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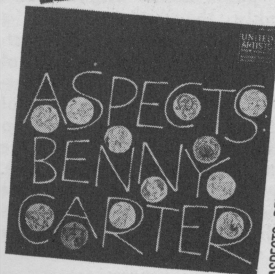
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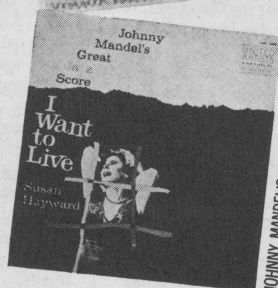
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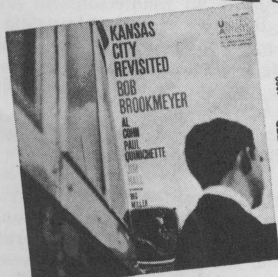
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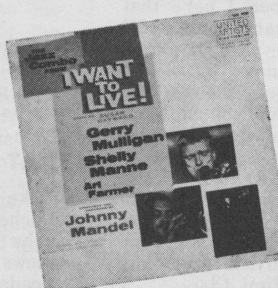
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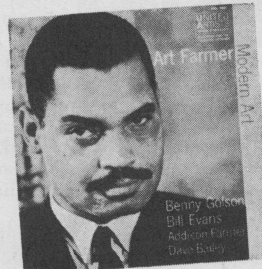
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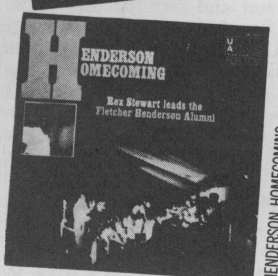
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# STACKING UP



# LETTERS

## THE ACADEMY

My congratulations to you upon your new magazine, the second issue of which I have just read and which I was pleased to see maintained the consistently high level of quality established in the first. Yours is, to my knowledge, the only American publication which has ever treated jazz in an intellectual manner, which takes the analytical and not the tabloid view of jazz. The esthetic success of your venture is assured; I can only wish you continued financial success.

Michael Taylor  
Head of the Jazz Department  
Harvard Radio Broadcasting Co., Inc.

Congratulations on the first issue of your new magazine. Jazz has long needed a publication of this excellent quality, and *The Jazz Review* gives the art of jazz a critical evaluation of the highest value. Your first issue shows an excellent sense of proportion in its mixture of important historical material and its emphasis on the truly significant in contemporary sounds. The analyses of recordings are superb, and in every case, your choice of writers seems perfect.

Edward A. Spring  
Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

## AND ABROAD

This is just a short note to congratulate you on the first issue of *The Jazz Review*; fascinating, beautifully produced, and not afraid to be technical on what is after all a technical subject.

This is exactly the kind of periodical which the jazz world has needed for so long.

Steve Race, London

... May I congratulate you on your excellent magazine of which I have received two issues so far. You and your stable mates are doing a most wonderful job. It was a rare pleasure to note that the U. S. finally has produced a jazz magazine in the true meaning of the word. I do hope there are enough intelligent readers to enable you to keep going in the direction you have chosen. ...

Carl-Erik Lindgren,  
Editor, *Estrad*, Stockholm

... Could *The Jazz Review* print a strictly analytical, Hodeir-type examination of the work of Roy Eldridge?

Dave Griffiths, London  
(Yes. Any candidates? Other suggestions for articles welcomed.)

... My name is Promodh Malhotra. I am the Secretary of the only functioning jazz club in Bombay — The Jazz Club of Bombay. It is a small organization of devoted and fanatical jazz fans though let

me say not bigoted, who have been carrying aloft the jazz banner for the past year. We have a weekly record session and once a month hold a Recorded Evening of Jazz at the air-conditioned auditorium that USIS kindly places at our disposal. Public interest in these evenings has been very heartwarming.

The recent visits of Dave Brubeck and Jack Teagarden have aided immeasurably the efforts of our club and now finally the local public for years fed on the myth of jazz' inherent lack of respectability have come to appreciate the truth. There have been lively exchanges in the newspapers between stolid old gentlemen of the 'old school' and us. We have emerged victorious.

Do you think we could have as the next visiting jazzmen, musicians of more solid content; e.g., Ellington, Basie, Monk, Silver, Coltrane, Miles, etc. Probably not. They haven't made *Time* yet.

We have recently been considering the introduction of a new organization and we chose the biggest name we could find for it — The Institute of Modern Jazz Study. All we hope to do is to foster research in modern jazz among the local jazz fans and we shall be plaguing you for material if it comes about. Jazz, you may be surprised to learn, has had fans in this city for over a decade and a half and maybe more. Although not too many people remember Teddy Weatherford and Leon Abbey, interest has always been alive and in the past ten years definitely on the upgrade. ...

Thank God for Willis Conover.

Promodh Malhotra  
Bombay

This letter would become too long for anyone to read if I told you in details what I found in your first number. I hope that you will have the necessary commercial success with the publication; its standards are very high. And you know it.

Maybe it will interest you though that I (a jazz follower with not much more than average musical knowledge, purely musical I mean) found the *Review* a challenging thing to read and was very proud that I understood most of the articles, even though I am not English or American. I thoroughly enjoyed and studied every line of the Gunther Schuller article on Sonny Rollins and the one by Mimi Clar ... I was especially grateful for the review of Thelonious Monk recordings, since I am planning to buy one and do not have any guide ... It is good that you cover the whole area of jazz; please keep doing that, though I am interested principally in modern jazz.

The blues lyrics without any further commentary! And for the ones looking for satire, as promised, there is your *Jazz in*

*Print*. You are the mouthpiece of many of my thoughts about the scene. You had me giggling like a teenager. Apart from that, I am grateful for the many hints about worth-reading jazz publications and the addresses.

I got the impression that all of you who are editing the *Review* do like jazz, its musicians and its followers. Is that right? I got that impression because you answered my letter ... personally. Because you let me have the first issue of the *Review*. (I shall soon send for one year's subscription.) I hope you know what that means to me. If I over here can be of any help to you at any time, I could not be happier. ...

Filly von Behr  
Muenchen, Germany

... I feel, sir, that American jazz circles are in bad need of an informative magazine, and providing you keep your articles on a far-sighted plane, your magazine should enjoy success. For instance, *Down Beat* concentrates too much on articles which are topical at the time of publication, and few of these articles are useful for reference. In Australia, a person gets a great opportunity to "review" the English and American publications without bias, and quite frankly, the American falls a long way short of his English counterpart.

I feel this is not so much a lack of ability on the American part but a persistence in writing the "wrong" sort of article and also a lack of foresight in judging really important artists. This in the land where jazz was born is unforgivable.

Also, sirs, would it be possible to have an occasional article by C. E. Smith, one of the outstanding authorities on the early blues. ...

John W. Emmerson

Balwyn, Victoria, Australia

(Charles Edward Smith, one of the first writers contacted when the magazine was being planned, has promised to contribute as soon as he has the time.)

## THAT CERTAIN THING

Like we say at the fencing academy, "touche!" ... I do think the new issue is the best yet, even though the record reviews lack that certain thing that makes a reader rush out and buy the disc under consideration. But *J. R.* is, all in all, much to be admired. Incidentally, I enjoyed all the parodies because, in each instance, the writer thereof was able to strike—wittily and urbanely—at the subject's chief characteristic. But do permit me to caution you against calling attention to typos (e.g. "urbanly" for "urbanely") when your own book is in a glass house in this respect. ...

George Frazier, New York



## SONEROS AND THE MAMBO

I was delighted to read Roger Pryor Dodge's excellent article on "The Cuban Sexteto" in the December 1958 issue. It is high time that the jazz fraternity came to realize how closely their music is linked to that of the Caribbean. Creole jazz was part of the same tradition as Afro-Cuban music. The *habanera* beat in so many early blues, the "Yancey bass" in the boogie, and the "Spanish tinge" in Ferdinand Morton's music are part of the same tradition. The so-called Afro-Cuban elements in early bop, far from being a short-lived fad, therefore were an instinctive return to the Creole roots of jazz.

I have spent much of the last thirteen years in search of the African, Mid-Eastern and Mediterranean roots of Creole music (much of it turns out to be Arabic on really close inspection), and if Mr. Dodge will forgive me, I'd like to enlarge on a few of the points he has made in his article.

He speaks of "the transition from the opening *son* to the *montuno*." This is a mis-use of Cuban terminology, for the *son* is the name for both parts; the first part is the *largo*. Admittedly, the term *son* has become almost as confused in Cuba as in the outside world. Hernando de la Parra, writing of the years between 1568 and 1592, mentions a *horra* free Negro woman named Ma Teodora who sang *sones* to a *bandola* accompaniment in Baracoa, the town where the *son oriental* (not the "oriental song" but the *son* of the Province of Oriente) originated many years later.

This, the stylized dance form which invaded Havana in 1916, had a definite form. Based on the *cinquillo*, the rhythmic module on which so much Afro-Cuban music is built, the *son oriental* had a simple rondo form, an introduction alternating with a couplet. Using rural instruments of African derivation, it represented the first inroad of Cuba's eastern folk music into the Spanish society of Havana and Matanzas.

The *maracas* marked the beat in straight eighths and sixteenths, the *claves* marked a cross-rhythm of a slow three and a fast six in alternate measures, the *bombo* marked the downbeat in one measure and the upbeat in the next, and the bass played an ostinato pattern up to the vocal entrance, which was marked off by a break.

The scale of the *son oriental*, like that of the blues, was characterized by a variation of the diatonic major in which some intervals were mobile. Thus the "*son* scale," as some Cuban musicologists have called it, was often confused by foreigners with one of the old church modes, especially the Mixo-Lydian or the Phrygian. The famous *son* passage in Alejandro García Caturla's "Obertura Cubana," for instance, has often been described as being in the Phrygian mode, since the second degree C natural (with the melody on a pedal B-F tonic and dominant of B) appears at a distance of a semi-tone from the tonic, while the D seventh is at a whole tone distance. Actually, however, this is a typical progression in the *son* scale.

The rhythm of the *son*, with its antipated bass, its *cinquillos* and its insistent process of *atravesarse* (clash between rhythm and melody), is unmistakably African. But the rhythms by themselves means nothing: it is the systematic tension created between the lilting Spanish melody of the *largo* and the ferocious African rhythm of the *montuno* which creates the flavour of the idiom. The melody is deliberately romantic—but once stated, it is

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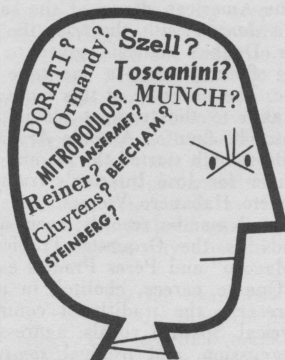
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meant to be debunked, and the singers do it by a form of rhythmic dissection, paired with an ironic dissection of the lyrics—a kind of monstrous scat riffing that would give grey hair to any American songwriter. At the same time, the percussionists attack the natural accents of the melody by displacing them systematically, trying to throw the singer by robbing him of all sense of orientation. This game (of which the improvised invention of new lyrics also plays a part) provides the Cuban *aficionado* with the charm, humour, tension and technical virtuosity which he expects of the great *soneros*.

Mr. Dodge mentions the Sexteto Habanero, the Sexteto Nacional, the Septeto Matamoros, the Estudiantina Oriental and the Sonora Matancera among the great *soneros* of the 'twenties. He should have added the Septeto Anacaona (which features that rare thing, a female singer of *sones*) and he might well have deleted the Sonora Matancera which is essentially an instrumental group, using arrangements—not an improvising group of singers with a *montuno* trumpet.

I think that Mr. Dodge may also be mistaken if he says that "while modern jazz still retains the method of improvisation of early jazz, the Cuban *mambo* in its synthetic development grows from no such indigenous roots." The *mambo típico* is the direct inheritor of the *son* tradition. It is much closer to the music of the Sextetos than to those accelerated *sones* of the 'thirties by bands like Azpiazu's, Lecuona's and Orefiche's.

Structurally, the Cuban *mambo* (as opposed to the American dance of the same name) is a *danzon* with the *trio*, the D-part in Mr. Dodge's analysis, given to an improvising flute playing a *montuno* in double time. The phrasing of this *montuno* is closely akin to the trumpet playing in the sextetos. The flute on Antonio Arcaño's 1940 records (which started the *mambo*) is a dead ringer for José Interian's trumpet on the Sexteto Habanero Victors.

All the good *mambo* records, even such jazz hybrids as the Orquesta Tropical's "Mambo Macoco" and Perez Prado's early Victors ("Que te parece, cholito" in particular) preserve the traditional contrast between lyrical Spanish vocals, aggressive African percussion, and ironical *son*-type trumpets. Only in the later Prado records (and of course in all the American *mambo* bands that stem from Prado) has the improvising *montuno* tradition been replaced by scored swing-type saxes or arranged Kenton-type brass.

Side by side with the loss of the *montuno* tradition went the loss of vocals. A *mambo* without a vocal is not a *mambo*: it's swing music in *mambo* time. All Cuban music is vocal music—and the vocalists invariably operate on a call-and-response basis. Solo vocals are extremely rare in Cuban folk-music: there always is a second singer or a group who answers the first. Instruments, apart from percussion, are permitted only to the extent that they support the vocals or translate them into a kindred instrumental idiom. All instrumental music in Cuban folklore preserves the structure of the vocal tradition from which it stems. When it deserts the vocal tradition, it is no longer Cuban.

Mr. Dodge therefore is right when he says that the *mambo* "in its synthetic development" lost its folk roots: but these synthetic developments took place mainly in the United States. In Cuba the *mambo* survives as a folk idiom—the direct successor of the *son*.

Ernest Borneman

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THE JAZZ REVIEW



## THROWBACK

The critical brickbats hurled at Elvis Presley's uninhibited performance come out of the same arsenal of opprobrium as those used against the jazz players back in the twenties. The spirit of brashness that so scandalized the decorum of the classical music reviewers was equally beyond the grasp of the more popular writers. The prevalent conception of popular music as something light, catchy or sentimental, could not be stretched to include the ill-mannered intruder from the bayous and the barrel-houses. And now that jazz has lost its obstreperousness and settled down to a respectable middle-age of bland crooning, old time dixieland and cool avant-garde extensions, the critical pundits are busy sharpening their long-unused invectives and whooping it up against this new disturber of the peace, young Mr. Presley.

Personally, though I find Presley artistically disturbing, at least he has injected into entertainment something long lacking—the roistering qualities of the rogue with provocative hints that he himself may not be exactly a cozy family man. Without going into the private lives of Mae West, W. C. Fields, Joe Frisco, or Eva Tanguay, we caught a leer or a gleam in their eyes that seemed more than histrionic, and were cheered to feel that the “dark gods” were not dead after all. Opposed to these inspired performers, we have our crooners who in attaining a style of respectable nonchalance succeeded in undermining virility.

Young people are by nature exuberant, and although they have in turn idolized the Rudy Vallees, Bing Crosbys and Perry Comos, they have never lost their response to the dance as pure rhythm. First there was their “scandalous” exhibitionism in the charleston, then their jitterbugging antics to their version of the lindy hop, and now their enthusiasm for rock ‘n roll with Presley as Pied Piper. Whatever may be said of his influence on present-day teenagers, I personally see a far more healthy release even in overdoing a dance craze or in idolizing the young man who is its symbol than in passive submission to long heart-rending seances in the darkened enclosures of movie theatres.

All this talk about bumps and grinds would lead one to imagine that Presley had invented them; jazz dancers have al-

ways used bumps. Even the well-respected Agnes De Mille TV show presented them for family viewing. Though Presley may have made them livelier, it is a little late, it seems to me, to be objecting to bumps *per se*.

The question of what is good for teenagers is another matter and not my concern. What I am concerned with is the attitude of the critics whose business it is to evaluate our popular entertainment. I would like them to show a little more appreciation of sheer theatrical vitality and less acquiescence to what is maudlin and insipid. In reading their reviews I always got the impression that they were lauding well-known performers whether or not they had really enjoyed the fare offered; it was too much to believe that they actually liked them. Certainly, I argued, it would be rash to publicly condemn a “personality” whose reputation represented a large investment in expensive ballyhoo. But their denunciation of the most popular (for teenagers at least) performer today proved me wrong. They really did like the performers they so lavishly praised.

In the past we have had some lively theatre. There were periods when the great mimes attained such renown that their characterizations have come down to us as representative types and are a part of our folklore. The creations of the *commedia dell'arte* persist even today in all the respected ballet companies. Though the prototypes of our modern pierrots, harlequins and the like were far from being the innocuous creatures we know now, their very strength as characters and their very persistence in our imagination derives from their origin as irreverent, bawdy, wayward beings akin to something deep within ourselves. Harlequin was far from the trim little creature we see today in the Biedermier version Nijinsky made so famous; his original was no moral example for 17th century teen-agers to follow. No more was Harlequin's friend, Brighella, a cutthroat if ever there was one. Alladyce Nicoll says of him, “. . . his lips themselves are sensual, his eyes are sated, evil, avaricious.” Such a character would need special dispensation to go about the city after his act on the stage.

But these are the characters that made art on the open-air platform and later on the stage, and to which mankind has always responded. Are we to believe that they were created merely through histrionic

insight? Or rather might it not be possible that the actor and his role were one and the same being? These characterizations are immortal because they were drawn from the deep level of Dionysiac lawlessness and from the gamut of life wherever life had a sting. In the accepted singing and performing types today they have no counterpart. Of course the *commedia dell'arte* had its innocuous characters too. In its *innamorati* we get a foretaste of our modern love-duets, but nothing has come down to us from them in either character or name.

Elvis Presley brings to us one of those fascinating characters of the old tradition, which by its very impropriety might go far to shock us out of our complacency in accepting the puerile fare that is being handed out to us from the stage and screen and in our living rooms. In spite of his blues, gospel and hillbilly background, Presley has succumbed to the practice of the balladeers—to make sentimental trash of all popular music. But when he sings the songs that make him do a lot of “wiggling and quivering” as he calls it, and such songs as *Heart-Break Hotel*, I would say that he shows a singing talent far above the needs of the total character he projects. What he has, however, is a delivery that tinges everything it touches with enough popular spirit to engage him to millions. Although Presley's is certainly a singing role, he must be taken for his act, not his singing *per se*. This act includes some dance movements of great strength, as those in his movie *Loving You* showed. His short dance sequence in this picture shows his unusual ability in this direction and that, without his having all the necessary elements that combine to make a great dancing talent, he does have the stance of a very great performer. Behind most art expressions there lurks one or more influences. Bo Diddley states that he was Presley's model; the Presley act before and after Bo Diddley no doubt was different.

If his talent is small in comparison with a Charlie Chaplin, a Fanny Brice or a Bert Lahr, he is still in their tradition. He has no kinship with the tuxedoed M.C. or the business-suited emcee-crooner-gagman who have superseded them. His approach is refreshingly alien to any tailor-made compliance to society. He is the present-day gadfly of the entertainment world.

Roger Pryor Dodge

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Other articles include **A Conversation with James P. Johnson** by Tom Davin, **Play the Blues** by Art Hodes. Record Reviews include **Art Farmer** and **Benny Golson** by Bill Crow, **Earl Hines** and **Cozy Cole** by Guy Waterman, **Shorty Rogers** by Mimi Clar, **Art Tatum** by Mait Edey, **Brownie McGhee** and **Sonny Terry** by Irwin Hersey.

THELONIUS MONK AT TOWN HALL by Gunther Schuller



Reviews of **Langston Hughes'** *Tambourines to Glory* by Le Roi Jones and Mimi Clar. **The Blues, Reconsiderations, and Jazz in Print.**



# The Jazz Review

## new Contributors:

**Danny Barker** is a New Orleans guitarist who has played with many bands. He now lives in New York, and is working on a book about New Orleans, as well as a play.

**Samuel B. Charters** is the author of *Jazz: New Orleans 1885-1957*. He has produced several documentary recordings for Folkways, and is now writing a book on the blues.

**Howard Hart's** poetry has been published in *Saturday Review* and *Made-moiselle*. His play, *A Piece of Noon*, is to be produced in London this year. **Yannick Bruynoghe** took down Big Bill Broonzy's story for the book *Big Bill's Blues* (Grove Press). He works in Belgian television, and is a leading authority on the blues.

**John Cohen** is a free-lance photographer whose work has appeared in *Seventeen*, *Esquire*, and *Life*.

**Quincy Jones**, trumpeter and arranger, recently returned from a long stay in Paris. He is in the process of organizing his own big band.

