"This group is absolutely gorgeous, a quality laid most obviously to Braff's mellow horn, Barne's disciplined but eloquent guitar and the masterly dynamics of both artists." -Philadelphia Daily News

A few years ago, trumpeter/cornettist Ruby Braff sat in with the George Barnes/Bucky Pizzarelli guitar duo at New York's Upstairs at the Downstairs. They played so incredibly well together that soon after they talked of getting together on a more permanent basis. Their talk was at 3:30 AM, and some 7-1/2 hours later they met at Barnes' house and played up a storm. It didn't take long for them to decide on a rhythm guitar and bass combination to back them, so they contacted Wayne Wright and John Giuffrida, and set off on a heavy rehearsing schedule.

Their debut was at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1973, where they were second on a bill with the Benny Goodman Quartet - the original one at that, with Wilson, Krupa and Hampton. If starting off on the right foot is a good omen, reports from that show put the Braff/Barnes group on top in every category but nostalgia. After such a performance, and the rave reviews, Newport promoter, George Wein would have had to be crazy not to have them back the following year. He wasn't and they were.

"They were not the reason the old hall was standing-room-only, but for sheer musical enjoyment they cut the Goodman Band to ribbons."

-San Francisco Chronicle

Their album, simply titled The Ruby Braff - George Barnes Quartet, was recorded for Chiaroscuro records, which is owned by Hank O'Neal. It is a small company, and the recording studio is located in O'Neal's Greenwich Village home. It was here that the quartet rehearsed for their Newport appearance, while an audience of musicians and listeners generally in their mid twenties watched, observed and thoroughly enjoyed what they heard. Later, Tony Bennett came by to sing and cut a record with them. After the record date, Bennett and the quartet made a documentary film together.

"It's a marriage that was made in heaven."

-Playboy

In performance, the Braff-Barnes group is a delight. The two leaders often open a tune in unison. They sound so right together that one could get the impression that they were poured from the same mold; except for their musical similarities and their height (they both register about 5' 5") a contrast is
evident. Braff is small boned with a thin face and a laugh that is as much a trademark as his trumpet sound. He's dead serious while playing, but smiles as though he's being tickled from behind while Barnes takes his turn. George, on the other hand, is stooky with a round head and more serious and reserved than his partner; his right foot atop a brick to achieve a comfortable stance for holding his guitar. (We saw him once with a cigar box but it proved inadequate as it kept falling over. They both sit in chairs, side by side, with Wayne Wright next to Braff, and present bassist Michael Moore stands in back.

If there were only one word to describe the quartet's sound, it would be dynamic. Many of their tunes are Rodgers & Hart classics or originals. They can have you on a mellow trip, when suddenly George (or Ruby-they both do it) will burst forth with a string of notes to make your head dance. Wright is strong and richly acoustic in his rythym support, Moore is a strong and steady bassist, he has to be since he alone has the job of keeping the time, driving the others and providing the bottom. You won't catch them running through today's pop hits. They don't have to - they can hold audiences of all types of musical preferences on their flawless performance alone. Their most contemporary tune is the Beatles. Here, There, & Everywhere, a number that fits their sound like a glove.

"A fine wine, mellow, light, clear and fragile yet explosive upon the senses - that's the Ruby Braff-Geo. Barnes Quartet." -Buffalo Jazz Report

The quartet is back in town, for the entire month of January, at the Statler's "Downtown" room. If you missed them the last time, and especially if you also missed Jackie & Roy - make it a point to get down to see them and the room. There is no limit to what can happen in jazz at the hotel. Big bands, contemporary jazz groups - you name it - there's a room in that hotel suitable for any type of concert. Get down as often as you can if you want jazz to continue to happen in Buffalo - and it will. B.W.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR JAZZ PERFORMANCE

The A.J.P. exists - its primary function was and is to create an environment conducive to the presentation and development of Jazz.

In November of 1972, the Association for Jazz Performance was to present its official program to our neighbors and friends. So that proper tribute be given, members of the AJP sacrificed their time and talents to the "Spirit of Jazz".

