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# 5/4 MAGAZINE

EXPLORING JAZZ FROM MAINSTREAM TO OFFBEAT

## JOHN BIRKS "DIZZY" GILLESPIE

October 21, 1917 - January 6, 1993



INSIDE:

Annie Ross  
Russell Malone  
Jerry Hahn  
John Bishop  
&

Composer's Notebook with Jessica Williams



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# GLASS SLIPPER TORCHED BY ARSONIST

By Laurence Svirchev

Vancouver's Glass Slipper was gutted by an arsonist's fire at around 11:00 a.m. on December 19. The motive is unknown. The Slipper, operated by a musicians' cooperative, was known internationally for performances of improvisational and creative music without artistic and commercial restraint.

Vancouver musicians, ranging from

Vancouver where you could play anything you wanted. It was the place to showcase new compositions and new music. And frankly, it had replaced the Hot Jazz Club as the place where new players got the chance to play their first gig in front of a listening audience. The Slipper was primarily about music."

"The Slipper was a unique venue," said Seattle bassist Michael Bisio, who



PHOTO: LAURENCE SVIRCHEV

*This international grouping of musicians is typical of the many artists who performed at the Glass Slipper. L to R: Daniel Carter, William Parker (New York); Roger Baird, Peggy Lee (Vancouver); Jim Knodle (Seattle); Tony Wilson (Vancouver)*

novices to internationally recognized musicians such as Roger Baird, the New Orchestra Workshop, and Francois Houle used the Slipper as a rehearsal and performance space. The Coastal Jazz and Blues Society regularly presented Vancouver, other Canadian and international acts there. The Slipper was also a site for the annual Time Flies series, the duMaurier International Jazz Festival Vancouver, and Hugh Fraser's Vancouver International Jazz Orchestra Workshop. Singing for Suppers was regularly presented by Vancouver vocalists to benefit hungry people.

The Glass Slipper originally opened in 1988 as a grungy, low-ceiling underground club sponsored by the New Orchestra Workshop. Through voluntary labor and a consistent policy of presenting improvised music, the Slipper became a comfortable room to musicians and a public interested in creative music. For example, in 1989 Lisle Ellis united four generations of musicians (including the legendary West Coast pianist Al Neil) into an 18-member workshop and performing group, the Freedom Force Ensemble.

In 1993 the Canadian Legion, owners of the building, decided to use the structure as a drinking establishment adjacent to their bingo hall. The Glass Slipper, managed now by percussionist Roger Baird and trombonist Ralph Eppel of the Musart Cultural Society, was relocated into an 85-year-old former church. The new Slipper had a high ceiling, great acoustics, a beautiful stage and sound system, again built by volunteer labor. Musicians could hang out away from the public and store their instruments in a modestly furnished basement.

Alan Natheson, Vancouver trumpeter, arranger, and teacher, has been playing at the Slipper since the beginning and was to present a quartet with younger players at the Slipper this month. He said, "I was stunned. This hurts much more than the loss of a commercial establishment because the Slipper was the only repository in

frequently played in Vancouver. "It was a place where conception and reality were one, a world-class performance space run by and for jazz musicians. The fire is a tragedy, but I'm sure the spirit of the Slipper is in safe hands, and like a phoenix, it will rise from the ashes stronger and more beautiful than ever."

Lost in the fire were the sound system, drum kits, and the grand piano that had been paid for by many benefits. Eppel was able to recover his trombone and some of Baird's percussion instruments, including singing bowls and Tibetan bells. Asked about his musical memories of the Glass Slipper, Baird said, "Definitely Charles Gayle was the heaviest music we had there."

Baird was optimistic about the future, indicating the desire to set up a new Glass Slipper. Ironically, a meeting is to be held with the Canadian Legion to present concerts in the original space they lost. Baird says, "The Glass Slipper earned the respect of the community, and now we need the helping hand of the community to rebuild."

Monetary donations can be sent to the Musart Cultural Society, 1867 Deep Cove Rd., North Vancouver, BC V7G 1S7 (FAX 604-929-5061, PH 604-929-5053) or to the Burnaby Saving Credit Union, 373 E Broadway, Vancouver BC V5T 1W6. Baird also said that any donations in kind, such as a piano, sound system equipment, club furniture and theatre equipment will be gratefully accepted. \*\*

## Julius Hemphill Composition Awards

Two categories—Compositions for small groups (1-8 instruments) or for jazz orchestra. Entries due 5/1/97. For information write Jazz Composers Alliance, Box 491, Allston, MA 02134 (617-964-5471).

# IN AND OUTTA' THE NORTHWEST

**B**umbershoot performance deadline, March 3 – for applications, call (206) 281-8111... **Jessica Williams** performed a solo concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in January as part of the Art Tatum Piano Series. Williams, who currently resides in California, is planning to relocate to Seattle in early spring... **Jay Clayton** and Brenda Bufalino took their Tap Opera to Berlin in January where they hooked up with former Seattleites **Denney Goodhew** and **Jerry Granelli** who teach at Hochschule der Kunst-Berlin... **Michael Powers'** *Frosty the Bluesman* hovered between #15 and #16 on *Billboard's* Blues Chart during the holidays... Trombonist **Kari Harris** from Garfield High School was awarded a full scholarship to the Berklee School of Music in Boston for the fall, and trumpeter Cecil Taylor is attending New York's New School on scholarship. Garfield alum **Clark Gayton** has taken his trombone on the road with Sting... Two of the five nominees for a Grammy in the jazz vocal category for 1996 are from the Northwest: Seattleite **Ernestine Anderson** is up for *Blues, Dues and Love News*, and Nanaimo, B.C., native **Diana Krall** is also in contention with *All for You*. Other

nominees are Shirley Horn, Cassandra Wilson, and Nnenna Freelon... **David Friesen's** West Coast tour includes several stops in Arizona, including ASU in Tempe, the Community College in Mesa, and Inspirations Coffee House in Scottsdale on 2/7 & 14. The tour winds up at the Maybeck Recital Hall in Berkeley CA on 2/16 for a duo concert with Denny Zeitlin... Pianist **Larry Fuller** has been busy touring with the Jeff Hamilton Trio, which just played the Remo Drum Factory in California. The trio hits the road again in March to play the Jazz Bakery in California and a jazz party in Scottsdale, and heads to Europe in May for the fourth time... Portland guitarist **John Stowell** will reconnect and perform with some old friends from the former Soviet Union at the University of Idaho festival in February. Stowell met the musicians on a Russian tour with Paul Horn and later played several European gigs with them... **Ralph Towner**, who spends more time of late in Europe than in Seattle, joins fellow guitarist John Abercrombie at the Blue Note in New York City, March 4-9. According to Vancouver photographer Mark Mushet's online "Open Letter," a new Oregon CD will see release soon as well as a new solo album from Towner and a duo with **Gary Peacock**. Ralph's recording with vocalist Maria Joao has been released in Portugal... **Kendra Shank** is back from several months in New York where she performed at Visione's, Cleopatra's Needle, and in a special vocal series at the Blue Note... In the can: new recordings by **Jay Thomas' Evolution** with vocalist **Becca Duran** and by the **Jovino Santos Neto Quartet**. Jovino flew to London in January to record overdubs on the album by percussionist Airtio. \*\*

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# Beyond Dizzy

Words and Photo  
by Laurence M.  
Svirchev

I encountered him back-stage at the Orpheum Theatre on June 21, 1991, with his last great project, the United Nation Orchestra. He was there to open the duMaurier International Jazz Festival Vancouver. Only the rhythm section was on-stage at that

approached him to ask permission to take photos during the sound-check, he gave me a stern look, saying, "Not now man," not even allowing me the chance to introduce myself.