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# Sonny Rollins' FREEDOM SUITE

by Dick Hadlock

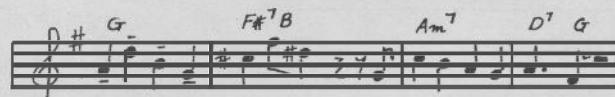


Sonny Rollins has at last invested a single extended composition with the power and plenty of his writing, improvising, and organizing skills. Whether or not *Freedom Suite* (Riverside RLP1Z-258) is, as annotator Orrin Keepnews claims, "about freedom as Sonny is equipped to perceive it," it is an engrossing and, I believe, successful effort to fit relatively uninhibited improvisation into a meaningful compositional structure.

*Freedom Suite* consists of four contrasting sections. Part I is built on an eight-bar theme, or more precisely a four-bar statement leading into four bars of pedal point (a sustained bass note, over which a variety of chords is introduced). Part II, in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, is constructed as a simple eight-bar phrase followed by two identical eight-bar replies (A-B-B). Two such twenty-four measure waltz melodies, separated by a "vamp" and terminated by an ad lib cadenza, constitute the entire movement. Part III is an engaging miniature "ballad" on which Rollins blows eight choruses (64 bars). Part IV begins with a recapitulation of Part II, then swings abruptly to its own sixteen-bar theme that shows a kinship to the original theme in Part I. Some extraordinarily free improvisation within the body of Part IV concludes the suite on a note of creative autonomy.

The galloping first movement provides Rollins with thirty eight-bar choruses to explore and develop. Although the four-bar theme statement is a simple one, it is relatively rich harmonically, inviting extensions and alterations. The second four bars (built on Pettiford's pedal point G) set up a different challenge, that of creating melodic lines and appropriate new harmony over a rigid bass line.

The opening theme statement that launches Rollins on a succession of harmonic and melodic variations is:



A kind of secondary theme is introduced in Rollins' sixth chorus, although its structure is essentially that of the initial theme statement. It materializes because Rollins anticipates each chord change by a whole measure or more; in effect, he shifts the tune one bar out of line, maintaining the dislocations through most of the movement. The result is restless but remarkably effective music that seems to struggle against its imposed structural confinement.

A bass solo halts the momentum, after which the saxophone returns to the rigid order of the first chorus.

Between his fourth and twentieth choruses, Rollins devises twelve harmonically different ways to handle a simple four-bar theme—an impressive example of sustained musical resourcefulness.



Rollins' linear direction in Part I is less adventuresome than his harmonic and rhythmic expeditions; he appears more concerned with chunky variations—mostly a procession of two-bar eruptions—on the simple theme than with long-range melodic development. In these 240 measures of up-tempo blowing, Rollins moves through the shallow waters that threaten many contemporary jazzmen, particularly when improvising at a swift pace: the over-abundant use of evenly spaced eighth and sixteenth notes, with few sustained tones; too little “shading” or vocal inflection; tasteless paraphrasing of other tunes in lieu of original lines; the tendency to avoid melodic intervals larger than a perfect fourth, sacrificing thereby a valuable instrument of surprise and stimulation; stereotyped and/or infrequent application of syncopation; the failure to utilize extended playing time for “building” a logical solo; the ignoring of the creative possibilities of key changes and imaginative modulations.

Part I suffers from all these weaknesses, although there are indications that Rollins is aware of such problems too. The opening three-bar phrase of his sixteenth chorus in Part I, for example, provides an effective antidote to the unsyncopated flow of eighth notes that precedes and follows it: *Bm*<sup>7</sup>



The merits of the first movement are impaired (as are those of the fourth movement, to a lesser extent) by Rollins' mysterious and irritating predilection for anachronistic “corny” phrasing and chugging 2/4 rhythms, but a substantial degree of interest remains as a result of his adroit references to the original theme, unpredictable placement of rests, and harmonic inventiveness.

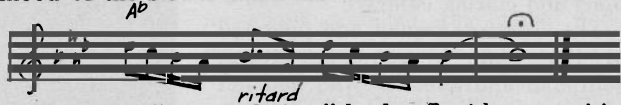
Because Rollins is, musically, an explosive compound of defiant individualism and often perplexing impulsiveness, his supporting players must be extraordinarily able musically and psychologically if they are to survive. Happily, Max Roach, who understands this Ghengis Khan of the tenor saxophone perhaps better than anyone, and Pettiford, certainly a more than able bassist, react promptly and tastefully to the barely discernible clues that tell where Rollins is going as he plays. The importance of Roach to this extended work cannot be overestimated; he relieves the saxophone of a number of rhythmic responsibilities and cements fragmentary statements into artistic entities.

Following a relatively colorless waltz interlude (Part II), Rollins creates a set of melodic inventions in Part III that, for this listener, constitute his best recorded work to date. Here is a most musical Sonny Rollins—thoughtful, expressive, and elegantly introspective. His tone, no longer an inflammatory and precariously tuned shout, acquires warmth and real virility, enhancing sinuous lines fashioned on the eight-bar theme. The theme itself bears some resemblance to the opening strain of Rodgers and Hart's *Nobody's Heart Belongs to Me*, and, while attractive, is not an extraordinary piece of writing. What distinguishes this movement is Rollins' commendable restraint, coupled with imaginative logic, as he affirms and reaffirms what I take to be an expression of melancholy that approaches but never actually reaches despair. The lack of humor that sometimes detracts from Rollins' playing becomes appropriate and acceptable here.

Part III is a mature jazz performance. Rollins *might* have developed an elaborate harmonic superstructure or given in to *bravura* gyrations, for both come easily to him. Because he resists such temptations, the emotional thread remains unbroken and is even strengthened with each successive chorus.

Demonstrating that he is not limited (as many contemporary jazzmen appear to be) to mere rapid execution as a tool of expression, Rollins scoops, bends, sustains, delays, suggests, repeats, and slurs notes to fit his interpretive needs. His regular but varying use of triplet figures in each of eight choruses is further evidence of Rollins' ability to maintain melodic proportion and balance throughout multiple refrains.

The last two bars of Part III are pointed examples of Rollins' skillful handling of metaphor and paraphrase. In this instance, he restates the third and fourth measures of the opening theme in Part I, fitting the notes to the mood of the slower third movement:



Part IV, a “recapitulation,” leads off with a repetition of Part II (waltz), including the closing cadenza. The remainder of the movement, in 4/4 time, is a series of fast variations on a somewhat trite sixteen-bar theme. Somewhere in the third chorus of this movement Rollins becomes “liberated” (the allegorical value of this is too obvious to need comment) from the preceding harmonic and rhythmic structure, to begin a lengthy exploration of the possibilities of semi-free improvisation. While the harmonic sequence (B6 to D7 to Gm to F7 to B6) is generally followed, there are virtually no bar lines or predetermined phrase lengths to suggest *where* chord changes occur. The three musicians move together intuitively to produce a memorable example of ensemble improvisation. This musical emancipation was indirectly suggested in Part I by the use of pedal point bass, which gave Rollins a taste of harmonic freedom.

Again, the experiment could have ended in chaos without the supportive musicianship of Pettiford and Roach.

The value of *Freedom Suite* is threefold: it allows Rollins, in the first and third movements to reveal his talents as a harmonic and lyrical improviser of the first magnitude; it offers a solution to the problem of jazz composition, which has usually meant “jazzy” effects written around soloists; it establishes, in the fourth movement, a new level of freedom in improvised ensemble playing.

Though Rollins has put on paper four separate and related themes, each with its own harmonic and melodic characteristics (portions of Part IV stem from Rollins' earlier composition *Valse Hot*), the significance of the suite is that it is designed for free blowing. The elements of the spare structural outline are less inhibiting to the soloist than those of, say, an Ellington work, in which the constricting hand of the pianist/arranger, however benevolent, still circumscribes the jazzman's role.

Recent efforts to include collective improvisation in extended compositions (Jimmy Giuffrè, Teddy Charles, and Charlie Mingus are some who have given the matter attention) have too often resulted in performances that can be judged only as formal music—and, as such, must be measured by those standards. Whatever the listener may conclude as to the jazz value of this performance, *Freedom Suite* is a successful jazz composition because it *requires* and *generates* spontaneous collective and individual improvisation.



# JELLY ROLL MORTON IN

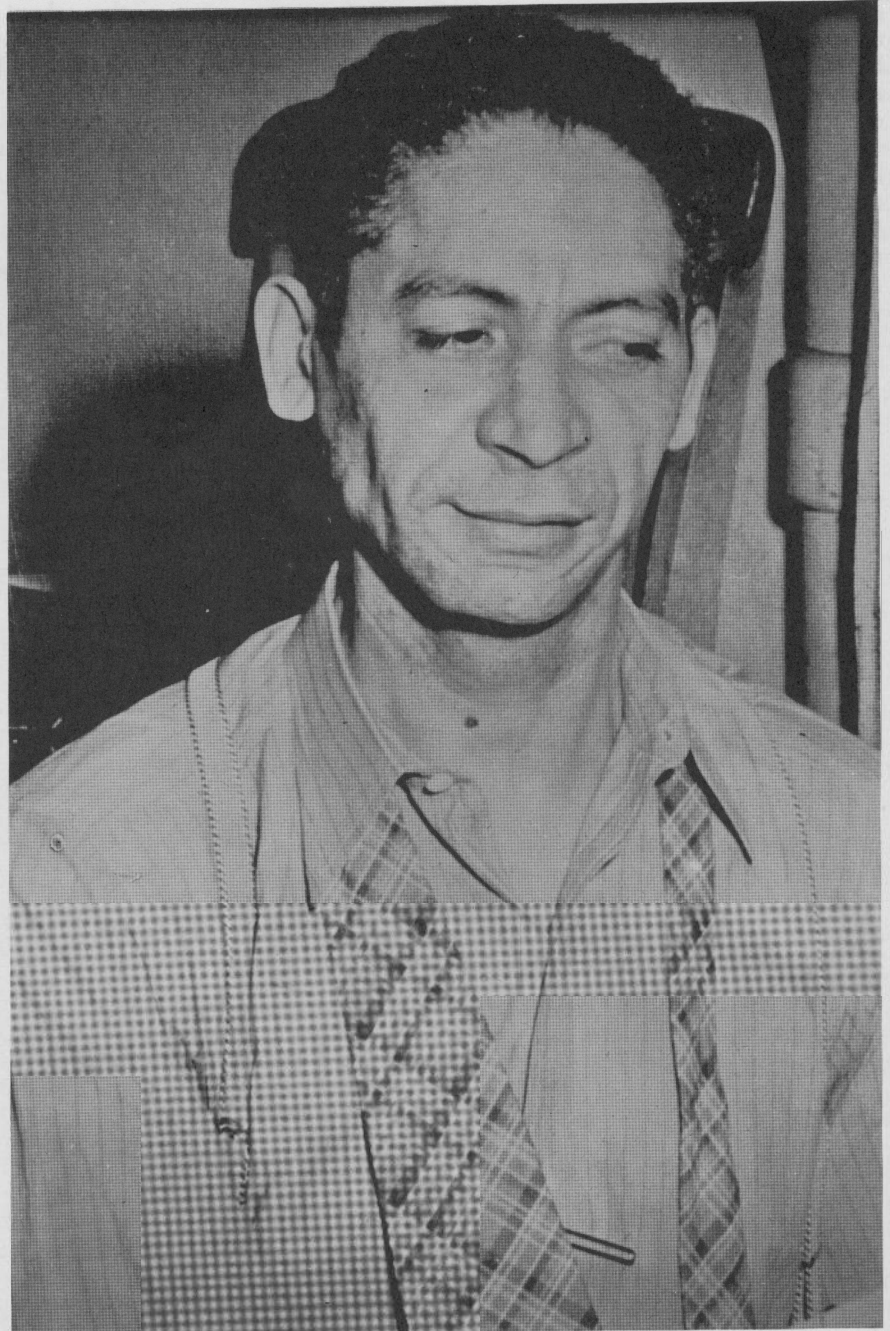
When I arrived in New York City, in 1930, my uncle Paul Barbarin and Henry "Red" Allen, my old friend, took me to the Rhythm Club which was known for its famous jam sessions and cutting contests.

The club was owned and operated by Bert Hall, a trombone player, politician and gambler who had left Chicago for New York. Bert introduced many reforms in Local 802 that were for the protection of its Negro members who, lots of times after working in clubs owned by racketeers, were doubtful of getting paid until the money was in their hands. (Before the coming of Bert there was The Bandbox, another club owned by a trumpet player named Major.)

The afternoon I walked into the Rhythm Club, the corner and street was crowded with musicians with their instruments and horns. I was introduced and shook hands with a lot of fellows on the outside. Then we entered the inside which was crowded. What I saw and heard, I will never forget. A wild cutting contest was in progress and sitting and standing around the piano were twenty or thirty musicians, all with their instruments out waiting for a signal to play choruses of Gershwin's *Liza*.

It was a Monday afternoon and the musicians gathered at the club to get their pay for weekend jobs and to gossip and chew the fat. But this Monday the news had spread that the famous McKinney's Cotton Pickers, from the Greystone Ballroom in Detroit were in town to record for Victor and start an eastern tour. At that time, the Cotton Pickers, Fletcher Henderson, and the Casa Loma orchestra were considered the best bands in the land.

This day, at the Rhythm Club, most of the famous leaders, stars and sidemen were there; the big names I'd heard and read about: Benny Carter, Don Redman, Horace Henderson, Fess Williams, Claude Hopkins, Sonny Greer, John Kirby, Johnny Hodges, Freddie Jenkins, Bobby Stark, Chick Webb, Big Green and Charlie Johnson.



Around the piano sat three banjo players: Bernard Addison, Ikie Robinson, and Teddy Bunn with his guitar.

Paul tells me, "See those three fellows, they are the best banjo play-

ers in New York City and that guy standing behind them is Seminole — you watch him." Which I did.

After each of the banjo players played dozens of choruses, the crowd yelled, "Seminole! Cut them cats!",

# NEW YORK by Danny Barker

and after much applause and persuasion Seminole, who was left-handed, reached for a banjo that was tuned to be played right-handed, and to my amazement he started wailing on the banjo playing it upside down; that is, playing everything backwards. I later learned that, being left-handed, Seminole did not bother to change the strings; he just taught himself.

After his solos the banjos were quiet — they just played rhythm. Then in rushed a comical little fat young fellow carrying some drums which he hurriedly set up. Paul said, "That's Randolph, he plays with the Tramp Band — a vaudeville act." Randolph played eccentric and trick novelty drums, he was very clever with all sorts of rhythm and clever beats. Then the crowd yelled for Chick Webb, who washed Randolph away.

Paul says, "Watch this." Then it was a trumpet battle — Bobby Stark, Rex Stewart and Cuba Bennett. Cuba Bennett was the most highly respected trumpet player at that time in New York City. He is a cousin of Benny Carter, and the great band leader boasted with authority that he could play more beautiful and complex solos than anyone in the whole world. When he played, everybody in the street and on the sidewalks rushed in. He was terrific. I'll never forget that, as I had never heard a trumpet like that. He was everything they claimed he was. While I was listening someone said, "That cat is only pressing on the second and third valve." I never saw much of him after that, as he went to Camden, New Jersey to live. But anytime trumpet players were discussed, Cuba Bennett was spoken of with reverence. I must have heard this about a hundred times by different musicians who had passed through Camden, New Jersey on tours:

"We passed through Camden, so we stopped at that gin joint where Cuba hangs out at. He still plays great. He's got a family and you couldn't pull him out of Camden for a million dollars."

At this session, John Kirby, who had just bought a new bass, was playing and like an amateur was searching for the positions on the fingerboard of the bass. I asked Paul who was that cat trying to play that bass.

Paul said, "That's John Kirby. He's the best tuba player in New York City. He works with Fletcher Henderson." I was amazed at his playing because I had heard the greatest bass players: Chester Zardis, Al Morgan, Albert Glenny, Jimmy Johnson, Ransom Knolling, Simon Marrero and dozens of fine bass players in New Orleans.

The crowd called for Pops Foster. Kirby handed him the bass and then stood by with all the other bass tuba players and watched Pops with pop-eyed interest as he slapped a dozen choruses on *Liza*.

In 1930 Pops Foster and Wellman Braud were the only two string bass players in New York City, other than a few Cuban and Puerto Rican bass players. The most renowned was Tizol, who is an uncle of Juan Tizol of Duke Ellington fame who wrote *Caravan*. The band leaders in New York City were finally convinced that the bass fiddle belonged and sounded better in the band than the tuba. So there was a mad change-over to the bass fiddle, and Pops Foster had hundreds of students and imitators.

I am watching the jam session with interest when Paul says, "Come over here and meet Jelly Roll and King Oliver."

In the meantime, here's that Seminole seating himself at the piano and playing "Liza" like as if he had written it, as the crowd screams their praise.

In the next few years I learned that Seminole was a wizard at playing the banjo, piano and xylophone. But, like Cuba Bennett, he went to Atlantic City, N. J. and became a legend of the past.

Paul leads me through the crowd to where King and Jelly are standing. I had noticed Fletcher Henderson was playing pool and seemed unconcerned about who was playing in the jam

session, or who was there. And whenever I saw him at the Club he was always playing pool seriously, never saying anything to anyone, just watching his opponent's shots and solemnly keeping score. All the other musicians watched the game and whispered comments because he was the world's greatest band leader.

Paul tells King and Jelly, "Here's my nephew, he just came from New Orleans."

King Oliver says, "How you doing, Gizzard Mouf?" I laughed, and Jelly says, "How you Home Town?"

I said, "Fine," and from then on he always called me "Home Town."

Jelly, who was a fine pool and billiard player, had been watching and commenting to Oliver on Fletcher's pool shots. King could play a fair game also.

Jelly says (and he doesn't whisper), "That Fletcher plays pool just like he plays piano — assbackwards. Just like a crawfish," and Oliver laughs and laughs until he starts coughing.

The session goes on and on, and I notice that nothing, the ovations, comments, solos, or anybody or anything, moves Henderson in the least.

That evening I went with King Oliver to his rehearsal. He did not play much as he was having trouble with his teeth.

Jelly Roll spent most of the afternoon and evenings at the Rhythm Club and everytime I saw him he was lecturing to the musicians about organizing. Most of the name and star musicians paid him no attention because he was always preaching, in loud terms, that none of the famous New York bands had a beat. He would continuously warn me: "Home Town, don't be simple and ignorant like these fools in the big country towns." I would always listen seriously because most of the things he said made plenty of sense to me.

Jelly was constantly preaching that if he could get a band to rehearse his music and listen to him he could keep a band working. He would get one-nighters out of town and would have to beg musicians to work with him.



Most of the time the musicians would arrive at the last moment, or send a substitute in their place. I learned later that they were angry with him because he was always boasting about how great New Orleans musicians were. At that time most working musicians were arrangement-conscious following the pattern of Henderson, Redman, Carter and Chick Webb. Jelly's music was considered corny and dated. I played quite a few of these one-nighters with Jelly and on one of these dates I learned that Jelly could back up most of the things he boasted of.

The band met at the Rhythm Club and left from there in Jelly Roll's two Lincoln cars about three in the afternoon to play in Hightstown, New Jersey, at a playground that booked all the famous bands at that time.

On the way we came upon a scene of much excitement. A farmer in a jalopy had driven off a country road right in the path of a speeding trailer truck. The big truck pushed the jalopy about a hundred feet, right into a diner. The diner was full of people who were having dinner. The impact turned the diner over and the hot coffee percolator scalded the waitresses and customers. Nobody was badly hurt but they were shocked and scared and screaming and yelling.

We pulled up and rushed out to help the victims who were frantic. Jelly yelled loudly and calmed the folks down. He took complete charge of the situation. Jelly crawled into the overturned diner and called the state police and hospitals. They sent help in a very short time. Then he consoled the farmer, who was jammed in his jalopy and couldn't be pulled out. His jalopy was crushed like an accordion against the diner by the big trailer. The farmer was so scared he couldn't talk and when the emergency wrecker finally pulled his jalopy free and opened the door and lifted him out, I noticed that he was barefooted. I remarked to Jelly that the farmer was barefooted. Jelly told me that happens in a wreck. The concussion and force cause a person's nerves to constrict and their shoes jump off.

Jelly talked to all the officials at the scene and they thanked him for his calls and calmness in an emergency. We got back in the cars and drove off.