On November 12, along with the Buffalo Jazz Ensemble, we celebrated this offering at the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library - the results were astounding, and feelings that had laid dormant in this city were both rekindled and instilled fresh in a new generation. Our concept had born fruit and the energy of this Spirit had been tapped.

Then came the responsibility of its development. As this organization was designed to encourage artistic development, the natural course to follow was the evolution of personal musical truth.

As the result of a few favorable events, the A.J.P. was granted a small contract with the New York State Council on the Arts and with the help of friends we were able to present concerts at the Kenan Center, the Studio Arena Theater, The Lewiston Artpark, and this past summer a series with the Buffalo Jazz Ensemble in Delaware Park.

Sadly, because of a small budget, we were unable to include the environment of our first concert (the visual offerings of the AJP). It is this aspect that should now be reinstated if we are to continue to develop.

As I am president of the Association for Jazz Performance and musical director of the Buffalo Jazz Ensemble my responsibilities have become diffused and somewhat cumbersome. It has always been my wish that someone would be interested enough in this organization, and the "Spirit" that governs it, to offer productive directorship. Our problem has always been a lack of immediate funds but there are numerous funding and sponsoring organizations that are in a position to aid in the development of our Association, all that is necessary is that a person, or persons, familiar with the environment we seek take initiative interest.

It is almost needless to mention that the possibilities of development are quite satisfactory. If one examines the interest given this music by educational an professional music schools its future directions will become evident.

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It has been said that record companies cash in on an artist's death by releasing more records than he had in most of his lifetime (e.g. Ben Webster). That cannot be said about Prestige, a company which released nearly thirty records for him since 1950; and it could be more, as I am just speaking of those currently available. Gene was a beautiful cat, his music is sexy and overflowing with soul. If you don't have many of Gene's records, pick this up. His version of My Way will tear your heart out. As Orrin Keepnews of Fantasy/Prestige says "these not only were his greatest hits, they still are pretty damn great.

PAUL HORN - A SPECIAL EDITION - ISLAND ISLD-6

Though Horn probably won a few and lost a few with his last epic release, Visions, he should be able to recover the fans he lost with this 4-side live recording. Sides I & II are the least moving of the 4, as they contain, for the most, often recorded tunes with some good soloing, but nothing of significance in terms of original arrangements. Dusk (Side III) is an 18 minute excursion in free improvisation featuring interplay between percussion, vibes, guitar and flute. Dawn (IV) is again free, but gains form for a short time twice in its 8 minutes. Forms is piece for 3 flutes and a piccolo, all played by Horn via studio overdubs.

Horn includes a booklet to lead you into the origins of his music, you can judge for yourself the impact, for some of the music is good. The recording quality is below par regardless of the fact that it was recorded live, and the pressings are average.

RE-ISSUES

Columbia has issued a 2-record set titled The World of Swing (KG 32945) containing 20 tunes from the same number of big bands ranging from a 1932 recording of The Growl by Baron Lee & The Blue Rythym Band to a 1965 Woody Herman live recording of Opus De Funk. A good one for nostalgia.

A 1961 Rocky Boyd Quintet date has been retitled Ease It! (Muse 5053) and released under trumpeter Kenny Dorham's name. Its typical of the Mainstream sessions of that time and is a fitting tribute to the late trumpet great. Speaking of tributes, Mainstream has gathered recordings from six artists and titled the disc Billie Holiday Revisited (409). All the tunes are associated with Billie, taken from albums by Morgana King, Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington, Carmen McRae, Charles McPherson and Art Farmer. Thoughtfully put together. All of the tracks on these records have been previously released.
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Different Drummer Mag.

