. To some extent I never went too far away from acoustic jazz then. In the 70s, beginning with Headhunter, I began to explore beyond the confines of acoustic jazz into pop areas — areas that I liked even when I was playing acoustic jazz, except I didn't have the courage, nor the interest to get into it at that time. That interest really came later. I think the music developed as I opened up and developed as a person. For example, I'm not a person who goes out dancing. I can't really dance. I can do it if I've got a few drinks in me, I can get up on the floor and dance, in a crowd of people [laughs]. But I'm not the kind of guy who goes to the disco and dances. And I never paid much

*Eric Myers is a freelance writer, an occasional musician and NSW Jazz Co-ordinator.

attention to people who do that, or that whole scene, or the music that they play in discos. But, as I grew as a human being, and because my music started taking me into those areas then, if I went to a disco, instead of looking at my watch and wondering 'when the heck am I going to get out of here?' I could sit there, watch people dance, and really get off, and have a good time watching them have a good time. It's a great feeling to be able to do that. I feel a bit stupid that I'm hung up about dancing myself. But I look forward to the day when I can even overcome that. I'm finding that, doing the things I do, I'm enjoying my life a whole lot more than I did before.

What difference has Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism made to your life over the last 13 years?

Well, the first thing that I noticed is the way I felt. I felt I had more energy than I ever had before, I felt younger, more on top of things. When I wake up in the morning and I do my morning prayers, something happens. I get a feeling that, all of a sudden, things get put into perspective, no matter how jumbled my mind might be — whatever the residue left over from the previous day, unsolved, unsettled, uncompleted. No matter what the circumstances, I get the feeling that I'm starting really fresh every day, to tackle whatever there is to be tackled. You know, without that, I'd be lounging around in bed trying to avoid things. I now have the feeling that before I used to be in the forest looking at the trees; now through practising Buddhism I can stand outside and not just see the trees but the whole forest.

I imagine your wife and daughter are also into Buddhism, are they?

Not really. My wife will sometimes practise it if she gets frightened about one thing or another. For example, if she is speeding down the freeway and sees a cop, she'll start chanting straight away ... [laughs].

I understand that Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism is simply a matter of chanting 'Nam-myoho-enge-kyo'.

Yes, chanting is the basic part of the practice. The prayers are called gongyo; there are morning and evening gongyo ... The chant has a certain sound; it's basically Japanese and it has a certain rhythm. The fact that it is Japanese is not really important. What's more important is the sound and rhythm when you're doing it. Your life recognises that and responds to it, so that what happens is not something which comes from some external force; it's the force that's actually in your life that you're unlocking. So, it's not like some kind of crutch to lean on; it's the very substance that you already have. Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism opens your life up so that you can use it to develop the real thing you are — the foundation of your very life. It's a catalyst which functions to open up something you already have.

A tuning in to your own energies?

Yeah. It's that really basic energy which is your own. It's also related to the energy that's in everything. That's the link with everything.

I'd like to move onto another matter now, if I may, and that's the business side of music. I understand that you formed your own publishing company as long ago as 1963 when you wrote Watermelon Man. Do you think that generally jazz musicians, particularly black musicians, should do more to get the business side of music together? To make sure they're not exploited?

Yes, definitely. I had the good fortune to have been brought to New York by Donald Byrd who happened to be one of the few jazz musicians period — but certainly black jazz musicians — that was fully aware of business, and aware of how so many musicians have gotten ripped off in the past. He was the one who suggested I get a publishing company and helped me to get it. I owe him a great amount of gratitude for having done that before I recorded my first album. My first album contained the tune Watermelon Man and I still own it.

Is it still the case in the States that black musicians are ripped off? Is that still happening in the music industry there?

I'm sure they are. Not like it was in the 20s and 30s when it was so blatant, but musicians are still getting ripped off. I guess that's the way business seems to work. If you don't know, they're not going to tell you. And if you don't ask they're not going to tell you either. So, you have to know in order to ask. Now, if you ask, you can protect yourself.

There was a time in the 40s when jazz was very much the popular music. Do you think it's a shame that, since the bebop era, pure jazz is reaching only a minority of people?

Of course I wish it were reaching more than a minority of people. On the other hand, when jazz was really the only popular music, that music had a much more commercial character about it, even though the artistry of jazz was there. Jazz has continued to evolve. I want to make the distinction between something that progresses and something

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that evolves. Jazz doesn't progress. There was nothing wrong with it in the 30s, and it wasn't better in the 50s or 60s. But certainly it has evolved, and one of the aspects of its evolution is to be very contemporary — very modern and avant-garde, if you will. Naturally, that limits the audience acceptance. There aren't that many people who are turned on by the avant-garde, by the thing that is leading the pack. The audience usually responds to someone using what an avant-gardist does in a context palatable to the general public. That's how it works. But the music business in general is suffering. I don't see any jazz musician suffering because he is a jazz musician; the business in general is suffering. If the business were healthy many of the jazz musicians would be doing quite well.

What are your feelings these days about free music? Do you think that has run out of steam or does that now have an important part to play in jazz?

I should interject at this point that I cannot consider myself to be a spokesman for what is happening in jazz. I'm not so much in touch with that as I was when I lived in New York. I've moved on to other areas of music. I just finished a three months acoustic tour with the VSOP II group with Wynton Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. So, I'm not off the jazz scene, but I'm not really on the scene any more. Partly because I moved out to Los Angeles, partly because I got married. I kind of got away from hanging out a lot. Part of it is because I'm doing other areas of music too.

Well, let me ask you a more specific question. When I heard your quartet in 1981 at the Kool Jazz Festival in New York, with Wynton Marsalis, Ron Carter and Tony Williams, I wondered how much of your music was unstructured, or free.

Okay, there is structure to the music. I think I can explain it this way. If, for example, I had an idea and I decided to write several compositions based on this idea or this combination of ideas, any one of those compositions is an example of that basic idea. So, the way this music seems to function is that the compositions we're playing are examples of some basic ideas, and so each musician tries to look at the music, moment to moment, and tries to find an idea that's inherent in the moment to moment music — whether we're looking at a whole phrase, or eight bars, or four bars, whatever it is. We're looking at a section, let's say, as an expression of an idea. So, if we can figure out an idea from this expression and use that idea to make another expression that's improvised, then we're still playing the composition, if you understand what I mean. So it means that we don't have to stick to the same chord structure, exactly. We have to know what the chord structure is, but how to get from point A and a whole series of progressions to point B, which is much further down the line — we can decide to do that any way we want. For example, if the chords seem to be moving up somehow in a certain section, then you can improvise on the chords the song was composed from . . . But why not create a whole new scenario of chords, of sounds which just have the feeling of moving up? If it's not moving up, how about moving down, as a contrast to that? There are so many ways to make that expression happen. So, it means that I have a really hard job as the keyboard player, because I'm the one that plays the chords. But I also have to deal with rhythm, when Tony Williams is playing very complex things, or when Ron Carter is playing complex things on the bass, then I have to somehow be available to be the glue, to give it another kind of substance. That's not an easy job.

I imagine they're the sort of concepts you're still exploring with VSOP II?

Yeah. We have a lot of fun.

It sounds like a very demanding but exciting context to play music in.

Absolutely. Very demanding and exciting. You hit the nail on the head. It's something I wouldn't even attempt unless I was with absolutely the best musicians and certainly Ron and Tony, Wynton and Branford are top-notch musicians.

I expect you're very glad that you met Wynton and Branford Marsalis . . .

Oh yes. They're great. Unbelievable musicians. And as human beings they're wonderful. We're going to see a lot more happening from both of them in the future.

So, what have you got coming up in the next six months? What sorts of projects are you working on?

I hope to do another album that is in the direction of Future Shock. The very first question you asked me was about someone who likes acoustic jazz being interested in that kind of music, so I'll tell you a few things that we discussed when we were discussing the concept of the Future Shock album. For one thing, we were talking about improvisation. Bill Laswell and Michael Beinhorn, the co-producers,

knew that my history and reputation is in jazz, and they also knew that I've done jazz/rock, jazz/funk, disco, pop, things that aren't even jazz at all. So anyway, we talked about the concept of improvisation. We came up with the idea of taking the concept of improvisation and instead of applying it to solo improvisation, which automatically implies a jazz context, we thought about applying it to the music in general — not so much from a solo standpoint but the actual composition and the tune, as it moves from moment to moment. I said 'fantastic'! Anyway, the one thing I get from listening to *Future Shock*, from almost all the compositions, is that they all seem to sound, or feel, improvised. There are things that appear out of nowhere, then they disappear. There are a lot of surprises in there. I feel it has that looseness of improvisation and I'm very happy about that. It doesn't sound so highly structured as some of the things I've done in recent years.

Has the record been a success in the States?

In America it's becoming a real big hit. The American music scene is very compartmentalised into different areas. There's black music, pop music, this and that, as you may know. When my record first came out, I heard it as a real crossover record that would be viable for the pop stations as well as the stations which play black contemporary music, or R & B. But, if you're a black artist you have to break the record through the black stations first. Then it can get the chance to be crossed over, to be on pop radio. Well, that happened with this record. The single was 86 this week, and the album just entered the pop charts at 113, then went to 76, and this week it was 53.

So, you're selling a few records over there.

Yeah, I'm selling a few records, I think. It's doing really well. It's been the No. 1 disco or dance record in the country for the past three weeks. They tell me it's the first time that a jazz musician has had a No. 1 dance record, ever. Of course it's not a jazz record, but I am a jazz musician. I'm really pleased that a lot of people like it from several standpoints. I think the record is somewhat daring and if people are interested in it, I'm glad to see it.

I was wondering if you've ever thought of coming to Australia?

Unfortunately I haven't had a chance to get there yet. I've been trying to get there for many, many years but somehow it just hasn't worked out.

It would be wonderful to see the VSOP II group here sometime . . .

I hope so. I think maybe the problem is a very simple one, having to do with economics. I know that European, American and Japanese audiences are very familiar with me. I've been going to those countries for many years, but I've never been to Australia. I may have a degree of popularity in Australia but it's not what it would be if I had been going to Australia many times over the years the way I have been going to Japan and Europe. So it means that, if I'm to go there, I can't go for the same kinds of prices I would expect from Europe or Japan. It means also that it would cost me money to go there. That's what the problem is. Once I go there to Australia, and the people really know me, then it will really open the gates for me. This is what I've been told; this is the way Australia works. □

BRITAIN'S NATIONAL JAZZ CENTRE

by Graham Collier*

A 19th Century warehouse in the heart of London's rejuvenated Covent Garden is now being converted into the National Jazz Centre. It will be a unique complex, including a 400 capacity performance area, bar, restaurant, shop, rehearsal rooms, and an audio/visual/library unit. In 1968 the Jazz Centre Society was formed in England with one of its aims the establishment of a permanent home for jazz in the United Kingdom. Some 15 years later its dream is close to reality, with the National Jazz Centre scheduled to open in March 1984. GRAHAM COLLIER gives some of the background to what will be a unique institution:

The late Sixties were a good time for jazz in London, relatively speaking. There still weren't any millionaires rushing into gigs and throwing money at us, but what made that time good were two things: The Arts Council, the major funding body for the arts here, was slowly realising that jazz was as worthy of help as any other art; also, and in some ways perhaps more important, local musicians were given a home of their own — shortlived though it turned out to be.

The latter was a tiny, and scruffy, basement situated in Gerrard Street in Soho, an area now almost entirely Chinese owned and operated. It had been left vacant with a short time left on its lease when Ronnie Scott moved to new premises a few hundred yards away in Frith Street (where he soon celebrates his club's 25th anniversary). Ronnie in a fit of altruism offered it to the local musicians and it ran, known as The Old Place, as a centre for us for well over a year. Playing there both in regular units as well as free blowing situations was almost every name of Sixties modern jazz in Britain: John Surman, Chris McGregor, Mike Osborne, Alan

*Graham Collier is a distinguished English jazz musician who has been active in recent years primarily as a composer, jazz educator and author. His books include *Inside Jazz: A Guide For The Layman*; *Jazz: A Students' and Teachers' Guide*; *Compositional Devices*; and *Cleo & John* (a biography of Cleo Laine and John Dankworth).



The National Jazz Centre, London: a unique complex . . .

Skidmore, Tony Oxley, Stan Tracey, Ken Wheeler, Malcolm Griffiths, Henry Lowther, Mike Gibbs and hundreds more including me.

It was of tremendous importance in that we could play together regularly as well as hear what else was happening, and just "hang-out" — talk and drink together in an atmosphere the like of which hadn't been seen in London since, I guess, the pre-war club days. The result was a great flowering of British jazz talent, the effects of which lasted well into the Seventies.

The first Arts Council funding for jazz came round about the same time in that I was lucky enough to be given a commission for a 12 piece band, which, inevitably, performed many times at The Old Place. Other musicians and clubs were also helped by Arts Council funding and for many of us it was a way of financing and rehearsing larger projects than we could otherwise have realistically worked with.

According to a recently released Arts Council statistic that first grant of a few hundred pounds has been increased 75 thousand per cent to this year's total funding of around 300,000 pounds. My maths being what they are I'll have to believe them, but either way it's not an enormous sum — being only 5% of the total music budget, but one which does have a significant effect on the current scene. Support is given to jazz in various ways, including directly as commission fees, rehearsal costs and bursaries to 'buy time', and indirectly by concert and club subsidy through various promotional bodies.

Chief among those promoting bodies has been The Jazz Centre Society, the formation of which is again linked to those good old days of the late Sixties and The Old Place. It was actually formed in 1968 and, as the name implies, was set up to establish a permanent home for jazz in London. Perhaps inevitably the organisation very rapidly discovered, and tried to fill, the many gaps in jazz promotion that existed then and the main project was not faced up to until relatively recently.

What emerged however was not the concept of a small club like The Old Place, but that of a huge "culture palace", custom built for jazz's peculiar needs (and complete, we used to joke, with a few penthouse suites for those of us incapable of staggering home after the rigours of a performance). The sums involved were, by jazz standards, huge. The actual estimates seemed to vary, it seemed weekly, between 300,000 pounds or so and a million and a quarter. Sadly, the organisation as it then was couldn't grasp that huge nettle and the resultant upheaval almost tore the JCS apart. In fact, in a real way it did, in that the Regional Arts Associations who had been quietly giving support to jazz in their regions (aided by the establishment of JCS branches in Birmingham and Manchester) were more than a little alarmed to see those funds going off at an often alarming rate to feed overdrafts and staffing problems associated with the proposed big palace in London. The result has been the recent formation of several new regional jazz associations (and the strengthening of the existing ones) and a new sense of urgency and reality affecting the development of the Centre project.

Somewhere in the middle of the rocky period, the Greater London Council had offered the Society, on highly favourable terms, the lease of a nineteenth century warehouse in Floral Street, right in the middle of Covent Garden, London's flourishing tourist centre. After many problems and the establishment of a new board and staff structure, work began on the site in 1982. Ironically about fifty yards away work is also going on at a 50 million pound extension to The Royal



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Opera House, the greatest "cultural palace" of our city. They don't seem to be having a lot of trouble raising their cash, but they're probably better connected than us jazzers who only want one of those millions! However, thanks to various bodies things are looking fairly good for an April '84 opening. The Arts Council helped through its Housing The Arts fund, as did the Greater London Council again, and the Musicians' Union gave a hefty 100,000 pounds interest free loan. Many musicians have also contributed through covenant schemes, and industry and business have given donations in kind (such as bricks) as well as in cash. There's also been help from the government (surprisingly) through its Manpower Services scheme, which subsidises the employment of people to work not only on the conversion work of the building itself, but also in education in the community schemes and a "Jazz Is" promotional scheme.

After many years of "what's happening?", the project is now keeping a high profile in the MS related educational and promotional schemes as well as with concert presentations (Dollar Brand recently) and free open-air concerts near the actual site of the Centre.

On that long awaited day when the Centre does open, hopefully next April, we'll be lost for choice of what to do first: there'll be music in the 400 seater hall, flexible we're told and able to "adjust to a solo piano or a twenty piece band, a childrens' concert or a dance company, a jazz band ball or a jazz funk disco — or even a straight play"; we'll also be able to hear music in the downstairs bar and restaurant, rehearse in the many practice rooms, join in the various workshops and lessons, buy a book or a record in the foyer shop and visit the archive "with library and visual facilities."

Cynics might also add that we can stand outside the offices listening to the sounds of anguish as the administration realise that the British really *are* philistines. Let's hope not. It really is time that jazz had a home of its own and if it fails this time I doubt there'll be another chance — ever, and Covent Garden will have acquired a rather expensive Bingo hall.

Assuming it does work, it will once again provide the opportunity for *this* generation of musicians, and those of us oldtimers who are left, to once again play regularly and listen to what else is going down — and then to talk about it, and the state of the world, all under one roof as we did all those years ago in Soho. □

SCRAPPLE FROM THE APPLE

by Lee Jeske

Those of you with long memories may remember this line from my cover story on Keith Jarrett in the March/April 1982 issue of this magazine: "About the only thing that Jarrett *hasn't* done recently is perform variations on jazz standards."

Now, if my ego was just a tiny bit larger I might think that Jarrett read that line while on tour over there (around the same time, you'll recall) and said, "Jazz standards, eh? Get me Manfred Eicher on the phone . . . I'll show that jerk Jeske that there is more to Keith Jarrett than meets the eye!" But, of course, it is only coincidence that in January of '83 Keith Jarrett brought Gary Peacock and Jack De Johnette into a New York City recording studio to wax at least two albums of . . . *blimey* . . . jazz standards. In the same paragraph of the same story I also said, "There is no way to underestimate or second-guess Keith Jarrett."

Well, a few days before Jarrett's *Standards, Vol. 1* hit the record stores, I went down to see the trio at the Village Vanguard. Keith Jarrett's penchant for doing a week at Max Gordon's jazz grotto every four or five years is praiseworthy, although it is an obvious public relations move. The Vanguard seats 123 people (that's what the fire department's notice on the wall says, but it's lucky for Max Gordon that no inspectors were down counting noses on this particular evening), which means that in a week there (at \$10 per seat per set) Jarrett plays to fewer people, for considerably less money, than he draws in a single solo concert at Lincoln Center. It is akin, in a small way, to the Rolling Stones doing the odd club gig during their tours of football stadiums. Only a small iota of the people who wanted to get in to hear Jarrett at the Vanguard were able to secure a reservation. Those who did get a ticket (including Mick Jagger — I wonder if Jarrett can get Stones tickets when he wants?) were treated to a rare and beautiful night of music-making.

During the course of the hour-and-fifteen minute set Jarrett played a number of tunes that went on too long, but, for the most part, the three men played wonderfully and with very little self-indulgent noodling. Peacock's firm, flowing bass work — not heard nearly often enough in these parts — was magnificent, and De Johnette proved himself, yet again, to be at the pinnacle of his talent and one of the two or three top jazz drummers around. But it was Jarrett's night, and his solos were crystalline, distinctive, soulful, and cantabile — reminiscent in their round tones and measured, introspective quality of the work of Bill Evans, whose photos are all over the walls of the Vanguard and who considered that cellar to be his home field. Jarrett's *I Fall In Love Too Easily* was particularly finely etched and his uptempo *The Masquerade Is Over* was rhythmic and roistering.

It would seem to be niggling here to bring up Jarrett's choreography at the piano. Hell, the guy even smiled and joked with the audience, and didn't quit playing in a huff when a glass clinked or the cash register rang.

And, like I've said, the music was quite exceptional. But the grunting and groaning — and I don't mean Errol Garner grunts, I mean full-blown animal noises and orgiastic yelps — the twisting and rocking, the falling to the knees, the shaking of the head, the general gesticulating and body tensing, is distracting. But, what the hell, if Jarrett's got to do it to make such lovely music, let him do it. Maybe, at this point, he truly can't play sitting still; I don't know. All I know is that Jarrett's trio gig at the Village Vanguard was a pleasure. Now about the only thing left he hasn't done is form the Keith Jarrett Big Band. Stay tuned, folks . . .



MARGARET SULLIVAN

Dizzy Gillespie: showed the audience where latin jazz comes from and who is still the master of the idiom . . .

A couple of days later, I was back at the Vanguard — this time in the afternoon — for a TV taping. Being at the Village Vanguard in the afternoon is unusual — the place is so dark and dim that it exudes nightness, like a catacomb. Stepping into or out of the club in bright sunshine is unnerving. Something else that is unnerving is going to a TV taping. Everytime I end up at one of these I swear — that I will never go to one again. The delays are interminable, the cameras are always exactly where your sightline is, the directors feel that they are Cecil B. DeMille and yell "cut" and "action" and treat their spectators as if they were smudges on eyeglasses. Needless to say, I didn't hang around the Vanguard long on this particular day; just long enough to hear a quartet of Lee Konitz, Roland Hanna, George Mraz, and Mel Lewis go through the paces. I'm a big fan of Konitz's dry, witty alto playing. He is a cool, some would say icy, soloist, but he swings in his own sweet way. The best piece I

heard — before I raced for the door — was a variation on *Star Eyes*, minus Hanna, minus the melody. Konitz's solo was typically spare and typically well-constructed, Mraz boomed along on the bass, and Lewis sat heavy-lidded behind his kit and knocked lightly at the door of Lee's solo. A nice mesh, before the yell of "cut" and an endless wait. □

Remember Swing Plaza, which I told you all about in the last issue? It's gone already. The hall was too large, the ambition was too large, and the management just withered and went away. I've said it before: there are too many jazz clubs hereabouts. □

Arturo Sandoval is the high-note trumpet player who was one of the founders of Irakere. Like Paquito D'Rivera, he left that Cuban band a few years ago, but unlike the altoist, he still lives and works in Cuba. Recently he was allowed to tour America (Paquito explained to me that the Cubans aren't afraid to bring Sandoval Stateside because he's not "the type" to leave his family and defect), and bring his own band along to boot. Unfortunately, there are a lot of anti-Castro Cubans living in New York, and the Cuban authorities were nervous about bringing Sandoval's band to the city (there were demonstrations a few months earlier when Orquestra Aragon played here, though they are much more of a government tool than Sandoval's jazz band). So Sandoval was scheduled as a soloist with Mongo Santamaria's band and the hard-core salsa band of Adalberto Santiago at the Village Gate, with Jon Faddis tossed in for extra measure. Sandoval wailed — this guy not only hits the high-notes (I'm talking high, I'm talking dog whistle high), but he can solo effectively way up there, and he *knows* how to fashion jazz solos over latin rhythms. Faddis did Sandoval good-natured battle but made the mistake of trying to match the Cuban's glass-shattering phrases. Sandoval won there, but Faddis made up for it with some wily jazz playing in a lower register. And you know where Jon Faddis and Arturo Sandoval go, Dizzy Gillespie ain't going to be too far behind. Late in the evening, the great man came down and showed the audience where latin jazz comes from and who is still the master of the idiom.