As we rode, Jelly spoke on and on of how white folks are scared to die. I rode in the car with Jelly and I can't recall who it was, but it was either Tommy Benford or Ward Pinkett who kept on disagreeing with everything Jelly said, which was the

usual procedure whenever he had an audience around the Rhythm Club.

We passed some men who were hunting in a field. They were shooting at some game that were flying overhead.

Jelly said, "Them bums can shoot. When I was with Wild West shows I could shoot with the best marksmen and sharpshooters in the world."

Either Benford or Pinkett said, "Why don't you stop all that bull-shit?" and that argument went on and on.

When we arrived at Hightstown and drove into the entrance of the playground and got out of the cars, I noticed a shooting gallery. So I said to Jelly, "Say Jelly, there's a shooting gallery."

Jelly's eyes lit up and he hollered, "Come here all you cockroaches! I'm going to give you a shooting exhibition!"

We all gathered around the shooting gallery and Jelly told the owner, "Rube, load up all of your guns!"; and the man did.

Jelly then shot all the targets down and did not miss any. The man set them up again and Jelly repeated his performance again.

Then he said, "Now cockroaches, can I shoot?" Everybody applauded. Jelly gave me the prizes, as the man shook his hand. Then he and Jelly talked about great marksmen of the past as his hecklers looked on with respect.

As he and I walked to the dancehall, I asked Jelly how did he know the man's name was Rube.

Jelly said, "Home Town, on circuses, carnivals, medicine shows, all concession owners are called 'Rube' and when anybody connected with the show gets in trouble with someone or people from the town, he hollers, 'Rube!' and the show people rush to his defense and rescue. Show folks stick together."

From then on I had a sympathetic respect for Jelly. I also noticed that his hecklers did not dispute him in a vicious way like the cats on the corners in New Orleans did.

As I look back on past scenes, situations, and the whys and reasons for many great musicians falling by the wayside, to be forgotten by the public, that first Rhythm Club visit comes to my mind. The musicians played spontaneous, creative solos under critical eyes in competition with the world's finest jazz musicians, and many an unknown joined these sessions and earned an international reputation.

Then I think of Fletcher Hender-

son's indifference to the activity there. He was the acknowledged King; his band was the greatest in the world. He knew it because he was being copied by everybody. His sidemen were the best and he paid the highest salaries. Every colored musician knew and read about his famous sidemen: Hawkins, Rex, Walter Johnson, Buster Bailey, Russell Smith, John Kirby, Jimmy Harrison, and those before these — Don Redman, Benny Carter, Big Green, Louis Armstrong, Joe Smith, Tommy Ladnier. Fletcher had hired and fired the greatest jazz names in America. . . . Then Jelly and Oliver watching his pool game.

It was a new era. They had become famous with bands which were smaller and which gave the sidemen freedom to express themselves. But the sound that Fletcher presented to the jazz scene was streamlined, big, powerful, and arranged especially to bring out the best in the instrumentalists of his band. The songs, scores and arrangements were copied and imitated by all the big jazz bands (exceptions were Guy Lombardo and Ted Lewis). And as time marched on Jelly and Oliver stood on the sidelines with their plans and music, as the fickle public hurriedly paraded by.

Ten years later, Fletcher Henderson, still cool and indifferent, stood on the sidelines as *his* fickle public hurriedly passed him by, rushing to hear Jimmie Lunceford and his youthful bunch of excellent soloists, novel arrangements, continuous music (intermission once a night). Lunceford gave his audience their full of beautiful music. His band played; his sidemen did not wander off as was the problem of leaders in the past. He popped the whip. In the past the leaders had around them famous soloists and sidemen and gave them publicity and billing on marquees and posters. But Lunceford's band was billed as the "Lunceford Special." No name but his.

Then came the great musical revolution. The new generation rebelled against the old system of being buried in a section, and blowing tonal and rhythm patterns, while the so-called stars, pets and musicians—the friends of bookers, agents, jive critics and magazine writers got all the credit. Youth wanted to express themselves and they did—right back to the old system in New Orleans.

"You play your part and I play mine, so we'll both express ourselves. You don't tell me what you want and I don't tell you. We will all variate on the theme."

# THE BLUES *and their lesson for modern poetry.*

## SHORT HAIRED WOMAN

I don't want no woman  
If her hair ain't no longer than mine.  
I don't want no woman  
If her hair ain't no longer than mine.  
Yes you know she ain't no good for nothing but trouble  
That keeps you buying rats all the time

Yes you know I carried my wife to the hairdresser  
And this is what the hairdresser said  
She said Sam I can't treat the woman's hair  
God knows I can't treat her head  
I told her no if her hair ain't no longer than mine  
Yes you know she ain't no good for nothing but trouble  
That keeps you buying rats all the time

Yes, you know I woke up this morning, people  
Poor Sam, he woke about the break of day  
I even found a rat on the pillow where she used to lay

No I don't want no woman  
Boy, if her hair ain't no longer than mine  
Yes you know she ain't no good for nothing but trouble  
That keeps you buying rats all the time.

(By Sam Lightnin' Hopkins. Score SLP 4022.  
Transcribed by Yannick Bruynoghe.)

## YACKETY YACK

FIRST VOICE: Take out the papers and the trash  
Or you don't get no spending cash.  
If you don't scrub the kitchen floor  
You ain't gonna rock and roll no more.

SECOND VOICE: Yackety Yack.

FIRST VOICE: Don't talk back!

FIRST VOICE: Just finish cleaning up your room.  
Let's see that dust fly with that broom.  
Get all that garbage out of sight  
Or you don't go out Friday night.

SECOND VOICE: Yackety Yack.

FIRST VOICE: Don't talk back!

FIRST VOICE: You just put on your coat and hat  
And walk yourself to the laundromat,  
And, when you finish doin' that,  
Bring in the dog and put out the cat.

SECOND VOICE: Yackety Yack.

FIRST VOICE: Don't talk back!

FIRST VOICE: Don't you give me no dirty looks.  
Your father's hip, he knows what cooks.  
Just tell your hoodlum friends outside  
You ain't got time to take a ride.

SECOND VOICE: Yackety Yack.

FIRST VOICE: Don't talk back!

(By Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. Copyright by Tiger Music.  
Performed by The Coasters on Atco 33-103. Transcribed by M. W.)  
(Contributions to this department are invited)

The original Negro songs contained seeds for growth in two lines—that of the music and that of the words. While musically there has been the maturing we know as jazz today, poetically there has been very little.

These songs presented a simplification of syntax and vocabulary which washed off English those dark encrustations resulting from a progressive Latinization of the language since the fourteenth century. With an active, cause-and-effect syntax and without all the Latinized polysyllables our language was more in its natural character and had true vigor of rhythm. For in language true rhythm awakens song, and then there is poetry.

In anthologies of the American poets you can see only hints of what might have happened. What did happen, it seems to me, is that good writers did not understand what the songs had to offer and stuck to their British literary models. The music developed and the suppleness of words did not, until we come to the present situation where the lyrics only indicate the basic impulse of a song and have little artistic integrity of their own.

Perhaps this accounts for something that is always startling: in the best contemporary jazz solo there seems to be a lacuna where the words should be. This is suggested and provisionally filled by the musician's use of speech rhythms. He is playing a mute poem in the free rhythms that language assumes. Consciously or unconsciously, he is taking on the burden of missing words.

Explanations generally end up by being what one personally sees. Billie Holiday says she grew out of Lester Young's saxophone playing. I can only explain it for myself by thinking that without his wordless poems built on the basic impulses in the songs, the lyrics would have frozen her.

The poem without words fits into modern poetry, since this poetry always tries to express the inexpressible. Mallarmé said the best poem is the untouched white page.

Where does the modern American poet stand then? He must use real words so that they sing and have meaning as they flow from his voice (for his is an aural art like music). I don't believe it is making an extravagant claim for jazz to say that deep within this music lies the hidden stream of the poet's language.

**by Howard Hart**



# KANSAS CITY BRASS

*Ed Lewis' story as told  
to Frank Driggs*



One of the neglected veteran jazzmen who is still working with his horn and has plenty to say is trumpeter Ed Lewis. Although not many know it, Ed was considered a first rate soloist during the twenties and early thirties until he started to assume the role of lead in the section. He was overshadowed in the great Count Basie band by the brilliance of a raft of trumpeters from Carl Smith, Buck Clayton, and Harry Edison, through Emmett Berry and Joe Newman. In the bustling atmosphere in Kansas City, Ed was the chief soloist with the great Bennie Moten band for six years and continued as a soloist and began performing lead trumpet duties with the Thamon Hayes Rockets in the early thirties. That he was still a good soloist in the Basie years is evidenced by his beautifully controlled muted solo on *Evil Blues* which opens and closes the record. Ed's career is more or less a picture of jazz in the Kansas City region during the years when a regional style was developed by George Lee and Bennie Moten and brought to a peak by Andy Kirk and Count Basie in the later thirties. Ed tells his story as follows.

I was born in a little town called Eagle City, Oklahoma on January 22,

1909. It was just a two-story town about ninety miles Southwest of Oklahoma City. My family moved to Kansas City, Missouri around 1912 and I entered kindergarten at Attucks School in Rosedale, Kansas, a suburb of Kansas City. After the fifth grade I transferred to Douglas school where I met my future wife, May Lue.

My career in music started soon after I came to Kansas City. My father, Oscar Lewis, was a trumpet player, a brass band man, and he played in Shelly Bradford's Brass Band. They played all the parades and funerals around Kansas City, Kansas then. He had studied music and was very well versed in the profession. One day he told me I was old enough to pick up a horn and start blowing. I never cared much for music, in fact had never given it a thought. In those days money was pretty scarce and he had an old horn, a German baritone, which someone had left with him and never came to pick up. He started to teach me the scales, but I thought it was silly and it didn't appeal to me at all. I was more interested in track, mechanical drawing, woodwork and things like that, but he was determined to make a musician out of me. Every evening when I came home he

used to demand that I play this horn sometimes I used to cry; I didn't like it. He drilled me and drilled me, I tell the truth, I never learned mu

My father taught me enough play with him in Shelly Bradford band. I didn't like it at all, because felt embarrassed to blow a horn the streets, but the kids thought it was something great. The teachers used let them go to the window to watch the band pass by. I never could make up my mind about music and throw my lack of interest my father pretty disgusted and gave up on me. He told me that I would need a profession one day.

I didn't bother about music more and put the old baritone horn away in the closet. By the time I was in my sophomore year at Sumner High I got married. This was in 1928 and our two children, James and Dolores, were born to us.

With the responsibility of a family I had to get a job, and work was scarce. I managed to find work as a highway construction man and truck driver's helper, but that work was hard. One day in the blazing sun while I was working on the highway my father's voice came to me just as if he were standing next to me,



**Paul Banks Orchestra, Kansas City, Kansas, 1926: Clifton Banks, as-cl; Ira Jones, banjo; Robert Simpson, tb; James Everett, dms; Paul Banks, pf-leader; Ed Lewis, tp; Jasper "Jap" Allen, tuba.**

son, some day you will need this profession. . . ." Then and there I realized just what he meant. When I got home that night and dusted off the old baritone and oiled up the valves and began to woodshed it. I began to remember what my father taught me and I started picking it up again.

There was a fellow around Kansas City named Jerry Westbrook, who usually worked by himself. He was a very entertaining guy who played piano and sang with a kazoo. He played a lot of club dates, and asked me to join him on a date that called for three pieces. I never will forget that job . . . I made \$5.00. I came home and told my wife, "Look, I made five dollars in three hours. I had to work all day long in the sun to make that much." This is it, I said to myself. The next day I went back to the highway job and collected my paycheck and never came back. From that day on, I never stopped blowing my horn.

Jerry Westbrook had organized a band under his own name with Herman Walder on trumpet, myself on baritone horn, Walter Knight on alto sax, and Danny . . . on drums. We did pretty good, not making much money,

but more than I made on the highway. I stayed with him until the summer of 1925. The early part of the summer we were on our way to Leavenworth, Kansas to play a date when we had an accident and Herman Walder got thrown through the windshield of our car. This ended his career as a trumpet player, and he was considered one of the best around then on trumpet. He switched to alto as soon as he got well, and he helped me to learn to play trumpet. I had set my heart on learning to play trombone and double on euphonium baritone, but Herman showed me so many things that I forgot about them. He became just as proficient on alto as he was on trumpet and was well known later on.

Jerry's band broke up that Fall, and Herman joined Laura Rucker, a wonderful piano player who sang the blues like Bessie Smith and the other greats of those days. I got a job with Paul Banks in Kansas City, Kansas. He had a ten-piece band and was very popular then. He had some good men with him like Ira Jones, the banjo man, and his brother Cliff Banks, who played New Orleans-style clarinet. Somehow I didn't fit in his band like I should have and left about two months later. Then I got a job in the

Yellow Front Cafe, which was run by Ellis Burton, who was later known as the "Chief" to all musicians in town. Three weeks later Herman Walder got me into Laura Rucker's band (we had to call her Miss Rucker). Pete Woods was on drums and we were playing at Elmer Beans on 18th at Paseo. We stayed there until that winter, when a T.O.B.A. show called Gibson's Chocolate Box Revue came through town. They needed some musicians and Gibson gave us a fine proposition and we thought it would be our chance to get in the big time. Herman, Pete, myself and another trumpet player named Elwood Flowers left with the show. We soon found out he was broke and the show got stranded in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. We got a couple of gigs in Cedar Rapids and somehow made it back to Kansas City. That was my first experience with the pangs of hunger and being away from home and we were glad to be able to get work with Miss Rucker again. This time she had a job at Meyer's Chicken Farm. December 31st my son, James, was born and the boss made an announcement over the p.a. system and everyone put an extra dollar in the kitty.

One day my mother said to me that



because my family was getting bigger I needed a better job. She told me, "... you know, son, Bennie Moten's my first cousin, and I'm going to see if he can find a spot in his band for you. . ." She saw him and told him if he couldn't use me, to at least listen to me.

I remember the day Bennie gave me the audition.

There were several other guys auditioning, and I'd rehearsed with little Jack Washington, an old school friend, who was working with Jesse Stone then. We were using Fletcher Henderson's *Stampede*, which was just getting popular then. I wasn't much on reading music, but most of the stuff they were playing was heads, although they were using stock arrangements of some of the popular music. He asked me what I wanted to play, and I told him *Stampede*. I didn't need any music because I rehearsed it so much I knew it from top to bottom. He gave me the second part and the solos, and it was pretty outstanding. There was no question about it, I had a place in the band, and played steadily with Bennie Moten for the next six years.

The thing I liked about that band in those days was that it was a common-

wealth band, and everyone got the same share. Bennie got double for being the leader, but everything else was split right down the middle, and I'll venture to say that right to this day, there hasn't been a squarer leader in the game than Bennie Moten.

I made my first records with the band soon after I joined them. They had recorded before and the older guys in the band, Lamar Wright, Woodie Walder and Harlan Leonard used to tease us new guys by putting their fat recording checks on their music racks saying these were the only kind of notes they knew of.

In those days Bennie's band was very popular and was booked steady about a year ahead and couldn't leave town to go East to record. So, Victor brought their machines to Bennie. The recordings took place in Lincoln Hall and it was the first time I'd faced a mike. The sessions lasted three days. I forget how many records we made, maybe ten or twelve. The next time was in Camden, New Jersey, and Bennie had to cancel some dates to make the trip.

Bennie's band was the cream of the Middle West and the people liked our music wherever we went. We had so

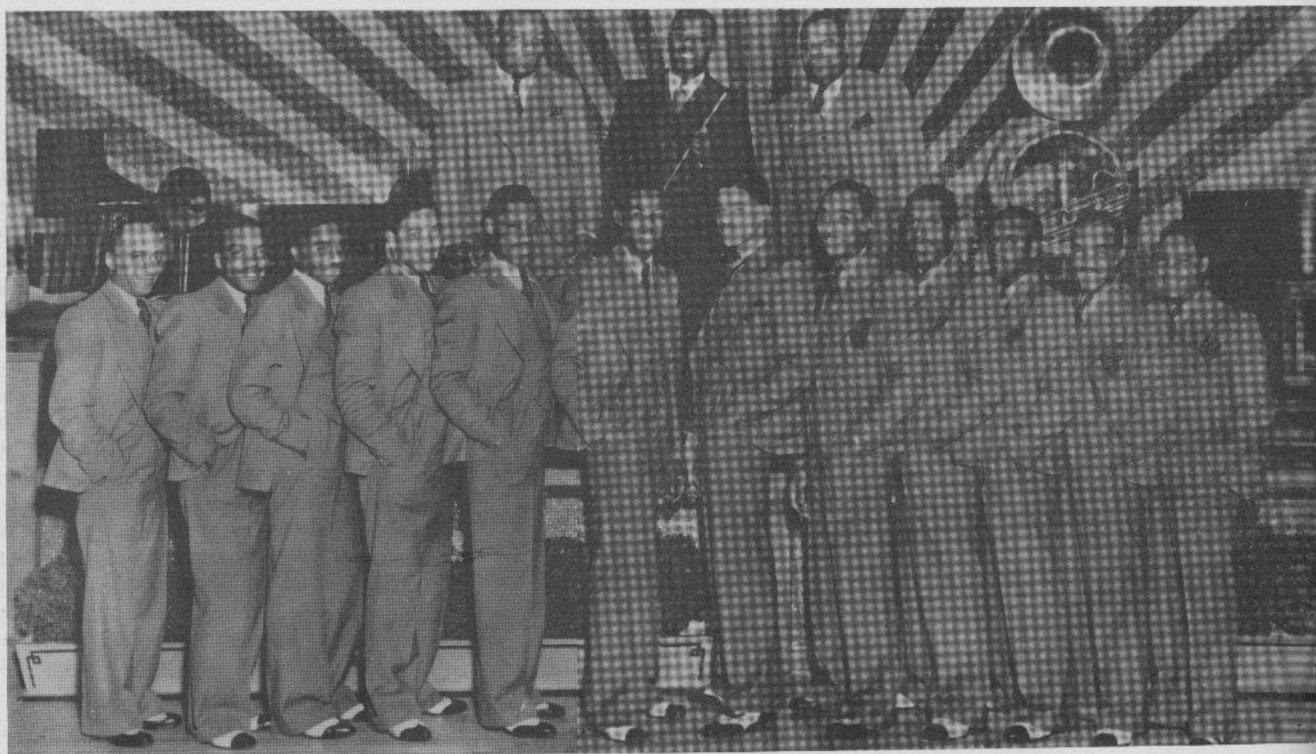
much work we didn't have to travel much, and there were a lot of other great bands around Kansas City then. George Lee had a great band with his sister Julia and Herman Walder, and Chauncey Downs' Rinkey Dinks were good. Andy Kirk and Clarence Love had good bands too.

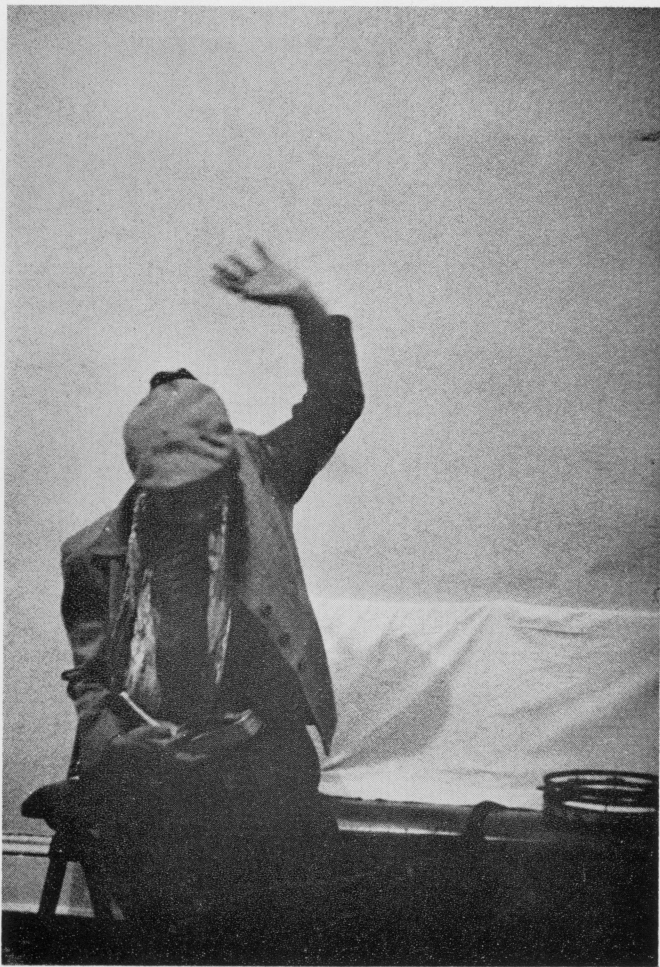
Every year the union (local 627) sponsored a battle of bands. They'd hold them down at the Paseo Dancing Academy at 15th and Paseo. It was the largest dancehall in Kansas City. Paul Banks, Chauncey Downs, Clarence Love and Andy Kirk were always on hand for those battles. The dances were used to pay for the building the local was buying then.

