Everyone must be aware by now that the world lost Duke Ellington, and he was buried on Memorial Day. He had been hospitalized since March, and died May 24 of lung cancer complicated by pneumonia.

There can be no doubt that the Duke was the most important influence on American music in this century - as a composer, a bandleader, and a person. He was loved and respected by everyone - especially his peers, and he will be missed by everyone who can tap their foot. His band turned out some incredible talent - Johnny Hodges, Cat Anderson, Harry Carney and Ben Webster - to name a few. He and his bands have recorded hundreds of albums since 1924, and 72 of them are still available. His compositions include such hits as Satin Doll, Moon Indigo, I Got It Bad & That Ain't Good, Sophisticated Lady - and on and on and on.

Volumes of books could be written about the Duke. Perhaps the best now available would be his own autobiography - Music Is My Mistress - recently published by Doubleday & Co. Many jazz writers have written about Duke - including Stanley Dance and Whitney Balliet.

With his passing we are surely sad. At this time however - we should be happy about two things - that he was born, and that he died with dignity and did not have to suffer with his illness. His memory and contributions are eternal.

-Bill Wahl

A word of thanks to Tom Alabiso for offering to have his article on Buffalo's Jazz History cut in favor of the above, and to Chris for doing the beautiful illustration of Duke on such short notice.

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(as ask Miles). I'm not just talking about high notes, because lots of players can do that. The difference here is in the beautiful music that Maynard creates. This may be getting of the track, but I have spent literally hundreds of evenings listening to this man, and he has something that cannot easily be put into words. Beyond his incredible playing, Maynard has boundless energy, not only as a player - but as a great band leader. There is something in his psyche which draws energy from the entire band to create an extremely exciting experience. What it boils down to, is that you must catch this band live, because the best recording techniques in the world cannot begin to capture the experience of hearing this band in person.

Get this record. If you like good music - you will dig it, if you like big bands - you will love it. If you are a trumpet player, you will probably freak out completely. M.L.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Experienced drummer looking for serious working jazz or jazz rock group, available immediately for work in the Buffalo or Toronto area. Call 652-9032 or 652-7092.

King 3B Slide Trombone - for sale - excellent condition with carry case, $175 firm. Dave - 883-3907 or 941-615.

Whether you are a musician looking for work, work looking for a musician, want to buy, sell, or trade an instrument, or a stereo, or a record, or a band looking for work; you would do well to advertise in this column except in the case of a club looking for a musician. Any ad we consider to be unacceptable will be rejected. Orders will be accepted by mail only, and must be in our office (with payment) by the 21st day of the month. The ads will not be categorized.

RECORDS

GARY BARTZ - I'VE KNOWN RIVERS & OTHER BODIES - PRESTIGE 66001
GENE AMMONS AND FRIENDS AT MONTREUX - PRESTIGE 10078
HAMPTON HAWES - PLAYIN’ IN THE YARD - PRESTIGE 10077

Here are the remaining 3 albums, from Prestige-Milestone, recorded at Montreux last summer. As was the case with the other 2 (Gordon & Tyner), these are quite satisfying.

The Bartz release, a 2-record set, strikes me as being his best since the birth of the NTU troop. Everyone has time to stretch out, and they seem to function better in a live performance than in a studio. Although Bartz’s vocals aren’t so hot, the music is; and the band communicates very well.

Ammons enjoys himself and blows well, accompanied by Hamp Hawes, Bob Cranshaw, Kenny Clarke and Kenneth Nash (congas), on his LP. That group does four tunes, including Sophisticated Lady, before being joined by the Adderleys and Dexter Gordon. Then its all stops out for a 17 minute bash - ‘Treuex Bleu; and they have a ball!

Hampton Hawes’ turns out a fine performance on an album, using both acoustic and electric pianos. He is accompanied by Cranshaw and Clarke for this set, which is one of the most interesting trio albums in some time. In addition to the title tune, a Rollins number, there are 3 Hawes originals, and the classic - Stella by Starlight.

So grab that wine, choose your artists and enjoy yourself.

FRANK STRAZZERI SEXTET - VIEW FROM WITHIN
CREATIVE WORLD CW3003

This gifted pianist from Rochester is both under-recorded and under-rated. This album, originally released on the Revalation label, is an impressive set of some very hip music. Frank plays electric piano throughout, and all six compositions are originals. Three of the players here are familiar names in this area - Don Menza, Frank Rosolino and Gene Cherico. Rosolino (trom.) turns out some of the best soloing of the date, while Menza's sax work is a bit lighter than his usual (good!). The leader has a sound of his own and must be heard. Look for this one, if you can’t find it - phone us. B.W.

JAMES MOODY - FEELIN’ IT TOGETHER - MUSE 5020

If this isn’t the best (I think it is), it is certainly one of the best albums that Moody has ever put out. This record contains not only fine blowing from the leader, on alto, tenor & flute, but also another brilliant performance from Kenny Barron on keyboards, and outstanding arrangements. Larry Ridley (bass) and Freddie Waits (drums) turn out superb work as well. The album opens with a version of Anthropology that boils for nine minutes gaining degrees as it progresses. Although there are plenty of minutes of music here, it goes by far too quickly. For men are pourin’ out their feelings - together.

THE BLACKBYRDS - FANTASY F-5444

The Blackbyrds are six full-time students, studying music at Howard University. Their music is a high quality blend of jazz, rock, soul and R & B; with touches of African and Eastern influences - black music. Portions of this album bring to mind some of War’s better things, but the Blackbyrds have it much more together both instrumentally and vocally. Watch for this one, it’ll probably make the radio. By the way - guitarist Barney Perry is from Buffalo. B.W.