He worked with the drummer first, changing intricate little things from the night before. He'd say, "Last night we did, 'Um, ah, bam, pow!'," but tonight it's "Ah, um, pow, bam." He worked with the man until he had it down. Then he went in turn to the Cuban percussionist, the bassist, the pianist and the guitarist and ran through the same procedures. No kidding around, no dizzy-stuff, serious as the Pentagon war-room. When the rhythm section had it together, he disappeared, didn't even bother with the horn sections.

Next time I saw Mr. Gillespie was when he hit the stage. He came out blowing his fabulous horn with the puffed-cheek thing for which he was visually famous. I nailed those shots, yeah, the same stuff that every other photographer has. But the Orpheum has house rules about photographers, so I had to split from the front of the stage after two numbers. As Festival photographer, I began shooting discretely from back-stage, but the angles were never right.

Mid-concert, Mr. Gillespie's manager approached me and said that the encore was going to be a vocal duet between Dizzy and his old buddy James Moody. Would I shoot them from the front and mail him a copy?

But the Orpheum is where the bourgeoisie go to hear classical music, and the front rows that night were filled with gowns and suits. This was not a jazz crowd. And the legendary John Birks Gillespie, making his last live appearance in Vancouver, did not get the applause for an encore.

I was bitterly disappointed that I didn't have the

**J**ohn Birks (Dizzy) Gillespie was the most serious musician I've ever observed. Most people have the image of the trumpet player who blew those high, fast notes through those exaggerated puffed-out cheeks, the man who was always kidding around on stage playing jokes on fellow musicians. He was all that, but this man was way beyond dizzy.

shoot camera flashes popping off all over the place. Mr. Gillespie seemed oblivious and turned to the best concert photographer in the world, Chris Cameron, and got into a conversation with him about his vintage Leica.

Then I saw the funniest event I ever witnessed and truly understood why he got the name Dizzy. A woman with enormous breasts, decked-out in a dress to show the world what she had, walked past Mr. Gillespie, went all the way down the stairs, turned around and walked backed up. Gillespie had the total vantage point, and he did not even pretend not to stare. The woman stopped one step below Diz, and proclaimed, in a loud falsetto, "Oh Mr. Gillespie, I just love the way you play the trumpet. Couldn't you give me just a little kiss here on my cheek?"

So Dizzy looks at her with suddenly mirthful eyes, puts on a phony British accent, and in false politeness, says: "Well, madam, under most circumstances I would love to kiss your cheeks, but since That Dizzy, what a cagey old fox! The woman hustled away, blushing in complete embarrassment to the laughter of all who heard the exchange.

Meanwhile, I just couldn't bring myself to take a photograph. Besides, who wants a photo of Dizzy Gillespie munching on his dinner? And then the magic happened. A woman, about age seventeen, walked up, introduced herself, and said she had just started the trumpet and did he have any advice for a young musician?

John Birks Gillespie, when he heard that question, changed his demeanour. He went into that serious mode I had seen at sound check. The Dizzy part of his personality was over-ridden by the patriarch passing a fraction of his lore to the generation of what could be his grandchildren.

Instinct told me to move fast. I pulled out my 'axe, flipped a flash on the head to overcome the tungsten lighting, slapped on a 70-210 f4 zoom lens, cropped-in real tight, and fired one frame, the one you see with this article, except the original is a color slide. I walked away, knowing I had the shot I wanted.

There are two post-scripts to this story. Every glossy jazz magazine turned the slide down. I guess it didn't fit the stereotype of the man who invented a new musical language. *5/4 Magazine* is the first to publish this image.

The second post-script concerns Mr. Gillespie's out-of-marriage daughter, the singer Jeannie Bryson. When she came to Vancouver, I prepared a framed 16x20, met her at the Vogue Theatre, and said I had a photo I wanted to get to the estate of her father. She gave me an address but asked me not to reveal its source. She explained that she was estranged from the Gillespie family because of the jealousies that her birth had provoked and that they would refuse the photo if she were involved.

Moved by her sincerity, I decided to give Jeannie Bryson the photo, so I unwrapped it. When she looked at the portrait, tears came to her eyes. She said, "Oh my God, that's my Dad! It's so beautiful! No one has ever caught that expression before, but I used to see it all the time!"

Every photo tells a story, and behind every photo there's also a story. ✖✖

special shot of that special man. I retreated to the opening night reception and, melancholy as hell, lingered longer than I should have, missing my next assignment.

Then, just towards the end of the reception, I wandered Dizzy Gillespie. He walked up the stairs, and everybody stopped their conversations to stare at the famous man. Gillespie, who'd probably been through this scene 300 times a year for the last 35 years, just got a plate of food and started chowing down, standing by the top of the stairs.

All kinds of people came over to chat, say a few words, shake a hand, and there were point-and-



# ANNIE ROSS: Elegant & Hip

by Sandra Burlingame  
Photos: Steve Robinson

Annie Ross is a "oner," to use a common crossword puzzle word for a not so common person, who is, not surprisingly, a puzzler herself. No one before or since Ross has approached the vocal and linguistic gymnastics that brought her fame with the Lambert, Hendricks & Ross group. A composer and lyricist as well, her career has included TV, movies, cals and dramas.

She was born into a vaudeville family after a matinee in London, one of five children, all of whom continued in theater. "And yes," Ross says matter-of-factly, "my mother did the matinee." During a visit to her aunt, singer/actress Ella Logan, Annie won a talent contest and a contract with MGM. When her family returned to Scotland, three-year-old Annie stayed on with her aunt in California, where she grew up.

"My aunt used to have big parties, and I would come down late at night to hear the music. I remember Johnny Weismuller doing his Tarzan yell for me and how pleased David Rose was when I sang one of his songs for him.