The battle usually got down to a tossup between George E. Lee and Bennie Moten, because each of us had a large following, but Bennie seemed to have the bigger one then. The old *Moten Stomp* was usually the deciding number. After we played that, it seemed like nobody wanted to hear anything more. It was just like Count Basie's *One O'Clock Jump* was later on. . .

*(This is the first of two articles on Ed Lewis.)*

**Bennie Moten Orchestra in 1930: (front row, left to right) Vernon Page, tuba-bs; Count Basie, pf-arr; Oran Page, tp; Ed Lewis, tp; Thamon Hayes, tb; Eddie Durham, tb-gtr-arr; Woodie Walder, ts-cl; Leroy Berry, gtr-banjo; Harlan Leonard, as-bs; Booker Washington, tp; Willie McWashington, dm; Jack Washington, as-bs; (back row, left to right) Benny Moten, pf-leader, Ira "Buster" Moten, acc-dir; Jimmy Rushing, vocalist.**



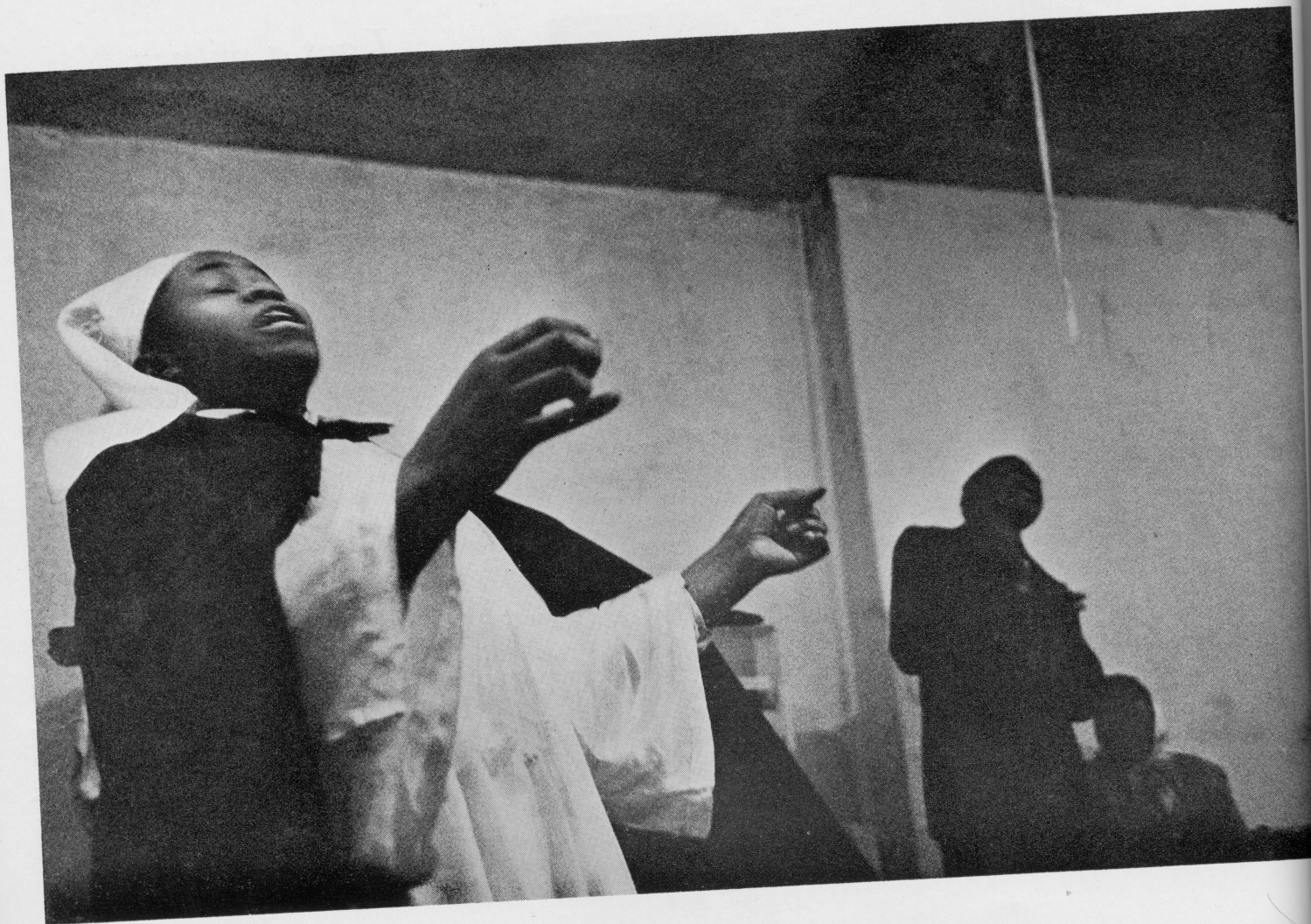


## *I got a witness...*

These photographs were taken by John Cohen over a period of several weeks at a small storefront church in New York's Harlem.



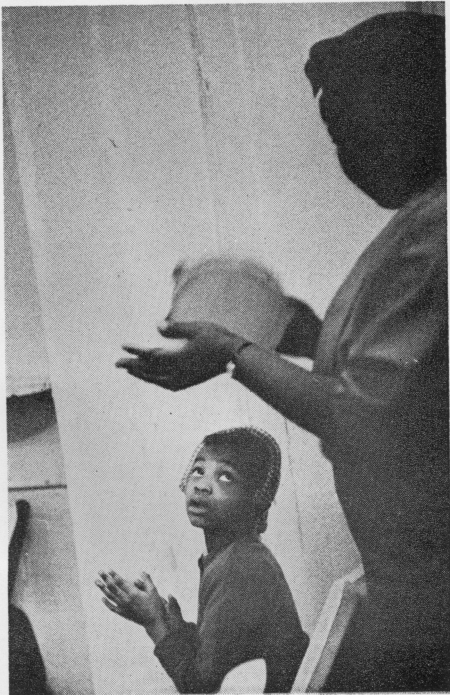
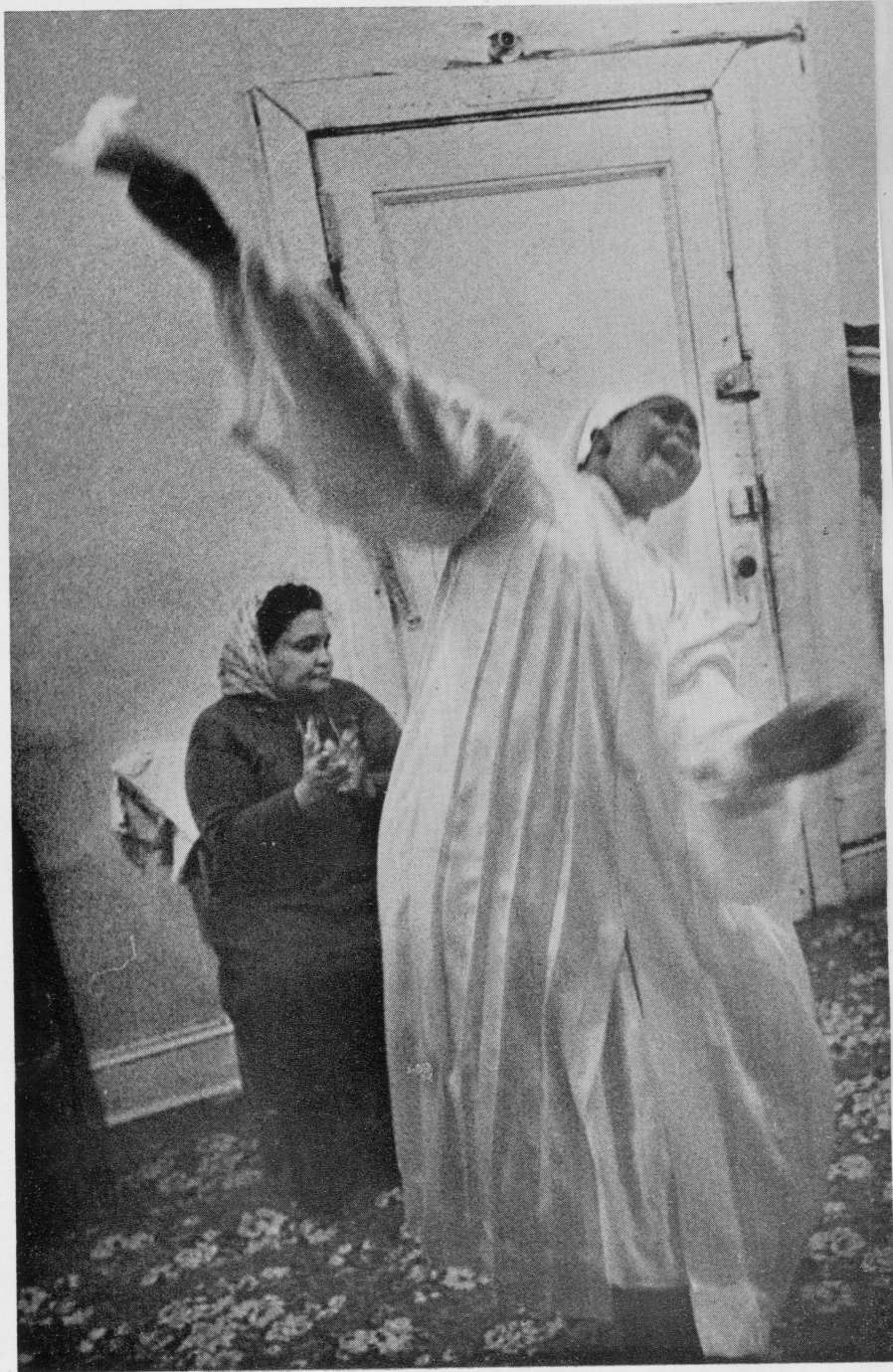
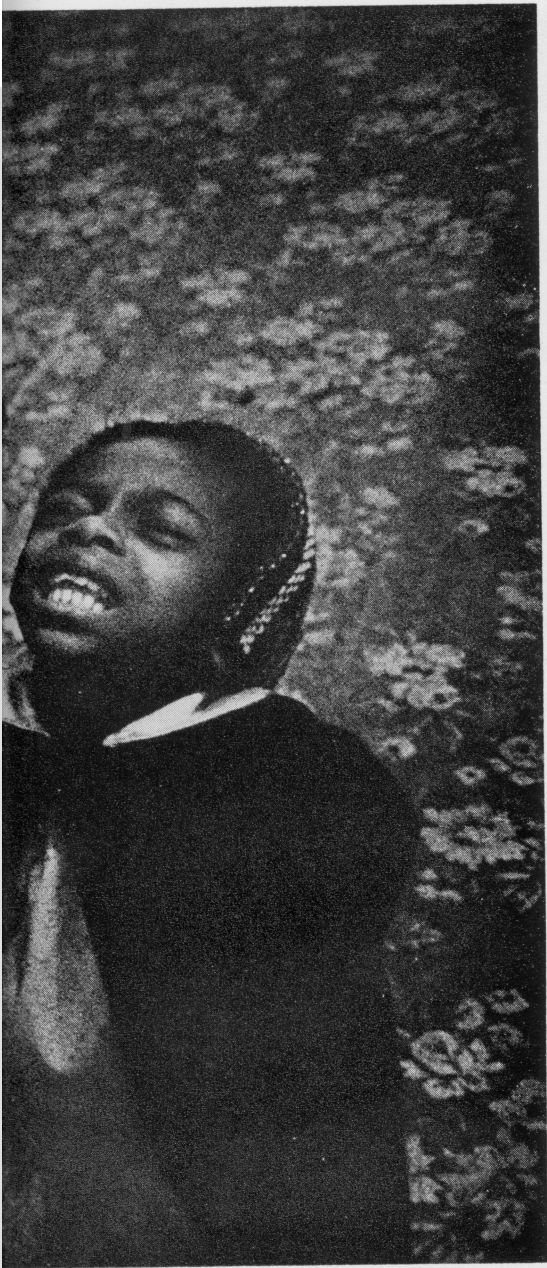




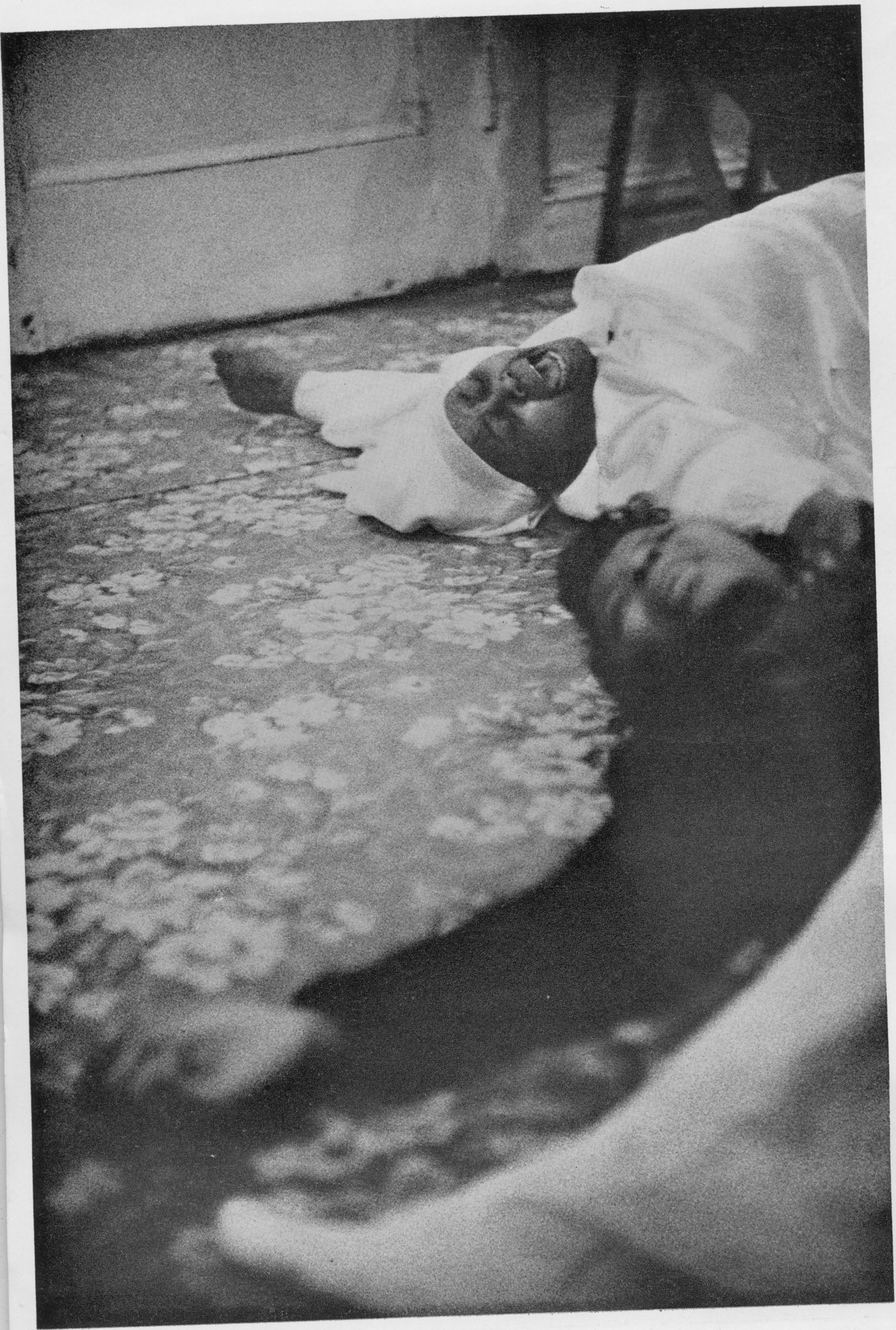












# ABBE NILES

a pioneer jazz critic of the '20s - - - by Sam Charters

There was so much unfavorable writing about jazz in its early years that many jazz enthusiasts are unfamiliar with the noisy exuberance of the writers who regarded jazz as one of the most exciting arts of the confused and colorful 'twenties. Along with the composers and the poets there were rebellious younger writers trying to bring to a larger audience some understanding of jazz as an American music. Gilbert Seldes, Virgil Thomson, and Henry Osgood were writing sympathetic and earnest articles for a variety of magazines, and Cal Van Vechten and Abbe Niles were writing splendid, confused pieces about the jazz scene.

"Explaining" jazz became so popular that in April, 1926, two magazines, *Harpers* and the *Literary Digest*, each found themselves with an article called *An Anatomy of Jazz*. Don Knowlton had written the *Harper's* piece, and Henry Osgood the one in *Literary Digest*. Abbe Niles' first jazz piece, *Eve Lamb of Widow Jazz*, had appeared in the *New Republic* in December, 1926. He was in his early thirties, and had already written the introductory material for the widely read collection of blues by his close friend, W. C. Handy. In 1928 he found himself, almost by accident, one of jazz's first, and best, critics.

In January, 1928, *Bookman*, a lively magazine on the arts, announced that in the February issue Abbe Niles, "graduate of Trinity College and Rhodes Scholar from New Hampshire," would begin a column devoted to "popular" music in the next issue. The column was Niles' "Ballads, Songs, and Snatches," which began in the February issue. To acquaint their readers with him they included an article, *Music in the Distance*, in which Niles described a bound volume of song from 1820 in his collection. He talked about this, and he talked about his interest in popular music.

"... while mildly instructive, it serves no really useful purpose—in particular, there's no money in it—and can therefore be pursued with a pure heart; it rewards its patron with a

sense (however baseless) of erudition; it impresses the neighbors."

Obviously, here was a man ideally suited to be a critic of the naive, exuberant jazz of 1928. A month later he began his commentary on the musical scene.

The first, "Ballads, Songs, and Snatches," set the pattern for his other articles. There was an extended discussion of the rhythmic complexities of jazz; then he commented on one of his favorite records.

"On the Columbia record 14250-D the Negro Empress of the Blues, Bessie Smith, raises her immense voice, and in tones of great bitterness and haunting sadness . . .

A bedbug sure's evil, he don't do me no good.

Year, a bedbug sure's evil, he don't mean me no good.

Ain't he a woodpecker — and I'm a hunk of wood."

He included the words for the next three verses. The article ended with,

"Something must be done toward abating 'vo-do-de-o-do, vo-de-o-do' . . .

'Would I buy rings and other things

For my sweet so-and-so?

Sure I'd buy rings and lots of things

But they cost do-de-o-de-o.'

and on the stands I see, 'Is She My Girl Friend? (How-de-ow-dow) . . . This may seem to be only a little thoughtless nuisance, like the Vice-President's collars, but like them it is in fact causing widespread and unnecessary suffering."

The column was immediately popular. Columbia and Victor; then Okeh, Vocalion, and Brunswick began sending to him their entire monthly releases. By June he was not only listening to everything that was sent him, but he was looking over the sheet music of a dozen publishers. He had said that he was going to write a column on popular music, and he tried to do just that. By September he was beginning to sound a little harrassed. The flood of Christmas releases and special publications fin-

ished him off. It had been a stunning effort, but the industry was too much for any single critic. He had listened to and commented on everything that struck him, from Abe Lyman's Californians to Blind Willie Johnson. To have something of Niles' range and knowledge a modern writer would have to be prepared to write intelligently on Roger Williams, Lightin' Hopkins, Thelonious Monk, Flatt and Scruggs' Foggy Mountain Boys, Turk Murphy, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Ricky Nelson, and the entire Folkways catalog. If Niles had known what he was getting into when *Bookman* approached him about the column he probably would have carefully refused. But then again, he might not have. He was that kind of a person.

