

MUSICIAN

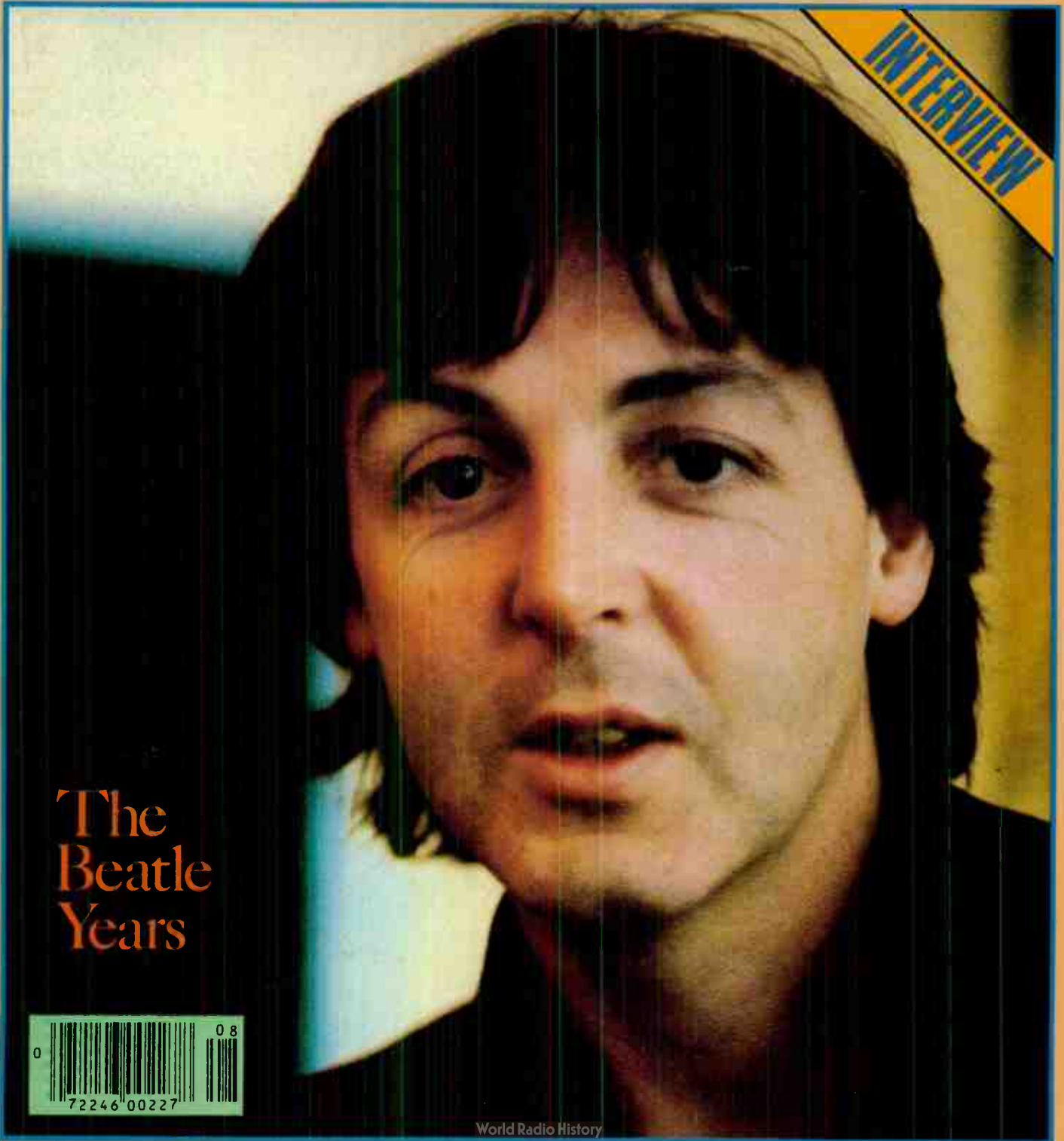
PLAYER & LISTENER

JACO
PASTORIS

No. 26 August, 1980 \$1.50

PAUL McCARTNEY

INTERVIEW



The
Beatle
Years



Sometimes it's the little things that count.

In today's electronic music, some devices can change your sounds radically. You can get a guitar to sound like an organ; or a keyboard to sound like steel drums. But what happens when you need your guitar to sound like a guitar? Did you ever feel that your sound was lifeless and dull? This is because your pickup is loaded by the amplifiers input. Loading causes a loss of highs and lows. If you play an acoustic instrument with a contact-type pickup you are probably experiencing this. If you are running long wires on stage, or are using several effects devices, consider the following alternatives.

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The MXR Noise Gate Line Driver was developed to solve the problems of background noise and hum that occur in live performance. This unit is particularly useful when using

many effects devices. In the front of a signal chain, the Noise Gate Line Driver, provides a buffer to preserve the proper line level for successive devices and amplification. At the end of the chain, it is used to "gate-out" unwanted noise leaving only clean signal. The threshold level, is adjustable allowing the unit to discriminate between program material and unwanted noise. In addition, the Noise Gate Line Driver provides a convenient high/low impedance interface for direct signal taps (i.e., live recording/PA).

Both the Noise Gate Line Driver and the new Micro Amp are ruggedly constructed, designed for long battery life, and backed by MXR's long term commitment and experience in providing the finest electronic devices for the music industry.

So, in the light of the many different modification devices available today; if musical accuracy is important to you, see your MXR dealer. Sometimes it's the little things that count.

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The Saturn has really got it in sound and features, and at \$795 also makes it in price. Try out a Saturn. It's red hot.

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MUSIC

PLAYER & LISTENER

NO. 26, AUGUST, 1980

Jaco Pastorius is the most original exciting bassist in years and is redefining the instrument through both his sound and conception. An outspoken exclusive interview by Damon Roerich



Thelonious Monk is one of the truly original jazz composers and pianists from the bebop era whose music went beyond all stylistic bounds. Bob Blumenthal talks about Monk's life and music.



Paul McCartney never wanted to talk about his past until he put on his old Beatle suit for some promo pictures. In a wide-ranging interview, Vic Garbarini and Paul talk about the days in Hamburg up through Paul's current solo album.



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**“If I couldn’t play Zildjians,
I’d change instruments.”**

Buddy Rich



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Co-Publisher/Editor

Sam Holdsworth

Co-Publisher/Ad Director

Gordon Baird

Assoc. Publisher/Advertising

Gary Krasner

Art Director

Sam Holdsworth (S.H. Swift)

Distribution Co-ordinators

Paul Sacksman

Brian Beaudry

Managing Editor/N.Y.

Vic Garbarini

Associate Editor

Rafi Zabor

Production Manager

Jane Winsor

Art Assistants

Laurel Ives

Bates Doge

Staff Photographer

Deborah Feingold

Administration

Cindy Amero

Kathy Thompson

Michelle Nicastro

Typography

Don Russell

Main Office/Production

42 Rogers Street

P.O. Box 701

Gloucester, MA 01930

New York Sales/Editorial

125 E. 23rd St., #401

N.Y.C., N.Y. 10010

(212) 260-0850

Contributors

Lester Bangs, Bob Blumenthal
David Breskin, Chris Cioe, Tom
Copi, Chris Doering, Deb
Feingold, Robert Ford, Dan
Forte, Robert Fripp, V. Gaits, Vic
Garbarini, Nelson George, Peter
Giron, Lynn Goldsmith, Mark
Mehler, Robert Palmer, Ebet
Roberts, Tom Sahagian, Michael
Shore, Chip Stern, Zan Stewart,
Roy Trakin

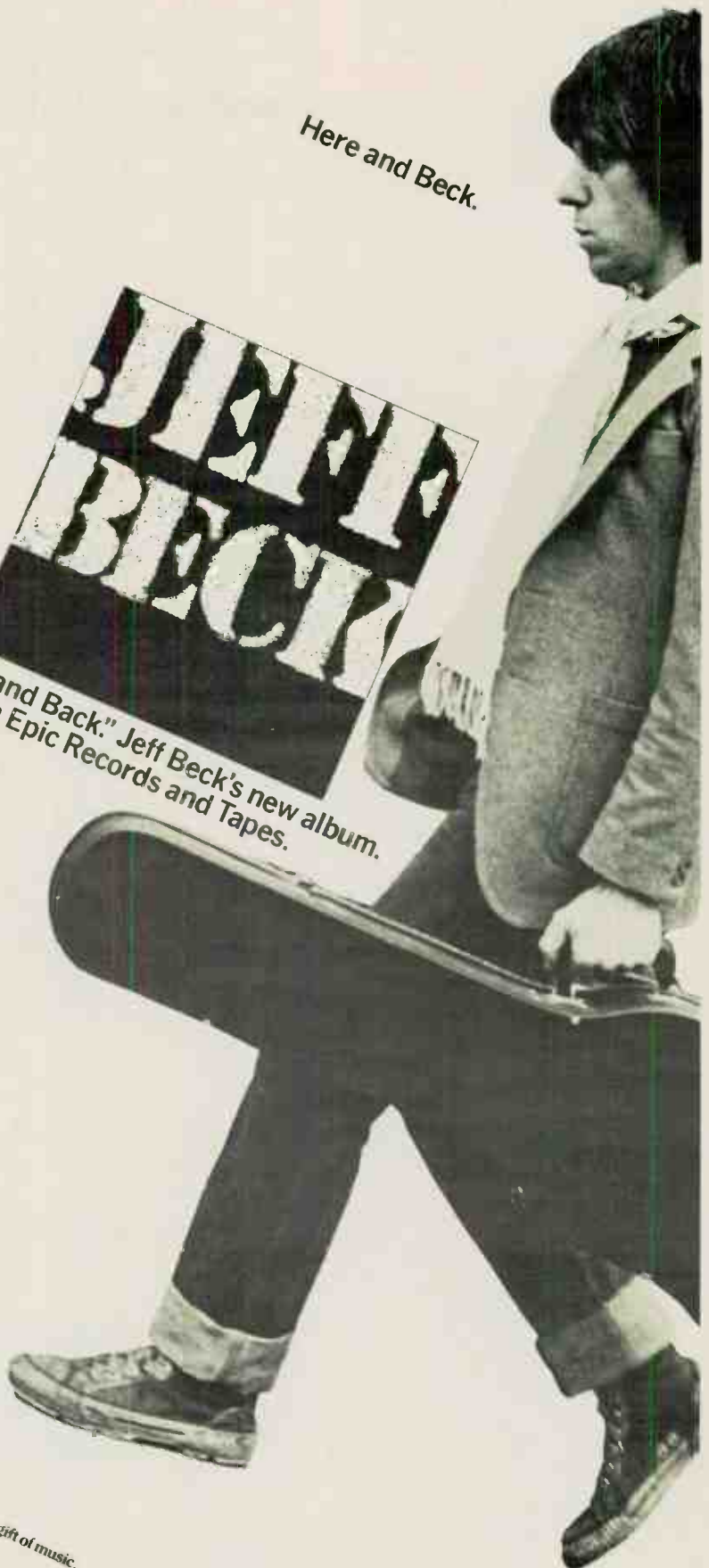
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Here and Beck.

"There and Back." Jeff Beck's new album.
On Epic Records and Tapes.



LETTERS

WHAT IS HIP?

Isn't it interesting that your two literary bastions of rock fringe hipness (Marsh and Bangs) appeared in the same issue extolling the virtues of the mainstream appeal of both Tom Petty and ZZ Top? Or is it? Time to get out the wide ties again, folks!

Edsel Ferrari
Salem, Mass.

WEATHER RETORT II

After reading Jon Pareles' review of a recent Weather Report concert in New York, I feel I have to answer for the other side. On March 1, I saw basically the same show at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium in L.A., and it was a disaster. Instead of playing tightly-arranged melodic pieces, they spent 90% of the evening jamming on endless riffs at high speed, with no melodic or harmonic structure. It was truly a monumental evening of self indulgence. Joe Zawinul himself said years ago that he would never allow Weather Report to become "a band for hotshot soloists. A musical statement is more important than a technical one." It seems that in the last year and a half he's gone back on his word. After witnessing their appearance in June, 1979 at the Playboy Jazz Festival, reading about last summer in Montreux and seeing the March 1 concert, I have seen the band slowly but surely take a cocky and arrogant attitude. You may buy what they're doing now, but I don't. I want to see and hear music from Weather Report, not cacophonous jamming, and I hope I speak for a good portion of their audience.

R. Remick
Los Angeles, Cal.

CLASH DEFENDER

Vic Garbarini's review of *London Calling* did the Clash a disservice. Why? Because it read like a critical apology... when I think Mr. Garbarini really liked the album and wanted other people to buy it. In my case, I had decided on the basis of the review *not* to buy the album. Fortunately, I had second thoughts after hearing the single that the Baltimore stations are playing (need I add that I have not bought the Clash before?). What an album! It deserves the kind of panegyric that J*n L****u gave S*****n and the kind of critical analysis E**s C*****o gets (whether he deserves it or not).

NOT a review that starts "Critics sometimes exhibit a disturbing and blah blah blah..." And NOT a review that makes references that are either so obvious (Sex Pistols, Dylan, Who) or so arcane ("Weltanschauung," W.B. Yeats, Tao) that they left me with the impres-

sion that the reviewer couldn't even stand to listen to the record more than once.

Daniel Prives
Baltimore, Md.

DANG BANGS

Dear Mr. Bangs, you have publicly thrashed a hero of mine, and I would like to put you in your place. This is in regard to your article on Free Jazz/ Punk Rock. One of the first points you make in the article is about passion and music. And how chops and technique don't make up for lack of heart. That's something I agree with. There ain't nothing more boring than listening to Al DiMeola slug his way through a whole side of plastic. But then you have the nerve to lump Duane Allman together with the Grateful Dead, saying all he did was to have the "stamina to play scales for an hour or two". When it comes to making a list of instrumentalists of any kind who have played with true visceral passion you can bet that Duane's name will be there near the top. The Allman Bros. never just played scales for an hour or two. Their tunes were tight, and the improvisation spiced them up and stretched them out.

What do you think such "jazz giants" as John Coltrane did but play in modes and scales for sides on end? He convoluted and transmogrified those scales, but if you knew anything about music you'd know that's what he was doing. Albeit with a great deal of spirit, inspiration and passion. Duane was the real thing. Like Hendrix, nobody can or ever will take his place. Also like Hendrix his death was the humus through which dozens of guitarists were nourished. You have done a great man a great public injustice. Take it back or else.

Bruce Piscitello
Easton, PA

Lester Bangs responds:

You're right. Duane Allman was a great guitarist. I hate guitar. The greatest guitar solo ever was Lou Reed on "I Heard Her Call My Name." This is the same man who took a Gibson L-5CEF Guitar (bought 40% off at Manny's for \$1,659 tax included) and plugged a sol-

dering iron into it just to see how it would sound. That's rock and roll. — Lester Bangs

GOD SAVE TULSA

My compliments. Your publication is interesting, varied and well written. Far too many publications offered to the consumer dwell on the sensational and peripheral matters that have little do to with the subject at hand (or ear). Thank you for finding a way to bridge the gap between the professional and the listener. I find it a real learning experience that stimulates and entertains.

Ellis Widner
Tulsa, OK.

REGGAE HEARTLAND

Your coverage on Bob Marley and the roots of reggae was excellent. Cioe and Sutton-Smith should be commended on the depth of their report. Particularly Rasta philosophy and Marley vs. Tosh/Bunny split (Twelve Tribes/Nyabingis). However, Jem isn't the only company importing reggae. Out here in the heartland we sell lots of reggae plus ska and rock steady. Keep up the good work.

Phil Alloy
Athens, OH.

JUST ROCK 'N' ROLL

Mark Mehler did a lot of beating around the bush to say that he doesn't care for Billy Joel. Mehler overlooked Joel's creativity and picked out bits of his new album that sound like other artists, when you can pick any Bob Seger song and find another Bob Seger song that sounds the same. Yet Cris Cioe gives Bob Seger a big rock and roll pat on the back in this same issue for turning out an album that is a rehash of his last. Is that creativity? No, that's rock and roll.

Christopher Amos
Fort Worth, Texas

POETRY

Mr. Zabor's reviews are like mini-recordings; his *Bear* is heart-breaking; and your magazine is choice!

J. Michael Kenny
New Orleans

REAL-LIFE ENVELOPES



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Because you're serious.



music

industry

news

By Nelson George and Robert Ford

\$100,000 Reward

Warner Communications Inc. has offered cash awards worth \$100,000 for information leading to the arrest of record counterfeiters. The amount of each individual award will be determined if and when the information provided leads to the conviction of any record duplicators. The idea is to entice retailers to inform on anyone who approaches them with illegal records. This bounty offer is an out-growth of the NARM convention in Las Vegas.

Miles Files

Miles Davis has been in the studio and the hospital this month. The word from the hospital is that it's nothing serious; in the studio he's been working up some new material with a new band. The music's in Miles' most recent funk vein, evolving from the bass lines up, and his young band from Chicago has been doing some of the writing. A Japanese tour has been tentatively set for January. We spoke with the band's reedman, Bill Evans: "Miles gets a kick out of putting young players in the forefront. He lets me solo all over the place while he works with the rhythm section. He might be using singers but it's difficult to say. We'll probably do the whole thing over in a month and a half." Any further developments in the Miles File, we'll let you know.

Small is Better

Stiff Records, the consistently innovative new wave label, has taken another step in establishing its 'small is better' philosophy in the U.S. CBS has right of first refusal on all Stiff's

product for U.S. and Canada distribution. Since CBS has passed on many of Stiff's lesser known performers these enterprising Englishmen have established their own independent distribution network in North America for performers whose sales average under the 500,000 unit mark.

The number of copies pressed will be linked to retail sales and not the wishful thinking of company executives. There will be no return provisions either and all records will be paid for cash on delivery to avoid cash flow problems, the bane of independent distribution. And like any select audience business a mailing list is being used to target new wave record buyers.

AM Stereo

AM stereo has been the dream of many radio station owners since FM became the major transmitter of recorded music. The problem has been in deciding which of several competing systems would be utilized. The FCC recently came to a preliminary decision to use a system developed by Magnavox. Instead of stabilizing the situation it has only stirred more controversy since there appear to be several technical and financial problems posed by the Magnavox system. So that debate has yet to be settled.

Also still to be determined is when there will be AM receivers able to accept AM stereo transmissions. WABC in New York, KDKA in Pittsburgh, and several other stations across the country are already broadcasting in AM stereo, but with current AM receivers the improved sound quality is impossible to appreciate.

The Peter Principle

Arista head Clive Davis, always one to search out glamour and publicity whenever possible, has now made the very logical move into the movie business. In conjunction with 20th Century Fox and Arista's European big brothers at Ariola, he has formed Arista Davis Ariola Films. The deal is for Davis to develop three film properties over the next three years for Fox, which means we'll be hearing plenty of Barry Manilow soundtrack music in coming years. Though some may suggest that is what he's been making all along. Jerry Greenberg, who recently "resigned" as president of Atlantic records, has formed his own label with his brother Bob to be distributed by Atlantic. As we said about David Geffen, old record company presidents don't fade away they just find new money. Greenberg's new label coupled with news of former Casablanca Records prexy Neil Bogart's impending CBS distribution deal gives new meaning to the Peter Principle. All you have to do to own your own label is to become president of a major corporate label and run it into the ground. Then, when the corporate big wigs can you someone will reward your incompetence with a label of your very own. The Bogart CBS deal is particularly interesting as it will put the west coast hypester under the same corporate umbrella as Donna Summer, the star he built and bilked at Casablanca.

Country Crazies

In the super conservative world of country music change comes mighty slow. So one must tip his Stetson to Freddy Weller, a Columbia records performer who has added fireworks, smoke bombs, and space cowboy suits to his live show. In Nashville where a sequined shirt and bandana are the norm, the reaction to Weller's "power country" approach is still to be gauged. Some are calling Weller country music's Kiss, and can you imagine a country Alice Cooper?

Rock Package Tours

The good old rock 'n' roll revue is making a comeback in 1980. Contemporary Communications, the powerful rock booking agent, has a 100-city tour featuring four of its heaviest metalers (Frank Marino and Mahogany Rush, Humble Pie, Mother's Finest, and Angel) at a lower-than-usual ticket price. To offset this decrease in revenue, T-shirts, tour books, and other rock merchandise will be sold in a supermarket type setup at each arena. Solar Records has a long country-wide tour underway featuring four of its artists, including the hot Whispers and Shalamar, to

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World Radio History

develop public identification with the label and capitalize on a number of successful pop singles. In both these cases, the tour provides each group with near equal billing, plenty of time on stage, and gives audiences more

music for their money. Other labels and booking agents are considering this package tour approach for the summer months, especially for middle level groups who can't fill larger arenas.

Chart Action: Mickey Mouse Goes Disco

A look at the pop album and singles charts during the early months of the summer revealed that several careers in decline had made major comebacks. Frank Sinatra's *Trilogy* album is the first traditional MOR album to crack the top 30 in a long, long time. Also coming out of commercial slumbers were Elton John, the Temptations, Mac Davis, the Spinners, Neil Sedaka, Genesis, the Manhattans, Jimmy Ruffin, the J. Geils Band, and the reformed Humble Pie.

Jermaine Jackson, who as a member of the Jackson Five contributed to many hits, is also again turning a profit for Motown records. When his brothers left for CBS records a few years back and he married a daughter of Motown's founder Berry Gordy, Motown poured thousands of dollars into making him a solo star. But Michael Jackson he wasn't. Finally after several flops, Stevie Wonder's sharp production gave him a number one soul single "Let's Get Serious" that went top 20 in the pop market. Nepotism lives, but it took Stevie to make it sell.

Movie music has also done well in 1980 as singles from *American Gigolo*, *Urban Cowboy*, *The Rose*, *Bronco Billy*, and *Roadie* did well on the pop, country, and disco charts. *The Empire Strikes Back* soundtrack isn't doing too badly either, starting at number 31 and working its way up. Just around the corner is the *Blues Brothers* soundtrack featuring James Brown, Rev. James Cleveland, Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, John Lee Hooker, and a couple of no-talent clowns in shades.

Bob Seger replaced Pink Floyd as the number one pop album finally putting some cracks in *The Wall*. (Eric "Laid Back" Clapton followed Seger in the number two spot.) Seger delighted Capitol's accountant when at one point his entire catalogue of Capitol releases appeared in the middle of the pop album chart. Heavy metal continued pounding merrily along as Van Halen, the Joe Perry Project, Heart, a new entry named Triumph, Rush, and the ever-beautiful Ted Nugent all cracked the top 40 pop albums. AC/DC, whose lead singer Bob Scott recently died in a car accident, have sold over 1,000,000 copies of their ear-shattering *Highway To Hell* album.

For black music fans it is worth

noting that on the pop album chart West Coast based musicians and bands (the Brothers Johnson, Michael and Jermaine Jackson, the Whispers, Shalamar, Raydio, and Smokey Robinson) were that music's standard bearers.

The disco crossover (songs that first received favorable club response) is doing well this summer. Lipps, Inc.'s *Funkytown*, and Manhattan Transfer's *Twilight Tone* are the most prominent examples. The real sleeper however is the *Mickey Mouse Disco* album by (who else?) Mickey Mouse on Disneyland records which has already gone gold and may have a shot at platinum. Some might say it's the right artist for the right music. We just wanna know if disco skates and cheese can be safely mixed.

While rock fans applaud Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* album for its well over 300 weeks on the pop album chart, for consistency there is nothing like a country artist. *Ten Years of Gold* by Kenny Rogers has been on the country album chart some 120 weeks at this writing, not much when compared with Pink Floyd. But when one notices that Willie Nelson's "Stardust" is also over 100 weeks and that both men have other albums nearing the century mark, the appeal of this duo and the steady buying of the country fan is clear.

The jazz chart, as usual, has precious little actual jazz music on it. Isn't it time the trade publications did something about it? Why not divide the chart in half with one side for fusion and pop-jazz (from Benson to Corea). The other for more improvisational music (Louie Armstrong re-issues to the Art Ensemble of Chicago). Under the current set-up the small, independent labels with steady selling catalogues have no shot at getting the exposure a trade chart listing represents.

On the soul chart the slow-dance single has come back strong as the Whispers, the Manhattans, Smokey Robinson, GQ, and especially the Isley Brothers with "Don't Say Goodnight" have made music with a good beat you can grind to. Roberta Flack and Stephanie Mills, with the production-writing aid of Reggie Lucas and Mtume, have revitalized the sophisticated New York pop-soul sound with diverse top selling albums on the soul chart.

Where to find the 4620 Cabaret instrument series.

| | |
|---|--|
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| MARYLAND Rockville | Veneman Music Company |
| MASSACHUSETTS Boston | E. U. Wuriltzer Company |
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| WISCONSIN Madison Milwaukee | Spectrum Audio Uncle Bob's Music Center, Ltd. |



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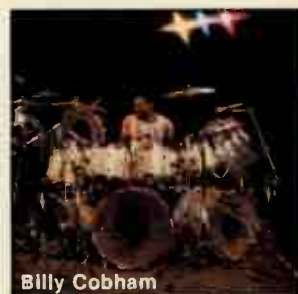
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HEAVY METAL HEATHENS

How can Heavy Metal make a comeback when it never really left? The Nuge proves that great trash never goes out of style.

By Dave Marsh

Despite the pundits, 1980 now shapes up not as the year in which the Clash and therefore new/whatchamacallit have conquered America, but as the year in which the Great God Heavy Metal has strikingly reasserted its dominance over rock's heartland heathens.

Rock pundits love revivals, so much so that they like to pretend that rock itself died between 1958 and 1963, just so they can claim that the advent of the Beatles resuscitated it. Nonetheless, the Great Heavy Metal Renaissance surely qualifies as the most unnecessary in history. When did this bludgeoning drone ever leave us?

What really happened, as usual, is that the kind of people who become pundits, and/or get quoted by them, had their attention diverted, first by disco, and then by the aforementioned whatchamacallem bands. Out there in America, though, kids were still growing up on a steady diet of Rush and Journey, Ted Nugent and Molly Hatchet, ignoring punk metaleers like the Ramones as blithely as they did neo-scholastics like Pere Ubu.

But the aforementioned quartet, plus such latecomers as Van Halen and AC/DC, did represent a striking decline in heavy metal from the halcyon days. Nugent alone kept his wits about him, while the original thinking man's metal group, Blue Oyster Cult, declined to the pretty-but-inoffensive "Don't Fear the Reaper." If there was one thing God intended heavy metal to be, after all, it was brutally offensive. Not to mention gruesomely fearsome.

There was another aspect to heavy metal's rumored demise, of course. When a heavy metal band like Led Zepelin becomes sufficiently popular, the experts simply take it off the genre books: Elton John isn't regarded as a singer-songwriter, anymore, either. So a band like Kiss, given its make-up, becomes associated with glitter bands like the Dolls and Bowie, even though its sound is pure Zeppelin/Sabbath in derivation. Until it starts playing Dance Oriented Rock — another term designed for those who have conveniently forgotten: this time, that the only difference between DOR and the disco we theoretically despised is not greater amounts of personality, but simply a



The Nuge has always been smarter than anyone gives him credit for. "The Wango Tango" is the first great rock of 1980, while Van Halen does for Jim Dandy Mangrum what Blondie did for Patti Smith.



convenient excuse to surrender to the rhythm.

But there's no denying that heavy metal was in dire straits when the contestants for the throne included a mushily mystical banality like Rush, proponents of third-rate Anglo techno-flash like Journey, or Van Halen, whose David Lee Roth is nothing so much as the man who did for Jim Dandy Mangrum what Debbie Harry did for Patti Smith: rinse with Clairol and siphon off the brains. Talk about rootless.

Naturally, this suited the music industry fine, since the music industry (with rare exceptions) never liked heavy metal much anyhow. Its practitioners were not exactly the type you could take home for dinner in the suburbs and what sort of TV show could possibly star Nugent, true carnivore of the arts that he

is. The Rolling Stones and the Who might be vulgar, but these guys were tasteless and by-and-large pretty damn proud of it. Which makes sense of what Bill Graham had to say about the supposed Metal Renaissance in the May 24th *Billboard*: "Everybody wants to see the two-headed lady in the circus at least once, so there'll always be the young, teen and pre-teen who comes to a heavy metal show because that's how you become irritated into rock. These bands stay popular through a rotation of fans. The kids are loyal to the decibel level."

Translation They'll grow out of it. Which I hope somebody at Warner Bros. Records reminds Mr. Graham next time Ronnie Montrose's sales start slipping.

And anyway, what about those of us
continued on next page

who refuse to act our age? Now I'm not pretending that I still play *Paranoid* with the regularity that I used to, or that even *Deep Purple in Rock* shakes my walls with the frequency that it once did. But my palms still get sweeter when I open the morning mail and receive a Zeppelin LP than when the new Stones' disc rolls across the threshold. At the very least, I remain sufficiently astute not to fall for either Def Leppard or AC/DC. And just dedicated enough to get a kick out of the Joe Perry Project's debut album. Perry sounded like he'd been sleeping through the last couple Aerosmith projects, which is probably the necessary consequence of overexposure to Steven Tyler, but here he seems practi-

cally reborn (although his knack for finding all-but-unlistenable vocalists hasn't failed him, even here).

It was the Perry Project album which first tipped me to the idea that heavy metal was enjoying a revival, not of popularity (as a friend of mine just noted, "Everybody talked punk and new wave but all that was selling was heavy metal anyway") but of quality. What made me certain of it was the appearance of Ted Nugent's *Scream Dream*, which features what the never humble Mr. Nugent quite correctly refers to as "the Amazing 'Wango Tango.'"

Nugent has become a critic's pet, mostly because he's dream copy: rock's own Noble Savage, loin-cloths and raw

meat, overt sexism and zero self-discipline, anti-drug and pro bow-and-arrow. But Nugent's image has been played up at the expense of his considerable skill as a guitarist; he may not have much sense of structure, but he can whang the hell out of that Gibson, with a crude finesse that lets him explore regions that all the competition long ago abandoned for more sedate adventures.

Wango Tango is almost typical Nugent — it starts out crazy and ends up insane, and while it would be pressing your luck to say that it meanders from one to the other, the path it travels is far from a straight line. For about 30 seconds, *Wango* is the kind of Ur-metal that Steppenwolf used to purvey, but then it becomes a straight "Cat Scratch" fever clone, before Ted decides to disassemble into a Sam the Sham spiel that is both urgent and completely hilarious. By the time he gets to the "Your face is like a Maserati" chant, you're willing to go the limit with him. Ted, as usual, is willing to push it that far, too: for scatology, *Wango Tango* is simply unmatched, making explicit everything the J. Geils Band implied with *Love Stinks* and with a simplicity that makes *Never Mind the Bollocks* seem arch. If 1980 has produced a genuine rock and roll classic, this is probably it, not excluding the fact that everyone, including myself, may have forgotten about it by the time that the year-end polls roll around.

But then, forgetting it is part of the point. Nugent has created his image knowing that as long as he chooses to play this kind of music, he'll never be taken particularly seriously. He thus becomes a press phenomenon without having to indulge in the overlay of hippie goo that Robert Plant paints on Jimmy Page's hard rock surfaces, or indulge in the artificial distance that has kept bands like the Ramones from reaching the audience their music aims for. Heartland heavy metal will never die because of one simple fact: it requires neither the conceit of the ironic nor the false humility of the overly sincere.

Wango Tango is in some sense a kind of joke, but it never backs off from its 'smash the world to smithereens' aesthetic. Nugent is simply having a blast and a laugh, the best way he knows how. Everyone who likes rock and roll needs this sometimes, a reminder that we originally fell in love with real trash, not transcendent garbage. Ted Nugent ranks with the rock and roll greats, not just the heavy metal ones, because he embodies the true credo of it all: "Born to Be Wild" is engraved on his heart, not with the delicacy of a tattoo, but with the sheer abandon of a 'lude freak wielding a Nugent "crew Knife" (two blades and a church-key, \$16.95 with the coupon on the inner sleeve). Like I said, a true carnivore of the arts. ☐



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FOLK ROCK REVISITED

Steve Forbert, Bruce Cockburn and Willie Nile are just a few of those reviving the honorable tradition.

By Cris Cioe

The first glimmers of a folk rock renaissance shone through the clouds this year, and in the immortal words of the Temptations, "where it's gonna stop, I'm sure nobody knows." Is this a mere revival, yet another attempt to exhume the past, to "try and catch the wind" (as Donovan so cleverly put it in '66), while the world stumbles toward the "eve of destruction?" Before answering these and other fascinating questions, we should perhaps pause to reflect on folk-rock's original glory days, an enigmatic pop music era that burned briefly in the mid-60's before being snuffed out by the opening chords of "Purple Haze."

We're talking '65-'66 now, that crack in time between the Beatles-led British invasion and psychedelia. *The* most influential person in that era of pop music was Bob Dylan. As a folk singer, of course, Dylan had combined Woody Guthrie's rambling style of delivery with the kind of personalized, even politicized lyrics that had never been heard on pop records before. But Dylan had been a rocker in high school, before he was a folkie, and the melding of his poetry with amplification was a natural progression. Moreover, when he plugged in his Telecaster in the 60s, AM radio had already primed the public for the sound via the Beatles, et al. The Byrds' cover version of "Mr. Tambourine Man" was the song that established the folk-rock style on the radio: ringing electric 12- and 6-string guitars, prominent snare drum on the backbeat, high modal harmonies in the vocals, and lots of up-to-the-minute relevance in the lyrics.

The style was also an American response to the British invasion of the record charts that had just occurred, a chance for American musicians and trendsetters to prove that they too could influence pop culture. In 1967, rock shifted into overdrive by getting heavier and bluesier at the same time, with groups like Cream and the Jimi Hendrix Experience laying waste to the slightly tinnier, treblier folk-rock guitar sound — and it was over, at least as a pop phenomenon.

Except that in New York City, clubs like the Other End, Folk City, and Kenny's Castaways never stopped featuring live folk music, and throughout the 70s a singer with a guitar, some originals, and a half-decent voice could always find



Steve Forbert (left) and Bruce Cockburn breathe some fresh air into a shopworn idiom.

work. By the end of the decade, this younger generation of East Coast-based folkies was sitting smack dab in the middle of an ironic situation. New wave rock and roll had grown up right down Bleeker Street as it were, at places like CBGB's on the Bowery, and virtually every new wave rock strain has stylistic roots somewhere in the 60s. So, it was natural for the "nouveau folkies" to plug into amplifiers themselves when it came time to get their record deals, keeping their folk roots intact while acknowledging these regressively changing times.

Willie Nile's debut album, released a couple of months ago, reveals a singer-songwriter of considerable grace, his reedy vocals and chiming band sound very much in the Bob Dylan-circa-*Highway 61 Revisited* mold. Signed last year to Arista Records after years of street-singing and dues-paying in the clubs, Nile chose to work with producer Roy Halee, who had engineered for the Lovin' Spoonful and the Yardbirds in the 60s. Nile also put together a band that included Jay Dee Daugherty on drums (ex of the Patti Smith Band) and guitarist Clay Barnes, an excellent player from the South (who had an under-appreciated band called the Cryers that made two albums in the 70s). *Willie Nile* is modestly produced, with rhythm guitar and snare drums very prominent in the

mix (luckily, Daugherty is a substantial and punchy drummer), and Nile's lyrics are, if anything, unpretentious.