Here, to close, is a transcript of a short conversation I overheard between Dizzy Gillespie and writer Stanley Crouch after a recent Gillespie/Faddis performance. I don't necessarily agree with it, but I did get a laugh out of it:

Crouch: "Man, you took Faddis to school tonight."

Gillespie: "Oh don't say that, man. He makes me play things that are . . . new."

Crouch: "Yeah, that's because he's got all your old shit." □

Reports From . . .

. . . Brisbane

By Jim Barlow

September in Brisbane means the Warana Festival and the performing arts a major attraction. Jazz earned itself considerable credibility here with Festival '82 public concerts and, as a result, this year's presentations were bigger and better than ever. Statistically 32 bands, involving about 250 musicians took part. There were two major public concerts on the 18th and 25th in the Botanical Gardens; The Morrison Brothers Big Band debut at the Queensland Cultural Centre on the 24th; six late evening small group performances in the City Mall and the Jazz Band Ball on the 18th September.

Special guest for the Big Band Bonanza on the 18th was Edwin Duff who also attended the Jazz Band Ball. Special guests at the Public Concert on Sunday evening of the 25th were the Don Burrows Quartet featuring James Morrison, David Pudney and Len Barnard. A large crowd braved cool and blustery conditions to give the visitors a warm welcome. A parade of local jazz groups followed to play the whole jazz spectrum. The Vintage Jazz and Blues Band; SCAT (a 16 member vocal ensemble); Ted Vining with Musiikki Oy; the Carribean Connection, The Musical Maniacs and almost the AYJ Octet. I say almost because there was a misunderstanding by one of the groups on performance time and the AYJ tragically missed out. I'm sure that won't happen again. MC chores were capably handled by Rod Horton.

The Morrison Brothers Big Band concert took place in perfect weather in a perfect setting and was undoubtedly the highlight of the Festival jazzwise. That concert was under the aegis of the Cultural Centre Trust but all of the other presentations were organised by the Brisbane Jazz Club. Incidentally, all of the concerts were paid gigs except the Jazz Band Ball which was arranged on a ticket sale percentage basis. Wisecrack of the festival by Frank Johnson to well known plectrum man,

APOLOGY

The editor regrets that the section 'Around The Jazz Clubs' is missing from this edition. During the production of the magazine, owing to various technical hitches, he did not have time to examine the mountain of newsletters and publicity material which comes to the magazine from some 20 jazz societies around Australia. He would like to suggest that, henceforth, all publicity officers who wish their club to be included in this section write about 300 words on club activities, type it clearly and send it to the magazine. Is this a reasonable suggestion? News of jazz club activities is important and interesting, and should be included in JAZZ Magazine. So, let's share the burden. The next deadline is January 20, 1984, for the Summer 1984 edition.

"You're lucky Morrison doesn't play a bloody banjo as well".

Jazz thrives in Brisbane but gigs seem to be mainly concentrated at weekends. Approximately twenty gigs weekly take place on a more or less permanent basis, with styles predominantly trad although Messrs Vining and Quigley valiantly advance the modern idiom on Friday nights at the Community Arts Centre in Edward Street. Radio 4MBS-FM has just started a monthly jazz newsletter for subscribers which includes a directory. If you have any jazz news you want publicising write to: 4MBS-FM PO Box 9, Red Hill, 4059 Brisbane, or ring 356 8777.

. . . Mildura

by Ian Horbury

Appropriately enough, "jazz on the river" was the theme of this club's latest activity, a Sunday afternoon paddleboat cruise in late May. On board the PS Avoca were two local groups who will appear at this year's Jamboree — John Holmes Hound Dogs and the Midstream Trio. The Hound Dogs entertained with their usual enthusiastic performance, somewhat in the style of the Bobcats. After a period of relative inactivity they showed their fans that they are moving towards top form again and should peak at the end of October.

Something of a surprise to many was the Midstream Trio. Although the resident band on the Avoca for some time now, it was clear that many of the Club's members had either not heard them before or had not really listened. Don Higginbotham's piano, in particular, impressed everyone. So popular did the event prove to be that another was held on 11th September. This time there were three groups aboard — John Holmes' small group, Mainstream and Terrace.

Latest news on the Jazz Jamboree is that Adrian Ford will appear as a special guest artist. The popular and talented brass and piano player from Sydney will play both as a solo artist and with the Yarra Yarra New Orleans Jazz Band from Melbourne. This great weekend was held from October 28 - 30. (See next issue of JAZZ for a report).

. . . Perth

By Steve Robertson

It was as unlikely a situation as you could imagine.

There on the stage at the Hyde Park Hotel, playing for the Perth Jazz Society, was a Los Angeles guitarist with an unpronounceable Teutonic name who had once led a punk surfer band.

And to top it all off, he's settled down in the tiny coastal town of Busselton, W.A.

But for 29 year old John Heussenstamm, it's all very logical.

"I came out to Australia almost three years ago," Heussenstamm explained between sets. "My wife Julie is Australian and besides, this country is great to play and teach music in. Around Los Angeles there are about 20,000 guitarists and only about 200 of them are earning a living."

The Heussenstamm name, difficult though it is to grapple with, is firmly linked with musical excellence. John's grandmother was a concert pianist, Uncle George is a major figure in Pasadena chamber music, and another uncle was a sax player in the Les Brown big band, that is, when he wasn't in the recording studio making country and western hits.

"I began playing piano at four," John recalls. "Then I heard Elvis and that turned me on to rock. I played trumpet and bass for a while, but listening to people like Clapton, Hendrix and B.B. King convinced me to switch to guitar. I was about 18 when I really discovered jazz, especially Kenny Burrell and Wes Montgomery."

Ever improving as a player, John found himself backing singer Denise Williams, and eventually joining that infamous band, The Surf Punks.

"I recorded for Epic as Johnny Malibu. It sold a hundred thousand copies, but it wasn't what I wanted to do with my life musically. Then I met my wife Julie and she convinced me I didn't have to play that kind of stuff, that I could play what I wanted to play. She's responsible for my musical revival."

In Busselton these days, Heussenstamm teaches between 20 and 30 young guitar students and plays throughout the southwest with a small dance band called The Lifters.

"We were doing a tribute to John McLaughlin and a member of the jazz society heard me. He recommended that the PJS put me on, so here I am. It's a thrill to be playing for a really appreciative jazz audience."

There is a lot to appreciate in John's music. His approach to the standards is fresh and innovative and he is the master of a blues-drenched fusion style that he performs on a rock musician's guitar. It's a certainty he'll soon be well-known throughout the west, even though he is hidden away in Busselton and has a name that's only pronounceable if you're a former member of the Wehrmacht.

The spirit of the Cannonball Adderley Quintet was evoked recently at the PJS when Keith Stirling and David Ades teamed with a local trio for an evening of top modern jazz.

As was pointed out in the cover article in the last issue of JAZZ, Stirling is indeed playing with great assurance these days. His biting muted solos on *All Blues* and *Softly, As In A Morning Sunrise* (what other kind of sunrises are there?) showed the influences of Miles and Kenny Dorham and Freddie Hubbard. His dynamics are impeccable, an example that a few well-known American trumpeters could follow.

The young alto player Ades proved a formidable talent. His shining moment was his reading of (arguably) Duke Ellington's loveliest ballad, *In A Sentimental Mood*. It was a passionate tour de force, played mostly in the upper register and graced with a marvellous Murray Wilkins bass solo. Pianist Mike Nelson continues to prove that he is an artist of national calibre, especially with his

very blue solo on *All Blues*. And drummer Glen Walsh impressed the visitors with his technique and ebullience.

They're already talking about a Second WA Jazz Festival following the success of the first one over a long weekend in York. Perth has a large and loyal traditional jazz audience and even the most insatiable fans must have been more than satisfied with the three days of almost non-stop music served up in this quaint colonial village about 90 minutes drive from the city. The familiar names of Perth trad were all there, Pam & Llew Hird, the Cornerhouse Band, Elvie Simmons and Ragtime, and many others. Not since the Convention in Fremantle in 1979 has so much traditional jazz been offered up here in the west. It would be a shame if it didn't become an annual event. □

... Sydney

by Peter J.F. Newton

August 7, Berrima Day, was perfect in every way, despite those predicators of doom who seem to associate the Sydney Jazz Club's winter events with the chill blasts of windgods and the inclemency of rain gods. Such is their loss — the winter of *their* discontent. Starting from Sydney's Queen Victoria Building, two coachloads of Sydney jazzers sought passage through the mad, pounding hordes of health freaks paying homage to the annual City to Suffering rite. The caravanserai stopped briefly at Balmain to collect the bulk of Bill Haesler's Washboard Band. The inner city Push — some lively, others just quitting last night's land of the legless — were also out in substantial force. Substantial that is given that Dave Ridyard's jazz breakfast was scheduled a few hours later at The Cat & Fiddle Hotel and that several buffs were actually up and running to Bondi. Even more puzzling, some went to watch: as one grey-beard among many remarked, it was indeed one way of getting jazz on the cheap, a number of well known bands being booked to play en route — but you would have to be dedicated! Large as the inner city mob was, it was refreshing to see new faces through the coach windows, many apparently trekking out of the boondocks of Sutherland Shire.

As our coach pounded through the Western Suburbs then down the new freeway, Iggy Kellaway sensibly substituted commercial radio *schlock* with the latest Yarra Yarra tape which, despite the sound system, was relished by the company. Sydney Jazz Club director Ken Pitkin (who must be commended for his work as Marshal of Ceremonies) added a tape of Jelly Roll and Fats — no Raelene, not duets — to ensure that at least one contingent arrived suitably attuned to the occasion. It was noted, as we swept through Strathfield, that our driver's left foot was moving with a tempo that would give fine grace and favour to any passing hi-hat. A printed notice above his head curiously advised us that it was against the law to "drink alcohol, etc, etc." No mention of penalties or indeed of the nature of the etceteras. I am pleased to report that there were no incidents of swyving, singing of lewd ballads nor other importunities, etc. — at least on the way down!

Springtime in the purlieus of Berrima is legendary. The air crisply fresh, warmed sufficiently by the sun to raise smiles and

appetites to the point where imbibing is pleasure rather than necessity. A time when you shut your eyes to the morass of wall-to-wall vehicles, close your ears to the inane muzak of a thousand car radios. But it is impossible to switch off completely. Two score years ago and newly arrived we used to come to Berrima from Wollongong; a pleasant Sunday drive into what has now become total tourism — a feeling fortified by observing the amount of imported junk in the 'arty-crafty' shops and the seeming decline of domestic housing. A time when one really thanks providence for the rarity of jazz. Friends who now run a corner store at Taralga on the backroad to Goulburn later echoed these sentiments, suggesting that there must come a time when the spate of tourists will dampen the spirit of the Berrima Day — and Taralga with its several pubs could well be a worthy alternative venue. Moreover, one excellent bass player, Richard Ochalski, now lives in the area.

But, as the writers say, we digress. By mid-day Sydney was joined in The Surveyor-General Hotel by delegates from the Canberra, Illawarra and Campbelltown Jazz Clubs, the latter having gracefully deferred its own picnic. After damping down the dusts of the throat, and some congenial chitchat, the *modus operandi*: the hirelings, led by Haesler, were to have the main bar an arm's throw from the Guinness; those seeking jam but no bread copped the more roomy lounge. Soon after noon, both were off and blowing.

Because of the nature of the Berrima bash, the reviewer is rarely able to do justice to the performances in the critical sense. And rightly so! To some degree (after the third pint of Guinness in my case) some judgements have to be suspended, the rough taken benevolently with the smooth. To say that the public bar of the S-G is uncomfortable with a crowd larger than a handful is a verity soon assuaged by copious inputs of food and beverage. Even so, you would have had difficulty conducting a game of pool on the room's largest piece of furniture. Yet in spite of the crowds, neither I nor my lady were really that uncomfortable — and the service from the publican and his hard-worked staff was superlative, given always with speed and right good humour.

The quality of the jazz in the two bars was up and down — like the speed of my drinking arm. There were many memorable if not great moments. Bill Haesler selected his team well. The incomparable John McCarthy played clarinet for the most part; John is the complete musician, rarely turning in a poor performance and always to be seen listening with interest to the creativity in others. The trombonist John 'Stalky' Colbourne-Veel has of late made quite an impression on me, not only for his originality but also for the lovely sound he draws from his instrument. He is fast becoming one of our more lyrical trombonists, and is also capable of using the plunger in ways quite stirring to the soul. The rhythm section had its strengths too. Since the death of Fred Starkey, Haesler is to my mind the *only* washboard player in Australia (now that should generate a letter or two). I must confess that I do not always look favourably on the banjo, much preferring guitar; it is a relief that, unlike many of its exponents, Iggy Kellaway makes the thing swing. A very strong bass-line was provided

by the veteran jazzier Jack Connolly on his extraordinary plastic sousaphone.

Several sitters-in were well-received. The ubiquitous Neil Steeper played some fiery trumpet, then shattered the complacency of the passing carriage trade which will never again tiptoe lightly through the tulips of Bowral and Mittagong. Neil's visit, although raucous, was regrettably brief; having driven down from Sydney for one set, he had to return for a four o'clock gig. There's dedication for you! I particularly enjoyed also the work of Jim Hilson, a trombonist who well lived up to a reputation I know only from the jazz press.

Not by design, we heard less than we ought from the jam sessioners; an obvious problem is that sets seemed to finish in both bars at roughly the same time. The rhythm section was a bit too stodgy at first, but seemed to pick up in the later sets. I heard some enjoyable booting tenor and some adequate trumpet from Brian of Campbelltown (surnames are not always my strong point, but mention of Merle should enhance identification). I also liked, probably for all the wrong reasons, some superior sing-along jazz piano. Fleeting memories of Rick's Cafe, London's Eastend pubs, Black Yanks playing piano in Aunt Alice's parlour in pre-D-Day Dorset. Who said nostalgia is a thing of the past?

There were moments of jazz and non-jazz which, for their *ad hocery*, are not out of place in this report. A group of well-oiled Campbelltowners, identifiable by well-filled Campbelltown JC tee shirts, led by Judi French adjusted vocal flaps to a little light to medium opera. Friends of long standing, ebullient over their first beers, bemoaning each other's earbashing after their last. The inevitable Cockney comic (not me, moosh) in our coach who knew all the vaudeville songs I have long forgotten. The hystrionic and obscene rendition of *The Ash Grove* which should be done (in whatever version) only by a Welsh male voice choir.

And indeed it was a noisy trip home. The new expressway, bane of conservationists, has reduced the journey from Berrima to Balmain to a mere two hours or so. There was in fact only one call for a pit stop. I think it was 'pit', although by this stage I may well have failed to note that the final consonant of 'pit' was often replaced by a pair of sibillants. In keeping with Sydney's day of reckoning, I canvassed the notion of a jazz jogathon, a happening recently endured over 10 km by the Charlin Jazz Society, Washington, DC. Despite skepticism, the consensus suggested that there may be merit in promoting such a race, taking the short route between The Cat & Fiddle and the Unity Hall, both in Balmain — provided that oxygen tents, a keg and a rejuvenating jazz band are stationed every two hundred metres.

Balmain and home. To the minor irritation of some, the coaches, for lack of parking space, overshot the doors of The Cat & Fiddle by about 500 yards; apparently several carousers completed the journey by cab. By all accounts there was a great night at the C & F (or Moggy & Wank as the locals now know it) whereas the breakfast was ill-attended. Be that as it may, for those of us who made it, the Berrima Picnic was *the* day — a most fitting celebration to mark the 30th anniversary of the Sydney Jazz Club. Bonzer!

CONCERT REVIEWS

Pyramid

Montreux Jazz Festival, Switzerland, July 18.

I did not expect Pyramid to face inequitable treatment at Montreux. After all, they came all the way from Australia and the festival's music director Claude Nobs had the opportunity to judge Pyramid's music from their first LP.

Still, they had to play on a Monday night, with no big name groups to pull in a large audience. Unlike most other evenings there was no TV coverage, live across Switzerland. Then Pyramid were victims of a reshuffle — moved to appear as the last of the evening's five groups. In spite of sound checks and a system handled by a world-famous team of engineers, there was a distinct, audible hiss over the PA. To top it all, their turn came, due to extra time allowed to other groups, at 1.40 am instead of the scheduled 11.30 pm. Only about 300 people were left of the already thin (about 800) Monday night audience in a venue that holds 2,500. By the time Pyramid finished only 150 were left. Who can expect a group to give of its best under such circumstances?

But the unexpected did happen. Pyramid stunned everyone present, in a historic, mind-blowing performance — surely a turning point in their career. A beguiled Claude Nobs walked onstage to redeem himself and declared — although it was unprecedented — that Pyramid would give a further concert the following evening. Unfortunately I could not be present on the 19th as I had to rush to the San Sebastian Jazz Festival in Spain. But news of Nobs's unprecedented move spread fast and at least 2,000 came the next day to hear Pyramid repeat their magic. Also billed for the 19th were Takehiro Honda's group Native Son, Lonnie Liston Smith and the guest appearance of Herbie Mann with Roy Ayers. Pyramid were given valuable publicity

throughout the jazz world, including an interview over the BBC World Service.

David Hirschfelder is one of the greatest keyboardists I have heard. He is a master — a monarch ruling with total command over his Yamaha Electric Grand Piano, the Fender Rhodes, the Korg Poly VI and Prophet V synthesisers with sequencer. He is much too skilled and artistic for the requirements of rock music (although he is closely associated with the Little River Band). His creativity needs a jazz outlet like Pyramid. He is the kind of musician Miles Davis should invite to join his present fusion outfit. He is capable of gaining international fame and recognition.

David Hirschfelder's solos sparkle with excitement. He is lyrical and his compositions have catchy melodies (they could be turned into pop hits). He was applauded repeatedly for his solos on the tunes *Introspection* and *School Yard III*. His mastery with keyboards gives Pyramid a genuine big band sound. The sequencer attached to the Prophet V is loaded with sets of prerecorded sounds. With one hand on the Yamaha or Fender Rhodes, and the other hand on the Korg, he flicks the sequencer switch, unloading some beautiful sounds which, combined with the other two hands, creates an exciting big band sound.

At the appropriate point Bob Venier comes in with pure acoustic flugelhorn and trumpet sounds, giving the music a healthy, natural, not-so-electric aura, making it all the more acceptable to those jazz ears which prefer acoustic to electronic sounds.

The Swiss, more than any country outside the USA, have a tradition in drumming, derived from the Basel burghers' Fasnacht carnival, which has helped them turn out some of the best jazz drummers in Europe. In Europe, only the Swiss drummers like Daniel Humair and Pierre Favre are accepted by and large by the American musicians. As Australia has no such tradition, it is incredible that a

drummer of David Jones's quality has emerged from a far corner of the world: Melbourne.

At Montreux David Jones displayed all the qualities one associates with Humair and Favre: total control, wit and humour, full dynamic range from heavy and loud to gentle and subtle, swing, showmanship, drive and power — and a few other things derived from his rock background which Humair and Favre do not possess. With sharply attentive ears, Jones was alive to every new situation as it arose. Always smiling, with his frail body behind a large kit, David Jones was without doubt one of the most interesting drummers to be found in Europe this summer.

Roger McLachlan (electric bass) lends more than adequate support to Venier, Jones and Hirschfelder, making them one of the most exciting groups to be heard in Montreux and also (10 days earlier) at the North Sea Festival. I heard them at North Sea on July 8, also on the festival's opening night. They played to about 600 people in one of eight venues, all in the same complex, where eight groups could be heard performing simultaneously. (Last year Crossfire faced an audience of 3,000 at the Garden Pavilion.) Although Pyramid played well and got repeated ovations, it was not the same as it was to be at Montreux. At Montreux they were really tight as a group, and their performance is now part of history.

Niranjan Jhaveri

Bruce Cale Quintet, Odwala

RMIT Theatre, Melbourne, September 25.

For Bruce Cale's Melbourne 'debut', economics dictated that he would be unable to perform with his regular band, so Cale and saxophonist Brent Stanton joined forces with three of Melbourne's finest, pianist Bob Sedergreen, trumpeter Bob Venier and drummer Virgil Donati. Surprisingly, Cale was untroubled by the prospect of performing his original music with an under-rehearsed lineup, and in fact was keen to hear new players offer a fresh perspective on his compositions.

It was a shame only about 100 people were there, because everything came together superbly. The players did justice to Cale's pieces, which often prompted them into some brilliant solos.

Cale is a very gifted bassist, who displays plenty of dexterity, accuracy and imagination both in his solos and in his ensemble work. He was never content to play 'follow the leader', was continually offering comments and suggestions to the soloist, and his interplay with Sedergreen was a source of delight.

Stanton played flute well enough on the pretty *Listen To The Song Of Life*, but was more impressive with his tenor on the other numbers. His solos tended to go on too long to maintain their effectiveness, but I liked the way he built his solos within the structure of the pieces, and insinuated rather than paraded every run he could execute. He was fluent, and fairly interesting.

Donati did his job skilfully and tastefully, while Venier also performed creditably. He has a clean, bright tone and a precise attack, with which he hit strong peaks in most of his



NIRANJAN JHAVERI

Pyramid at Montreux: an historic, mind-blowing performance . . .



Bob Sedergreen (piano), Bob Venier (flugelhorn) and Bruce Cale (bass): everything came together superbly . . .

forays. And Sedergreen was exciting as ever, working busily through his ideas, paying due care to the demands of the music as he set up a strong groove.

But the real star of the concert was Cale the composer. His melodies were unusual and attractive, and his pieces rewarded the interest of both players and listeners. *Cryptogram*, a bebop piece with a difference, was the least interesting, in that it essentially became a straight-ahead blowing piece; significantly, it was during this number that the concert lost its momentum. That momentum was picked up immediately with *Rolling Thunder*, which drew a bold, imaginative solo from Venier, prompted by the 'pause-run' structure, as was Sedergreen. Such devices also offered the players inspiration on *Bindo* and *Kuri Monga Nuie*. I am sure this concert would have confirmed for all listeners Cale's reputation as one of the most important composers in Australian jazz.

