Wayne Shorter
Freddie Hubbard
Herbie Hancock
V.S.O.P.
Tony Williams
Ron Carter
V.S.O.P. July 8

There should be no doubt that the most outstanding jazz event for Buffalo since the appearance of Dexter Gordon last year will be the V.S.O.P. Quintet - in concert on Friday, July 8. The concert will be presented by Festival East, "with a little help from QFM 97." The site will be the Shea's Buffalo Theater.

The V.S.O.P. Quintet is made up of five "stars" of jazz - Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Freddie Hubbard, Ron Carter & Tony Williams. The name V.S.O.P. means "very special one time performance", used originally for the concert at the 1976 Newport Jazz Festival. That night - June 29 - at New York's City Center was a reunion of sorts for Hancock. This band did a set, followed by Herbie's earlier 70's sextet, followed in turn by the pianists current funk band "Headhunters."

These five musicians certainly have enough credentials to satisfy anyone. Shorter and Hubbard were co-workers in Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in the early 60's. Hubbard went with Max Roach for a while and has led his own groups or made brief appearances with others since leaving the drummer. Shorter went on to join Miles Davis' famous quintet of the sixties, along with the rest of the V.S.O.P. band - Carter, Hancock & Williams. Throughout this period, each would record as leaders on various labels - with their cohorts and others as sidemen. One such recording finds the current touring quintet almost intact - on one of the most popular albums of the era - Herbie's Maiden Voyage (Blue Note). The only difference was that George Coleman played tenor for the date rather than Shorter. Another recording that comes to mind is Wayne Shorter's Speak No Evil (Blue Note), where the quintet is again "almost" together, except that Elvin Jones is on drums instead of Williams. Then, of course, there's all those Miles records - with no Freddie. Not until the release of the V.S.O.P. album on Columbia did these men, who were often associated with each other, finally appear together on wax.

Currently Herbie, Freddie, Ron & Tony lead successful bands of their own. Wayne co-leads Weather Report with pianist Joe Zawinul. This makes the tour an even bigger event - there's all those Miles records - with no Freddie. Not until the release of the V.S.O.P. album on Columbia did these men, who were often associated with each other, finally appear together on wax.

Remember the date - July 8. If you miss this one, there's no second chance. Also on the bill will be saxophonist John Klemmer and band. Klemmer is himself enjoying widespread popularity, and has just released a new album on ABC records.

There'll be two shows at 7 & 10:30 PM. But, don't forget - it's only one night. Don't miss it - be sure to get your tickets soon. For more information consult the ad in this issue, or phone Festival at 854-7173.

Latest Recordings
V.S.O.P. - Columbia 34688
John Klemmer - Life Style - ABC Records

JOHN COLTRANE

This month, July, is the tenth year since the passing of John Coltrane, one of the most powerful figures of both the saxophone and modern jazz.

Born John William Coltrane on Sept. 23, 1926 in Hamlet, North Carolina, he first became known as a member of the bands of Dizzy Gillespie, Johnny Hodges, and Earl Bostic. He began to gain respect among musicians during his years with Miles Davis, between '55 & '60. In 1960 he formed his own quartet, experimenting with personnel until he found the musicians who could provide the exact sound he wanted - pianist McCoy Tyner, bassists Reggie Workman or Jimmy Garrison and drummer Elvin Jones. Eric Dolphy, who played alto sax, flute and bass clarinet, would also play with the group frequently during the early years.

Originally, Coltrane was influenced heavily by Dexter Gordon, but went on to form his own unique sound, playing lengthy, intense solos which weren't always well received by the critics of the time. While some labeled it "sheets of sound", others condemned it as "anti-jazz" or "noise." Around '61 Coltrane began to employ the Indian improvisational concept, where improvisations are often based on predeter-

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which is one of the Hallmark jazz albums and a vital part of any Collection of Coltrane music.

John Coltrane is only now receiving the popularity he deserved during his lifetime. He was a great man as well as a great musician. In an interview I did with Elvin Jones last year he referred to Trane as "an angel." He compared his years with John to "a kid in school being on a continual recess." He seemed to give others the freedom to play and create.

Trane was a master of not only avant-garde but beautiful ballads and straight ahead blues. He's influenced countless other saxophonists to date and his legacy will always live on.

On the anniversary of his death - Sun., July 17 - I will be featuring his music on "Jazz Contours" on WBFO beginning at noon. His music will also be featured throughout my shows during July.

This issue of the BJR is dedicated to the memory and the spirit of John William Coltrane. Peace. B.W.

PAUL DESMOND SUCCUMBS TO LUNG CANCER
PAUL DESMOND 11/25/24 - 5/30/77

To say that Paul Desmond was perhaps one of the greatest lyrical improvisors ever to have emerged in jazz must indeed be an understatement.

Paul's alto was the dominant sound of the historic Dave Brubeck quartet for the better part of two decades. The group was tremendously creative, and had a sound that was able to capture the attention of millions of listeners, many of whom would not have ordinarily been listening to jazz.

During and after his tenure with Brubeck, Paul performed and recorded in many different group and orchestral settings. His playing was never less than superb.

There was more to it than just the notes he played or how he played them. The magic of Paul Desmond was in his sound, I really mean it. His tone was astonishingly beautiful.

The reason I mention this is because we are in an age where electronic wizardry seems to be enveloping most of the musical frontiers including jazz.

In the process we seem to be losing something very important.

A musician's tone on his instrument can and should be like his personal signature, his identity which sets him apart from all others.