His songs aren't meant to be grand gestures or deeply profound statements, but more painterly and impressionistic in their detail. In the past, the lean and spare singer has had severe health problems, partially as a result of his rural, upstate New York background clashing with the toll of city life, and there's an underlying sadness and sense of mortality in these songs — especially the love songs — that is their most affecting quality.

But the two modern folk-rock singer-songwriters who've made the most commercial dent so far are both younger — do a lot less overt harkening back than their revisionist contemporaries. Bruce Cockburn (pronounced Coburn) is a Canadian, and quite a big star in his own country. *Dancing In The Dragon's Jaw* is his tenth album, and has been fairly successful on the American pop charts. His songs are deceptively simple sounding at first, but gradually the range of influences that Cockburn's smoothly assimilated into his acoustic guitar style and songwriting is amazing. His band plays a rhythmically supple blend of spare jazz-rock that comes off sounding like a mixture of pared-down Pat Metheny and folk-

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LOU REED'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Lou Reed: Growing up in public makes for good therapy. But is it art?

By Brian Cullman

The past is always with us, everywhere we turn — too large to escape and too large to even look in the eye. Like Medusa, it can only be seen through trickery or with mirrors, at an angle. Look at it face to face and your words will turn to stone.

When an artist tries to explain himself and write about himself overtly, instead of covertly, he will usually do one of three things: he will lie, he will be wrong, or he will bore his audience to tears.

Henry Miller re-invented his past over and over again, filling it with talking vaginas and charming lunatics who lived at the edge of the world and the end of a world; for his partial autobiography, Ernest Hemingway created a world in which everyone alive was (or wanted to be) his dearest friend and where heroic meals were waged forever; Nabokov charmed his way through his life story by creating a double, a perfectly separate Nabokov who could walk through situations and events for him. They were all born entertainers and born liars who would never for a moment let the facts of their lives spoil a good story.

The moment art surrenders its imaginative medium it surrenders everything. Sincerity is almost never enough, but even the best liars get caught imagining it is or should be. (Is there anyone who actually prefers the hammy sincerity of Dylan's "Sara" to the brilliant artifice of "Sad Eyed Lady Of The Lowlands"?) What to do? Our secrets are so petty, and the world is so large.

And so, on to Lou Reed — a man who has confounded everyone, not simply by staying alive (no mean feat in itself, especially considering the continued rumors of his imminent demise due to drugs, sexual activity or boredom), but by releasing 14 albums in just over eight years (confounding everyone with more and more good songs and fewer and fewer great ones — avoiding their possibility by manic productivity). The father of new wave, he has been too consistently passionate, eccentric and silly to remain on speaking terms with his children. A great believer in "the artist as metaphor," he's turned himself into a series of outrageous caricatures: the rock 'n' roll animal, the innocent bystander as one mean son-of-a-bitch, the leather boy as sexual jambalaya in the



Reed sounds off-center and confused on *Growing Up In Public*. *Waking Up In Public* might have been a better title.

land of *haricots verts* — but he's never been bound by these; he's pushed each one to its limit yet remained apart, separate, and larger than any metaphor he's devised. And for someone with such a sustained reputation for decadence, his songs remain consistently innocent and open-hearted.

*If I could make the world as pure
and strange as what I see
I'd put you in the mirror
I put in front of me.*

Hearing his songs is often like walking into the middle of late-night conversations: they have centers but no apparent sides, they don't seem to begin or end.

*What do you think I'd see
If I could walk away from me?*

*I saw myself in a dream
and I just want to tell you
everything was alright.*

Like Neil Young and Van Morrison, he continually allows honest confusion into his work; i.e. he doesn't limit what he writes about to what he understands. And so, even in his most contrived songs, he reveals small moments, unexpected truths that are both charming and strange. At times they seem akin to old-fashioned children's rhyming songs:

*Ping Ping Ping
Satellite of Love*

*And the colored girls go
Doot doo doot doo doot
Doot doo doot.*

all harken back to:

*Mumps said the doctor
Mumps said the nurse
Mumps said the lady
With the alligator purse.*

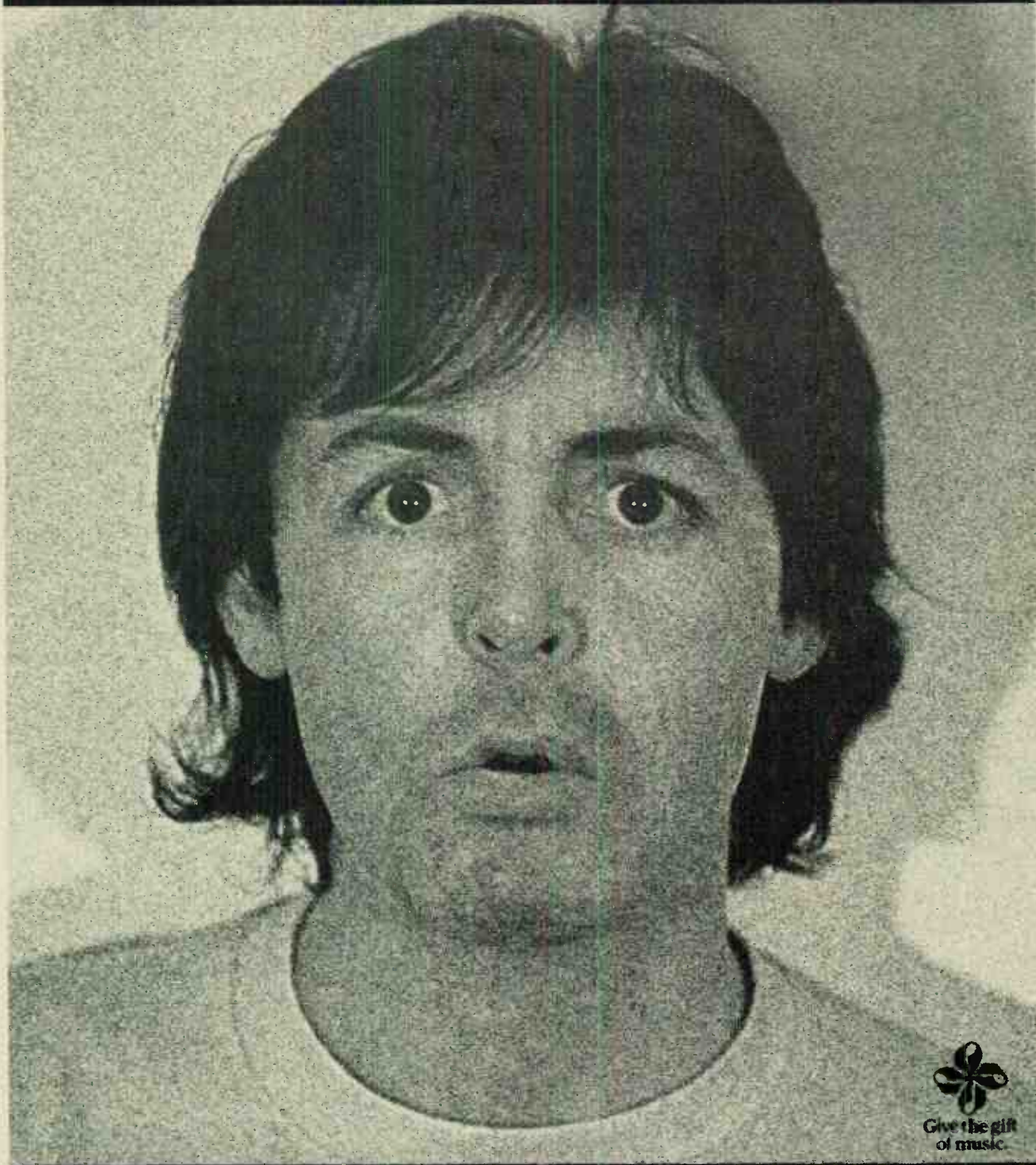
It's this playfulness, this sense of telling stories to yourself, that's missing from Lou Reed's new album, the overtly autobiographical *Growing Up In Public*, that make it seem so wrongheaded, despite the passion and conviction he's so obviously brought to it. Where before he seemed to talk to himself and let us eavesdrop, now he seems intent on explication, on looking us in the collective eye, as it were, and telling us Just What Happened (the facts, ma'am, just the facts) with his mother and father and his relationships ("Who wants to hear about how you hate men?") and the various roles and restrictions that have been thrust on him. It makes for good therapy, but it doesn't make for good songs.

Everything is off center. On the cover he looks confused and puffy-eyed, like an alcoholic teddy bear, dressed in what appears to be a green velour pajama top (given the picture, *Waking Up In Public* might have been a better title). It's a severely unflattering picture and, whatever its intention, makes him look lost and out of control. Neither is appropriate to this record. Whatever his other failings, Reed sings with more power and passion than he's evinced in years, blustering and yelping his way through songs that, in the recent past, he would have slyly talked his way through. It's a joy to hear, although it's not always in the service of the material: on "Standing On Ceremony," Reed obviously has so much fun growling and working himself up into rage and fury that it's easy to forget that the song IS angry and bitter and simply enjoy the bravura performance.

It's odd (and a little cowardly) that on a record this personal Reed should choose to work with a collaborator. Whatever Reed's limitations as a melo-dist might be, they are also his greatest strengths. With his classic New York rock 'n' roll instincts (embracing both Delmore Schwartz and the Jive Five), his

continued on page 82

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WHOSE NEW WAVE?

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By Lester Bangs

Isn't it exciting that the Eighties have arrived and rock 'n' roll is here to stay again at last? Disco finally did die! Why, and to think that just six months ago before the onset of the new decade *Newsweek* ran a "Disco Takes Over" cover story. And that everybody was lamenting the way New Wave had largely fizzled out, and the larger problem that nothing much seemed to be happening anywhere. The first indication I got that any kind of really big change was coming was when *ABC 20/20* ran a New Wave segment last December 13th, where they showed clips of the Beatles at the Cavern in Liverpool and then cut to films of the Ramones and Clash and told the audience for the first time on American network TV that it was all the same thing. I saw it at a party, and remember being surprised that I was about the only person in the room who got all excited — "Don't you see? They've opened the door!" — but then, I also got excited when NBC ran those sensationalistic clips of the British punk scene back in early '77, which I actually thought at the time would drive American teenagers crazy into some mass rebellion of their own (what teenagers I later talked to had apparently been frightened by the show).

But now the word has definitely come down: Disco Is Out. Rock (Particularly New Wave) Is In. Rock discos are springing up (as they have been for some time, actually) all over Manhattan, sure to be the next big thing to hit Middle America as well. Punk is no longer such a dirty word, but "New Wave" is what's on everybody's lips. New Wave supplements in general interest magazines. New Wave clothes in all the chic boutiques (and all over Manhattan last year's disco kids in brand new black leather suits 'n' boots just bought for 'em by Mommy and Daddy, garnished with green hair and buttons of their faverave groups, this development as well obviously destined to spread to the heartland). Two writers of my acquaintance are working up scripts for New Wave movies, for Hollywood not the "underground," but unfortunately for them somebody else beat 'em to it: a guitarist friend who lives on St. Mark's Place tells me they're already shooting one in his neighborhood, and all the little twerps we've dodged at CBGB's are getting



This is New Wave, this flood of new bands falling all over themselves to sound alike? Who decides these things anyway?

work as extras.

He also asked me a question the other day that I've been asking a lot myself lately: "Isn't it a little weird that all of a sudden, overnight, at the turn of a new decade, New Wave becomes acceptable and disco is passe? Who makes these decisions anyway?"

I couldn't answer the question and still can't, so this piece will be less researched than from a suspicious gut. I'll leave the research to people like Marsh and Fripp, if even they can answer that ultimate question of final authorization, and just say that I've been around the music business for eleven years now and this feels like a setup. It just went from one extreme to the other too quickly, and no way can I see this as any grass-roots populist upsurge. What I can see it as is another media fabrication, because I live fairly close to the belly of the beast and I felt the rumblings fairly early on. Just like, to backtrack a bit, I was initially surprised when I started getting phone calls from magazine editors and freelancers late in 1976, either wanting me to write articles or give them quotes on just exactly what this "punk rock" stuff was. Aside from the Ramones and the Dictators, I'd thought punk was pretty much dead 'n' buried post-*Raw Power* (Patti bein' Art, y'know, and the Sex Pistols still almost entirely unknown in this country). In 1977, of course, we got so swamped with media coverage of punk that by early 1978 the magazines were done with it and you

couldn't even sell a book on it even though everybody'd pronounced it dead yet again!

By the end of 1979 ... yeah, I know the B52's sold a heap o' records, and I know the Clash were coming on strong, and I know the Knack etc. etc. blah blah blah. But. A year before that Talking Heads, not to mention Elvis Costello, had begun to move product and everybody was talking like not just New Wave but all rock 'n' roll was doomed, and the Clash had just put out a second album (*Give 'Em Enough Rope*) with at least two songs ("Julie's on the Drug Squad" and "Stay Free") every bit as pop-radioable as anything on *London Calling*. We are not talking about a gradual process of acceptance here. We are talking about moving overnight from a situation where Lee Abrams, head of the largest broadcast chain in the country, sent out a letter to all his affiliates saying New Wave was nothing but a critics' hype and they shouldn't play any of it, to the doors being flung open for the Clash and the Pretenders (enough so they could go Top 30) and even a little bit for the Ramones. Oh yeah, the will of the people and all that, yeah sure. But apparently not the will of Lee Abrams, either. Then who?

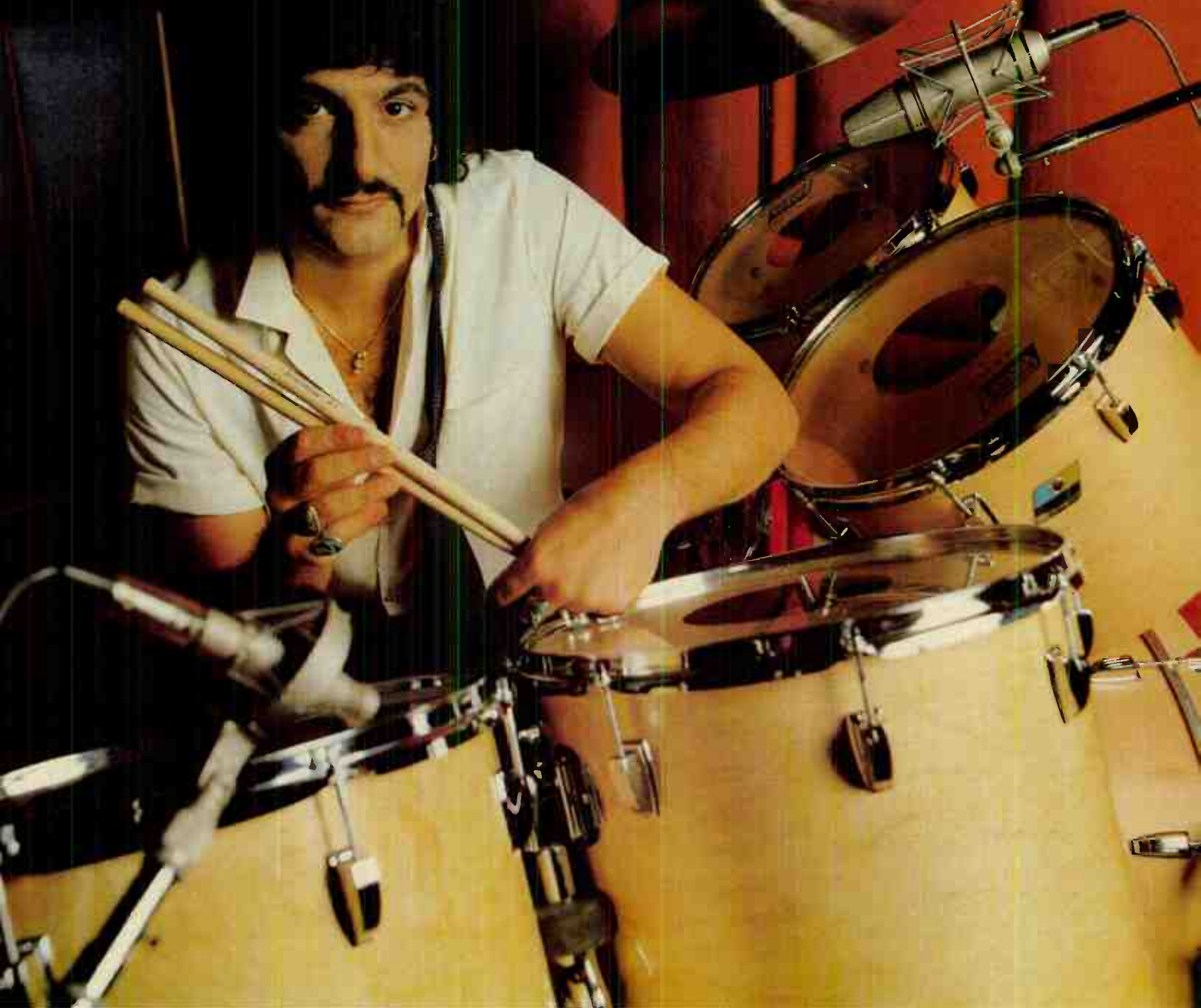
Okay, here's what I think: "New Wave" as it stands today is in large part nothing more than a marketing device. It had become painfully obvious that disco wasn't moving albums, ergo a new fad

continued on next page

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was needed to get the buyers back in the stores. So suddenly "New Wave" became acceptable. Except if you look at the stuff that's been released, promoted and for the most part enthusiastically received by the critics since we rang in the new decade, it's almost entirely comprised of music about nothing by people with no personality. In other words, the most whitewashed, eviscerated, irrelevant, power-poppy face of New Wave. In other words, the face of appeasement. To the extent that the flood of groups with names of one and two and sometimes even three syllables now being spewed into the market by major American record companies can be said to stand for anything at all, they stand for values diametrically opposite to what New Wave in its primal form was all about: where the Sex Pistols and Clash questioned authority, took the liberty of redefining their music and their lives in an atmosphere of absolute existential freedom, these bands all seem pathetically eager to please, totally willing to dilute, modify or mutate themselves in absolutely any way that will increase the likelihood of their becoming rockstars. As for the music itself, they might as well all be the same group. At least disco was upfront about being phony and unoriginal.

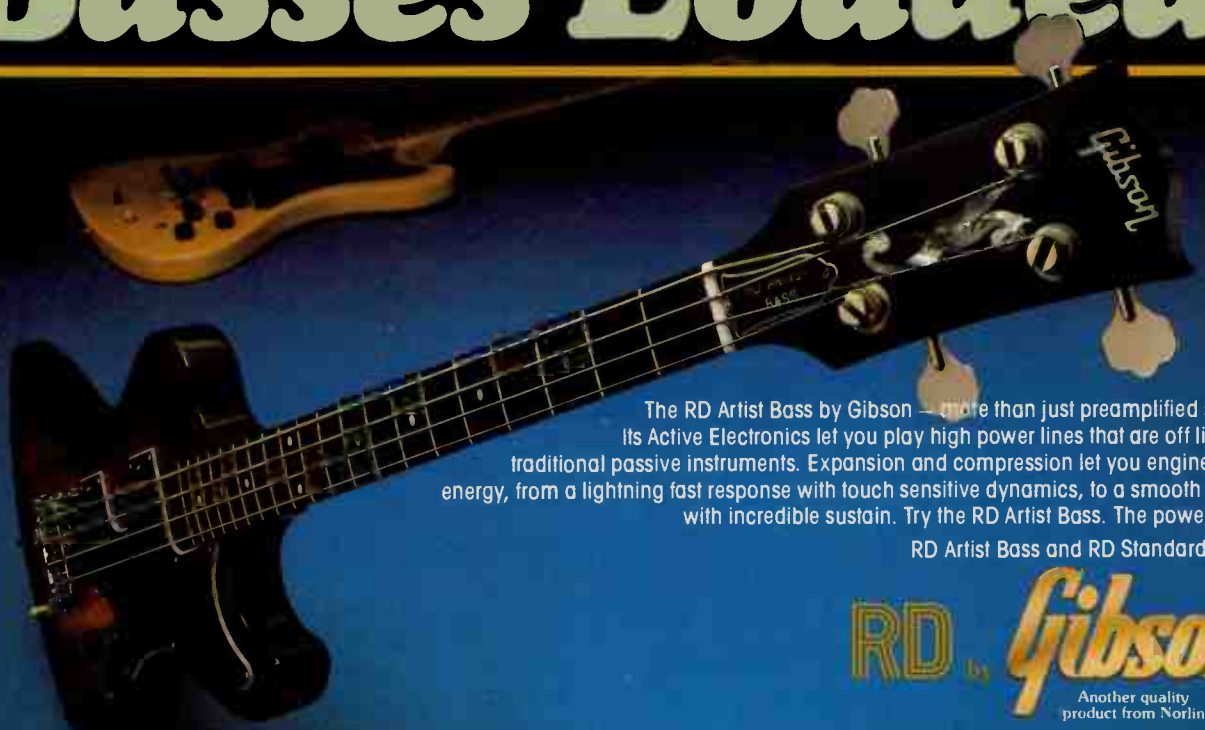
Let's see, let me just go through my

junkpile of recent releases for a minute here: okay, which of the following groups did these songs: (a) "Children of the Night"; (b) "Chasin' Rainbows in the Night"; (c) "Lights in the Night"; (d) "Hollywood Nightmare"; (e) "In the Night"; (f) "Night of the Angels"; and (g) "Panic in the Night"? Was it the Original Mirrors, the Brains, Philip Rambow, the Elevators, the Reels, Bram Tchaikovsky, Flash and the Pan, DB Cooper, Couchois, or the Strand? Well, it's (a) the Strand, (b) DB Cooper, (c) Flash and the Pan, (d) Bram Tchaikovsky, (e) the Brains, and (f) and (g) *both* from the same album by Original Mirrors! And that's just from the last month alone! Bruce, you knew not what you wrought! What, Bruce Springsteen's not a New Wave artist? Why not? Everybody else in the world is! And I submit that, though you may prefer the latter, we have come some distance from Richard Hell and the Voidoids to Robin Lane and the Chartbusters. (Why didn't they just call themselves We Want Money?) You may not have liked Richard Hell, his image, his music or what he had to say, but he invented his own damn image, no other band sounded like his, and his message ("Who says it's good to be alive?") may have been defeatist but at least it was original. You could pick the boy out of a crowd. Today what we have is a bunch

of faceless phony powerpop groups on one side, and an equally faceless (but that's the *point*, oh yeah, right, sure), phony-futuristic bunch of Gary Numanoid synthesizer gimcracks on the other side laying down absolutely nothing that wasn't done far better (more fun for sure) by Kraftwerk in 1975. It's all pathetic swill, but nobody wants to admit it because then they'd have to admit that New Wave at this point is very little more than the Emperor's New Clothes and *then* where would be be? Back with Foreigner, not to mention leaving whole nations of rock critics with nothing left to write about!

No, I agree, it's much better this way. Let's go on telling ourselves that the Pretenders are ANYTHING AT ALL more than a decent pop band, good for a few spins. Let's all dig for the deep significance and visionary conviction in the works of Lene Lovich! Let's ignore the fact that the Sex Pistols or the first Clash album for that matter or Public Image Ltd. for that matter STILL don't get played on the radio almost anywhere outside the occasional college station. Let's keep telling ourselves that 90% of this "revolution" in music as it currently stands is EVEN AS MUSICALLY VALUABLE OR SIGNIFICANT as the Archies! After all, it beats watching Sha Na Na on the tube. Doesn't it? 

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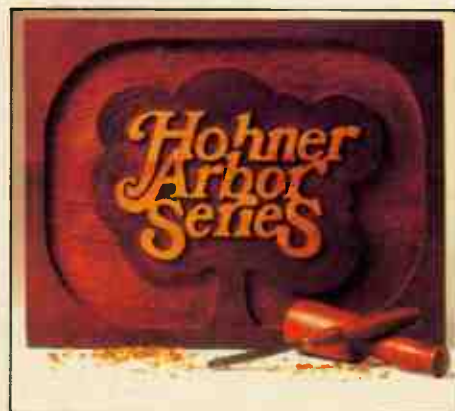
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THE SOLOIST BOOM

There's been a recent spate of solo recordings and performances. Is it artistic purity or simply overindulgence?

By Bob Blumenthal

That big package in the mail — from the fascinating Swiss hat Hut label — made me confront the solo boom all over again. hat Hut has released some challenging music by players and lesser-known Americans and Europeans; 20 titles in all, under 11 different single or collective leaders and seven of the 20 albums, by four of the 11 leaders, are unaccompanied concert performances. These are not piano or guitar solos, mind you, but unaccompanied soprano sax, tenor sax, trumpet. Joe McPhee, who also does some group playing, has four solo albums. For all I know, reedman Andre Jaume could be making his debut without additional instrumental company.

This idea of unaccompanied playing by non-traditional solo instruments has been gaining momentum over the past five years (the piano solo syndrome took shape a bit earlier and also continues). Economically it makes obvious sense. Improvising musicians, especially those considered a part of the *avant-garde*, have seen the old performing system, which centered on week-long club bookings, replaced by an itinerant international scene of music festivals, small concerts, university residencies and (for a time) loft/studios. Beyond an honest desire to work at least part of the time in a solo format, musicians who in the past would have put all of their energy into maintaining a permanent band must be prepared to travel alone if that is all the gig calls for or affords.

Like most of the notable ideas in the last wave of innovation, solo horn playing is a product of Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM). There are earlier examples in jazz history — isolated tracks by Coleman Hawkins, Sonny Rollins and Eric Dolphy — but it has taken the Chicagoans to turn the practice into an acceptable mode of performance. Roscoe Mitchell's composition "Sound," from the 1966 Delmark album of the same name, offered each member of a sextet room to blow a *cappella* at length, and a year later Mitchell was giving solo concerts. In 1968, Anthony Braxton recorded two albums' worth of alto solos (*For Alto*, Delmark), and has followed with periodic double doses since, making him the most notorious solo performer. Since the deluge, there have



Roscoe Mitchell (left) started it, Anthony Braxton (right) and others developed it, economics made it necessary, but what kind of future has it got?

been solo albums by AACM members Leo Smith (trumpet), George Lewis (trombone), Leroy Jenkins (violin), Malachi Favors (bass), Don Moye (percussion) and others. There are also numerous solo performers, most notably soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy, who are not from the AACM.

For pure challenge, the situation can't be beat. Harmonic backdrops and fixed rhythmic pulse, which the new music has already questioned as being too limiting, can be totally abandoned, together with conventional intonation and compositional structure. At least Hawkins, Rollins and Dolphy had 4/4 time and the recurring chord patterns of popular songs to build and release tension against; the new music soloist has only the rules he or she chooses to impose. The most complex and unusual of structures can be employed, together with the most extreme sonic techniques. And a new freedom has been added — the freedom from having to agree with other musicians.

If I make it sound all self-indulgent it's because too much solo playing sounds that way to me. (It should go without saying that this comment applies to more traditional solo instruments as well.) Several unaccompanied players have devised elaborate rules for ordering a solo performance, but even the best of these (Braxton, Lacy, Mitchell)

often sound caught in academic exercises. The extended passages of overtones and harmonics which most solo saxophonists employ also often leave me feeling that being able to produce these sounds at length was the whole point. Somehow the most extreme techniques of new music always seemed valid in a group context, as the need to relate to other musicians has been the surest protection against one's becoming overwhelmed by the pleasures of freedom. In an ensemble, compositional innovation must serve the collective purpose; improvisation is a responsive, rather than a purely self-generated act; and sonority may break and bend only as it blends.

"Dealing with your own vibrations I find is very important for me in this period because I'm trying to go further into myself, and playing solo is helping me to do that in a sense," Roscoe Mitchell said in a 1975 *Coda* interview. This is a mood that extended (and still extends) far beyond the *avant-garde*, as has been noted most prominently by Christopher Lasch in *The Culture of Narcissism*. I think too much of Mitchell's music to dismiss him as a Seventies cliché, but I must admit that, as with virtually every other musician produced by the jazz idiom (I'm not even sure Art Tatum is an exception), I prefer hearing

continued on page 94

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PUBLIC IMAGE

On April 20, Public Image Ltd. made their New York debut at the Palladium, and a month later they turned American Bandstand into a puppet theatre of controlled chaos by dancing and goofing their way through lip-synchs of "Poptones" and "Careering." Dick Clark looked none too pleased as Lydon roamed through the audience like a death-star Dennis The Menace; the band played in direct opposition to their pre-recorded material.

I'm not sure that anyone will take me at face value if I say that Public Image's Palladium date was the best rock concert I've ever heard. After all, singer Johnny Lydon — speaking pistol-in-cheek — has gone to great lengths to posture himself far from traditional rock stardom and song forms. Who could imagine that this wise-ass street urchin's grey, existential indictment of all values and history could be so affirmative and uplifting. PiL isn't preaching nihilism, but freedom of the human spirit. If "Radio 4" affirms a belief in something infinite and peaceful, the majority of Public Image's music speaks of the tensions that bind

us, the misconceptions that blind us and the system that subjugates our spirit. At the center of their sound is Jah Wobble's inexorable electric bass, thumping away like a heart; skipping a beat here and there, avoiding the usual harmonic resolutions; anchoring all the confusion and dissonance in something steady like the basic beat of reggae. The Palladium concert began with Wobble and drummer Martin Atkins in a duet that was melodically free but physically immediate, so much so that the entire audience pogoed without let-up. Lydon and guitarist-keyboardist Keith Levene then came on and the band launched into "Careering," overlaying a thorny surface of metallic blips and bleeps, synthesizer murk and power chords against the grain. Lydon's frenetic, charismatic singing gave everything unity and direction, a sort of avant garde dub. "A face is raining/a-cross the border/The pride of history/the same as murder/he's been careering...is this living?" Lydon sang over the barren, post-war soundscape. He turned his pantonal ravings into melody much as an avant garde jazzman would do it, by following a rhythmic contour with an unshakeable

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CHEAP TRICK

EBET ROBERTS

feeling for the beat. And in the process of atomizing civilization Lydon often eradicated distinctions between himself and that which he criticized ("I've been careering"), which is a humanizing touch.

Public Image is the apotheosis of a thousand garage bands trying to play with the free-form energy of a Cecil Taylor or an Ornette Coleman, the maturation of what the Velvet Underground proposed on "Sister Ray." The emotional power of Public Image far exceeded their technical limitations, and their combination of free textures, drones, ethnic suggestions and dance rhythms is gripping and unprecedented in rock. The Clash have already outflanked the forces of corporate mind control; armed with rock 'n' roll they've attacked the underbelly of pop. Public Image has taken their ugly music straight into the enemy fortifications — party music for the Great Depression, a real dance on the grave. Where do I sign up? — *Chip Stern*

CHEAP TRICK

The significance of a live "Day Tripper" on *Found All The Parts*, the new ten-inch Epic/Nu-Disk LP by Cheap Trick, will not be lost on those pundits who accuse the popular comic-book-look quartet of good-natured but nevertheless unforgivable Beatle graverobbing. What hopefully won't be lost on such skeptics is Rick Nielsen's near-Xeroxed Roy Wood guitar break and the heavy metal menace underlining not only "Day Tripper" but the Zeppelinized ballad "Can't Hold On" culled from the same '78 Budokan concerts that went Top Five as *Cheap Trick at Budokan*.

Because in this age of fusion music galore, Cheap Trick — Nielsen cavorting like an overgrown gnome, paunchy gangster-suited drummer Bun E. Carlos, punkish heartthrob bassist Tom Petersson, and dreamboat Robin Zander — have designed and executed a flawless fusion of AM radio hummability, DC comic visuals, jock-rock aggression, and psycho-lyrical concerns. There are very few bands of Cheap Trick's pop/rock ability that can, as they did at a recent two-hour showcase at a Long Island's Calderone Theatre, play side by side a rousing dancefloor exercise about suicide ("Auf Wiedersehen"), a hellish dirge inspired by convicted Chicago nursekiller Richard Speck ("The Ballad of T.V. Violence"), and a sympa-

thetic assessment of the generation gap (the anthemic "Surrender").

With the Move's Roy Wood in creative eclipse and Todd Rundgren preoccupied with Utopian visions and techno toys, composer and conceptualist Rick Nielsen, for all his concert buffoonery (spitting guitar picks, exaggerated guitar-hero poses), is the most gifted heir to the post-hippie tradition of chiselling commercial pop values, garage punk arrogance, and arty *Sgt. Pepper*-inspired dabbling into an imposing statue of song. Nor is Nielsen ashamed to pay his elders due respect. In Cheap Trick's bulldozing version of the Move's "California Man," he also quotes Wood's "Brontosaurus." He slips in a Jimmy Page riff from the obscure Yardbirds B-side "Think About It" in the fade-out of "The House is Rockin'" on *Dream Police*. And there is more than a hint of Rundgren/ELO/*Abbey Road* in the choral harmonies wafting throughout "Voices," an unsettling ballad of love and extreme paranoia.

On masterfully produced platters like *In Color*, *Heaven Tonight*, and the criminally underrated (despite its chart-topping sales) *Dream Police*, Cheap Trick create enduring works of pop art. Onstage, they bring simultaneously to life the exhilarating joys of teenage sex in "I Want You to Want Me" and the subversive Hitchcockian terror of the discolored "Gonna Raise Hell." What this has to do with the Beatles — other than their tastefully underexploited kiddie matinee marketability — is that few bands since the British Invasion champs have consummated the marriage of teenybop whimsy and rock 'n' roll angst with such effortless and high artistic cool. Unlike most of their contemporaries, Cheap Trick can be appreciated as cotton candy with a beat or critics' gourmet fare in the same earful. Are Cheap Trick the new Beatles? No. Are they the next best thing? Considering the current competition, yes. — *David Fricke*

JACK BRUCE

Though many groups are credited with starting jazz-rock fusion, the usually unmentioned bassist Jack Bruce helped inaugurate the style when he left Cream over a decade ago. Bruce was the first rock star to turn to jazz at the height of his popularity. It seemed a logical progression for Bruce to go

from the increasingly drawn out heavy metal improvisations that Cream developed to a more sophisticated soloist's medium when he joined Lifetime with drummer Tony Williams and organist Larry Young. Bruce had fans from Cream who treated his new music like the plague, however, and the virtuoso bassist has struggled bitterly against this prejudice through the ensuing decade, making an occasional album and guesting on several sessions. The current group promised to showcase Bruce at his best. Drummer Billy Cobham, the clockwork mainstay of the Mahavishnu Orchestra, looked to be the perfect rhythm section partner for Bruce, and versatile keyboardist/guitarist David Sancious was also an interesting selection. Ex-Coliseum/Humble Pie guitarist Clem Clemson seemed an inappropriate choice to round out this lineup, at least until the band opened its set with "White Room."