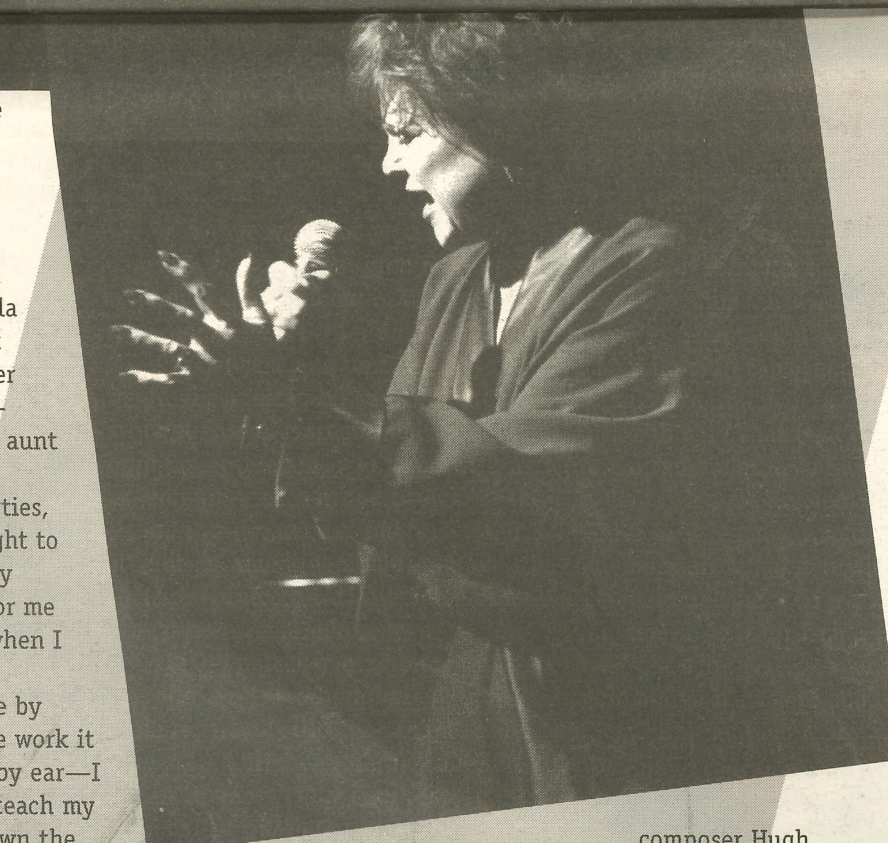
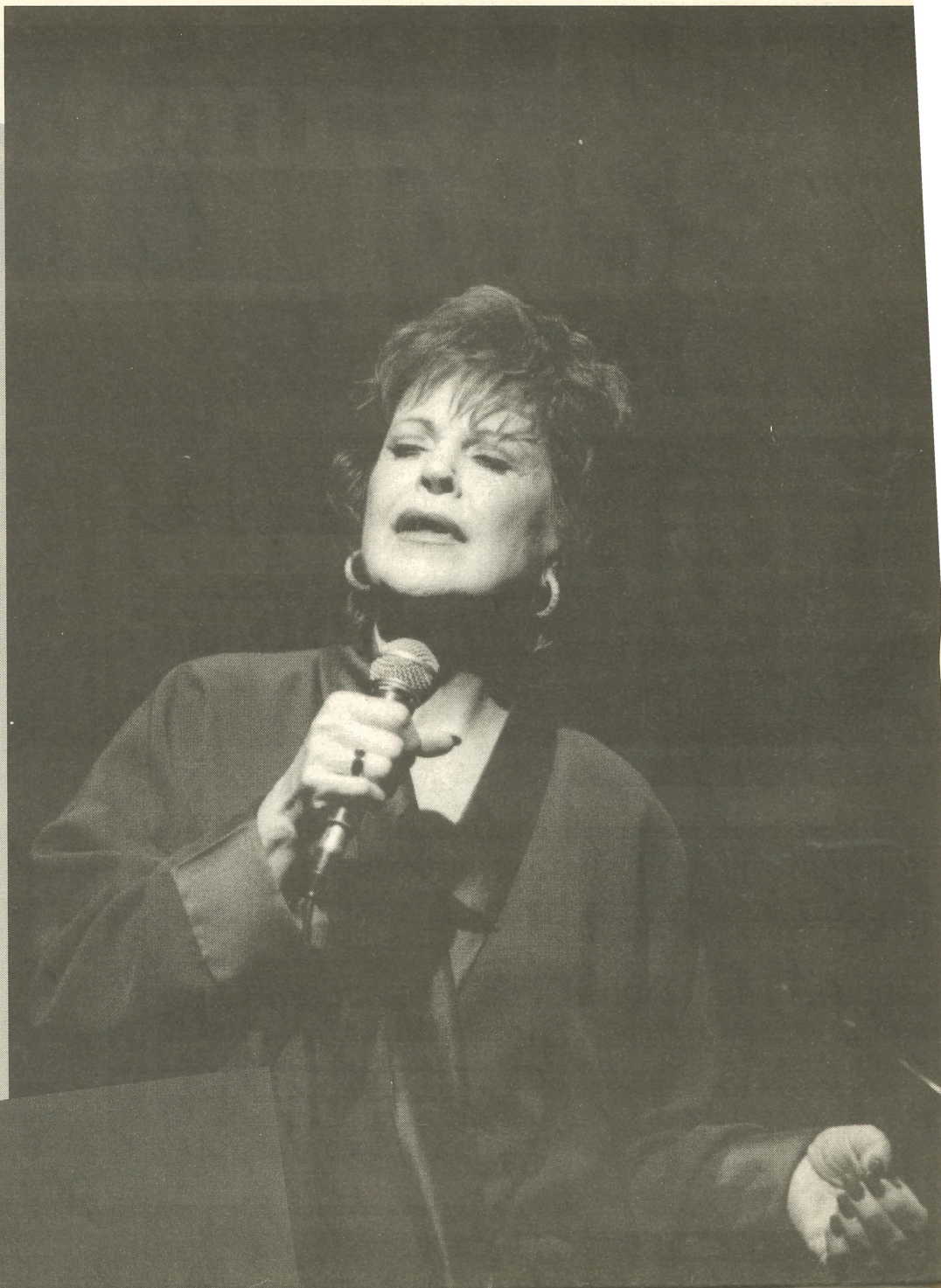
"My father taught me to dance by giving me a rhythm and having me work it out with my feet. I learned songs by ear—I don't read music. When I want to teach my piano player a new song, I sing down the changes—all the nuances. I always tell him, 'Don't give me brown chords—I want rainbows.'"

With gamin-like red hair and an open, unaffected personality, Ross is like a rainbow showering bright colors on her surroundings. Petite, simply and smartly attired, at 66 she can easily pass for a decade younger.

Ross has matured into a compelling performer whose complete musicality can still startle and whose depth of emotion replaces the high-speed, tongue-twisting lyrics and elastic vocal acrobatics of her youth. Elegance and humor, audience rapport, and a riveting stage presence defined her December Jazz Alley appearance—her first in Seattle.

Ross is a true pro who began her career at the tender age of three on Vaudeville, appeared in an *Our Gang* episode at five, and played Judy Garland's little sister in *Presenting Lily Mars*. After drama school in New York she starred in an English musical comedy, *Burlesque*, while still in her teens. While based in Paris she worked with several big bands, performed with

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composer Hugh Martin and with Blossom Dearie, and hung out with jazz greats like Bird, godfather to her son Kenny Clarke, Jr., Dizzy, Coleman Hawkins, and James Moody.

