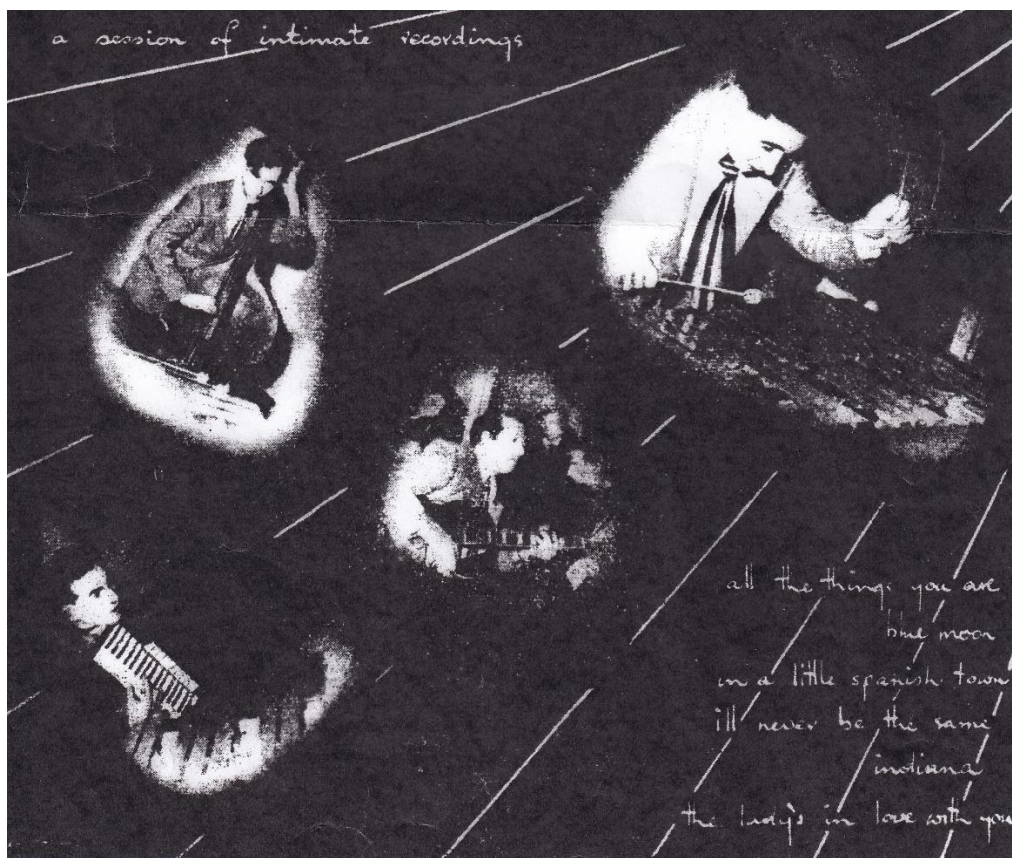


PAT CAPLICE'S QUINTET PACKS SOPHISTICATED PUNCH

by Wally Norman*

Currently appearing with Gaby Rogers down at swanky Romano's Restaurant, Pat Caplice and his Art Ray Quintet give the customers just what they want — commercial music with beat. These boys, who have been together for quite a long time, are keenly interested in their music, to the extent of having many records made, at their own expense, in search of a new “sound.” Music is really only a pastime for them, as they have comfortable daytime jobs in business.



This image illustrated Wally Norman's article...

**When this was written sometime in the early to mid-1950s, Wally Norman was a leading trumpeter active in the Sydney nightclub scene, leading groups which many progressive musicians passed through. By the late forties according to Bruce Johnson's Oxford Companion, "he was known as a leading pioneer in Sydney in fostering interest in bop, through journalism, record sessions and concert performances..."*

Pat Caplice was born in 1927 and was educated at St Charles, Waverley, where he used to play the drums for the marching. On leaving school he was engaged as a manufacturing jeweller, but took up drums in his spare lime and studied with Bruce Finlay.

Three years ago, after gaining experience on casual gigs in the suburbs, Pat decided try his hand at vibes. and studied hard with Bruce and at the Con. After 18 months he was an accomplished player with a keen sense modern harmony, and he decided to form a group of musicians with similar ideas to his own. This was the group known as The Art Ray Four which made a name for itself at the Royal Motor Yacht Club at Rose Bay, where they played regularly and also on three jazz concerts at the Assembly Hall (which they consider the only hall in Sydney with acoustics suitable to the group).



A shot of the author of this piece, trumpeter Wally Norman (centre) in action with his band presumably during the 1950s. On the left is trumpeter Jack Crotty, and the trombonist Billy Miller is on the right... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN, ALSO DATE AND LOCATION UNKNOWN

The Art Ray Four are also to be heard on a series of recordings for Fidelity label with the Lester Sisters, but not satisfied with the balance achieved on these records, they

cut several discs at Columbia at their own expense, in endeavouring to capture the elusive “sound” they're after.

These discs are *In a Little Spanish Town*, *All the Things You Are*, *Indiana*, *Blue Moon*, *The Lady's In Love with You* and *I'll Never Be The Same*. According to Pat, "they're quite close to the result we're after".

The outfit consists of Pat Caplice, vibes, with Ken Morrow, piano accordion, who is married with three children and a printer by trade; Don Pickering, guitar, an accountant whose neat style on guitar builds up the rhythm; John Morrow, bass, a commercial artist; and Don Varella, drums, a recent addition to the group, a salesman from New Zealand.

Arrangements are by Pat Caplice and Ken Morrow, and the style most favoured is the semi-bop sound in the Mooney-Van Damme-Cole tradition.