The concert was ably opened by Odwala, who for this performance comprised Martin Jackson on saxes, Jex Saarelaht on piano, Barry Buckley on bass and Keith Pereira, with special guest Keith Hounslow on pocket cornet and flugelhorn. The rhythm section, anchored by the selfless Buckley, kept a steady groove happening on numbers like *Dual Force* and *Greetings To Idris* while Jackson and Saarelaht worked through neatly flowing solos and Hounslow displayed his rare gift for melodic improvisation.

Saarelaht's *Hymn For Jim* saw an attractive, Blue Note-style head move into a medium groove with strong solos from piano, flugel and tenor. Next up, Jackson laid out while Hounslow, back on harmon-muted cornet, gave a dazzling display of ad-lib fast-blues playing, with Buckley really igniting the rhythm section.

Jackson's tenor and Hounslow's muted cornet combined handsomely for the melody of Mal Waldron's *Soul Eyes*, the highlight of which was a stunningly beautiful Hounslow solo. The final number, *Vienna*, saw Jackson's best solo of the day, a tenor work-out with some in-context fiery flourishes, and another inspired offering from Hounslow.

Adrian Jackson

Manly Jazz Carnival 1983

Manly Corso Plaza, Sydney, October 1, 2 & 3

Once again this splendid event, now in its sixth year, proved to be a highlight of the year in Sydney jazz. As we've said before, the Manly Jazz Carnival is very good for jazz. As in most cities, jazz in Sydney is usually played late at night in licensed venues where children are not admitted. Manly Council and the Carnival producer John Speight are to be congratulated for providing this invaluable opportunity for jazz to be heard out in the community — not merely by jazz buffs, but also by the wider public, including families and young people.

Over three days thousands of children heard jazz, many of them for the first time. Judging by their evident enjoyment and attention, many of these youngsters will go on to be jazz fans in the future; once jazz

captures the young imagination there is no turning back. Festivals such as this Manly event are a crucial part of the education process.

Over the three days there were many highlights, including the presentation of modern jazz outfits that are — perhaps unfairly — regarded as non-commercial or too far out for the average audience. Roger Frampton's *Intersection* was one. Other than Frampton (sopranino saxophone & piano) it included Peter Boothman (guitar), Lloyd Swanton (bass) and Phil Treloar (drums).

The enduring qualities of Frampton's music are eccentricity and unpredictability — the perennial search for something new. That is why his music is so arresting. His simple tune *The Body Blues* which the group opened with, had some quirky variations on the normal blues progression — just enough to ease the listener out of his normal, conventional groove. With Frampton, there is no loafing on the part of the listener.

Tears Of A Dragon, a superior composition by Peter Boothman, had a stirring melody, stated in unison by him on guitar, and Frampton on sopranino saxophone. The use of this sort of melody, along with Boothman's lovely, singing sound, took the music into something of a heavy metal area. One finds this sound in contemporary rock music, but it was invigorating to hear it employed in the loose, creative context of *Intersection*.

The group produced expressive, free solos, with the rhythm section always building powerfully towards climactic peaks. After the guitar solos, Frampton usually took a solo on electric piano, giving the quartet an added voice.

Intersection confirmed that it is one of the most creative and stimulating groups now playing in Australian jazz. There are many elements which make its music interesting. Among them, for example, is the tendency, which I have already mentioned, for Boothman's guitar to venture into the heavy metal area (along with the group's willingness to explore various aspects of 'fusion' music.)



The New Orleans Spirit group at Manly. From left, Lachie Jamieson (drs), Dieter Vogt (bass), Freddie Wilson (baritone), Graham Conlon (gtr), Marty Mooney (tenor), Bob Henderson (trt): accessible, mainstream jazz . . .

Frampton, too, is an extraordinary saxophone player who is open to a variety of approaches on the instrument. Note his willingness to use a broad vibrato on the soprano, thereby, in one huge step, reaching back into the pre-bebop eras.

One can understand why Marty Mooney's New Orleans Spirit group has been packing 'em into The Cat & Fiddle Hotel, Balmain, every Sunday night. Despite the name, this definitely is not a New Orleans jazz band, as we know them in this country. It is more a 1930s-style swing band which also plays 1940s-style bebop. The arrangements are loose, but clever, with the two saxophones (Mooney on tenor, and Freddie Wilson on baritone & alto) producing a rich, dovetailed sound.

This group allows trumpeter Bob Henderson to stretch out and show a side of his playing that is rarely visible in the Graeme Bell band. On top of a very swinging, rather turbulent and emphatic rhythm section (Dieter Vogt, bass, Lachie Jamieson, drums, and Grahame Conlon, guitar) he is able to play a little softer, close to the microphone, and take a much more extended, linear approach than is possible in the Bell band. The architecture of his lines in *Take The A Train* and *You've Changed* (which he also sang sensitively) suggests that he is developing into a trumpeter with the careful, highly musical phrasing of a Bob Barnard — and that's a great direction to be heading in.

A word for Lachie Jamieson. For many years he has been regarded as a madman in Sydney jazz. Yet, is there a more swinging, bebop-style drummer in town? He never just coasts along, even when he is using brushes. He is always pushing the soloist with powerful accents and his general turbulence prevents the rhythm section from ever becoming sluggish.

This was a splendid performance from a freewheeling, blowing band, producing the kind of accessible, mainstream jazz that is the backbone of the Sydney jazz scene.

The South Australian College of Advanced Education Vocal Jazz Ensemble provided the Manly audience with the sort of choral jazz

MANLY JAZZ CARNIVAL 1983 PROGRAM

Saturday October 1: *Forest Graduates Stage Band; Jazz Parade from Manly Wharf; Official Opening; Abbey Jazz Band; Roger Frampton's Intersection; Doctor Jazz & Sons; Nancy Stuart Jazz Band; Marty Mooney's Spirit of New Orleans.*

Sunday October 2: *NSW Conservatorium Big Band; South Australian CAE Vocal Jazz Ensemble; Jack & Indra Lesmana Quintet; Errol Buddle Band with Doug Williams; Harbord Diggers Big Band; Carnival Jam Session.*

Monday October 3: *Young Sydney Jazz Orchestra; Frank Traynor's Jazz Preachers; The Benders; Morrison Brothers Big Bad Band; Su Cruickshank with the Tom Baker Quartet; Bob Barnard's Pacific Jazz Stars.*

that is rarely heard in Sydney. The solid work that must have gone into their ensemble arrangements was evident, and all credit to them for the disciplined articulation of complex jazz phrasing, in unison and harmony. Many members of the group attempted scat singing — certainly one of the most difficult tasks in all art music — with acceptable results, and the audience obviously enjoyed the performance very much.

The members of the ensemble would probably benefit from hearing a tape of their performance, as I did. If anything, the singers needed more understatement. Everyone seemed to be *over-singing* and their articulation was too precise and definite, often a little too far up on the beat, giving the group a very straight, pert, *white* sound. They need to develop a more relaxed, laid-back feeling in the group so that, instead of the singers pushing the music out in such a full-throated manner, the music flows out more naturally. Who am I to say how this can be achieved? Perhaps by listening more to the approach of the great black American singers?



JANE MARCH

Doug Williams: the real thing . . .

The Errol Buddle Band gave a splendid display of jazz/rock fusion and soul music. The band's fierce, powerful rhythm section (Dave Fennell, keyboards, Dean Kerr, guitar, Sunil de Silva, percussion, Phil Scorgie, bass, Chris Sweeney, drums) was in top form, and the playing of Errol Buddle (saxophones, flute & piccolo) was as masterful as ever — still pure jazz, even if it was riding on the top of rock and latin rhythms (other than their lightning version of *The Basement Blues* in fast four).

The group was joined for two numbers by the singer Doug Williams. It was apparent, while he was performing, that his soft/funk or soul music had great appeal to the general public. Of course, Doug Williams does not have to work to sound authentic. As a black American he is the real thing; a genuine representative of the school of American singers that has thrown up people like Donny Hathaway and George Benson. Williams is certainly in their league.

When I hear this sort of aggregation of Sydney jazz players, I am always delighted and fascinated by the variety of players we have. Even the moderately talented players, performing with genuine jazz spirit, are a source of great enjoyment. Yet, at the same time, the jazz spirit combined with extraordinary talent is a heady mixture. The music that emanates from that combination stands head and shoulders above the rest. In this area I would place Indra Lesmana, who played with the NSW Conservatorium Big Band and with his guitarist father in the Jack & Indra Lesmana Quintet.

They included, other than the two Indonesian expatriates, Col Loughnan (tenor saxophone), Bruce Cale (acoustic bass) and Andy Evans (drums). Although Indra Lesmana was on electric piano and Jack on electric guitar, the general approach was that of swinging, acoustic jazz. The young Lesmana's sparkling right hand lines and biting chords in the left, indicated what a precocious, maturing jazz talent this young man possesses — although, at the ripe old age of 17, he is now something of a veteran in Sydney jazz. In his own tune *A Day In The Park* he produced a prolific, torrential outpouring of melodic ideas. The audience,



JANE MARCH

The South Australian CAE Vocal Jazz Ensemble: how to get that laid-back feeling . . . ?

obviously fascinated by his extraordinary command of the keyboard, gave him vigorous applause.

By the same token, the audience tended to lose interest during the extended solos of the other players in the quintet. This is not to say that they should have shortened their solos. But it is to say that this sort of acoustic jazz has limited appeal to the general public, unless the soloists produce a little extra magic or play with unusual flair. Still, it was right that this sort of group — representing the state of the art in post-bop, modern jazz, along with Roger Frampton's Intersection and The Benders — were included in the Carnival. Such groups are a very important part of the jazz spectrum in this city.



JANE MARCH

Indra Lesmana: a prolific outpouring of melodic ideas . . .



JANE MARCH

Andrew Gander of The Benders: hard-bop played with blistering virtuosity . . .

The third day of the Carnival survived the one factor that threatens all open-air events: rain. There was some discomfort for the hardened spectators who, tenaciously, persisted to the end but generally the Carnival continued on its successful way, give or take a few sound system problems caused by dampness. The highlights of the day were the appearances of The Benders and the Morrison Brothers Big Bad Band.

The Benders, including Jason Morphett (tenor saxophone), Chris Abrahams (piano), Lloyd Swanton (bass) and Andrew Gander (drums) gave a powerful display of their biting, uncompromising modern jazz. I can only describe their music as hard-bop played with blistering virtuosity. Jason Morphett had to fill very large shoes when he took over from Dale Barlow, but he is now every bit as impressive as Barlow was. In fact, The Benders may well now be a better *group* than they were with Barlow. The rhythm section has evolved into a marvellously well-integrated unit, always willing to explore interesting rhythmic ideas. There is a looseness and flexibility about their playing which gives the group a feeling of great freedom, yet it is a freedom which is given a solid direction by their knowledge of each others' playing. It is rare to see this type of integrated group feeling outside the best working American

groups.

The Morrison Brothers Big Bad Band gave their second public appearance following their performance at Brisbane's Warana Festival on September 24. (See cover story for a full report on this group). They showed clearly that the music they are presenting has great popular appeal.

This review is naturally inconclusive, as there were a number of performances which I was unable to catch. (See box on page 44 for a full list of the Carnival programme.) Many people felt that the most memorable performance of the weekend was that given by Frank Traynor's Jazz Preachers from Melbourne on the third day. That group included the great Keith Hounslow on trumpet; I'm sorry I missed it, along with a host of other performances.

All credit to John Speight for making the Manly Jazz Carnival as comprehensive as it now is. This event not only allows people of all ages to hear jazz; it also attempts to cover the great variety of jazz now played in Sydney. Of course, not every eligible group is able to appear. But John Speight has been able to achieve each year a balanced programme, from traditional and swing, through to modern jazz and the avant-garde — by no means an easy task.

Eric Myers

Jazz Guitar Showcase, featuring Bruce Clarke, George Golla and Tom Rabaka

Hilton International Sydney Jazz Festival, Marble Bar, Sydney Hilton, October 22

This particular concert created much interest, in that it brought together two long-standing, great guitar players in Australian jazz: Melbourne's Bruce Clarke and Sydney's George Golla. They had played together before in the recording studio, but this was their first performance together in concert.

Golla opened proceedings playing solo, with versions of Barney Kessel's *Easy Like* and the David Raksin ballads *Love Is For The Very Young* and *Laura*. The evergreen Golla style was as delightful as always: measured, understated forays through the chord structures, with subtle, uncomplicated variations on the conventional changes, his harmonic ideas always held together by clear, concise runs and clever connecting sections.

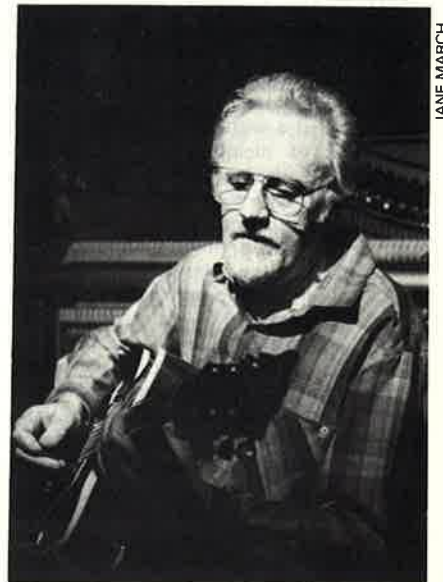
George Golla's style is now a completely individual one: mature and finished, honed pretty close to perfection, and this was a predictable demonstration of his artistry. Also it was evident that in the hushed tones of the Marble Bar, which was mercifully uncrowded (when crowded, it can be like the Black Hole of Calcutta) Golla had a sure ability to establish a mood, and draw the listener into his music — the mark of a fine musician.

When he had completed Jobim's *Once I Loved, Angel Eyes, Little Girl Blue, It Might As Well Be Spring* and *My Funny Valentine* (the last three a tribute to Richard Rodgers), the gauntlet had been well and truly thrown down — however gently — for Bruce Clarke. How would the Melbourne legend fare after Golla's compact and exquisite performance?

I preface my comments on Bruce Clarke by pointing out that, no matter how much we

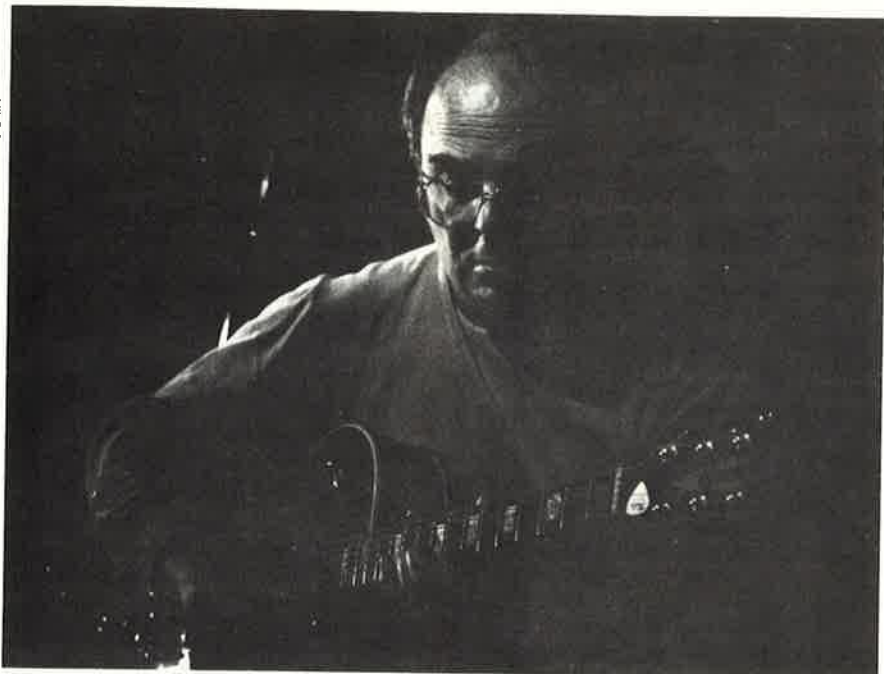
talk about players getting together merely to celebrate the music, jazz is basically competitive. A good battle between two top players is always invigorating, especially if they inspire each other, and the listener will invariably get a charge from the evidence that one player or another swings more, or can produce the most convincing and interesting ideas — that is the essence of jazz. There was therefore a legitimate interest in the audience as to who, out of Clarke and Golla, would emerge as the superior player.

The program which Bruce Clarke selected for his solo spot was a good deal less esoteric and more shop-worn than Golla's: *Tenderly*,



JANE MARCH

Bruce Clarke at the Marble Bar: more aggressive than Golla . . .



George Golla: Impressed with his tidiness and consummate architecture . . .

Autumn Leaves, Sweet Georgia Brown, Jordu, The Shadow Of Your Smile, St. Louis Blues. It was immediately obvious that his approach to the guitar was in some contrast to Golla's — he was more aggressive and overstated, but not so assured. Whereas Golla had impressed with his tidiness and consummate architecture, Clarke's style was less compact, more turbulent, and a little rougher around the edges.

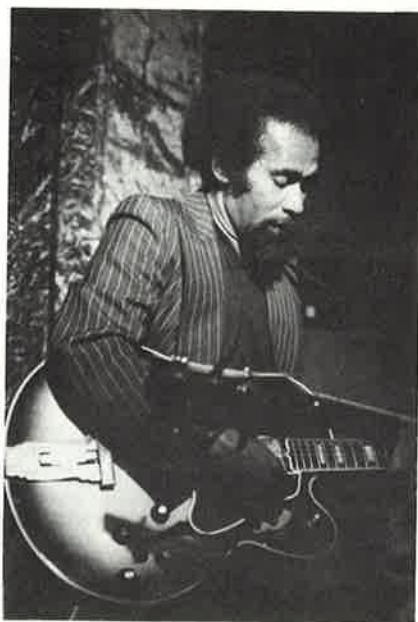
Still, there was much to come. What would both men produce on the wave of propulsion provided by a rhythm section? The two guitarists were soon joined for the penultimate set by Ed Gaston (bass) and Alan Turnbull (drums) for a set of interesting standards, including *Indian Summer, Maybe Today, Song For Delilah, I Fall In Love Too Easily, Fly Me To The Moon* and *Lady Be Good*.

This was a splendid opportunity to compare their styles, and their contrasting approaches to improvisation were immediately obvious. Once out in a solo, Golla demonstrated a withering superiority in the expression of melodic ideas, particularly through his capacity to double the time-feel, with flashing sixteenth-note phrases, articulated with sure precision. Clarke steered well clear of this approach, suggesting that his finger technique is far inferior to Golla's. In fact, Clarke's approach became predictable and stereotyped as the afternoon wore on: one or two choruses of linear improvisation or melody construction; then, when he approached an area where he might have developed his initial ideas, he invariably confined himself to percussive, syncopated chords or octaves. This approach tended to produce some excitement but, to my way of thinking, it was a limited one alongside the unlimited supply of ideas emanating from Golla. Clarke, I felt, was avoiding the challenge.

On the other hand, Clarke was willing to extend himself in the general areas of vigour

and aggression, usually building his solos up to a peak through percussive thumps and volume (an approach which, I noticed, got a good reaction from many in the audience). Golla tended to remain more circumspect and unemotional, extending himself in the more purely musical areas of technique and melodic ideas.

The contrast in their sound quality was also instructive. Whereas Golla located most of his playing in the upper register, where he retained a crystal clear sound, Clarke showed a distinct preference for the middle register



Tom Rabaka at the Marble Bar: uncannily like Wes Montgomery . . .

and a much thicker string sound.

Following the two Australians, the Fijian guitarist Tom Rabaka appeared with Raddy Ferreira (piano), Bill Twyman (bass) and Matt Dilosa (drums). Rabaka, who is a Fijian priest, had been flown over especially for a series of concerts, and this was his first appearance.

It was immediately obvious that Rabaka was a great guitarist, with immaculate technique, a wonderful flow of ideas, and a gorgeous sound (produced by using only his right thumb instead of a plectrum). In tunes like *On Green Dolphin Street, Besame Mucho* and *Misty*, I noted the splendid construction of his solos and his ability to get hot on the instrument. The ovations which greeted his solos suggested that, on the face of it, he was the most exciting guitarist of the afternoon.

Yet, I became more uneasy as his set went on. Rabaka sounded so uncannily like the great American Wes Montgomery that I wondered if he was a reincarnation. Was Rabaka's playing no more than a representation of Montgomery (albeit a powerful and authoritative one)?

My uneasiness was confirmed later in the week when a number of Sydney guitarists, on hearing Rabaka, ventured a similar conclusion: that he is an extraordinary and superior purveyor of the insights that Wes Montgomery brought to the jazz guitar but, at the same time, there is little originality in his playing.

I hasten to add, though, that this is the sort of comment which might be made only by the purist with a knowledge of jazz history. To the lay audience Tom Rabaka came across as a great guitar player, who would give the best in the world a run for their money. Most people left the Marble Bar with the feeling that he had played George Golla and Bruce Clarke off the stage.

Eric Myers

The Paul McNamara Quartet

Hilton International Sydney Jazz Festival, Sydney Hilton, October 19.

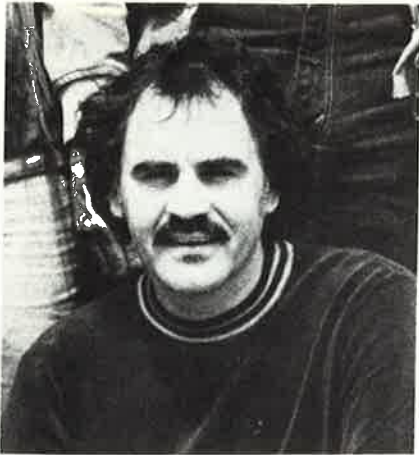
The Paul McNamara Quartet's performance at the Sydney Hilton Hotel's Marble Bar made few demands on the listener. But perhaps that's just as well. The Quartet began at 9.30 pm and by then some patrons had been drinking for three and a half hours.

The material they played during the night was mostly standards from the 60s and there were some isolated highlights to enjoy.