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PATRICE RUSHEN - PRELUSION - PRESTIGE 10089

It is this type of album that is best served by a
record review. After seeing the picture of this twenty-
year old girl (who looks about 16) on the cover, and
having no prior knowledge of her; the initial playing
was like opening the hood of your new Fiat and finding
a Ferrari engine. This University of South Carolina
music student has got her act together; as she wrote
and arranged the tunes on this disc and plays piano
well enough to be in the running for giant status in the
near future. Joe Henderson is heard on tenor sax, and
the sound of this album is much like many of his
own Milestone albums. Patrice is heard on acoustic
and electric pianos, clavinet and electric synthesizers and
shares most of the soloing with Henderson. Her most
obvious jazz influences are Herbie Hancock and McCoy
Tyner, but she also has roots in classical music - she
gave her first classical piano concert at age 6! Prelusion is one of those "sleepers", a downright
pleasurable surprise. This and the Azar Lawrence
disc are the cream of Fantasy/Prestige/Milestone's
huge December release.

ELVIN JONES - LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD
ENJA 2036

While still waiting for a Jones album, At This
Point In Time, that should have been released by Blue
Note some time ago, this one took me by surprise.
This is a typical Elvin Jones session from an
equally typical Jones group - a pianoless trio. That
format seems to push him to a physical and creative
peak, allowing him the freedom he desires and needs.
With Elvin is bassist Wilbur Little and tenor-man
George Coleman. The hot cut is Coleman's By George,
reminiscent of Elvin's performance with Trane on
Impressions, as he builds, backs off-his cymbals
thrasing - bursts of notes rolling off his snare, to
the toms toms and accents through rim shots, bass
drum and hi hat before, on or after the beat. Coleman
and Little turn out some superb work throughout, but
the trumpet solo from Marvin Peterson, who is present
for Mr. Jones, comes off as below par, possibly due in
part to the poor recording job, which is the only
fault of the record. Perhaps you should get another
opinion on this one - its only fair to warn you that
this reviewer is crazy about Elvin Jones!

MILES DAVIS - GET UP WITH IT - COLUMBIA
KG 33236

You get a lot of music for your money on this
$6.98 list 4-sider. The shortest side runs 26:56, the
longest, which contains only Calypso Frelimo, goes
32:07. 7 of the 8 tunes feature variations of Miles'
latest groups, and the music remains in the basic
style of his In Concert album, though this one is much
more interesting. The remaining track, Honky Tonk,
features Ex-Davis names such as Steve Grossman,
Hancock, McLaughlin & Billy Cobham, and appears
to be recorded around the time of Jack Johnson
due to the inclusion of bassist Michael Henderson. The album
is dedicated to "The Duke", and the tune He Loves
Him Madly is a quiet, moody piece that fits its title.
To like or dislike Davis' recent work is a touchy
subject these days. If you were turned off by In Concert,
I'd suggest skipping Get Up With It. If not, you'll
probably find his latest an improvement.

FLORA PURIM - STORIES TO TELL - MILESTONE
9058

The name Flora Purim should click with most
everyone who has been even remotely following the
contemporary jazz scene. Her track record is
astonishing. Since entering the U.S. jazz scene six
years ago, she has won numerous polls and the acclaim
of critics and the jazz public. Her previous album,
Butterfly Dreams, was a logical extension of her work
with Chick Corea. With this release she comes on with
a sound all her own, a third world flavor blending
Brazilian, Jazz and Rock music with the highest level
of feeling, creativity, musicianship and class. The list
of musicians here is impressive alone - Geo. Duke,
Airto, Miroslav Vitous, Ron Carter and Santana to
name a few. Every song is a gem - try to scrape up
some money for this one - it's worth it to the penny.

KENNY BARRON - PERUVIAN BLUE - MUSE 5044

Peruvian Blue is similar in many ways to Kenny's
smash debut album Sunset To Dawn (5018), as he
utilizes acoustic and electric pianos and clavinet,
includes a solo offering - this time its Here's That
Rainy Day, and makes an excellent choice of sidemen
(who are rarely on the side). A duo version of Blue
Monk is included here with guitarist Ted Dunbar, who
has been soaking in the critic's bloodbath just too long
now. A good, attentive listening of this track will re-
veal that he not only blends well with the leader, but
remains sensitive to Monk's original feel for the
composition. All six tracks make it - Kenny is always
above average.