On a gig at the Band Box in New York, where her band included Max Roach, Lionel Hampton signed her to replace Ernestine Anderson for a Scandinavian tour. Returning to New York in 1951 she became a sensation the following year with her recording of Wardell Gray's solo on his tune "Twisted" for which she wrote lyrics.

Never one to rest on her laurels, she returned to England, where she won the London Critics' Award for her singing and dancing in the one-woman, three-man show, *Cranks*. When *Cranks* came to New York in 1956 she met Dave Lambert and Jon Hendricks.

Hendricks had written lyrics to Woody Herman's version of "Four Brothers," and he and Dave were working on a recording that would feature lyrics for several Basie standards. They hired a group of session singers to record, but the music didn't swing. They

asked Annie to come in and coach the singers. But as Ross says with a perplexed smile, "You can't teach someone to swing."

That recording project fell through, but Lambert suggested that they overdub the four parts and include Annie. And so the Lambert, Hendricks & Ross trio was born. What they did with three voices became jazz history. They built a repertoire around instrumental solos, added lyrics to some, and created a new art form. While King Pleasure and Eddie Jefferson had introduced vocalese, the art of vocalizing instrumental solos, no one had attempted to perform the complex improvisations in a trio format, and no group since has approached the high art of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross.

"We probably got \$15 for our first gig. We thought we were awful, but the management asked us back at \$25, and it just took off from there," says Ross.

Their first recording, *Sing a Song of Basie*, was soon followed by *Sing Along with Basie*, and LH&R became the hottest thing in jazz. They continued to record as a trio, but, to everyone's amazement, with no overdubbing; they played the hungry i, the Chicago Blue Note, the Flamingo in Las Vegas, London's Festival Hall, and all the major jazz festivals in the U.S. and abroad; they won polls and accolades from critics and from national magazines like *Time*, which called them "the James Joyce of Jive."

"That was absolutely a joyous period in my life. Magic happened every night. Jon was tremendously talented, and Dave was a gem," says Ross.

On tour in 1962 Ross fell ill and returned to London, ending the glory days of LH&R. But she returned to the stage, playing *Threepenny Opera* with Vanessa Redgrave, Weill and Brecht's *Seven Deadly Sins* with the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, Pirandello's *Tonight We Improvise*, and gave a one-woman show at the Hampstead Theater Club. She even owned a night club called Annie's Room in 1965-66. Since 1985 she has split her time between London and New York.

Topping the list of many film credits is Robert Altman's 1994 *Short Cuts* in which Ross plays a boozy, self-consumed singer. When asked how much weight

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# FIRST STRINGERS:

## Russell Malone

by Roberta Penn  
Photo: Vince Gonzales

**R**ussell Malone's musical career began in the Pentecostal Church with clapping hands, beating drums, ringing tambourines and rasping washboards. It became a personal experience when his mother brought home a guitar.

"Mom came home and put her bags on the table and pulled out a loud green plastic guitar with four pink strings. That's how the love affair started," Malone said over coffee. "When my hands got bigger she bought me an electric guitar and I started learning hymns like the Dixie Hummingbirds doing 'Beside of My Neighbor.' And from the TV show *Hee Haw* I learned the guitar solos on the country and western music of Merle Travis and Chet Atkins."

Both the soul of his gospel upbringing and the clean technique of players like Chet Atkins ring out of Malone's guitar today, but his style is jazz. In fact he is one of the most respected young players on today's scene. Just over the past 18 months he has recorded with Diana Krall (with whom he appeared in November at Seattle's Jazz Alley), the band that played on the *Kansas City* soundtrack, and the new releases of Benny Green, Stephen Scott, Gary Bartz, Terrell Stafford, Jerome Richardson and Don Braden.

Ironically Malone hasn't had his own contract for nearly four years, even though both his CDs, *Russell Malone* and *Black Butterfly*, were well received. But rather than dwell on the demise of his relationship with Columbia Records, Malone likes to focus on the positive future and a past that he is proud to claim because he knows he has a bright future. He isn't cocky but confident that he will record under his own name again.

Cocky is an attitude Malone had to drop some 15 years ago. It was in the mid-80s when he had moved from his home town of Albany, Georgia (where he reminds me both Harry James and Ray Charles were born) to Atlanta. He was working with jazz, blues, C&W and R&B artists who would pass through town, performers like Cleanhead Vincent, Little Anthony, Clarence Carter and Patti Austin. One night

Jimmy Smith was in town and Malone was dying to sit in with him because two of his guitar heroes, Grant Green and Wes Montgomery, had played with the organist. Sil Johnson, who was playing with Smith, introduced Malone.

"I was cocky—I told him, 'I know all your tunes,'" Malone says. "Well, when I got up to sit in he started playing 'Laura,' which I didn't know. Then he started doing tricks with the harmony, and I was lost. After the set he told me, 'Don't come up on the bandstand with that attitude.' Then he took me to his room and I just played for him until six a.m."