For the first time since leaving that band, Bruce was succumbing to his audience's request for Cream material. Clemson played the Eric Clapton parts virtually note for note, Sancious backed the guitar harmonically, playing an inventive organ part reminiscent of Steve Winwood's Traffic fills,

JACK BRUCE



but Cobham was at a loss, unwilling to ape Ginger Baker's slow but precise style and sounding out of place with his rapid-fire approach. After two experimental songs on which Cobham fit well and Sancious played with Cream favorites, "Born Under A Bad Sign" and "Politician," with Sancious on guitar, Clemson continued to use a Clapton mode while Sancious played like Hendrix. When Bruce tried to play an electric piano intro to the next song, the crowd screamed for other Cream tunes. They eventually had to settle for Cobham's "Quadrant IV," the drummer's best moment of the night. Bruce, whose bass playing and singing were in top form, was astounding here, challenging Cobham with ringing bass lines that punched in and out of the rhythm pattern at will. The crowd was treated to "Sunshine of Your Love" and a shaky "N.S.U." at the end. "Thank you," Bruce told the audience, "you've been very ... noisy." It would be a shame if this is the form the much heralded '60s revival is to take — mak-

ing accomplished musicians ape past successes instead of staying creative. — John Swenson

SQUEEZE

It is when you experience the energy and abandon Squeeze displays in concert that their appeal really begins to take shape. In a recent appearance at the Bottom Line in Manhattan, Squeeze performed the nearly impossible and brought the notoriously hard-to-please New York City audience to its feet for the entire second half of their set. The strain of "pop-rock" championed by artists such as Squeeze, Nick Lowe, Elvis Costello, et al. crawls on many influences for its inspiration, but American R&B forms are always lurking just beneath the surface. Squeeze acknowledged this debt at the Bottom Line when they performed a joyful version of Ray Charles' "Messin' Around" as their only non-original song of the evening.

The uncanny vocal harmony of Chris Difford and Glenn Tillbrook that forms the cornerstone of Squeeze's sound is astonishing to witness in concert. Jools Holland's sense of humor

chord with many people in England (and here in the States), including Elvis Costello, who has frequently called them one of his favorite groups. Finally on their newest LP, all the distinct elements that characterize their unique approach, have come together with a power and consistency that the band, despite moments of brilliance, has lacked till now.

Squeeze has had a rocky history with critics, especially in England, for either being "not political enough" or "too sweet," but what's more universally political than sex (or lack of it), and on the basis of *Argybargy* and their recent tour, they have toughened up their sound considerably. — Nils Von Veh

DOLLAR BRAND

The pianist who sat next to me at Dollar Brand's (Abdullah Ibrahim's) Bottom Line show was disappointed that Brand played so few solos. For most of the set, Brand comped with those gospelly chords of his that make the whole piano ring like a carillon; then he picked up a soprano sax and joined his horn section — saxes and trombones — in chordal chorales. It sounded great to me, and it made perfect sense, because Brand is coming into his own as composer and arranger; he didn't just play the piano, he played the whole band. Virtually all great jazz musicians fall into two categories — those who have distinctive ideas about their own instrument and those who invent an ensemble sound — and with his recent music (check out the remarkable *African Marketplace* on Elektra) Brand stakes his claim to join Ellington, Mingus, and a handful of other orchestral thinkers. The Bottom Line set was a composers showcase, and a brilliant one.

Brand's band pieces expand and reshape the materials he's always worked with, the loping grooves of South African music and the warm extensions of it in gospel and blues. Though Brand's solos prove he's a master of Ellingtonian harmonies, most of his new pieces are simpler, building basic major and minor chords to jubilant call-and-response structures. Like Brand's solo work (from



DOLLAR BRAND

which Keith Jarrett learned plenty) the pieces roll forward on chordal vamps with undercurrents of African polyrhythm easy grooves that soothe as they hypnotize. Brand has figured out how to use his horns to build momentum without breaking into it — a matter of the intuitive, detailed crescendos he long ago perfected in his solo work — yet the band sounds childlike and spontaneous. After a long, mesmerizing vamp, great pealing chords slash out of the horn section like a tropical cloudburst.

At the Bottom Line, Brand's band kept expanding on stage. Partway through the set a third sax player showed up, still later a second bassist, the sound got denser and richer, but not more complex. Although solos were subordinated to the band — which kept up the hypno-vamps through most of them — two deserve mention. One was by Carlos Ward, whose alto spot started in a nasal, modal, Moroccan/Arabic snarl and shifted smoothly into insinuating blues. The other was by Brand himself, who played what must have been five minutes of a tremelo chorale — all 10 fingers hitting chords in continuous 32nd notes in which the melody was so songfully phrased that I kept looking for another instrument doubling it. Brand hasn't lost an iota of his power as a soloist. He's gained a band — Jon Pareles

and rollicking keyboard style creates a much more vivid impression than the polish of their new LP allows, and the raw muscular punch of the rhythm section contributed to one of the most euphoric concert experiences I've had anywhere.

Before it became fashionable, Squeeze came to the U.S. in 1978 and did a pioneering, low-budget, two-month tour of small U.S. clubs, masterminded by their manager, Miles Copeland, prior to even signing a major label deal. Shortly after their return from the U.S. in 1978 the band signed with A&M Records. Their first album (titled simply *UK Squeeze* and produced by Cale) was a flawed work, lacking any overall consistency, although one tune — "Take Me I'm Yours" — gave a clear indication of the band's potential. Their second LP — *Cool for Cats* — was an enormous step forward and spawned three Top 10 singles in England. Their poignant evocation of everyday life and wry sense of humor struck a resonant

SQUEEZE



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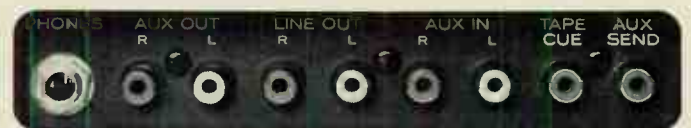
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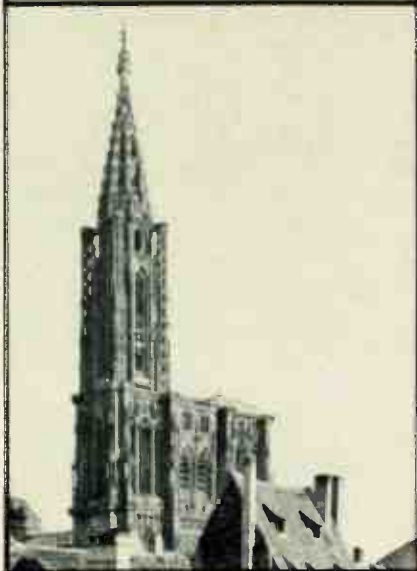


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May 1: Restaurant de Volder: Eindhoven, Holland

Beginning the journal of the tour of the League of Gentlemen, a dance band (Sarah Bass, Johnny Drums, Barry Keyboards, Fred Chuckman the Sound-mixer). The plan was that we drive from the Kings Road, London, to Dover for the 12:30 Hovercraft, then a 200 mile drive to Eindhoven. The Volkswagen Rent-a-Microbus was and remains a complete disaster. The journey was further complicated by delays resulting from the closure of Knightsbridge to traffic after the seizing of policemen at the Iranian Embassy. We stopped outside an Iranian bank in East London so that Johnny Drums, formerly a mechanic, could fiddle with the engine. The engine started and while Johnny used his right foot to hold the accelerator down he hit the brake with his left, causing a sudden stop. This occasioned the sliding door to abruptly slam upon my hand. I screamed, confronting intimately the terror of every craftsman who relies upon his hands.

Brussels 5th May 4:30 PM

Our four gigs in Holland were in Mijmegem, Rotterdam, Eindhoven and Amsterdam. In Rotterdam the band found a new spirit. Walking to a cafe after the gig, Barry was talking about the

possibility of music reaching a level that made talking about units of records meaningless. This galvanized some of my thinking since David Bowie asked me last week what it was that I wanted to do. Simply, in a musical sense, to open the door to that magic, I suppose; but with an audience and the group to take a sudden tangential court curve and fly off in three-dimensional geometrics. The first King Crimson had it but I couldn't work on that much negative energy anymore. Every group I've belonged to has been at least as disparate, but this new one is the only one which lacks brutality and malice among its members. My frustration with the lack of experience is balanced by the good hearts. Meanwhile my hand, within two inches of crushing two fingers and ending the tour, is much better although weak.

Brussels 6th May: 3:50 PM

Once again I'm writing in a fine old restaurant/cafe/bar. Last night those of the team capable visited La Grande Place in the center of Brussels. This is the most remarkable area of pieces of architecture I have visited. The first time I saw La Grande Place was last May, during the small mobile Frippertronics tour of Europe, when Small Ears from Megabucks was given the chore of entertaining me for the evening, and after eating he took me to a spot that gave him a lot of pleasure — La Grande Place. As we walked about late one night last year to the rectangular area where 13th and 14th century buildings on the long sides face off the 16th century on the short sides, he pointed out the 14th century town hall. This staggeringly impressive building has a steeple which gives the impression that it is just about to take off and leave the rest behind. Further, the steeple is not in the middle of the building but just off-centre. Small Ears told me that there is a legend that the architect who had spent his lifetime on the building, when he saw the completed work and that the steeple was off-centre, climbed to the top and jumped off. I replied that the man who had built *this* would be able to jump off and probably fly away. The most striking feature of the town hall was that it was the precise architectural expression of what Gurdjieff referred to as the Law of 7. If one missed the clue of the steeple, it would be impossible to miss the rows of statues in 7 with pillars under the 1st and 4th of each. As in music, c-d-e semi-tone f-g-a-b semi-tone. That and the Christianier district of Copenhagen were my two deepest experiences of the European tour. Meanwhile I've read a review in a French music paper *Rock & Folk of God Save the Queen/Under Heavy Manners*. As far as my schoolboy French can decipher, it considers me to be a brilliant self-publicist and manipulator of the media, very charming, coming on like a priest but actually a charlatan. Actually this highlights two

important points for me. Firstly, confusing the raincoat with the flasher beneath and secondly the importance of criticism as a leveling force in an area where perspective is easily lost. Actually, for me to have expressed the ideas which I have in the past two years and made a commitment to them in public has been very difficult for me. With an intimate and well-researched enquiry into my shortcomings and weaknesses, Fripp is an uncomfortable beast to live and work within but since he is all I have, he will simply have to do.

Cambrai, France; Friday 9th May: 12:40

As I sit here over dinner in the Metro-pole Restaurant, the waiter has wheeled by a trolley with portable gas rings. The brand name of the gas rings is formidably imprinted on the front: ENO. Eno is now being pressed into service to cook a steak with cognac. My head hurts from a high leap and karate kick in the dressing room yesterday, surely the most stupid action of the week, since I failed to notice a low concrete beam directly above me.

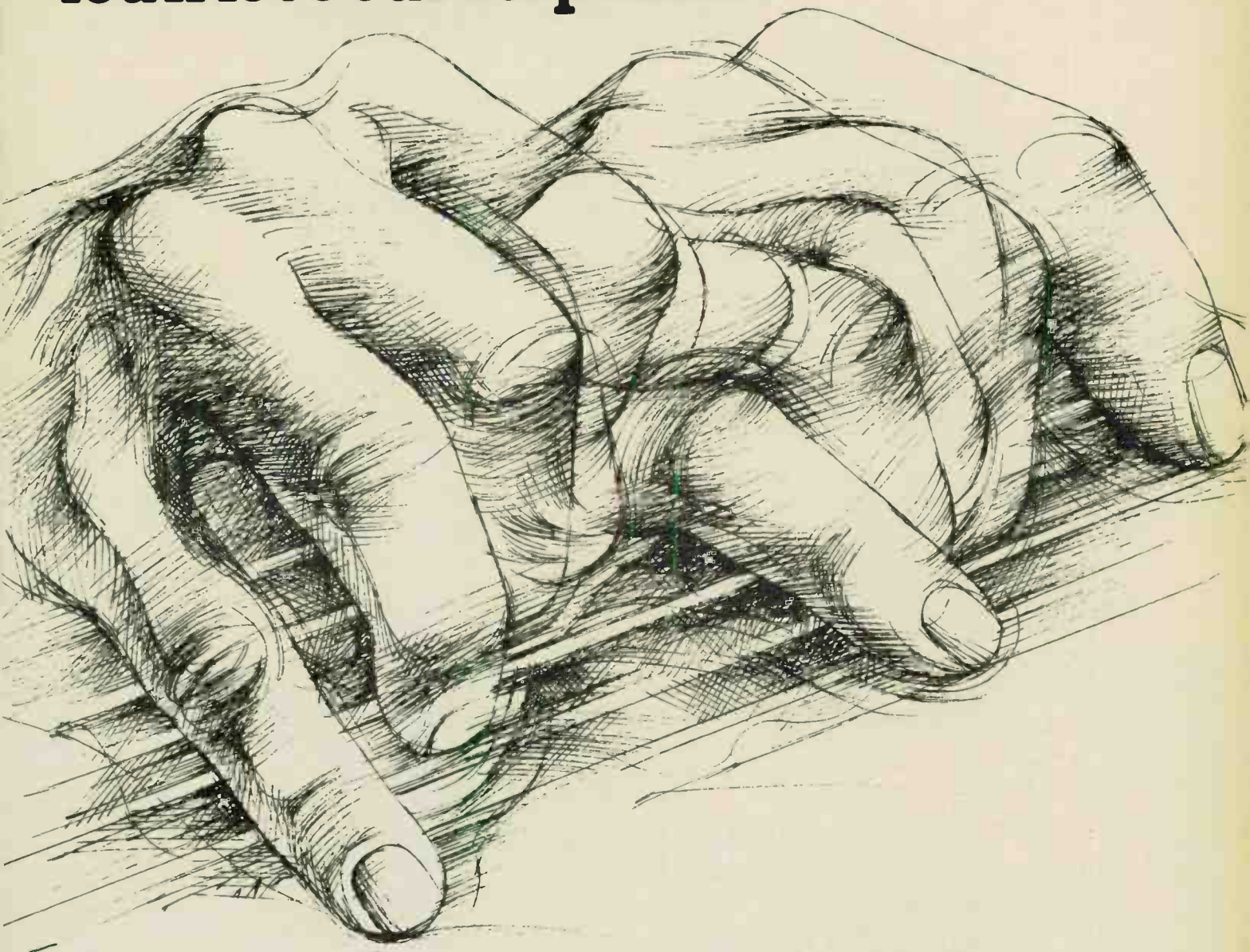
Rouens, Monday 12th May: 11:15

The bells in this unbelievable cathedral have begun on the half hour.

Here I am again sitting in front of this symphony in architecture, but tone deaf. The assumptions behind sacred music are the same as those behind sacred geometry, that the proportions are universally consonant. With a note of music one strikes the fundamental, and in addition to this root note other notes are generated. These are called the harmonic series. The number of notes in the harmonic series which are generated by striking the fundamental determines the idiosyncratic timbre of the instrument. For example the English horn sounds less than the piano, which gives the *cor anglais* its *cor anglaisness*. These harmonics can be expressed mathematically and related as functions of each other. In terms of Western culture the mathematics of music were explored by Pythagoras. Since colours have vibration rates, colours can also be expressed mathematically as functions of each other. These mathematical propositions extrapolated from natural qualities of sound and colour can be expressed architecturally. So one can say, analogously that this cathedral expressed, in mathematical propositions, combinations of proportions and distances of a form of universal order. As one fundamental note contains within it other notes in the octave, two fundamentals produce a remarkable array of harmonics and the number of possible combinations between all the notes increases phenomenally. With a triad, affairs stand a good chance of getting severely out of hand. For this reason the tempered scale was developed to compromise the natural consonance in

continued on next page

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order to reduce dissonance. For this reason I frequently avoid striking major thirds in chords, the major third being present in the harmonic series. Peter Gabriel and Townshend do the same.

It's very easy to imagine the difficulties in constructing a symphony and the triumph of Beethoven, who wrote, at a quality, an amount of music which a modern day copyist would spend his entire lifetime merely copying. A cathedral is like a symphony, the statues and ascending spires leaping harmonics from the fundamental, yet all held together in a terribly inspiring harmony. Since music is a very high order of language and according to some schools has an innate capacity for *physical* change, so this symphony in stone continues to sing to me but it's falling on deaf ears. My head doesn't know the language. The aim of real art is to present solutions consonant with a natural order in a higher-order language which can't actually be understood with the mind. It has to be approached through the heart. All over Rouens, in this remarkable old town center, all over France and throughout Europe a symphony was constructed over a period greater than the lifetimes of its individual builders, who nevertheless shared and worked toward a common vision. They constructed, in front of everyone, all that was ever needed to be known about

political, social and personal organization. As the harmonic series can be contained within one idea, so political and social order must be able to be found within one person. I suppose that would be enlightenment.

Dijon, 15th May 10 PM

Last night was Paris, a success at the Bataclan. Not so much a sudden improvement in the group as a warm audience. This did a great deal to restore the slump in spirits from the evening before in Rennes, where not only did the group make some inexcusable blunders but they were presented to a seated audience in a small theatre. As a dance band with the emphasis on spirit rather than competence, we had specified rock clubs with dance floors. In other words, while under the considerable pressures of touring with a new, inexperienced band, the office in London was unable to take care of basic matters. Four out of seven gigs in France were seated. Were it not for Paris, always a tonic to one's pecker, I considered cancelling the tour outright.

A pleasant afternoon in Paris, my favorite city, along with New York. A visit to the cathedral of Notre Dame. It didn't have the strength for me of Metz or Rouens from the outside but the inside was impressive. I should love to play a Frippertronics tour of the French Gothic cathedrals. Touring Europe is much

more difficult than North America. The Continental pace of life is geared to eating, the American to working.

Berlin, May 19, 1980 10:15

Sitting over breakfast exhausted after the 18½-hour drive from Clermont-Ferrand, a pot of muscular coffee exercising itself within me, I am still angry about Megabucks in Paris, whose sole interest seems to be to feed me, and if not me, then anyone remotely connected will do. In the industry's present state at least, eating in expensive restaurants is inappropriate, for me personally offensive. And yet after the Paris show, when I disappeared for an interview, the band and friends went out with Megabucks to an expensive restaurant. The band, knowing my feelings, declined anything more than a bottle of wine, and was unable to afford the food. Meanwhile the Megabucks, unable to spend on me, or on the League of Gentlemen, instead managed to form a party of 15 or 16 with the promoters of the gig. The bill for 15 people in an expensive Parisian restaurant would be very high, and will be passed on as a *bona fide* promotion expense for Robert Fripp, even though the occasion contradicted all my stated aims and wishes. To make it worse, Barry cannot afford the 275 pounds for a new organ, which would have been paid for by this one meal. The matter will not stop there. **M**

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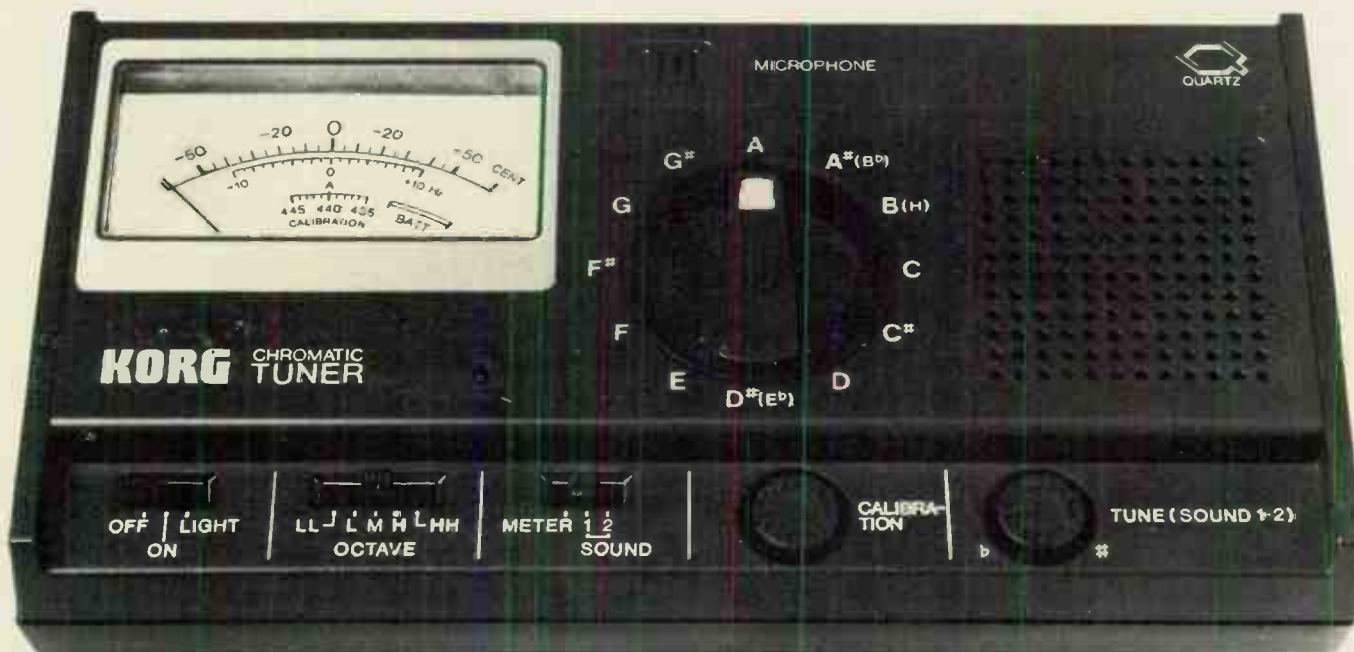
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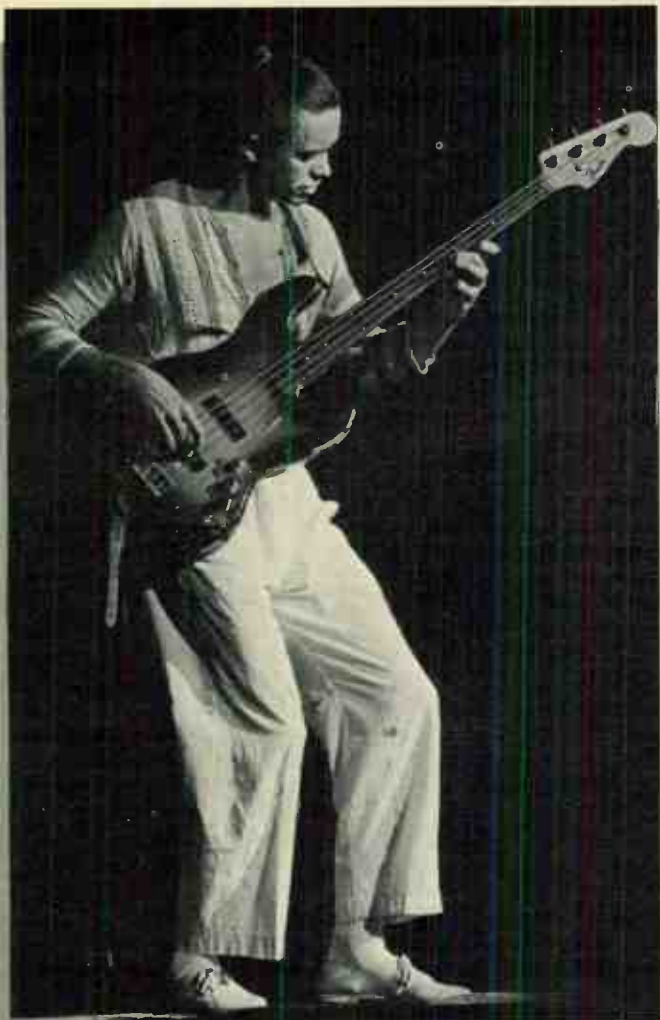
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THE BASSIST INTERVIEWED

Jaco Pastorius is an original, no one will deny him that. In his hands the electric bass has become a sonorous, singing lead instrument for the first time. While the electric bass before Pastorius certainly didn't render all its players uniformly anonymous – Steve Swallow, Stanley Clarke and Alphonso Johnson had all evolved personal jazz styles; and Bootsy Collins and Larry Graham had done a great deal to open up the bass's role in R&B – Pastorius was really the one who opened the door on the instrument and changed everyone's notion of what it could do. Since his emergence as Weather Report's bassist in 1976 he has drawn both praise and fire for his highly personal

continued on next page

PASTORIUS

By Damon Roerich

conception and his flamboyant stage antics, which can be as wild as any rocker's. The comparisons with Jimi Hendrix have been inevitable, if not wholly appropriate.

It may be too soon to decide whether Pastorius is a real innovator or only an exceptionally ingenious stylist — a lot of what he plays was prefigured on the acoustic bass as early as 1960 by Scott LaFaro and thereafter by the legions who followed him — but he began as most innovators do, with a sound uniquely his own, well suited to his own invented purposes. He also brought along an unprecedented bundle of effects, though, significantly, he depends less upon his equipment than his hands (as in his use, for example, of his palm on the strings to produce a conga-like, percussive sound.) His use of a range of string-pressures in the left hand in combination with a variety of playing positions (from fret-board to bridge) and attacks in the right, enable him to produce not one timbre but several, from the leanest sound to the most full. Sheer talent puts them at the service of a single, coherent style; and without his exact, aggressive sense of time, Pastorius' appetite for counterpoint would be only one more ungainly, overblown ambition in a musical epoch already full of them — his rhythmic feel owes more to 60's Motown than 70's pop and twang.

It is odd that jazz-rock fusion took an instrument, the bass, that had already been liberated from mere timekeeping in one of its parent musics (remember jazz?), and demoted it to a less creative role (as thump-thump sproinga-thump). Only Pastorius has figured out how to improvise while not soloing, and while he can on occasion soak up more of the limelight than is good for the band, more often than not he is a brilliant accompanist and an inspiring addition to the music. However audiences and critics may respond to his antics, few will deny that this young bassist is one of the most creative and vital musicians of the day. Like Miles Davis, he is as outspoken offstage as he is on his axe. The following opinions on radio, critics, performing, philosophy and world affairs are pure, undiluted Pastorius.

This exemplar of the "Florida sound" was born on December 1, 1951 in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and was raised in Fort Lauderdale. He credits his father, Jack, a professional drummer and singer, as an early influence (indeed, Jaco still plays some drums on Weather Report records, and singers have been as great an influence on his style as any bassists have). He began by playing drums, piano, sax and guitar, but switched to electric bass after nearly severing his hand in a street fight. No longer able to play drums, he was asked if he could make a gig as a bassist. Never having played the instrument but apparently feeling confident that he could, he withdrew his savings from the bank, bought a Fender Jazz Bass and went to work.

Pastorius taught at the University of Miami and wrote for Peter Graves' big bands. He did some more writing for the legendary Florida jazzman, Ira Sullivan, but he did not limit himself to jazz. He performed extensively with rock 'n' roll pioneer Wayne Cochran and his C.C. Riders, the Temptations, and the Supremes. While house bassist at Fort Lauderdale's Bachelor's III Club, he was befriended by Blood Sweat & Tears drummer Bobby Colomby, who produced Pastorius' first album on Epic.

Pastorius first approached Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter after a Weather Report concert in Miami. The upshot of this meeting was Jaco's participation on Zawinul's "Cannonball" on the *Black Market* lp — particularly appropriate in view of the fact that Cannonball Adderley, to whose memory the tune was dedicated, was another Floridian — and Pastorius' original contribution to the album, "Barbary Coast." By 1977's *Heavy Weather*, he began receiving co-producer credit (and has continued to receive it through *Mr. Gone* and *8:30*). Since joining Weather Report he has been nominated for three Grammys. He has performed on a number of rock albums including Joni Mitchell's *Hejira*, *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*, and *Mingus*. To say that he has the respect of his peers

would be an understatement. He has more than that, and at the age of 29 he is one of the men at the helm of a great and obviously classic band. He is an influence now, and the odds are that the creative weather will continue to be fine.

MUSICIAN: Why do you feel people get hung up in limited musical bags?

PASTORIUS: Fear. They're limited also — in their thinking, listening, or playing. I'm playing on this Joni Mitchell tour and a lot of people and critics who come to see her have listened to her first few albums — which I haven't even heard — and they want to hear her like that because that's where they're comfortable. They don't want to grow but *she* grows and they put her down. You know? It doesn't make much sense. A form of fear. I haven't read the reviews because I never do read them. But you do hear talk about them. People talk about reviews they've read in the dressing room — they feel funny. But musically they feel good because they're growing.

MUSICIAN: If radio promoted creative music instead of playing down to the listener, how well do you feel that would go over?

PASTORIUS: I'll tell you, probably not too much because if good music was promoted then they couldn't sell all the tons of shit and make all this incredible money which is . . . the entertainment business is at fault as much as anything else for inflation. To me, it looks like Germany in the thirties, right? Pretty soon we'll be able to wallpaper our walls with U.S. dollars because everything is so out of control. So I don't think that radio is ready to do this — yet. They've got to keep this influx coming and doing all this shit that the record industry is doing right now, which is completely numbing society with a ton of bullshit. There's not all that much good music in the first place to play.

What are they going to play? (Smiles) They're going to play Weather Report — who else? I gotta be honest with you, who else is really creating new music that isn't all *serious*? There's some people playing today but the shit's so serious! We're out there having some fun, too, and we're *playing*. So I can understand why people might be hooking up on us. We're not trying to create anything different, we're just playing — the way we are. It's just the natural combustion that happens when we get together and people seem to like it.

But, to get back to the radio thing. I don't think that's going to happen, to be realistic. If it did happen, people would definitely listen and think a little more because their brains would loosen up a bit more . . . you're sitting there and you're badgered by the same monotonous music, it's almost as if it's a plot — the way music is today — to sound the same and therefore keep people the same.

MUSICIAN: Where's rock and jazz influenced music headed, in your view?

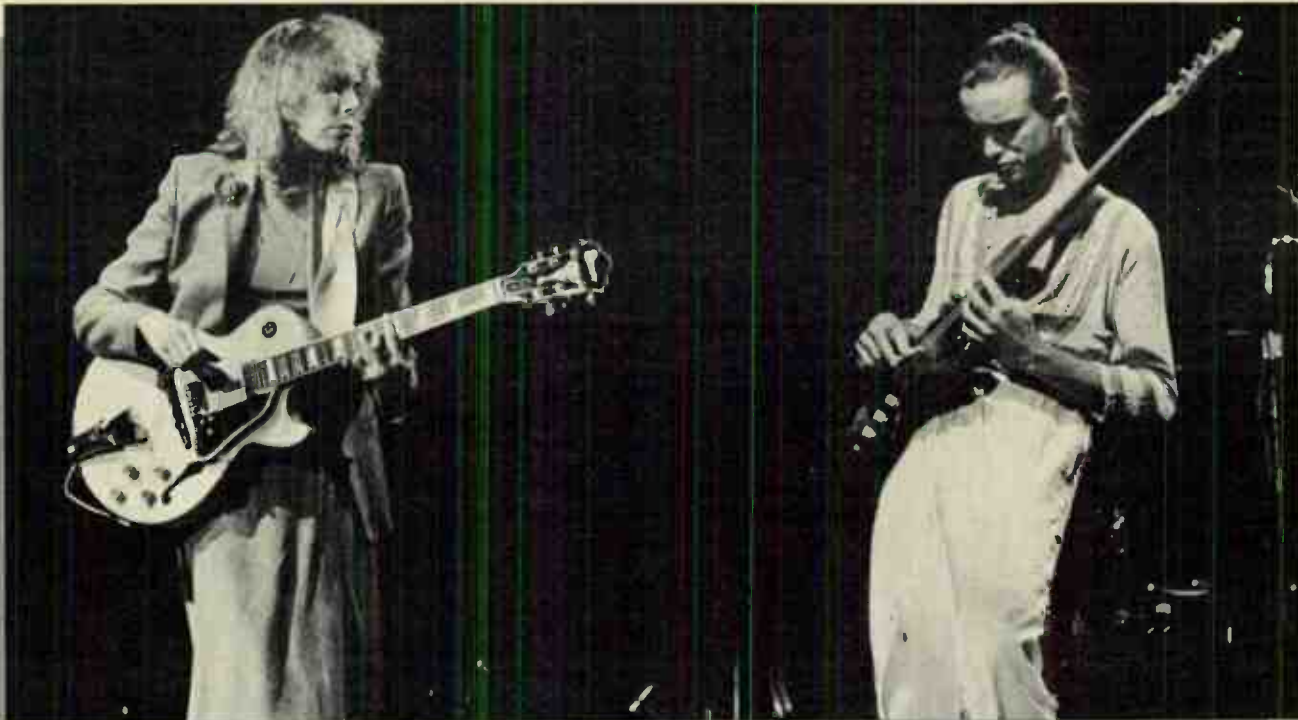
PASTORIUS: It's going to Fort Lauderdale. That's where I'm going on Monday. (Laughs) What can I tell you? I can play rock-and-roll and I can play jazz. I don't know too many people who can do both. And that's the future.

MUSICIAN: How did you meet Ira Sullivan?

PASTORIUS: I was writing tunes in Miami and Ira had a piano player at the time named Alex Darqui. He played on my first record on one tune. He's a very good friend of mine, we grew up playing together. Alex would bring in my music when they were gigging, because it was original music, you know, local music. Ira started playing it and really liked it. At the time, I was playing with Wayne Cochran and the C.C. Riders and, when I got back to Florida, I quit the band because I wanted to practice. Ira called me to write more music. One of the times, I came in with my bass and played "Donna Lee" for him and that was it!

MUSICIAN: Ira Sullivan and Wayne Cochran — what a combination!

PASTORIUS: That's just two of many. Musically, I was early into rhythm-and-blues and jazz — singing jazz, like Sinatra. The Beatles, Sinatra, and James Brown were probably my



Pastorius has never restricted himself only to jazz. Before Weather Report he gigged with Wayne Cochran and his C.C. Riders, the Temptations and the Supremes. More recently he has lent his services to Joni Mitchell, appearing very prominently on her last three albums.

biggest influences. After that, Miles Davis. My daddy was a musician, but he left home when I was very young. I'm formally self-taught.

MUSICIAN: What was the first record you ever bought?

PASTORIUS: That I can't remember. Probably something like James Brown or the Beatles, some 45 like "I Got You" or "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" or some Rolling Stones' first hits. That's when I had some money in my pocket, when I was about twelve. But I didn't have a record player. (Laughs) So it didn't matter. "Get Off My Cloud" ... something like that.

MUSICIAN: What other artists do you dig?

PASTORIUS: Hard to say. I like Picasso. I like *philosophers*. I like Nietzsche, I like Chnst — as a philosopher ... I really like ... I *dug* this guy Caravaggio, way back around Michelangelo. He was one of the first artists to draw — he was crazy! — he drew big murals but he would never use guidelines. He would just put paint right to canvas, which was pretty amazing, and the stuff looks like Michelangelo! Check him out — Caravaggio. Anybody who's doing something great, I like. Chagall, Elvis Presley, I'm very close-minded. There's just a mass ignorance thing going on — people are taught not to think. So anything that's unique, I like.

MUSICIAN: What's it like to work with Zawinul?