You don't hear many new musicians talk about tone quality any more today. They talk about a lot of things but they never talk about tone.

Paul Desmond was born in San Francisco, California. His father was an organist for the silent movies. What that had to do with Paul's development I do not know. But one thing is for sure, he turned out to be one of those rare musicians who had to play but one note, and you knew right away that it was the unmistakable alto saxophone of Paul Desmond.

For me it was one of the most beautiful sounds in the world. Malcolm Leigh

MORE JAZZMEN DIE
Two more jazz musicians have recently left us. Trombonist Bennie Green and French hornist Julius Watkins both passed away in late May.

PALAME BIG BAND TEARS UP TRALFAMADORE
Emil Palame's 16 piece big band will continue to play at the Tralfamadore Cafe this month, with four dates scheduled.

The band screams and they've been packing the club tighter with each appearance. Hopefully, a big band night will be a regular weekly occurrence sometime in the near future.

Check it out - hell of a sax section.

BUDDY RICH TO PLAY EDUARDO'S
Drummer Buddy Rich will bring his big band to Eduardo's on Bailey Ave. on July 8. The club has previously hosted the big bands of Stan Kenton, Maynard Ferguson, Count Basie and Woody Herman.

Rich's new album, Plays & Plays & Plays just came out on RCA (too late for review) and a quick sampling reveals it to be his best in some time.

Also - the Glen Miller Orch. will play Eduardo's July 17, and Lionel Hampton will be in on Aug. 12 & 13.
SLEEPY JOHN ESTES DIES

Sleepy John Estes, one of the country blues finest singers and songwriters, passed away Sunday, June 5, 1977. Born in 1904 he spent most of his life around the Memphis area in Brownsville, Tennessee. John was never a remarkable guitarist, but he possessed a crying voice and composed some of the finest blues, often from his personal experiences. He recorded for Victor in 1929 with mandolinst Yank Rachel and later for Decca. These classic early recordings, such as "Divin' Duck Blues", "Floating Bridge", "Everybody Ought to Make a Change" and "Someday Baby", are available on various anthologies as well as reissued in Europe and Japan. He was rediscovered in the Brownsville area in the early sixties where he was living in an abandoned sharecropper's shack. John appeared at folk festivals, clubs and toured Europe three times and Japan twice. He was about to tour Europe for the fourth time when he suffered a stroke which led to his death. Since his rediscovery John recorded several fine albums for Delmark and influenced such folk and rock artists as Taj Mahal, Ry Cooder and Mike Bloomfield. The number of country blues artists is rapidly dwindling with John's death and the deaths of Bukka White and Thomas Shaw earlier this year. Their music has made this a better world to live in. R.W.

DOUBLE IMAGE

DOUBLE IMAGE - THIS MONTH AT THE TRALFAMADORE

Double Image, consisting of David Friedman and David Samuels both playing vibraphone, marimba and percussion, Harvie Swartz on acoustic bass and the exciting new drummer/percussionist Michael DiPasqua, offers a totally new group sound.

Because of its unique instrumentation and fresh approach to individual and group improvisation, Double Image has been quickly and steadily achieving popularity both here and abroad. After 6 short months the group has already performed at New York's renowned Bottom Line, completed a successful tour of Europe, appeared at the world famous 1977 Newport Jazz Festival and just recently recorded an album on the Inner City label.

New York Times critic John S. Wilson remarked, "...The group is completely innovative. There is no precedent for it in Jazz... At their best they develop and project a feeling of intensity that held the room in a pin-drop silence...."

Each member's list of credits is quite impressive. David Friedman, aside from having 2 albums out under his own name, has recorded and performed with Hubert Laws, Wayne Shorter, Horace Silver and many others. David Samuels has been a main-stay in Gerry Mulligan's recent groups. He appeared on 3 of Mulligan's albums as well as Gerry Niewood's latest LP. Niewood's album also contains several of David's compositions.

Harvie Swartz has played with practically every known Jazz artist at one time or another. Recently, however, he was featured as a composer and performer on both of Friedman's albums and Steve Kuhn's new album on ECM.

Michael DiPasqua has performed and recorded with Don Elliott, Zoot Sims, Attila Zoller, Chet Baker and many others.

The four musicians that comprise Double Image have combined their strong individual musical styles with a mutual compatibility to create an ensemble that is rapidly making a place for itself in contemporary music.

Double Image will appear at the Tralfamadore Cafe, 2610 Main at Fillmore, July 15, 16 & 17, Fri., Sat. & Sun. nights. See the ad in this issue for details.

SPIDER MARTIN AT ATTICA

John "Spider" Martin's quintet visited the Attica Correctional Facility on Saturday, June 11th to play for the inmates. This is now a traditional thing with Spider who visits all of the penal facilities in the Western NY area as many times a year as his busy schedule will allow.

The original members of the group are still here - Joe Locke (vibes), Richard Felice (drums), Russae Taylor (guitar). The only change has been the addition of bassist Oscar Alston and as an added dimension, vocalist Beverly Simms, of "Birthright".

The group's forte is diversibility. Its ability to swing from mainstream jazz to disco, soul, rock, dealt out with imagination, dedication and improvisation.

The quintet opened with "Gentle Thought," a Herbie Hancock tune featuring Martin on sax backed up melodically by Locke on vibes. A Charlie Parker tune, "Half-Nelson," gave us a chance to hear guitarist Taylor's pleasingly delicate solo, together with Alston's intensity on bass. The tenor man's clean, velvet-toned feel for ballads blended with Locke's bell-like sounds on vibes, leaves no doubt as to Martin's ability as a musician.