During the year Niles' pieces sometimes appeared alongside articles by the humorist, Robert Benchley. It was often a toss-up who was funnier. As with his comments on 'vo-do-de-o-do' and the Vice-President's collars, he was a stylish and biting commentator on some of the music he came across. He described the now-forgotten verses to *I Scream—You Scream—We All Scream For Ice Cream* as "... the most determined and sustained comic effort since the Cox presidential campaign." He noted *An American Songbag* as by "Carl Sandburg, the American song bug." After listening to Vernon Dalhart's *The Hanging of Charles Birger* and *The West Plains Explosion* he called Dalhart the "official hired mourner to the Nation." He noticed that on an Okeh record by Zack Hart the composer credit on one side was correctly given to the gifted Negro composer of the 19th century, James A. Bland, for *Carry Me Back To Old Virginny*, but that they had given Bland composer credit for the other side, too. It was something called *Coon Can Game*. He was interested in everything. "A novelty is Joseph F. Falcon's singing, plaintively through the nose, of two Louisiana Cajun songs." The less subtle of the blues he classed under his own title, "Pornograph Records." And there was his plaintive question, "Why is it always 'Red Nichols and his Five Pennies'? Why not 'Red Nichols and his Hot Scents'?"



Niles' freshness and style are very different from the plodding earnestness of most modern jazz writing, but then jazz in 1928 seems to have been considerably more colorful than jazz in 1958. In 1927 the Pittsburgh Pirates were able to win the National League pennant with an infielder who caught infield flies behind his back and a pitcher who celebrated his occasional moments on base by imitating bird bath statuary and rendering musical comedy favorites; so it may be just as the blues said—"times ain't now, nothing like they used to be."

There was a great deal of interest in "sweet jazz" or "symphonic jazz" in 1928. Niles did not care for it.

"What was it in jazz that so infuriated some people? Just two qualities: a little strangeness and a little humor. Both had been absent from most pre-jazz popular music, and neither is to be found in the so-called 'sweet jazz' of 1928. . . . The 'sweet' technique, hardly connected with true jazz save in its employment of saxophones and banjos, consists principally of hiring expert arrangers. . . . The result is refined, but still dull."

He had succinctly summed up the case against "symphonic jazz." It was dull. This is certainly one of the most important critical standards, and was at the base of Niles' writings on jazz. If he thought something was dull, he made no effort to justify it, musically or intellectually. He was interested in the first struggling attempts at jazz composition, and was impressed with James P. Johnson's suite *Yamekraw*, named for a colored section in Savannah. Niles wrote, ". . . I catch the sensation of idling through that place in a Ford on a hot night, when doors and windows are open. . . ."

The first recordings done in the rural South by Victor and Columbia began to be released early in 1928 and he found them wonderfully exciting.

"The music of the streets and music halls is not something serene and sublime. It need not duck its head to make way for the clouds. . . . There is not much beauty, to be sure, but neither is beauty irreconcilable with real, even with 'hot' jazz. . . ."

A fat comedian, bouncing downstairs on a banana peel is worth a thousand tootsie rolls. Therefore I shall holler for such records as Columbia's (r) of

the raucous, ginny voices and the felonious fiddling of Peg Leg Howell and his Gang."

There was a footnote.

"Race Records, here indicated by the letter 'r' are those made for colored consumption. Most dealers haven't them, but all can obtain them. Listening to race records is nearly the only way for white people to share the Negroes pleasure without bothering the Negroes."

He wrote probably the first review of Blind Willie Johnson—" . . . violent, tortured, and abysmal shouts and groans and his inspired guitar in a primitive and frightening Negro religious song . . .," used some of Barbecue Bob's blues lyrics, talked about Jim Jackson and his Old Dog Blue, and began his July article,

"Rabbit Brown, colored, sang to his guitar in the streets of New Orleans . . ."

By December, 1928, Niles had probably one of the best record collections in the United States and he was also ready to throw in the towel. He had had no time to write the longer pieces that he enjoyed, his work was months behind, and the record industry seemed to be getting even larger. He had listed dance records, vocal hits, jazz, music from the Broadway stage and country music. There had been, finally, time to write very little else. He was more an amateur enthusiast than a professional critic, and he wanted to get back to his researches into American ballads and early sheet music. In January, 1929, "Ballads, Songs, and Snatches" appeared for the last time. There was an editor's note that the column had been very popular and had received much favorable comment.

Niles summed up a great deal of what he thought about jazz and its musicians in an article entitled *Jazz: 1928: An Index Expurgatorius*. He discussed Duke Ellington, Frankie Trumbauer, the Hot 5, and many other musicians, and in the first paragraphs wrote one of the best defenses and explanations of jazz written in the 1920's.

He opened his article with a quote from another magazine.

"The noble trombone is made to bray like an ass, to guffaw like a village idiot and moo like a cow in distress. The silver-toned trumpet, associated in poetry with the seraphim, is made to screech, producing sounds like tearing calico or a nocturnal tomcat."

Sir Henry Coward

Then he commented,

"One of the unwritten mottoes of sensational pulpsters runs, 'When in doubt, denounce jazz! It jazzes up a sermon, it has helped to fill empty pews. I, for one, shall not quarrel with the precept when it is limited to such worthy purposes. Neither shall I quarrel with Sir Henry Howard's above-quoted remark, since it correctly and artistically describes some, though not all, of the best jazz.'"

It is the writers and critics, he feels, who have failed to come forward to jazz's defense, and who have never really bothered to listen to the music itself. He feels that much of the public hostility to the music is due to their disinterest. There must be men who will listen and write intelligently.

"During 1928 I have . . . heard and taken notes upon the dance music, not only of the more polished orchestras that lurk, tuxedo clad, beneath potted palms, but of — Boyd Senter and his Senterpedes; Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers; The Dixieland Jug Blowers; Curtis Mosby's Blue Blowers; Wilson's Catfish String Band; Gid Tanner's Skillet Lickers; Joe Foss's Hungry Sand Lappers; Frank Blevin's Tar Heel Rattlers; Peg Leg Howell and His Gang; Clarence Williams Washboard Five; Creath's Jazz-O-Maniacs; The Whoopee Makers; The New Orleans Boot Blacks; Dad Blackard's Moonshiners; and of the Goofus Five.

". . . They have vitality and ideas of a peculiarly American flavor . . . the bitter, salty wit and humor, and the flashes of defiant, unwilling beauty which characterize good jazz."

His next article for *Bookman* was entitled *The Literature Of Folk Song*. He continued to do occasional jazz writing. There was a 1929 piece on jazz for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and a revision of the Handy book in 1949 among other things, but he was no longer a regular critic of the jazz scene. His wondering excitement and deep appreciation of the music had been evident in every word he had written in the *Bookman* articles. In Abbe Niles jazz had had a critic of style, wit, and creative insight. Perhaps in his honor there should be some sort of a small memorial. Perhaps a phonograph record. Something by "Red Nichols and His Hot Scents."

## REVIEWS: RECORDINGS

### AHMAD JAMAL TRIO

*Count 'Em 88*, Argo lp 610.

*Volga Boatman; Green Dolphin Street; How About You; I Just Can't See For Lookin'; Spring Will Be A Little Late This Year; Beat Out One; Maryam; Easy to Remember; Jim Love Sue.*

Ahmad Jamal, piano; Israel Crosby, bass; Walter Perkins, drums.

*Jim Love Sue*, Argo lp 636.

*Taboo; Should I; Stompin At The Savoy; The Girl Next Door; I Wish I Knew; Cheek To Cheek; Autumn In New York; Secret Love; Squatty Roo; That's All.*

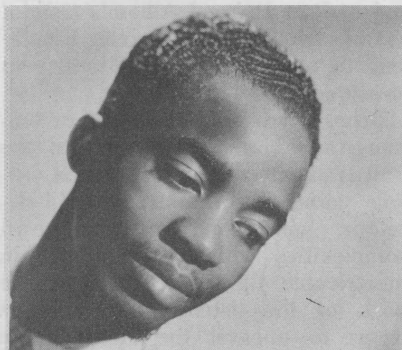
Ahmad Jamal, piano; Israel Crosby, bass; Vernell Fournier, drums.

It is not surprising that Ahmad Jamal has become popular since his conception is slanted so strongly toward the attainment of popular acceptance. What is surprising is a remark of Miles Davis's that Leonard Feather quotes on the liner notes for Blue Note 1595, "All my inspiration today comes from Ahmad Jamal." Hearing similar reports, and noticing the many uses Miles has made of Jamal's conception in his own work recently, I expected to find Ahmad playing much more mature jazz than I find on these records.

I remember the Jamal trio that came to New York around 1951, with Ray Crawford on guitar and Eddie Calhoun on bass. At that time Ahmad was playing cocktailish jazz in a rather contrived manner that was not unpleasant, but seemed very shallow. Ray was the strongest jazz voice in the group, but the structure of the trio was obviously commercial, loaded with crowd-pleasing gimmicks, cuteness, and deadly repetition. After hearing the records at hand (recorded in 1956 and 1958) and having heard his present trio recently in nightclubs, the main change I can discover in his work, other than the replacement of guitar with drums, is his development of understatement as a style and a much surer sense of theatrical timing. His conception has been carefully polished and is emerging as a highly marketable product. His improvising, however, is still the same inconsequential stuff that it was eight years ago, except that now he seldom attempts to improvise at all, relying more strongly on his arrangements.

His worked-out treatments are carefully calculated to provide various

build-ups, climaxes, musical jokes, and attention-getters, but after one has heard these once, the surprise is diminished and the personal expression of the musician becomes more important. Jamal has excellent assistance from a good rhythm section, but his own taste is based on no artistic principle that I can discover. Rather, he has found that there is an area of sensationalism that has been neglected; if you play softly (and sometimes not at all) for a chorus or two with only the bass line and brush rhythm to create forward motion, a couple of bars of mezzo-forte block chords or a few sudden medium volume accents, trills, or arpeggios provide as much dazzle as other groups achieve with loud passages accented and climaxed with even louder ones. With his formula, plus the more ancient one that goes "if you repeat a figure long enough even the densest audience will begin to recognize it," Ahmad has developed a number of arrangements of some very good tunes that have tremendous commercial appeal, but rarely carry on to deeper musical expression.



The fact that he utilizes jazz phrasing and time and that the group strives for good tone quality and intonation most of the time is very encouraging in view of the number of groups that have achieved popularity through deliberate and thorough distortion of all the qualities of melodiousness and pleasing sound that one associates with the word "music." However, it is a mistake to consider him as primarily a jazz pianist. He is more a musical entertainer than an artist, since his first responsibility is obviously not to his own creative spirit, but to the entertainment of his audience.

Though a fine artist will include in his artistic expression a means of communication with an audience that can find it, it is not his first responsibility to see that he is getting through. Before anything else comes the necessity that he stay in touch with and follow his own creativity; after that he may be able to consider how to find an audience that likes what he has made.

Even as a musical entertainer, Jamal is far from being a great craftsman, though he may very well develop into one. His general format is a valid one, but he now often relies on banalities and hokum which a maturer Jamal may discover can be eliminated without his losing the appeal of the main conception. He needn't pounce on his surprise accents quite so hard; he needn't tease the listener quite so long before actually playing something; he needn't be quite so coy or as bombastic as he occasionally becomes.

Though Miles may have taken many of Ahmad's ideas for his own use, his results with them are always infinitely more satisfying because Miles does have a primarily artistic approach to playing, and has developed an adult standard of musical taste that eliminates the possibility of his offending the listener with musical con-games. Miles feels his music strongly, and doesn't worry about indicating his feelings through trickery. He too follows the line of simplicity, but for its own lovely sake, rather than as a set-up for a shock or a cute punch line.

Though Jamal falls into tasteless moments, his general conception has an undeniable charm, and the time feeling that the group lays down (God bless Israel Crosby) really makes me pat my foot. There is a definite need for entertaining groups that are as musical as this one. The lack of them has left the field in the hands of charlatans and carpetbaggers. Jamal is not a great artist, but he may well stimulate in a percentage of his audience an appetite for heartier fare than he is able to give them, just as the King Cole Trio attracted an earlier generation to the work of less popular but more artistic musicians.

—Bill Crow





ATLANTIC'S NEW LPs

# BARBER

Chris Barber

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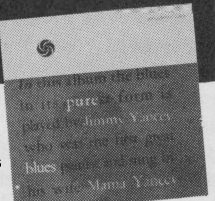
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## MANNY ALBAM

*The Blues Is Everybody's Business:*  
Coral, 59101:

Soloists: Nick Travis, trumpet; Vinnie Burke, bass; Ernie Royal, trumpet; Phil Woods, alto saxophone; Art Farmer, trumpet; Bob Brookmeyer, valve trombone; Ed Costa, piano; Gene Quill, alto saxophone; Gene Orloff, violin; Al Cohn, tenor saxophone.

In this jazz suite, Albam's exposition of the blues is a very congenial thing to his musicians, who are afforded the opportunity to play quite consciously, within a sound and colorful framework, and for no more than a few choruses, the best of what they know best. The recording is his highest achievement to date, not only as a composition of broad musical and popular appeal, but as a vivid allegory, to which a meaningful ballet could effectively be staged.

The suite is not intended to record the historical development of the blues, which fact may cause its failure to charm the purist-historian. But its meaning, as conveyed in its title, its performance, its literary analogue (prepared by Albam and appearing on the second page of the jacket assembly), is universal and multi-valent.

Of particular note are Brookmeyer's work in Part III; the muted conversations of Farmer and Travis with Burke in Part III, of Woods and Quill in Part IV; Cohn's intelligent and warm sermon in the latter quarters of Part IV, and Albam's tasteful use of strings which, in jazz, usually tend to abate emotional intensity to messy sentimentality.

Brookmeyer is very witty, unpretentious, and soundly adjusted to the temperament of the piece at the various points of his entrance. He develops, within a figure, his own complexities which seem to attain inextricable tightness; then, at the peak of the listener's interest, he seems to unravel the circumstance by restating, in summary, and in notes of larger metrical value, what he has said, thereby achieving a kind of underlined quality in his inventions. He is the magnificent craftsman.

Farmer, Travis, and Burke engage in a pleasurable discourse, which has

good texture and import. Woods and Quill follow to speak with each other in a heated conversation which ascends enormous emotional heights. Woods' smooth adroitness contrasts delightfully with the zeal, determination, and enthusiasm carried over by Quill's gutty playing which, at times, sounds as if he were trying to inject five or six notes between each half tone interval.

Cohn, the "Wise Leader of the Truth Seekers," appears as the final major soloist. He is nicely introduced through an incomplete cadence made of solid brass, and proceeds to catechise—basically, formally, and with mature discretion—in a line whose first two bars seem to ask a question whose answer would bring a solution to the blues enigma:

Musical Example 1

In the next two bars an answer is proffered:

Musical Example 2

but its utter simplicity renders it as incomprehensible as the simplicity of Truth itself.

On the larger scale the suite is successful, to my thinking, in that it is not experimental; its harmonies are conservative, as are its lines and, for the most part, its instrumental voicing. In the larger portion of his present work, Albam has chosen to rest on all of his accumulated experience as a musician-composer-arranger, and to exploit the essence of what has been done in jazz, rather than aspire to membership among the experimentalists. Indeed, it is a difficult thing for an artist, especially in jazz, to reckon with himself so that perhaps it might be better to work with what already has been firmly and logically established; even if in doing this he might deprive himself of the rank of "Innovator," which term, in jazz, has been more than seldom carelessly thrown about from critic to crackpot.

If this attitude actually exists in Manny Albam—and it most certainly is effectually apparent in his music—I am sure that it is of a disciplined conscience and not of an unimaginative consciousness.

—Tupper Saussy

EX. 1



EX. 2



## ORNETTE COLEMAN

*Something Else!!!!*, Contemporary C3551.

*Invisible; The Blessing; Jayne; Chippie; The Disguise; Angel Voice; Alpha; When Will The Blues Leave?; The Sphinx.*

Personnel: Ornette Coleman, alto; Don Cherry, trumpet; Walter Norris, piano; Don Payne, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

First of all, that's a fine bass player — good sound *and* time. He and Don Cherry, the trumpet player, have tremendous authority.

These cats sound very sincere. They have that thing that makes for real jazz, that makes it really breathe and live on its own. Usually, the jazz that kills you the most is the jazz that's helping to strengthen our language. And we need all the vowels we can get.

You can tell these guys are young. Their emotions are not matured but that might be to the good, because they might be a little more daring because they're not set.

I must say I'm a little puzzled at some of the statements Coleman makes in the notes as contrasted with this record. He speaks of letting the melodic lines form the harmonic patterns. You can't do that with the pianist playing fixed changes and the bass player playing a set line. He also says he'd like to have the changes different each time. To do that, you'd have to eliminate the pianist and the bass player or else have done extensive research in mental telepathy.

I still dig what he's doing though. It's a matter of growing pains. Age should give him more taste melodically. He'll settle down and get more of a message over. He seems to be searching in a manner similar to Monk. He hasn't gone past Monk by any means. *Invisible* seems to me to have the same basic feeling, the same basic attitude as *Epistrophy*.

But the seasoning isn't there yet. I also don't think he has enough tone control. Maybe it's a plastic reed. It's a young voice — a voice before the voice changes. He does get his voice into his horn, but the intonation is questionable sometimes.

He speaks in the notes about his concern for getting a *human* sound in his playing by getting the right pitch. Well, he may be stretching that analogy too far. A lot of the things he's doing only an exceptional human voice could do, and then not naturally. If he means talking through the horn, it all depends on the type of speech he means. Inarticulateness isn't pleasant to listen to. At the

moment, he talks the way a teenager might.

Same thing with his written lines. They have a lot of richness, but they're not developed yet. A teenager talks with not too much authority because he's not really sure what he's talking about. When Coleman does get authority, he'll be able to say more and say it more deeply with less.

His work is a combination of a lot of elements — Bird, Monk, etc. His *combination* of these elements may well be original, but I don't think there are as yet any original contributions of his own. There is something there that can be original and that will develop. His present occasional incoherence is probably the price he's paid for seeking originality, but he hasn't found anything really original yet.

Everybody in the album has a good conception of time, and everybody understands the role of improvisation in relation to the rhythm section. Unlike many young players, they don't try to swing *for* the rhythm section. It takes good understanding of jazz rhythm to play *with* rather than *for* a rhythm section. A lot of young guys don't have faith in the rhythm section, and try to swing it. They don't leave enough of the proceedings to what will naturally come out of the human element in jazz, the rapport between the players. The mature jazz musician always has enough confidence to know what to leave to the human element whereas the young horn player tries to swing every beat of every bar and tries to fill up all the holes. The authoritative jazz players, however, know how much a half-note rest swings. Coleman, in summary, has something to build on and I think he believes in what he's doing.

—Quincy Jones

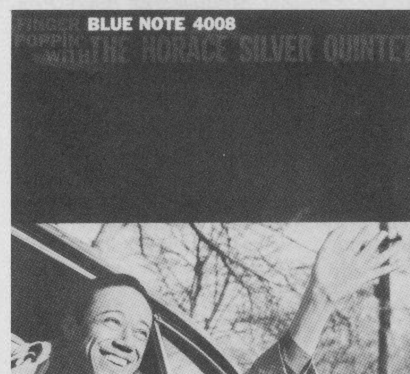


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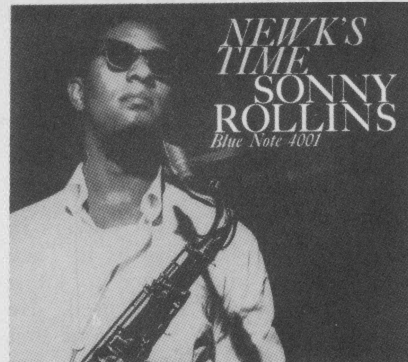
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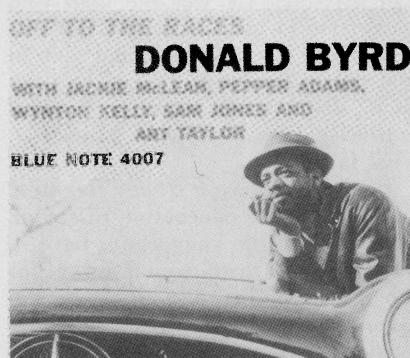
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## DUKE ELLINGTON

Newport 1958, Columbia CL 1245.