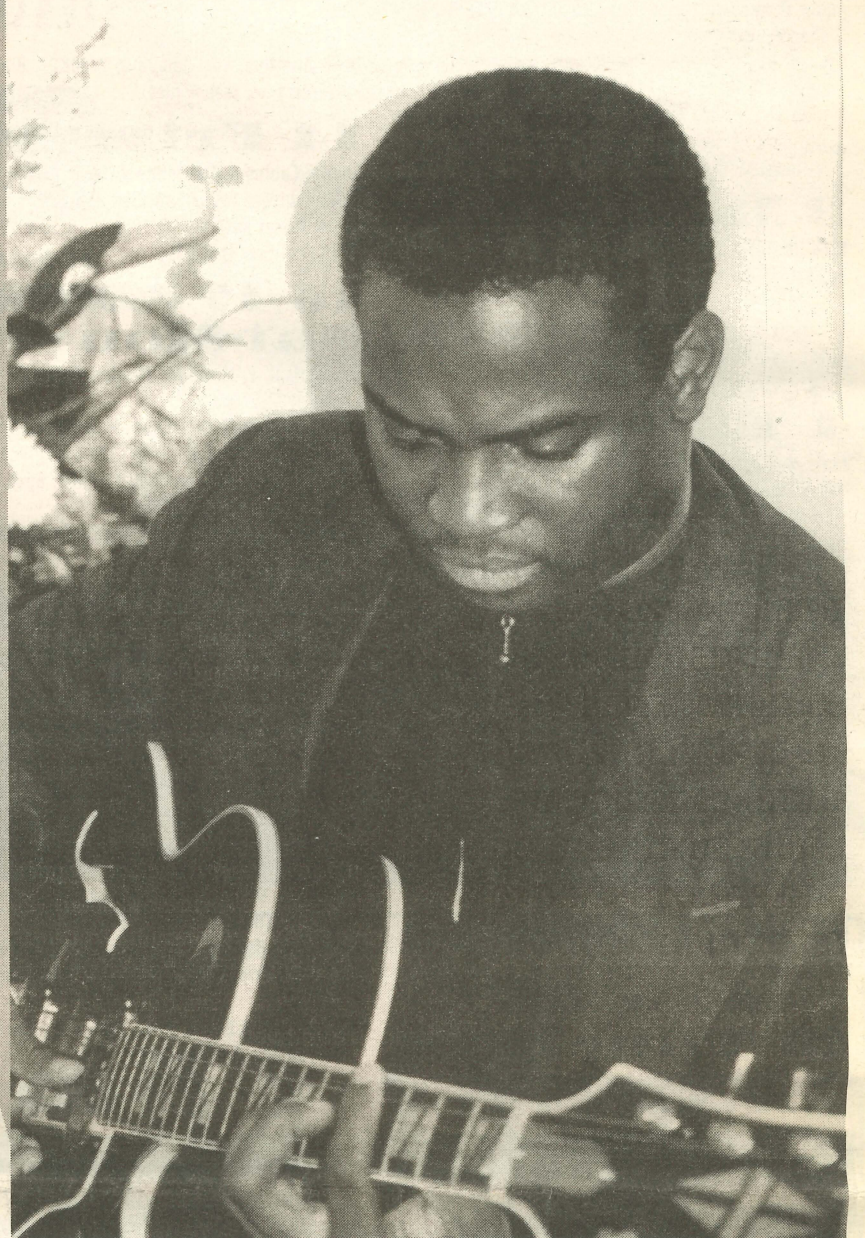
After Smith gave Malone this lesson in humility, the guitarist wanted more than ever to be in his band and called him at least once a week until he got a job. He spent two years with Jimmy Smith, 1988-1990,

learning the ropes and meeting the right people. He even met one of the two guitarists who made him realize he wanted to be player, George Benson.

"I was 12 years old when I saw George Benson playing a big, hollow-body guitar on TV. I had never heard jazz on guitar, but I knew that was what I should be doing," Malone recalls.

With the money he earned raking leaves Malone bought *The George Benson Cookbook* and *Reason*. From there he began reaching into the jazz guitar archives, searching out Wes Montgomery's *Smokin'* and Johnny Smith's *Moonlight in Vermont*. Along the way he also began listening to modern players like

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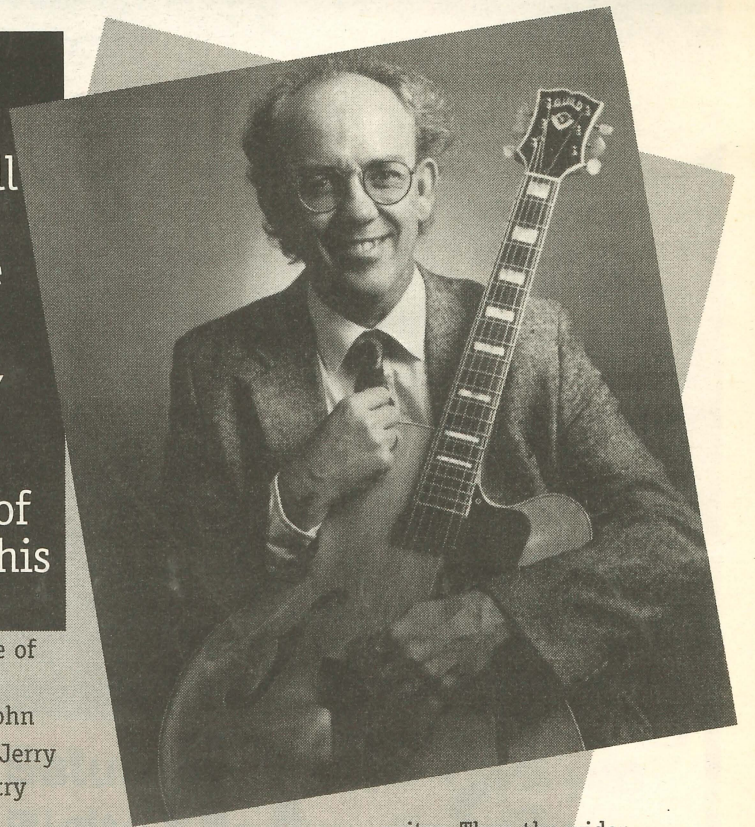
## Jerry Hahn

by Lynn Darroch

**J**erry Hahn is back in town, and, as usual, he's full of energy. When the phone rings, he jumps up from the sofa, knocking over his briefcase. He moves quickly, with a bounce that belies his 50-plus years. His eyes are wide behind the lenses of his glasses. Like his music, his face is lively and open.

Those qualities helped Hahn become one of the most influential guitarists in the 1960s and 1970s, when he played and recorded with the John Handy Quintet and Gary Burton and led his own Jerry Hahn Brotherhood. His fusion of blues and country sounds with straight ahead jazz and free playing served as a springboard for important innovators such as Pat Metheny, John Scofield and Bill Frisell, as they stretched the range of jazz guitar.

As an educator and author Hahn continued to influence other musicians, even after he left the San Francisco Bay area and high profile touring for a teaching job and the small-town tranquillity of Wichita, Kansas. He wrote a monthly column, "Jerry Hahn's Guitar Seminar," for *Guitar Player* magazine in the 1970s, and his three-volume *The Jerry Hahn Contemporary Guitar Series* is an important instructional resource. At Wichita State University he established bachelors and masters programs in jazz



guitar. Then the wider opportunities to play lured him to Portland, where he lived from 1986 to 1993.

Now he's back in town after four years in Denver, Colorado. Significantly, a teaching job got him back to the Rose City. Starting in January he began developing curriculum for and teaching in Portland State University's new guitar performance program. And he has a new CD with him—his first in 20 years. *Time Changes* (Enja) demonstrates the command of a player operating with the relaxed confidence of maturity and the energy of fresh ideas.