A keen sense of phrasing, a unique timbre and flawless diction were just a few of Beverly Simms's high cards shown on "O制造业" and Louise Rawls's "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine." As a closing tune she rendered a chorus of Billie Holiday's "Good Morning Heartache," and the 441 attending men gave her and the group a standing ovation.

A Spider Martin performance is at once professionally polished and based on the unpredictability of personal creativity in enhancing the group's image.

AUDIENCE RESPONSE: Excellent.

Now recording on IMPROV RECORDS, owned by singer Tony Bennett and hotelman, Bill Hassett, "Spider" told this interviewer that he feels very happy and comfortable with this label and has just released a new album, "Absolutely John 'Spider' Martin." Recordings in March.

This year the group has been invited to the Newport Jazz Festival in NYC. "This is where I've been trying to get all my life," says Martin a veteran of the Niagara Falls - Buffalo - Rochester jazz circuit. "I've been moving up one step at a time, but I'm always looking back to see if there is someone on the
Join Herbie Hancock’s class reunion and listen to some of the tastiest jazz ever, from Herbie’s past and present, on “VS.O.P.” (Very Special One-time Performance), a double live album recorded at last year’s Newport Jazz Festival in New York.

Now “VS.O.P.” is on tour, and Herbie will be bringing you some of those great moments along with his mates, “The Quintet,” composed of Freddie Hubbard, Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams and Ron Carter.

“VS.O.P.” is one reunion you can’t afford to miss.

On Columbia Records and Tapes.
Produced by David Rubinson & Friends Inc. Ron Carter appears courtesy of Milestone Records.

 Appearing at Shea’s Buffalo Theater, July 8th.
McCOY TYNER - SUPERTRIOS - MILESTONE 55003

Everyone who enjoyed McCoy's earlier trio record Trident, with Ron Carter and Elvin Jones, should be pleased with Supertrios. Half of this two-record set is played by Tyner, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. As you'd expect, especially from McCoy & Tony, the energy level is high as they rip through Tyner originals - Blues on the Corner & The Greeting, Coltrane's Moments Notice, Monk's I Mean To You and Jobim's Wave. The only ballad, Prelude to a Kiss, is done as a duo by Tyner and Carter - they sound gorgeous.

Record two is a second trio - Tyner with Eddie Gomez and Jack DeJohnette. I find this set more rewarding than the first - DeJohnette's drumming is strong, exact and precise, but less overpowering than Williams. Gomez is a master and does some extremely tasteful work, often in the upper register - check out Stella by Starlight. Again the energy level is high, but there's more dynamics in the performance. The only non-Tyner original among the six cuts are Stella & Billy Strayhorn's Lush Life.

In summary - four sides by two groups of musicians who deserve the label "supertrios". McCoy sounds great with each, and the diversity in the sound of the trios makes for even better listening.

B.W.

ELVIN JONES/JAMES MOODY/CLARK TERRY - SUMMIT MEETING - VANGUARD 79390

Summit Meeting is a sort of "Vanguard All Stars" session, with Elvin, Moody & Terry joined by fellow Vanguarders Bunky Green (alto sax) and the fine guitarist Roland Prince. Guests Al Dailey/piano, David Williams/bass and Angel Allende/percussion round out the octet.

Everyone appears to be in good spirits and each plays up to or above his usual high standard. Both Summit Song and Blues for Clark were penned by Bunky Green, who seems to have an affinity for 3/4 time. Moody's Tee Pee Music burns straight ahead, while Moody Magic is a melodic, almost spacey ballad written by producer Ed Bland. Jones, an Ellingtonian, is in his element on this album.

Moody, Terry & Green solo on each track and all three sound better than most of what I've heard on their own respective Vanguard releases. Elvin & Williams work well together (Williams was a member of his quartet) and keep things strong and steady; they're superb on Moody Magic. Jones takes more solos here than on his own disc; another result of the good time jam session feeling present throughout the album. Another former member of Elvin's band, Roland Prince, is always great to hear and his many solos here are no exception.

This is a very successful session that rewards repeated listenings. You might get a kick out of the back cover photo too - only one of the five musicians pictured is correctly identified!

B.W.

MILT JACKSON - AT THE KOSEI NENKIN - PABLO LIVE 2620 103

From the opening tracks it becomes clear that Millicent has captured in his element on this album. In the way of background, this is a double album recorded live in March of 1976 at the Kosei Nenkin in Tokyo, Japan with no additional string section or overdubbing to clutter the music. It's been awhile since I've heard Milt so inspired on any record - the timbre I've taught him live, especially after he returned to the audience and room, have been a joy to hear. His accompaniment consists of Ray Brown on bass, Cedar Walton on acoustic and electric piano, Teddy Edwards on tenor sax, and Billy Higgins on drums. Collectively the members of the group provide the backdrop for Bags to play in front of but Walton and Edwards are standout soloists. Most of the selections are uptempo and Milt's vibes swing precisely and effortlessly throughout all four sides. The degree of rapport between these musicians seems high. Notice how easily they trade off with one another at the beginning of The Prophet Speaks and the comping of Cedar Walton throughout. Jackson once expressed a feeling that it was difficult for his vibes and an electric piano to work well together in a live situation but here is proof that it can be done if taste is applied. The whole Pablo Live series has been high quality material but this two-record set may be best music to come from Milt Jackson since the finest days of the Modern Jazz Quartet.