MORGANA KING - NEW BEGINNINGS - PARAMOUNT 6007

Whew! Morgana does it again. This incredible lady’s albums are few and far between, but when they arrive - watchout! These are those who will raise the question as to whether or not she is a jazz singer. Well forget about applying a label to Morgana King. She is in a class by herself. Popularity of a singer does by no means denote ability. Morgana never had the recognition she so rightly deserves, although in a sense she has, because as far as musicians (her peers) are concerned - she’s among the best.

After some tragedies in her personal life, such as the death of her husband - jazz trombonist, Willie
Dennis (in a car accident), she was somewhat secluded from the world.

Now Morgana is on the scene again. From the first few bars of Sunshine of Your Life, through half a dozen more of today's best tunes - she makes her greatness clear again. There is so much love and deep feeling on this record, don't be surprised if you start to cry - as I did. New Beginnings - get it.

M.L.

WEATHER REPORT - MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER - COLUMBIA KC 32494

Another fine disc from Weather Report! Despite changes in personnel on each of their four albums, they have maintained their patented sound, although they were a bit more rockish and structured on Sweetnighter. This album brings together the Sweetnighter style with the airy sound of their earlier works. New to the lineup is drummer Ismael Wilburn and bassist Al Johnson (who was recently with Chuck Mangione). Miroslav Vitous is heard on only one track. Vocals are heard (without hindering the music) on a few numbers. The music is colorful and percussive - an experience. Many of the tunes here will be familiar to anyone who saw this group at U.B. in April. B.W.

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET - BLUES ON BACH - ATLANTIC SD1652

This long overdue MJQ album finds them at their usual greatness, and is well worth the wait. The nine tunes here are all by Lewis or Jackson, and five of them are based on works of Bach. John Lewis uses the harpsichord often here, and it fits well with the material. I prefer this to their last few releases, but that is a matter of personal taste. I don't ever remember the MJQ putting out a bad album. They are masters who form a jazz institution. B.W.

FLORA PURIM - BUTTERFLY DREAMS - MILESTONE M-9052

If you are familiar with Flora from her work in Chick Corea's original Return to Forever, then you can expect more of the same if you purchase this fine side. Along with Joe Henderson, Stanley Clarke, Geo. Duke, David Amaro, Ernie Hood, and her hubby - Airtio, the lovely lady floats through the eight tunes with the lyrical beauty that is connected with her name. One high point is Antonio Carlos Jobim's DINDI, which she sings in her native language (Portuguese). Henderson's sax and flute work is much mellower than heard on his recent albums. B.W.

PAUL DESMOND - SKYLARK - CTI 6039

Paul Desmond, Gene Bertoncini, Gabor Szabo, Bob James, Ron Carter and Jack DeJohnette - that's the lineup - augmented by Ralph MacDonald (percussion), and George Ricci (cello). The music on this album is equal to or greater than these people who made it. It is refined and gorgeous. It seems as though people either like or dislike Desmond - with no medium; but if anyone really listens to him play - I should think they would have to admit that he draws a beautiful and unique sound from his horn. These tunes are typical of material found on Desmond's records. Take Ten (a 1974 Take Five?) will bring back memories of a song that turned thousands on to jazz in 1960. If you dig Paul, he'll be at the Bourbon Street in Toronto this month - see the ad in this issue. B.W.

CHARLES MINGUS - MINGUS MOVES - ATLANTIC SD 1653

Mingus is always exposing new talent to the jazz world. On this record he has two newcomers - Ronald Hampton on trumpet, and George Adams on tenor and flute, who both sound promising. Don Pullen is on piano, and drummer Dannie Richmond has returned. The music is lyrical, and more structured than most Mingus performances. The group is joined by Honey Gordon and Doug Hammond on vocals for a lovely rendition of the title tune - written by Hammond (who preceded Richmond as interim drummer). This album would be a good addition to most any jazz collection.

B.W.

SHORT SNORTS

BUDDY TATE & HIS BUDDIES - CHIAROSCURO CR-123

Buddy Tate & Buddies have turned out no less than a swinging, bluesy album, which should please most jazz buffs. Tenorman Tate is joined up front by Illinois Jacquet (also tenor) and Roy Eldridge (tpt.). All three solo with imagination and soul. The rhythm section, which includes pianist Mary Lou Williams, is fat and solid throughout. Music such as this is rarely produced these days - a totally relaxed and personal session.

B.W.

LONNIE LISTON SMITH - ASTRAL TRAVELING - FLYING DUTCHMAN 10163

In his days with Pharoah Sanders, Lonnie Liston Smith wrote and performed tunes with beautiful melodies, and rich textures and colors. This album is more of the same. Mood music - by itself it goes nowhere - but it takes you anywhere you might want to travel to. Unlike many Sanders albums, none of the music here is irritating. A good set. B.W.

DOM UM ROMAO - MUSE 5013

This first effort by Weather Report's percussionist is a gem. This is, it seems to me, what a percussionist's album should sound like. The music is played around a myriad of percussive effects resulting in an intricate blend of Brazilian music, jazz and God knows what else. For me, this is the sleeper of the month.

B.W.
The six tunes here are all Davis originals—written as a film soundtrack. Most of the music is soulful and happy, except for the sad Julie's Rag Doll, with vocals by Davis (that's not why it's sad). It's a good disc, although bass players won't get much out of it. Davis writes some nice stuff.

B.W.