The Quartet features some very experienced musicians: McNamara (piano), Col Loughnan (tenor/soprano saxophones), Craig Scott (bass) and Alan Turnbull (drums).

Paul McNamara on piano exuded his considered, polished style, his fingers racing up the keyboard or gently pressing chords into being. There was nothing wild or chaotic about his playing and sometimes I thought that a pity.

Col Loughnan seemed more willing to grab the audience by surprise. In the opening, up-tempo number he took up the melody, flung it into excitement, and in the following sleazy



Col Loughnan: more willing to grab the audience . . .

blues, handled a smouldering tenor.

The drummer Alan Turnbull maintained a strong presence and even had Col Loughnan laughing with surprised delight at some of his rhythmic ideas. In the first bracket Turnbull was beating along and at one point suddenly broke into a war-dance roll that picked up the ears of the audience, making them eager to listen again. His various forays from background rhythm-keeper to breaker of the status quo was entertaining, and I would have liked more of this approach.

The bassist Craig Scott strung together some wonderful, fast lines that kept on flowing, and in the slower material showed himself equally ready for the task.

With such talent and experience on stage I was disappointed not to hear more exciting interplay between the instruments as, for example, when one instrument states a phrase and another suddenly continues it. Admittedly such interplay takes time and experience together and I understand that Col Loughnan plays only occasionally with the other three, who otherwise are Don Burrows' rhythm section at the Regent Hotel.

But the night was comfortable, the people happy, and the jazz sophisticated with moments of interest.

Gerald Curtin

Hilton International All Star Orchestra, featuring Various Artists.

Hilton International Jazz Festival, Marble Bar, Sydney Hilton, October 29, 1983.

The last day of the month-long Hilton Jazz Festival in Sydney was a fair indication of the variety the Festival had to offer.

With an emphasis on contemporary jazz, styles throughout the month varied from mainstream to jazz-rock, funk to latin and afro-jazz. And October 29 had some of each in the one day.

The venue was the Sydney International Hilton Marble Bar, with jazz from about three in the afternoon until the end of the night. It was one big jam, with many musos seen at other times during the Festival taking part.

Raddy Ferreira was leading the Hilton International All Star Orchestra, with featured guests. There were in fact so many guests that it was hard to see the exact line-up, and the

shape of the band was changing throughout the afternoon. But the basics of the orchestra were seven front line and six in the rhythm section.

The sound also varied. At times there was a combination of a funk tune played with a latin-afro rhythm, and jazz style front line solos. In fact, with a dozen or more players wanting to solo, the tunes were lost. But since it was after all a jam, and everyone was having a good time, why not!

One of the highlights of the afternoon was Errol Buddle sitting in. It's always a pleasure to hear Errol play, and he didn't let me down, playing with his usual good taste. One short bracket featured Errol with the rhythm section, with Ed Gaston on acoustic bass, and Fijian guitarist Tom Rubaka. Among the tunes was the evergreen *Autumn Leaves*. Quite a contrast to some of the funk during the afternoon.



Errol Buddle: playing with his usual good taste . . .

Tom Rubaka played rather carefully and didn't open up as much as others during the afternoon. Tom was heard earlier in the week playing a let's remember Wes night, emulating very brilliantly the Montgomery style but not too much of himself.

Another highlight was some very nice sounds from the steel drum played by West Indian percussionist, Bruce McLean. His sensitivity on this instrument was punctuated by his high energy and boisterous leaping about on the other percussion instruments.

Chris Connolly was featured on some vocals, and was the guitarist with the Orchestra. The vocals overall were disappointing, not in terms of performance, but because the sound system in the room leaves a lot to be desired. Chris did some nice funky tunes, but the sound lacked the clarity the style needs.

Harry Rivers was at a very high energy level, and his arrangements were some of the tightest during the afternoon. Harry has a good sense of timing in terms of sensing when to stop, before the tune is burnt out so that it's still happening at the end.

Rumour has it that the Hilton International All Star Orchestra (or at least in part) may do some early week nights at the Marble Bar shortly, adding a more modern flavour to what has become mainly a trad room. Certainly if they play with the same sense of enjoyment as I heard them, it's worth keeping an eye on the gig guides for dates.

Eija Cox

Record Reviews



VARIOUS ARTISTS
"The Legendary Jazzmen"
(Volume 3)
RCA VJL 204 10.

I hope he doesn't see this (mind you don't tell him), but I don't see why the editor (God bless him) insists that a block of the record cover should accompany record reviews. For one thing, it takes up space, and for another, it costs money. There are another couple of reasons, but I'll forget them and mention just one more, applicable to this record. Look at the illustration above and you'd be forgiven for thinking that Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Jackson and Brownie McGhee were all on this record. Now, it so happens that none of them is on this double album, so it's also downright misleading to use the above photo of the cover. By the way, I'm sure RCA did not mean to be misleading using this cover: I think they just gave the artist his head, so to speak, in drawing legendary jazzmen, and he came up with these four.

Ron Wills compiled this double album, as he did its predecessors, and I think it's the best to date in the series, one of the best jazz series so far issued in Australia.

There are 26 tracks. The earliest is *Smoke House Blues* by Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers (recorded in 1926); the latest is Johnny Hodges' *Take 'Em Off* (1967).

One of the most charming tracks is Paul Desmond's *Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo*, with Desmond on alto saxophone, Jim Hall on guitar, Gene Wright on bass and Connie Kay on drums. The recording date is given as 1965, but wasn't that album released here in 1960? Anyway, it comes from a delightfully placid backwater of jazz and gives us the chance of hearing Desmond away from a Dave Brubeck setting.

The rest of the material, with the exception of Shorty Rogers' *Martian's Lullaby* (excellent baritone sax from Peter Adams and pleasing piano from Lou Levy, who was out here with Ella Fitzgerald in 1960), is stronger stuff,

Record Reviews

with one exclusion.

The exclusion is the only disappointing track: Ziggy Elman's *And The Angels Sing*. I've always considered this a dog of a tune, and Elman's *Frahlich in Swing* excursions were monumentally boring. If only Ron Wills had given us *Sugar* or *29th And Dearborn*, both of which were recorded at this session, and both of which contained some of the best jazz trumpet Elman recorded. Jess Stacy's piano — solo, and in the rhythm section — was a bonus.

Now, let me rave about the rest of this glorious issue. It kicks off with Tommy Ladnier's *Weary Blues*, high spot of which is two titanic choruses on clarinet by Sidney Bechet.

The second track is relatively obscure, although the title is famous enough. It's *The Dicty Glide*, by Duke Ellington, recorded in 1929 and chosen by Wills as an example of the trumpet work of Arthur Whetsol. I think the only time I would have heard it before would have been on Ron's ABC Swing Notes sessions of 1942 or early 1943.

There are four other Ellington tracks on this release: the Rex Stewart small group on *Menelik*, the Ellington 1945 band record of *Black and Tan Fantasy* (chosen for Tricky Sam Nanton's trombone), the best version of *Jubilee Stomp* (representing Otto Hardwick's alto sax) and *Just A-Settin' and A-Rockin'*.

This last is one of the greatest pieces from Ellington's greatest band (1940-41) and is included as a feature for Ben Webster's tenor sax. This was first issued in Australia in 1945 and I remember that Ron Wills, in his review of it in *Tempo*, preferred it to its other side, *Take The A Train*. Spot on, too, if I may say so without sounding condescending. Apart from Webster's mellifluous playing, we have choice samples of Barney Bigard's clarinet, Jimmy Blanton's bass and Nanton's trombone.

I guess we can consider Johnny Hodges' *Take 'Em Off* as an example of Ellingtonia too. Intended as an example of the cornet work of Ray Nance (who was featured on *Take The A Train*), it also features the incomparable Hodges, Paul Gonsalves on tenor sax and Ellington "associate" Jimmy Jones on piano.

The Legendary Jazzmen Volume 3 features some great drummers. Lionel Hampton plays one of the greatest recorded drum solos on *Jack The Bellboy*, on which Lionel's "accompaniment" is the King Cole Trio — Nat on piano, Oscar Moore on guitar and Wesley Prince on bass. This was made in May, 1940, two months before Krupa recorded *Who?* with his own band and before Rich put down *Quiet Please* with Dorsey. I bet it frightened hell out of both of them.

Dave Tough is heard in one of his rare drum solos on Dorsey's *Liebestraum*, which also has solos by Slat's Long, a great, underrated clarinetist, Bud Freeman (tenor sax) and Bunny Berigan (trumpet). Tough's final

solo reminded pianist Jimmy Somerville (or was it multi-instrumentalist John Sangster?) of a drum set slowly falling downstairs.

Cozy Cole's brushes propel Frankie Newton's *Rosetta*, with sterling solos by James P. Johnson (piano) and Pete Brown (alto saxophone), and his cymbals spark Wingie Mannone's *Limehouse Blues*, with the resonant, biting tenor choruses of Chu Berry.

Baby Dodds's parade drums beat the heart rhythm of Bunk Johnson's *When The Saints Go Marching In* and George Stafford's rims are heard at their best behind Joe Sullivan's rolling piano solo on Eddie Condon's *I'm Gonna Stomp Mr Henry Lee* (this also has mighty vocal and trombone by Jack Teagarden).

Sid Catlett's cymbals and tom-tom boot along the last chorus of another outstanding track: Lionel Hampton's *Haven't Named It Yet*. This was one of the first small-group titles recorded by guitarist Charlie Christian, who had just joined Benny Goodman on the recommendation of John Hammond, who discovered him in Oklahoma City. What a rhythm section! Clyde Hart (piano), Artie Bernstein (bass), Catlett and Christian. And then there's Hamp on vibes, Henry Allen on trumpet, J.C. Higginbotham (trombone), and a sweeping, punching, rasping solo by an alto saxophonist of whom we hear all too little — Earl Bostic.

I'm not running out of tracks or out of ideas, but, thanks to this ruling that photos of the record covers accompany the reviews, I am running out of space.

Permit me to at least mention the Tommy Dorsey-Jack Teagarden duet on *The Blues* by the Metronome All Stars, Benny Goodman's beautiful solo on the same group's *Blue Lou*, the sheer exuberance of Muggsy Spanier's *I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate*, the Pete Johnson-Albert Ammons duet of *Boogie Woogie Man* (recorded in 1941, not 1951, which the sleeve notes would have you believe), King Cole's piano solo on *Blue Because Of You*, Max Kaminsky's trumpet on *Tin Roof blues* and Bob Haggart's bass on a 1964 remake of *Big Noise From Winnetka*. By the way, talking about Muggsy's Sister Kate, an ABC duty announcer played this one Saturday morning about 18 weeks ago and told us Muggsy was a pianist. Ecod! Now you just look at the pretty picture underneath this — or above ...

Dick Hughes



MILES DAVIS
"Star People" (CBS SBP 237920)

WYNTON MARSALIS
"Think of One" (CBS SBP 237926)

"I haven't heard him, and I'm not curious. All the trumpeters copy off of Clifford Brown and Fats Navarro and Dizzy ... There's no original players any more. I know the guys in my band like Marsalis ... but I'd rather hear something with a different approach from what they call jazz." (Miles Davis, talking about Wynton Marsalis in *Ebony*).

"He ain't doing nothing. He imitated the shit out of Fats for the first five years, and Clark Terry and Louis Armstrong and Monk and Dizzy. Then he sits up there and talks about how he listens to Journey and Frank Sinatra. He's just co-signing white boys, just tomming." (Wynton Marsalis, talking about Miles Davis in *Jazz Times*).

It's almost as though the confrontational image had been engineered by a shrewd PR man. Both trumpet players, both signed with the same record company, one flowering for the first time, the other re-emerging after a long silence. The competitive atmosphere is misleading however, and distracts from the actual music. It also implies that the two musicians are pursuing parallel paths. This is Wynton Marsalis's 2nd album as leader of his own group. His brother Branford plays reeds, Kenny Kirkland piano, Jeffrey Watts drums, and Phil Bowler and Ray Drummond take turns in the bass chair. This is Miles Davis's 3rd album after a five year break. He plays keyboard in addition to trumpet (he is also responsible for the sleeve concept and its drawings). Bill Evans (reeds), Marcus Miller (el. bs.), Al Foster (dms.), and Mike Stern (gtr.), from his LP *The Man With The Horn* (CBS SBP 237569) are heard again, with John Scofield and Tom Barney alternating with Stern and Miller respectively, and Mino Cinelu on percussion.

The Marsalis LP is acoustic jazz. The style is what might be called post George Russell. On *Later*, *What is Happening Here (Now)*, and *Knozz-Moe-King*, there is an evasiveness of tonal centre in the traditional sense, though this is not free form music. It is highly (too highly?) structured, but according to comparative recent harmonic conventions. There is some variation. *My Ideal* is a familiar ballad whose changes encourage a

slightly more conservative approach. *Fuchsia* is an atmospheric piece, a slow moody tone poem whose melody could easily be imagined behind the credits of a TV series. To that extent it is probably the most flaccid piece on the LP. But in general the style represents a crisp yet accessibly restrained example of post bop. Because of the hype industry, attention will inevitably focus on Marsalis himself. It's a shame and a disservice to him that the publicity to which he has been subjected is beginning to obscure exactly what he is as a musician (a crude illustration: ask jazz followers if they've heard of Wynton Marsalis. Ask what they think of him. Then ask what records they've actually heard by him). We hear him on this occasion as a composer, arranger and musician. In the last category he demonstrates extraordinary physical command of the instrument, exercised over a wide range of its possibilities. The coda on *My Ideal* is a demonstration of lip control, as are the startling intervals during the fade of *What is Happening?* The occasional growl and half valve slur are a nod in the direction of the less orthodox effects that jazz has introduced to the art of blowing. The total sound of the group gives a larger picture of his conceptual approach to the music. *Think of One* is a tremendously effective track with its use of silence and extreme dynamic variations. *The Bell Ringer* is a *petite suite*, each successive movement creeping in through a pensive pause. He insists upon much more than just an informal blowing through the tunes; his attention to pace, volume and total structure is so

thorough as to border on the pedantic. In fact the cleverness of many of the group devices is often rather cold. The LP presents traces of almost everything that has happened since hard bop except fusion and the more extreme manifestations of the avant garde — "A lot of the avant garde cats are charlatans anyway" (*Jazz Times*, July 1983). With these qualifications, his work might be described as contemporary mainstream, exercises that show he has finished an apprenticeship with honours. But like 'exercises', it generates almost no emotional force. He seems to inject little passion, but at the same time the abstract conceptions as yet lack the grandeur that would compensate for that absence. *Fuchsia* and *Melancholy* flirt with atmosphere, but the relationship lacks depth. A balance between form and content is rarely achieved by a young artist, and sometimes never in a lifetime. Juvenilia usually suffer from an excess of one or the other no matter how precocious the student: content spilling over into melodramatic declamation or form becoming simply empty virtuosity. Marsalis's work is biased towards the latter.

In the light of the overall jazz tradition, the attempt to pit him against Miles Davis is extremely obtuse. At the moment the most prominent characteristic of Marsalis is his formidable command of the instrument (though like most unusually young performers, it is not as complete as the popular publicity suggests). He is more in the footsteps of someone like Clark Terry. I have suggested that his work is a bit empty, but at the same time he is a far more creative musician than

the young Jon Faddis, whose earlier work on Pablo (for example with Oscar Peterson, 2310 743 SUPER), was the most brittle caricature of Dizzy. Marsalis's compositions and arrangements manifest great potential in terms of having something to say. He speaks of his emulative admiration of Clifford Brown, but unlike his idol, he is not yet at the frontier of the music. The records he has so far made demonstrate that he is preparing for that, showing his mastery of what leads up to it. Perhaps this session might be compared to the Coltrane album I've reviewed elsewhere in this issue, in that it suggests a consolidation of the past rather than a jump into the future.

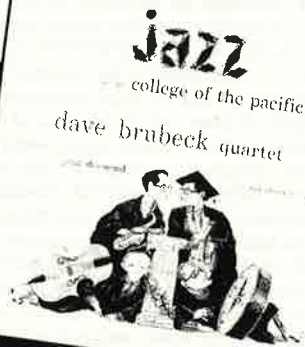
The Miles album scarcely constitutes the same kind of musical endeavour, either intrinsically or in relation to the jazz tradition. It's a further development of what he began doing on *Bitches Brew*: heavily electronic funk or fusion. Just so you know. I could never connect with *Bitches Brew* or *Jack Johnson*. I thought *The Man With The Horn* was empty, effete and pretentious. I think *Star People* is magnificent. Perhaps it has just taken my ears this long to catch up. Perhaps Miles himself has finally sorted something out. More likely a bit of both. Variations on the blues form are prominent, as on the title track, the end of *Come Get It*, and the slightly Caribbean *Speak*. *Star on Cicely*, based on a guitar solo played during a pre-recording run through, is more harmonically free, while at the other end of the spectrum, *U'n'l* is a jaunty 8 bar mantra that makes you wanna dance. The guitar on this is totally engaging, tossing the melody

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Record Reviews

about, bending it, twisting it out of tune, but always retaining its strutting, gum-chewing spirit. It has the feel of a folk theme (in fact it is something else; it reminds me of the beginning of Jimmy Giuffrè's *Out of Somewhere*) with a carnival flavour. *Star People* is a masterpiece in the genre. The introduction and interlude, on Oberheim keyboard (I think), generate an impression of galactic distance, anguished remoteness and solitude, and this acts as a foil to the blues that is the main business of the track. On this, as on the whole album, Miles's own playing has a compelling rawness that makes comparisons between him and Marsalis meaningless. Throughout, the music has avoided the emasculation which overtakes so many exercises in fusion or whatever you want to call it. There's a purity about it which is only compromised by some rather unctuous and complacent moments on the cover notes — Leonard Feather listening to the playbacks with the musos: "Miles sipped on his Perrier. 'Play that slow blues again, Miles,' I said."

So far I've concentrated on simple descriptive observations. If you think that critical analysis should limit itself to 'What about the bit where ...' and 'Fabulous!', read no further. How does this stand in respect of the jazz tradition? Miles is in no sense a pioneer in the approach he takes on this and earlier albums in the same style, but when a musician of his celebrity and stature becomes involved, the question is going to be asked. One of the tendencies of black music in America after Joplin has been to push against the limits of conventional Western harmony as embodied for example in the diatonic scale. Joplin himself of course sought to succeed in terms of that convention and to be taken seriously as a composer in a European sense. As jazz developed however, the increasing mastery was also an overcoming, a stretching beyond the limits — flattening the 3rd, the 5th, the 9th, and more, until the diatonic framework was wrenched so far out of shape that it scarcely bore the stamp of its origins. And the more indistinct that impress became, the more jazz expressed its African element. So runs one argument. Now although the electronic technology behind this music is the outcome of a highly sophisticated scientific culture, the music itself is very largely expressive of a different form of consciousness. In *Star People* there is a withdrawal from academic tidiness, returning to the raw quality of folk art — like much of Mingus's work, but never so ferociously elemental as, for example, *Me, Myself an Eye*. The drums in particular express the point; there is even a passage in which he uses press rolls in the old New Orleans style. Again, on *Come Get It* the spirit is extremely primitive (which is not to imply naive or simple). The African component virtually overwhelms the European. If you buy this looking for a return to the pre 70s Miles, forget it. This music is more eclectic than innovative. It

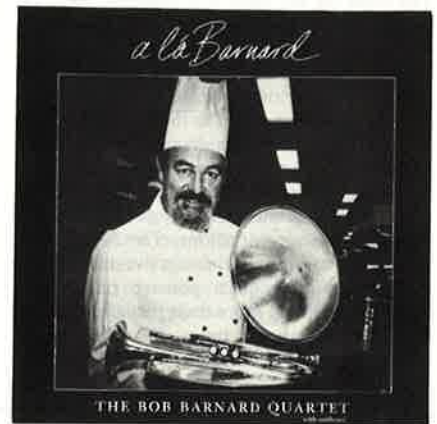
doesn't stand in the same relationship to his career and culture as say, *Kind of Blue* — a creation of a new thing. This is more a synthesis of the black American music tradition, drawing on all its aspects, from the blues (Hopkins, T-Bone, B.B. and Albrt King ...) to the modal experiments in which he himself played such a major role.

It's no good listening to this with the same expectations you bring to the Wynton Marsalis record. And it's no good trying to judge it through the language that has evolved around those expectations. I could talk about the instrumentation, the equipment, the technology, the groups of notes played here and there, but this only discloses the medium, not the content. If I say of Wynton Marsalis that he possesses great instrumental control, that tells you a lot about the sound you can expect. That is a large part of his 'message'. But to say the same thing about Miles, while it is true, is nonetheless quite beside the point, and is no preparation for the music. Listen to *Come Get It*. The whole band is primarily the vehicle of a primordial rhythm. It's the rhythmic surge that matters more than any harmonic development. The drumming has in -extinguishable energy. The combination of this, the simple bass riff and Miles' feral interpolations, makes this the most savage, primal track on the album. The more conventional jazz performance is contained in time. Any point in the unfolding of the music is mainly understood by virtue of what went before and what will come next. The passage of time reveals the music. But the hypnotic and repetitive quality of this, together with its comparative independence of the more entrenched notions of harmonic movement (of 'changes'), means that its spirit is not imprisoned by time.

Consider a nineteenth century realistic painting. It reveals itself through space. The eye scans space (over a brief period of time) to apprehend it. Music, as we are accustomed to it, reveals itself through time. The ear requires time (sometimes with a small spatial component) to perceive. The African spirit in this music (and I repeat, Miles is by no means an innovator in the use of this), includes a wholeness, transcending both space and time. The analytic Western tradition has tended to regard the visual as primarily a matter of space and the aural as primarily temporal. When we try to cope with this music we are hampered by that connection between music and time ("...but where's the melody?"). As Picasso and the cubists tried to overcome the authority of space, so this music and the black tradition which it draws upon, seeks to oppose the tyranny of time. If you are beginning to form the thoughtful response, 'Farkin Bullshit', it's because I am chipping away at an assumption about perception so thoroughly entrenched that we have come to think of it as the only possibility. But it's not. This music seeks to break out of the boundaries of linear time, and our ears are not habituated to such an enterprise. To hear it, you've got to circumvent your rational expectations. Listen with your guts or your skin or something. This is not music produced from the mind, and because our ears are tied to our minds, we have to be alert in some other way. Respond to pulses, not bars. It's not literalist music. It's poetry rather than prose.