J.H.
EDITH WILSON WITH LITTLE BROTHER MONTGOMERY - HE MAY BE YOUR MAN (BUT HE COMES TO SEE ME SOMETIMES) - DELMARK 637

Edith Wilson’s career in show business goes back to the vaudeville blues recordings she made in 1921. Her career included touring Europe with Sam Wooding’s Orchestra, singing with Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller in Connie’s Hot Chocolate Revue, being Kingfish’s mother on the old Amos ’n’ Andy radio show and being the personification of Aunt Jemima. This delightful album, where she is accompanied by a traditional group, the State Street Ramblers, is a recreation of the music of the twenties and shows that at the age of seventy she possesses great spirit, warmth and humor.

Material ranges from popular tunes to great double-entendre tunes like “My Handy Man Ain’t Handy Anymore”. The title tune Edith originally recorded in the early twenties and like the entire album possesses great spirit, warmth and humor. The State Street Ramblers, led by Little Brother Montgomery and including Franz Jackson, Preston Jackson (now with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band) and Ikey Robinson provide warm Dixielandish backing which adds to the infectious character of the music. Little Brother contributes a vocal to “The Same Dog”, a wry duet with Edith and this album is also notable for presenting some of his piano work with a band on wax. A most valuable release that represents one of the few recent and readily available recordings of the vaudeville blues. Even more important, a very entertaining album that fans of traditional jazz and blues should get their hands on.

R.W.

DOUG & JEAN CARN - HIGHER GROUND - OVATION 1702

If you’re already a fan of Doug & Jean Carn, you’ll find Higher Ground a let down from some of their previous recordings. The short tunes featuring Jean’s voice are up to par, but some of the tracks with instrumental soloing lack spirit. I’ve also found three tracks which are exact duplicates from the albums Revelation and Spirit of the New Land. There’s no such credit, nor is there a trumpeter clue to check it out.

Jean Carn is, with Dee Dee Bridgewater, one of the top young jazz vocalists - a beautiful voice. But, you’d be better off with either of the above-mentioned records (Black Jazz Records #’s 16 & 8).

B.W.

BILL EVANS - QUINTESSENCE - FANTASY F-9529

Bill Evans has to rank as one of the world’s most tasteful pianists. His work over the last several years has been primarily in trio settings with Eddie Gomez on bass, Marty Morrell on drums, and more recently Elliott Zigmund taking over for Morrell. His latest release, Quintessence, is a delightful departure from his highly polished trios, expanding the unit to a quintet. The rhythm section is co-anchored by drummer Philly Jo Jones and prolific bassist Ray Brown. Philly Jo uses his brushes with the deftness of a surgeon on Thad Jones’ A Child Is Born and Martina then he steps out to swing on Bass Face. The composer of Bass Face, Kenny Burrell, is included here and you’ll enjoy the way Kenny’s sensitive guitar complements the understated playing of Evans throughout the entire album. The tenor sax of Harold Land is heard here bringing to mind some of the much earlier recordings of Evans with the likes of Cannonball and Lee Konitz. Each member of the quintet seems to have his ears wide open which makes for natural interplay. A unison lead is played by Land and Burrell on Sweet Dulcinea where Evans comps masterfully in the background for several measures before taking a solo. Quintessence is an illustration that as easy as it would be for Evans to dominate the proceedings he does not and the result is a beautifully balanced album.

J.H.

Editors Note: Another Bill Evans album will be released in the fall featuring Evans’ regular trio plus Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh.

NORMAN GRANZ’ J.A.T.P. IN TOKYO - LIVE AT THE NICHIGEKI THEATRE - PABLO LIVE 2620 104

Among the trio of releases in the new Pablo Live series is this boxed - three record set, recorded live in Tokyo in November 1953. The first two sides present the J.A.T.P. (Jazz at the Philharmonic) all stars, which on this occasion included names like Ben Webster, Flip Phillips, Oscar Peterson, Benny Goodman, and Thad Jones. This is a recreation of the music that was recorded in the Tokyo Music Hall, Kingfish’s mother on the radio show and being the personification of Aunt Jemima. This delightful album, where she is accompanied by a traditional group, the State Street Ramblers, is a recreation of the music of the twenties and shows that at the age of seventy she possesses great spirit, warmth and humor.

Material ranges from popular tunes to great double-entendre tunes like “My Handy Man Ain’t Handy Anymore”. The title tune Edith originally recorded in the early twenties and like the entire album possesses great spirit, warmth and humor. The State Street Ramblers, led by Little Brother Montgomery and including Franz Jackson, Preston Jackson (now with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band) and Ikey Robinson provide warm Dixielandish backing which adds to the infectious character of the music. Little Brother contributes a vocal to “The Same Dog”, a wry duet with Edith and this album is also notable for presenting some of his piano work with a band on wax. A most valuable release that represents one of the few recent and readily available recordings of the vaudeville blues. Even more important, a very entertaining album that fans of traditional jazz and blues should get their hands on.

R.W.

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Jean Carn is, with Dee Dee Bridgewater, one of the top young jazz vocalists - a beautiful voice. But, you’d be better off with either of the above-mentioned records (Black Jazz Records #’s 16 & 8).

B.W.
Carter, Ray Brown & Roy Eldridge. They do four jams - Tokyo Blues, Up, Cotton Tail and a ballad medley, with a different soloist for each of the seven ballads. Side three is the Oscar Peterson trio - with Ray Brown & Herb Ellis. For myself, some of the best moments are on the next side, with the Gene Krupa trio. Benny Carter & Oscar Peterson join the great drummer who's having a grand time on each of the four cuts.