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5/4 Magazine



# AROUND THE REGION

with Bob Mariano

## February 1997

See Venue Listings for additional music

### 1 Sat

Ernestine Anderson thru 2/2, Jazz Alley (See Venues)  
 Bellevue (WA) Community College Jazz Festival, w/  
 Jon Faddis, featuring 15 bands all day, BCC Jazz  
 Band at 7:30pm (206-649-3081)  
 Brian Cunningham/Rick Leppanen/Jud Sherwood,  
 Stuart's Coffee House, Bellingham WA, 7:30-10pm  
 (360-738-7572)  
 Barney McClure & Guests, Seattle Sheraton Gallery  
 Lounge, every Thur-Sat(206-621-9000)

### 2 Sun

Andre Thomas Jazz Jam, Tula's, 9pm, also 2/16 & 23  
 (See Venues)  
 Trillian Green, American Dream Pizza, Corvallis OR, 9pm  
 (206-782-6477)  
 Joanne Klein/Marc Smason Quintet w/Larry Fuller, live  
 recording session, 7pm, New Orleans Restaurant (See  
 Venues)

### 3 Mon

MJ Williams & Three Form, Jazz Alley, (See Venues)  
 Julie Wolf/Hans Teuber, also 2/10, Trattoria Michelli,  
 Seattle, 8-11pm (206-623-3883)  
 Imperials Studio Jazz Ensemble, Pacific NW Music  
 Festival, Meany Hall, UW, 5pm

### 4 Tue

Tania Maria thru 2/8, Jazz Alley (See Venues)  
 Dan Balmer Duo, also 2/11, Brasserie Montmartre,  
 Portland, 8-12pm (503-224-5552)

### 5 Wed

Mike Bisio Trio, 8:30pm-12:30am, Tula's (See Venues)  
 Bebop & Destruction, Art Bar, Seattle, 9pm, every Wed  
 (622-4344)  
 Toby Schneider, also 2/21, 5:30-9:30, Terrace Garden  
 (See Venues)

### 7 Fri

Ray Anderson, New Orleans (See Venues)  
 Kelley Johnson Quartet, 9pm-1am, also 2/8, Brasserie  
 Montmartre (see 4 Tues)  
 Jack Brownlow/Clipper Anderson, Salute in Citta,  
 9:30pm-12:30am

### 8 Sat

Joe Mangarelli Quartet w/Rudy Petschauer, Phil Baker,  
 & John Hansen, 9pm, Tula's (See Venues)

### 13 Thur

Crispin Spaeth Dance Group w/Wayne Horvitz thru 2/  
 16, On the Boards, Seattle, (206-325-7901)

Peter Boe Duo, 9pm-1am, also 2/20&27, Brasserie  
 Montmartre, (see 4 Tues)

### 14 Fri

George Cables & Andrienne Wilson, 7:30, 9 & 11:30,  
 New Orleans Restaurant (See VENUES)  
 Susan Pascal Trio, also 2/15 & 19, 5:30-9:30, Terrace  
 Garden (See VENUES)

### 15-17 Sat-Mon

Baaba Maal, 2/15, Vogue Theater, Vancouver BC, 8pm  
 (604-682-0706)  
 Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Mount Baker Theatre,  
 Bellingham WA 8pm, 2/15 (360-671-1998) and  
 Everett (WA) Performing Arts Center, 8pm, 2/16 (888-  
 257-3722, 206-257-8888)  
 Festival Sundiata, 2/16-17, Seattle Center (206-386-  
 4086)  
 Kendra Shank Trio, 2/17 and 24, 8-11pm, Trattoria  
 Michelli

### 18 Tue

Diane Schuur thru 2/23, Jazz Alley, (See VENUES)

### 21-22 Fri-Sat

Lynnwood Jazz Festival w/Arturo Sandoval, 2/21 and  
 Ernestine Anderson, 2/22, Seaview Auditorium, 8pm,  
 Edmonds Community College (206-640-1249)  
 Heat Wave '97, Jazz & Blues Festival, Pt Townsend Wa,  
 2/21-22 (800-733-3608, 360-385-3102)  
 Dan Blunck Quartet, 2/21, Tula's, 9pm (See VENUES)  
 Alan Jones Trio, 2/21, New Orleans Restaurant (See  
 VENUES)  
 Michael Powers Group, 2/22, 9pm-1am, New Orleans  
 Restaurant, (See Venues)

### 23 Sun

Dave Pietro, New Orleans Restaurant (See Venues)

### 24 Mon

Jay Clayton Project, Jazz Alley, (See Venues)

### 25 Tue

Elvin Jones Jazz Machine thru 3/2, Jazz Alley (See  
 VENUES). 3/3, Vancouver (BC) East Cultural Center  
 (604-682-0706)

### 26 Wed

Improvisational Music Concert, 8:30, Speakeasy,  
 Seattle

### 28 Fri

Robin Holcomb & the Jim Knapp Orchestra perform  
 works by Holcomb, Knapp, and Jovino Santos Net, w/  
 vocalist Jay Clayton. PONCHO Hall at Cornish College,  
 8 pm (206-726-5066)

### Coming in March

Jazz Expo w/Marlana Shaw, Pierce College,  
 Tacoma, 3/15.

Below: The Volunteer Park Conservatory Orchestra performs at "Heat Wave '97" (2/21-22), the new and expanded version of the former Port Townsend Hot Jazz festival. In addition to music in the clubs, the arts festival offers theater, film documentaries, poetry/music collaboration, masquerade ball for all ages, parade, and workshops all day Saturday for children and adults.

PHOTO: NANCE CALTERWOOD



Vocalist Andrienne Wilson is joined by pianist George Cables on Valentine's Day at the New Orleans Restaurant. Trombonist Ray Anderson is featured on 2/7 and saxophonist Dave Pietro on 2/23.



Jim Knapp's Big Band features composer/pianist Robin Holcomb on 2/28 at Poncho Hall.



Ernestine Anderson is at Jazz Alley, 2/1-2, and at the Lynnwood Jazz Festival, 2/22, following Arturo Sandoval on 2/21.



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■ **TULA'S** (2214 2nd Ave, Seattle, 206-443-4221) Mediterranean & Southern cuisine, Sun-Tues 3pm-mid, Wed-Sat 3pm-2am, music nightly.

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... you are in the company of a masterful interpreter of song.