BUDDY RICH/LIONEL HAMPTON - TRANSITION
- GROOVE MERCH. 3302

The title for this one comes from the fact that
two very different sessions produced this music. Side
one finds Rich and Hamp in the company of Zoot Sims,
Teddy Wilson and Geo. DuBivier; taking you way back
with swingin' versions of Avalon, Airmail Special,
Ham Hock Blues and Ring Dem Bells. Everyone is
within their own element on this side, and get it on
from start to finish. Side two puts Rich and Hampton
at the head of a ten piece band with a contemporary sound. Kenny Barron is added on piano, and two saxophonists who are no strangers to the Buffalo area—Sal Nistico and Joe Ramano are featured, with Sims only heard on Fum. Both sides come off well as everyone involved gets into it. There is a drawback in that the recording quality should be much better for a 1974 recording.

**CIRCLE - PARIS CONCERT - ECM 1018-19**
KEITH JARRETT - FACING YOU - ECM 1017

Each of these albums received wide critical acclaim when originally released by ECM and available only as imports. The Circle concert was recorded live in 1971 by Chick Corea, Anthony Braxton, David Hollond and Barry Altschul. All are masters of improvisation whether it be free or within a structured piece, and both phases of the music are included here. It gets a mite heavy at times, but if you can get into the avant garde, get set for a real trip.

The Jarrett LP was his first solo piano disc recorded in late '71 or early '72. Unlike his Solo Concerts set, this contains 8 titled songs, running from 3 minutes to 10:07. An excellent record marking the beginning of a new career for Jarrett as a widely accepted solo performer.

**EARL & CARL GRUBBS (THE VISITORS) - REBIRTH MUSE 5047**

The Grubbs Brothers are always good listening, as they carry you back to the sound of Coltrane around the Giant Steps era. Earl on tenor and Carl on alto sound great on this disc, both in their unison passages and solo spots. Pianist Kenny Barron is never less than tops in all his recorded work; and how could Buster Williams and Al "Tootie" Heath be capable of anything but a first rate performance such as this? When you've got cats like this doing a record, you're going to get some heavy, pure music. That's Rebirth.

**GEORGE DUKE - FEEL - BASF 25355**

Feel is similar to Duke's earlier release Faces In Reflection in that the format is high-energy, funky jazz/rock. He seems to be listening to Chick Corea's later albums, and possibly even Brian Auger's obligation expressed, as the sound of both groups are reflected in his music. His vocals are high and smooth

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**BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC POPS**

(Perhaps that's where I hear Auger), and Flora Purim is added for Yana Aminah. Duke is one of the few real masters of the synthesizer and is highly creative on electronic keyboards. This record proves that his writing makes the grade as well.

**AZAR LAWRENCE - BRIDGE INTO THE NEW AGE - PRESTIGE 10086**

From composition, to execution, to production and engineering - Azar's debut album is a total success. Lawrence has grown since coming into light with Elvin Jones' Group a few years ago, his current work with McCoy Tyner and this LP being proof enough. The music here is black jazz similar to the records of drummer Norman Connors, but more consistent. Jean Carn's vocals adorn two cuts, two others feature a 9 piece group (including pianist Joe Bonner and trombonist Julian Priest). The remaining tune, Fatisha, is a duo performance from Lawrence and percussionist Kenneth Nash. This is an album that is destined to please fans of McCoy Tyner, Joe Henderson, Norman Connors and others in that vein. Most impressive for a first album.

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The New Wave was "Downtown" for three weeks last month, and we found them to be much better than we had expected. As an instrumental quintet they were capable both together and separately. The real treat came when vocalist Barbie Rankin joined in - she's got some talent and has got to be heard. She's by far among the best vocalists to come from this area in some time. Her style shows influences such as Cleo Laine and DeeDee Bridgewater - breathy, colorful and forceful. They should be back next month. Check them out!

We caught John Heartsman & Circles at the Ontario House and found them to be the finest area group to blend jazz, rock and soul into a tight, full sound. Heartsman plays organ, e. piano, flute and guitar; with sister Janice LaVon on vocals, Mark Demperio on drums and Larry Burnett on congas. You can't help but be turned on by their funky sound, and if you like to dance - this is the group to check out.

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