The rest is some prime Ella Fitzgerald, who is heard on nine tracks with her quartet - pianist Raymond Ruma, Herb Ellis, Ray Brown & J.C. Heard. The remaining tune - Perdido - is another J.A.T.P. all stars jam - with Ella.

An expensive set but well worth it for collectors and J.A.T.P. fans. The recording quality isn't bad considering the year. It is only the full ensemble passages that are a bit muddy. The packaging, pressings, notes and data are all above average. B.W.

EARL HINES - EARL HINES PLAYS GEORGE GERSHWIN - CLASSIC JAZZ C3J1

One of the reasons why the music of George Gershwin has been so easily integrated into the jazz world is because of the thoughtful harmonic sequences he employed and the catchy, simplistic melody lines. Over the years Gershwin's music has provided a nearly perfect base for jazz improvisation. It was Earl Hines who gave generations of pianists the model for soloing and improvising with the right hand by freeing it from the somewhat structured and rigid stride piano form of Fats Waller, James P. Johnson and others. Earl Hines Plays George Gershwin brings together the compositions of Gershwin, and provides a nearly perfect base for jazz improvisation. It was Earl Hines who gave generations of pianists the model for soloing and improvising with the right hand by freeing it from the somewhat structured and rigid stride piano form of Fats Waller, James P. Johnson and others. Earl Hines, playing music specially recorded for this package, will use the improvisational skills of the "Fatha" to solo piano in a two record set that should please fans of both men. Hines' fleet right hand weaves in and out of the melodies of Gershwin classics like Summertime, Rhapsody in Blue, Love Walked In and Embraceable You, albeit with execution that at times leaves something to be desired. The spirit and unique Hines style is always present and so is the rolling bass lines and steady comping provided by the left hand. You must remember that at the time of this October 1973 recording session Hines was 70 years old and yet he possesses a vigor and enthusiasm in his playing even today that is the envy of pianists half his age. Listen to the flourishes and runs of his right hand and his claps and octave fills which make him one of the great Gershwin composers uniquely Hines. Most Earl Hines performances contain at least one Gershwin number but now we have a true collector's item with the Fatha displaying his endless imagination. 

THE GUITAR PLAYER - MCA 2-6002

This two record set features nine first class guitarists, playing music specially recorded for this package, with two tracks, heard either solo or with their own bands.

Lee Ritenour, plays some of the best guitar I've heard from him, with a sextet including Ernie Watts and Patrice Rushen. Laurindo Almeida offers three acoustic tracks - one solo and two trio. Joe Pass demonstrates his solo virtuosity for three cuts; Larry Coryell is heard solo on three more; and, another trio of songs comes from the Herb Ellis/Barney Kessel quintet. Another guitar duo, Irving Ashby & John Collins play two tunes with superb backing from Hampton Hawes, John Heard & Billy Higgins. Last, but not least, is two tracks of blues from B.B. King with six musicians in the band, including Leonard Feather on piano.

All of this material was recorded in 1976 and comprises an excellent package for all enthusiasts of the guitar. It's all well recorded, and informative data on each guitarist is included.

PAT METHENY - WATERCOLORS - ECM 1-1097

Here we have the second album as a leader for guitarist Pat Metheny, a former member of the Gary Burton Quartet. The album opens with the title track, Watercolors, which displays the airy quality of Metheny's guitar (made even more light sounding by the ever-present use of a slight amount of reverberation on his guitar). Lyle Mays at the acoustic piano sounds very self-assured and makes use of the full range of the keyboard. His comping is effective and his solos flow beautifully from one idea to the next with certain techniques that bring to mind an earlier Chick Corea. The next selection, Icefire, is a solo guitar statement from Metheny that makes a strong case for his skill on the instrument. Oasis opens with the resonant bass of Eberhard Weber but the piece meanders through chord changes that don't take full advantage of Weber's astounding technique. In the next piece, Lake, we are treated to a much fuller use of Weber's bass playing as he skampers over the full range with great speed while retaining his beautifully clear tone. It should be mentioned that Danny Gottlieb's drums offer a pleasant backdrop giving the music a lightly-tinged but tasteful rock flavor. Gottlieb is unlike many so-called jazz/rock drummers who bash away mindlessly at the kit drown out the soloists and adding nothing to the music. Commercially, this album should win a wider audience for Metheny's guitar work especially with the tune River Quay from side two. River Quay is a short piece patterned vaguely after the current successful endeavors of George Benson that will most likely get lots of airplay. Overall, an impressive album for guitarist Pat Metheny.

B.W.
Over his last several albums, Gary Bartz' music has possessed a quality that could be referred to as street music. The problem with his latest release is that the jazz element has been replaced with a slick, funky sound that makes the music more commercially appealing but less musically rewarding. Syreeta Wright did a fine job on Bartz' previous disc, but is less convincing here in her regular Motown role. Vocals from Bartz & Syreeta are heard throughout, as are background voices. Gary's sax solos are restrained - nowhere does he cut loose as he can well do. This is the Bartz sound but its very much watered down; better suited for dancing than listening.