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**DON LANPHERE QUARTET**

Feb. 15 & 28, 9pm-1am

**DAN BLUNCK QUARTET**

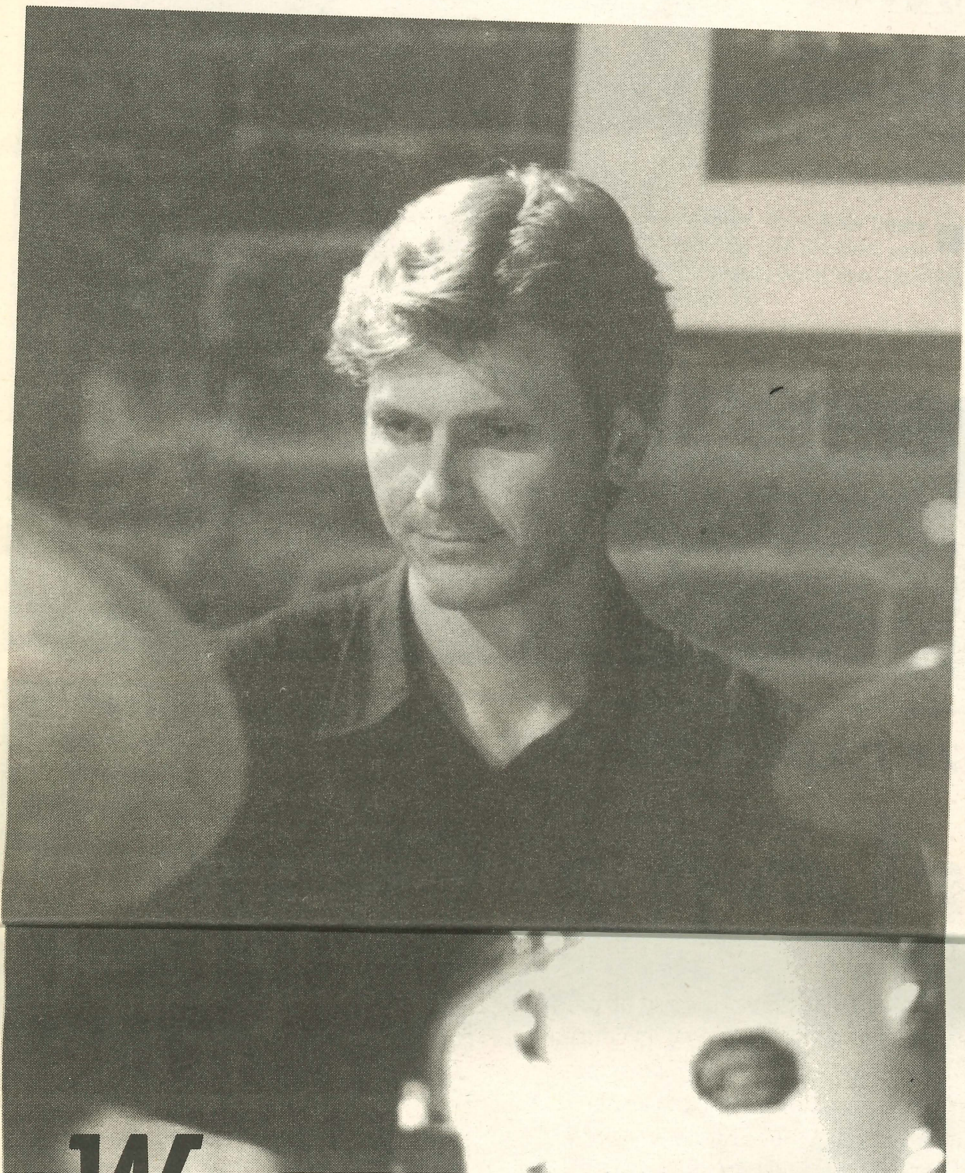
Feb. 21, 9pm-1am



# face the Music

## JOHN BISHOP: When Drummers Get Their "Druthers"

Words and  
Photos by  
Steve  
Robinson



**W**hat do Jon Faddis, Bobby McFerrin, Benny Golson, Slide Hampton, Ernie Watts, Red Skelton, Bob Hope, Frankie Avalon, and the McGuire Sisters have in common? They've all been backed by drummer extraordinaire John Bishop. Such flexibility is required of any drummer who expects to make a living at it, but where does he go to make the music he wants to play? In Bishop's case, multiple contexts are applicable, but he is especially fond of his weekly gig as leader—or should the word be coordinator?

Bishop doesn't want to control everything, remembering one nightmare gig for which he couldn't play loudly enough to satisfy the leader. "It was like trying to emulate the offspring of Sonny Payne and a freight train." For his efforts he got one line in a review: "Drummer Bishop struggled through much of the evening." He says he would have preferred it to read, "Drummer Bishop struggled through much of the week and then bludgeoned the bandleader."

There's a decidedly warm, friendly feeling about a regular gig. The players tend to know each other and often audience members. Walk into the Old Town Ale House in Seattle's Ballard neighborhood on any Tuesday night and you'll feel that warmth. Despite the high ceiling, bare wood floor, and unfinished red brick walls, the acoustics, although bright, aren't bad. And acoustic music is what you'll find. This

weekly gig has the feeling of friends gathering for a jam session, but the difference is in the friends, a veritable Who's Who of the Seattle jazz scene. The participants are never afraid to try out new ideas, and the result for fans is a rare glimpse into the creative process at its best.

As relaxed as these sessions are, Bishop's road to such ease and proficiency was arduous. His mother, a piano teacher, started Bishop on that instrument at six, and he began playing drums at seven. Professional playing jobs began in high school, followed by stints with the North Texas State University stage band ("it was rather competitive," he remembers modestly) and Buddy Greco, where he first met saxophonist Hans Teuber and convinced him to move to Seattle.

Bishop's own Seattle move had come five years earlier, in 1981, when Glider, a Eugene-based band in which he

played, came to town for a gig. When the job ended, the rest of the band moved back to Eugene; Bishop didn't. Since then he has become one of the busiest drummers in the Northwest.

On recent Tuesdays, the personnel has included the likes of pianist Marc Seales and bassists Jeff Johnson and Chuck Bergeron. This particular evening, the players included bassist Doug Miller and three saxophonists: Rick Mandyck (tenor), Teuber (alto, tenor, and a bit of piano), and Rich Cole (tenor on the second set).

Providing excellent support, appropriate dynamics, and some interesting rhythm and tempo changes, Bishop handles the sometimes difficult task of being a drummer/leader well. As often as not, a tune starts with someone just blowing. Mandyck started "Stella by Starlight" unaccompanied with an oblique reference to the melody which the others picked up instantly. First solo honors went to altoist Teuber, who has become a master at employing space to construct solos that delight the from straight swing to punctuation, picked up intensity with him. The tune

ended with bass and drums speeding up to greater than double time and then slowing back down, a clear case of the pianoless rhythm section first responding then taking charge.

Other tunes included Gillespie's "Woody 'n' You," a classic Coltrane blues, "Mr. P.C." (on which Mandyck did Trane proud), and the Sonny Rollins bop burner, "Airegin," led off by Rich Cole's muscular tenor at breakneck speed. At the end, Bishop launched what sounded like the intro to "Equinox" but became a highly stylized and effective rendition of "Angel Eyes."

What makes these sessions so appealing for the players is the contrast with some of their other jobs. According to Bishop, good leaders "see that if all the musicians bring their own concepts to the bandstand, there's the possibility that far greater music could happen." Bishop leads primarily by choosing his cohorts carefully and just letting the music out. "I've been playing with good friends whom I also consider to be some of the best in the world on their what happens at the old town."

So was I. ✕✕

## MATTHEW SHIPP: A New Voice

**E**ntering into a lively discussion on the internet's rec.music.bluenote jazz newsgroup, I once chided some other aficionados when they suggested the current crop of "young lions" on piano had nothing new to say. I asked how much new is possible, and what young players are doing it?