*Just Scratchin' the Surface; El Gato; Happy Reunion; Multicolored Blue; Princess Blue; Jazz Festival Jazz; Mr. Gentle and Mr. Cool; Juniflip; Prima Bara Dubla; Hi Fi Fo Fum.*

Personnel: Johnny Hodges, Russell Procope, Paul Gonsalves, Jimmy Hamilton, Harry Carney, reeds; Ray Nance, "Cat" Anderson, Shorty Baker, Clark Terry, trumpets; Britt Woodman, John Sanders, Quentin Jackson, trombones; Duke Ellington, piano; Jimmy Woode, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums; Ozzie Bailey, vocal. Gerry Mulligan, baritone saxophone, added on *Prima Bara Dubla*.

I think "Cat" Anderson ought to have his own band. I don't think, incidentally, that he's a jazz musician. He's a good trumpet player and certainly an impressive exhibitionist, but for me, he's never played jazz. I realize Duke knows how to make everybody an integral part of the orchestra, but "Cat" doesn't stay in the realm Duke conceives for him. If he did, he'd be very functional; but he seems to spend most of his time trying to break out of what Duke has set for him. "Cat" is like a Father Flanagan trying to run Vassar while his hands were still full with Boys' Town. Duke's given him enough to do.

"Cat's" *El Gato* stopped the show in Paris. All the trumpet players in the audience were gassed by it. They ran backstage and wanted to know what mouthpiece "Cat" used. He wouldn't show it to them, and that made them mad. But none of that has anything to do with jazz. Duke *does* have a beautiful trumpet player in the section — Clark Terry — but he doesn't use him enough. Clark has never sounded like anyone else; he's always been himself. I love his humor and his tone. He was the man who taught me to play in Seattle. He was with Basie's sextet then, and was in and out of the town. To me, he's got such deep roots, confidence and authority. Back to *El Gato*. Musically, what is it?

Paul Gonsalves on *Happy Reunion*. I love Paul. His conception of sound. Just a few of the young guys have it. Most have thrown sound away for other things. Basically, I guess, I'm a romanticist. I like beauty — pretty music, pretty women.

Billy Strayhorn wrote *Multicolored Blue*. Billy to me is the boss of the arrangers. I'd like to really know just what's what in that little lab of theirs. I'd like to know how much Billy is responsible for in Duke's work these days. Ozzie Bailey, the singer in this, doesn't fit with the band at all. Maybe I'm prejudiced because I liked Al Hibbler with

Duke. He had the same sound with the band as Carney's baritone — the coarseness, the deep-rooted earthiness and warmth. About Strayhorn again, I bet he orchestrates a lot of Duke's things. It sometimes feels to me that Duke plays a lot of things to Strayhorn on the piano, and then Billy takes over. I hear a lot of piano-style things in those arrangements.

Listen to the trombone section. It's very, very good. And the rhythm section. Woodyard and Woode definitely understand what Duke is trying to do. Not many young drummers could fit into Duke's band. In a drummer, Duke needs a man with fullness and drive who is also tasty. Many younger drummers would be too busy, too self-conscious. On bass, Duke needs a man who won't just walk all the time.

*Jazz Festival Jazz* sounds like something Tom Whaley (the copyist) whipped up when he was asleep on the bus on the way to Newport. I don't think this kind of program as a whole, by the way, indicates that Duke is putting on Newport. He'd do it anywhere. If he had the time, he'd do it well. If he doesn't have the time, it'll always look and sound like Ellington even when it isn't fully.



I dig *Mr. Gentle and Mr. Cool*. I'm a sucker for transparency. It's fantastic how effective simplicity is. I'm glad to see Harold Baker back in the band. It seems as if with some of Duke's sheep, it's not possible for them to stray effectively. Speaking of

using space, I love Duke as a pianist. His playing reflects his writing so much. He has so much taste. He always knows when *not* to play. That's just as important.

I like the feeling with which Ray Nance plays the violin, but I don't like his technique. For a trumpet player, he plays good violin. But as a trumpet player, he's fine. He's distinctive, identifiable. He has such a definite thing, like his solo on "*A*" *Train* which is a classic. Ray is another example of a jazz fact — if a guy is himself and sincere, he doesn't have to play too much on his horn. But if he doesn't have real identification, he has to be a real virtuoso and you have to judge him by how well he knows his horn. It's the penalty he has to pay for not being individual.

*Juniflip* is Clark Terry's, and as I said before, I love him. He's a natural musician. The Carney-Mulligan baritone duet on *Prima Bara Dubla* I don't like. It's a gimmick. I might appreciate it better except for the fact that when you have these two plus the Ellington orchestra plus Duke as a composer and player, what happens here is not enough. It's trite thematically; it sounds contrived; and when you're playing in a tempo like this in a minor key, if there isn't real emotion, it just dies. This died. And they wind up in thirds at the end. Now that's very "original." It implies real "organization." As for *Hi Fi Fo Fum*, I've never heard a drum solo arrangement I've liked.

As for the performance as a whole, this was the place where it was desirable for the band to make an impression, and I'm sure Duke did. But musically, this is the outside of the band. They didn't let the people all the way in. And yet it is a fantastic band. Even when you're hearing just the outside, it's so nostalgic and the nostalgia is so powerful it almost covers up any flaws that might be in the band. By the way, I dig Hodges more and more. I didn't get the message at first, but his feeling and his conception are very impressive.

What I resent in the current Duke is when he takes masterpieces of his own and soups them up in hi-fi and destroys the original feeling. The *Ko-Ko* on Bethlehem, for example. It's unbelievable. I don't know why he does it.

But even in a performance like this one, even when they're just opening the doors a little and not playing what the band is really capable of, you always know there's *something* there.

—Quincy Jones

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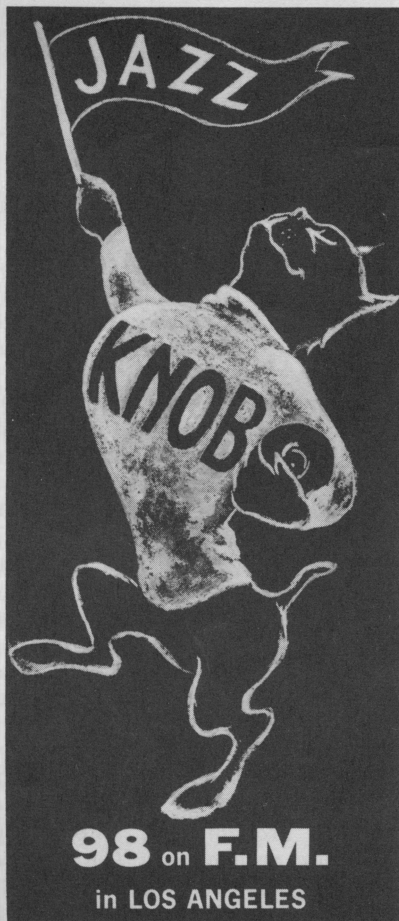
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## VICTOR FELDMAN

*The Arrival of Victor Feldman,* Contemporary C3549.

Feldman, vibraharp and piano; Scott La Faro, bass; Stan Levey, drums.

This is a rather belated celebration of Vic's arrival on the American jazz scene; he has been over here since 1955 and had the misfortune to make an album that winter in New York for a record company that never released it. It was a good date (I was there) and I wish I had a copy of it for comparison. As far as I remember, Vic sounded then very much the way he sounds on this album, good.

Most striking on this recording is the bass player, Scott La Faro. Unfortunately, it is not his excellent playing that demands the listener's attention so much as it is his overpowering presence, for he has been recorded at an unnaturally high level that distorts both his own sound and that of the group. When he plays an accompanying line the disproportionate balance gives the bass notes the predominant melodic importance and seriously impairs their relationship to the rest of the chord.

This extreme close miking and strong amplification of La Faro's instrument gives unnatural emphasis to finger noise, string rattle, and high overtones, that normally would not be audible to the listener. The sound of a bass when played mezzo-forte and then amplified is nothing like the sound of a bass played fortissimo. The fortissimo here takes on the same sort of electronic sound that bass-amp attachments produce. The rich overtones of the wooden resonating chamber are lost in the amplified twang of the string.

Aside from the annoying balance (in order to listen to Vic's playing I found it necessary to cut the bass control on my machine down as far as it would go) and what I feel certain is a considerable distortion of La Faro's natural tone and volume, his playing here is quite imaginative, and he produces a legato sound, a coherent line, and vigorous time, using a remarkably facile technique to very good advantage. Much of his solo conception at present leans on patterns that lend themselves to velocity, but there is a good feeling for melodic structure in his choruses, and he certainly likes to swing. I must add again that I cringe at his overall sound here which I feel has little connection with his playing; much of it seems to be the result of improper mike pickup. I can't be sure just how

much, having never heard him play before. But I've had my own experiences with engineers and I know what they can do for you.

If La Faro really sounds this way in person, then I would say that he plays too loud for the group, his harsh low register accents are unnecessarily violent, his tone is often twangy, and the loud slapping of the strings against the fingerboard indicates a badly adjusted instrument. But if my ears haven't deceived me, these defects are all artificially produced through overamplification. There may be no amplifier attached to the bass, but the engineer has achieved the same effect.

Stan Levey plays tastefully throughout the album. He seems to have calmed down considerably since his Stan Kenton days. The need to whip the group into a frenzy has evidently been replaced by a desire to play simple lively rhythm with a musical touch and an economy of decoration. His time tightens up a little when he gets excited, especially on fast tempos, but not not enough to seriously hinder the soloist.

Vic plays both piano and vibes here. He seems to have a characteristic feeling for each instrument, rather than a vibraharpist's conception of piano playing or vice versa. He has a clean, even technique and an easy feeling for rhythm. He moves the music along logically without pushing for effect, and works for a full resonant tone on both instruments.

His writing and his improvising both indicate a fondness for the early blues as well as for the conceptions of Powell, Parker, and Jackson. He plays the piano with unpretentious directness; his solo lines are unhurriedly constructed with a nice sense of form. Though his melodic imagination doesn't venture beyond familiar ground, he uses material that has become part of the common fund in an intelligent personal way. On the vibraharp he works within Milt Jackson's conception but does not pretend that he and Milt have identical feelings. He seems to admire Milt's musical attitudes more than his mannerisms.

His treatment of the lovely Chopin waltz is a good example of the adaptation of classical themes to jazz forms for esthetic reasons (because the musician finds the theme satisfying material to work with) rather than for novelty effect. I like the possibilities that exist in 3/4 time, and am glad that many groups are finding their way into it. Jazz musicians are



now beginning to discover various interesting ways to imply its basic feeling, as they have done in the past and will continue to do with common time.

The standards *Flamingo*, *S'posin'* (good bass chorus), and *No Greater Love* are pleasant versions of pretty tunes. *Serpent's Tooth*, *Satin Doll*, and *Bebop* follow the quality of the originals without trying to imitate

them. Vic's own *Chasing Shadows*, *Too Blue*, and *Minor Lament* demonstrate his ability to write strong melodies with chord structures that provide interesting material for the soloist.

*Bebop* is understandably brief, since it is played at a man-killing tempo. No one invents anything unusual on it, but no one is skating through or faking either. I admire

them for being in the good physical shape that such a pace requires.

The whole set of tunes is done in a craftsmanlike manner by three able jazzmen. Unfortunately the overbearing bass balance puts a continual strain on the ear and the credulity of the listener. As Durante might exclaim, wagging his nose with amazement, "That's not a bass!" But it certainly is a bass player.—Bill Crow

### DIZZY GILLESPIE SONNY STITT SONNY ROLLINS

*Sonny Side Up*, Verve MG V 8262

*On the Sunny Side of the Street*; *The Eternal Triangle*; *After Hours*; *I Know That You Know*.

Personnel: Dizzy Gillespie, trumpet; Sonny Stitt and Rollins, tenors; Ray Bryant, piano; Tom Bryant, bass; Charlie Persip, drums.

This is one of those a&r situations where the producer figured all he had to do was to get three "names" into a studio. They should at least have been given to time to prepare some fresh material. Not much was expected from an administrative point of view, however, except to have their names for the cover. This is the safest way to a&r if you don't want to work. You can always depend on talent of this caliber to stand up under pressure, but it's a shame not to take full advantage of what people like these have to say.

As for Dizzy's vocal on *Sunny Side of the Street*, by knowing Dizzy and loving him I can't put him down for singing. His clowning is all part of him. It's natural and there's nothing fake about it. He's one of the few "modern" jazz musicians with humor in his playing. Certainly there's thinking jazz and crying jazz, but sometimes you laugh too. I expect the reason for the relative absence of humor these days is that the younger generation is very self-conscious. A lot of the insecurity in this generation as a whole is expressed in its music. The older guys were part of a happier thing and had more confidence in themselves as men and as musicians. They had a greater capacity to communicate to the layman because they expressed pleasure in playing what they believed in. Many of the younger men—again out of self-consciousness—rebel against outside communication.

*The Eternal Triangle*, the second number, is about the best you can do to get something together for a date like this in contrast to *Sunnyside* which sounded to me like something

to just fill up a date. This one sounds like they said, "Let's get *something* together." It's not only first choruses and endings. I respect them for putting one original thing in there. It wasn't expected of them.

About Sonny Stitt—I would dig him in Basie's band. He's what Basie needs and it would be good for Sonny. It would give Sonny some kind of setting. He has none now, going from one local rhythm section to another. When you have a regular setting, it's easier to find yourself—you're forced to, in a way. Working with local rhythm sections, it's just a matter of accustoming them to what you're used to.

In terms of style, Rollins and Stitt complement the hell out of each other on this album. Stitt is of the Bird school. He has much drive and vitality and sometimes plays rhythm for rhythm's sake—and does it well. Rollins is a developer of his material. He's more interested than Stitt in thematic structure. He uses rhythm more like Dizzy does—to enhance the development of the lines rather than for itself.

Dizzy plays like a drummer—he has fantastic rhythmic displacement. In the last three or four years, he's been playing better than he ever has before. The best setting for him though is a big band, but one in which he wouldn't have to worry about how long the band can work.

With most of us, after we get the technique and basic conception, the biggest problem is to find the right medium in which to express ourselves. Dizzy has. His style is so fully developed that it's like breathing with him. He can play whatever comes to his mind. His technique has become a part of him.

This is the first time I've heard Tom Bryant. He has good time. About the group as a whole, I'd like to have heard the small group treated—in concerto grosso style—against a big band or a partial big band background.

On *After Hours*, I'd have preferred that Ray not have used that eight-

to-the-bar walking bass in the first chorus. It should have been either no bass line at all or a four-to-the-bar line. This way it makes the bass a little too top-heavy since he's just playing a single line on top. There's no middle, and it spoils the mood. The overall mood of the whole piece here is made somewhat too heavy. It sounds a little *before* after hours. But your imagination doesn't work very fast when you have to find the tunes right on the date.



If Persip had to use a backbeat on this track—Dizzy probably told him to—it would have been much better behind the three horns in ensemble passages. But playing it behind a Harmon mute trumpet is like trying to put a watermelon into a coke bottle. The track becomes most convincing toward the end of Dizzy's solo and then through Newk's (Sonny Rollins'). They moved into 12/8. In this context, that tempo gives you greater scope for emotion.

Sonny Rollins' opening stop-time solo on *I Know That You Know* is like standing naked on Broadway, especially in that tempo. But he came through wonderfully. I think Sonny is the most important tenor on the scene. He's influenced by Bird, but by his spirit. He's not a carbon copy. And he has brought back emphasis on thematic development. The a&r man should plan that well.

—Quincy Jones

## BILLIE HOLIDAY

*Lover Man*, Decca DL 8702.

*Lover Man*; *That Ole Devil Called Love*; *My Man*; *You're My Thrill*; *Crazy He Calls Me*; *Weep No More*; *There Is No Greater Love*; *This Is Heaven To Me*; *Solitude*; *Porgy*; *Girls Were Made to Take Care of Boys*; *Please Tell Me Now*.

Personnel: Russ Case, trumpet; Jack Cressy, H. Schertzer, Larry Binyon, saxes; Dave Bowman, piano; Carl Kress, guitar; Haig Stephens, bass on Tracks 1 & 2. Paul Ricci, sax on Track 1. Johnny Blowers, drums on Track 1. George Wettling, drums on Track 2. Billy Butterfield, trumpet; Bill Stegmeyer, clarinet; Toots Mondello, Al Klink, altos; Artie Drelinger, Hank Ross, tenors; Bob Haggart, bass; Danny Perri, guitar on Tracks 7 & 9. John Levy, bass; Denzil Best, drums on Tracks 3, 6, 10, 11. Bobby Tucker, piano on Tracks 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11. Bunny Shawker, drums on Tracks 7, 9, 10, 12. Stardusters, vocal group on Tracks 6 & 11. Bobby Hackett, trumpet; Milt Yaner, clarinet & alto; John Fulton, clarinet & tenor; Bernie Leighton, piano; Tony Mottola, guitar; Jack Lesberg, bass on Tracks 4, 5, 12. Dean Eckles, sax & flute; Charles La Vere, piano; Robert Bain, guitar; Lou Buttermann, bass; Nick Fatool, drums; voices on Track 8. Strings on Tracks 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 12.

I might say before I begin that I am anything but rah-rah about female singers in general. Most of them satisfy me on isolated songs only. Billie is the one singer whose general offerings I accept without reservations.

Billie really can't sing in the conventional interpretation of the word (Sarah Vaughan has a much better voice as far as quality goes), but with her unique phrasing, intonation, and word pronunciation she enacts her own laws and rules over a personally reorganized world of song. With other singers, I become so preoccupied with the mechanics of their

singing (she strained to hit that note, she's flat here, she's trying to be sexy there, now she's getting coy or cute, she's trying to swing or "sell" this number and if I saw her in person she'd be going thus and so with her hands) that I can't feel the song. Billie involves me in the song itself and her (maybe *the*) meaning of it. Her experience and feeling in the song become mine too; she makes me participate emotionally even more than musically. Billie and her songs are one; she makes a song hers, reinterprets it by restyling lyrics and tune to her own specifications. Her singing is as natural as if she were talking, no phoniness. Since Billie has lived most of the experiences she sings of, her performances have conviction, sincerity, and awareness.

*Lover Man* contains a number of the more unimpressive Holiday sides, along with some of the best. The recordings date from 1944 through 1950 and utilize such personnel as George Wettling, Billy Butterfield, Bob Haggart, Denzil Best, Bobby Hackett, Nick Fatool. *Lover Man*, *That Ole Devil Called Love*, *You're My Thrill*, and *Crazy He Calls Me* include ballad-style strings in the accompaniment but Billie successfully overcomes the non-jazz surroundings as she imbues each song with a feeling of the blues. One facet of Billie's style, a certain flippancy and mischievousness, emerges on *That Ole Devil Called Love*.

*My Man* and *Porgy* remain in a class by themselves: the former one of the most lucid examples of how the Holiday conception reincarnates

what remains lifeless and vapid in the hands of another, the latter a communicative, deeply moving plea. Who else can sing lyrics like "Don't let him handle me and drive me mad" without sounding artificial or absurd? Who else can change a single word with such significance? Bobby Tucker's unobtrusive piano accompaniment greatly contributes to the mood established by Billie on these two tunes.

The remaining tracks sound like an attempt to doll up Billie for the consumption of the unhip general public. *Weep No More*, with unnecessary and annoying ooh-wah fill-ins by the Stardusters, tries at being blue and even Billie cannot save *Girls Were Meant to Take Care of Boys* from drowning in its own simpering. That vocal group (the Stardusters again) coming in on the *Girls* track right after *Porgy* is an unpleasantly abrupt descent from the heights. What happened on *Girls*?—the musicians, Billie, and the Stardusters are each in a different key; tonal chaos results. *This Is Heaven To Me* aims to duplicate a *God-Bless-the-Child* atmosphere but is too vague melodically to register as another *Child*. *Solitude* clutters up the backing with too many arranged substitute chord changes; Billie's version of the same tune with Oscar Peterson on piano (Clef MG C-18) is much more meaningful.

The album is worth the price just for *Porgy* and *My Man*; *Lover Man*, *Ole Devil Called Love*, and *You're My Thrill* thrown in besides also raises its value.

—Mimi Clar

## PHILLY JOE JONES SEXTET

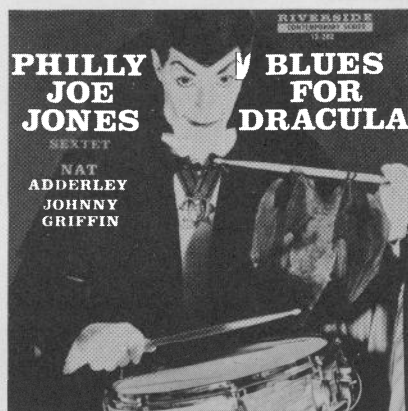
*Blues for Dracula*, Riverside 12-282.