AL COHN - AL COHN'S AMERICA - XANADU 138

If you're one of the many who have dismissed Al Cohn by thinking his public career ended with his last duo date with Zoot Sims, think again. This recording, Al Cohn's America made in December 1976, shows believer and skeptic alike that Al Cohn has not only retained the same sassy, Lester Youngish command over his tenor sax that he had while working with Woody Herman's herd and with Zoot Sims; he has improved on it. Lately Cohn has been working primarily on studio recordings, film scores and the like. But jazz is a part of him and Al's playing here is exciting, precise and filled with energy. It brings out the best in his co-workers: Sam Jones/bass, Leroy Williams/drums and Barry Harris at the piano. To get the full impact of his playing, put on side B which opens with Bright, a Cohn original that starts with Al jumping out at a fast clip, followed by an equally swinging piano solo from Barry Harris (a charter member of the Xanadu stable and recording partner of Cohn's on Play It Now) and then a few nice drum breaks by Leroy Williams. A touching duet by Harris and Cohn, Skylark, is next and proves again the sensitivity and grace of both musicians. There's not a bad song on the record and Cohn's treatment of America the Beautiful one side one shows that while he displays his prowess on tenor throughout, he also has a good sense of humor.

DON CHERRY - HEAR & NOW - ATLANTIC 18217

Here we have two maestro of the avant-garde performing music that is unlike what you'd expect from either of them. Cherry's previous release (on Horizon Records) projected a much mellower sound than normally associated with him. Hear & Now is even tamer, mixing funk with Indian music and rock guitar. It's very listenable fusion music though it won't please regular Cherry fans. Ornette, who has signed with Horizon, attempts to play avant-garde and funk at the same time! It doesn't work. His band - two electric guitars, bass & drums can't seem to figure out what's happening here and neither can I. One song fills most of the record and it just keeps degenerating. This might have been fun to record, but I doubt if anyone would share the enthusiasm after spending six bucks and tossing it on the turntable. You just might want to dance on it.

A New Jazz Quintet

HORIZON

at

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PIERCE ARROW AGENCY/ THURS.
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9:30
TED CURSON - FLIP TOP - ARISTA AL 1030

Of the many positive impressions conveyed by this album, one of the most noticeable is the full-bodied sound of this quartet (heard on side one only). The use of two lead instruments - Ted Curson on trumpet and Bill Barron on tenor sax - gives the quartet a somewhat big bandish sound. The success of this venture is due in no small part to the contributions of Herb Busher on bass and Dick Berk on drums who hold the rhythm together with steady hands. You'll be amazed after listening to Flip Top to know that side one was recorded nearly thirteen years ago yet it has a very contemporary sound. Despite the minor mode and challenging chord changes in Bill Barron's Desolation, the solos from both Curson and Busher are precise in their attention to the musical framework. Precise but not stiff as Barron and Curson both display great lyricism. This is true also in the treatment of Curson's Searchin' for the Blues, which swings at a medium tempo, and Barron's Light Blue, a short boppish number. Side two is quite a different story having been recorded live with Curson on trumpet as featured soloist with the Zagreb Radio Orchestra at the Yugoslav Jazz Festival held in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia; a recording made at least ten years ago. Curson seems quite inspired by the presence of the Zagreb Orchestra (an Ellington-influenced big band with heavy emphasis on brass, conducted by Zita Carone). All tunes performed on side two are Curson originals and it sounds so comfortable that you get the impression he might have written them originally with a big band in mind. At any rate, we have two radically different settings for the music of Ted Curson which makes Flip Top all the more satisfying.

J.H.

MILES DAVIS - WATER BABIES - COLUMBIA 34396

It took a long time for me to get a copy of this recently released album, but the music is well worth the wait.

Side one - three cuts in all - features Miles with what has come to be known as the "ESP Band". All of these musicians, except Miles, will play Buffalo this month (July 8) - Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter & Tony Williams. This is the mid '60's all acoustic Miles sound heard on many sides such as Miles Smiles, ESP, The Sorcerer, etc. Side two brings us to the Silent Way/Filles De Kilimanjaro era - late '60's, with electric piano and the addition of Chick Corea & Dave Holland. Again - more great music as we go to the very beginnings of what we now know as "jazz rock" by the man who created it.

An important addition to a Miles Davis collection - all previously unreleased music.

B.W.

ANTHONY BRAXTON - THE MONTREUX/BERLIN CONCERTS ARISTA AL 5002

In 1971, Anthony Braxton recorded a two-record set for Freedom entitled "The Complete Braxton." The title was not his idea - in fact, "Several Facets of Anthony Braxton" would have been a much more appropriate one. In that session, Braxton changed costumes between every scene and showed us his versatility on everything from a bebop quartet to a written piece for five tubas.

Now, six years later, we have in our hands "The Montreux/Berlin Concerts." This album is no less than a milestone, not only in Braxton's career, but in the entire history of this music as well. In it, Braxton has gathered his many disparate influences together into one totally integrated music. There are three groups and two festivals represented on these four sides, but don't look for any seams - there aren't any. Instead, listen to written music, improvised music, bebop, contemporary classical, and parade music - and marvel at how they've all become Anthony Braxton music.

Oh, and don't be afraid to laugh and get excited. The group laughs all the way through the March and during his alto solo on Side One. Braxton cuts loose with a wild, rapt wail that sounds just like Eddie Lockjaw Davis!

As for the sidemen, I think everyone knows what Dave Holland, Barry Altschul, and Kenny Wheeler can do. Those unfamiliar with what George Lewis can do are in for a shock. Monster players like this don't usually appear out of nowhere, but here he is, folks, and there's nothing wrong with your turntable speed.