It's not in 'competition' with Marsalis at all. The two men are addressing different aspects of the human being. Marsalis is playing jazz. Miles Davis is playing black music, a larger category. Marsalis has none of the mythic and monumental simplicity of Miles's conception. When the latter enters on *Star People* there is something archetypal, essential about it. Marsalis's work is shapely and elegant, but the architecture is more conscious and on a smaller scale. There is deliberation in every note he plays and the choice is always tasteful. The brain is in charge, the passion filtered through the rational faculty and elaborated with strict regard for the 'rules'. Marsalis speaks to the mind, Miles addresses the soul.

Bruce Johnson



THE BOB BARNARD QUARTET
"A la Barnard"
(Dialogue YPRY-2089)

On the cover, the familiar, genial bear-like figure, dressed for some unexplained reason in a chef's uniform, smilingly presents his cornet on a salver. A gift from him to us, one might say — without wishing to sound too corny — of all that wonderful music Bob has played for us over God knows how many years. Sadly, it is typical of the major record companies that this superb musician has been so shamefully neglected by them, and instead they continue to flood the shops with a plethora of mindless, mediocre rubbish. In fact, it has been left to one enterprising young man — Mark Hewitt — to produce this fine album of Bob Barnard as he is playing today.

Not really today, in fact, as the album was recorded at a gig over a year ago in the now-defunct Paradise Jazz Cellar in Kings Cross, by Bob and his regular rhythm section — Chris Taperell (piano), Wally Wickham (bass) and brother Len (drums). It's worth the minor imperfections — the bass is too prominent, the drums too distant — to hear the inspiration and excitement of a live performance before an audience.

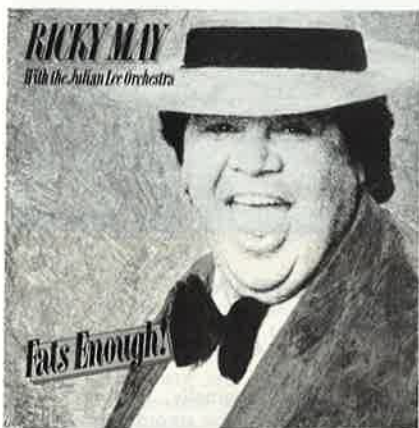
As is usual with Bob, there's plenty of unfamiliar material. On Irving Berlin's *You're Laughing At Me* (which Fats Waller recorded so hilariously), he demonstrates in the first chorus what a fine song it can be in the right hands; after a neat, sprightly piano solo by Chris, Bob builds through two choruses to a climax of Louis-like grandeur.

I've never encountered Jule Styne's *I've Heard That Song Before* in a jazz format, but again Bob has chosen unerringly, and in the second and third choruses he shows — despite the influences of Louis, Bix and others — what a totally original musician he is. For good measure, there's also a splendid stop-time chorus after the piano.

There are two good up-tempo tunes from the Beiderbecke repertoire — *Sorry* and *There'll Come A Time*, on both of which Bob slips in and out of Bix's style. On the slow *If I Could Be With You*, it's back to the Armstrong influence with a beautifully laid-back theme statement and a fine final chorus, climbing in the break to the high register for the majestic climax, with elements of Louis's classic solo.

The old waltz *Paradise* is put into four time at up-tempo, with a nice theme statement and solo by Chris, and a rich, fiercely swinging finale by Bob. The album ends with a driving version of Cole Porter's *I Love You*; we need hardly tell Bob that his amatory sentiment is fully reciprocated.

David Stevens



RICKY MAY WITH THE JULIAN LEE ORCHESTRA
"Fats Enough!"
 ABC Records L 6001 1/2

This double album is a swing orchestra showcase for Ricky May, presenting a programme of songs from the 30s and 40s, all of them associated with jazz performers of the day. It's a first rate performance of its kind, and at the same time it reminds us of some of the more irritating anomalies associated with the situation of jazz musicians in the music industry. The latter point is related to hype, image, the way in which various sections of the music community perceive each other. To begin with, and for example: for a few months a couple of years ago the general public formed the opinion that Billy Field was Australia's leading jazz singer. That was because the general public was told to believe as much, in the interests of selling a single called *Bad Habits*. Public fame, that is, has little relation to talent or truth; rather, it is an expression of the profit motive, an extension of packaging. As Andy Warhol observed, the time will come when everyone will be famous for a few minutes. The respect of one's peers is worth infinitely

more and lasts much longer. Ricky May possesses that respect, and this album demonstrates why. It might come to demonstrate something else as well. Public fame is a screen from two sides. If the public cannot see through it from one side, nor, frequently, can the profession from the other. Ricky May is less well known perhaps than Billy Field, but he is sufficiently celebrated as a club singer for many jazz enthusiasts to suspect that he has nothing to do with jazz. Well, here again the album could change a few minds.

It's named for Fats Waller, but this is no set of brittle impressions or caricatures. It is the well-oiled spirit of Fats which May evokes, from the opening of the first track, *Nagasaki*. Likewise, the vocal interludes on *Hold Tight* are audible projections of Fats Waller's conspiratorial wink. But the voice is Ricky May's, and it is a voice well attuned to the genial spirit of the whole programme. There is a well established comic tradition in jazz singing, and this is where May's performance is situated. In terms of tone and timbre, the voice itself is like a meatier Mel Torme without the calisthenics. But the spiritual antecedents are Fats himself, Louis Armstrong at moments (listen to the stop-time scat on *That Cat is High*), and perhaps most pervasively, Louis Jordan. Although *Flat Foot Floogie* is a Slim Gaillard number, the vocal approach owes more to Jordan, and May's spoken passages and asides recall the same performer's work on songs like *Beware!* What makes this a jazz performance however is Ricky May's sense of swing. The opening of the boogie *Pig Foot Pete* suggests that he can swing while he talks. And the brief hesitation before he makes the first eponymous accusation on *Your Feet Too Big*, is a fine detail of timing. It's not a great voice in academic terms, but nor was Fats Waller's. It is a lot more accomplished, furthermore, than a number of local singers who regard themselves as uncompromising jazz performers might wish to concede: his scatting in unison with the brass section in *Caldonia* is the most assured professionalism. And, what matters here, it's a jazz voice, with guts and gusto.

As is the orchestra, under the direction of Julian Lee. With due respect to May, Lee's arrangements are at least as important to the quality of the album as the singing. Their pace is tremendous. To illustrate: I put side 1 on, and in the time it took me to walk to the fridge and open a bottle of beer, so much had happened of a reviewable nature that I had to start it again. I had to play the first track, *Nagasaki*, three times for my notes to keep up. There's a massive opening chord, and a spoken introduction. After 16 bars the tempo's brought up. Following the first 16 bars of the next chorus, an alto solo over the bridge and final eight. 16 bars trombone, a bass bridge, 8 bars drums (egged on by May), vocal to the next bridge, a key change interlude, a second key change ... For all this, one is never distracted by the busyness or with the feeling of empty exhibitionism. It is simply a well-paced programme (or menu, to judge from side 2). The style of the writing is generally in the swing idiom of the period from which the songs are taken. There are shades of Dorsey and Goodman, and on *Down the Road A Piece*, an echo of the Bob Crosby reed section sound. But within this

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Record Reviews

general format there is great variety, from the brief burst of dixieland in *The Joint Is Jumpin'* to the Horace Silvery gospel opening to *Mr. 5 By 5*. Lee's imaginative and witty approach breathes new life into old warhorses like *Big Noise From Winnetka* (on which he is the whistler, by the way); over the repeated bass G, voices creep in in a humorous counterpoint, gradually disintegrating into a disjointed dialogue with a shell-shocked victim of *I've Been Everywhere*. Similarly, the superimposition of *Sing, Sing, Sing* and *Christopher Columbus* creates new patterns of tension in two well worn songs. On *Flat Foot Floogie* May sings over Ed Gaston's arco bass, as Slam Stewart was wont to do singlehanded (so to speak). The band itself provides vocalising on several numbers and somebody sings a very creditable harmony on the Bob Barnard/John Costelloe composition *Just a Couple of Dudes*.

The orchestra itself could hardly have better jazz credentials: in addition to Julian Lee on piano, there are Errol Buddle, Clare Bail, Dave Rutledge, Col Loughnan and John Holman on reeds, Bob McIvor, Jack Grimsley and Bob Johnson on trombones, John Hoffman, Bill Burton and Ken Brentnall on trumpets, Ron Philpott guitar, Mark Bowden and Alan Gilbert on drums, Clive Harrison and Ed Gaston on bass. There's enough solo space to confirm the improvisational energy in this aggregation, though I would have been interested to have the solos credited. I think I can pick some: McIvor for example on *Boogie Blues* and *Hey Ba-Ba Re Bop*. Three that really stand out are the trumpet on *Dudes* and the piano and clarinet solos on *Caldonia* — the latter a cameo appearance by Don Burrows. The trumpet solo is not only a marvellously constructed affair, it is uncannily like the work of the song's composer, Bob Barnard. Come on, admit it — he was there for that track. Who are the others? The fact that I have to ask that question touches on my opening point. That is, the invisibility of our best jazz talent. I'm going to finish with a complaint that, far from detracting from the music, arises because of my admiration for it. Here is a band which, collectively and individually, is scarcely known to the public. Take the sax section: it includes musicians who could eat many of the more publicity addicted reed players around town for breakfast. The band and its director/arranger are vital to the effectiveness of this album. They deserve better representation. There's plenty of room on the ample double sleeve to give them specific credit for each creative contribution. It's a reflection again of the violent discrepancy between what the public is instructed to perceive and what is really there, between visible talent and the pool of actual talent. And the thing that stands between them is the publicity machine, which cares more for image than ability. There is a huge reservoir of talent on this album, but

while it is audible it is not as visible (ie., acknowledged) as it should and could be. Perhaps it is because the division of labour fragments the flow of production — the publicists have no special love for the particular product. I know it's always possible to err in detail, but the following suggests more than just clerical error. Two highlights are the bass work on *Floogie* and on *Winnetka*, probably the most famous bass feature in the history of jazz. The bass player is Ed Gaston. He's not mentioned anywhere on the sleeve.

Bruce Johnson



GALAPAGOS DUCK "The Voyage of the Beagle" (ABC/Festival L38081)

What a talented — sometimes brilliant — bunch of guys the Duck are (or should it be "is"?). They have written and performed what is probably the most successful album (recorded in May this year) of original Australian jazz apart from John Sangster's output: a suite of pieces based on the epic voyage of His Majesty's Ship Beagle in 1832, with the young naturalist Charles Darwin on board, as a result of which Darwin later developed his Theory of Evolution. The fact that the Beagle visited the Galapagos Islands probably had something to do with the inspiration for the album (the group's name didn't come from any connection with the Islands — it was an on-the-spot invention by Spike Milligan.)

The diverse countries and islands visited by the Beagle give them the opportunity for widely contrasting themes, from the dreamy *In a Brazilian Forest*, written by John Conley and Tom Hare (featuring Tom on flute and Mick Jackman on marimba, and reminiscent of some of Sangster's rain-forest music) to the happy dixieland of *The Skeletons of Punta Alta* (by Bob Egger and Tom Hare, featuring gutsy trumpet by Tom and trombone by Greg Foster) and the gospel-rock of *Life On The Archipelago* (by Greg Foster). There is even a vocal on *St Elmo's Fire*, written by Greg Foster and excellently sung by Mick Jackman; Tom Hare plays a fine, poignant flugelhorn solo on this one.

The "voyage" begins and ends with an attractive piece by John Conley, featuring excellent harmonica by Foster and Hare on alto on its first appearance (with a fast rock beat), and the same gentlemen on trombone and flugel respectively on the second

performance. John Conley also wrote *Tattooed Warriors* (the New Zealand variety) which is a straight ahead swinger, with impassioned alto by Tom, Greg's harmonica and great funky piano by Bob Egger (why didn't they use him on the recent Hilton Jazz Piano Showcase?) and the delightful Spanish-flavoured *Cordillera*, which features the keyboards of Jackman (synthesizer) and Egger (piano). *The Emu Dance*, another with a jazz/rock beat, has a brief introduction and coda on didgeridoo, and solos by Tom on soprano and Greg on trombone. *Coral Island* is a charming ballad by Mick Jackman, featuring him on vibraphone.

An excellent album in all respects, and the recording quality, as one might expect from the ABC, is first class.

David Stevens



JOHN COLTRANE "Coltrane" (Original Jazz Classics OJC-020)

This reissue, originally Prestige 7105, presents Coltrane's first recorded essay as a bandleader, dating from May 31, 1957. The rhythm section he picked consisted of the highly influential Paul Chambers on bass and the youngest of the Heath brothers, Al, on drums. Red Garland plays piano on three of the six tracks, Mal Waldron on the others. The latter's dark and moody solo on *Chronic Blues* is particularly noteworthy. Except for two quartet tracks (with Garland on piano) the rest of the front line consists of two comparatively obscure musicians. Sahib Shihab, a.k.a. Edmund Gregory, was later to spend considerable time in Europe working with, inter alia, the Clarke-Boland Big Band, before returning to the States in 1973 to settle in L.A. The trumpeter was Johnnie Splawn, whose playing discloses his avowed admiration for Clifford Brown. In spite of this, and the impressive muscularity of Shihab's baritone, the album belongs to Trane from the point of view of both musical and historical interest.

1957 was an enormously fertile year for the 30-31 year old John Coltrane. 'Fertile' is an apt word in many ways: fruitful, swelling, growing, full of promise, mature. At the purely statistical level, he was present on around 20 separate recording sessions — few musicians have that much to say in a lifetime, let alone in 12 months. 1957 is arguably the year in which the 'sheets of sound' concept begins to be audible, generating a bursting

rhythmic and harmonic density. Six months after these sessions he rejoined Miles Davis in what would become a seminal group in the late Fifties. The procreational metaphors are irresistible. It was a year of looking forward, and you can hear a little of the shape of things to come from the opening of the first track, *Bakai*, with its complex polyrhythms. This was also the year (by Bill Cole's account) in which Coltrane experienced a spiritual renaissance which was to manifest itself in a confirmed religiosity, often proclaimed in his music.

It was, to risk a cliché, a year of transition, of consolidation of musical gains and of reconnaissance into the future. In terms of simply blowing the tenor, Coltrane's mastery is intimidating, from the moment he sweeps in after Garland's spare solo on the opening number. His energy and presence are massive, a big sound over three octaves. The two quartet tracks, *Violets for your Furs* and the ballad *Time Was* (taken up tempo) show not only this strength but also precision; a really comprehensive control of the horn. But Coltrane is not simply on display here as an instrumentalist. *Chronic Blues* and *Straight Street* are his own compositions, the latter using a similar stacking up of rhythmic figures as is heard on *Bakai*. He is also the arranger on some if not all the tracks. The independence of his mind is evident on the unusual treatment of *While My Lady Sleeps*, a beautifully finished performance, in both senses. The burgeoning harmonic concepts are hinted throughout, most obviously in his treatment of the blues form. On *Chronic Blues* the piling up of chords, one upon the other, signals directions he was to take with increasing momentum.

I find that I am still using images that signify potential rather than fulfilment. If 1957 was indeed a year of transition, which side of Coltrane was most apparent here? As I have said, there are intimations of the future. But it is worth listening to this session in conjunction with the pairing of Coltrane and Thelonius Monk. 1957 was also the year of the Monk/Coltrane partnership at the Five Spot Cafe in New York. Said the tenor player, "Working with Monk brought me close to a musical architect of the highest order. I felt I learned from him in every way, theoretically, technically". The quartet from the Five Spot — Wilbur Ware and Shadow Wilson were bassist and drummer, respectively, at the time — recorded three tracks on April 16. These have just been reissued on OJC 039, part of the same series as is this album. The Monk session is remarkable enough now, but in the context of 1957 it's electrifying. It was made in the same week as one of the Curtis Counce sessions, reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Now, Counce's group was one of the more virile West Coast bands of the day. But a comparison with the Trane/Monk material is a stimulating jolt to the historical imagination. Analogy: in Bath, England, you can walk among evidence of a material standard of life enjoyed by the Roman colonialists which is little short of ours (and probably more energy efficient). You can then drive a short distance to Cornwall and at an archaeological site called Carn Euny, see the warren of passages, caves, and stone cells that the Britons of the time inhabited. It's impressive, until you

remember that at the same time the troglodytes of Carn Euny were scurrying around their burrows, the Romans were taking their ease and comfort in centrally heated Bath. The point? Much as I like the Curtis Counce Group (and they weren't revivalists; they were playing at what they felt to be the forefront of jazz developments), the sound of Coltrane and Monk in the same month makes them sound positively primitive.

The disparity is diminished but still audible with regard to the present album. Perhaps, leading his own band on record for the first time, he responded with a constraining concern instead of audacity. Monk certainly gave him something that encouraged audacity (why didn't he pick Monk for the session?): a more open harmonic and rhythmic landscape in which to move, so open in fact as to constitute at times stretches of silence. The pianist's laying out on *Nutty* and *Trinkle Tinkle* gives Trane more room so that, even though this recording was made a month earlier, it sounds like a later stage in musical development. It is interesting that shortly after this the sax player began experimenting on record with just bass and drums.

Coltrane's career from the late 50s reminds me of a man pounding at the walls and ceiling of a room too small for him. That room consisted of traditional instrumental interplay and received harmonic notions. His 'sheets of sound' can be seen as a frenzied exploration of every possible exit, as well as the road leading away. Monk gave him a path, often in the form of structured silence. The two albums make an enormously instructive pair. The May sessions show us where Coltrane has come from, and the sessions with Monk, where he was going.

Bruce Johnson



HARALD WEISS

TROMMELGEFLÜSTER



RALPH TOWNER
 "Blue Sun" (ECM 1250)
HARALD WEISS
 "Trommelgeflüster" (ECM 1249)
LESTER BOWIE
 "All the Magic!" (ECM 1246/47)
MICHAEL GALASSO
 "Scenes" (ECM 1245)

Manfred Eicher's ECM label just keeps on getting better and better. No longer can one complain of an ECM "sound", or pigeon-hole all ECM music as "chamber jazz". The breadth of material recently being offered on this label far exceeds that of any other individual label I can think of.

The four solo albums under scrutiny here serve to further demonstrate Eicher's current depth-of-field. They are each totally individual with the only common factor being their exceptionally high recording quality.

Ralph Towner's *Blue Sun* is the most conspicuously ECM-ish. But then that's hardly surprising considering it's his tenth album for the label. The music would, I guess, fall under the banner of "chamber jazz", in that it is more intellectual than visceral, has its roots in the softer side of jazz, and tends toward romanticism rather than pragmatism.

There are many who decry such music as "jazz for people who don't like jazz." But such an attitude implies a kind of parochial arrogance that only a narrow-minded jazz purist would harbour. The fact is that Towner's music incorporates only *some* of the conventions of jazz, and in doing so leaves room for the assimilation of a great many foreign (to jazz) musical elements.

Melody and overall texture dominate *Blue Sun*. There are no impassioned solos. The addition of synthesizer to Towner's repertoire of guitars, piano, french horn, cornet and percussion, allows him even greater textural opportunities. The synthesizer is generally used to flesh-out the compositions rather than as an intrinsic solo instrument, so the album still retains an acoustic feel.

Some of the classical guitar playing I found too fiddly and lacking direction, notably on *Mevlana Etude* and *The Prince and the Sage*. But *C.T. Kangaroo* is a surprisingly comic, catchy number based on a simple three tone progression, and the title track presents a guitar and piano duet that soars to truly majestic heights.

The whole album has a light, airy feel that is at once insubstantial, yet peacefully satisfying — a dichotomy which makes it both acceptable as background music and deserving of closer scrutiny.

German composer/musician Harald Weiss is a newcomer to the ECM label. A very prolific composer, Weiss has completed pieces for orchestra, songs, music for the theatre, films, and radio plays, and works for percussion ensembles. His principal interest is the combination of sound and scenic expression.

It is therefore not surprising to find that *Trommelgeflüster* (drum whisper) is a very theatrical work. Composed entirely for percussion (drums, gongs, cymbals, etc.), and voice, the music is like a rich tone poem, underpinned with a definite rhythmical base.

Record Reviews

The striking of objects and/or the body to create musical rhythm is the most basic and universal form of instrumentation. For this reason an album of entirely percussive sounds generates an illusion of cross-cultural eclecticism. But illusion is the operative word as *Trommelgefluster* owes no allegiance to any specific cultural heritage, primitive or modern.

The variety of uses to which Weiss applies his remarkable voice are a real highlight of this album. Sometimes his voice is just another percussive instrument, gasping, shouting, wheezing, stuttering in counterpoint to the drums, and at other times it presents an almost falsetto crooning of wordless vocals a la Klaus Blasquiz of Magma fame.

If it helps any, while listening to this album I was in turns reminded of: Nana Vasconcelos' *Saudades* album; Australian percussion ensemble of the late 70s, Aire; Zappa's *Return of the Son of the Monster Magnet* from his first album *Freak Out*; Edgar Varese's *Hyperprism*; and, most particularly, the corporeal music of Harry Partch.

As with listening to a recording of Partch's work, *Trommelgefluster* conjures images of a theatrical event, where the physical actions of the musician are as integral to the vitality of the work as the music itself. It is thus an album to be listened to (preferably through headphones) not simply played.

Lester Bowie's *All the Magic!* appears to have been conceived as two albums yet is inexplicably released as one double album set. The first album presents Bowie's ensemble work, whilst the second album, separately titled *The One and Only*, presents Bowie in a solo context.

All the Magic!, the first album, continues in the direction Bowie established with *From the Root to the Source*. In another history lesson from professor Bowie's on-going lecture series, jazz, blues, rock, soul, and gospel are all combined to further elucidate the heritage that is "Great Black Music". Anyone who heard *From the Route to the Source* during their Australian tour, or has listened to Bowie's *The Great Pretender* album (ECM 1209) will know exactly what to expect.

The line-up on this occasion includes Ari Brown on saxes, Art Matthews on piano, Fred Williams on bass, Philip Wilson on drums, plus the home-grown God-fearing vocals of Fontella Bass and David Peaston. The music really fires, from the frenetic improvisation of Bowie's *Spacehead*, to the jaunty calypso of Albert Ayler's *Ghosts*, from the sensitive, bluesy simplicity of Bernard Ighner's *Everything Must Change*, to the rollicking revelry of Lee Leonard's *Let the Good Times Roll*.

