

Earshot Jazz

A Mirror and Focus for the Jazz Community

Seattle, May 1988

New Jazz, New City—The May Lineup

New Bands, Renewed Bands & Bands from Canada

Five top regional ensembles are featured in the first month of *New Jazz, New City III*, including opener Peggy Stern (see profile below); two bands from Vancouver, British Columbia; a brand new Seattle unit; and a reconstituted group from *New Jazz, New City I*. First of the Canadian bands is Chief Feature (May 10 at 8 p.m.), which presents a rare and great pleasure: serious and uncompromising jazz. Drawing faithfully from several musical streams born in the 1960's, Chief Feature presents Colemanesque, atilt blues, with sax and trumpet embroidering keen melodies, and the rhythm section freed from repetitious cadence. You'll also hear Coltrane's swooping clusters; Albert Ayler's agile and fecund imagination; Charlie Haden's and Gary

Peacock's roving bass lines and Ed Blackwell's and Jack DeJohnette's independent, grounded rhythms.

For all their influences, there is no duplication or imitation in Chief Feature's original and

acoustically contemporary sound. "We are trying to whittle down our music so that it is strong and uplifting," says Chief Feature founder and tenor sax player

inside music," explains Freedman, who shares the bandstand with bassist—and ex-Seattle resident—Clyde Reed, trumpeter Bill Clark and drummer Stan Taylor. Reed has played with the Paul Plimley Octet and works with Lunar Adventures (featured at *New Jazz, New City II*); Freedman and drummer Greg Simpson comprise the Vancouver Art Trio, which played the Nimes Jazz Festival in France; Bill Clark performed and recorded with the VEGE band.

Video Bar-B-Que

Also from Vancouver, B.C. this season we are presenting Video Bar-B-Que, an at times audacious and at other times contemplative but never abstract little big band that produces joyful music filled with surprises. True to its name, V-B-Q serves up a spicy variety of musical images. The first tune I heard the group play, "Triskaidekaphobia," put me in mind of a theme song for a 1950's urban detective show—a catchy hook played by sly, muted horns over a street-sauntering bass. Nighttime urban tension. The septet works collectively, producing original compositions and arrangements that amalgamate swing with fusion; Ibrahim with Metheny; and Monk with Mingus with Coleman with Coltrane with, perhaps even, Mancini and more. Latest arrangements include Mingus' "Boogie Stomp Shuffle," Coleman's "Jump Street," and Coltrane's "Resolution."

Video Bar-B-Que is young—most members are in their early twenties—and new. Arising last summer from local jazz sessions, the group received enthusiastic responses at festivals in Vancouver and Victoria. Group members include Aaron Doyle, trumpet and flugelhorn; Rob Murphy, tenor saxophone; Brian Harding, trombone; Greg Boothroyd, bass; Dave MacDougal, drums; Tony



Bruce Freedman. Chief Feature was formed in 1981 with the idea of "blending outside and

New Jazz, New City III Peggy Stern

5/3 at 8 p.m. at New City Theater

As a classical pianist Peggy Stern holds degrees from the Eastman School and the New England Conservatory. But her jazz degree comes from the school of hard knocks. "I was playing with Richie Cole and Eddie Jefferson," Stern recalled recently of one of her first jazz gigs in New Hope, Pennsylvania. "Eddie called for 'I Cover the Waterfront' and I thought he was kidding! I didn't know there was such a tune. He hummed the melody there on the bandstand, but I had no idea what the voicings were. He said, 'If you got ears, you'll hear it.' We got through a couple of choruses and he said, 'Stroll.' I didn't know what that meant so I tried a walking bass line, and he looked at me and said—louder—'Stroll!' I played faster, and he turned around and said, 'Take a walk!' Then I knew what it meant!"



Peggy Stern

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In One Ear...

Elliott Bay/Gig Harbor Jazz Festival update: It looks like Media One, which has moved its dates for the Elliott Bay Jazz Festival to the same weekend as the Gig Harbor Jazz Festival (8/13-14), isn't budging. Though we've received no official answer to our letter urging Media One to reconsider, we hear that the Elliott Bay event will open at Magnuson Park, August 6, with Manhattan Transfer, then continue through the following Saturday. We're disappointed, as we're sure all of the fans in the area who will be forced to choose between the two festivals are disappointed, too...May 2 is the deadline for artist applications to the King County Arts Commission's

new Touring Program 1989-90. Descriptions of artists and groups selected by panelists at the auditions will appear in a roster publication which will be sent to community groups in late August. Applications to audition: call 344-7580...