Side 4 is entirely taken up with a composition for chamber orchestra (the Berlin New Music Group) and two soloists (Braxton and Lewis). Most of these things turn out to be oil-and-water confrontations; this one is a wedding. Jim Laniook

GEORGE MURIBUS - GEORGE MURIBUS TRIO '77 - CATALYST 7619

Mentioning the name George Muribus probably does not stir much recognition unless you are familiar with Azteca, a group led by Coke Escovedo. That should not stop you from paying close attention to the music contained in the George Muribus Trio '77. Muribus is a gifted pianist and on this recording he displayed diversity and a breadth of talent that reflects influences of Bill Evans, Lennie Tristano and just a touch of Oscar Peterson. In other words, he can go out but he knows how to come back. On Coltrane's Giant Steps he gives the often-performed number a pleasant new twist by taking it out of the standard 4/4 time signature and making it 5/4. Drummer Lee Charlton is given a drum solo to open the piece which is...
followed by a short solo by Muribus and a brief statement by bassist Len Lasher. Lasher composed four of the seven songs on the album and has previously distinguished himself as a member of Tommy Flanagan’s group, as a student at Juilliard and as a member of the San Francisco Symphony for the past thirteen years. The traditional Greensleeves is taken a step further than most versions as Muribus again slips into a comfortable 5/4 time signature. He moves in and around the melody line with ease and grace and then turns it over briefly to Lasher for another bass solo. Most of the songs on this album follow this kind of pattern where each member gets a chance to show his wares. There is an inherent empathy and equality amongst the members of this trio that makes it seem easy for them to perform challenging material.

JULIAN PRIESTER AND MARINE INTRUSION - POLARIZATION - ECM 1098

Trombonist Julian Priester’s second ECM effort is a sextet date recorded in Germany in January of this year. He uses his own band, made up of musicians who’s names are new to me. Although no one except Priester is outstanding by himself, they work very well as a unit.

Polarization is a trombone solo with a second track overdubbed - a light and reflective sound which goes right into Rhythm Magnet, played over a repeating bass pattern. The sound is much like Herbie Hancock’s bands’, from the albums Mwandishi thru Crossings, of which Priester was a member. Trumpeter Eddie Henderson’s band also continues in the same tradition. Wind Dolphin shifts to the avant garde, while Coincidence is a sweet ballad, played with trombone, guitar and piano only. Scorpio Blue is another ballad with the same set-up plus bass. The full ensemble returns for Anatomy of Longing as we return to the “Mwandishi sound”. There’s some good tenor work here from Ron Stallings. Ray Obiedo’s electric guitar solo is rather dubious but some brief interplay follows from Priester & Stallings to repair any damage.

A good record from Priester who has been a consistently good trombonist since he emerged with Sun Ra in the 50’s.

B.W.

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FLORA PURIM - ENCOUNTER - MILESTONE 9077

Of the many albums Brazilian vocalist Flora Purim has done, this is the most jazz oriented.

The several personnel groupings on this disc make for an interesting, balanced program of music. Saxophonist Joe Henderson is on hand for versions of Chick Corea’s Windows, and his own Black Narcissus, during which he takes an unaccompanied tenor solo. Two cuts find Flora in the company of McCoy Tyner - Airto joins in on the first while the second is a straight piano/vocal duo. Beautiful.

Among the musicians heard on various cuts are George Duke, Ron Carter, Raul De Souza, Hermeto Pascoal and Urszula Dudziak, who adds her own brand of vocals to the title track.

There’s no commercialism here - just great music in the Brazilian jazz vein. In fact, it often swings. This one is well worth checking out - Flora & Company are in great form. B.W.
HENRY FRANKLIN - TRIBAL DANCE - CATALYST CAT-7618
You may recall the name of bassist Henry Franklin from his associations with Freddie Hubbard, Hampton Hawes and Bobby Hutcherson, among others. His first recording as a leader for Catalyst, Tribal Dance, is a strong statement that takes in elements of straight ahead playing and the freedom and expansiveness of the avant garde. The album opens with Tribal Dance, a hard-driving composition by trombonist Al Hall. Hall’s trombone is part of a three-piece horn section consisting of Jerry Rush on trumpet and flugelhorn and Charles Owens on tenor and soprano sax conducted by composer Jack Fulks. Pianist Dwight Dickerson who has appeared on previous Catalyst lp’s provides steady backing for the high energy numbers but also sets the pace and is featured prominently on the ballad For Penny. That’s one of the most pleasing elements of this record: these musicians have the sensitivity to play a ballad without missing a note and yet can improvise freely with each other without destroying continuity. The young drummer, Son Ship (Woody Theus) uses the full range of his set including various percussive devices shifting easily from fast to slow pace as in Spring Song. Son Ship’s solo on Cosmos Dwellers indicates that as he develops further we will be hearing alot more from him in the future. Charles Owens is a standout, not only on saxes but also on the English horn and flute. Running through each composition is the consistently powerful bass playing of Henry Franklin who possesses a clear tone and sure control of his instrument. J.H.

JAN GARABEREK - DIS - ECM 1093
Norwegian saxophonist/flutist Garbarek teams up with guitarist Ralph Towner for Dis, a duo recording with some help from Den Norske Messingeksett (brass) on one cut. Wind recorded through the aid of an “Aeolian harp” is added on three more tunes. A “spooky” sound prevails and Garbarek & Towner certainly play well, but nothing really happens. Both musicians have many better examples of their work available on ECM & I’d suggest that you buy them first or hear this one before committing yourself. There are some nice moments, but overall this album would have a limited appeal. B.W.