PASTORIUS: (Brightens considerably) Great! That's where I've done most of my work with synthesizers. I'm a composer and Joe can play all the parts. For instance, there's a tune I wrote on *Mr. Gone* called "Punk Jazz" and it sounds like it's written for strings and brass and Joe's played all the parts. I brought in the score. He played every note by himself. A thirteen piece score. I'd say, "I want a string section here, I want brass here, I want maybe a few flutes here," and he goes for it. I love working with Joe.

MUSICIAN: What problems do you encounter in the studio?

PASTORIUS: Mainly the pressure of time. I'm always on the road even when I'm in the studio. Joe gets to go home because he lives out here. [L.A., Jaco lives in Florida.] Sometimes, engineers have problems understanding what Joe and I are going for.

MUSICIAN: What were you hearing the last time your imagination was peaking?

PASTORIUS: That's hard to say. Usually when I'm peaking, I'm playing. So the information is coming to me. Somehow, I understand that I have my hand in it, that I'm actually doing it, that I'm making the music come out. But I don't actually know or believe that the music's actually coming from *me*, though. It's almost like it's coming *through* me, like it's in the air. Without the eyes, you wouldn't see. Without the sun, a prism isn't caused. You wouldn't see it. The *sound* somehow comes through me. You get your technical thing together and then you have to totally open up and be free. Not be free — surrender to it! Then it will come through you. Writing will actually come the same way. It will come on the piano or the bass or whatever I'm playing at the time. A set of drums.

MUSICIAN: Do you feel that the greater range of sounds today, that can be played, say, on the synthesizer, actually increases the artist's imagination?

PASTORIUS: No question. Definitely. He has it in hand. You can't go out and hire a brass quintet every time you want to write for a brass quintet. With a synthesizer, you can get a very close sound.

MUSICIAN: What results do you see in the future from the cross-pollination of musical and engineering concepts? Say, something like holographic sound?

PASTORIUS: It's happening already. I'm not that much concerned with it. What I'm concerned with is the music itself. Whatever technical thing I need to keep up with for what I want to know is about it. Personally, what I need is some time off. Because I want to practice my bass.

MUSICIAN: Do you think critics help or hinder the musical experience?

PASTORIUS: They've got to hurt it. Because of one thing. *They don't know what they're talking about.* If someone's going to judge *us*, you don't get someone who knows nothing about it! Critics are judges. If you want a critique on the Bolshoi Ballet, you don't send a country-and-western critic. Simple as that. And, if someone's in the *new* territory, who is to

judge? Plus the fact that, if you don't like something, *Don't Write About It!*

MUSICIAN: Why do you call your music Punk Jazz?

PASTORIUS: Well, it's not from Punk Music. It's punk, like . . . I'm a Punk. A street kid. Like in the streets, a punk used to be a . . . someone who's a wiseguy. And I'm sort of a wiseguy inasmuch as I don't give a shit! Punk is not a *bad* word. It's sort of someone you respect because he's got enough balls to stick up for himself. It has nothing to do with Punk Music like with needles sticking through your nose. I've had this title for years, ten years. Punk Jazz. Much before this English music. It has that feel.

MUSICIAN: What effects do you feel electric music has on the body? (We were looking over a declassified Pentagon study of the use of sounds in warfare.)

PASTORIUS: I believe that sound and music definitely has a need to be used for some good right now. There's all this pollution. Something's got to change — you can't polish a turd. And something major's going to happen. I'm just going to live and be as happy as I am all the time. I don't see any point in getting too negative about it. I'm going to get myself, my music, my family together because *something* is going to happen! *This* is the shit I'm really interested in, 'cause *this* is what's going on!

MUSICIAN: Scientists support Zawinul's theory that certain sounds can heal and kill. Any experiences along this line?

PASTORIUS: I haven't experienced killing but — I won't say that I've healed — but *many* times I've played for people who are sick. And it works. I used to play for mental patients at hospitals precisely for this reason. The doctors over there knew that every time we played, everything got much hipper. I know that certain sounds can cure, too. Edgar Cayce's got a lot of studies on this. I was standing in front of a bass amp onstage once and it wasn't all that loud, but the frequency . . . I shit in my pants! The sound was like an enema. It actually happened to me. But *good* music really soothes the body. I don't want to talk about it because I'm no expert, I just know how to do it.

MUSICIAN: What gives Weather Report its power and creativity?

PASTORIUS: The combustion of the people and how each one of us grew up. Lack of fear and the ability to make decisions, as opposed to waiting to be told what to do. We all have an incredible musical background, for lack of a better term — a melting pot.

I've never talked to Joe about it but something comes

through *me* — like I said, the instruments are just there to help out. I'll get it out during the day by telling a joke or something. It could be another dimension but . . . esthetic energy is a good word for it, actually. It's something that's definitely coming . . . I compared it earlier to the rays from the Sun. It's a power. When you're with good people it's like an avalanche. Everything goes right when you're honest, giving, and sharing. You don't learn anything without sharing. I think, although I don't like to compare, that most people think too much of themselves in a *physical* way. "What am I going to do today, I gotta pay a bill." My only concern is being healthy, my music, my wife, first, and then everything will take care of itself. I was smart enough in high school — I don't have to worry about intelligence. People are always trying to be cool, to prove this point. You don't prove nothing! I can say for our group that we don't have any competition because we're not competing.

MUSICIAN: Would it be helpful for science to discover a way to enable the artist to turn up the volume and fidelity of that esthetic energy?

PASTORIUS: One way might be to take care of artists, to make it easier for them to live. But then I know that my stuff is so honest because I grew up rough and graduated. I don't know that this energy might not be on a spiritual level. Or a philosophical level. I don't know where it's from. A combination, a trinity sort of thing — the heart, the spirit, and the knowledge. The music comes from the shit you grew up with and maybe something extra that we don't know.

Joe and I seem, when we're improvising, like we're one guy. We'll be choosing notes but we don't know what we're playing in advance. Let's say we're improvising just chords, we'll be playing something that's fitting — all music will fit if you play it with enough confidence — but it's not a short cut. We're actually playing something and taking the biggest chances and it's almost always harmonious. There must be some form of telepathy in there.

Joe might call it the fourth dimension. Whatever it is, it's unique, like a fingerprint. Everyone's got it.

The first time you play, when you're young and you *realize* that you're actually *playing*, that you're the one making it happen . . . to stay aware of that incredible energy and honesty . . . that's what it's about.

I take performing for granted. I don't get nervous. It's like it's my *responsibility*. It comes through me. When I listen to it back, I usually like it because I'm playing my best, I feel, because I'm not trying to do anything, I'm just *there*. Usually when I listen to it back I have a good laugh. **M**

PASTORIUS ON EQUIPMENT

"As a bass player I use two old Acoustic 360's on stage. In the studio I go direct. Unless I want to use a fuzz tone or something, which I use with my amp. On stage I use two Acoustic 360's and there's a new amp, I think it's 440, I use two of those. They've got four 15 inch gausses in them. And I've got them in tandem so I've got this old Acoustic with this incredible bass presence that pushes you just like an R&B sound. You *feel* good, you can feel the bass in it and it never breaks up. Then I've got the four 15 gausses that are high-sounding so I get an incredible clarity. I've also got an MXR digital delay. I put it through one amp and the other amp will go clean to cause a natural sort of vibrato, almost like an organ Leslie. I play lots of harmonics and it really gives me an incredible timbre."

We'd add that one of Pastorius' two Fender Jazz Basses is fretless, the other fretted. Pastorius' flawless intonation on the fretless axe is aided by the fact that the fret positions are marked off visually on the neck; in fact they are the remains of frets that have been filed out and filled in. We'd also like to point out that while Pastorius is very much at home with technology (to the point of crediting his tone and vibrato to digital delay and other expensive superstar goodies), every bassist we've consulted on the subject has said the same



thing: "It's in his hands, it's in his time, it's in his inventiveness. It's because he's got all that going for him that he can make the equipment speak, not the other way around." Note the way he moves his plucking right hand along the strings as he plays, getting a different sound from the pick-ups in the various positions.

TOM COPPI

Peavey equalizers have been designed using the latest computer assisted design techniques and precision components to offer the musician, sound man, and home audiophile flawless performance without extravagant cost or compromises in quality.

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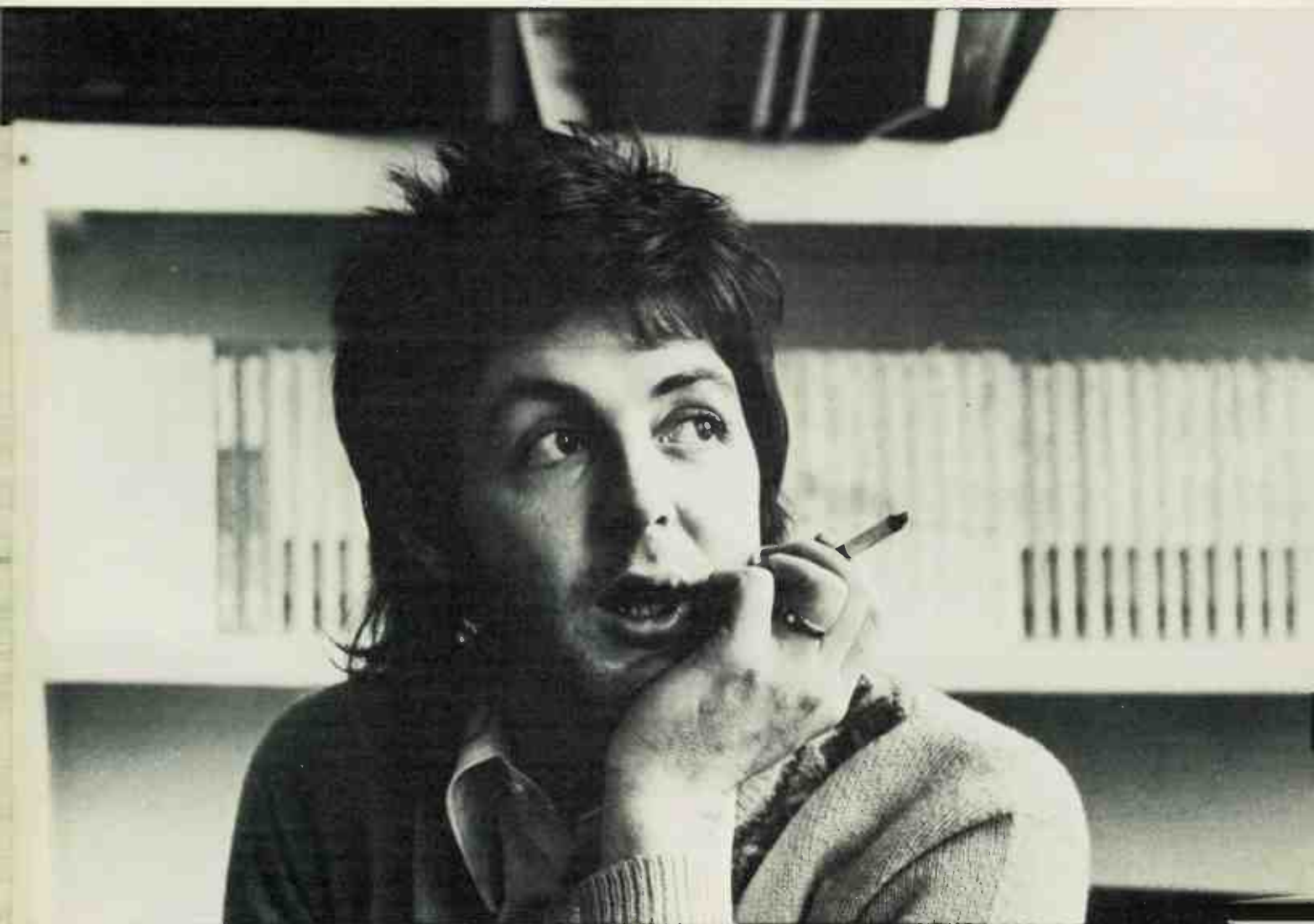
Complete specifications and descriptions of the Stereo Graphic and EQ-27 are available upon request

by writing our Literature and Promotional Department, Peavey Electronics; 711 A Street; Meridian, Miss. 39301.



PAUL McC

LIFTING THE VEIL ON THE BEATLES



JOE STEVENS

CARTNEY



RETNA

By Vic Garbarini

I'm sitting in a large, sparsely furnished apartment somewhere in north London. Paul McCartney is seated across from me, patiently sipping a cup of tea as he waits for me to set up my tape recorder. Finally, I'm ready to go. I'm just launching into my first question when McCartney suddenly turns toward the door and smiles. I watch in amazement as both John Lennon and George Harrison enter the room. "Ringo couldn't make it," says McCartney, still smiling. I open my mouth to answer him, but instead of words only a ringing bell-like noise came out . . .

Woke up, fell out of bed, Dragged a comb across my head. Shit. It's 8:20 already. I wearily grope for the clock, making a mental note to ask my dad to fix the alarm. As I stagger into the bathroom I remember about the geometry test. *The geometry test!* I'd forgotten all about it! Two minutes of pure panic ensue as I feverishly search my memory: *relief.* I sit behind Mraz in Geometry. The math freak. The guy I loaned

last month's copy of *Playboy* to. *Good ol' Mraz . . . Found my coat and grabbed my hat, Made the bus in seconds flat. Found my way upstairs and had a smoke, Somebody spoke and I went into a dream . . .*

"Sugar?"

"Huh?"

"Sugar," repeats Paul McCartney. "Do you want sugar in your tea?"

"Uh, right. Sorry. Drifted off there for a minute." Be cool, thinks I. Engage the critical faculties. He's just another bloke. Wrote a lot of good songs. *Transformed my generation.* Hasn't done much interesting lately. Sure, he's talented and his music changed my life. But he's only human. *So why do I feel like I'm having a conversation with my own childhood?* Hold on now. Let's get some perspective here: Carl Jung actually had conversations with his archetypes. *Yeah,* responds a tiny voice, *but did one of them ever put sugar in his tea?* Point

taken. *When I get older, losing my hair, Many years from now . . .*

Natural. Unpretentious. Those are the words that best describe James Paul McCartney at 38, ten years after the breakup of the most influential pop group the world has ever known. The boyish good looks are still remarkably intact, (no hair loss, though most of the babyfat is gone), but what impresses most is his relaxed, open manner. He seemed totally at ease during our two hour conversation at his London offices. He was charming, frank, and surprisingly willing to talk at great length about the Beatles experience. Willing isn't the right word — he seemed positively eager to discuss it, for reasons he explains fully in the interview. Paul claims he wants to be just an ordinary guy, and I believe him. He's anchored himself in normalcy, reasonably secure in the nest he's created with his family and farm. As a result, his work with Wings has sometimes lacked creative tension — a problem which many critics, myself included, find irksome. Great art often requires friction — something to struggle against, an inner or outer obstacle to overcome in order to get the creative juices flowing and provide energy. Externally, there's little for McCartney to rub up against these days, and he doesn't seem to harbor the kind of inner demons that can drive John Lennon to tantrums and transcendence. But when he's offered a challenge, as in the case of the nearly disastrous *Band On The Run* sessions — or in a concert situation, as captured on the excellent *Wings Over America* live set — McCartney has proven that he can still turn out material that rivals his work with the Beatles. His creative potential may be somewhat underutilized at times, but his powers seem relatively undiminished. In fact, his new solo album, *McCartney II*, contains some of his best material since *Abbey Road*. True, there's relatively little tension here, but in this case it hardly seems to matter: This is pure, distilled, essence of McCartney — gorgeous, dreamlike melodies floating through Eno-esque electronic textures, ranging from the Bach-like elegance and soothing ethereality of "Summer Day Song" to the poignant romanticism of "Waterfalls". His work may occasionally be disappointing, but I'm heartened that a man who's been through what McCartney has can remain so open and unspoiled and still capable of creative work of this caliber.

*They've been going in and out of style
But they're guaranteed to raise a smile.
So may I introduce to you
The act you've known for all these years . . .*

MUSICIAN: Let's just skip over the whole Japan thing. I'm sure you're sick of answering questions about it by now. Needless to say, you won't have a *Live At Budokan* album coming out this year.

McCARTNEY: (deadpan) Good joke.

MUSICIAN: Thanks. I've been saving that one for weeks. Moving right along: Why another solo album now?

McCARTNEY: Well, actually I was trying *not* to do an album. It was just after *Back To The Egg*, and I wanted to do something totally different. So I just plugged a single microphone into the back of a Studer 16-track tape machine; didn't use a recording console at all. The idea was that at the end of it I'd just have a zany little cassette that I'd play in my car and never release. In the end I had a few tracks, played them for a couple of people, and they said, "I see, that's your next album." And I thought, "Right, it probably is." So then I got a bit serious about it and tried to make it into an "album." That was the worst part of it — I was having fun till then.

MUSICIAN: It's interesting the way you describe your approach. It reminds me of the way Eno goes about making an album — creative play. The other person who came to mind when I first heard it was Stevie Wonder . . .

McCARTNEY: I like Stevie a lot. It's probably because he's the only other person who's done this kind of recording . . . doing it all yourself.

MUSICIAN: You're also the only two people who've combined avant garde electronic textures with an unerring sense of melody.

McCARTNEY: Well, I can't help that. I'm glad I can't help that. When I was doing this album I thought I'd make something that didn't sound anything like me. The first three tracks I made were the two instrumentals on the album and a third one which I later put lyrics on. I wanted something that sounded nothing like me, but inevitably you start to creep through even that, your sense of tune or whatever it is.

MUSICIAN: Have you ever consciously tried to do a melody that was non-diatonic, not based on a major or minor motif or something?

McCARTNEY: Well, I don't understand that in music. I'm not a technical musician.

MUSICIAN: Something discordant, something that isn't normal tonal melody.

McCARTNEY: Yes, on some of the tracks. I had enough for a double album and most of the tracks that came off to make a single album were a bit more like that. One was kind of sequences of wobble noises, a crazy track, probably not worth releasing, it's just for the cassette in my car. There are people who like it but it's just experimental. I like it, but . . . zoning in on which ones we were going to release, I asked a lot of people which were their favorites, and the ones that got dropped off were probably the least me. I've got one 10-minute instrumental that just goes on forever and forever.

MUSICIAN: And you left off the ones that were less melodic. Could you ever conceive of putting out the experimental stuff?

McCARTNEY: I wouldn't mind it. The thing is, I go through record companies and record companies want to have a say in it. If I bring them an album which they think is totally uncommercial and I say, "Look, artistically I've got to do this . . ." you have to agree with them in the end when they say, "Look it's very nice but we'd rather have this please because we're the company that's going to release it." I'm not going in an avant garde direction particularly — it's just for my own interest, that sort of stuff — but still I get certain decisions creeping in that wouldn't necessarily be my decisions.

MUSICIAN: You're forgiven. Were you very disappointed or surprised by the negative critical reaction to *Back To The Egg*?

McCARTNEY: I'm used to all that now. Nearly everything I've ever done or been involved in has received some negative critical reaction. You'd think the response to something like "She Loves You" with the Beatles would have been pretty positive. It wasn't. The very first week that came out it was supposed to be the *worst* song the Beatles had ever thought of doing. Then *Ram* was supposed to be the *worst* thing I'd ever done. And so the criticism continues.

MUSICIAN: But was the harder rocking approach on *Back To The Egg* a reaction to criticism of your work as too poppy? Were you influenced by the emergence of New Wave?

McCARTNEY: It was just what I was into at the time. The New Wave thing was happening, and I realized that a lot of New Wave was just taking things at a faster tempo than we do. "We" being what I like to call the *Permanent Wave* (little joke there . . .) So you get something like "Spin It Out" out of that. I'm always getting influenced. Most of the songs I've written can be traced to some kind of influence — Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Chuck Berry to name a few. Even some of the thirties-type tunes like "When I'm Sixty-Four" or "Honey Pie". That's influenced by Fred Astaire and people like that.

MUSICIAN: Can you look at your own work with any degree of objectivity or impartiality? I mean, can you listen to an album you've just made and trust yourself to be able to see what it's strong and weak points are?

McCARTNEY: When they first come out, I'm totally confused. It takes a few months for me to warm up to them. Sometimes I'll be at a party, and I'll hear music coming from the next room. Immediately I'll get jealous and think "Who's that?" So I go into the other room and it's *us*. And I think, "Hey, I like this group — we're alright after all! Because everyone's a bit paranoid.

MUSICIAN: *Band On The Run* was probably the most suc-



"I recently did Beatle Paul for a video clip. I put on my old uniform and got out the old Hofner violin bass — which still had a Beatles song list taped to it— and I didn't realize till later that I'd broken the whole voodoo about talking about the Beatles. 'Cos I'd been him again and it didn't feel bad."

cessful Wings album from both a commercial and critical standpoint. Was it the most satisfying one for you?

McCARTNEY: I like *Band On The Run*. That was going to be a normal Wings album originally, but then our guitarist at the time, Henry McCullough, and Denny Seiwell failed to turn up. It was one of those numbers where they said, "We don't want to go to Lagos and record this album, sorry." I was left in the lurch at the last minute — literally an hour before the flight. So there was just Denny Laine, Linda, and myself in Nigeria. I played drums, bass and a lot of guitar myself — I took a lot of control on that album. It was almost a solo album.

MUSICIAN: Why Lagos?

McCARTNEY: I just fancied going to Africa; I'm into African rhythms. While we were there I saw the best band I've ever seen live. Fela Ransomeokun, it was. I think he's in jail, now; he's too political for the local authorities. We saw him one night at his own club and I was crying. A lot of it was just relief. There were a lot of crazy circumstances and weird things happening. At one point we got held up at knifepoint. It was a real fight to make that album.

MUSICIAN: Do you find in your experience that friction like that can actually help the creative process?

McCARTNEY: Unfortunately yes, it does help. It's unfortunate because who wants to go around having stress all the time just to aid creativity? But when it happens it does actually seem to help. It's a drag because the logic then follows is that we should all walk around even more stressed to make better albums. Who needs it? I'd rather not make albums than do that. But it did help on *Band On The Run*; it gave us something to fight against. At first I was worried. But then I thought

"Wait a minute, I love playing drums." So the positive side started to creep in, too.

MUSICIAN: I've heard that with the Beatles you sometimes gave Ringo directions regarding what he should play.

McCARTNEY: We always gave Ringo direction — on every single number. It was usually very controlled. Whoever had written the song, John for instance, would say "I want this." Obviously a lot of the stuff came out of what Ringo was playing; but we would always control it.

MUSICIAN: Did musical disagreements or conflicts have anything to do with the breakup?

McCARTNEY: They were some of the minor reasons, yeah. I remember on "Hey Jude," telling George not to play guitar. He wanted to echo riffs after the vocal phrases, which I didn't think was appropriate. He didn't see it like that, and it was a bit of a number for me to have to dare to tell George Harrison — who's one of the greats, I think — not to play. It was like an insult. But that was how we did a lot of our stuff.

MUSICIAN: We were talking about creative tension, and how even if it's a pain in the ass it can be useful. Are there any particular Beatle albums that...

McCARTNEY: The *White Album*. That was the tension album. We were all in the midst of the psychedelic thing, or just coming out of it. In any case, it was weird. Never before had we recorded with beds in the studio and people visiting for hours on end; business meetings and all that. There was a lot of friction during that album.

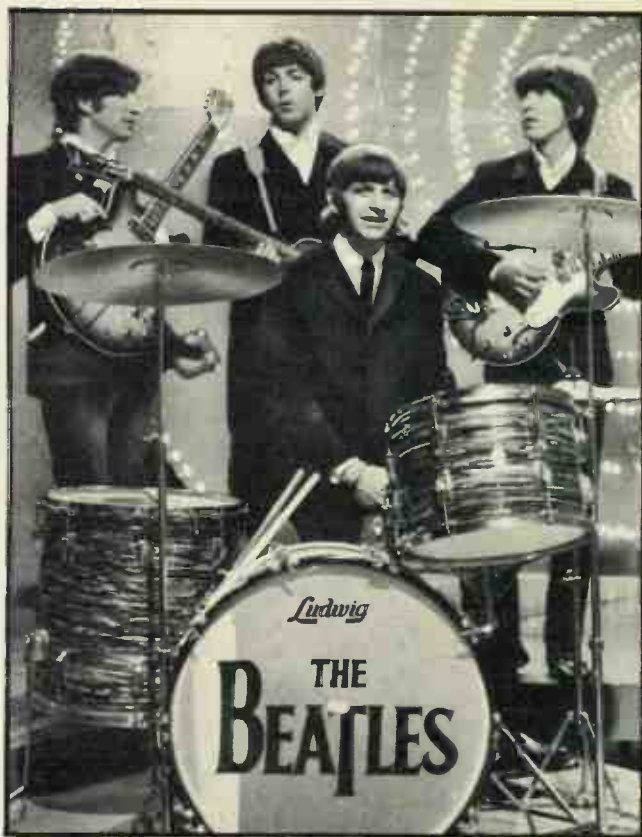
MUSICIAN: That was the one that sounded the most fragmented to me, whereas *Abbey Road* sounded the smoothest. Yet I imagine there was a lot of tension at that point, too.

McCARTNEY: No, not really, there was... no, come to think of it there was actually, yes. There were one or two tense moments. But it didn't feel like a tense album to me; I was busy getting into a lot of new musical ideas, like the medley thing on the second side. I think the *White Album* was the weirdest experience because we were about to break up. And that was just tense in itself.

MUSICIAN: I want to ask you about your bass playing. To me you've always played bass like a frustrated guitar player. Those melodic lines that started to show up on *Sgt. Pepper* — there was no precedent for that in rock music. How did that style of playing come about?



"In Hamburg we literally worked eight hours a day, a full factory day; other bands never worked that hard. Eventually we realized it was going to get very big. In England, there was this incredible excitement. The papers were saying, what's left, you've conquered everything, and we'd say AMERICA. We were cooking up this act, the Beatles, and we knew . . . We'd distilled our stuff to an essence, we weren't any old band."



MCCARTNEY: I'd always liked those little lines that worked as support, and yet had their own identity instead of just staying in the background. Also, bass was beginning to come to the fore in mixes at that point. If you listen to early Beatle mixes the bass and bass drum aren't there. We were starting to take over mixing ourselves, and to bring those things out, so I had to do something with it. I was listening to a lot of Motown and Stax at the time, Marvin Gaye and people like that.

MUSICIAN: How did *Sgt. Pepper* come about?

MCCARTNEY: I think the big influence was *Pet Sounds* by the Beach Boys. That album just flipped me. Still is one of my favorite albums — the musical invention on that is just amazing. I play it for our kids now and they love it. When I heard it I thought, "Oh dear, this is the album of all time. What the hell are we going to do?" My ideas took off from that standard.

MUSICIAN: Wasn't the initial concept some kind of fantasy thing?

MCCARTNEY: Yeah, I had this idea that it was going to be an album of another band that wasn't us — we'd just imagine all the time that it wasn't us playing. It was just a nice little device to give us some distance on the album.

MUSICIAN: I remember listening to it and thinking it was the perfect fantasy album; you could put yourself into a whole other world. That's really the way you went about creating it, then.

MCCARTNEY: Right. That was the whole idea. The cover was going to be us dressed as this other band in crazy gear; but it was all stuff that we'd always wanted to wear. And we were going to have photos on the wall of all our heroes: Marlon Brando in his leather jacket, Einstein — it could be anybody who we'd ever thought was good. Cult heroes. And we kind of put this other identity on them to do it. It changed a lot in the process; but that was the basic idea behind it.

MUSICIAN: Thinking back on that period, which album would you say caught the feeling of expansion and creativity that was going on at its height?

MCCARTNEY: *Pepper* probably . . .

MUSICIAN: What about *Rubber Soul*? That was a real departure . . .

MCCARTNEY: All I can remember is that it was a kind of

straightforward album . . .

MUSICIAN: It was so acoustic though, compared to the previous stuff.

MCCARTNEY: Those were the sounds we were into at the time. "You've Got To Hide Your Love Away" is just basically John doing Dylan. Dylan had just come out and we were big fans of his. *Rubber Soul* was just a catchy title, that's the bit I remember most about it. A lot of people liked that as an album.

MUSICIAN: Among connoisseurs it's considered one of the early high points. *Revolver* too . . .

MCCARTNEY: Just to show you how wrong one can be: I was in Germany on tour just before *Revolver* came out. I started listening to the album and I got really down because I thought the whole thing was out of tune. Everyone had to reassure me that it was O.K.

MUSICIAN: Robert Fripp wrote a piece for us recently in which he talked about an artist's image, and how it can have a life of its own. In the sense that you're Paul McCartney, a human being with tastes, talents, faults, and all that; and yet you also have a public image — as Johnny Lydon would say — that has a life of its own that's almost independent of you. Sometimes people relate to that image instead of to you as a person. How did you deal with this when you first encountered it with the Beatles? Did it bother you? Was it enjoyable? How did it feel from the inside?

MCCARTNEY: At first you're just an ordinary Joe rockin' around trying to make a living. Then you get famous; you get your first hit and you love it. There's nothing you'd like to do more than sign autographs: *You got 'em - I'll do 'em*. That wears off after three or four years. You start to think, "Wait a minute, what am I bloody signing for you for?" At this point I've come to another phase where I think it's all O.K. again. So I've been in and out of that.

MUSICIAN: Have you ever wished you could just chuck it all and fade into obscurity?

MCCARTNEY: I remember thinking at one point that I've come to a point of no return; that even if I say now that I don't want to be famous anymore, I'll be like Brigitte Bardot or Charlie Chaplin: a recluse but still very famous. And that's no use — they'll be after me even more.



"I remember many times just sitting outside concert halls waiting for the police to escort us inside and thinking, 'Jesus Christ, I really don't want to go through with this. We've done enough, let's take the money and run. Let's go down to Brighton.'"

MUSICIAN: Do you think that was John's reaction?

McCARTNEY: I really don't like to speak for John. But seeing's how you've asked me, my theory is that he's done all the things he wants to do except one — being himself. Now he's just turned on to actually living his own life — sod everyone else. But it's not an aggressive thing, from what I can see.

MUSICIAN: Musically you're the most active of the former Beatles. You maintain a band and still tour pretty consistently, which the others don't. I don't want to get into a comparison trip, but after being with the Beatles, where do you go?

McCARTNEY: It's rather difficult to top, yeah.

MUSICIAN: All of you must have felt some trepidation at the thought of going out on your own, but you didn't seem to worry . . .

McCARTNEY: I didn't seem to, but that's one of my features: I may seem to not do a lot of things, when in fact I can be just as bad as the next guy. The first gigs we did with Wings were frightening; it was so scary coming out with a new band knowing the Beatles was what was expected. But it was just a question of knowing I had to run that gauntlet — go through that thing, and that once I came out of it I'd feel better and be glad I'd gone through it.

MUSICIAN: Did you ever experience that kind of fear with the Beatles?

McCARTNEY: Sure. I remember many times just sitting outside concert halls waiting for the police to escort us inside and thinking, "Jesus Christ, I really don't want to go through this. We've done enough, let's take the money and run! Let's go down to Brighton, or something." Linda and I felt like that when she was having our last baby. We were driving to the hospital and there was this terrible desire to say, "Let's go to Brighton instead." If we could have gotten away with it, we would have.

MUSICIAN: Those early tours with Wings were pretty innovative for the time: showing up unannounced at colleges in a van and charging only a dollar admission. Exactly the kind of impromptu "small is beautiful" philosophy that a lot of the New Wavers are beginning to espouse, only you were doing it eight years ago. What led you to take that approach?

McCARTNEY: Instead of doing what was expected, I asked

myself, "What do I REALLY want to do?" What have I missed being with the Beatles? What is it time to do? It was silly little things, like with the Beatles you used to get paid massively, but you never saw it because it always went straight into the company. You had to draw on it. So for me one of the buzzes of that first tour was actually getting a bag of coins at the end of the gig. It wasn't just a materialistic thing — it was the feeling of getting physically paid again; it was like going back to square one. I wanted to take it back to where the Beatles started, which was in the halls. We charged 50p to get in — obviously we could have charged more — and gave the Student Union a bit for having us there. We played poker with the money afterwards, and I'd actually pay the band physically. you know, "50p for you . . . and 50p for you." It brought back the thrill of actually working for a living.

MUSICIAN: Can you empathize with this New Wave thing? Did you feel that same explosive force with the early Beatles in Hamburg and elsewhere?

McCARTNEY: Yes, I think it's the same thing, and will always be the same. It's just a question of age: when we were 18 we were doing it and getting exactly the same reaction, only twenty years earlier. It's the energy. I don't care where they got it from, if it sounds like a great piece of music — the Sex Pistols "Pretty Vacant," for instance — then I'm all for it.

MUSICIAN: Some of the early Beatle material was obviously coming out of Chuck Berry and Buddy Holly, but most of it seemed strikingly original. How did that Merseybeat sound come about?

McCARTNEY: When we started the Beatles, John and I sat down and wrote about fifty songs, out of which I think "Love Me Do" is the only one that got published. Those songs weren't very good because we were trying to find the next beat — *the next new sound*. *New Musical Express* — which was a much gentler paper at the time — was talking about calypso, and how latin rock was going to be the next big thing. The minute we stopped trying to *find* that new beat the newspapers started saying it was *us*; and we found we'd discovered the new sound without even trying. That's what made me suspicious of categories like heavy metal or pop. My musical tastes range from Fed Astaire to the Sex Pistols and everything in between: Pink Floyd, Stevie Wonder, the Stones . . .

MUSICIAN: A great deal of the criticism you've come in for seems to be because you use pop as a medium. What is it about pop you're attracted to?

McCARTNEY: I just like it. I'm like a lot of people — when I get in my car and turn on the radio I want to hear some good sounds. So whatever I write, I write for that. What are the alternatives? To write a "serious" piece of music. Or modern classical music? No thanks. I'd bore myself stiff after a couple of bars

MUSICIAN: The first major cultural experience of my generation was in February 1964 when we saw you on the Ed Sullivan Show. It was like something just swept over the whole country, a new, open energy . . .

McCARTNEY: It was strange, wasn't it?

MUSICIAN: What the hell was it all about?

McCARTNEY: I don't know. I personally think that in America there was a standard way of doing things. The only freaky people were Hollywood writers, jazz musicians and pop stars; but even they were tied to a framework. Meanwhile we had cooked up this whole new British thing; we had a long time to work it out and make all our mistakes in Hamburg with almost no one watching. We were very different, having taken all the American influences and stewed them up in a British way. A lot of things had been happening with our own chemistry. 'Cos John and I were strong writers, George was like a third writer, Ringo who had a good head on his shoulders and was by no means thick . . . We'd put in a lot of work. In Hamburg we'd work eight hours a day, which most bands never worked that hard. We literally worked eight hours a day, it was a full factory day. So we had developed our act by the time we came to America we had worked all that out. All the success we'd had in Britain — the British newspapers were saying, well, what's left to do, you've conquered everything, and we'd say AMERICA. We got the Number One, did Ed Sullivan . . . by then we'd distilled our stuff down to an essence, so we weren't just coming on as any old band. We had our own totally new identities . . .

MUSICIAN: Did you feel that among you, was . . .