*Blues For Dracula*; *Trick Street*; *Fiesta*; *Tune-up*; *Ow!*

Personnel: Jones, drums (and monologue); Nat Adderley, cornet; Julian Priester, trombone; Johnny Griffin, tenor sax; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Jimmy Garrison, bass.

The effort to be different at all costs had pretty well run the gamut of tricky cover art. With this new Riverside lp it has been extended to the hitherto inviolate sound track. The title piece introduces Philly Joe Jones (the drummer, that is) as a student of the double horror movie, whose clichés he burlesques in a four minute monologue.

Jazz has always had its humorous side and certainly no one objects to a little fun. But this off-beat comedy, conceding that it comes off, is still a risky index of cultural literacy. There are other considerations, too.



The modern jazz musician has been asking all along that we accept him as a mature artist. Does he still want us to take him seriously? And what about the consumer? Is he willing to pay \$4.98 for a comic monologue? Or would he be better off with a whole Theodore lp?

There have been successful records in the past where jazz artists combined speech with music. One recalls Fats Waller's monumental *The Joint is Jumpin'*. But that was a biting comment on the social scene Fats conjured up for us. So in its way was Wingy Manone's *Stop The War*. *Blues for Dracula* isn't a comment on anything, except Philly's special hobby and that giant of celluloid Thespians, the late Bela Lugosi.

Stripped of its rather desperate bid for attention this is just another pick-up date, compounded of some new names with Riverside house men. They make some music but the sales pitch is the insistent note. Philly Joe might take another leaf from Max's book and scout himself up a really interesting new jazz group — if he could tear himself away from those fascinating old double horror bills.

—Ross Russell



## LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS

*Lightnin' Hopkins Strums the Blues*, Score SLP 4022

*Katie May; My California; Honey Babe; Short Haired Woman; Little Mamma Blues; Shotgun; Rollin' and Rollin'; See See Rider; So Long; Mistreated.*

This is a most welcome lp because, for some reason, Lightnin' Hopkins has so far remained less well known than other great contemporary blues performers such as Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker.

Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins was probably born and raised in Louisiana. His town of predilection for many years seems to be Houston, Texas. He has also lived and worked in California and was even recorded in New York for Decca in 1953. His recording activities started around 1946 for the now defunct Gold Star label; since then his name has appeared on the following labels: Modern, Aladdin, Sittin' In With, Jax, Mercury, RPM, Decca, Herald and Harlem. The numbers on this lp come from the Aladdin company for which they were made at the end of 1946 or early '47 and some of them apparently were previously unissued. On all sides but two (*Katie May* with pianist Thunder Smith and drummer; *Little Mamma Blues*, with drummer), Lightnin' Hopkins is alone, accompanying himself on guitar.

Compared to all blues performers

actually active and known to us, Lightnin' Hopkins is the most "primitive." He belongs to the sources as far back as we can go in this idiom, resembling much more a Blind Lemon Jefferson than a Big Bill, for instance. Among other things he is essentially a solo performer, changing the patterns, the lyrics, the chord progressions as he feels. Strangely enough he is completely intact, free of any urban or alien influence. His voice is deep and rich, with a strong, rough accent perfectly matched to the type of songs performed and his guitar is adapted to his speech as intimately as a second voice would be. When he starts a chorus one can never tell where he's aiming, how the phrases will be developed, and what sudden and abrupt changes he may introduce and bring to their logical conclusion.

Like most blues performers, Lightnin' Hopkins has one tempo he specially favours and which is for him particularly successful — very slow, absolutely relaxed and lazy. He possesses, especially on this type of slow number, the characteristics, quite hard to summarize briefly, which make a performer a great, genuine blues artist compared to the many average good ones.

The choice of the numbers on this lp is all in all quite representative and satisfactory, though far from being a choice of Hopkins at his best throughout. It has to be noticed also

that, technically speaking, some of the recordings are badly reproduced (*Shotgun, Mistreated*) and even in the better cases the lp versions can never be compared to the old 78 rpm records.

*My California* is a perfect example of pure blues atmosphere and of Hopkins in his better mood. *Short Haired Woman*, printed on page 15, one of his favourite compositions, is equally successful. This is an example of his lyrics' originality, in perfect accordance with melody and guitar style. *See See Rider* and *So Long* are particularly interesting as examples of how Hopkins changes classical tunes of the blues repertoire, and adapts them to his own strong personality.

It is to be hoped that this lp will attract attention to Lightnin' Hopkins, one of the richest of all blues performers today. There is a large choice available among his already existing records; and most of all, I wish that a recording company would bring him into a studio again soon—Hopkins as well as the many other blues artists still active today.

—Yannick Bruynoghe

(N.B. Any information concerning Lightnin' Hopkins or other musicians in this field would be most welcome. Please write to: Yannick Bruynoghe—42, Rue E. Gossart—Brussels 18—Belgium.)

## MAX ROACH, NEW QUINTET

*Deeds Not Words*, Riverside 12-280.

*You Stepped Out of a Dream; Filide; It's You or No One; Jodie's Cha-Cha; Deeds, Not Words; Larry-Larue; Conversation (solo).*

Personnel: Roach, drums; Booker Little, trumpet; George Coleman, tenor sax; Ray Draper, tuba; Art Davis, bass.

At Newport last summer some two hours before he was due on-stage with his new quintet, Max Roach might have been found alone, half crouched over his snares and tom-toms, under the canvas directly behind the orchestra shell. Ostensibly he was tuning up and the people watching him included all of the jazz drummers who happened to be at Newport. In the half light Max presented an eerie, monkish figure. The layman might have wondered, since Max had been in the trade since Minton days, why he required two hours to prepare for a twenty minute show. The homage of fellow professionals was the tip-off. They were there to learn from the best in the business.

This sort of obsessive devotion to music is not uncommon in the highly

partisan field of jazz. Louis, Morton, Fats, Pres, Bird all shared it. Perhaps it helps explain genius, not so much an infinite capacity for taking pains as an excessive dedication to one's art.



Master drummer, elder of the bop revolt, Max Roach at 33 continues to exert a strong influence on young musicians. His latest group makes its debut in a well-produced and annotated Riverside lp. It was recorded shortly after the festival, but under studio conditions, uses the same personnel and much of the same

material.

It is a youthful group in the extreme. Booker Little, the trumpet man, is 20. Tuba-ist Ray Draper is 17. George Coleman and Art Davis are in their early twenties. The master-disciple relationship is emphasized. These names are new to jazz. Whether they are genuine talents scouted up by the master, or merely gifted apprentices who have already profited by their new association, or both, is hard to say. But they make some forceful jazz on this record. Their gusty, turbulent music is welcome in this day of bland, self-conscious musicianship.

The lead side, *You Stepped Out of a Dream*, is formidable. The metric changes, running broad jump solo entrances, and linear structure are typical of the album. There's a sixteen bar section where the metre shifts from Afro-Cuban to "up" that is a lovely example of suspense obtained by the simplest of means, and of Max's sure, light, driving hand on the reins.

Good intonation and phrasing mark

the solo work of Little's trumpet and Coleman's tenor sax. Bassist Davis has a fine beat and broad tone. But the surprise of this date is Ray Draper. He may be on the way to adding a new instrumental voice and style to jazz, very much the way J. J. Johnson did with trombone some ten years ago. There's a lot of Draper on *Filide*, which happens to be his original. He solos on most of the sides and puts a strong, supple bottom in the rhythm section when he is not busy in the front line.

Generically, this is another version of the piano-less band, but the sonority of this group, with its three wind instruments all tuned in B-flat, is

weightier than Mulligan's — heavy, large, and darkly brassy.

These performances are jazz stripped to essentials—like the New Orleans style of Oliver or the tightly-knit Parker-Gillespie groups in the mid-forties. (Max was on the latter of course.) Rhythmic considerations pervade every aspect of the playing. The solos are direct and functional, and often depend upon sheer velocity for effect.

This is playing a pole away from the cool or typical West Coast, where voicing, technique, harmonic extension and refined intonation enjoy priorities. Here the emphasis is on phrasing, hot tone, drive, and rhyth-

mic interest. Many tastes will favor the blander, less stringed music. But then that has been the kind of jazz (Whiteman, Shaw, Dorsey) which has demonstrated the poorest staying powers, once its vogue was exhausted. This music seems closer to the common source of jazz than a good deal that is being played today.

Whatever future judgments may be, this seems jazz drumming at its all-time high. The liner notes tell us Max went directly from high school into Minton's. It didn't take Max fifteen years to learn to play this well. It took jazz sixty years to produce drumming this excellent.

—Ross Russell

*Drums on Fire*. World Pacific WP-1247. Tabla solo *Variations In Tintal* by **CHATUR LAL**; *Caravan* by **THE MASTERSOUNDS** featuring Benny Barth; *Ritual* by the **JAZZ MESSENGERS** featuring Art Blakey; *Bark for Barksdale* by the **GERRY MULLIGAN QUARTET** featuring Chico Hamilton.

The four tracks on this lp present extended drum solos by four different drummers in a variety of contexts. The fact that they are all drummers seems a thin excuse for packaging them in this manner, but that is a matter of taste; there may very well be enough people who are interested in an hour of drum solos to warrant such an album.

The Chatur Lal track is the only one that I found at all interesting. The drums he plays have a lovely liquid sound, and he produces a variety of pitches on them. He improvises on a basic pattern that is difficult to find and follow since it does not relate directly to any of the forms that seem natural to the Western ear. However, his statement and subsequent development of themes can be understood after a few listenings, and the inventiveness and grace of execution that he displays are fascinating. There is no evident attempt to "break it up" with any of the time honored show drumming climaxes that are found on the rest of this album, but being unfamiliar with traditional Indian drumming I am also unfamiliar with what devices (if any) a rabble-rousing tabla player might use to gain the applause of an Indian audience.

The Mastersounds track featuring Benny Barth does not sound like it was intended to be taken seriously and I will refrain from doing so. Entertaining an audience with a nov-

elty number of this sort might be very successful, but it has little value on record. Barth plays the usual busy up-tempo solo, leaning heavily on the hurrah of latin rhythms as an accompaniment to his rather dull thundering. The rest of the group whoops it up behind him with cowbell clinks, clave clacks, hoots, caws, and yelps of gibbering Spanish, playing for comedy effect. The whole thing goes on much too long even in fun. When they finally get back to playing a closing chorus of *Caravan* the sound of music is a welcome relief, but by this time the musicians are in no mood to give it more than a perfunctory once-more-around.

Art Blakey's insistence on his two years' research among the tribes of inner Nigeria and the resulting effect on his conception of drumming is about as relevant as the rotogravure article I remember reading in the thirties about Gene Krupa (then the star of the Goodman Band) and his studies of the exotic rhythms of Africa. If either drummer has made such a study, it certainly hasn't affected his playing. Art's track on this record sounds like it's roots are much more in Spanish Harlem than in Nigeria, and a listen to any African ethnic record will remind the listener that the showboating and humbug on the Blakey record is all his own. As far as "expressing the day's events using the drum as a vocal tool" (liner notes by Ed Michel), I find little conceivable connection between the drumming here and the stories the album notes claim are being told by the drums. I have heard far superior drumming of this sort on the shores of the 110th St. lake in Central Park, where groups of young Negro conga drummers, tin-can beaters, bottle-clinkers, and chest-slappers often meet

on a summer afternoon to enjoy the simple pleasures of playing rhythm together without any attempt either to tell folk stories or report the news of the day. Blakey's medicine-show bunkum seriously interferes with his own expression, which is not Nigerian tribal ritual, but American jazz.

The last track on the album was cut at one of Gerry Mulligan's California Concerts and for obvious reasons was not included in the album of the same name. Definitely show material, this music is much less valid on record. I find Hamilton's entire approach to the drums quite vain and frivolous, though he sounds much better when accompanying the quartet than he does during his long solo. The tune is a pleasant sendoff for any instrumentalist to develop choruses on, but old show-biz Chico, as soon as he is allowed to carry the ball, drops the original tempo and any connection with the original tune and begins building all kinds of effete phrases that vanish into nothing before they are out of the drum. He postures, gesticulates, and emotes with all the fine sensitivity of a morality-play villain, without regard for musical values. The drum solo gets so far from any connection with *Bark For Barksdale* that the return to it by the horns is a little shocking. In the brief remainder of the number Gerry and Jon Eardley play a chorus of improvised counterpoint that just gets nicely going by the time they go into the final chorus of melody. Chico's parting shot is a loud, crude acoustical pratfall that sums up his whole performance with deadly accuracy.

This whole album has a "scraps from the editing-room floor" quality that does neither the artists nor the record company any credit.

—Bill Crow



**THE DAVIS SISTERS:** *He That Believeth*, Savoy MG 14014.

**THE DAVIS SISTERS:** *Shine On Me*, Savoy MG 14007.

In jazz circles, the Davis Sisters would be referred to as a "wailing group." They sing with a firm conviction in a highly ecstatic manner. Their numbers (unlike those of subtly-building groups like the Pilgrim Travelers who reach a fever pitch so gradually one does not consciously realize it at first) start on a fairly high level of excitement and stay there. The opening of *Shine On Me*, for instance, from the similarly-titled album, is like what it takes a preacher an entire sermon to work up to.

A wonderful roughness pervades the Davis Sisters' delivery. It stems in part from the built-in blue tones of their voices (what a refreshing lack of pear-shaped tones!), also from their swing, which a friend of mine described in effect as "feeling like you are being thrown up in the air every other beat" (second and fourth, that is). Constant leader-chorus antiphony permeates the sing-

ing, with the chorus catching words, syllables and phrases from the leader in a great ballgame of sound.

These particular lp's mostly contain what could loosely and understatedly be termed "toe-tappers." Only entirely sustained, long-noted solo is *Shine On Me*; other slowly ad-libbed songs eventually lapse into rocking rhythms. (*He That Believeth*, *In That Sea* from "*Believeth*;" *I Promised the Lord* from "*Shine*"). Remaining performances either waltz (*I'm Satisfied at Last*, *I'll be Satisfied* from "*Believeth*;" *This Is My Prayer* from "*Shine*") or swing at varying speeds (*Jonah*, *Search My Heart*, *What He's Done For Me*, *Oh The Joy That Came to Me*, *Almost Home*, *My Wonderful Counselor*, *You're Gonna Need Somebody on Your Side* from "*Believeth*;" *Sinner Man Where You Gonna Run To*, *I Want To Be More Like Jesus*, *I Don't Know What I'd Do, Keepin' Me Alive*, *There's a Tree on Each Side of the River*, *When I Get Inside*, *Come On Go With Me*, *Farewell* from "*Shine*").

In "*Believeth*," the Spanish-tinged *Jonah* with bongo-like drum beats, is one of the few gospel songs I've heard that breaks off abruptly without ritard. *What He's Done For Me* spreads a long-note vocal over a break-neck instrumental accompaniment.

In "*Shine*" (with a beautiful cover of a spire and tree silhouetted against a cloudy violet sky), *I Want To Be More Like Jesus* sounds like Wild Bill Davis supplied the organ intro. The choral "Ooh-ah's" on *Tree*, in voicings and stylization could belong to a pop song. I know the Davis Sisters would not want to do so, but put *Tree* on a jukebox and it's a hit. (Why can't kids listen to music like this which has the musical qualities they seek in rock and roll but which is artistically and emotionally genuine?)

Curtis Dublin's piano chords, note clusters and counter-melodies, as well as the organ and drum rhythms contribute considerably to the drive of the songs. Though wordless, the instrumentalists' excitement is felt as overwhelmingly as that of the vocalists.

The Davis Sisters bear a message besides their immediate religious one to everyone connected with jazz; they remind us that the down-to-earth, free, natural, unaffected, singing-out of the emotions is an ever-living part of our jazz heritage, and that it is mighty hard to beat.

—Mimi Clar

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## REVIEWS: BOOKS

*The First Book of Jazz*, by Langston Hughes; illustrations by Cliff Roberts; music selected by David Martin. Franklin Watts, New York, 1955.

Langston Hughes has tackled an extremely difficult project — that of communicating the history and nature of jazz to children—and he does a fine job. The explanations are clear and accurate (though highly generalized) and the musical examples are simple—if the child cannot play them himself, they are easy enough for anyone who reads music to execute.

Throughout, the idea that jazz is *fun* recurs and I see nothing wrong in this (if any of the youngsters decide to be jazz musicians when they grow up they'll be disillusioned soon enough). Better that kids form wholesome attitudes toward jazz than be led into "jazz is naughty so I will play it when Mom and Dad aren't home."

The author explains that jazz is a way of playing music, that jazz is American; he stresses the happy-sad quality of the blues and jazz; he notes and defines ten basic elements of jazz: syncopation, improvisation, percussion, rhythm, blue notes, tone color, harmony, breaks, riffs, and joy of playing.

The Record Recommendations are good (but Erroll Garner, Bud Powell and Oscar Peterson under "Cool Combos" and Duke Ellington (!?) under "Progressive Sounds"?). I would omit some names from the list of "Famous Jazz Musicians" in favor of including others I consider more im-

portant, but this happens whenever anyone compiles a "list." I do object thoroughly, to the inclusion of Barbara Carroll's and Hazel Scott's pictures in the "*Great Jazz Pianists*" gallery (*italics mine*) when no photo of Tatum or Powell appears as misleading to impressionable young minds.

Though *The Book of Jazz* is highly simplified in technical terms, the child will need to bring a certain amount of musical knowledge to the book. The chapter on syncopation, for example, mentions a five-tone scale, seventh and ninth chords (you'd be surprised how many college music majors have no idea what these are), 4/4 tempo, weak and off beats, twelve bars, and I wonder how many children fully comprehend these terms. As near as I can figure out, the writing is for sixth and seventh, possibly advanced fifth, graders, and most youngsters of this age may not have the background for such technical references. Usually by the time a child can identify a ninth chord or a weak beat he is ready for a more detailed explanation and advanced presentation of jazz than Hughes provides.

To an adult, the illustrations are marvelously droll, from a banjo-playing angel to a completely self-satisfied modern mule. But will children be able to appreciate the drawings, which are modern and in black and white? Younger children (who usually prefer color pictures) probably will not dig the sophisticated approach of artist Cliff Roberts,

whose subtly humorous work reveals a familiarity with and a real insight into jazz musicians and the jazz scene. Still, since more and more children's books are being illustrated in a modern style, my doubts are probably based on personal recollection of my own tastes in childhood.

Hughes has made Louis Armstrong the focal point, the main character or "hero" of the book by managing to relate the developments in jazz to Louis's activities and experiences. In addition to the chapter devoted to Armstrong's life, the "little Louis Armstrong" references tell how Armstrong and his friends play homemade instruments as children, how his great grandmother remembered dances in Congo Square, how his father sang work songs at his job, how his relatives sang religious songs during Louis's boyhood, how he listened to Jelly Roll's ragtime as he passed New Orleans cafes, how he followed the bands in the second line, how he made some blues records with Bessie Smith, and how whites in Chicago listened to his horn. Louis in this way acts as central theme or frame of reference, as a personification of jazz with which the readers can keep in touch throughout.

*The Book of Jazz* gets kids on the right track: it helps them form constructive attitudes toward jazz and gives them pertinent historical and technical facts and will, I hope, serve to launch many youngsters into further explorations of the jazz idiom.