In comparison, *The One and Only* is something of a disappointment. Through the thirteen tracks Bowie appears to be bent on

cataloguing the variety of possible sounds he can squeeze through his trumpet. He runs the gamut of plagiarized ditties, blurts, squawks, farts, half-valve mutterings and other basically vocal effects.

The result of this gimmickry is an album that lacks intensity and verges on trite flippancy. *Thirsty* presents three and a half tedious minutes of trumpet played into a tub of water. *Miles Davis Meets Donald Duck* is a stand-up comic routine which sounds just like the title suggests.

Unfortunately much of the music on *The One and Only* is as self-indulgent as the album title. Like most comedy routines, it really only bears listening to once or twice.

To be sure Lester Bowie is a magnificent trumpet player and a heavy ambassador for "Great Black Music". But I have long harboured a suspicion that he is a bit of a worry in the ego department. (Just take a look at the liner photos on *The One and Only*.) Behind the healthy disrespect for musical boundaries there lurks an over-zealous insistence on the intrinsic sanctity of the music per se. Bowie maintains all the self-righteousness of a committed preacher, and I can't help but wish he'd leave the pulpit and rejoin the choir.

Michael Galasso's *Scenes* is an album of meditative and fairly minimal multi-tracked violin. Imagine if you can a short phrase lifted out of one of J.S. Bach's solo violin works (BWV 1001 to 1006) and treated with the rhythmic phasing and cycling of Steve Reich, Terry Riley and Philip Glass. There you have it. An energetic yet hypnotic sound that somehow harks back to a classical chamber music tradition.

Often Galasso's music has the vibrant, polyphonic qualities of Renaissance dance music. In the middle ages, as still today in the traditional folk music of the Balkans and Greece, the melody played by the main performer and embellished through improvisation, would be accompanied in parallel fifths and octaves, or supported by a constant pulsing drone. These same principles have been expertly applied by Galasso so that the music, whilst being clearly modern, has a somewhat folksy, Baroque feel to it.

If you happened to enjoy Steve Reich's *Violin Phase* (ECM 1168), then Michael Galasso is the man for you.

Tony Wellington



JAN GARBAREK GROUP "Wayfarer" (ECM 1259)

Yet another permutation of the four players who have been about the most consistently recorded on ECM lately. In a general sense, the quality of music is assured from these players: Garbarek, tenor and soprano; Bill Frisell, guitar; Eberhard Weber, bass; Michael DiPasqua, drums and percussion. For the ECM buff, or any potential buyer, the issue is whether this album is just another re-run of the same ideas, or whether the musicians manage to break fresh ground this time around.

Gesture is made immediately striking by DiPasqua's percussive texture — some small shaker, I think. The relentlessness of this nails the piece to earth as Weber floats and weaves around the spiralling soprano and guitar.

On *Wayfarer*, after a prolonged 'tenor as approaching insect' opening, DiPasqua explodes in DeJohnette style, and both Garbarek and Frisell unleash some of their best work. Frisell's solo is particularly notable, because he escapes from that stylistic corner he was painting himself into, with that guitar sound on every item he played on. Here, he employs a more strident sound, thereby sharing the responsibilities of making the whole thing quite ballsy.

Gentle is very much in the vein of the last Garbarek album, *Paths, Prints*, which featured the same players, with the exception of Jon Christensen being the drummer. As with this track, the music was a little aimless, not only in the improvisations, but in the compositions themselves.

Pendulum is an object lesson in using space rather than notes. The players are content to let someone else finish their phrases, and as is usually the result, the overall sound becomes more orchestrally full, while an overly busy four piece band often sounds thin. Weber is particularly masterful in this way. His whole style is to comment on proceedings in an atmospheric way, rather than to maintain a pulse.

Once again Frisell opens up, reminding me of McLaughlin with Miles on say, *Jack Johnson*. DiPasqua is much "drummerier" than I have heard him previously. For instance, on the *Gallery* album (ECM 1206) he played cymbals virtually exclusively.

Throughout, Garbarek reaches the most impressive heights of emotional commitment since Gary Peacock's *Voice From the Past — PARADIGM* (ECM 1210). On both tenor and soprano, his voice is equally individual, strong, and emotive. Like all the masters, his solos are constructed with an air of relaxation, leaving long spaces, yet not just stringing together licks: the whole is invariably coherent these days. Listen to *Spor*.

Sing Song is a quirky piece, employing some riveting duet work between Garbarek and Frisell, while the rhythm section chops up the feel with considerable invention.

If you feel as though these players have been treading musical water for the last year or two, this is the one that puts them ashore again.

John Shand



**VARIOUS AUSTRALIAN
ARTISTS "Jazz Action Sessions
Vol. 1" (MX207686)**

I can't remember a jazz record for a long time which has given me more pleasure, or more different kinds of pleasure, than this one.

This is a selection of tracks recorded during 1982 by 2MBS-FM technicians at the monthly Jazz Action Society of NSW concerts at the Musicians Club, Sydney. It is a marvellous collection, spread over two LPs, showing the extraordinary variety, turbulence and energy that characterise modern jazz in Sydney in the early 1980s.

The opening track is *Autumn Leaves*, played by the Errol Buddle Band (Rodney Ford, drums, Mark Isaacs, keyboards, Dean Kerr, guitar, Phil Scorgie, bass, Peter Cross, flugelhorn). Buddle and Cross take the first solos on the LP, both displaying beautifully finished, mature, individual styles. They set the tone for what is to come throughout the LPs: jazz of infinite variety and interest.

Five of the 13 tracks were recorded on September 7, 1982, billed as An Evening of Singers, with Barbara Canham, Marie Wilson, Trude Aspeling and Sandie White, backed by David Martin (pno), James Morrison (trt), Dale Barlow (tnr sax), Lloyd Swanton (bass) and Tom Parkonnen (drums).

These tracks are the backbone of the two LPs. Barbara Canham's version of *You Go To My Head* is a lovely one, with all the warmth and sadness of Billie Holiday in her vibrato. Marie Wilson, in her version of the unusual ballad *A Sinner Kissed An Angel*, shows that she knows how to deliver a meaningful lyric. During the first chorus some of her phrases are whispered rather than sung, so that when she opens out in the bridge, following David Martin's piano solo, she lifts the spirit and builds the song to a moving finale. This is a lovely performance, with pace and drama.

Trude Aspeling contributes a freewheeling version of *Blue Skies*. Her generous voice sprawls expansively over the pulse of the rhythm section with her huge vibrato almost a caricature of Sarah Vaughan's. What a singer! And what surprises she has in store for the listener! Her first chorus is followed by exquisitely shaped choruses from James Morrison (trumpet) and Dale Barlow (tenor sax), showing clearly why these two men came to be regarded as young masters so early in their careers.

In fact, this double LP would be worth having simply to experience the fact that, in September 1982 they were already powerful, questing players. Barlow, merely by the way he punctures the silence with his lovely tenor sound, uncannily recalls the early Coltrane.

Note also the strong, reliable work of Lloyd Swanton on these tracks. While he has gone ahead in leaps and bounds over the last 12 months, these recordings show a young musician already developing into a great bass player.

I feel that the singer Sandie White has been, somewhat unfairly, a victim of the critics: phrasing out of control, suspect tuning... What haven't they said about her? It is ironic therefore that her contribution to this collection — two ballads, *My One And Only Love* and *My Romance*, accompanied only by David Martin on piano — are as close as possible to faultless. This is a stunning performance.

Other highlights abound. The Dick Hughes Famous Five have a version of the Charlie Christian/Benny Goodman tune *A Smooth One*. After sparse, rather tentative solos from Hughes (piano) and Bruce Johnson (trt), Merv Acheson (tenor sax) leaps in, doubles the time-feel and rips the tune up with an avalanche of sixteenth notes, producing an extraordinary solo that is consummated beautifully. Here is a legendary player on one of his best nights.

Here and Now, an original by the saxophonist Ken James is an impressive vehicle for James himself, Col Brown (bass), Dave Levy (piano), John Pochee (drums) and Dave Colton (guitar). Alternating between a latin feel and a swing feel, they produce turbulent hard-bop which has an insistent power. The solos are long, ballsy, full-blooded and brilliant, booted along by Pochee who, as always, is as alive to the music as he is to the drums.

The track called *Temple Bells* represents the avant-garde. The tune is played by John Bostock (pno), Greg Mayson (reeds), Craig Scott (bass) and Jeremy Cook (drums). It appears to be a free, unstructured dialogue between the instruments, based on a motif written by Bostock. When the tune ventures briefly into tempo, there is a short burst of inspired piano from Bostock, followed by the sort of speculative music which tends to mystify many listeners (including this one) — glocks, plicks and rumbles, punctuated by sudden clusters of notes. I wonder what it all means...

The double LP closes with the tune *Doxy* — a jam session with Laurie Bennett (drs), Keith Stirling (flugelhorn), Col Loughnan and Bob Bertles (saxophones), George Brodbeck (trombone), Tony Esterman (pno), George Golla (gtr) and Jack Thorncraft (bass). Note Stirling's solo, an extended soliloquy which takes the listener from bebop into the sort of modal dissonances that sound authentic only in the hands of trumpeters who understand the insights of Miles Davis — and Stirling is assuredly one.

Other artists on the LP include the pianist Mike Nock, playing a solo blues called *Blues*; the David Martin Quintet playing a Mike Nock composition *One For Captain Gloom*; Mike Bartolomei (pno) and Graham Jesse (flute) playing Bartolomei's *Colours*; and the guitarists Ike and Saul Isaacs playing *Polka Dots and Moonbeams*.

The Executive Producer of this splendid double LP is Bruce Johnson, Jazz Co-ordinator at 2MBS-FM, and I imagine he is responsible for the fine attention to detail on the cover notes. Names of tunes and musicians are spelt correctly with one exception: Dave Colton is listed as Dave Coulton. I know my good friend Bruce (another stickler for accuracy) will not mind my pointing out this isolated aberration.

Eric Myers



**eddie 'cleanhead' vinson
& roomful of blues**



**JIMMY WITHERSPOON
"Jimmy Witherspoon Sings The
Blues With Panama Francis And
The Savoy Sultans"
(Muse Records MR-5288)**

**EDDIE CLEANHEAD VINSON
"Eddie Cleanhead Vinson and
Roomful Of Blues"
(Muse Records MR-5282)**

**BIG JOE TURNER
"Blues Train"
(Muse Records MR-5293)**

With yet another resurgence of interest in the blues tradition this is a timely release from Muse Records. Timely also, as all three artists share a strong common link. Jimmy Witherspoon, Eddie Vinson and Big Joe Turner all began their careers as band singers, all had top selling records in the black R & B charts and all are currently enjoying renewed popularity on the US and international blues and jazz touring circuit.

Jimmy Witherspoon sang with Jay

McShann's band for over four years from 1944 to 1948. His 1949 recording of *Ain't Nobody's Business* for Supreme Records was on the race charts for some thirty four weeks and in terms of chart longevity it still ranks as the number one rhythm and blues record of all time. In recent years Witherspoon, with the billing of the "World's Greatest Blues Singer", has toured with great success throughout the US, Europe and Australia.

Eddie Vinson rose to fame with the Cootie Williams big band in the early 1940s, with hits such as *Cherry Red* and *Somebody's Got To Go*. His 1945 recording of *Kidney Stew Blues* firmly established him as one of the most popular race artists of the day. Although he retired briefly in the early 1960s, he is a regular performer on the US club scene and at festivals and concerts in Europe.

Big Joe Turner sang with the legendary Pete Johnson band during the 30s and 40s and later became a major recording star for Atlantic Records in the 1950s with his classic recording of *Shake, Rattle And Roll*. Despite the fact that he is not in the best of health he continues to perform in blues and R & B clubs throughout the US.

In recent years many attempts to rerecord the blues greats of the 1940s and 1950s have met with failure as the artists concerned have been lumbered with unsympathetic backing musicians and equally unsympathetic producers. I'm glad to report this is not the case with these three albums from Muse. Indeed all three albums manage to breathe new life into old material with a refreshing and contemporary approach to recording.

Jimmy Witherspoon's session was recorded in Paris for Disques Black and Blue who have been major offenders in the rehash blues album market. Fortunately on this occasion they have chosen drummer Panama Francis and his very swinging Savoy Sultans to provide the backing and this album bounces from the opening track. Five of the album's nine tracks are standards usually associated with Jimmy Rushing such as *Goin' To Chicago* and Witherspoon is obviously paying tribute to another great blues shouter.

The album is equally a showcase for the Savoy Sultans (named in honour of Al Cooper's original Savoy Sultans) as it is for the unique vocal style of Spoon. Tenor player, George Kelly, who played with the original Al Cooper group, has combined with Panama Francis to provide arrangements which set the mood beautifully for all of Witherspoon's songs with the standout being a great reworking of *Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You*.

Both the Eddie Vinson and Joe Turner albums feature the nine piece Roomful of Blues as the backing group. Producer Bob Porter describes them as "the quintessential back-up band for any blues or R & B artist" and whilst they don't quite live up to that rather extravagant claim they do provide a very swinging and youthfully exuberant backing. Roomful is made up of young white musicians, the majority I would guess in their late twenties or early thirties and as both Cleanhead and Big Joe were born prior to 1920, the albums make for an interesting combination of youth and experience.

Of the two, the Vinson album is slightly disappointing as Cleanhead is not showcased to the extent one might have expected. He is restricted to only three vocals — a shame as

he has a great blues voice and a wry sense of humour with his original blues lyrics. I would also like to have heard more of his coarse but endearing alto style.

Although Roomful are given plenty of 'space' on the Joe Turner album the session belongs to Joe. Jimmy Witherspoon, a great admirer of Joe, has been quoted as saying that his voice has not changed in thirty years and hearing him on this album one has to agree. Big Joe Turner has a relentless, no frills style of vocal delivery that just aches the blues. This album is a real celebration of Joe's contribution to the blues tradition. Co-producing with Bob Porter is the legendary Doc Pomus, a self-confessed Joe Turner fanatic, who has done a marvellous job with this session. New Orleans pianist Dr. John, another great admirer of Big Joe, makes a guest appearance with some rollicking Crescent City style piano on *I Want A Little Girl*.

If you can afford it, then buy all three. If not, then the Big Joe album is certainly the pick of the crop.

Chris Ruhle



DAVID FENNELL WITH KERRIE BIDDELL & WENDY GROSE
"Harbour Crossing"
 (Larrikin LRJ-130)

It is quite appropriate that this LP is called *Harbour Crossing*. It captures the optimism and positive vibes of Sydney in the 1980s, reinforcing the fact that we live in a very musical city.

It also represents, for me, the musical sophistication and good taste of a particular generation of singers, musicians and arrangers who came to prominence during the 1970s and have become part of the 'quality music' establishment in the recording studios: people

Ray Williams, one of Sydney's most loyal jazz buffs, suffered a stroke shortly after the Sydney Jazz Club's October picnic; he is now recuperating in St Vincent's Hospital. Ray is known for his geniality, his constant good humour and, above all, his height which matches that of trombonist Dick Bradstock. In fact, it is that height which long ago inspired his affectionate nickname — so get well very fast *Longtack* ... for your jazz friends' sake.

Peter J.F. Newton

like Kerrie Biddell, Wendy Grose, Col Loughnan, Mick Leyton, Phil Scorgie, John Hoffman et al and, of course, David Fennell himself, who is responsible for the music and arrangements (and some lyrics, I think) on this fine LP.

The title track *Harbour Crossing* is a bright instrumental, representative of the sort of latin/jazz/rock idiom — which I always associate with the early Chick Corea — but which has been enthusiastically adopted in this country. David Fennell, who has been visible in the jazz clubs in past years with his own group Powerpoint, Kerrie Biddell's group Compared To What and, more recently, the Errol Buddle Band, is a leading purveyor of this genre, which requires an exemplary command of the acoustic and electric pianos, plus various electronic synthesisers. This sort of music is informed by many of the sounds and feels derived from rock and soul music but, as Fennell shows, in the hands of a good composer, can retain the interesting harmonic changes and improvisational space of jazz.

On Side 1 there are two songs *Nothin' But The Best* and *Playing The Game*, sung beautifully by Kerrie Biddell. These two songs, after repeated hearings, are less memorable than the others on the LP, and I've been trying to work out why. The lyrics — presumably written by Fennell himself, as the cover notes are ambiguous — tend to lack poetry — and the harmonic changes of the songs suggest that they are crafted rather than inspired. The third song on Side 1, *Give Me Time*, sung very well by Mick Leyton, is something of a contrast, in that it has an unselfconscious, straightforward melody line, completely without pretension. But it works much better than the other two, and has a delightful chorus that soars, capturing the attention of the listener. It is as good as, say, many of the songs Graham Russell has written for Air Supply.

This LP seems to be more satisfying the further you get into it. In fact, Side 2 is full of gems. *New York Nights* is a funky, latin-flavoured impression of the Big Apple sung with wit by Wendy Grose. The rather eccentric, off-beat lyrics for this tune are provided by Janice Slater, who also wrote the lyrics for *Searching For Love* and *The Shameless Man From Mars*. These are lovely songs, full of gentle thoughts and quiet wisdom, and they are sung beautifully by Wendy Grose.

Searching For Love is particularly memorable, establishing a wistful mood through the imagery of the lyrics and some lovely chord changes. Snatches of phrases tend to remain in the mind — "tasting tears and grapes", "liquid and flowing this life", "air is salt-drenched here ..." This is a sensual song lyrically and also musically, with wind-chimes and flute warbling in the background. In fact, this sort of sensuality, which is found in the work of other jazz-based Australian composers, like Julian Lee and John Sangster, pervades the LP. I believe it is a basically Australian sensuality — the product of a sunshine culture on the coast of the Pacific basin. It is the sort of lush sensuality you might find in Brazilian music perhaps, or to some extent in the popular music of the US West Coast.

I haven't said much about the instrumentals on this LP, but they're well-crafted, exhibiting a superior musical mind on the part of the composer. In the arrangements,

there is an exhaustive attention to detail, particularly in the rhythm section feels which are used. Generally, the solo space is reserved for David Fennell on keyboards, showing that he is one of our most capable and versatile players, but also there are cameo solos by various local jazz players, too numerous to list here. A very large studio orchestra is used on many of the tracks.

Overall, this is an impressive collection of original music, incorporating a host of influences and impulses, derived from jazz and many contemporary music idioms. It has a lovely, relaxing ambience about it, with the music articulated with an easy, understated brilliance. All credit to Larrikin for making it available. It deserves to be played widely on the turntables in our radio stations and homes.

Eric Myers

V-DISCS

Reviewed by Clement Semmler

To older Australian jazz enthusiasts there's a touch of nostalgic magic in the mention of V-discs.

Back in the 1942, 1943 and 1944 war years, James Caesar Petrillo, Prezzy of the American Federation of Musicians, ordered a total ban on recordings by his members until the record companies paid his union a royalty to compensate for the playing of records on radio and juke-boxes. The ban hit the big bands of the day particularly badly; some of them never recovered.

But during these years the American Armed Forces persuaded Petrillo to lift the ban for recordings made solely for the enjoyment and entertainment of American servicemen overseas. They were called Victory Discs or V-discs.

In Australia, since there were no armed forces radio networks (as in Europe), the V-discs were played by local radio stations, but a condition of their use was that pseudonyms be used for the band names. I well recall hearing for the first time many wonderful Benny Goodman performances including *Don't Be That Way* and *King Porter Stomp*; as well as the bands of Ellington, Woody Herman, the Dorseys and others.

Some of this jazz treasure trove, I'm glad to say, is now available locally through the Italian Fonicetra Company, by arrangement with American Columbia, under the label, V-Discs. (If you have trouble tracking them down, they're distributed by Carinia Records of Sydney.)

Like treasure trove you have to separate the precious metal from the ore: there are odd tracks by the likes of the Milt Herth Trio, Sinatra, the Mills Brothers, etc., which you have to wear. Likewise, not unexpectedly, (after 40 years) there are isolated patches of surface noise. But even at that, there are many magnificent tracks, in most cases one-off and never before released because the musicians were got together in these cases for once-only recordings, both on the East and West coasts of the USA.

I have heard 8 albums. There's a set of two — *Le Stelle Del Jazz* (VDL 1005-6). On Vol. 1 a stand-out is *Love is Just Around the Corner*,

a terrific jam session by the V-Disc Jumpers — Yank Lawson. Peanuts Hucko, Bud Freeman, Ray McKinley on drums, Carmen Mastren (gtr) etc. Another highlight is an Ella Fitzgerald group (1945) in *I'll Always Be in Love with You* — Ella at her peak backed by Charlie Shavers, Lou McGarity (some mike-tearing trombone solos), Hucko sounding like Peewee, Buddy Rich and others.

There's a Louis Armstrong group (Hackett, Teagarden, Herb Ellis, etc) in *I'm Confessin'*, two tracks by Muggsy Spanier's V-Disc Dixielanders (*Tin Roof Blues* and *Cherry*) with Bud Freeman, Hucko again, Wetling & Co., and for my money the best track of them all, Red McKenzie leading McGarity, Hucko, Bobby Hackett, Cozy Cole and others and singing *Can't We Talk it Over?* Red was a colossal jazz singer — he achieved a timbre and resonance that has never been imitated, much less surpassed, and this is truly one of his best. It's a tune just made for his highly idiosyncratic style. Vol. 2 has a Goodman Quintet including Norvo and Teddy Wilson; a Tatum trio (Los Angeles, 1945); a superlative track of *Squeeze Me* by the Spanier group (this time with Peewee, Stacy, Bob Haggart on bass, and others); a Teddy Wilson group; and Mildred Bailey teaming up with a Goodman V-Disc All Stars outfit (Eldridge, Yank Lawson, Teddy Wilson, Vernon Brown on trombone, etc.) in *There'll Be a Jubilee*.

Also in a 2 album set is *Le Voci Indimenticabile* (VDL - 1003/4), some dispensable stuff (Slim Gaillard Trio, Sinatra) but 3 or 4 tracks well worth the money, especially two Mildred Bailey groups, one a small unit including hubby Norvo and Teddy Wilson in a haunting version of *Downhearted Blues*; another with her Allstar Jam Band, an out-of-this-world group with Louis, Eldridge, Teagarden, Barney Bigard, Teddy Wilson, Al Casey (gtr), Pettiford, and Big Sid Catlett (just where would you get a group like that, again!) in *Squeeze Me*. Both tracks were recorded in New York in 1944.