McCARTNEY: Yes, we knew it. People were saying, "What's this with the haircut?" If I go back on the haircut thing I know it was actually because we saw some guy in Hamburg whose hair we liked. John and I were hitching to Paris and we asked him to cut our hair like he did his; he didn't do it quite the same and it fell down in a Beatles cut. He was a very sort of artsy guy this guy, great guy called Jergen. He cut our hair, we came back to England. All the people in England thought we were German, 'cos the newspapers said *Direct From Hamburg*. All the kids were surprised when they saw us. We had leather jackets and blue jeans. We thought we won't have corny suits, we'll have new things, Cardin jackets. So by the time we got to the States, for instance . . . the hair, which was really a bit of an accident, and was really what a lot of artsy people were doing anyway, we were the first with it in the States so it looked like we'd invented it. Actually the story was a lot more ordinary. Like life is. But by the time it got to be presented on the Ed Sullivan show, the biggest show in the States, and there we were with these funny haircuts, it was us. Everybody said, "You started the Beatle haircut." So it was like distilling the essence of what we were going through and laying it all on America in one big move. That's why it was such a big shock and had such a big effect on them.

MUSICIAN: Was it apparent to you that something was going on that was more than just another very big group — that this was a cultural phenomenon?

McCARTNEY: You don't get into that. I don't think that when Muhammad Ali was shouting he was the greatest that he actually *knew* he was — it was bluff. Show biz. He *suspected* he was; we suspected we were. But a lot of what you did was just bluff, because if you want to be number one you *tell* everyone you're number one.

MUSICIAN: But when did you realize "My God, it worked!" This is more than just a musical event; this is a whole generation . . .

McCARTNEY: Very early on. When we started off in Hamburg we had no audience, so we had to work our asses off to get people in. People would appear at the door of the club while we were on stage, and there would be nobody at the tables. We used to try to get them in to sell beer. The minute we saw someone we'd kick into "Dancing In The Streets" — which was one of our big numbers at the time — and just rock out, pretending we hadn't seen them. And we'd find we'd got three of them in. We were like fairground barkers: see *four*

people — have to get them in. We eventually sold the club out, which is when we realized it was going to get really big. Then we went back to England and played the Cavern; same thing happened there. First nobody came; then they started coming in; finally they came in droves. There was this incredible excitement. So we knew something we were doing must have been right. By the time we started playing tours it really didn't surprise us anymore, though we were still thrilled by it all. When we were on the Chris Montez tour he was on the top of the bill; halfway through they switched it and put us on top. It was embarrassing as hell for him — I mean, what could you say to him? Sorry Chris? He took it well and stuff, but we expected it by then. Everywhere we'd gone it'd seemed to work.

MUSICIAN: At that point no European group had ever really conquered America — no pop group. How did you determine when you were ready to take the plunge and come to the U.S.?

McCARTNEY: The thing we did — which I always think new groups should take as a bit of advice — was that we were cheeky enough to say that we wouldn't go to the States until we had a No. 1 record there. We were offered tours, but we knew we'd be second to someone and we didn't want that. There was a lot of careful thought behind it. There were a lot of artists from here who'd go over and vanish. Cliff Richard's still trying to make it in the States. We always looked at it logically and thought, well that's the mistake. You've got to go in as No. 1. So there was a lot of careful thought there, we were cooking up this act, the Beatles. It was very European, very British as opposed to the standard American way of doing things, Ed, couple of jugglers, Sinatra, Sinatra Jr., even Elvis from the waist up. The American Dream.

MUSICIAN: Can you remember what it was like when it finally happened?

McCARTNEY: When we heard that our first record went No. 1 in the States? Yeah. We were playing Paris at the time. The telegram came and we all jumped on each other's backs and

"The White Album. That was the tension album. In any case it was weird, beds in the studio and people visiting for hours on end. We were about to break up, and that was tense in itself."

ran around everywhere. Big Mal the roadie gave everyone piggyback rides — we were just so excited. So we went to America; and it was all like we'd planned might happen. But we were lucky; it went much further than we'd ever imagined.

MUSICIAN: What was it that made the group able to weather the incredible pressure of all that and stay together as long as it did?

McCARTNEY: It didn't feel like pressure — it wasn't pressure for a long time. At American press conferences, they used to ask, "What will you do when the bubble bursts?" There used to be a guy like yourself who we'd take around with us 'cos he was so funny. We used to ask him to ask that question every time — it was the only question he ever asked on the whole tour. He got to be like a court jester.

MUSICIAN: So how did you answer him?

McCARTNEY: I don't know — we'll blow up or we'll fall out of the sky or whatever . . . But it was never a serious question to us.

MUSICIAN: When and why did the bubble burst?

McCARTNEY: I don't know, really. Just about a year before the Beatles broke up. You could say the seed was sown from very early on. I don't know — it just did. Friction came in; business things; relations between us. We were all looking for people in our lives. John had found Yoko; it made things very difficult. He wanted a very intense, intimate life with her; at the same time we'd always reserved that kind of intimacy for the group. You could understand that he had to have time with



“The big influence on Sgt. Pepper was Pet Sounds by the Beach Boys. When I heard it I thought, ‘Oh dear, this is the album of all time. What the hell are we going to do?’”

her. But does he have to have *that* much time with her was sort of the feeling of the group. So these things just started to create immovable objects and pressures that were just too big. After that — after the breakup — then the idea of when-will-the-bubble-burst came home. So I thought, “Oh *that* was what that guy was talking about at every bloody press conference!” We weren’t aware of that much pressure while the Beatles were happening because we were a very organized group — a well-rehearsed unit. But eventually I started to realize what they were talking about. When you start to grow up you realize, “Wait a minute, I really am holding down a job here and if my paid gig goes down . . .”

MUSICIAN: I’m impressed by how easily you can go back into that period and pull out all these amazing things. I was afraid you might not be willing to talk about the Beatles; it seemed like a forbidden topic for so long . . .

MCCARTNEY: Well, I recently did this video clip on which I play all the instruments like I do on the album. We had to think of someone to make the bass player like. So I told the director I could do Beatle Paul. And he said, “Yeah, you’ve gotta do it”. I almost chickened out in the end. But I did it and put on my old uniform and got out the old Hofner Violin bass — which still has a song list from the Beatles taped to it — and I didn’t realize till a few days later that I’d gone and broken the whole voodoo of talking about the Beatles . . . ‘Cos I’d been him again and it didn’t feel bad. I mean if someone else is going to impersonate me, I might as well do it myself. And it was such a ball among the studio technicians — they really got off on it.

MUSICIAN: Did it feel like you were stepping back into that old image for a minute?

MCCARTNEY: Yes. I felt great. It felt like I was on a T.V. show twenty years ago — exactly the same. The bass was the same weight — the whole thing about the Hofner bass is that it’s like balsa wood. It’s so comfortable after a Fender or a Rickenbacker. I now play a Rickenbacker or a Yamaha, which are quite heavy.

MUSICIAN: Why did you switch?

MCCARTNEY: It was given to me. Back in the mid-sixties Mr. Rickenbacker gave me a special left-handed bass. It was the first left-handed bass I’d ever had, ‘cause the Hofner was a converted right hand. It was a freebie and I loved it; I started getting into it on *Sgt. Pepper*. And now I’m playing a Yamaha.

MUSICIAN: How come?

MCCARTNEY: Because they gave me one — I’m anybody’s for a free guitar! Sometimes I think I should research what instrument I like to play best. But generally I seem to play stuff that’s been given me. Naturally I only play the stuff that I like — I’ve been given stuff that I don’t care for — but I like it like that. I don’t like things to be too thought out and logical. If someone asked me what strings I used I honestly couldn’t tell you — they come out of a little bag. To me these things are just vehicles. They’re beautiful and I love them, but I don’t want to find out too much about them. It’s just the way my mind is; I’d prefer to be non-technical.

MUSICIAN: What about your composing and writing? Do you have a set way of going about putting together a song, or is it all pretty free-flowing?

MCCARTNEY: I’m suspicious of formulas: the minute I’ve got a formula I try and change it. People used to ask us what comes first, the music or the words? Or Lennon and McCartney, who does what? We all did a bit of everything. Sometimes I wrote the words and sometimes John did; sometimes I’d write a tune and sometimes he would.

MUSICIAN: . . . *were* you the Walrus?

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THELONIOUS MONK

Though called the high priest of bebop, Monk was unlike anyone before or since. His powerfully contained and integrated sense of rhythm, harmony, and melody remain a revelation.



ROBERT PARENT

By Bob Blumenthal

World Radio History

Thelonious Sphere Monk — consider the name, for it reflects the man's music. There is the imposing complexity and originality rooted in tradition (in this case family tradition) of "Thelonious," the abrupt angularity of "Monk," and the rhythmic impact of the two in juxtaposition. People often fail to grasp the rich internal harmony of the first name by misspelling it "Thelonius," just as they miss the full chordal nuances of many Monk compositions. Most revealing of all, however, is "Sphere," with its intimations of rounded, three-dimensional completeness. Monk the Sphere, the autonomous planet pursuing his own orbit through the musical universe. It is only fitting that one of the most frequently employed adjectives to describe Monk's music is *self-contained*.

This sense of fullness, incorporating as it does sonic brilliance, dissonance, silence, rhythmic surprise and melodic logic, has led musicians, critics, and record labels to dub Monk a genius. Perhaps the breadth of his achievement was captured most succinctly by one of his most dedicated students, soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy, when he noted that "Monk's music has profound humanity, disciplined economy, balanced virility, dramatic nobility and innocently exuberant wit."

Monk's career has been as singular as his name. He was born in North Carolina in 1917, but his family moved to New York in 1924 and set up residence in an Upper West Side apartment, close to the future sight of Lincoln Center, which Monk would call home for a half-century. He began playing the piano at age 11, worked Harlem rent parties at 14 and toured the Midwest as accompanist to a faith healer two years later. Mary Lou Williams, who heard Monk during this period, reports that he displayed a typically fluid swing piano technique *a la* Teddy Wilson; but this changed rapidly when he returned to New York at age 19 and became deeply involved in the Harlem after-hours scene. Young black musicians, in rebellion against big-band conventions and the ripoff success of white musicians, began developing a more technically advanced language at clubs like Minton's Playhouse and Monroe's Uptown House. Monk, the house pianist at Minton's, got to jam with such sympathetic cohorts as Charlie Christian, Kenny Clarke, and Dizzy Gillespie (hear *Charlie Christian*, in the Archives of Folk series, for two examples of Monk circa 1941), and rapidly developed the most uncompromising style of all.

As Gillespie notes in *To BE ... or Not To BOP*, Monk participated actively in the give and take of these sessions, encouraging the teenaged Bud Powell and trading insights with the older musicians. (Dizzy claims to have introduced Monk to the flatted fifth, while crediting the pianist with showing him the minor sixth chord with a sixth in the bass.) The music which evolved from this period (and later became labelled "bebop") surely reflects aspects of Monk's thinking, especially in several of its harmonic aspects (the fondness for major sevenths and ninth chords, for example), but the rapid tempos and arpeggiated melodies most listeners recognize as bebop are far removed from Monk's aesthetic.

In any event, Monk had removed himself from the center of

that scene after working with Coleman Hawkins on 52nd St. in 1944. From this point forward he led his own groups, though the work was scarce and recording opportunities limited. His first sessions, made for Blue Note between 1947 and 1952 and currently collected on *The Complete Genius*, suggest that in many important respects Monk was not really a bebop musician.

Examine Monk's rhythms, for one obvious example. In place of the steady eighth and sixteenth-note streams of most boppers, one finds a great reliance on space and silence. Monk's phrases have odd shapes, fit into odd niches on the bar line, and are accented in odd places. The disciples of Parker and Gillespie sound self-consciously virtuosic and ultimately predictable in comparison; their approach to the beat, for all its greater surface dazzle, is far less sophisticated than Monk's irregular impulses.

Melodically Monk was also into something different. He has written his share of convolute lines ("Four in One," "Trinkle Tinkle," "Who Knows?") and developed his own trademark arpeggios, but the *characteristic* Monk phrase is tight and stark, and offers the seed for a complete musical statement. And, since Monk's conception is so thoroughly integrated, he is able to make rhythm and harmony work melodically.

"Criss Cross," considered one of Monk's masterpieces from the Blue Note period, offers insights into his melodic approach. An initial two-note phrase is repeated three times with a "tail" added; each of the three tails is different (and iconoclastic) both harmonically and rhythmically. These tails form an ascending pattern in the first four bars of the piece which suggests a complementary, descending response in the next four bars containing its own abrupt accents and clipped repetitions. As is so often the case in Monk's music, the conclusion of the main eight bar melody (the A in AABA song form) provides melodic material for the bridge; thus, in structural terms, B flows out of A. The

bridge of "Criss Cross" is only eight bars long, like the bridge on thousands of other pieces, yet it is particularly dazzling; for while most composers would employ symmetrical melodic blocks of four bars each, Monk gives us melodic units of three bars, three bars and two bars!

Monk's sound at the keyboard set him further apart from the bebop norm. His strong, aggressive touch produced tones that seem horn-like in their boldness; and his fondness for space (plus an adroit use of the pedals) highlighted the rich overtones which this percussive attack produced. Gunther Schuller has noted that Monk's unorthodox way of holding his fingers (flat and parallel to the keys, rather than curved) accounts for his striking sound, as well as his penchant for playing large intervals with dissonant "satellite" notes attached (such as major seconds and major sevenths where other pianists would play a simple octave). When Monk has worked with two or more horns, this tonal character carries over to the rough-edged ensembles he prefers to characteristic bebop unisons.

An iconoclastic harmonic sense completes the composite picture. Beyond the frequent appearance of seconds, sevenths and ninths which fall so naturally under Monk's



Monk's strange hats and impromptu dances were a charismatic adjunct to the most emotionally intense jazz of the 50's.

fingers, there are the flatted fifths and the whole-tone scales. The pungency of Monk's harmonic palette (which Andre Hodeir has called an "acid bath" when applied to popular material) is perhaps the most easily grasped aspect of his music, yet it cannot be isolated from Monk's notions of melody, rhythm, and sound. For Monk's perspective on music is comprehensive, an interrelated and reinforcing series of concepts and techniques, intuitively arrived at perhaps, but polished techniques nonetheless, which function so integrally that melody cannot be divorced from rhythm, or rhythm from attack, or attack from sound, or sound from harmony, or (to complete the circle) harmony from melody.

The Complete Genius is the perfect introduction to Monk's music, pointing up the straightforward simplicity of his methods and underlining the structural familiarity of his materials. With rare exceptions, such as the ten-bar bridge in "Thelonious," Monk retains the familiar boundaries of the 32-bar song form or the blues. He even borrows chord changes from Tin Pan Alley, a common practice in the Forties, although "In Walked Bud" is a far cry from "Blue Skies" (on which it is based), and the isolated, rhythmically erratic tones of "Evidence" are even further from the underlying "Just You, Just Me." (The title of this last piece, by the way, gives verbal evidence of Monk's reductive methods: "Just You, Just Me" = "Just Us" = "Justice" = "Evidence"!)

Unfortunately, most of Monk's musical qualities were buried at the time beneath his image. Blue Note producer Alfred Lion's wife Lorraine had dubbed Monk "the high priest of bebop," and the hype stuck. To most people Monk was a mad genius clad in odd hats and sunglasses, whose music seemed incomprehensible to all but a charmed few. To make matters worse, Monk lost his New York City cabaret card under questionable circumstances in 1951, and without this then-essential police license he was unable to perform regularly (and thus develop a following) in the nightclubs of the world's major jazz market. Monk persevered, however, taking one-night jobs when they were offered, writing more music and making more records.

Between 1952 and 1954 Monk was under contract to Prestige; and, with the exception of some alternate takes and a fine quartet session under Sonny Rollins's leadership, the results are now available on the double albums *Thelonious Monk* and Miles Davis' *Tallest Trees*. Beyond the introduction of several fine compositions, these sessions suggest that Monk was growing more assertive as a piano soloist (although Prestige provided him with an abysmal instrument which added a tinny, trebly edge to his solos unheard before or since). "Blue Monk," "Little Rootie Tootie" and "Locomotive," with their "train" figures and basic riffs, helped to clarify Monk's roots in both the Harlem stride school and the Kansas City blues bands (Martin Williams has noted that Count Basie, with his rhythmically varied bass lines, is the link between James P. Johnson and Monk). And there were several opportunities to work with musicians equipped to handle Monk's challenges — bassist Percy Heath, drummers Art Blakey and Max Roach, and a proven soulmate from the Blue Note days, vibist Milt Jackson.

Jackson and Monk were reunited on the Miles Davis Modern Jazz Giants session, the date on which Davis and Monk argued when the trumpeter insisted that Monk lay out during Davis's solos. Others have also called Monk an intrusive and insensitive accompanist, but in fact Monk's weighty, rhythmically complex chording creates a polyphonic texture reflecting both the melodic momentum of the soloist and the percussive underpinning of the drummer. The energizing effect of Monk the comper is apparent on "Bags' Groove" from the Davis session, when Monk finally appears behind Milt Jackson after the trumpet solo.

"Bags' Groove," in the take heard on *Tallest Trees*, is also the occasion for a Monk solo which Andre Hodeir hailed as "the first formally perfect solo in the history of jazz." Perhaps more clearly than anywhere else in Monk's recordings, we

hear the pianist take the most rudimentary of melodic ideas and, through rhythmic displacement, harmonic extension and the use of silence, create a seemingly inevitable totality which transcends the limitations of 12-bar structure and blues harmony. As Hodeir points out, this is more than "thematic variation"; it is a self-generating "open form," both thematic and a thematic in its nature, feeding on its own asymmetry.

Riverside purchased Monk's contract from Prestige in 1955, and immediately embarked on a strategy for making Monk comprehensible to the masses. His first two sessions under the new affiliation, now collected on *The Riverside Trios* (Milestone), featured Monk as piano soloist on non-original material by Duke Ellington and a group of pop composers. Whether programming of this type convinced record buyers of Monk's accessibility remains debatable; what immediately followed, however, was as singular as any of his Blue Note sessions, and finally put Monk over the top as a creative force.

The twelve-month period beginning in late 1956 proved to be the pivotal year in Monk's career. First he recorded *Brilliant Corners* (reissued on Milestone's *Brilliance*), an uncompromising program of originals featuring the complex title piece, excellent rhythm support from Oscar Pettiford and Max Roach, and two saxophonists — Sonny Rollins and Ernie Henry — whose caustic attack matched that of the leader. A few months later Monk recorded his first solo album, which can now be found on *Pure Monk* (Milestone), an overpowering program containing the definitive "Round Midnight," a jarring reconstruction of the standard "I Should Care," and a lengthy blues called "Functional" which once and for all verified Monk's debt to (and assimilation of) his pianistic forebears. Finally, Monk's cabaret card was restored and he was once again able to land regular gigs in Manhattan. The group he assembled for a summer engagement at the Five Spot, with John Coltrane on tenor, Wilbur Ware on bass and Shadow Wilson on drums, was quickly hailed as the most inspired

After a decade of being written off as a fumbling performer and an impenetrable musical thinker, by 1956 Monk was being hailed as the major creative force since Charlie Parker, responsible for bringing order and form to modern jazz.

working ensemble since the early days of bebop on 52nd Street. Coltrane's contract with Prestige kept him from recording extensively with Monk; but the quartet did leave three titles, a magisterial "Monk's Mood" was taped without Wilson, and Coltrane and Ware participated in a fascinating blowing session that also includes Coleman Hawkins and Art Blakey. (All of this material is now on Milestone's *Monk/Trane*.)

Now the superlatives began rolling in and Monk, who had been written off as a fumbling performer and in impenetrable musical thinker for over a decade, was suddenly winning polls as a pianist and being hailed as *the* major creative force since Charlie Parker. Critics (led by Hodeir, Schuller, and Williams) credited Monk with bringing order and form to modern jazz; his was the first truly "Modern" and "abstract" jazz sensibility; Monk's compositions were pure instrumental conceptions rather than songs or tunes, while his command of discontinuity and asymmetry promised to redefine jazz rhythm. And he still appeared to be going strong, long after initially making these discoveries.

Monk had lost none of his eccentricities, but the habits which once made him so forbidding now only contributed to his charisma. Audiences may have laughed at Monk's hats and the impromptu dances he broke into while his saxophonists soloed, but they also came to realize that he was delivering some of the most emotionally intense music jazz had to offer. And while many assumed that Monk was too



DON SCHLITTEN

Monk's quartet with John Coltrane was only together for a few months in 1957, but people still talk about the Five Spot gig as one of the pivotal moments of modern jazz. There are records, but nothing could capture the sheer force and intensity of the energy passing between the two men.

far out to share the concerns of more conventionally articulate musicians, there is substantial evidence that he cared deeply about the place of his music and his contemporaries in society. The late Hampton Hawes, in his autobiography *Raise Up Off Me*, tells how Monk took the strung-out Hawes off a Central Park bench, brought him home, and lectured him on his responsibilities as an innovative black musician. This wasn't the only case.

For a time Monk's Riverside recordings sustained the notion that he could maintain a high creative output. There was the free-blowing 1958 quartet with Johnny Griffin, Ahmed Abdul-Malik and Roy Haynes (*Thelonious Monk at the Five Spot*), a 1959 Town Hall concert with orchestral arrangements by Hall Overton (*Thelonious Monk in Person*), and a 1959 studio quintet, with Thad Jones and Charlie Rouse in the front line, which introduced two stunning new pieces, "Jackie-ing" and "Played Twice" (available as part of *Brilliance*). Then Monk settled into a routine. He led a quartet with Charlie Rouse as featured tenor player for over 10 years, and preferred rehashing old compositions to writing new ones. After signing with Columbia in 1962 and appearing on the cover of *Time Magazine* in 1964, Monk not only enjoyed years of substantial commercial success but also became something of a jazz institution. None of his Columbia quartet recordings are bad, and a few are quite good (*Monk's Dream*, *Crisis Cross*, *Underground*), but the creative energy which had been so universally acknowledged in the late Fifties had dissipated long before Monk broke up his quartet in 1970.

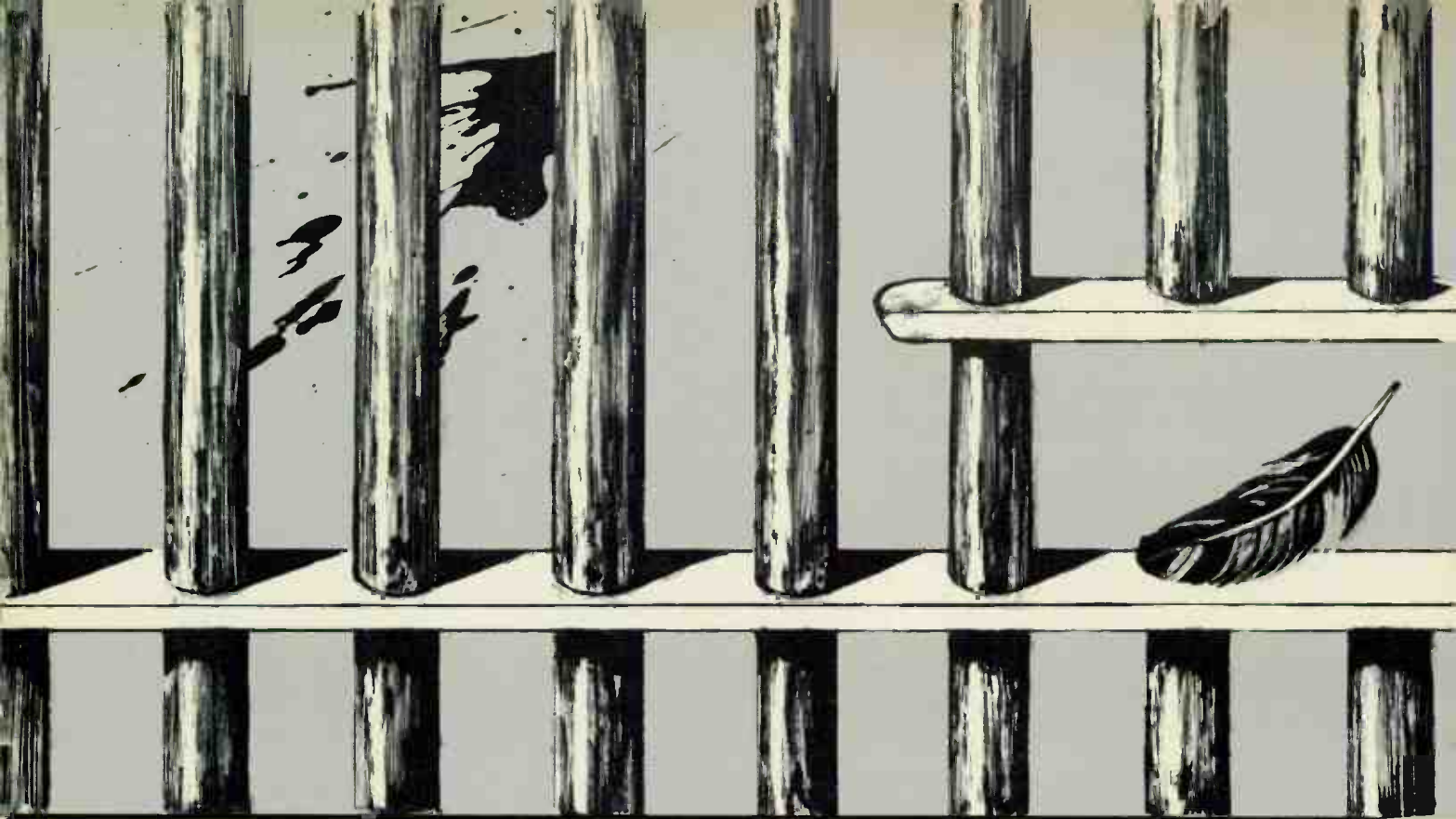
He toured briefly with a Giants of Jazz sextet that also included Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, and Art Blakey, then stopped performing at the end of 1972. His last public appearance was at the 1975 Newport-New York Jazz Festival; since that time he has lived in New Jersey. An old friend who

spoke with him recently says that Monk has not touched the piano in the last three years.

What had gone wrong? Why had the triumphs of tracks such as "Evidence," "Misterioso," "Crisis Cross," "Bags' Groove," and "I Should Care," performances which suggested that improvised music could be created without sacrificing an overall formal unity, not evolved into more constant and even more inspired achievements? Several explanations are possible. Perhaps the musicians capable of reaching these pinnacles were simply not available to Monk on a regular working basis — Milt Jackson, one of his most sympathetic collaborators, was a recording studio associate, while the working band with Coltrane was together only for a few months. Then again even the most talented Monk band may have been unable to pursue further extensions of Monk's methods if the paying public had simply demanded repetition of his most popular pieces.

Ultimately, however, Monk became a prisoner of those conventions which he had so imaginatively renewed. If his structures were surprisingly commonplace (song form and the blues), so were his preferences for tempos and format. Instead of offering us something still newer, Monk's band in the Sixties merely delivered an endless series of tenor, piano, bass and drum solos at a static medium tempo.

Yet the search for new forms and new unities did not end with Monk — it was carried on by several of his students (especially Rollins and Coltrane) as well as younger generations who had absorbed his lessons. And, even when his approach had grown thoroughly predictable, Monk and his band continued to play stark and often powerful music. Like all spheres, Monk's world had its boundaries, but it also nurtured art of rare beauty which promises to survive as one of this century's supreme achievements. **M**



JANE WINSOR

THE BEAR

Chapter VI by Rafi Zabor

The Bear woke to find himself standing in the middle of his cell under a terrible downpour of yellow light from a bulb in its own iron cage above him, shouting, "DON'T DO THIS TO ME I AM THE INSTRUMENT OF MERCY I AM THE INSTRUMENT OF MERCY!" He blinked. What? I am the instrument of what?

Then he saw men in uniforms at the door of his cell and despite a horrible buzzing in his head he rushed them. The first one stuck an electric cattle prod into his chest and he flew trembling and blinking to the rear wall. The second raised a long black gun and shot a dart into the center of his belly. As the tranquilizer took effect and his eyes began to close he observed, in the cell to his right and behind a steel grid that seemed oddly familiar, a lion seated on the edge of a cot. The lion was smoking a cigarette and regarding him with apparent interest. Above the lion there appeared to be a beige eagle on a perch on a shelf. "I am the instrument of what?" the Bear asked.

"Drugs are funny," the lion told him. "They've got you tranked to the gills. You'll say anything."

The Bear's eyes closed. He ran through the dark city of himself in search of the creature that properly lived there, he overturned beggars and buildings in the hope of his name, opened children in public places, went briefly into business for himself, asked old women and young the answer but there was no one home, it was a nightmare city under artificial light and nothing grew there, nothing knew him, nothing really lived. O help me, he asked. O nothing and nowhere, help. O lost O gone. Iris? Rose of the world, was there any hope of finding Iris? In the midst of his pain the figure of Duke Ellington came to him, brilliant in white suit, top hat and tails, and placed a calming hand on his shoulder. "We are aware of you," Duke Ellington said in a voice that sounded like his band playing low. "Raise me up into that music by which all things are changed," the Bear replied. "Crazy," said the figure, and split.

The Bear woke twice, dimly, before getting up. Through heavy-lidded eyes he took note of the lion and the eagle. The lion appeared to be doing yoga on the cement floor of his cell; the eagle turned upon him an unwavering grey-blue glare. The third time he woke, he rose slowly to a sitting position, and after his head had stopped throbbing he unpacked his alto to see if it had been damaged. The keys worked; it appeared to be okay.

"Alto, huh," the lion asked him. He was a good looking lion but his mane was matted and his fur looked dusty. He slouched. He had friendly eyes.

"Yeah. What are you in for."

"Bass."

"How'd you learn."

"Worked in a children's zoo. Management thought it would be cute if I could play a few notes, you know? I was young, I went for it, I wanted to please them, I tried. Who would have guessed I had talent? I became a virtuoso, went semi-pro. Made a few outside gigs. Wouldn't take the discipline at the zoo anymore. Didn't like being locked in at night, got tired of the kids . . . They must have decided I was too dangerous to be left at large. Busted me at the Vanguard one night. There I was minding my own business, listening to Sonny Fortune and putting the move on this Bengali kitten I'd met over cheesecake at the Figaro that night and bang, it was G Men and J. Edgar Hoover ail over me."

"How long you been in?"

"Many moons now. Half a year."

"Jesus." The Bear groaned and ran a hand over his eyes.

"You'll get used to it."

At this point the eagle, who had been gathering himself like a curse, lunged off his perch as if taking off for the skies. His jesses slammed him to a halt eight inches off and he fell in a heap to the shelf. The Bear winced and closed his eyes; he was certain the eagle had broken every bone in his body. When the Bear opened his eyes again, the undamaged eagle

was straightening his wings and glaring murderously around him.

"What's he in for," asked the Bear.

"Being an eagle."

The eagle turned his brilliant eyes upon the Bear and opened wide his beak upon a coral-colored mouth. "*I am Brimstone*," the eagle hissed at him. "*And I love nothing that lives.*" He opened his wings again to rearrange his feathers. He was beige all over, with darker brown feathers patterning his wings and tail. He looked fierce-eyed, imperious, alert.

"Then what do you love?" asked the Bear, but the eagle didn't answer.

"That's about all you'll hear out of him. Long on melodrama but short on words," the lion confided. "He's not into talking and being buddies. Cold blooded. Doesn't have mammal emotions like you and me. Lions, bears, face it, we're into rank sentimentality here and he's got no patience for it."

"Yes?" said the Bear. His head was still throbbing and he had some trouble keeping pace with the conversation. The lion seemed unreasonably cheerful under the circumstances. "Yes?"

"Sometimes they put a vulture in with him." The lion twisted his neck, stuck out his front teeth and hunched up his shoulders to demonstrate how a vulture is a degraded travesty of an eagle. "Doesn't faze him. Strong fella. Lousy company though."

"What's the vulture for?"

"To break his spirit. Show a predator his scavenger *semblable*. That's what we're here for. It's that kind of place. They put a jackal in here with me once but I ate him."

Brimstone slammed off his perch again and scrambled his bones to lightning. The Bear winced again and pulled his head down between his shoulders.

"It's called *baiting*," the lion told him, "and he can do it all day. Hollow bones, low bodyweight, funny karma, I dunno."

"Ever untied him?"

The lion nodded. "Beats his brains out on the wall, rips his wings up on the bars. I've tried to train him, make his life a little easier, you know? Last time he tried to take my eyes out for me. Real smart fella. Um," said the lion in a different, more confidential tone of voice. "I don't mean to be made happy by your capture or anything, but I'm kind of glad to have you for company. Life was getting thin."

"I believe you," said the Bear.

"Before you got here we had a vocal quartet for awhile, the Wolves."

"What happened to them?"

"Got shipped out to Cleveland. Jingles for 5 to 20, no possibility of parole before 4½. Disco in three with good behavior."

"Awful."

"The pits. *Ooh hoo, ooh hoo*," the lion sang in a ghostly, effeminate falsetto. "*Ooh hoo-daaaannnce . . . I'd die.*"

"I can't sing."

"I wonder what they have in mind for me. Fucking king of beasts, it better be good."

"Me, I'm just a large fat shaggy dog," said the Bear.

"Let me give you some basic advice about this place. Rule one: don't start putting yourself down. It grows on you here and if you don't watch it it'll get so heavy you can't budge it. Two: don't fight with the guards again, not unless you got a taste for shock therapy. You'll love that. There'll be all kinds of things you won't be able to remember anymore. If you act cool and look rehabilitated all you'll have to cope with is daily sedatives and the confinement. I'll show you some exercises to help deal with the trunks and as for the confinement, there are ways of putting even that to decent use. Ever hear Ram Dass' line about how if the prisoners think they're in a monastery and the jailers think they're in jail then the only people in jail are the jailers?"

"What a lot of shit," said the Bear.

The lion shrugged semi-apologetically. "The attitude has its

uses. In the amplitude of God's earth why have we fallen asleep in prison? Why have we put ourselves, of all places, here?"

"Listen man, it ain't my fault I got here," said the Bear, although actually he wasn't sure: self-accusations swarmed.

"All this crap's a spinoff of our own warped sense of self-importance. You got here the same way as me," said the lion. "Unfinished business, funny ideas, paranoid imaginings, pride."

The Bear gestured around him at the bars, the walls, the caged light and the eagle. "Imaginings?" he asked.

"Consider the lilies of the field," said the lion. "Do they have to go through this shit?"

The Bear lay down on his cot and looked up at the ceiling of his cell. "I don't buy it that it's all my fault. I don't." There was a small window high up in the rear wall, unbarred but far too small to get through. He checked the lion's cell for reference: no window there. Twin cells otherwise: holes to crap through, bars in front, a grid between. It was one large cell that had been divided.

"What's your name?" the lion asked him.

"Just the Bear."

"Mine's Beeb. Of course it's not your fault you're here. I explained myself badly. Can you really play that alto? It's like the first time I've ever seen them leave an instrument in with anyone."