—Mimi Clar



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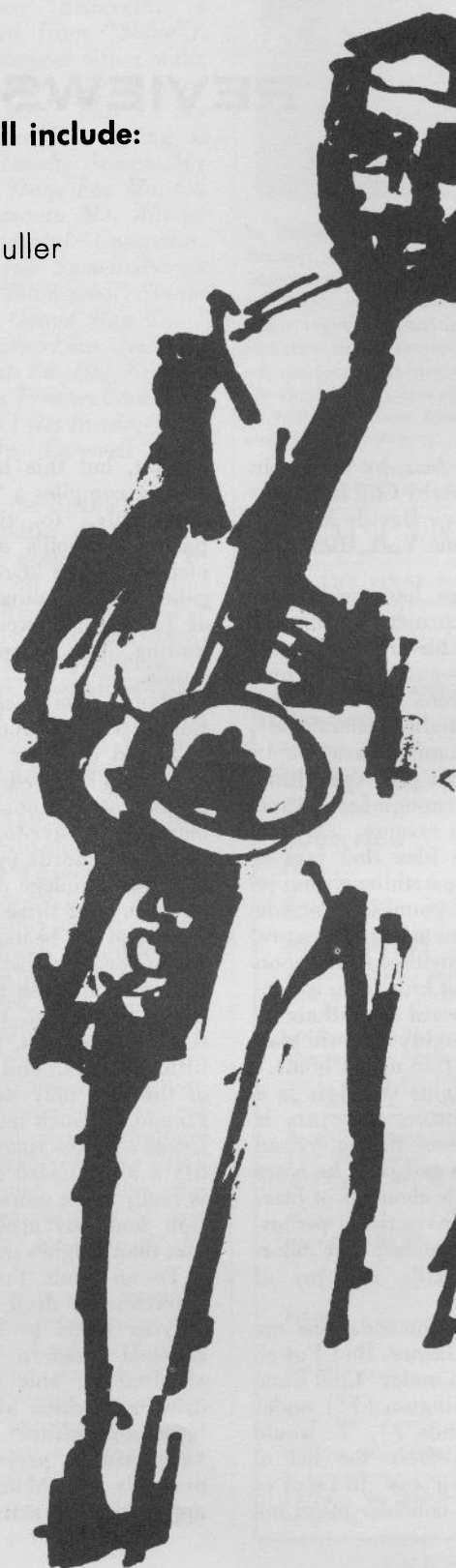
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## REVIEWS: MOVIES

*I Want To Live*, produced by Walter Wanger, directed by Robert Wise, screenplay by Nelson Gidding and Don Mankiewicz, music by Johnny Mandel. (Figaro Film—United Artists)

*I Want To Live* is so knowingly done—so well written and acted, so well cast, well directed, photographed and edited—that it dazzles one so that he may not see it for what it is.

The action and its burden are especially suited to the pseudo-documentary treatment which it was given—the apparent detachment was precisely the best way for the film to make its point. And it is there to make a point. It is a piece of passionate and, under the surface, passionately presented, journalism. In another time, it would have been a political pamphlet; today it is a plea cast in the form of observed humanity, using a telling exploitation of emotion, violence, and of environment.

Barbara Graham is an amoral but essentially sensitive girl; she has discovered none of her capacities but her feelings and she lives by them. She has more life and more capacity for living than most of those around her, and their world, where “goodness” and “morality” have more to do with convention and fear than with insight or conviction, is clearly not available to her. What is available is the human contact of prostitution, the violence and zest of dives, the perverted defiance and excitement of crime.

Susan Hayward was able to convey the irony of Barbara's kind of sordid reality in a milieu of superficiality and deception. I have never before thought Miss Hayward could act; like Lana Turner she seemed only capable of *performing* at a certain pitch of bitchiness, confusion, and intensity. It is true that she cannot read lines or pace a scene as a professional actress can, but she does grasp and sustain Barbara in her

complexity and in the implicit commentary that her character represents. Handed a scene like the one in which her prison reunion with her child is cruelly exploited by the visiting press, she is moving in executing it. And in the way she implies Barbara's undeveloped capacity for moral insight, she shows a perception deeper than that in the script's and one that approaches tragedy. Her Barbara is all feeling, uncompensated, with the warmth and the spite, the tenderness and the violence, the glorious and terrible things that that side of man can bring him.

In the end, we do not know who or what is to blame: man's laws, the selfishness of city attorneys, the methods of police, fate, Barbara's environment, or Barbara herself. We come away, in short, feeling the way we may have felt when we went in: that something very fundamental has gone wrong with the human soul, but what it is exactly or what to do about it, we don't know. Perhaps (as the script pleads) we can at least postpone the pressure a bit by passing a law or two. Perhaps we can try to stop dealing with it by finding scapegoats like Barbara to punish for our own confusion. Thus her story can engage our feelings but not enlighten our souls.

In the context of the film, the Johnny Mandel music seems rather conventional, a lot of it out of Alex North with dashes of Elmer Bernstein and Leonard Bernstein. It is basically the kind of score that violent “low-life” and “delinquency” films and TV whodunits have made us familiar with—but better than many, to be sure. It is sprinkled with jazz devices, has some improvisation by jazzmen, and, alas, the facile agitation of popping bongos. And the music represents what Barbara represents: confused emotional violence; indulgence; a limited look at reality; and a direction-less undisciplined, potentially meaningful but self-defeating life—pathetic without being tragic,

ironic without being really significant, alive without really living, a symptom of a plight without insight into that plight, commenting without forcefully criticizing, instinctively reflecting without really understanding. From Gerry Mulligan, Art Farmer, and Frank Rosolino boozing on the stand we switch to a couple of ratty looking guys sucking up pot in an alley.

There is one scene which will delight: as Barbara is received with affected friendliness in the death house at San Quentin, a radio counterpoints with Lawrence Welk. Barbara shouts to them to turn off the schmaltz. They do. And through her example of guts and vitality, they turn off the other schmaltz too and have soon worked out an honest, respectful relationship with her. The radio counterpoints with Gerry Mulligan—then Barbara underlines it with a hippy's plug.

It is rather strange that the proclamation that this film has a “jazz score” is being celebrated. One cannot imagine a young “classical” composer greeting with glee news of the latest activities of Miklos Roza: he knows well that his kind of music has been a self-sustaining art for at least two hundred years and the fact that someone uses its devices for the comparatively bland function of accompanying a movie might well depress him if he thought about it. Here is jazz, trying finally to break out of its functional assignments in dances and barroom, celebrating assignments which put it on a plane with Franz Waxman! At any rate, I hear more range, more depth, and more devotion to the essential character of Jazz in a three minute Ellington record than I hear in this movie.

Jazz is a music with an identity, a heritage, a dignity, a life and implicit human attitudes of its own. It is not a set of devices or *outré* effects to be toyed with, nor a “symptom of the times” to be exploited.

—Martin Williams



# JAZZ IN PRINT

by Nat Hentoff

James Baldwin, author of the best jazz short story yet in print (*Sonny's Blues*), the best novel involved with the Negro church (*Go Tell It on the Mountain*), the best collection of essays concerned with being a Negro in America (*Notes of a Native Son*, Beacon paperback) has a good essay in the January 25 *New York Times Book Review* section. Title is *The Discovery of What It Means to Be an American*.

Superior article on *Muddy Waters*—"Hoochie-Coochie Man" by Paul Oliver in the January *Jazz Monthly*. Also *The Hal Singer Story* as told to Albert McCarthy; a valuable piece by Max Harrison in re *Charlie Parker on Savoy*; etc. . . . Included in the January-February *Recorded Folk Music* is A. L. Lloyd's *Street Singers of the French Revolution* . . .

A reader writes that one of the best jazz radio programs in the country is *The Harley Show*, WBAL Baltimore . . . The December issue of Bob Koester's *Jazz Report* (42 East Chicago Avenue) has a fascinating *Memories of Kansas City Early Jazz* by Jasper Allen as told to John Beaman. Also an appreciation of the late Danny Alvin by Art Hodes . . . Solid articles in the January *Jazz-Hot* on Art Blakey, Benny Golson, Bobby Timmons, Jymie Merritt, Lee Morgan and Ernie Wilkins. Also a detailed analysis with musical examples of André Hodeir's *L'Alphabet* (Savoy MG 12 104) by Christian Bellest . . .

The January *Jazz-Statistics* has material on Fate Marable, background on Quentin "Butter" Jackson, etc. . . . If an address of any magazine mentioned in this department is not included in the issue you're reading, it's been given previously . . . More on Fate Marable in *The Story of Harry Dial* as told to Frank Driggs in the December *Jazz Journal* . . . The Mohawk Valley Jazz Society has started a news letter. For information about the letter and the society, Bob Barnes c/o Westmoreland Central School, Westmoreland, New York . . . Article on Luis Russell's Orchestra by Harald Grut in the December *Or-Kester Journalen* . . . A piece on Erroll Garner by Leonard Feather in the February *Compact*.

One of the best interviews in recent *Down Beat* history was Tom Scanlon's with Teddy Wilson, January 22. Teddy said this about Charlie Parker, and I've known musicians who claim Bird felt the same way some of the time: ". . . I always thought a saxophonist like Parker would sound much better with a conventional rhythm section than with a *hipster* rhythm section. To my mind, if the background gets too complex, it kills the solo . . . To me, the Parker-like soloists would sound much better if they had simpler harmonic backgrounds; then their own harmonic thinking would come over far better" . . .

Ronnie Roullier, Ted Heath arranger, reported on his impressions of jazz in New York in the December 19 *Jazz News* (Britain): "There is a feeling in New York that jazz is a part of their life. There are thousands of people, in the States, who are now in their thirties and forties who were kids in the days of swing. There are people from all walks of life who know and appreciate jazz. They were fans in their youth and in the process of growing up they have not lost their taste for jazz . . . (In Britain) we are one generation behind but, we will—in time—develop our own tradition. However—if it is going to be a copy of the American original—then it will not compare. There are original influences in British jazz but they tend to be killed by this terrible passion that we have for comparison. Tenor sax players, for example. How can they succeed when almost inevitably they are compared with either Lester Young or Stan Getz . . ."

Comments on the "terrible passion for comparison" in jazz are welcome . . .

Shorty Rogers, quoted in the February 5 *Down Beat*: "Jazz is constantly changing. It's changing so rapidly that what's valid today might not be valid three weeks from now. So musicians have got to go on developing with it and, in turn, change the music to fit the time."

Was it on January 5 or 13 that Louis, Basie, Lester, Duke, Billie and Bird became invalid?

New book by the consistently valuable Danish critic, Erik Wiedemann, *Jazz og Jazzfolk*, (Ascheoug Danks Forlag, Copenhagen) . . . Long, probing essay on Erroll Garner, *The Last of the Mohicans*, by Whitney Balliett in the January 31 *New Yorker* . . . Skimpy if enthusiastic article by Roland Wingfield, formerly with Katherine Dunham, in the January *Dance* magazine: *New Orleans's Marching Bands: Choreographer's Delight*. The dance magazines—all of them—remain square about jazz. They still think, for example, that Jerome Robbins can at times be called a “jazz” choreographer.

Several jazz collectors' items unavailable here have been issued in Britain. A reliable record store to deal with there seems to be Agate & Co., Ltd., 77 Charing Cross Road, London W.C. 2. You can write them for details . . . The last *Discophile* (it was incorporated into *Matrix* as of January) was December and had material on Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee and a Sonny Thompson Discography by Kurt Mohr . . . According to Max Jones in the January 17 *Melody Maker*, Freddie Jenkins, former Ellington trumpet player, is

working for a real estate agency in Fort Worth.

Good article by Ed Salzman, *There's Money in Jazz 78s (Some)* in the December 27 *Saturday Review* . . . Excellent reporting by J. M. Flager in the December 6 *New Yorker* on the Zildjian cymbal hegemony. It's an *Onward and Upward* with the *Arts* piece and is called a *Far Cry from the Corybantes*. Said Robert Zildjian: “Another thing about cymbals—top-quality cymbals, at any rate—is that they produce virtually all the notes in the scale, or their harmonics, even though they can't be tuned to a specific note, like C, D, or B-flat. As a matter of fact, if any single note does dominate a cymbal's tone, it's obviously an inferior instrument . . . It was from Krupa that my father got the idea of developing a line of cymbals just for jazz. Hi-hats, for one example, and sizzles for another—cymbals fitted with loose rivets and used mainly for brush work.” There's more about jazz and much other cymbal lore.

Anybody interested in doing thorough instrument reportage is welcome to submit ideas to *The Jazz Review*.

Charles Edward Smith has two first editions of the Eddie Condon-Thomas Sugrue *We Called It Music*. He'll swap them for the American editions of Louis Armstrong's *Swing That Music*, Wilder Hobson's *American Jazz Music* or Panassié's *Hot Jazz* . . .

A new German jazz monthly—with excellent photographs—is *Schlagzeug*, Berlin-Halensee, Kurfurstendamm 136, Germany. Leonard Feather is American correspondent . . . Horste Lange contributes a separate discographical section to the magazine.

Robert Taylor's description of a university-sponsored jazz panel in the January 30 *Boston Herald*: “. . . The first member of the panel is a distinguished jazz buff from one of the professions, a man who has left his mark in fields other than music—a celebrated surgeon, say—who is applauded roundly because of his non-musical status. The second is a virtuoso trumpeter who is wearing a gnashing hound's tooth check suit, Dundreary whiskers and an expression of dissolute ennui. The third is a prominent scholar from one of the jazz monthlies, a sartorial echo of the trumpeter save for narrow lapel touches proclaiming the skulking vestiges of a commitment to society. The fourth is a disc jockey who has rebelled against playing the kind of music he doesn't believe in, which is mainly music written in the Phrygian mode . . . Unfortunately, the argot has its limitations and the symposium boils down to a contest between the amateur buff and the professional scholar. The former, who is enthusiastically alert, informs the audience that jazz has come of age; that millions throughout the world regard it as our only truly native art form; that jazz's new respectability is underlined by this very occasion. The insight strikes the audience with the force of a thunderbolt.

“The jazz scholar agrees, but neither jargon nor enthusiasm moves him very much. He wants to disclose that he really knows music. Phrases such as ‘augmentation’ and ‘mirror fugue’ are moulded into forgotten corners of band history; and the Mound City Blue Blowers are compared to the Rasoumovsky Quartet. Presently, though, all the speakers will agree that something significant has been said about jazz today, and the Shrinagar [University] Festival will show its first non-profit profit. The trumpeter will leave the platform amid scattered hurrahs. ‘Man,’ he will mumble, shaking his head. ‘Man.’”



LOUIS ARMSTRONG, currently touring Europe, takes two NORELCO 'Continental' recorders wherever he goes. Says Louis, "I tape phono records and airshots all the time and if I'm in the room talking with friends, my NORELCO's keep right on copying with the volume turned down." Louis also finds the choice of three speeds convenient, using the slowest, 1½ ips for interviews and speech recording, the 3¾ speed for some music, and the 7½ speed for live recording. He says, "I've tried lots of tape machines since I got my first one in 1948, but NORELCO is the one for me." Recently he picked up two NORELCO 'Continental's' in Copenhagen. Set to run on the European power frequency of 50 cycles, they will be reset for 60 cycles when he returns to the United States. Like all NORELCO recorders they can be set in a few minutes for any power voltage requirement anywhere in the world; from 110 to 250 volts. The NORELCO 'Continental' is a product of North American Philips Co., Inc., High Fidelity Products Division, Dept. 1EE5, 230 Duffy Ave., Hicksville, L. I., N. Y.



In the December *Bulletin du Hot Club de France*, Olivier Keller tells of the band he heard at a one-nighter in Harlem. Manzie Johnson was the leader, and among the sidemen were Joe Thomas, Paul Webster, Budd Johnson, Happy Cauldwell, and Hilton Jefferson.

**The Spread of Jazz (Place Names):** From the December 19 *Jazz News*: "During November a band swap took place between the Racehorse Jazz Club, Hereford, and the Delta Jazz Club, Cheltenham. Hereford's Easy Riders were disappointed to find the Delta Club almost empty. The place of the future in Cheltenham these days is the Cellar, featuring jam sessions on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The Racehorse Jazz Club is planning an exchange with The Cellar in the New Year when the Easy Riders will play in exchange for a pick-up group."

#### The Stablemates?

Masco Young in the January 31 *Pittsburgh Courier*: "The reason that's being given out to explain why Dick Clark's popular *Bandstand* show on ABC-TV never has Negro teenagers dancing before the cameras. Clark, a \$400,000-a-year television performer would lose his national sponsors if he integrated the show."

#### The All-American boy.

An Evening of Comedy at the Newport Jazz Festival was proposed by Tom Scanlan in the January 31 *Army Times*. Among Scanlan's proposed innings:

"A critics' panel will discuss jazz

piano. Critic Barry Ulanov will explain why Phineas Newborn is the successor to Art Tatum 'with a clear title to the throne.' Critic Martin Williams of *Down Beat* and *The Jazz Review* will explain why Art Tatum 'obviously had limited melodic invention.' . . . Jazz critics Nat Hentoff and George Frazier will meet in a boxing ring with typewriters oiled. If Frazier writes, 'I kid you not' or 'I tell you true' before Hentoff uses words like 'minimal' or 'arcane' or 'egregious' or 'spare,' he will lose. If the reverse happens, Hentoff will be the winner. If Frazier quotes a Latin phrase at the same time Hentoff quotes Elizabethan verse, the bout will be declared a draw . . .

"Chet Baker, third best male jazz singer according to the Metronome poll (Louis Armstrong was not in the top ten), will sing. George T. Simon, writer and associate producer of the Timex all-star jazz shows on television, will explain how to produce a good jazz show on television. During Simon's lecture, 50 drum soloists and 100 other musicians will be present for demonstrations and Jane Morgan and Jaye P. Morgan will sing. Dakota Staton will also be on tap for imitations of Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, et al. . . . Several of the poll-winning guitarists will attempt to demonstrate unamplified guitar . . . The publishers of *The Encyclopedia of Jazz* will recite the 'more than 200 compositions' Leonard Feather has written . . ."

From a Big Bill obituary by Humphrey Lytellton in the August 23

*Melody Maker*: "Big Bill was a difficult man to accompany. No, that's not quite accurate—he was an impossible man to accompany, except on the rare occasions when he sang a conventional twelve-bar blues. He was sensitive to the jibes of the schooled players who accused him of bad chords. He *knew* he was right—and yet by the book their arguments were convincing. By the standards of the more sophisticated 'modern blues,' his chords were 'wrong' and his measure erratic. But the source of incompatibility was much deeper than a mere matter of technicalities. He had long reached maturity as an artist when he was first afforded the luxury of an accompanying band. Of necessity, and with instinctive musicianship, he had learnt how to provide on his guitar a complete and satisfying accompaniment. The thrummed lower strings, whose atonality—like the drone of the bagpipe—was the despair of the trained men, provided a steady rhythm to which bass and drums could add little.

"And with a technical adroitness sometimes obscured late in his life by stiffness — and carelessness — he produced from the upper strings melody and counter melody in the face of which the added horn man felt about as useful and significant as a rejected suitor at a wedding. Bill need not have worried. The sounds he coaxed from his guitar may not have come out of a textbook. But if the word has any meaning at all, they were *music*, through and through." . . .

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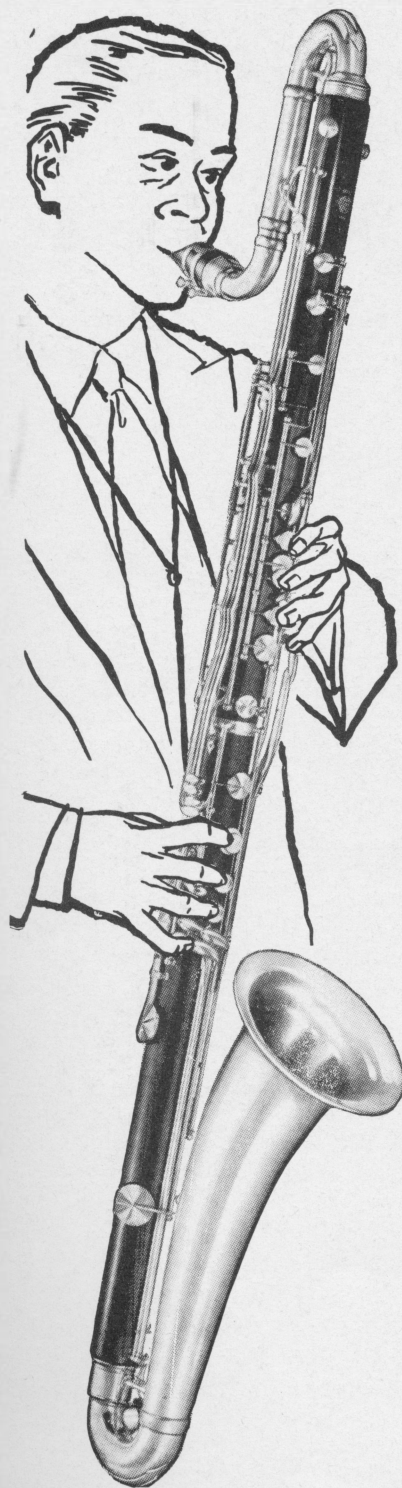
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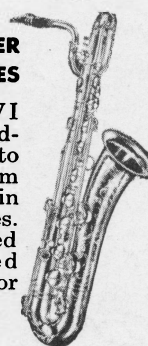
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