KEITH JARRETT - STAIRCASE - ECM - 2 - 1090
Much of Keith Jarrett’s music has a sameness to it that has both negative and positive aspects. On the negative side, a certain monotony sets in after you become familiar with the way he structures his compositions. Jarrett always leads toward the same goal and utilizes similar voicings and fingering techniques to get there. On the positive side, he does have an unmistakable style and an unquestionable command over the piano. It is also a decided plus factor that he chooses to perform on the acoustic piano rather than resort to the temptations of electronic gimmickry. Staircase is a double album divided into four separate compositions, Hourglass, Sundial, Sand, and Staircase. On the whole this project is a step in the right direction from his previous album, the pompous Hymns/ Spheres. Staircase even has moments of new venturing for Jarrett such as the modal qualities expressed in Sand. But where McCoy Tyner can build a solid base of rhythmic support into the modal chords in his left hand, Jarrett does not. The net result is mostly of the same music that we’ve heard before from Jarrett. Pleasant listening but nothing new.

Big Joe Turner and Lloyd Glenn were a treat at WBFO’s benefit presentation at the Trafalgar Memorial Day weekend. Lloyd Glenn is simply a magnificent pianist and Big Joe still can fill a room with his blues shouting. There were problems at times with the local rhythm section though there was excellent music to be heard all three nights. Thanks to those of you who came.

Though perhaps more a funk player than a bluesman today Johnny ‘Guitar’ Watson gave a slightly ragged but striking performance at the Shea’s Buffalo. Looking quite debonair and receiving gold albums for the locally distributed DJM albums Ain’t No Such Thing as a Real Man, Bitchin’ and J.T.’s Real Man. For Ya, Watson played a set of tunes mostly from these two albums. He included a funky “Gangster of Love” and showed considerable stage presence. My only fault can be with the material and execution which is somewhat contrived (to my ears at least). His bluesy guitar was present for the solos, but the flow from vocal solo wasn’t as natural as possible. The music strikes me as too calculated as I was waiting for Watson to take off on an explosive solo. These are my own reactions to both the concert and the recent recordings though no doubt many disagree. I don’t dislike the music, just frustrated by aspects of it. Incidentally an import on Red Lightnin’ the Gangster is Back (0013) features many of his early recordings. Despite a couple of clunker tracks this album has some great moments, blues with some wonderfully violent guitar work. The original recording of “Gangster of Love” is included. Blues enthusiasts can’t help but be knocked out by this set which if not available locally may be had from Southern Record Sales, 42 North Lake Ave., Pasadena, California 91101. Write them for information and prices and ask for their latest listings of blues, folk and jazz albums, both domestic and import. You might also try the Jazz and Blues Centre in Toronto.

New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (Island ISLD 9424) provides documentation of the R&B portion of the 1976 edition of what some call the finest music festival anywhere. Featured are the Texas blues of Lightnin’ Hopkins as well as the legendary Professor Longhair (these may be Fess’ only current domestically available tracks), Irma Thomas, with a really fine “You Can Have My Husband, But Please Don’t Mess With My Man”. Lee Dorsey, Ernie K-Doe and Robert Parker (all recreating their hits.) Side one is all taken by the sweet soul of Allen Toussaint one of the unrecognized giants of pop music today and guitarist Earl King making a rare appearance on record. The Earl King, Lee Dorsey and Robert Parker sides are studio recreations of the live gig due to problems in the live recording. Generally a very satisfying set of New Orleans music and blues.

Blues by Ron Weinstock

The name ‘Guitar’ Watson is one of many great blues albums from abroad that are available by mail. For example Flyright Records put out a set featuring the late tenor sax player J.T. Brown and His Boggie Boys (LP 4712) featuring the raspy sax of Brown as an accompanist to Roosevelt Sykes, Washboard Sam, Elmore James, Little Johnny Jones and others. Some of J.T.’s own mellow vocals are included and some fine jump
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blues as well as hard rocking Chicago blues (as on his own "Sax-ony Boogie", Little Johnny Jones' "Dirty By the Dozen" or Elmore's "Baby What's Wrong") and provides a rounded picture of a unique but underappreciated bluesman. Route 66's reissue of West Coast pianist-singer Floyd Dixon, Opportunity Blues (KIX-1) provides valuable documentation of a style of blues that wasn't in favor with blues collectors until recently. Music ranges from Charles Brown influenced ballad-blues ("Broken Hearted" and "Telephonin") to jump blues ("Real Lovin' Mama" and "Moonshine"). A treat is the 1951 live recording of the bawdy "Too Much Jellyroll" and "Baby, Let's Go Down To the Woods". This valuable reissue comes from Sweden. Two new series of albums are available only by import. The MCM label of France has recorded a number of Chicago blues artists in the bars they play. Flyright has started issuing the Louisiana Swamp Blues and other music recorded by Crowley, La. producer Jay Miller. Artists such as Slim Harpo, Lightnin' Slim, Silas Hogan and Boogie Jake were recorded and many artists were released on Excello. There is much unreleased material as well as very rare stuff and these albums feature either totally new material or alternate takes. As much of the Excello blues is out of print this series take on added value. I will provide more detailed reviews of this material in future BJR's.

There is no store currently carrying Living Blues. Issues may be had for $1.00 or a 6 issue subscription for $5.50 and should be sent to Living Blues Publication, 2615 N. Wilton Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60614. Stores interested in carrying Living Blues should also write there.

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