The Bear had forgotten all about it. He sat up slowly and worked the keys. Harken to this reed forlorn, he thought. Brimstone sprang from his perch again and his jesses jerked him to a halt. The Bear raised the saxophone to his snout and tore off a long tongue of blues. He played a wounded, aching phrase that seemed to fly up to the top of the cell and then, its wings broken by impact with the ceiling, fell swooping back to him and landed in his crumpled heart. Would you know how lovers bleed? Then listen, listen, to the reed. He put the saxophone down, too exhausted to play any more.

"Wow," said Beeb softly from his cell. "You can really play."

The Bear shook his head. "Nope. Not me." Oh God help me, he thought. I have been brought low. I have been brought to my knees.

Beeb had gotten up and was pacing around his cell. "You're terrific, a real talent, it's criminal to keep you here. . . ."

The Bear ignored him and lay back down. In the lion's cell, the eagle had regained his feet. Straightening his wings and then folding them back along his compact, lethal body, he climbed up to his perch and turned upon the Bear implacable and envenomed eyes.

Something was pulling him back to consciousness but he did not want to go. He was a large dark ship on the sea of being, he was under the comforting waters. Something was pulling him upwards. Please no . . . He woke at first light and tried for a moment not to remember where he was, but then it broke in on him. He opened his eyes and tried to read it like a hieroglyph: lion, eagle, bear. Cell, window, cell. Oh Lord leave me anywhere but here . . .

But he had been left here, and he felt the dullness and banality of the place homing in on the last few hopes he had for himself and oppressing them with a damp and impersonal weight. Was there anything in him that had power to last? Could he produce anything from inside himself that would make a difference? *I'm a musician*, he protested, but it did not sound convincing. *I love Iris*, he said to himself, but was palpably aware that he was grasping at a straw. *I have loves, hopes, dreams*, he continued desperately. *I have a feeling heart*. It was stunning to feel how the words made absolutely no impact upon either himself or the listening world. *I haven't got a leg to stand on*, he said to himself finally, and an answering voice came back, *Yeah, that's right*.

The lights came back on at seven-thirty. The lion sat up and groaned. Brimstone looked magnificently around him, leapt off his perch and crashed. Half an hour later a guard came by

with two large bowls of oatmeal and shoved them through slots in the bars.

"*L'Chaim*," said the lion, and began to eat.

The Bear put his bowl aside.

"Eat it," said Beeb. "Outside of drugs that's all you'll get till evening. You don't want to take the drugs on an empty stomach. Eat it all."

The Bear ate it all. When he was finished he tried to look out of the window in his cell but it was too high. Even standing on his cot, hanging on to the chain and leaning he could not see out of it.

"It's an axiom of modern architecture that form follow function," the lion told him.

At eight thirty, two men came by, one with a cattle prod and the other with a red plastic funnel and some pills. The Bear and the lion were made to stand close to the bars with their forepaws crossed behind them. The funnel was inserted into their mouths and down their throats, Beeb first and then the Bear. Pills were chucked in, and then about a pint of water. The Bear gagged. The men left.

"Give it time to reach the bloodstream," said Beeb. "Then we'll try to do something about it."

The Bear waited. He knew what was happening to him. He was being reduced back to the world of cartoons. He'd had his broken little fling in the daylight world . . . He felt something reach his brain, his metabolism begin to shift.

"Now," said the lion, and they began doing pushups with their feet propped up on their cots. "Go the limit," Beeb was telling him, "enough to get a blood rush and run some of the crap through your system." When they had finished and the Bear felt flushed they did jumping jacks, deep knee bends, then the slow hip-circles of the warmup for *tai chi chuan*. "Now that we got some of the crap out there," said the lion, gesturing around himself, "this'll help to clear the subtle body a bit so it don't all drift back in on us."

Don't tell me about that stuff you crummy flowerchild, the Bear muttered angrily to himself. I know that stuff coming and going. The subtle body, for chrissakes. Kid stuff . . . He felt something stealing inexorably over him; he felt weak and tired, something in him had shifted gears. "Oh Jesus," he said, and sat down. "Oh Lord."

"I didn't say exercise would handle it completely," said the lion. He had assumed the lotus position on the floor and was bending from the hips. "And anyway you can't beat it the first day. But don't quit, exercise gives you the phantom of an edge. Tranks are a subtle enemy. You have to find out who they are, develop personal and appropriate strategies . . ."

Something like a fog was moving subtly through his mind and body and turning off all the lights. He felt his consciousness, his sense of self, abating. "Oh no." It seemed he had begun to cry.

"The stuff is supposed to dampen your conflicts to the point where you can deal with them—"

"Conflicts?" asked the Bear.

"—but what it does is make you malleable and stupid. I suggest you hang in there and fight it."

The Bear stood up. "Fight it. Right. Who do I have to kill."

"Try running in place."

"Running in place. Right. I know that one." His whole body was shaking. "I wanna kill these sonsabitches, Beeb. I wanna destroy their fucking world."

"Well, you know how it is, you ain't gonna get the chance. And anger won't help you."

The Bear growled deeply and showed his teeth. "You jaded asshole. I'll kill you too."

"That'll be swell, Bear. Terrif. I want to remember you just the way you are." The lion assumed some new and tangled posture on the floor. "Cheers."

The Bear began running in place in the center of his cell, the tears pouring down his face, trying to pump the awfulness out of his system. When he stopped, he sat dully down and watched Beeb feed the eagle: he held out small strips of dark

and questionable meat and Brimstone gobbled them, using the strong muscles of his throat to ripple them down. His wings were held out as if triumphant. It was as if he had just swooped off the top of a mountain and smacked a salmon out of fast and frigid waters. Once, he hooked his beak down into Beeb's forepaw, hard. Beeb smacked him in the side of the head and came down, a small dark gash marking his fur.

"Blood. You believe it?" said the lion, sucking at the wound. "You believe this character? Blood, the stupid chicken draws blood!"

The Bear put his head in his hands. There was something he had to do but he couldn't remember what it was. He had to play music but he had forgotten why, he had to try to bring beauty into the world but he didn't know the reason, he had to love Iris, or was it only fuck her, he had a friend named Jones who had sacrificed everything for him; all the elements were there but he had forgotten how they connected up and what made them live. Along with cold dark rainy streets and the sound of jazz, the hopes and hallucinations of his life whirled around him in a ring. He groaned aloud.

"It's your first day," Beeb was telling him. "Don't get all melodramatic. You'll get a handle on it."

Brimstone baited and crashed.

The Bear lay down on his cot and turned his face to the wall. He tried to go to sleep so that everything would go away for awhile but he could not.



The days and nights rolled over him in waves; he had never felt so alone. He longed for his friend Jones, for Iris. But he had taken Jones so completely for granted! And Iris, all he had really wanted was her body, wasn't it? Was that friendship? That love? He didn't deserve either of them, and his longing for them now — their warmth, their understanding and acceptance — felt utterly cheapened, stricken at the roots. He had thought of himself as so friendly, so all right, such a good guy. But he had been wrong. He was a finicky, spoiled, twitching thing that wanted only to be pleased and fulfilled. He was at least as monstrous as the world must see him.

"Mr. Bayer."

"Who?"

"*Mr. Bayer! You!*" It was the usual Mutt & Jeff team of guards with a prod. "Doctor wants to see you."

The Bear turned to Beeb. "Oh heavens. What to wear."

He was led along a series of cinderblock corridors. Far off he could hear the howling of imprisoned dogs. It was his first time out of the cell and he walked uneasily, as if unsure of himself in so much space. He was urged finally into a surprisingly well-appointed office, where a man in a white labcoat awaited him behind a desk. It was not, the Bear was disappointed to notice, Lester Bowie. "Doctor Hackenbush?" asked the Bear.

"Please sit down," said the doctor. He was a large man with pale, nearly translucent skin, a high red forehead, steelrimmed glasses and yellow hair. The Bear didn't like him one bit.

"What's this Mr. Bayer stuff," the Bear asked him.

"Ve ask ze questions," he said, and then had a laugh at how well he had done the accent. "We needed something more than merely The Bear for our files. Perhaps you would prefer something nearer Teddy, or Cuddles?"

"Watch it," said the Bear.

"What do your friends call you, The? No, they call you Bear, and from Bear to Mr. Bayer is such a small step upwards, and so convenient. Why, it makes social discourse more fully possible, does it not? Come in Mr. Bayer, thank you Mr. Bayer, how do you do Mr. Bayer, and so on through all the social amenities. Remember these phrases. They will stand you in good stead in later life."

"Go fuck yourself Mr. Bayer," the Bear essayed.
"That's the idea," said the doctor. "You've got it now. Mr. Bayer." He ticked off something on a form in front of him on the desk. "A sign of real intelligence at work. Can you type?"
"Can I what?"

"If you can type we might be able to find you a secretarial job at a record company. I understand you have some experience of the music business?"

"I'm a musician. I made a record." There was an unsettled feeling in the Bear's belly. It rose uncomfortably upwards and spread his mouth into a wide and nervous grin.

"Yes, and clerical work pays so much better, doesn't it. Before the administration can begin to consider your release there will have to be some prospect of a steady job."

"I'm a bear." He waved his paws in the air. "Look. Fur." He raised his lips. "Big sharp pointy teeth."

"I don't see why this should be such an obstruction if you're willing to change."

"Sure," said the Bear. "A few depilatory treatments and I'll be all fixed up."

The doctor raised an eyebrow at him. "Does it bother you to be a bear?"

"I like it."

"Then what's the problem? Do you think you have a problem? If you think you have a problem, can you tell me what it is? Feel absolutely free. Tell me what it is."

The Bear was confused.

"Do you think you must only play music for a living? Doesn't that strike you as uselessly restrictive, even antique? Do you really find the activity that significant? That rewarding? Isn't it more the idea of yourself as a musician than the music itself that appeals to you? Can you tell me why you play music? Go on, tell me why you play music."

The Bear felt his grin tightening. "Just plain stupid, I guess."

"Would you characterize yourself as a creative person then?" the doctor asked him. "Or stupid. Would you characterize yourself as creative, stupid, or merely defensive? Just what kind of person are you."

"The Bear that can be named is not the constant Bear." He raised his head and glared at the doctor.

"Ah, the first line of the *Tao te Ching* if I'm not mistaken. A little parody. You're well read then. How remarkable. How very fine for you that must be. All the same I must ask you to find some dominant quality we can begin to work with."

"I'm a sweetheart," said the Bear.

"Good," said the doctor. "Very good." He smiled in a satisfied way at the Bear and at the papers on his desk, then stood up, braced himself and leaned heavily across the desktop. "I'm going to reduce you to fucking rubble, jack." He stuck his face directly into the Bear's and showed decaying yellow teeth. "I'm going to cancel your anomalous ass. I'm gonna suppress you all the way back to oblivion."

The Bear considered ripping the doctor's throat out for him but decided against it. "Is this theatre or are you really serious?"

"I'm just trying to live up to your expectations. *Guards!* That will be all for today."

The Bear was led out of the office and back to his cell by a different route. He was disappointed to find himself trembling. He listened for the dogs again but could not hear them. Perhaps someone had shut a door. He was led back into his cell.

Beeb raised his eyebrows at him: "Nu?"

"Tom's a-cold," said the Bear.

"You bet your ass he's cold. Who'd you get, blonde hair or black?"

"Blonde, with fangs," said the Bear.

"McVeen, the paranoid's dream baby. Ain't he a trip? Stoned all the time of course, ripped right out of his nut. He's not such a bad guy once you get to know him. At least he's got a sense of humor. They got another guy Barker, the house liberal, keeps apologizing and telling you he's got nothing to

do with the place. Ping and pong, yin and yang, I don't even know which one I prefer anymore."

"They good for anything?"

"A break in the routine. Barker keeps swearing he's gonna get me out. The main thing with both of them is that you have to talk rehabilitation. Tell them you want to adjust, tell them it would be nice to live in a zoo and with luck you could learn to sweep out your own cage. That's all you want, a cage, a broom, and three squares a day. Rehab's your ticket out."

"Pardon me, but if you know so much how come you're still here?"

"One of the eternal questions." The lion shrugged. "When I was new I thought it was all in good fun, like everybody really knew what was what and all the bad action in town was just a necessary pretense. The sad thing is a lot of people take themselves for real, you know? and I'm slow to pick up on it. Always. So there I was, asking them in all earnestness one enlightened being to another, 'Why should one wish to adjust to the demands of a society whose basic assumptions are demonstrably destructive and arguably insane?' They refused to be engaged by the question."

"Too bad," said the Bear.

Well, I can understand that. It's not their job to indulge in a critique of culture. It's their job to be blind, malevolent assholes and they want to do it right. They told me I was a sociopath. Gradually I gave up trying to talk to them. . . . I have a tendency to stay where I'm put anyway, like maybe there's a lesson to be learned and I shouldn't try to split. It's possible I'm too trusting and passive. Or you think maybe it's because Leo is a fixed sign?" The lion shrugged again, as if apologizing for being unable to think beyond this point.

"That's crap, Beeb. That's just a bunch of excuses." The Bear began shadowboxing in his cell, left, right, footwork, bodyblow, jab. "I want out."

"You try to fight this place they'll run you like a pinball machine, like a rat in maze. Stimulus and response, push and pull, positive and negative, ideas, anger, personality, pride, that's all they know and they've got the game foxed. Pure qliphoth accourse. Forget about dealing with them on their own level. The only way out of here is *up*. Hold to the unconditioned, find the Spirit in the middle of this shit and hang on. Find the fixed stars of your own nature. Live with what they can't reach, it's the only way to survive. Imprisonment's an okay discipline in that respect, a real make or break."

"The prospect of being executed in the morning is a wonderful stimulant to the mind?"

"Zactly."

"I don't buy it. The only way out is out." He resumed bobbing and weaving around his cell, but he knew it was a pretense, he had never felt so powerless in his life. In awhile there wouldn't be anything left to fight with. He disliked the lion's easy lingo but in a sense Beeb was right. The only action open to him was to turn inwards and dig, under cover of ruin. for the traces of the self he had lost. It might not get him out of here but at least he would have his integrity back. When was the last time he'd felt like himself? The night he played with Bowie and McCall? The instant he'd seen Iris? A minute or so between jokes with Jones? He couldn't remember. The past months were a maze in which he had gotten lost. It was a long way to go. Was he wising up or just losing hope?


He sat down awhile and watched Brimstone baiting. That was why eagles' wings were so large: the first joint, from the body to where it angled backward, was long and muscular. How beautiful. But he couldn't decide whether the bird was magnificent or merely cruel. He says he loves nothing that lives. I have my pretensions, but am I any better?

"Mr. Bayer."

"Who?"

"Mr. Bayer! You!"

Guards again. "What is it?"

"You have a visitor. Says his name is Jones." 

— to be continued —

RECORD REVIEWS

Graham Parker



Art Ensemble



Genesis



Max Roach



Graham Parker

The Up Escalator, Arista AL 9517.

Great rock 'n' roll, and guts for gettin' through the big game. For me, anyway, that's the bottom line on Graham Parker. Even as it enters *Billboard* charts at 90 with a bullet, there's a lot of ambivalence about *The Up Escalator*. The intensely personal relationship Parker establishes with his fans through his work creates weighty expectations, and that's partly responsible. But at least some great rock 'n' roll and definitely a whole lot of unblinking bravery have been delivered once again, so I'm not going to pay my own yo-yoing too much heed.

First, the rock 'n' roll. It was reported right after *Squeezing Out Sparks* last year that Parker was pleased to be paring down the music, moving toward a more basic sound. *The Up Escalator* is musically leaner in every way — melodies are less dramatic, instrumentation and arrangements more spare. Especially after the vivid pounding of cuts like "Love Gets You Twisted" on *Sparks*, some of this new stuff can seem almost monochromatic. Jimmy Iovine has scraped off all the familiar murk from the first three albums the way *Sparks*' Jack Nitzsche did. But Iovine kept scraping until Parker and the Rumour's sound got itself a nearly frenetic brightness as never before. Between that and the no-extras songwriting, the music takes on a whole new kind of imperative for Parker, almost as if the scary self-revelation within demanded that he say it fast and say it straight, before he decided not to say it at all.

Parker started five albums ago (not counting *Parkerilla*) at a barely swallowed cathartic shriek. The world he

saw around him needed to be taken to task and he did so, in incredible songs like "That's What They All Say" and "Howlin' Wind." His own part in these failures was acknowledged, but the other-directed fury needed to exhaust itself first. Only then could the riskier inward turn be taken farther. If Graham Parker is brave because he can screw up the courage to ask hard questions without shutting his eyes or grabbing easy answers, then *The Up Escalator* is his bravest work yet: the questions are mirrors now, rather than hand grenades flung at someone else's suburban patio. Maybe that's why "Stupefaction," similar to the accusatory finger-waggers of old, is the LP's lamest track. Let ye who have not sinned, et cetera. "I had the energy," goes a verse in "Endless Night," "But outgrew it/the identity/but saw through it." The raw nerve called "Empty Lives" also sounds like smug polemic until the lyrics are deciphered and a climactic line strips away all the distance between Parker and the pain: "Don't make me feel that emptiness again." However the demise of the smart-mouth sage is delineated in the press, it must be acknowledged that only a writer of Parker's gifts and discipline could pull so far into the first person and still speak with such excruciating exactness for so many of us. As usual, someone who's not in the middle of it with a typewriter and a magnifying glass got it right. I tested *The Up Escalator* on a discriminating but uninitiated friend who didn't know or care about the keyboard sound two albums ago or what have you. She got halfway through the record, looked up at me with *that* grin, and pronounced the verdict. "I'm gonna

go out and buy this tomorrow. It's real good." — *Laura Fissinger*

Pharoah Sanders

Journey to the One, Theresa 108/109.

If Sanders underwent an identity crisis to make his close-to-crossing-over *Love Will Find A Way* two years ago, he's got everything figured out now, for *Journey* is Pharoah in all his radiance, quietly serenading with a koto here, totally freaking out with a screaming choir there. In between, he likes to groove. Actually, these facets of the artist are not new, they just haven't been presented as completely as they are here.

Though traces of John Coltrane can be heard, Pharoah is uniquely himself, a singular performer. Deep down he's a melodist, a deliverer of rhapsodies composed of thick, booming notes sent our way via a tone made up of little wires of sound, all different yet wrapped into a unified whole by some invisible cover. Did I really say that? He still enjoys hollering in the tenor's upper reaches like a man possessed, but he also spends a lot of time down here on earth, telling musical stories.

These four sides are loaded to the brim with excellent stuff. "You've Got To Have Freedom" starts with a vocal chant, then trumpeter Eddie Henderson, pianist John Hicks and the leader lay down superheated statements, ending with Pharoah's natural echoplex, achieved by repeating the same 4-note, octave-raining pattern, with the resulting harmonic sounding like the echo. "Think About The One" has a churchy vocal from Claudette Allen, interspersed with tenor notations and more raucous vocal enthusiasms from some extras. "Greet-

ings To Idris," for Idris Muhammad, who bolsters the sides with crafty drumming, is a two-chord courser, on which Hicks produces serpentine of sonority and a wide range of tonal hues.

The date is also graced by such celebrations as "Kazuko," with delicate koto strains; "Easy To Remember," which Trane recorded with Johnny Hartman and Pharoah handles with elegance; and "After The Rain," on which pianist Joe Bonner plays sumptuously. *Journey* is a view of Sanders from all sides, and to say it's accessible is not in the slightest a pejorative. — *Zan Stewart*

Grateful Dead



Brand X



The Manhattans



The Beatles



The Art Ensemble of Chicago

Full Force, ECM-1-1167

Got a real fun album here. The title refers not to any vehemence in the music but to the fact that the band appears with its full instrumentation, including gongs, zithers, bike horns, duck calls and various other sonic kitchen sinks. The music is a far more accurate representation of the band's work than last year's fine but squeaky-clean anthology, *Nice Guys*, not only because of the expanded orchestration but because the AEC allows itself to ramble, miss a few chances, make obvious errors and just generally have a good time. What surprises me is that producer Manfred Eicher willingly abets them. The recorded sound is fine, but not *echt*-ECM, crowded rather than bare, lots of presence and little reverb, the drums right up front and no audible chill in the air. The glacier has finally cracked: we don't have Manfred Eicher to kick around anymore. In fact in the last few months ECM has emerged as the most interesting jazz label in the business. Aw shucks.

Side one contains one piece, bassist Malachi Favors' "Magg Zelma," with Roscoe Mitchell's agreeably hokey "Care Free" providing an upbeat coda; it represents a compressed version of a typical AEC live set. Being typical, it begins in near silence with the barest wisps of sound and continues through eight or nine minutes of gongs and duck calls, newborn babies and crosstown traffic, bike horns, zithers, geese. It's as if you have dialed a world in the process of being formed. The moment-by-moment development is wholly logical yet completely unpredictable: all sounds are

possible and, caught as they are midway between mystery and meaning, they have all the odd, compelling beauty of the almost-born. This section ends powerfully — and I know it looks silly on paper — with a lone duck call set against a wall of gongs. All in all, it's a stunning demonstration of the kind of magic the Art Ensemble can pull out of air other bands couldn't even breathe. Favors then states a strong, angular, modal theme on bass and Roscoe Mitchell enters on tenor for the first of his several remarkable solos on the album. Mitchell's sense of pitch keeps him typi-

cally clear of the standard modal groove other players would have fallen into, and if he sounds a bit obtuse on first hearing, I think you will find that he sounds progressively more adept thereafter. Don Moye kicks the drums in on a powerful 6/8 and Lester Bowie comes to the fore for a trumpet solo — as usual the band leans on him for most of its straight ahead work. Bowie sounds fine but Moye sounds tremendous, and Mitchell adds fascinating marginalia on glockenspiel. After a short, furious drum solo — it's good to hear Moye come off this well on record for a change — there's a series of exchanges between the horns and percussion in which, unfortunately, "Magg Zelma" loses much of its momentum and nearly falls apart. The playing moves from brilliant to dull and back again so often it seems almost a matter of policy, and you can hear the horns cue the climax with all the zest of an "Okay fellas, let's get it over with." "Care Free" romps it to an effective close and you're left with something that is 83% masterwork and 17% slog, better odds than anyone else in town is giving at the moment but still frustrating as hell.

Side two starts off with a 100% sure thing, Lester Bowie's "Charlie M," a slow drag that does recall Mingus in his *Blues & Roots* period but more vividly resembles Ellington ("The Black & Tan East St. Louis Mooche-aloo") and, so help me, "Sixteen Tons." Bowie takes the growl trumpet part over deep reeds and sounds even more like Cootie Williams than usual. During his excellent solo he is occasionally menaced by noisemakers and ducks. (As Samuel Johnson remarked recently in *The Idler*, when a man is tired of Lester Bowie, he is tired of

life.) Malachi Favors also gets a solo (catch his classic opening) and there's an out-of-tempo section (catch Mitchell's bass saxophone, it's heavy) before the marvelous final head. If you haven't heard "Charlie M" on your radio by now you're on the wrong station.

Joseph Jarman's excellent "Old Time Southside Street Dance," which combines the spirit of Bud Powell's "Parisian Thoroughfare" with the letter of Charlie Parker's "Constellation," deserves a less random, throwaway treatment than it gets here (though, funny thing, it turned up on the radio just now and sounded

exhilarating abstracted from the rest of the album). The disc concludes with the title tune, a collective impromptu that works well enough for its first half — peaking with Favors repeating something like "Hello Joe" into a bullhorn and then cackling dementedly when everyone else stops playing — but the rest of it is a real disaster, a textbook example of how free-associative jazz can fail to work, and keep right on failing no matter what anyone does to try and fix it. I think the idea may have been to use all the instruments on hand in the studio; too bad the piece ended before the list ran out. Like *Nice Guys*, *Full Force* sounds like the right album at the right time (Smart Black Music). It's just the loose, goofy kind of record I'd hoped the Art Ensemble would come up with. Next time I hope they attempt something on the order of *People in Sorrow* (doesn't everyone?), a complete and perfect piece of unprecedented music. Failing that, I'll take the Friday set from last June's concerts at the Public Theatre (WKCR recorded it). Failing that I'll take what I can get. I'm glad this band's around. — *Rafi Zabor*

The Manhattans

After Midnight, Columbia JC 36411.

The Temptations

Power, Gordy G8-994M1.

Many of the surviving male soul groups whose successes date back a decade or more emphasize smooth, harmony-cradled vocals; even on a high-powered song — the O'Jays' "Love Train," for example — the lead vocal seems to act as an interlude while the group's cohesive power renews itself for another gloriously exact vocal

confluence — usually the chorus, often the unexpected verse line. The Manhattans are among the most sweet and romantic of these groups, evidenced by their overwhelming preference for easy-going ballads, and the necessary strength of their unified musical personality obviates any attempt to truly spotlight the individual group members. (This stance applies, of course, to the O'Jays and the Stylistics, among others.) Thus, while the quality of their performances is never less than pleasing, the Manhattans *must* find material as first-rate as their singing. If the songs are not interesting enough, one looks for individual personality to put the material across — say Diana Ross's "Love Hangover." And although they have consistently hit the charts for well over a decade, it is for this reason that the Manhattans' last major hit was the magnificent "Kiss and Say Goodbye," first R.I.A.A.-certified platinum single and WABC's (N.Y.) #1 record of 1976. *After Midnight* is one of the Manhattans' better albums. Singing about three of the basic stock soul ballad situations — I love you and you love me; I love you but something's wrong; I love you, please love me — the group glides through nine (not-too) slow dancing, necking numbers, only a couple of which are humdrum. "Shining Star's" simple, rhythmic joy and the cascading harmony on "It's Not the Same" are very

fine, as is the wonderfully-titled "Cloudy, With a Chance of Tears," in which the metaphor gets out of hand: "...Misty with a promise of scattered sunshine." Since, however, the one up-beat number, "It Couldn't Hurt," is so refreshing, I would hope that the Manhattans will essay more of such songs on their next album.

The Temptations, on the other hand, owe their incredible success over the past two decades to a group set-up that is the antithesis of that of the Manhattans. Certainly no group could have asked for better material or more exciting and innovative producers, and to be at Motown in the glory days caused a special magic in itself, but it was the plethora of individual talents and recognizable personalities that enabled the Temptations to surpass even such successful groups as the Four Tops. David Ruffin's earnest sensuality, Eddie Kendricks' thrilling falsetto, Paul Williams' sturdy leads, and Melvin Franklin's speaker-busting bass worked apart and forcefully together to come up with classic after classic. It was only after numerous personnel changes (sort of like Charlie's Angels) and overly impersonal experimentation on the part of the producers that the hits stopped coming, and finally the group left Motown.

Well, it's semi-reunion and rejoice time. The Temptations — Franklin, Otis Williams (the other founding member), long-time members Richard Street and

Glenn Leonard (another falsetto whiz), and the prodigal Dennis Edwards, who was the deserving, gruff-voiced replacement for David Ruffin, in his second go-round — are back on Gordy. *Power* was partly recorded at Hitsville U.S.A. in Detroit, and it has songs that successfully compare with songs from all of the group's golden eras. Their early, sweet soul days are brought to mind by "How Can I Resist Your Love," "Struck by Lightning Twice" is excellent pop-soul, and "Power," a sarcastic (I hope) celebration of demagoguery, continues where the non-stop energy of "Ball of Confusion" left off. The Temptations are back. Maybe Motown is, too. — *Jim Feldman*

Grateful Dead

Go to Heaven, Arista AL 3508.

Roxy Music

Flesh and Blood, Atco SD 32-102.

In rock & roll, growing up isn't hard to do. Aging gracefully is. More's the miracle, then, that not only have the Grateful Dead finally reconciled their acid-tested idealism with the commercial demands of the AOR age, but British ultra-modernists Roxy Music — having seen the future of electropop in spiritual sons like XTC, Ultravox founder John Foxx, and the emperor in his new clothes, Gary Numan — turned around and examined their own rock & roll souls in a boldly introspective, dark, dramatic

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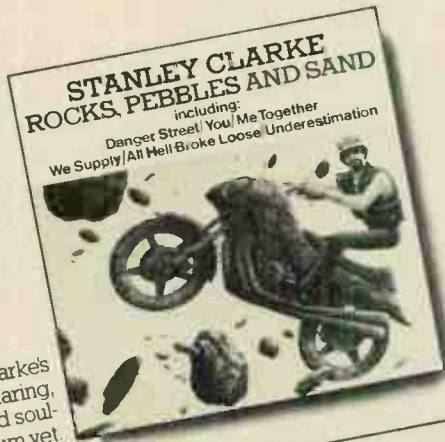
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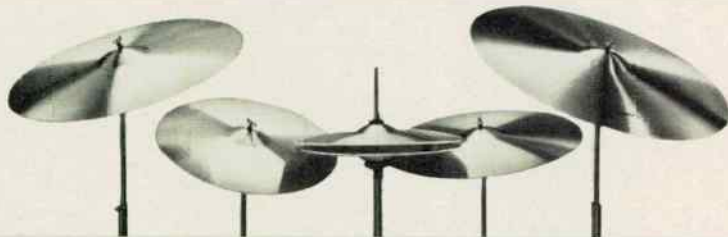


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album. Polar opposites in sound and style, these two bands strike a unified chord as rock & roll musicians coming to terms with the times and themselves without begrudging one or compromising the other.

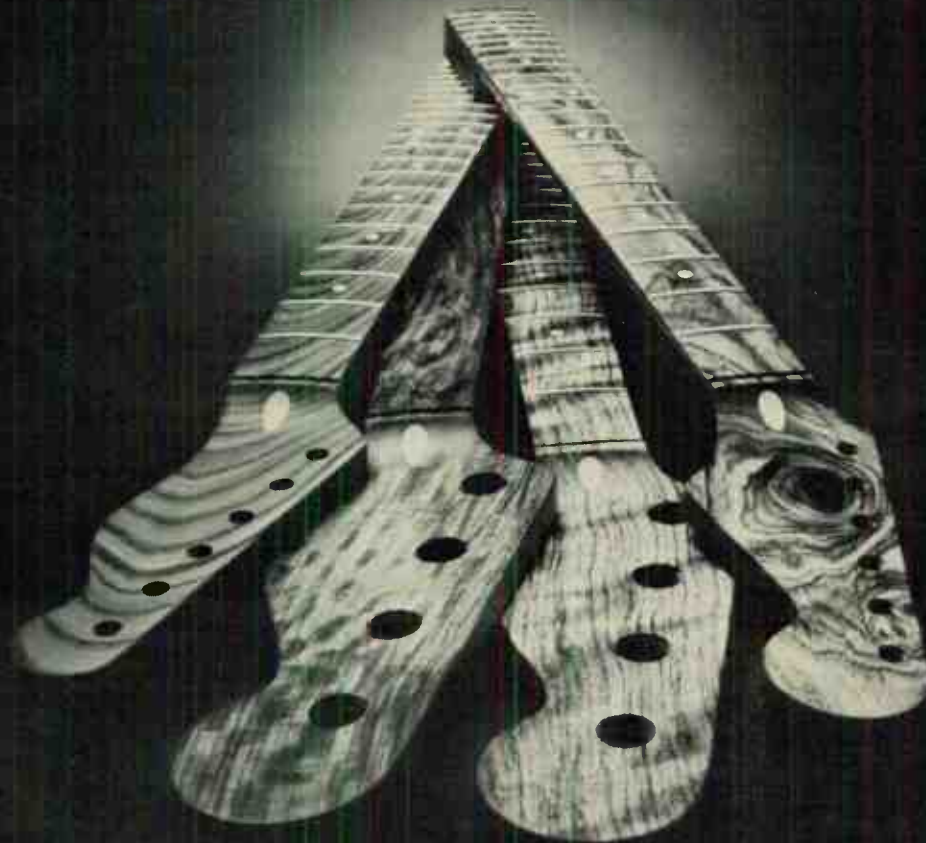
With classic hippie panache, the Dead start with a cosmic giggle, posing for the cover of their latest album in smart white suits and clouds of dry ice in a take-off of the phrase "go to hell." Yet the rock on *Go to Heaven* is hard and fast, sanded into a bright melodic finish by ex-Foreigner producer Gary Lyons. Mr. Natural-style shuffles like "Alabama Getaway" and the traditional "Don't Ease Me In" are taken at almost punky tempos. "Feel Like a Stranger" is as close to James Brown as the Dead could ever get and even Bob Weir's Doobie-fied "Saint of Circumstance" rocks like a devil between flourishes of grand piano and steel guitar moans. And atop Lyons' punchy FM radio mix blows the breezy harmonic mix of Weir's vibrant tenor, Jerry Garcia's engaging nasal whine, and new keyboardman Brent Mydland's schoolboy highs.

The dilemma Roxy's poet-dandy Bryan Ferry faces on *Flesh and Blood* is not so easily resolved. The new wave upstarts weaned on *Roxy Music* and *For Your Pleasure* — the classiest statements on the avant-garde adventures and high-fashion narcissism of the '70s — outstripped Ferry and Roxy's own accomplishments during their three-year absence. But instead of rising to their precocious challenges, Ferry calls his own bluff, examining on *Flesh and Blood* what made Roxy great and its relevance in a new era. On paper, disembodying "In The Midnight Hour" and the Byrds' "Eight Miles High" is a masterstroke, summarizing as they do Roxy's dilettantish fusion of honky uptown funk and rock experimentalism as recently as last year's *Manifesto*. Their performances, however, are like peeks through a looking glass, distant memories of what those songs used to sound like broken only by Phil Manzanera's futurama variations on the Coltrane guitar breaks in "Eight Miles High."

But that kind of mature restraint is entirely appropriate to the latest entries in Ferry's songbook. A much subtler Roxy — characterized by metallic melancholy blows on assorted horns by Andy Mackay and Manzanera's oblique guitar intrusions set against an eerie mural of mellotron and synthesizer colors — highlights of the dramas of love and ego in "Flesh and Blood" and "My Only Love," marches morosely to the dirge-like "Rain Rain Rain," and continues the '75 scenario of "Love is the Drug" with mocking disco cool in "Same Old Scene." Once bold and brash as befitting a campy revolution of art'n'outrage, both Ferry and Roxy Music see the danger of overplaying a hand they no

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longer hold. *Flesh and Blood* succeeds as a triumph of their will not only to survive but to prove that even in rock & roll there is still wisdom in years. — David Fricke

The Beatles

Rarities, Capitol SHAL-12060

Various Artists

20/20, Motown M9-937A2

As you're studying the liner notes to the Beatles *Rarities*, it's hard to remember that some conglomerate is making a profit off the package — and doesn't even have to pay out tour support. Each extra beat in "I Am the Walrus," every made-for-mono mix and accidental guitar squeak is described with such scholarly disinterest that you'd swear Capitol's motives were purely academic. Sure you would. And you've been dying to spend a week comparing variants of "Penny Lane."

As you may have begun to suspect, Capitol has not been holding back the good stuff all these years. The face on the cutting room floor is there for a reason and so are un-anthologized B-sides like Harrison's "The Inner Light" and the rap-novelty, "You Know My Name." But *Rarities* is less an album than a document — an eloquent six-dollar testimony to the (pernicious) belief that rock and roll is born in the studio. Certainly George Martin's work with the Beatles forced people to acknowledge the possibilities of creative technique — and of rock itself — but I'd be a lot more interested in pre-orchestrated outtakes from *Sergeant Pepper* than all *Rarities* natter about channels and artificial stereo. Trivia like this can train your ears and warp your perspective: would Charlie Manson have acted any differently if he'd heard "Helter Skelter" in a mono mix?