Vol. 2 isn't up to the same standard (Pied Pipers, Perry Como, Dick Haymes etc.), but there are still a few gems. In particular, two tracks from Pearl Bailey, backed by Bill Butterfield, Bill Stegmeyer (clt.), and others — she sings *Tired* and *Fifteen Years*; and then the rare combination of Lena Horne with a West Coast Goodman outfit — including John Best and Bernie Privin on trumpets, Kai Winding, McGarity, Getz and Mel Powell (Hollywood 1946). Lena sings jazz with the best of them and this is a tidy version of *Come to Baby, Do*.

Then, *Grande Solisti*, 2 vols. (VDL-1007/8). Vol. 1 is an absolute winner, with pick-up bands led by Fletcher Henderson (L.A. 1946), Cootie Williams (N.Y. 1941), Roy Eldridge (N.Y. 1941), 4 tracks by the Jimmy Dorsey Orch. (L.A. 1943). They're all as good as they should be, but the highlights are still to come. First, Coleman Hawkins teamed with Art Tatum (need one say more) in *My Ideal* (N.Y. 1944) and then an absolutely brilliant big band picked up by Jimmy Mundy — including Juan Tizol, Willie Smith, Babe Rusin, in a booming Mundy original, *Hello Goodbye* (L.A. 1946).

Vol. 2 has equally magnificent tracks, nearly all recorded in New York during 1945-46. Just to whet your appetites: a Fats Waller

organ solo, *Solitude*, (this one, L.A. 1943) where the master sings and soliloquizes amidst his glorious chords; three wonderful Tatum solos; a Goodman quintet with Teddy Wilson at piano in *Exactly Like You*; and perhaps the top track, a Coleman Hawkins quartet, with that vastly under-rated pianist, Eddie Heywood, Pettiford on bass and Shelly Manne (on "batteria" as the label puts it!). I can only say that I've never heard the Hawk sound more relaxed or mellow in a track that's over 5 minutes of sheer joy.

This leaves an album entitled *Celebri Complessi* (Vol. 2) (VDL - 1010), which hasn't much except a Goodman trio (Hollywood, 1946) with Mel Powell at piano in a lovely version of *I Want to be Loved* which is almost worth the price of the album anyhow, and a couple of Louis Jordan Tympany Five tracks, if you happen to be a Jordan fan.

And last of all, *Le Grande Orchestre* (Vol. 1 - VDL 1001) — and I doubt if you're ever likely to hear a big band album like this, in the sense that these are original and one-off performances.

Anyway, there's the Sam Donahue Navy Band with Conrad Gozzo and John Best heading the trumpets — and I think this is the band that came out to the Pacific and Australia in the war years. It plays a couple of Donahue originals, *Convoy* and *Last Party* with great verve. There's an Ellington track from the old Zanzibar Club (N.Y. 1941) when Taft Jordan, Wilbur de Paris and Jimmy Hamilton were with the band; two from the big 1945 Krupa band; two from the Kenton band in the same year; two from Woody Herman (N.Y. 1945), including that classic *Your Father's Moustache*, which they really take apart, and a stunning 1944 Basie band item, *Gee Baby Ain't I Good to You*, which has Lester Young and Buddy Tate in the line-up and Harry Edison and Joe Newman on trumpets. The tune, of course, is a showpiece for the singing of the incomparable Jimmy Rushing.

The point is that these albums are true collectors' items; rare jazz material that is probably in limited supply, so I daresay it's a case of first come first served.

Clement Semmler

THE TRIP —

Art Pepper On Record

by Niels Nielsen

It was no surprise when Art Pepper died on 16 June. He was 56.

The circumstances of his tragic life made his appearances on record in a featured setting less frequent than those of countless "stars" of lesser ability. The finite body of work he left will be a target of jazz collectors over the next decades, and the time to start picking up the best albums is now! This piece is a brief guide to the Art Pepper albums that I could lay ears on readily; there is no pretense of completeness.

Pepper's principle recordings 1951 to 1981 — with a gap between 1960 and 1975 — were

highly consistent, and it is possible to generalise about his playing more than about most jazzmen of comparable stature:

- He was one of the great melodists of jazz, and this melodic strength can be traced to his choice of early heroes — Benny Carter, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Willie Smith and Joe Thomas from Jimmie Lunceford's band, Ben Webster, Zoot Sims (a contemporary) and Lester Young — melodists all.

- His playing always had an underlying toughness about it, along with a bebop hipness. Pepper developed these useful traits in the trial by fire of 1940-43 LA jam sessions with such young black lions as Dexter Gordon, Teddy Edwards, Sonny Criss and Charles Mingus. The road, exemplified by big band work with Benny Carter (where he had race problems, and was left behind in California when Carter toured the South) and Stan Kenton, also toughened him musically.

- He communicated. Pepper's playing gave the impression to the listener that his every thought was reflected in a phrase on the saxophone. This ability, which abounds in the folklore of jazz, is really quite rare. He never gave the impression that he was merely running the changes, or coasting, or just playing technical exercises. Pianist George Cables pointed out that Art's thing was "trying to make the magic happen", and usually he succeeded.

- There were changes in his playing over the years, which appear to have been gradual as far as the 15-year discontinuity allows us to judge. The changes centred around an increase in intensity, finally to a frightening level; a general "freeing-up" (both Ornette Coleman and middle period John Coltrane influenced Pepper); an increase in tonal variations and vocalisation; and a turn towards edge-of-disaster playing with extensive use of choppiness, dissonance, rests and (almost) breakdowns to add tension.

- He played in good company. All that he ever really needed was a good rhythm section, and so many times on record he got just that. When a second front-line voice was present it was usually a sympathetic one: Red Norvo, Chet Baker, Jack Sheldon, Sonny Stitt, Warne Marsh, Joe Gordon, Shorty Rogers.

- His choice of material was unsurprising but interesting: the better standards and "originals" built on them, and the blues. As with Sonny Rollins, unusual tunes were often chosen, and many have stayed in jazz since. Some pieces occurred over and over again. At a rate averaging one to two per session a vehicle appeared which fell outside this pattern e.g. latin pieces, compositions by other jazzmen.

- He gave of his best whenever captured in a small group setting. His autobiography *Straight Life* makes clear that he was usually high, unwell or tense at his record dates, but this never passed to our side of the microphone. Playing saxophone was "straight life" for Art Pepper.

- Like most saxophonists, Pepper doubled, often on tenor saxophone on which he retained all of his fluidity and drive but lost some of that cutting edge and individuality. His clarinet playing was more interesting, showing echoes of Lester Young's clarinet work, and also Artie Shaw and Buddy de Franco. But it is an alto saxophonist that his greatest work was recorded.

The nuts and bolts of his methods were absolutely conventional, and were best summed up by Richard Hadlock of the *San Francisco Examiner*: "Note, too the time-honoured devices by which the altoist communicates his feelings: the variable vibrato; bent notes; intuitive control over growth and decay of each tone; the injection of blues-like phrases; arrangement and re-arrangement of melodic fragments; the development of contrasting rhythmic figures."

The following summary of the recordings concentrates on the differences between albums; Art Pepper's own playing being never less than good.

THE ALBUMS 1951 to 1960

Shorty Rogers and Art Pepper-Popo (Xanadu 148), 1951. Rating: fair to good.

The Early Show (Xanadu 108) and *The Late Show* (Xanadu 117), 1952. Rating: good to very good.

Early Art (Blue Note LA-591-H2), double album, 1956-57. Rating: good to very good.

Art Pepper plays Shorty Rogers and Others (Pacific Jazz LA-896-H), 1956-57. Rating: good.

Art Pepper Meets the Rhythm Section (Contemporary S 7532), 1957. Rating: very good.

Art Is The Art Vols 1, 2 (Trio 7196, 7197), 1957. Rating: excellent. (Much of this is on *Omega Alpha* (Blue Note LT-1064).

Modern Jazz Classics (Contemporary S 7568), 1959. Rating: good.

Gettin' Together (Contemporary S 7573), 1960. Rating: good.

Smack Up (Contemporary S 7602), 1960. Rating: very good to excellent.

Intensity (Contemporary S 7607), 1960. Rating: excellent.

The Way It Was (Contemporary S 7630), 1956-60. Rating: excellent.

Earliest of these albums, *Popo*, was recorded live by Californian jazz fan Bob Andrews at the famed Lighthouse on portable equipment. Sound quality is fair — with Shelly Manne very overrecorded. The music is quite good, and very warm. Pepper plays well throughout, Rogers is winning in patches, sounding very like the early Miles Davis; pianist Kenneth Patchen doesn't quite measure up as a soloist.

Xanadu 108 and 117 and *Art Pepper Meets The Rhythm Section* would serve as typical early Art Pepper albums. Bob Andrews was again on hand (at the Surf Club in Hollywood) to record the Pepper Quartet in 1952 and 25 years later this material has been issued on Xanadu. Sound quality varies from better than you would expect to, in a few spots only, rather worse than you would want. But the sound is a living sound, carrying more excitement than Pepper's contemporaneous studio sessions which are collected on *Discoveries* (Savoy 2217 and not reviewed here). Because of his subsequent career we would expect excitement from pianist Hawes, but bassist Mondragon and drummer Bunker come on like Oscar Pettiford and Kenny Clarke on an inspired night, yet again disproving the cosy east/west, black/white theories of the 1950s.

Twenty years after Count Basie's All American Rhythm Section first recorded in 1937 the title had passed to Red Garland,

Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones, *The Rhythm Section* on S7532. Hindsight shows anchorman Chambers, also the mainstay of the 1960 version of Miles Davis's rhythm section heard on S7573, to have been sadly underrated in his lifetime. He was the energy source of these two powerful jazz engines.

In 1972 Art Pepper named that second Davis rhythm section on *Gettin' Together* as the best he had played with up until then. The album doesn't come across to the listener quite that well; it is very good but not as outstanding as the two other 1960 albums. Pianist Wynton Kelly is a little off-mike, and on three tunes trumpeter Conte Candoli is added to no particular effect; he is clearly outclassed. Pepper's choice of tenor saxophone for two tunes also reduces the tension a notch. Hear it for yourself; English writer Max Harrison chose this one as the indispensable Art Pepper album to be included in the book *Modern Jazz 1945-70: The Essential Records*.

Really essential are the two albums *Smack Up* and *Intensity* featuring the matchless rhythm duo of bassist Jimmy Bond and drummer Frank Butler. The first of these had Jack Sheldon playing trumpet very well on all but one cut, in a 1958 Miles Davis manner. Pianist Pete Jolly also plays particularly well — but Pepper, Bond and Butler dominate the date; in fact whenever Pepper is not playing the listener's attention is automatically on the bass/drums pair. The material is unusual: six compositions by saxophonists. Three of these are our old friend the blues, with Pepper's *5/4 Las Cuevas du Mario* and Coleman's *Tears Inside* being memorable performances. Duane Tatro's sad song *Maybe Next Year* also stands out.

Intensity is a quartet album with Philadelphian hard-bopper Dolo Coker doing the piano chores splendidly. It is even finer than *Smack Up*, featuring seven of everyone's favourite popular songs given their forever definitive treatment as Pepper wrings all the melody out of them. Because of the fifteen-year break in the saxophonist's career these two great albums fall chronologically in the early section, but Pepper's more intense, looser, later style was well in evidence by 1960.

The best piano performance on any early Art Pepper session was on the last date by Carl Perkins on the two 1958 Trio albums, just before his early death. The session was originally for Omegatape, designed for issue on pre-recorded reel-to-reel tape, an idea which never caught on with audiophiles. A lot of the session's success is due to the recording set-up and way of tackling the slightly unusual popular songs used (such as *Begin the Beguine*, *Without A Song*, *The Breeze And I*). Piano and saxophone were set up equally, with the bass and drums given a subsidiary role. Perkins took full advantage of his featured role and played at a level which would have blown most other soloists away: using powerful chording and scorching mid-range single-note lines, filled with unhackneyed ideas. Pepper matches him — and that is enough to assure a top album.

Modern Jazz Classics is something apart. In 1959 the idea of arranging 12 m-j-c's, most of which were originally "underground" small black band features, for an 11-piece band plus featured saxophonist, was exciting.

In 1982 this everyday project has to stand or fall on its musical merits. Overall it stands, although Marty Paich's charts are pretty thin in places. There are some short Supersax-type passages and an adequate re-write of *Four Brothers* but mainly we get Pepper plus rhythm, with band punctuations. So ultimately, the session rested on Art Pepper, who came through with the goods. Two of his best tenor sax features are here: *Walkin'* and the superb *Move*. He sounds uninhibited by the group. Many of his solos are quite long for the period, especially on such demanding tunes. Of the other musicians only trumpeter Jack Sheldon is featured for more than a few bars.

Of all these albums only the Pacific Jazz effort is real West Coast California cool — but there is quite a bit of aggro in its two sessions nonetheless. The Shorty Rogers side features a fine 9-piece band in which the agile tuba of Red Callender is very prominent. Pepper is the main soloist, more limpid and cooler than usual in tone, but the ideas are burning. Standouts are *Bunny*, a beautiful slow piece reminiscent of Gerry Mulligan's *A Ballad*, and the swinging *Po Po*. The second side has a conventional sextet date, with pepper and pianist Pete Jolly standing out. Chet Baker and Richie Kamuca are the other horns.

For a varied sample of "early" Art, *The Way It Was* is thoroughly recommended. There are three fillers featuring the three top rhythm sections: Garland/Chambers/Jones; Kelly/Chambers/Cobb and Coker/Bond/Butler — all of them are classic performances. Side 1 has Pepper with, for once an equal front-line partner. Tenor saxophonist Warne Marsh is a pure, smooth melodist. His slightly fuzzy tone fits well with Pepper's sharpness and angular melodism. Great music!

The only album not mentioned yet is the Blue Note double, which is also recommended — but not ahead of some of the others. It includes three sessions with vibraphonist Red Norvo, Sheldon and pianist Russ Freeman the major other voices.

II THE ALBUMS 1975 to 1981:

Quartet Albums

Living Legend (Contemporary S 7633), 1975. Hampton Hawes, Charlie Haden, Shelly Manne. Rating: excellent.

The Trip (Contemporary S 7638), 1976. George Cables, David Williams, Elvin Jones. Rating: Good.

No Limit (Contemporary S 7639), 1977. Cables, Tony Dumas, Carl Burnett. Rating: very good.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday Nights at the Village Vanguard (Contemporary 7642-4 available separately or GXH-3009 boxed set), 1977. Cables, George Mraz, Jones. Ratings: good to very good, very good, very good.

Among Friends (Interplay 7718), 1978. Russ Freeman, Bob Magnusson, Frank Butler. Rating: very good.

Today (Galaxy 5119), 1978. Stanley Cowell, Cecil McBee, Roy Haynes. Rating: very good to excellent.

So In Love (Artists House 9412), 1978. Hank Jones, Ron Carter, Al Foster/Cables, Haden, Billy Higgins. Rating: good.

Landscape (Galaxy 5128), 1979. Cables, Dumas, Higgins. Rating: excellent.

Straight Life (Galaxy 5127), 1979. Tommy Flanagan, Red Mitchell, Higgins. Rating: excellent.

Pete Jolly — Strike Up The Band (Yupiteru/Atlas LA-27-1003), 1980. Jolly, Magnusson, Roy McCurdy. Rating: very good to excellent.

One September Afternoon (Galaxy 5141), 1980. Cowell, McBee, Burnett. Rating: very good to excellent.

Roadgame (Galaxy 5142), 1981 Cables, Williams, Burnett. Rating: excellent.

Faced with so many fine albums within a single pattern: great solo alto saxophonist in top form with leading rhythm section taking care of business, it is only necessary to comment briefly on differences. All are recommended!

Some of these later albums display the early cooler Pepper better known from the 1951-60 period. Collectors who find watching open-heart surgery in living colour a little hard to stomach should stay clear of the adrenalin-charged Vanguard live sessions, and in particular should investigate *Among Friends*, *So In Love* and the Pete Jolly album for the thinking man's Art Pepper.

The Pepper clarinet is displayed in single performances on *Landscape* and *Roadgame*, the latter album being a fine remembrance of the exact band which toured Australia.

Devotees of the Art Pepper tenor saxophone are catered for by *No Limit*, which includes a latin tune *Mambo De La Pinta* done as a quintet piece, with overdubbed tenor comments over the opening and closing alto statements, the major solo being on tenor. The final two VV albums also feature fine tenor saxophone, particularly the Saturday 16 minute version of *Cherokee* which, as well as a glorious alto solo, has out-to-lunch tenor at the end. Incidentally, the liner notes do not mention Pepper's tenor foray.

All albums have definitive slow and medium tempo performances, varying markedly from session to session in length of improvisation and emotional climate. There is no best, but *Over The Rainbow* on *Landscape* and *Patricia* on *Today* echo Australian performances I will always remember.

All of the bassists are excellent and no more need be said about them than that they are among the best in jazz.

The earlier solos by pianist George Cables — say, up to *So In Love* on the album list — strike me as being a little lightweight. From *Landscape* onwards he seems to dig in much more. Readers who are drawn to all his work can rack up the ratings of the earlier albums a notch. Pepper's old West Coast associates Russ Freeman and Pete Jolly have wiry styles which suit him admirably — Jolly's album has particularly impressive piano playing. Tommy Flanagan (naturally) is fine on *Straight Life*.

As a rhythm section the Hawes/Haden/Manne trio on *Living Legend* is outstanding as is the Freeman/Magnusson/Butler team on *Among Friends*. On *No Limit* Elvin Jones doesn't mesh as well with the others as he does on later sessions. Billy Higgins (naturally) and Carl Burnett do great things.

Two of the albums have a percussionist added on one cut each, and on *One September Afternoon* guitarist Howard Roberts is an addition/substitution on two tunes, but the

basic quartet format remains.

The final comment might be that overt emotion is more evident on the live albums: the Vanguards, *Landscape*, *Roadgame*.

DIFFERENT FORMATS

Dolo Coker — California Hard (Xanadu 142) 1976. Rating: fair to good.

Jack Sheldon — Angel Wings (Yupiteru/Atlas LA-27-1001), 1980. Ratings: Very good to excellent.

Winter Moon (Galaxy 5140), 1980. Rating: fair to good.

Shelly Manne — Hollywood Jam (Yupiteru/Atlas LA-27-1012), 1980. Rating: excellent.

Note that two recommended Sonny Stitt albums featuring Art Pepper were reviewed in JAZZ of August, 1982 (Issue 10).

Dolo Coker's date is a hard bop session with the late Blue Mitchell playing trumpet and flugelhorn. There is a fine piano trio feature and Pepper plays on the remaining five tunes, twice on tenor sax (without distinction). *Mr. Yohe*, a blues by Pepper better treated on *Living Legend*, is the best cut, but a 15 minute feature for drummer Frank Butler takes some interest off the album. Butler is such a great band drummer that long solo features are a misguided compliment to his ability.

Jazz musicians need string sections like ships need wheels. All the praise heaped on the Stan Getz/Eddie Sauter *Focus* album doesn't cause me to forget that Stan and the rhythm section could have spent half the time in the studio without the strings and produced better, if less historic, music.

California's Bill Holman and Jimmy Bond did the unobtrusive arrangements here, and Pepper plays great jazz helped by the same rhythm section which recorded the uncluttered *One September Afternoon* a day later. Anyone liking their jazz with strings attached will love this album.

The two Japanese albums are part of a thoroughly worthwhile project to keep the spirit of the original 1950's West Coast jazz alive. Jack Sheldon's album has pianist Milcho Leviev, bassist Tony Dumas and drummer Carl Burnett, Pepper's regular rhythm section of the time, so all get together like old friends. The solos and rhythm section work are very much 1980, but to hear the theme statements of the title tune is to take a trip back to 1955. *Broadway* and *Minority* also give a nostalgic kick in the ribs. A fine album, particularly because our hero gets more than a sideman's share of solo space, his playing on *Historia De Un Amor*, being equal to his very finest work elsewhere.

Shelly Manne's album features, as well as Pepper, those three West Coast stalwarts tenor saxophonist Bob Cooper, pianist Pete Jolly and bassist Monty Budwig. Great white hope of the trombone Bill Watrous completes a sextet guaranteed to produce at least a good record. They do much better than that! With two extra horns solos are naturally shorter than on a quartet album, but Cooper in particular stands out — it's good to have him back. And Jolly! Let's hope we hear much, much more of his powerful work. This is a great, vital album, not as much for Art Pepper, who nevertheless makes the most of his limited space, but for the whole band.

Niels Nielsen

NEW RECORD RELEASES

By Roger Beilby*

Well feedback at last. In my last column I mentioned the English Jasmine Label and its lack of distribution in Australia. Soon after publication I was visited by Graeme Osborne with a Jasmine catalogue in hand. Graeme has been working in London for Doug Dobell in his record shop for the last ten or so years and has returned home to set up Jazz Import Services. As well as Jasmine he will be distributing Hep, Dawn Club, Affinity, Charley, Spotlight, 77, Mole Jazz, Steam and Ingo. Trade enquiries are welcome on (03) 878 1539.

The highlight of the new releases is Ade Monsborough's Adelaide Connection *All Steamed Up*. This is a cassette featuring Ade, Dave Dallwitz, Bruce Gray, Johnny Malpas, Bob Wright and John Woodards. Distribution is very limited but if you can track it down it is well worth the effort. This issue is closely followed by an EMI Custom release of Bob Barnard's Quartet *'A La Barnard*. Other local issues are Graeme Bell's All Stars *Hold That Tiger*, SeaHorse 005 (record and cassette); *Highlights of the 37th Australian Jazz Convention*, Grevillea Records 1110; *Easy Does It*, Storyville's 15th Anniversary Album Jazznote 030. Carinia distributes the Bell album and Larrikin the other two. Available only from the band is a cassette by Melbourne's Black Beach Jazz Band.

Swaggie Records (available through Carinia) have reissued Len Barnard's Famous Jazz Band *The Naked Dance*, S1267; *Jazz From New York 1928/29*, S1299; *Hot Trumpets Jazz In Chicago 1928-30*, S1284. They have also completed the Clarence Williams Washboard Band sides recorded for Vocalion in the mid 1930s. Volume 4, S814., and Volume 5, S815 are now available. To complete a busy couple of months for Swaggie they have reissued with new cover designs Armand Hug *New Orleans Piano*, S1281; and Earl Hines' *Piano Portraits of Australia*, S1350.