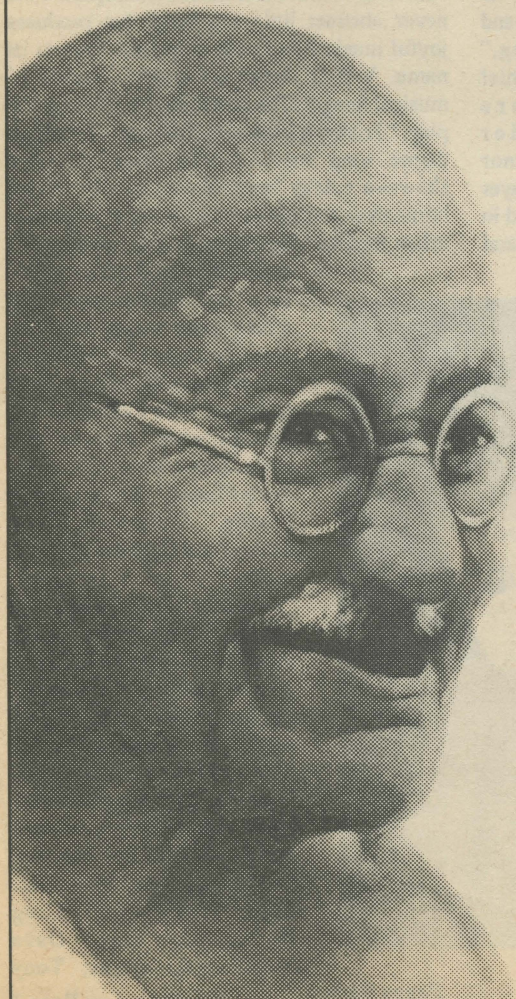
First Gary Peacock, now drummer and percussionist Jerry Granelli is leaving town. Jerry is off to Nova Scotia to take a teaching job. We'll miss ya...We'd like to thank Preview Publishing, publishers of *Bill Mazerowski's Baseball*, for the use of their telephones during our annual membership drive in February...Ham Carson, the wonderful clarinetist who used to work with Great Excelsior, is back in town after several years in California. Catch him Thursday nights, 6:30-9:30 at the

New Orleans Restaurant if you want to hear some sparkling licks...Bravo! Jazz Alley is bringing back the Seattle Jazz Festival, which features regional musicians nightly for a week, May 30. Look for Ralph Towner and others in this hot week...

Jay Clayton has been awarded a \$2,000 grant from the King County Individual Artists program to present "Different Voices," an improvised a cappella work for three vocalists..."Roots of Jazz: King County," an Earshot Jazz oral history project funded by King County Historic Preservation, is underway. We'll be doing 50 interviews initially with jazz musicians who have made significant contributions to the scene here. We're particularly interested in pushing back to the pre-WWII era, so if you have any information or suggestions about jazz history in our region, please call us: 285-8893...

Brad Schoepach has been awarded a Seattle Arts Commission composition grant of \$2,600. Congratulations, Brad!...The five finalists for the Rocket/NAMA Rocky Awards in the Best Jazz Group category are Blue Sky, Kenny G, Oregon, Scott Lindenmuth, and Diane Schuur...Those Garfield kids did it again—first place at the Reno Competition. Congratulations to all the players and to Clarence Acox, director...The Bellevue Jazz Festival relocates to downtown Bellevue this summer...The newly formed Jazz Alliance in Portland holds its "Northwest Jazz Summit Meeting" April 29-30. This is an ambitious organization, mounted by Portland jazz advocate Judith Broadhurst, that may be an important link in forming a chain of Western American and Canadian jazz organizations...

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PHILIP
GLASS
SATYAGRAHA

July 23, 26, 28, 30

Tickets on sale now.
Call (206) 443-4711.
Or TICKETMASTER, 628-0888.

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