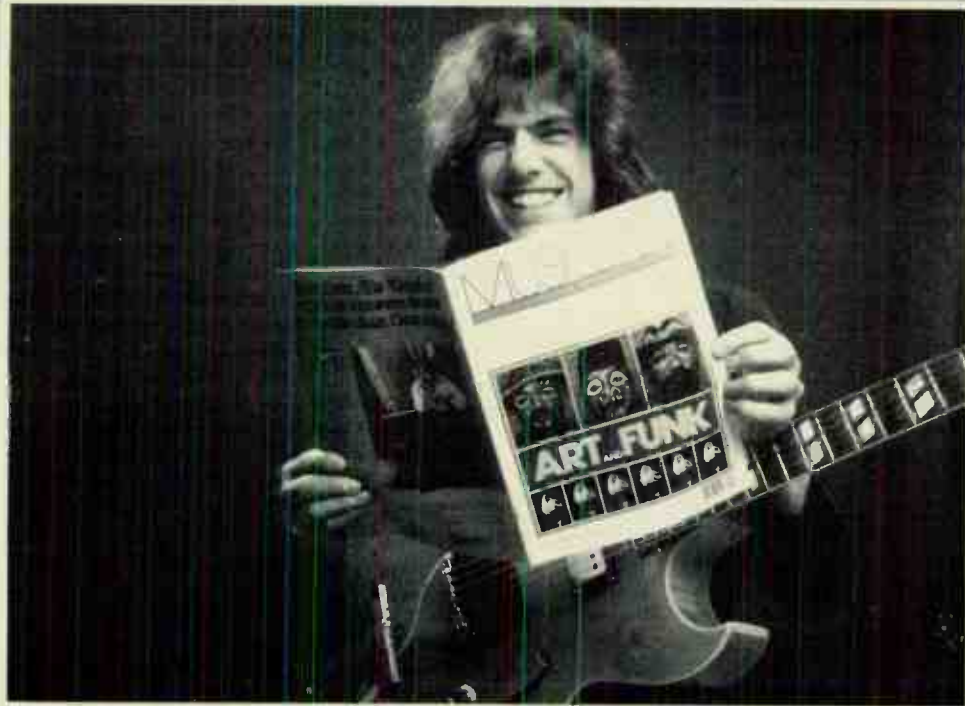
At first glance, Motown's *20/20* looks like another piece of profit-minded packaging without even the dubious benefit of footnotes. "Twenty number one hits from twenty years at Motown," the cover claims, and then the earliest song is from 1969. Maybe time passed slowly in Detroit. If there's some reasoning behind the collection, it seems to be designed to pick up where the indispensable *64 Motown Original Hits* leaves off (circa 1971) while allowing for overlap — a depressingly generous forty percent. Almost incidentally, *20/20* chronicles a decade that's just beginning to be recognized as an important one for black music, and points the way for collections to come — a really good *Roots of Disco*, for instance.

During the transitional years ('69-'70) Motown was responding to the cultural revolutions around them with songs like the Temptations' "Runaway Child Running Wild" and "Psychedelic Shack". But the number one hits that *20/20* is concerned with are a weird reflection of white America's cult of innocence

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(remember flower-power?) and its fear of black militancy. Listen to side one and the voices are all childrens': Michael Jackson and a still under-age Stevie Wonder; Diana Ross's little-girl highs and Smokey Robinson's ambiguous falsetto.

Side two, however, begins appropriately enough with Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On," recalls (in "Papa Was a Rolling Stone") the languorous orchestrations that began coming out of Philadelphia, looks forward to disco/funk with the party music of "Keep on Trucking." In the '70s Motown was no longer the undisputed leader it had once been, and 20/20's outline of history gets progressively sketchier. Even so, the selection is unnecessarily pale — choosing Stevie Wonder's "Sunshine of My Life" over his "Living For the City" (and counting a number one on the white charts heavier than a number one for R&B), ending the dance fever decade with the Commodores' wispy, gray-eyed soul. But for those of you who still prefer content over form, misleading, flawed and incomplete as 20/20 is, it opens doors that *Rarities* forgets exist. — Ariel Swartley

Max Roach

Freedom Now Suite, Columbia JC 36390.

New Freedom Suite is a programmatic work that was way ahead of its time for

1960. It draws upon the compositional legacy of Duke Ellington (the open horn voicings of "Driva Man" and "Freedom Day" are similar to Mingus in this respect), makes vivid, swinging use of the then radical 5/4 meter ("Driva Man" and "Tears for Johannesburg") and documents the ongoing struggle for freedom of black people throughout the world. The voice of Abbey Lincoln takes on the role of everyman (or woman, black or white). On "Driva Man" her voice spits and writhes under the whip, setting the stage for a grainy, bittersweet tenor solo by Coleman Hawkins, whose rising arpeggios and mordant tone make this one of his great recorded solos. On "Freedom Day" Lincoln decries and celebrates over a hurried 4/4, with crackling solos by Booker Little and Julian Priester, a thematic drum break by Roach, an American Indian reprise and a final charge for glory. The "Tryptich" suite is a duet between Roach and Lincoln that begins ("Prayer") with Roach's distant thunder and Lincoln's floating, wordless response, before breaking into "Protest" with four-alarm rhythms and the excoriating, pent-up fury of Lincoln's screams; "Peace" is a post-coital remission, with Lincoln's moans and Roach's rimshots and cymbals a thematic resolution to "Prayer." What Lincoln's voice lacks in bravura chops (read: Sarah, Betty and Ella) is compensated for by emotional depth, as she

shows during her tribal exchanges with Roach, Olatunji and a percussion ensemble on "All Africa," which contains a lucid, understated improvisation by the drummers. "Tears for Johannesburg" combines 5/4 time, African colors and gospel wails into a funky, perfect closer for a great album. — *Chip Stern*

Genesis — Duke, Atlantic

Brand X — Do They Hurt?, Passport
Dixie Dregs — Dregs of the Earth, Arista

Fourteen (count 'em) years after *Pet Sounds*, progressive rock musicians are still trying to blow up their lead zeppelins with classical gas. Genesis sounds like they stumbled into an elevator in their search for a higher form of musical expression. Phil Collins pipes out lyrics which are designed to fit the musical rhythm, mean nothing, and convey a sense of paranoia and depression just this side of suicide. The cheerily diatonic melodies are supported by clouds of marshy keyboards and pillows of mellow guitars which totally ignore the words. The occasional fluffernutter is all right with me, but twelve in a row? The drums occasionally try to get things moving, but the beat keeps collapsing into a slogging slow four and only reinforces the feeling that behind the hours of craftsmanlike overdubs are three businessmen fulfilling a contract.

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depending on who's writing. Guitarist John Goodsall gets a sound reminiscent of both Mahavishnu and the Byrds out of his electric 12-string, while bassist Percy Jones goes for the avant-funk. On "DMZ" he shows he's heard Jaco & Stanley but also has his own thing. He'll pop a string, jump to a harmonic, then bend the harmonic, getting a sound like an overblown tenor sax. Besides Jones' bass playing, the best thing about Brand X is their sense of humor, an uncommon trait among progressive rockers. "Fragile" is built of atonal keyboard clusters and pointillistic bass over popping drums, and closes by mixing them with the sound of breaking glass, as if to say "Got it?" Goodsall gets off the best joke, though, undercutting the synthesizer pomposity of "Triumphant Limp" with a quote from *Twilight Zone*.

I put *Dregs of the Earth* on my turntable with some trepidation, but found that Steve Morse has brought classical composition and rock energy together to the advantage of both. His basic technique as a writer is to take a totally played-out form like the one-note boogie of "Twiggs Approved" through a classically-derived maze of modulations and contrasting themes. Amazingly enough when the band pops out at the end of all this they're very close to the original spirit of raw fun that made the music work in the first place. The playing is every bit as good as the writing. These

guys have the chops to deliver those super-speed digital patterns that really make the climaxes flash and go boom. Odd meters and time changes of "Hereafter" flow with finesse. The Dregs don't have to tell jokes to let you know they're having fun, — *Chris Doering*

Clifford Jordan

The Adventurer, Muse 5163.

It was getting very frustrating trying to explain to friends outside of the New York area just how monstrous a hard bop player Jordan still is. His recent recordings, while good, didn't really prove my case. They simply did not capture the creative fire and vitality of musical ideas he demonstrates nightly on the bandstands of N.Y. But God be praised, for Jordan has finally come to my rescue. Now I can cut the sophistry and produce the real goods — *The Adventurer*.

Combining a superlative rhythm section — Tommy Flanagan, Bill Lee and Grady Tate — with stimulating compositions and some of his most inspired blowing since the Mingus dates, Jordan gives us ineluctable proof of his current mastery. This must have been a very satisfying and relaxed session, because these veterans swing like crazy, playing off each other with a kind of sensitivity and exuberance rarely heard off the bandstand. And I suspect that the choice of tunes had a lot to do with the

success of this record. Reworking already interesting numbers like Quasimodo, "I'll Be Around," and the ballad "No More," Jordan delivers personal statements that reach out with imagination and sincerity. Add to that his own substantial compositions, especially the captivating title tune, which utilizes an abundance of perfect intervals in the melody and atypical harmonic progressions to create a pensive edge the players explore to full advantage. And if Jordan's moving playing doesn't kill you Flanagan's will. — *Cliff Tinder*

Jeff Lorber Fusion — *Wizard Island*, Arista AL 9516. Three Or Four Shades of Funk by a band of hopefuls in the Commercial Fusion Sweepstakes (three year olds and up, \$100,000 added). Everyone's musical education is on display, with satisfying if anonymous results. The grooves have a harder edge than most, and drummer Dennis Bradford and bassist Danny Wilson throw in ad libs that add complexity without losing momentum. However, I had trouble believing in the solos or remembering the somewhat notey melodies. These boys break fast out of the gate, but go wide on the far turn and despite a strong finish ("Rooftops," a latin burner with Chick Corea on minimoog) end up ahead of the field, but out of the money. — *Chris Doering*

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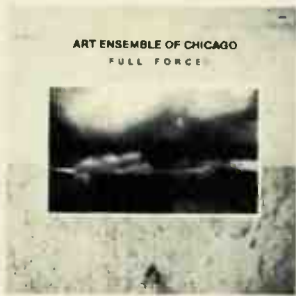
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David Darling *Journal October*



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Volume 1
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here is the mainstream's favorite tormented saxophonist on the Thursday of his first-ever gig as a leader in a New York nightclub three summers ago. Got that? Pepper's playing here is warm, naked, beautiful, almost sentimental: three of the record's four tunes are dedicated to close friends of Art: a slow "Goodbye" for Hamp Hawes, a blues for long-time producer Lester Koenig, and a thankful romp for John Snyder. George Cables — whom Pepper rather euphemistically calls "the master" — solos and comps with grace, Mraz gives more recorded evidence why he was one of Mingus' favorites, and Elvin Jones sounds like Elvin Jones, only less so, being solo-less and seeming manacled. All in all, a good record, a modest and strong record, and certainly enough to hold us. — *David Breskin*

George Duke — *A Brazilian Love Affair*, Columbia FE 36483. "A very special album conceived and recorded in Brazil; a blend of music, musicians, and ideas." So says the cover: in fact, parts were also recorded in Los Angeles, which helps explain the enervating gloss Duke gives what *is* Brazilian here (a few Rio musicians amidst Duke's regulars, and two tracks featuring the writing and singing of Milton Nascimento). This always happens, however, when American ideologues "meet" Brazilian music. (For example, though Nascimento has made three albums for A&M, and is co-star on Wayne Shorter's *Native Dancer*, his import LPs are far better — as in truer.) Worse, the result is not even focused, funky Duke, a musician who says he "loves diversity" but often lets it get the better of him (ever since his early MPS albums, which did touch all the bases successfully). In fact, compared to this LP, his Brazilian excursions as producer and sideman for Flora Purim have more of an edge. Plus, what album *isn't* a blend of music, musicians, and ideas? — *Michael Rozek*

Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band — *Goes To Washington*, Elektra 6E-218. Spend a week tracking Dr. Buzzard's trivia racket on the album jacket. Groove to the champagne disco-swing inverted Lawrence Welk strings. Cool your ears to the frayed silk voice of coy, fey Cory Daye. Dream of drowsy romance in Paris, France; perhaps even a hometown chance, and the mandatory Augie D./Stony B. nostalgic trance. Play with the (intended) clichés. Shuffle to the supple sugar-coated vibes, slip to the flip-flop rhythmic drum dip and rise to the punchy piano mambo. Wonder how this "New York At Dawn Show" goes down in Des Moines. Remember crazy Tommy Mottola and the crazy days when this band's first slut/saint-evil/angel dualistic ditties hit the air back in '76. Dance, of course, thinking how fine these folks can heat up a cold day and cool off a hot one. — *d.b.*



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Tim Berne — 7 X, Empire Records EPC36K. Berne's soaring lyricism and pungent ensemble writing manage to avoid most of the past decade's clichés, offering the possibility of a new star on alto saxophone. Alex Cline's drumming imparts the energy, and Berne's use of fixed modal structures (they could use a bit more chromatic contrast) and Nels Cline's electric guitar make for creative jazz-rock (well, sorta) forays on "Chang" and "7 X." Berne writes great linear melodies, like the swinging "Flies" and the stripper-on-the-runway "Showtime," as well as the evocative formal designs of "The Water People" and "A Pearl in the Oliver C." Very promising, to say the least. (Available through Rounder Records or Empire Productions, 136 Lawrence St., Brooklyn, NY 11201) — *Chip Stern*

Sister Sledge — *Love Somebody Today*, Cottillion SD 16012. Disco is not dead, it's just been transformed into something better. Bernard Edwards and Nile Rogers proved that disco could have an undercurrent of tension and doubt on their remarkable album *Risque*, and that all manner of progressive R&B devices could be incorporated into the disco thump-thump-thump. While Sister Sledge don't exactly admit to world concerns ("I'm A Good Girl" and "Let's Go On Vacation") or irony, they are making the most consistently lively pop R&B extant. These nice Jewish girls (oh, they're not ... sorry) have a tangier sense of harmony than most girl groups, and sister Kathie Sledge can shout in a way that belies all that polish and proper unbringing. The title tune and "Reach Your Peak" are not as anthemic as "We Are Family" but they benefit from Edwards and Rogers tasteful, unpredictable arrangements. There's no filler material either. Good stuff. — c.s.

John Abercrombie — *Abercrombie Quartet*, ECM 1-1164. In which the Coltrane quartet is dissected, eviscerated and put under glass for examination. "Ah yes, we can eliminate regular accents from 4/4 meter to generate an indefinite pulse." "Hmmm, minor modal structures without cadence resolutions will allow the soloists a wider range of note choices." These are hard lessons to learn and to put into musical practice, but not nearly as hard as the lessons about passion and commitment contained in Coltrane's music. Pianist Richard Beirach sounds like he has begun that study, but Abercrombie's lines sound like finger exercises except on "Dear Rain," the only cut on which the digital delay he likes to use doesn't obscure both the rhythm and the sound of his instrument. In the age of industrialized music, this is a courageous direction to take, but I wish they had taken it further. — c.d.

Joan Armatrading — *Me Myself I*, A&M SP 4809. *Me Myself I* should put Joan

Armatrading over the top and make her a star, but will the tradeoffs and built-in contradictions of this record self-destruct or erupt? The trademark chord changes and resolute vocal power is all in place, but her delicate acoustic forays are limited ("All The Way From America"), as producer Richard Gottelher goes for an open yet hard rocking sound anchored by the powerful drumming of Anton Fig and Chris Spedding's sinuous guitar work. The tough-mindedness of the title song ("I wanna be by myself/I came into this world alone") is mitigated by the affection for and need of nearly everything else, and the new emotional edge to her rock, testifying blues, funk and reggae, lead me to conclude that the 80s will be Joan Armatrading's time at last. — c.s.

Art Matthews — *It's Easy To Remember*, Matra MA1001. Matthews plays a sassy yet understated style of chordal piano that is reminiscent of Wynton Kelly, and he's made an exemplary album of mainstream progressive jazz with spirited drumming from Alan Dawson and somersaulting lyricism from trumpeter Dizzy Reece, two overlooked masters; not to mention some of the most focused, ebullient Archie Shepp (on tenor and alto) in memory. A bristling arrangement of "I'll Remember April," a celebratory "Samba Ebony" and George Coleman's brassy "5/4 Thing" all prove that there's still plenty of freedom in the traditional structures if you can play them this well. (Matra Records, P.O. Box 635, North Amherst, MA 01059) — c.s.

Jack Walrath — *Demons In Pursuit*, Gatemouth 1002. Here's the real fusion music, a cunning, good-natured synthesis of jazz, blues, rock and classical music by master trumpeter Jack Walrath. His playing has the articulate sarcasm of a Lee Morgan, his writing reflects the eclecticism and bravura of his former mentor Charles Mingus, and with ferocious support from people like Dannie Richmond, John Scofield, Ray Drummond and Jim McNeely every style is navigated with maximum authenticity, instrumental prowess, and humor. Check it out. (Gatemouth Records, 90 Madison Ave., Island Park, NY 11558) — c.s.

David Pritchard — *City Dreams*, Inner City IC1070. Amidst the extensive borrowing from Pat Metheny and Weather Report, it's hard to hear Pritchard's own voice on this album. He seems to be stumbling in others' footsteps. The melodies sound thought up rather than heard, and the longer compositions on side two don't hang together very well. As a soloist Pritchard doesn't say much except "I can play fast." Charles Orena's sax playing shows a good ear for melody and development, and guest stars Freddie Hubbard and Patrice Rushen contribute some nice moments.

But someone should have told the bassist that using a fretless instrument is no excuse for playing out of tune. — c.d.

Sadao Watanabe — *California Shower*, Inner City IC 6062. Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Inner City Proclaims "Fusion Music" will "lead the rest" in the 80s! The rest of what I don't know, but if this LP reflects their idea of trend-setting product, one would have to believe that the Board of Directors has been experimenting with mind altering drugs 'cause gentlemen, you are hallucinating! This is more of that Demerol-drenched fuzak that hides under the banner of "accessible jazz." To make matters worse, Watanabe is boring as hell and the compositions are no better. You Doonesbury freaks might remember the semi-fictional "Wah-Wah" Graydon boasting to Jimmy Thudpucker that he could cut his material "by mail." In this case the studio cats could've cut this one by broken winged carrier pigeon. — p.g.

Gladys Knight & The Pips — *About Love*, Columbia JC 3638. The low-profile empress of sultry adult soul returns in fine form after a brief hiatus from her Pips. Produced by Ashford & Simpson, the material could easily be taken for the duo's surplus, but I tend to think otherwise. The A&S influence surfaces most noticeably in the background voicings, which the Pips pull off with charming ease. In the past, Knight & Co. have displayed a tendency to cross over the mush line, but they avoid it on "Friendly Persuasion," a sensitive yet unyielding ballad reminiscent of the best mid-60s soul. The band is pumpin', especially the underrated Francisco Centeno on bass and the sometimes overrated Eric Gale on guitar. If the A&S production seems imposing, let it also be noted that Gladys & the Pips might have needed a dominating outside influence to help them get back on the track even if that same presence restricts them occasionally. All in all, a melodious and sometimes inspiring LP by one of the superlative vocal troops of the past few decades. — *Peter Giron*

Average White Band — *Shine*, Arista LA 9523. Producer David Foster, who appeared as a guest keyboardist-arranger on Earth, Wind & Fire's *I Am* LP, decided to try out some of that band's tricks on this album. However, outside of their three-letter abbreviations these two ensembles share little else. Attempting to reestablish AWB in the fatuous world of top 40 chart-busting, saxist Roger Ball teams up with Bill Champlin, co-author of EWF's "After the Love is Gone." The result is an embarrassing, slipshod imitation. When the Scots plus one aren't busy lifting trademarks, they're struggling to harness the appeal they've lost since their first two albums. If lucky they might get an MOR-R&B hit out of "What'cha Gonna Do For Me," but I'm afraid that's it. — p.g. 

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Folk Rock cont. from pg. 18

influenced pop music. Cockburn's lyrics tend toward the ethereal and cosmic-religious, but for once, the music perfectly matches such a mood. "Creating Dream," from this recent album, features a delicate climbing instrumental bridge between verses that's quite stunning. Production on this album is resonantly clean and spacious; actually, it may be a little too clean. On "Incandescent Blues," which I take to be the closest Cockburn will come to a "Subterranean Homesick Blues"-style critique of the human condition, the instrumental sounds are so sweet and, well, folky, that it's a little difficult to take the singer's lightweight snarling seriously. But that's carping on my part, because taken on its own modest terms, Bruce Cockburn's brand of folk-rock is

fresh and appealing.

And now we come to the heavy hitter of this bunch, the one who's just recently had a top-ten hit single in America, but got his start on Bleecker Street just a couple of years ago. Though only in his mid-20s, Steve Forbert's raw talent is strikingly original and potent. On the surface, he appears to be working in a shopworn idiom: a young guy in faded denim, playing a well-worn Martin guitar with a harmonica rack around his neck. But once he starts singing and performing, even solo, the intensity and involvement he projects clearly signals that this is a rare talent at work. Born in Meriden, Mississippi, Forbert got his start early playing rock 'n' roll, but when he hit New York in 1976, it was as a folk singer. Significantly, though, it was during this period that he found his managers and

record label while playing solo at CBGB's, opening for various rock 'n' roll acts including Talking Heads and John Cale. His first album, *Alive on Arrival*, received wide critical acclaim, as producer Steve Burgh cast Forbert with a small but tight band, projecting a wry portrait of, in the singer's own words, "a country kid in a big city." To record the more recent *Jackrabbit Slim* album, Forbert travelled to Nashville with producer John Simon (known for his work with the Band), and came up with a little more polished and developed sound, but one which still projects his unique approach to familiar elements.

The backbone of Forbert's style and thrust is that he manages to project a complete musical personality and world-view. He defines his musical style as "folk, rock 'n' roll, country, rockabilly, soul, pop, gospel, blues music... American music with the accent on songs." Specifically, this amounts to contrasting and blending, say, pop conventions like descending bass line patterns and gospelish female vocal backups on a song's chorus, with a stark acoustic guitar-harmonica instrumental sound on the verses. "Wait," from the recent album, is an eloquent example of how well this potpourri approach works. Although Forbert has used studio musicians, two players who also tour with him contribute greatly to his sound on record. Paul Errico, a New York-based organist, adds a warm and, at times, powerful gospel influence to the songs, and on the aforementioned "Wait," plays a lovely and atmospheric accordion solo that sets up the song's last verse beautifully. Sax player Bill Jones plays very tasty solos throughout, and his warm tone perfectly matches Forbert's grainy but mellow voice. The songs themselves deal with subjects like a lover who's finally gone too far in abusing his partner ("Say Goodbye To Little Jo"), or the singer's going back home to Mississippi and seeing old friends ("January 23-30, 1978"). Somehow Forbert manages not to sound derivative, mostly because his viewpoint is so consistently individual and unsentimental, while the music tends to be warmly engaging and friendly, each song like a classy musical daguerreotype of the scene he's describing. There's something innately and bluntly cinematic about Steve Forbert's songs, which might also explain why, of all the nouveau folk-rockers we've been considering, he will probably have the most profound impact on pop music, at least for the time being. As for folk-rock itself, the genre's trademark quality — i.e., the communication of anger, confusion, joy, etc. in the ironic context of amplified traditionalism — may once again appeal to a large audience in what already promises to be an angry, confusing decade. If it happens, these will be the tambourine men, and woman, to watch. **M**

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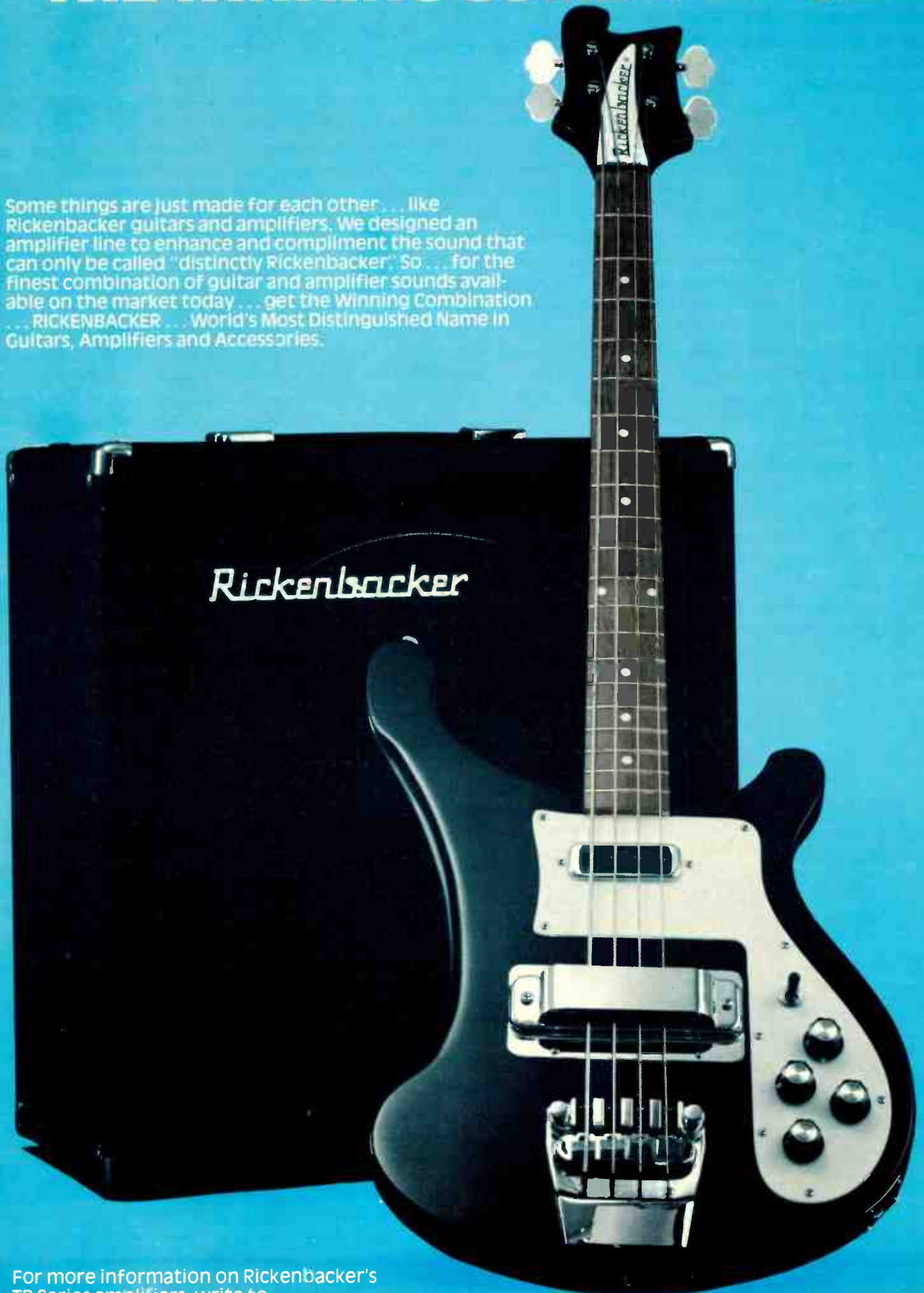
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ROCK

New Musik travels in straight lines while the Brains reach critical mass. Chaka gets naughty and The Albanian Film Festival kicks off.

By Vic Garbarini

SHORT TAKES

Jo Jo Zep



Grace Jones



New Musik



Ray Gomez



Phil Lynott — *Solo In Soho* (Warners) Lone Lizzy synthesizes/homogenizes his normally potent black/Celt rock into soft-core pop. The tunes are fine — it's the arrangements that spoil things. Even his ballads sound better in Thin Lizzy's grittier context.

Grace Jones — *Warm Leatherette* (Island) Check out the cover. *The Bride of Frankenstein meets Roosevelt Grier*. Whew. Or maybe a cross between Alicia Bridges and Mean Joe Green. The music? *The Zombies Who Devoured Kingston*, starring Patti Labelle and Marianne Faithfull. Best song? "Bullshit". **The Jags** — *Evening Standards* (Warners) The festival continues. Tonight's feature: *I Was A Teenage Elvis Costello*, starring all the kids on your block.

Dirty Looks — *Selected Shorts. The Last Original New Wave Band*, starring the Staten Island Boys Club. "Fat, ugly, and they play real good" — Clive Barnes.

Wreckless Eric — *Big Smash* (Stiff/Epic) Now playing: *What If Graham Parker and Nick Lowe Were Really the Same Guy?* Starring Ian Gomm. Screenplay by Woody Allen.

Tonio K — *amerika* (Epic) *Mr. Zimmerman Goes To Washington*. Gore Vidal convinces Dylan to join the Sex Pistols and run for President. "A zany but insightful comedy. Thoughtful, humorous, and poignant — I love this jerk." Alex Solzhenitsyn, *The Vermont Picayune-Anarchist*.

The Brains (Mercury) From the movie of the same name. Talented but over rated post-punk old/New-New/old wave psychedelic-hard-rock-arties from outer space attach themselves to the back of bored critics' necks, forcing

them to emit uncontrollable hosannas.

Jo Jo Zep and The Falcons — *Screaming Targets* (Columbia) *Set Me Kangaroo Loose, Bruce*. Crazy scientist implants Graham Parker's brain (and Toots of the Maytals backbone) into the body of unsuspecting Aussie yob. Dancing in the street ensues, and there is much rejoicing in the kingdom. "Hit and Run" is the best white reggae I've ever heard (skanking vocals, as well as guitars). Thought the rest of this stuff was the new Graham Parker album when I heard it on the radio.

The Average White Band — *Shine* (Arista) The average black band... What happened to spunk and funk?

Dave Cousins — *Old School Songs* (Passport) BBC-produced documentary originally titled *Elizabethan Hoore-nanny*. Acoustic versions of Strawbs songs. Get the originals, notably *Heroes and Heroine*, *Ghosts*, and *Bursting At the Seams* (Steeleye and Fairport fans take note).

Bram Tchaikovsky — *Pressure* (Polydor) Heavy metal for New Wavers. No "Girl Of My Dreams" here.

New Musik — *Straight Lines* (Nu Disk) Best of the new specially-priced Epic 4-song EPs. Bright, catchy Euro-pop with a New Wave feel. Title tune a stand-out. There is life after power pop.

Ray Gomez — *Volume* (Columbia) What a cynical money-grubbing-corporate capitalist-pig-sneaky-no-good-trick! Know what they did? They hired all these superstar-types to play on one record, and pretend it was some new guy! Probably did it to save on taxes or something. Well, I'm no fool, No sir. That's obviously Jeff Beck playing his ass off on "West Side Boogie" and "Blues for Mez." And that's gotta be

Steve Miller finally putting some life into his vocals on the pop stuff. I'd recognize Joe Walsh's rhythm guitar work anywhere. I figure they all must have collaborated on the writing, 'cause none of them have done anything this good in years. I mean, here it is — the hard rock, pop, jazz fusion, supercharged breakthrough, and it's all just a cheap trick like the *Masked Marauders*. If only there really was a Ray Gomez Naw, that'd be too much to ask for...

Ronin (Mercury) LOS ANGELES, MAY 30.(UPI). Police in Burbank report that vandals broke into The Warner Bros. recording complex last night and severely marred Linda Ronstadt's new album. According to Lt. Peter Asher of the L.A.P.D., "a bunch of punks gained access to the studio at about 4 a.m. Linda's band — Rick Marotta, Waddy Wachtel, and the guys — had written some great tunes and laid down the instrumental tracks, with Ronstadt scheduled to add the vocals later. The little ruffians just overdubbed their own trashy vocals, then mastered it and destroyed the tapes. I guess they'll just have to put it out like this..."

Chaka Khan — *Naughty* (Warners) "Clouds" is the best R&B I've heard this year — black pop with muscle. Khan's voice can get up into Aretha country when she has a chance to open up. There are a few other nice moments here, but a whole album like "Clouds" could earn this girl the crown.

Cherie and Marie Currie — *Messin' With The Boys*. Former Runaway Cherie and her clone/sister go heavy metal pop, and I love it. (I don't believe I'm saying this). "Since You've Been Gone" and the title tune are too good to miss. I may start chewing gum again... M

JAZZ

A lot of melted records: Alberta Hunter comes out on top, there's some well-done pop jazz, we remember bebop and we always have the blues.

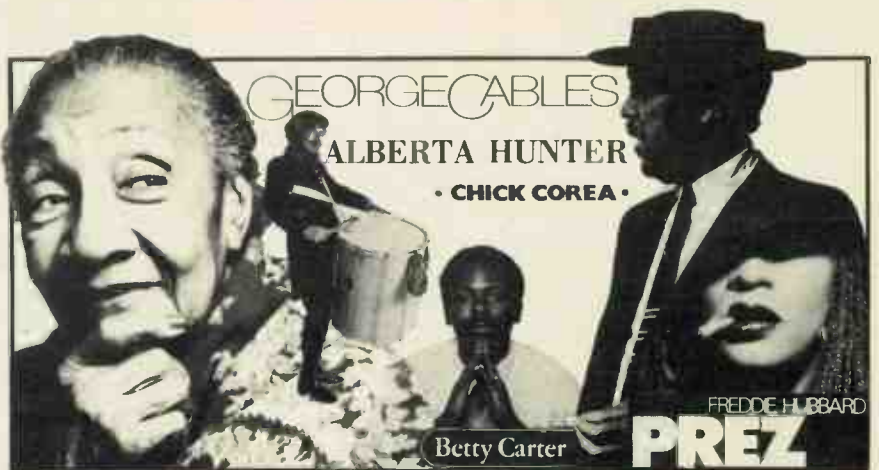
By Rafi Zabor

S H O R T T A K E S

The album I feel like crowing loudest about is *Amtrak Blues* (Columbia 36430) by Alberta Hunter. That's her in the illustration; if Chick Corea were standing on my shoulder I'd be trying to knock him off. On the other hand, Hunter promises that if she catches up with her man, she's "gonna crack his head, drink his blood like wine." She's pretty spry for a woman of 84. Finally on record, you get all the vigor and commitment of her live work at the Cookery and elsewhere. She seems to grab a song by the throat and tell it to be something; as a result, no phrase, no word goes by without standing up straight and telling you exactly what it means. In person, Alberta Hunter can work the sleepest audience up to a standing ovation; you may feel stupid standing up in your living room and applauding this record, but if you get the urge, I say go with it.