Since my last column both Avan Guard and Another Record Distribution have had many new issues,

too many in fact to do justice to in a column of this size. They include, from Avan Guard, Arnett Cobb and the Muse All Stars *More . . . Live at Sandys*, Muse MR 2736; Sonny Stitt, *Last Stitt Sessions Volume 1*, Muse



MR5269; Stephane Grappelli and Hank Jones *A Two-fer*, Muse MR 5287; Red Rodney, *The Three R's*, Muse MR 5290; *Jimmy Witherspoon Sings the Blues with Panama Francis and the Savoy Sultans*, Muse MR 5288; Also available through Avan Guard is an excellent series on Dutch CBS. Artists featured include Pim Jacobs, Roger Van Otterloo, Chris Hinze, Ann Burton and Rita Reys.

Some of the albums available from Another Record Distribution include excellent Japanese reissues of 25 albums of Miles Davis; J.J. Johnson and Kai Winding *Jay and Kai*, CBS Sony 20 AP 1463; Lester Young, *Portrait of Lester Young*, CBS Sony 20 AP 1448; Louis Armstrong *Satchmo the Great*, CBS Sony 20 AP 1846; Stan Getz '57, Verve 23 MJ 3181; *Count Basie 1939-1951*, CBS Sony 50 PW 77/78; Oscar Peterson Trio *In Tokyo 1964* Pablo (Jap) MTZ 8001/2; Jimmy Smith *Organ Grinder Swing*, Verve MV 2074; the list goes on and on and the pocket and the bank account empty by the week. I may even have to build more record shelves. Other issues available from ARD are Peter Erskine *Self Titled*, Contemporary L 14010; Curtis Counce Group *Carl's Blues*, Contemporary S7574; Bunk Johnson and Lu Watters *16 Historic Recordings of Bunk and Lu*; *The*

Buddy Tate Quartet, Sackville 3027; Don Thompson and Ed Bickert *Dance to the Lady*, Sackville 4010; The Jim Galloway Quartet featuring Jay McShann *Thou Swell*, Sackville 4011; Duke Ellington *Money Jungle*, EMI Pathe Marconi BNP 25113.

Argus Records have a new shipment of Jazz Tribunes, that excellent French RCA Double Volume reissues. Approximately 40 volumes are available and at \$13.99 a double it's a steal. Some are available on cassette with a playing time of about an hour a side (\$15.99 each).

At long last Jazz and Jazz have released *Ace in The Hole* by Steve Waddell's Celebrated Creole Bells, YPRX 2062; It took nearly four years to see the light of day but was well worth waiting for.

Finally an issue that until now has escaped my attention: a self-titled cassette by the Abbey Jazz Band, only available from the band. These days a record collector has an excuse for going to a hotel at night ("Just going out for that cassette that's only available from the band.") It even fits your shirt or trouser pocket so you can't lose it. □

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*Roger Beilby is one of the proprietors of Melbourne's specialist jazz shop Mostly Jazz, 94 St. Kilda Road, St. Kilda.

...and we've also heard

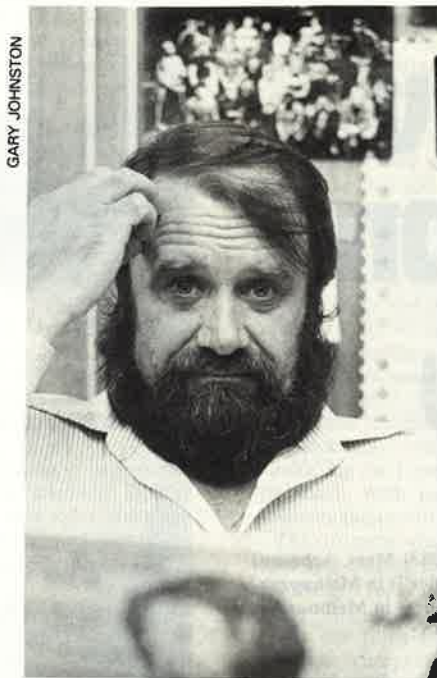
By Dick Scott*

Now that The Basement has a theatre license and has completed its extensive renovations, big things are planned for 1984. Georgie Fame will be appearing in January along with the Aussie Blue Flames. Bruce Viles hopes to have in March the top New Zealand group Sustenance — unknown in Australia but said to be a world-class group playing extraordinary music. The pianist and writer in the band is Phil Broadhurst, originally from the UK. On saxophone and bassoon is Colin Hemmingsen, who is also principal bassoonist with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and President of the NZ Jazz Foundation. In 1970 he won a *Down Beat* tenor saxophone scholarship. On bass is Paul Dyne, and on drums is Roger Sellers, who is well-known in this country. He played here for some years before carving out a busy career in England from 1974-81. He played with Ian Carr's Nucleus along with the New Zealanders Brian Smith (reeds) and Dave MacRae (keyboards) and was virtually the house drummer at Ronnie Scott's for years. He returned to Wellington in 1981. In the New Year The Basement could also have the percussionist Nana Vasconcelos, winner of this year's *Down Beat* Annual International Critics Poll. Vasconcelos is likely to come to Australia for the Perth Festival, following an appearance at India's Jazz Yatra and, if he is in Australia, Bruce Viles says there's a good chance he will appear at The Basement. □

Television programming for jazz is set to expand with the ABC's taping of several concerts at the Don Burrows Supper Club in addition to the regularly scheduled *Don Burrows Collection* now in its third series.

Producer Barry Crook intends to shoot concerts over the next eight months at the club using small video cameras to remain unobtrusive and be able to capture the feel of the audience and club as well as the music and performances. The first concert was taped in early October featuring Ricky May and his back-up band consisting of Harry Rivers (drums), Peter Cross (trumpet), Mark Isaacs (piano), and Bill Twyman (bass). The set included a

*Dick Scott is a professional journalist with News Ltd in Sydney. His pieces on jazz appear occasionally in *The Australian*.



Barry Crook: keeping jazz on television . . .

surprise appearance from Billy Field singing a duo of *Bad Habits* with Ricky.

Barry Crook is negotiating with performers for the series titled *From The Supper Club* and intends to lean towards a vocalist as the main part of the programme with excellent backing musicians as well. Initially four or five segments will be shot in the year ahead to be aired on the ABC later in 1984. The *Don Burrows Collection* is being scheduled for 13 segments which will include about half Australian artists coupled with overseas performances for the rest of the series. Crook is currently reviewing miles of tape and film of foreign artists which arrive weekly at his office.

Though the budget for jazz programming is admittedly small, Crook stretches every dollar and tries to allocate a lion's share of the funding for local artists as opposed to buying expensive overseas productions. Crook says that the audience may be small but, "Their appreciation level is very large and they are encouraging us by calls and letters to do more in the area of jazz programming." The next project for the *Don Burrows Collection* will be Ricky May and the Julian Lee Orchestra performing works from the double album set *Fats Enough*

featuring tunes by Fats Waller and other piano/vocal compositions from the jazz realm.

This concert will be held at the Regent Hotel Ballroom, a new facility that the management hopes to use for a wide range of entertainment including more big band and jazz performances. Another segment of the *Burrows Collection* has already been taped when Crook and the ABC team set up at The Basement for three nights for a programme to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the venue.

Performances by Kerrie Biddell, Crossfire and Galapagos Duck were taped and several guest artists sat in with the bands including previous members of the Duck Willie Qua, Chris Qua, Col Nolan and Len Barnard, now known as the Old Ducks.

The ABC hopes to tape three overseas programmes. It is likely that, as response to the programming becomes more evident, the powers to be would add more jazz. One of the ways to assure this is by writing to the Television Entertainment Department of the ABC and giving support to the present programming as well as making suggestions for more and longer jazz programming in the future.

Barry Crook pays tribute to the high quality of his production staff. "Producing jazz for television is not like any other production," says Barry, "because I have to, and do, rely on my crew. Jazz is basically improvisation and to capture what the musicians are doing, I do place an enormous amount of trust in my crew, whereby the sound production people, the cameramen, lighting people and vision mixers express themselves according to the feel of the music. Basically we record the programs in real time, and we do it warts and all — we don't go back and drop in".

"The inventiveness of the Dick Bond crew in Sydney, with Noel Cantrell on sound, and in Melbourne the Roger McAlpine crew with John Beanland on sound, is just splendid. Chris Boniface, the music producer, works at both ends. It's a delight to work them them. They're able to bring about a marvellous marriage of sound and vision. All the programs are recorded in stereo, and I look forward to the day when they are transmitted in stereo." □

The Merv Acheson Story

(Part 9)

In part 8 of this series (JAZZ, July/August 1983) Merv Acheson described life as a musician (and occasional "minder") in Melbourne in the late 1940s. He had several unhappy experiences in Melbourne, and was glad to be back in Sydney. NOW READ ON:

Back in Sydney things were not too bright on the show business scene. The wartime black market profits which the big time operators had been spending in the nightclubs were drying up and these places were frantically changing bands and acts in an attempt to attract new custom. Good musicians were playing musical chairs going from place to place with no continuity of employment.

Registered poker machine clubs with entertainment as we know them today did not exist and hotels were forced by law to close at 6 pm. The Petersham Inn had a regular Saturday afternoon band led by guitarist Morgan McGree and some of the big city plush hostelrys hired bands for private functions in banquet halls not open to the public, but jazz in hotels, which is now so prolific, just did not exist.

About this time a journalist friend who wanted some time off asked me to deputise for him on a country newspaper for a few weeks. I don't think I ever had such an unhappy and frustrating time as on this assignment.

I checked my journalistic credentials and Australian Journalists' Association card and boarded a relatively small plane for a town in Victoria, a State in which I have never had much luck.

I should have known the whole venture would be a disaster.

It started when I entered the newspaper office about noon one day in mid-summer when the temperature was over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, tar was oozing from the street in puddles and stray dogs were panting for breath.

When I introduced myself I was immediately reprimanded for not wearing a coat and tie. It seemed that members of the white collar fraternity were expected to dress up at all times even when they were not yet on the payroll.

The work was boring; the paper was a morning one so I started every afternoon about three o'clock and worked until midnight. First there came the round of the civic offices collecting routine handouts, prepared bland statements and self-laudatory stories from various local dignitaries. Later in the day came the council meetings, the get-togethers of other local influential bodies and the eternal blather of the typical small town politicians.

All this junk the paper printed willingly and fully — but awkward questions to the hierarchy were taboo.

I dug up some good stories, which in a city paper or even a small paper in a less inhibited community would have made the front page, but they never saw the light of day. Two pieces I wrote; one on the appalling conditions of the local Aborigines living in their humpies on the outskirts of town without sanitation, medicine or running water in the dry season and begging whites to buy liquor for them from the hotels where they were barred; and another on the harsh lives of itinerant seasonal white workers and their families. Both stories were spiked immediately, never to be published.



Merv Acheson, Journalist, outside the *Tempo* office, Sydney circa 1951.

Apart from dissatisfaction with the actual work I was still being harassed about my personal life. This included drinking in public bars of hotels; (employees were expected to drink in the saloon or lounge); wearing sports clothes and shorts on my day off; taking out a waitress in the local hamburger joint, AND, horror of horrors, sitting in with the local dance band on an occasional Saturday night.

By this time I had had it and sent a frantic telegram to the friend who gave me the job telling him to hurry back.

Favourite weekend pastime of the upper middle class in this town seemed to be ghastly picnics on the bank of some turbid waterhole infested by flies, ants and, at dusk, mosquitos. The beer was flat and warm, the sandwiches crinkled and dry, the women dowdy and the men humourless and forever talking about their week-day business.

I attended one of these disastrous functions on the recommendation of a workmate — but never again.

I have always disliked the outdoors — to me if you've seen one tree, one patch of bush, one river or mountain you've seen 'em all. My absolute preference runs to concreted streets, advertising hoardings, neon signs, skyscrapers, brightly lit bars and dimly lit nightclubs.

Soon I was on another light plane heading back for civilisation and I have rarely been as exuberant as when we touched down at Sydney airport.

I lost no time in putting the word around that I was back and in less than a week I had an offer I could not refuse — Frank Johnson, publisher of *Tempo* magazine, with *Music Maker* one of the two oldest established and most prestigious entertainment publications in Australia, wanted me as editor.

This Frank Johnson, (no relation to either the Sydney or Melbourne trumpet playing Frank Johnsons), had an office in George Street near Martin Place, where he put out magazines on Australian history, books of local poetry and comics. But I was to be solely concerned with *Tempo*.

Since before the war I had been writing on jazz as a freelance for both this magazine and its rival *Music Maker* but now I was to be in charge of news, features, layout — the whole works. The magazine was a monthly and I had only to work part-time leaving plenty of

opportunity to play music. It also put me in a position to get advance information on what was about to happen in the music trade.

Publisher Johnson was a large, stout, red-faced, jovial, whisky drinking, extrovert who handled all advertising for his magazines and confined his journalistic activities to making suggestions for editorials usually directed at outlets such as theatres and radio stations for not employing enough live musicians. When not on his advertising rounds he could invariably be found in the bar of the old Plaza Hotel on Wynyard Station ramp (now the Menzies) drinking with his friend "Jack" Idriess the famous author of books on the Australian outback.

Although not particularly a jazz fan he had a stable of jazz specialists writing for *Tempo* including Ron Wills, Wal Durbin and Don Stollard in Sydney and Harvey Bruce in Melbourne. Incoming mail was heavy with learned record collectors arguing who had played what on which disc or whether so and so was better than such and such. To liven things up the regular writers on the magazine and myself often wrote argumentative letters to each other on various aspects of jazz - all for publication.

While with *Tempo* I took a trio into Mick the Greek's Collonade Club at La Perouse which was a very rough place indeed. A regular customer was The Angel of Death, "Pretty Dulcie" Markham, who always had a specially reserved table near the band to accommodate her large entourage of brightly dressed girls and beefy men in dark suits and big hats.

I had known Dulcie in Melbourne where bandleader and multi-instrument man Stan Bourne and I regularly attended Sunday afternoon parties in her St. Kilda house. There were some great jam sessions in that place with top musos from theatres and nightclubs dropping in to blow up a storm and help themselves to the generous supply of free liquor.

Dulcie was limping when she came to the Collonade Club because it seems someone had put a gun through her Melbourne bedroom window and shot both her and her current boy friend. She had gained her nickname The Angel of Death because half a dozen of her men friends had been gunned down in underworld battles.

She was a great fan of jazz, although no scholar on the subject, and her favourite tune was *Ugly Child*. All went well at the nightclub until one night when she asked for a number. We had just installed a new

pianist who did not know Dulcie. He had had a few drinks, looked her up and down and said "Nought for molls!"

This was a straight out declaration of war and in a minute the place was a mass of shouting men and girls, smashed glassware and crockery, spilt liquor and overturned chairs and tables.

The drummer, Alan Burke, and I bodily ejected the pianist through the back door while the crowd, apparently forgetting the original reason battled happily among themselves.

I never worked that spot again and never worked with that pianist anywhere again. He was too tactless for me.

One of the most exciting events during my stay with *Tempo* was the first Sydney Jazz Convention held at Ashfield Town Hall between Christmas Day and New Year's Day 1950. We had several full page spreads in *Tempo* with a banner headline on page one "Jazz! Oh Jazz! Oh Jazz!" and a dozen pictures featuring top jazzmen of the day. As I write I have a copy of this magazine dated January 1951 before me with photos of Johnny McCarthy, Duke and Betty Farrell, Jim Roach, Terry McCardell, Alan Burke, Jack Parkes, Eric Dunn, Ron Wills, Wal Durbin and the Southern Jazz Group.

My next nightly stint was at the Embassy Club on the harbourside at Manly. It was run by two Greek brothers and went broke before very long because of their habit of giving expensive free parties to their friends and relatives. At this club there was an imperious head waiter who not only cooked crepe suzettes at the tables as if he were conducting the London Philharmonic but attempted to give orders to the band. With people like drummer Bill Coady, pianist Wally Andrews and myself in the outfit this was tempting fate.

The rift came when he came up at 2 am as we were getting ready to leave and ordered us to play on because some of his good tippers were still there. I told him in no uncertain terms to "Go cook his fish and chips!"

The last thing I heard from him was an indignant spluttering: "feesh an' cheeps!" A few days later the joint closed.

NEXT ISSUE: The Balaclava, the Doc Willis Band at the Port Jackson Hotel, the Criterion years, pub jazz in its hey-day, the great Giles O'Sullivan all night jazz spot, the first Musicians Union magazine.

"He is my equal"

ELLA FITZGERALD

**MARK
MURPHY**

KINSELAS

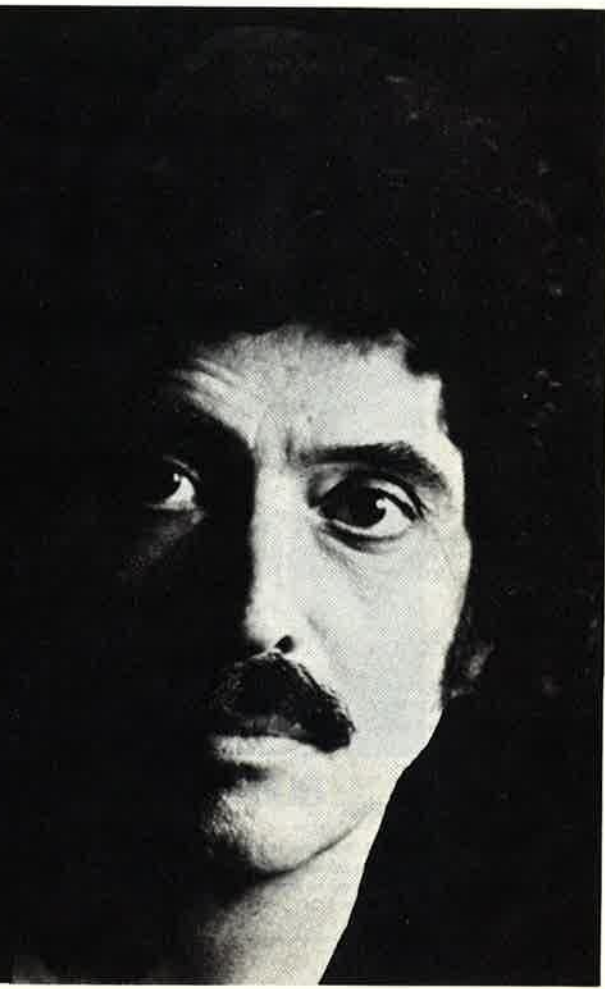
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GROUPS AVAILABLE

DOCTOR JAZZ & SONS. Stars of Manly Jazz Carnival. (044) 76 2102, 22 Bay Street, Narooma NSW 2546.

KEITH STIRLING QUARTET/QUINTET. Available for engagements Sydney, NSW or interstate. Phone (02) 848 9405 or write 16 Sefton Rd, Thornleigh NSW 2120.

TAPES

PEE WEE ERWIN EXCLUSIVE TAPES as featured in JAZZ Magazine (November/December 1982 issue). Titles: *Pee Wee in New York, Pee Wee in Hollywood, Pee Wee At Home.* \$10 postpaid. Write GPO Box 4689, Sydney NSW 2001.

BOOKS, RECORDS, CALENDARS

JAZZ BOOKS AND RECORDS. Current, rare and out of print. **1984 COMPLEAT JAZZ CALENDAR.** Write for free lists. Jazz Record Exchange, Dept. AUJ, Jamaica, N.Y. 11415, U.S.A.

WRITERS

DO YOU WANT A WRITER? Full-time journalist will write sleeve notes, artist bios, press release and/or publicity material. Jazz a specialty, other areas as well. Dick Scott. Phone (02) 33-4538 a.h. or write 1/243 Forbes Street, Darlinghurst 2010.

TUITION

MUSIC LESSONS. Bruce Cale, Sydney area. (02) 560 4449. Bruce Cale will also accept students from anywhere within Australia on the principle of lessons by cassette tape. Write C/- PO Hampton, NSW 2790.

JAZZ IMPROVISATION ON ANY INSTRUMENT. From the journeyman stage to alert versatility on today's music scene. Sydney area. Keith Stirling, 16 Sefton Road, Thornleigh 2120. Phone (02) 848-9405.

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RECORDS

MOSTLY JAZZ: SPECIALIST JAZZ RECORD SHOP IN MELBOURNE, 94 St. Kilda Road, St. Kilda Vic 3182. Postal address: PO Box 342, Elsternwick Vic 3185. Phone (03) 534 1173. Shop hours: Wed-Thurs 5-7.30 pm, Fri 5-9 pm, Sat 10-2 pm, Now open Sundays 2-5 pm. Mail orders welcome. Contact us for a special deal on Jazz and Jazz LPs.

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 PHONE: 212 4543

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Tuesdays
 The Le Claire Quartet
Wednesdays
 Sketches
Thursdays
 Roger Frampton's Intersection
Fridays
 Chuck Yates Trio
Saturdays
 Various Guest Bands

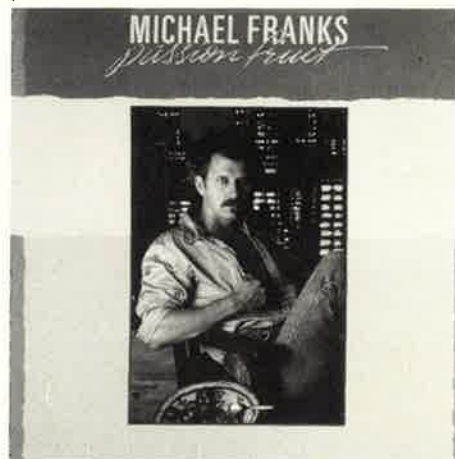
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Thursday to Saturday 6.00 pm to 11.00 pm
Supper Friday and Saturday nights

Tuesday Su Cruickshank and the Chubby Chasers (Harry Rivers, Col Nolan, Darcy Wright)

Wednesday Jan Adele

Thursday Su Cruickshank and the Jazz Orchestra of the Obese (Ray Alldridge, Possie Poo Poo and Laurie Thompson)

Friday Su Cruickshank and the Jazz Orchestra of the Obese, plus Harry Rivers

Appearing in December
Anne Doyle and David Levy