Le Jazz-Rock

No, no, don't run away, don't cry, please stop screaming. There's some good stuff in the bag this month and I promise to avoid the stock responses. For instance: poor Woody Shaw. There he goes, turning out creative, honorable hard bop albums one after the other, and here comes **Freddie Hubbard** shucking and jiving his way through El Lay studio funk and just plain cutting him to pieces. At least for the first side of *Skagly* (Columbia 36418) — wunnerful title, Fred: how's about *Do the Funky Overdose* for a followup — Hubbard plays with wonderful continuity and gorgeous tone despite the efficient but uninspired backup. He may not take himself seriously anymore, but he seems to have resolved some of his conflicts about commerce and art by settling down to a relatively fruitful compromise. So he's a great trumpeter taking it easy, though that won't save him on side two, with its stronger-than-dirt riffs. **Chick Corea**, *Tap Step* (Warner Bros. 3425): not bad, but all that stays with me is the fine percussion, most of it by Airta. The little Chick-melodies and Spanish heart-aches all sound alike, and "Granpa Blues" is a disgrace. Still, I have to admit that the album is an improvement, though it would be hard to say on what. Wait for *Delphi II*. **Bobby Hutcherson's** *Un Poco Loco* is reviewed elsewhere in



this issue, and it's good AOR jazz (AORJ? AOJR? AOJ?), the funny thing is that **George Cables' Cables' Vision** (Contemporary 14001) is both a better Hutcherson album than *Loco* and a better Freddie Hubbard record than *Skagly*. Overpolite stuff, but well written and thoughtfully done. Hubbard, recovering from root canal work, plays some lovely middle-register stuff (should he hire Ken Norton to sock him in the jaw now and then?), and Hutcherson is brilliant, as usual. Peter Erskine and Ernie Watts sound pretty good too. Definitely JOARJ (George) of the month. If only the B theme of "Morning Song" didn't sound like Mangione... **Stuff**, *Live in New York* (Warner Bros. 3417) sounds like a set of rhythm tracks, a Music Minus One record (Sanborn? You? Me? Maybe Don Pardo?) "Duh hey, we do this in the studios all the time." That's right, you do, and well, but it's silly without a front man. You rouse yourselves a bit on side two, for "Ain't No Mountain," and Gadd and Tee sound terrific, but gee fellas, it's just not enough. **Irakere 2** (Columbia 36107) must be accounted a major disappointment. *Irakere* showed the band off at its live best, not the most original band in the world but absolutely one of the hottest and most committed. This new studio album is a relatively low-voltage return to the Latin music norm, with too much fake-funk, not enough fire, and not enough solo work from Paquito and Sandoval. What a letdown. This band should always be recorded live. A better example of Latino jazz is provided by

Cal Tjader's La Onda Va Bien (Concord/Picante 113), too mellow for salsa but melodious and expert enough to please. Notice particularly the conga playing of Poncho Sanchez in the Puerto Rican rather than the Cuban style: few notes, rock solid time, and stirring tone. Tjader himself seems a bit lost in the mix. *Por que?* **Manhattan Transfer**, *Extensions* (Atlantic 19258). I may be perverse, but I always thought Weather Report's "Birdland" sounded like a perfect theme for a daytime TV game-show once the introduction was done with. On the other hand, I find the Transfer's vocal version (lyrics by Jon Hendricks) rather bracing, much better arranged and more energetic. "Trickle Trickle" is also revived, and I've missed the tune ever since I lost my 45. Otherwise *Extensions* is the usual coy, fey, prefab crapola you'd expect. So *this* is how rock critics write....

I Remember Mugrup

Here's a silly idea: Let's take *Al Haig*, *Duke Jordan*, *John Lewis*, *Sadik Hakim*, *Walter Bishop Jr.*, *Barry Harris*, *Tommy Flanagan* and **Jimmy Rowles** and get them to play the works of one major bop composer, three or so cuts each. We'll make a double set out of it and call it *I Remember Bebop* (Columbia 35381). Thing is, the best laid follies of mice and A&R men can sometimes go awry: the album's terrific. Al Haig unaccompanied is marvelous, John Lewis sounds mysterious so that the lucidity award goes to Flanagan, Bishop does a fine "Ornithol-

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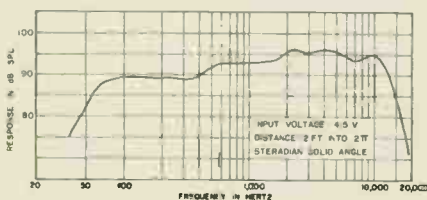
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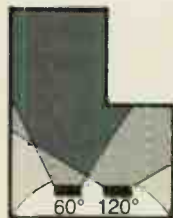


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GUITAR MAINTENANCE

By Alec Geanoulis

Maintaining your guitar is simpler than you might think and can help you avoid a lot of the trouble humidity and temperature changes bring to your neck, body and strings.

A guitar, like most mechanical things, requires a little routine maintenance in order for it to constantly be in tip-top playing condition. This can mean a number of things, from a simple changing of the strings to adjusting the truss rod, adjusting the action, removing accumulated dirt from the fingerboard, setting intonation, cleaning noisy tone and volume controls, tightening loose parts to cleaning the finish. A few simple tune-ups every now and then and a constant eye on the changing conditions of your guitar will prevent many problems from occurring and help diagnose problems at an early (easily repairable) stage. An ounce of prevention is really worth a pound of cure.

In this article, I'll go over the steps involved in the different procedures, and hopefully better acquaint you with your guitar. The average person can and *should* be able to perform these routine procedures without having to have any great skill or knowledge. I'll also mention some other commonly occurring problems that do require skilled labor and should be referred to your favorite local repair shop.

Neck Maintenance

Guitar necks come in many sizes, styles, shapes, and methods of attachment to the body, depending on the type of guitar (electric, acoustic, classical, bolted-on, glued-on). As varied as the necks are, the great majority of them all

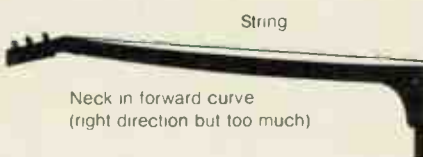


Fig. 1

have one thing in common; namely, they are all made of wood (unless you happen to own one of the \$800 graphite necks made by Alembic or one of the few metal-necked guitars). Being wooden, the necks are susceptible to changes in the relative humidity of the air. When the humidity goes up the wood will swell up, when the humidity goes down the wood will shrink. These changes are very slight and probably would not be noticed by the average

beginner banging away on his Silver-tone guitar with a one-inch action at the 12th fret. However, to a professional playing on a nicely set-up high quality instrument, one thirty-second of an inch could mean the difference between a guitar that feels stiff in the middle of the neck, to one that feels perfect and plays like butter.

Most guitars will have a truss rod in the neck. Truss rods are metal rods embedded in the neck which allow you to place an adjustable amount of tension on the neck. This tension provided by the truss rod is used to counter the tension of the strings which are trying to pull the neck into a forward curve. (see fig. 1). Truss rods are usually accessible from either the top or bottom end of the



Fig. 2 Truss adjustment bolt placement

neck (see fig. 2). Ideally, the neck *should not* be dead flat but rather have a very slight forward curve or relief to it. The reason the neck should have a slight curve in it is that when a string is plucked it vibrates in an arc, that being widest at the string's mid-point. Therefore a slight relief in the neck will allow you to have a lower overall action than if the neck were dead flat. The best way to check for the right amount of neck relief is *NOT* to sight down the neck but instead to use the "string as a straight-edge" method. This is done by pressing down a single string at two points on the neck (one at the 1st fret and the other at the fret where the neck joins the body) (see fig. 3). Next, while holding down these two points, reach out toward the middle of the string with one hand and press the string lightly. There should be a little gap before it touches the fret. This gap is your amount of neck curve, or relief. The gap should be about the thickness of the first string. If it is the thickness of the first string, then no truss rod adjustment is necessary. By the way, the guitar should be fully strung and tuned up to pitch with a gauge of strings you would normally use. If the



Fig. 3 String as straight-edge method

gap is greater than the thickness of the first string, then the truss rod needs tightening. It also probably means your guitar is harder to play in the middle area of the neck. If the gap is less than the thickness of the first string, or if there is no gap at all (the string is actually touching the frets) then this means you have a reverse bow in the neck and the truss rod will need loosening (see fig. 4). It also means that you have a terrible buzzing problem with your neck. Tightening of the truss rod is generally done in a clockwise manner with either an Allen (hex) wrench or a screwdriver. Loosening is performed in a counterclockwise manner. Be sure to go in small steps when making these adjustments ($\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of a turn at a time) checking your progress as you go, with the "string as the straight-edge" method. A slight flexing of the neck in the direction of the adjustment will help to give you an "instant settling-in" of the neck for a more accurate adjustment. Again all of these procedures are done with strings on and tuned to pitch.

Because guitar necks are made of wood and constantly changing due to weather conditions, truss rod adjustments may need to be pretty frequent. Especially if you travel a lot between the drier parts of the country and the more humid parts. If you primarily stay in one part of the country year round, you'll probably notice a recurring seasonal cycle of dryness in the winter months when the heat is on and the dampness in the summer months when the heat and humidity are high. In most cases what you'll find is that in the summer when the humidity is up, the neck will swell and the gap will disappear, requiring that the truss rod be loosened. While in the dry winter months the gap will become larger because the wood has shrunk

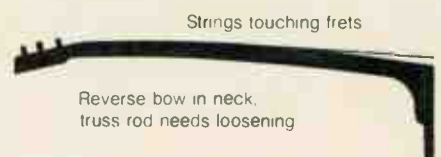


Fig. 4

necessitating a tightening of the truss rod. Truss rod adjustments may sound scary but they aren't all that bad once you get the hang of them. It always amazes me how some people will attempt major do-it-yourself repairs that they should never attempt themselves, yet when it comes to simple truss adjustments they're petrified, as if there must be some sort of voodoo involved. Truss rod adjustments are a part of your guitar that changes so often enough that you

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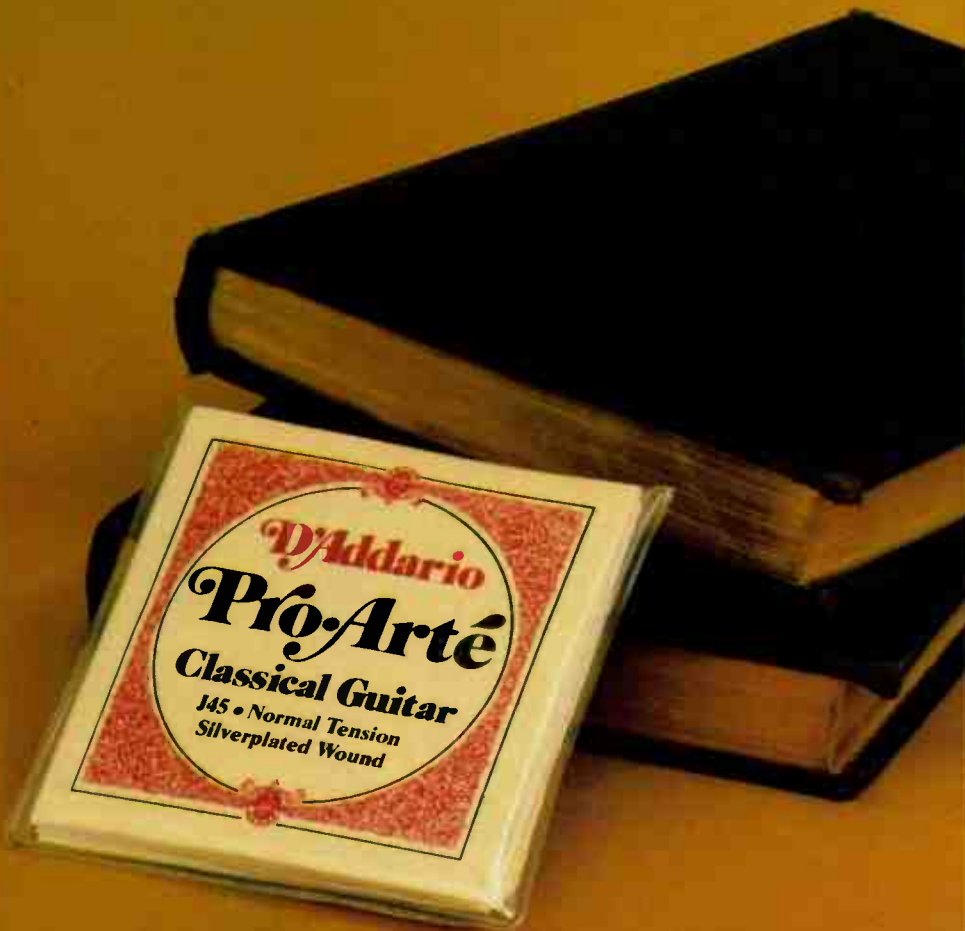
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should be able to adjust it yourself.

Nuts and Bolts

While we are on the subject of necks we might talk about the bolted-on variety such as those found on most of the Fender electric guitars and about nuts and bolts in general. All guitars are vibrating bodies by nature, and because of this constant vibration, things such as screws and bolts will be constantly working loose. Every now and then give all of them a tightening. You don't have to prove you're Hercules, just keep them snug or you might strip the threads. It will prevent a lot of unwanted rattles and other problems. Especially keep the little tensioning and gear screws on tuning machines snug to prevent slipping and also make the gears last longer. A single drop of oil on the exposed type of gears makes things a lot easier too.

Noise Common to Electric Guitars

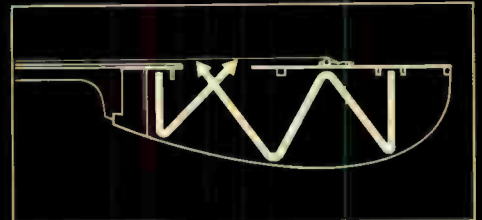
Noise problems with electric guitars are rather common. The biggest noise offender is R.F.I. (radio frequency interference) hum caused by poor shielding of the pickups and electronics compartment. The job of properly shielding a guitar from R.F.I. is somewhat complex and it's best to leave it to a competent repairman. Another common noise problem with electric guitars is the scratchy intermittent crackling you get when you turn your tone and volume controls. These controls (called potentiometers or pots) often get dirt and junk inside of them which interferes with their smooth operation. This dirt is easily cleaned out by using one of the commercially available electrical contact cleaners. They come in an aerosol can with a little straw-like nozzle for reaching into tight areas. Most potentiometers have an opening in their side for cleaning. Getting at the potentiometer on a solid body guitar is easy. Usually there is a cover plate covering the electronics compartment that can be easily removed. On f-hole arch-top type of guitars it's a little more difficult. You'll have to remove the knobs and nut that holds the potentiometer and then fish it out through the f-hole or the cutout for one of the pickups. Be careful not to break off any of the wires. A good idea before you do this is to tie a piece of string or dental floss to the shaft of the potentiometer before you fish it out. This makes fishing it back a lot easier. Once you have the potentiometer out stick the nozzle of the cleaner into the slot on the potentiometer and spray it clean while turning the shaft back and forth. The solvent should remove all the dirt. One final step you can do to give the pot a real silky smooth feel is to get some silicone grease in one of those syringe-hypodermic needle dispensers. Shoot the potentiometer full of the grease while turning the potentiometer's shaft. This also lasts a lot longer than just the cleaner which is mainly a solvent type of cleaner and

continued on page 94

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STUDIO

CONTEMPORARY HARMONY/RON DELP

ARRANGING: HARMONIZING A MELODY



Another way of working 3-part harmony is utilizing a background that sustains, while the melody moves above (or below) it. With three voices, one obviously plays the melody, which leaves only two voices to supply harmony and motion. If the song uses 4-part harmony (7th chords) then you must choose your two notes well.

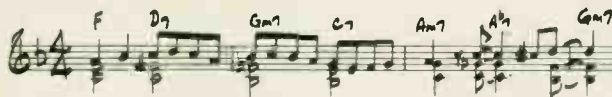
As with the other techniques I have discussed, the below are not limited to a three-horn band, but can be used with 3 saxes, or whatever, within a big band. Or for that fact, three synthesizer lines, three string parts for either live or synthesized music, three-note organ voicings, or vocals. Music is music, and the basic concepts of melody and harmony have remained the same for three-hundred years ... only style and convention change. So whether your goal is scoring for Lawrence Welk or working out parts for next year's heavy rock sound, the basic foundation is the same — and you adjust or flat-out break the rules to accomplish what you want.

I have mentioned guide tones many times in the past, and here I go again. Remember that *guide tones* are the 3rds and 7ths of chords, and that these notes are the most important members of a chord, as they both outline the type of chord and provide the most forward motion. Also remember that it is best to move the guide tones of one chord to those of the next chord by step whenever possible.

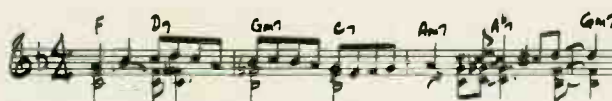
Here is the melody I've been using all along with the guide tones for each chord:



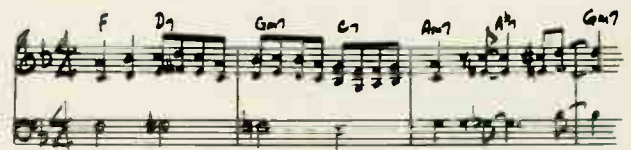
When the melody anticipates (as it does with the C in the 3rd bar, and the D in the 4th bar), it's usually a good idea to have the harmony anticipate, too:



You can alter the rhythm of the guide tone background as you wish to provide more interest:



You can also use just one of the G.T. lines, with the other harmony voice moving in 3rds or 6ths with the melody. In this next example, I chose the top line (look back at the first example) mostly because it has more motion (fewer repeated notes) than the bottom line. I put the line on the bottom (bass clef), and harmonized the melody in 6ths.



If I wanted more motion on the bottom, I could give the G.T. line some fill-in notes to keep the action going when the melody is not so active. Notice the 1st and 3rd bars:



Next month I'm going to cover 4-part harmony writing which will also cover reharmonizing and substituting harmony. That should be interesting to you guitar and keyboard players, as well as writers.

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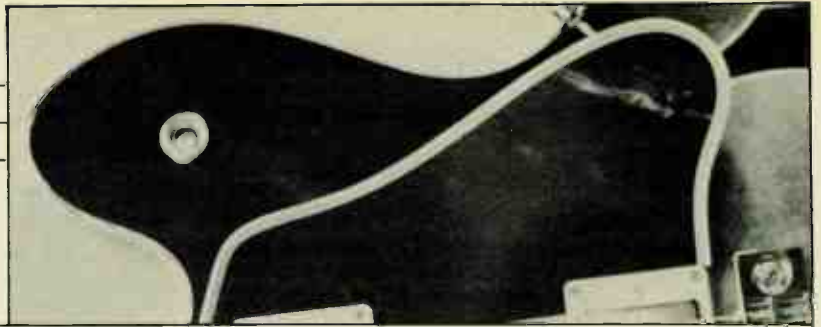
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STUDIO

GUITAR/JOHN AMARAL

DEVELOPING LICKS MELODICALLY



Starting this month, we're going to look at some techniques for melodic development that I have found very useful and applicable to all kinds of music, especially Jazz-Rock.

Both derivative guitar players and innovators may be locked into a creative process that allows them to develop spontaneous solos that tend to hold a listener's attention, help him feel a certain way, and give him the satisfaction of a balance between predictability and surprise. Melodic architecture (shape) and rhythm may be studied separately in order to clearly define the elements of melody, then recombined to take on a quality that neither shape nor rhythm have alone, which one might say is "greater than the sum of the individual parts." Although you will learn to see many available choices and directions, bear in mind that art is created not by expanding, but by narrowing the number of choices.

Even the most innovative player has programmed his subconscious mind with source material from which he develops rhythmic and melodic motives. Innovative players are scarce individuals who are able to come up with fresh approaches; previously unconceived ways of putting together materials which may have been generally available for some time. Creativity is not dependent upon the amount of source material a person knows, but upon how well he is able to use just a little bit of it. Wes Montgomery, for example, was known for his uncanny ability to take a few simple licks that he had learned from sources like Charlie Christian's records and develop them into logical, interesting melodies. The following techniques are useful springboards that will help you develop an inspired melodic lick into a complete solo.

Technique #1: Shape Inversions

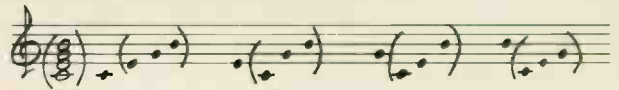
Every three note group has six melodic shapes:



Note that all three lines show the same shapes. For a triad, each inversion has six shapes.

A four note group has twenty-four possible shapes. Think of them this way.

1. Any note in the group could be the first note.
2. The remaining notes can be played in six orders, like the example above.



Technique #2: Superimposed Rhythmic Groupings

A series of eighth notes can be grouped in three novel ways:



By accenting the first note of each group, you can superimpose rhythmic figures over the time in ear-catching ways. This approach is very effective in Jazz-Rock rhythm guitar playing.

A technique I use in my composing classes at the Berklee College of Music is to get three different players to play these rhythmic groupings at the same time, then gradually leave out some attacks while continuing to *imply* the time.

Have fun with this! See you next month.

Next month: *More Development Techniques.*

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Soloists cont. from pg. 28

Mitchell performing with others. The solo boom has driven home the truly singular and magical thing about jazz: not just that it is created spontaneously, but spontaneously *and collectively*. The novelty and the possibilities of solo playing should not lead us to erroneously conclude that this is suddenly an out-moded or less monumental achievement.

I don't mean to suggest that unaccompanied concerts and albums be abandoned; I'm even prepared to recommend a few of the latter. But it is encouraging to see that ideas arising in the solo context are being applied creatively in group situations. The duo format has blossomed alongside the solo, offers a viable accommodation between working alone and with others; and continues to gain popularity (hat Hut also has five duet records, by four different duos). Ensembles of a single instrument or a single instrumental family such as the World Saxophone Quartet offer yet another approach to confronting the challenges of the solo format in a group context.

As for a sampling of solo records, try Hamiet Bluiett, *Birthright* (India Navigation); Anthony Braxton, *Alto Saxophone Improvisations 1979* (Arista); Steve Lacy, *Clinkers* (hat Hut); *The George*

Lewis Solo Trombone Record (Sackville); Joe McPhee, *Graphics* (hat Hut); Roscoe Mitchell, *Nonaah* (Nessa); Famoudou Don Moye, *Sun Percussion Volume 1*, (AECO); Leo Smith, *Creative Music - 1* (Kabel); and Bertram Turetzky, *New Music for Contrabass* (Finnadar). *Nonaah*, a two-record set, has two solo versions of the title piece, plus a third for four altos, and the comparison illustrates (for me at least) many of the points made above. And hat Hut, which also features such old-fashioned items as band records by David Murray and Jimmy Lyons, can be reached at Box 127, West Park, NY 12493. **M**

Guitar cont. from pg. 88

evaporates off fast. If after all of this your tone and volume controls are still scratchy sounding, then it means that the potentiometers have worn out and most be replaced. This again should probably be taken care of by a guitar repair shop.

Setting the Action and Intonation

Lastly, setting action and intonation is accomplished after the truss rod adjustments are finished. String heights or action for electric and acoustic guitars should be about 3/32" from the bottom of the string to the top of the fret where

the neck joins the body of the guitar, for the bass side (6th string). The treble side can be as low as 2/32". Classical (nylon string) guitars and bass guitars need a little higher clearance or whatever it takes to remove the buzzing. Fret buzzing at a single spot on the neck may mean a fret is loose or is of uneven height with its adjacent frets. Most fret work should be referred to a guitar shop.

Setting intonation puts the guitar in tune with itself all the way up the neck. It involves changing the individual string lengths and usually cannot be done on acoustic guitars with fixed bridge saddles. Hopefully it will have been correctly set at the factory. To set the intonation, first tune the guitar to concert pitch. Next compare the harmonic note at the 12th fret of a string with the fretted note at the 12th fret. If they match, the intonation is correct. If the fretted note is sharp, then the string length will have to be made longer by moving back the saddle. If the fretted note is flatter than the harmonic, then the saddle will have to be moved forward, shortening the string length. Now check the tuning again and recheck the harmonics. This procedure will need checking frequently as the individual saddle pieces will move from time to time due to the vibrating nature of the saddle. **M**

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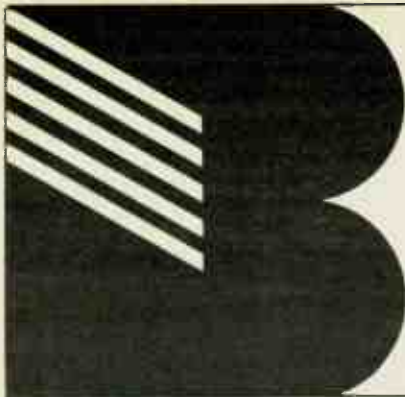
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Hohner has introduced a new acoustic series, the Arbor 900's. Named "Arbor" for their all wood construction, the series includes seven different models with tops of solid close-grained Canadian or Alaskan spruce, bodies of selected mahogany, rosewood and makassa. All woods used in making of Hohner's Arbor Series guitars are ages up to five years. As a result, the woods are amazingly free of instabilities. M. Hohner Inc., Andros Rd., Hicksville, NY 11802.



A group of four small, rugged amplifiers has been introduced by **Guild** Guitars. All have line output jacks for plug-in to PA's or larger amplifiers, headphone jacks, power switch and pilot lamp as standard features. Model Five, shown here, is a 10-watt RMS/20-watt peak amp with a 6 1/4-inch speaker and treble booster and retails for \$189.98. Guild Guitars, P.O. Box 203, Elizabeth, NJ 07207.



Unicord takes great pleasure in announcing the new line of Westbury Amplifiers. The Model 1000, a 2 x 12 Dual-Channel Reverb Twin is unique to the Westbury line and the industry in that it features two completely independent, separately voiced pre-amp inputs — which can be switched instantly, without control changes. Features include: extra-heavy-duty transformer mountings; oversized heat sinks; current limiting short circuit protection; easy-service modular PC boards; over-sized speaker magnets Unicord, 89 Frost St., Westbury, NY 11590.



Gibson's new **Les Paul** model, the LP Firebrand, is a single cutaway electric guitar featuring a sculptured mahogany body and neck construction with an antique mahogany finish, exposed coil hum-bucking pickups, black speed knobs, and black mounting rings that complement the contrasting chrome hardware, ebony fingerboard, dot inlays and corresponding side dots, a chrome-plated stop-bar tail-piece, and individually enclosed chrome-plated machineheads with shaped buttons. The playing ease of the LP Firebrand is due to the 22 frets and 24 3/4" scale length fingerboard. Gibson Guitars, 7373 N. Cicero Ave., Lincolnwood, IL 60646 for further information.



Kaman Musical String announces the introduction of Adamas Strings for acoustic and acoustic-electric guitars. The technological difference in these strings is Composite Gauging, the term used to describe Core and wrap wires of exactly the same dimensions on the fifth and sixth strings. This results in a sharper more precise tone. The second string was redesigned to lessen the frequency response peak. Kaman Strings, Box 837, Bloomfield CT 06002.

ARP Instruments began shipment in February of its new 16-Voice Electronic Piano to dealers throughout the United States and Canada. This instrument offers a variety of touch-responsive percussive sounds, including acoustic piano, vibes, harpsicord, harp, electric piano (tone bar effect). A 73-note standard wood keyboard with a specially designed and weighted maple action replicates the feel and response of a traditional grand piano. ARP Insts., 45 Hartwell Ave., Lexington, MA 02173.



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McCARTNEY: Yeah. I'm *still* the Walrus. That was a nothing thing, really, didn't mean anything. What happened was that during *Magical Mystery Tour* we did a scene where we all put on masks . . . it happens to be me with the Walrus mask . . . we just picked up a head each; no thought behind it. Then there was all that stuff about me being dead . . .

MUSICIAN: I think it's amazing that your bass playing continued to improve after you died. Very impressive.

McCARTNEY: Hmmm . . . yes. Then there was that whole thing about me wearing a black carnation. I had a black carnation because they'd run out of red ones. So there was this *hugely* significant thing of me wearing a black carnation. Or turning my back on the *Sgt. Pepper* cover — it was actually just a goof. When we were doing the photos I turned my back . . . it was like a joke or whatever.

MUSICIAN: Are your good feelings about New Wave because you recognize the same kind of creative element you cultivated with the Beatles?

McCARTNEY: I think the nice thing about New Wave is that it's gotten back to real music, rather than pop. I don't like a lot of it . . . a lot of it I do like. I can see where it's all come from. A great deal of it you can trace back to the Doors, Lou Reed, Bowie, and Brian Ferry. But that's great. I was influenced by Elvis, I still do an Elvis impersonation at a party, "Love Me Tender." I recognize that we're all these very frail . . . no matter who puts on the great show out front, basically we are all imitators. We used to nick songs, titles, John and I. I've even been inspired by things in the press. "Helter Skelter" came about because I read in *Melody Maker* that the Who had made some track or other that was the loudest, most raucous rock 'n' roll, the dirtiest thing they've ever done. I didn't know what track they were talking about but it made me think, "Right. Got to do it." And I totally got off on that one little sentence in the paper, and I said, "We've got to do the loudest, most raucous . . ." And that ended up as "Helter Skelter." But that's great. We were the greatest criminals going.

MUSICIAN: Getting back to your own writing, I've noticed that with Wings your writing often centers on themes having to do with the home, domesticity, and the family. Is that a reaction to the craziness of the Beatles and the 60's in general?

McCARTNEY: It came out of getting married. Everything changes in the way you look at things. I started realizing that I liked the warmth of a family — the no-hassle thing of having a family you can relate to intimately without really trying. When you're 18 you sneer at all that kind of thing. But when you're 30 you start to reconsider: *What do I really think about all that?* When my dad used to hit me as a kid he'd say, "When you've

got kids of your own you'll understand." And I thought, "You're a lunatic! You're hitting me and I'll never understand that." Then you get a few kids and you realize what he was talking about. Only time can do that. The word *home* changed its meaning after I'd gotten married. I'd never really had a home for a long time. I started to realize that it's important to investigate your feelings instead of hiding them.

MUSICIAN: Looking back over your career do you feel satisfied? Do you feel content when you consider your musical legacy?

McCARTNEY: I'd say I've done some songs that I think are really good; some that I think didn't quite come off; some I hate. But I've done enough to satisfy myself that I'm O.K. That's basically all I'm looking for. Like most people.

MUSICIAN: As long as you stay in touch with your own creativity, as you said, and keep going through this reviving, refreshing process.

McCARTNEY: Yes, as long as there's still some good music coming out. There'll be a wave of bad music out there and then something'll come along and kick it. They may be swearing and picking their noses and cutting themselves but if they bring out good . . . if the energy is there regardless of the form . . . if it's Merseybeat or Potatobeat it makes no difference to me, as long as there's something there. There's a great trick about records, it has to leap off the plastic and if it does, it's magic. How is it that some leap off the plastic and some don't? I don't care who does it, or how. It can be Segovia or Johnny Rotten as long as they're communicating.

MUSICIAN: To me, the deepest song you've done since the Beatles is "One of These Days" on the new album. What's going to happen one of these days?

McCARTNEY: But doesn't everyone have this kind of thing in them, since they're a kid, that one of these days I'll get round to it? I've always wanted to be a friendly person, well one of these days I'm going to be a friendly person. But in the meantime life gets in the way and you don't always find yourself being friendly . . . It's just groping in the dark really, but a lot of what I do is like that, and I don't see any alternative to it. But I think of that as a positive thing. I don't know what I was before I was born. I was the sperm that won out of those three hundred million, I can't remember that far back but there was something working for me, some incredible thing that did it. So for me the wonder of that, of knowing that something got on with it before my conscious memory existed, leads me to believe that when you die maybe something gets on with it, too. Which gives me this vague faith that I can't pinpoint. I don't say it's so-and-so doing it. But it's just IT, and whatever IT is I have an optimistic view about it. Based on the record that it got me this far it can't be *that* bad right? **M**

ABBEY ROAD

BEATLES

McCartney is at his best when he eschews security and 1. takes a risk (as on *Wild Life* — recorded in a few days a la Dylan) 2. is challenged (the stressful *Band on the Run*) 3. is caught off guard (*McCartney II* — an informal home studio project not originally intended for distribution). Just how much he values a secure environment can be gleaned from the following example: McCartney had planned to use Abbey Road, (where the album of the same name and other Beatles albums were recorded), last year to record *Back to the Egg* with Wings, but found it to be already booked during the dates he needed. Since Abbey Road was his favorite studio he decided to take drastic measures. In the basement of his offices in London's Soho Square he actually built an exact replica of his favorite room in the Abbey Road studio. It was precise in every detail. There's even a large security door against a wall which leads nowhere — simply to duplicate one in the original studio. A massively enlarged photograph depicting a larger room full of recording equipment, musical

instruments and other electronic gear covers one entire wall. This is precisely the view you'd have in the real Abbey Road studio. Inspecting it I noticed a large clock on the studio wall in the photograph. The clock in the photo showed the time to be 1:35 p.m., which was an interesting coincidence, as my own watch read 1:35 also. We completed our tour of the building and were passing through the same room again when I happened to glance at the clock in the photo. *The hands had moved.* The time now read ten minutes to two — the correct time! A representative of McCartney's office explained: "After finishing the replica studio, we invited Paul down for a look. He was delighted by everything but stared a long time at the photo. He turned and said 'the clock doesn't work'. We laughed but he said 'no, I'm serious. *I want the clock in the photo to work*'. So we had them hollow out the wall and install real hands on the photo clock and watchworks behind the wall. Tells excellent time, actually." I'll bet. Talk about controlling your environment.

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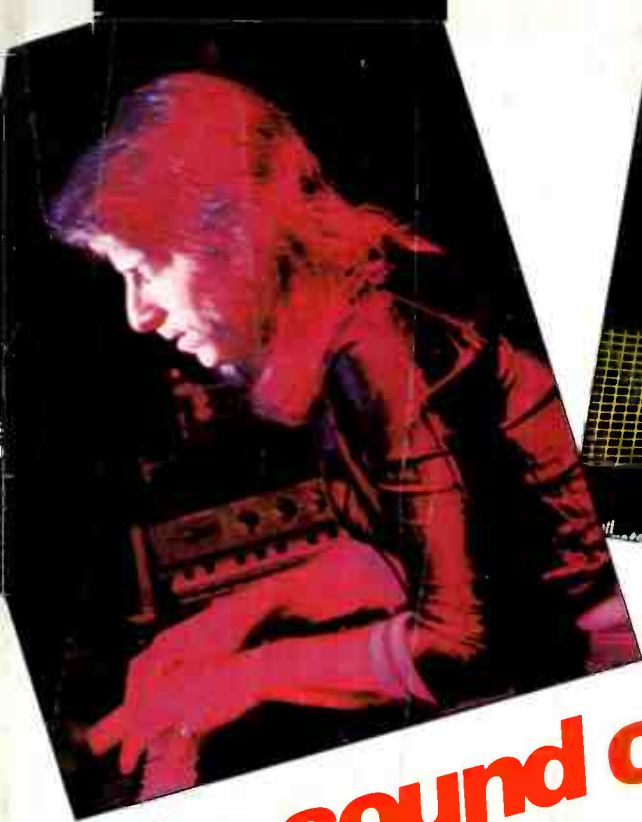
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