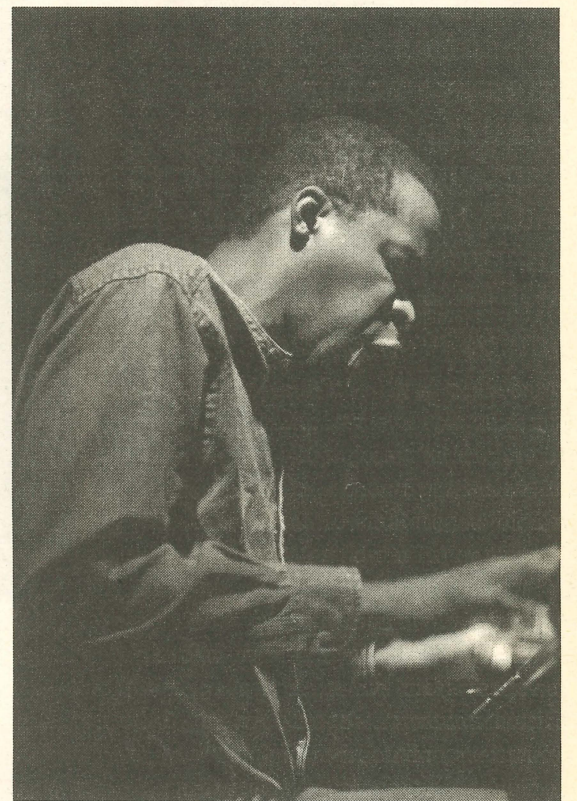
My query resulted in a number of responses, but virtually everyone suggested I check out Matthew Shipp. I did. I enjoyed his recordings, but they didn't prepare me for what I heard on December 13 at Vancouver's Glass Slipper.

Shipp—with William Parker on bass and Susie Ibarra on drums—did nothing short of redefine the piano trio. The show consisted of two 50-minute, non-stop sets with thematic material ranging from "Golden Earrings" to Gershwin's "Summertime" to "Autumn Leaves."

While the material might seem standard, the approach was not. At times everyone soloed at once, resulting in a massive wall of sound. The diminutive Ibarra provided thunderous, Elvinesque rolls against which Shipp and Parker were free to perform exploratory

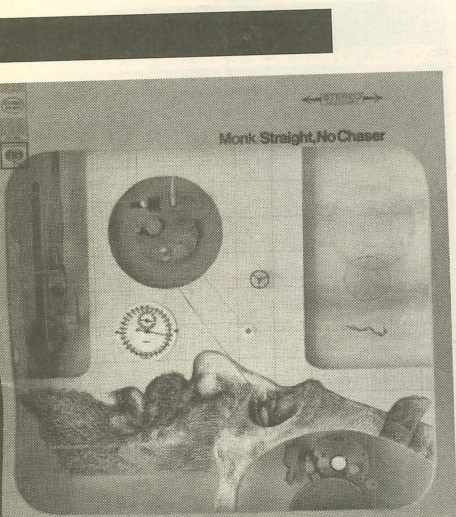
surgery. Shipp often immersed himself in pounding, repetitive riffs at either end of the keyboard. At other times the group became introspective, and we heard beautiful, quiet, solo passages from both Shipp and Parker. The one constant was extreme passion, making my last evening at the now burnt-out Slipper a night to remember.

✕✕





# Listening



**THE MONKIOUS MONK**  
*Straight, No Chaser*  
COLUMBIA/LEGACY

One of the tragedies of Columbia's CD reissue program is that they have bloody well taken their sweet time reissuing the Monk/Davis/Ellington catalogues, all of which have been available in Europe for years. But when they do get around to releasing this quintessential music, Columbia seems to do a more than fantastic job. edly the most important reissue of 1996 because it not only contains the long out-of-print, never-heard genius pieces "Locomotive" and "Japanese Folk Song (Kojo No Tsuki)" but also dangles unedited versions of the more familiar title cut and "Wee See" before the listener.

The reissue was produced by Orrin Keepnews, who had also produced more than a dozen Monk records at Riverside. Keepnews wrote the liner notes for the 1967 vinyl release and on this CD provides fascinating insight into the history of the recording. The original producer, Teo Macero, was faced with an overabundance of material from the sessions and excluded three tracks and edited some nine and a half minutes from three other tracks. All the music has now been restored.

Compare, for example, "Japanese Folk Song" on the original vinyl/European CD with the complete reissue. In the edited original Charlie Rouse's tenor solo ends at four minutes and 28 seconds, at which point Monk begins a piano solo. What actually happened at the session is that Monk dropped out of comping the melody behind Rouse at 4:28; Rouse's solo continued without Monk for another two and a half minutes, and Monk's solo kicked in at 6:39. On either version the transition from solo to solo is technically and musically flawless, an indication that Macero (in the pre-digital age) was not only a superb editor but knew how to satisfy Monk, the most meticulous of musicians.

There are also Monk solo recitals such as the Arlen/Koehler "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" and Ellington's "I Didn't Know About You." The gospel solo, "This Is My Story, This Is My Song," is a portrait of the Monk style, a miniature glimpse into his

sparseness and how he got one of his nicknames, Melodious Thunk.

This is a critical musical work. Buy it. —**Laurence Svirchev**



**STRAIGHT INTO YOUR HEART**  
The Metropole Orchestra  
Nancy King  
Steve Christofferson  
AONS

**NANCY KING/STEVE CHRISTOFFERSON**  
*Straight into Your Heart*  
MONS 295

With Holland's 54-piece Metropole Orchestra backing them, vocalist Nancy King and pianist Steve Christofferson go *Straight into Your Heart* with their new CD, easily a contender for best of '96. The Dutch Radio orchestra, complete with strings, offers a setting that becomes as well as challenges this duo. The arrangements by either Rob Pronk or Steve Gray are knockouts, tailored to the artists' talents, soaring at times but more often subtly present, enhancing every nuance of performance.

"The hallmark of Nancy's style," according to vocalist and music teacher Cherrie Adams, "is octave displacement, although that trait is not so apparent on this album as on previous CD's and in live appearances. Many singers use octave leaps to avoid hitting notes outside their range, but with her range Nancy doesn't have to worry about that. She does it for fun. That's the way she hears the music—like a horn player. It's more a matter of note choice with Nancy, and her leaps are always in tune."

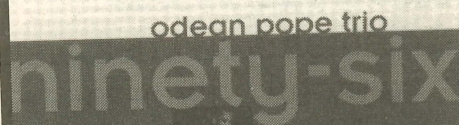
Christofferson is noted for playing melodica simultaneously with piano. He also composed one of the album's most memorable tunes, "Blue Beach," a divinely lyrical, wordless vocal with a soft samba-like rhythm.

Artie Shaw's "Moonray" opens with an arrangement so memorable as to get stuck in one's head, where it goes round and round for days. The impeccably chosen material includes Dave Frishberg's lilting and danceable "Zanzibar" and King's very personal interpretation of Bill Evans' "Waltz for Debby," a tribute to lost childhood which closes with the original coda from Evans' 1961 album. The uptempo take on "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes" would make Sinatra swoon. King's own "Moonlight to You" with lyrics by Marilyn Simpson is stunning—basically a duo performance with minimal strings

punctuating emotional highlights. Its tenderness is intensified by the soulful touch of Steve's harmonica-like melodica. The title cut closes the CD with the elegance of a mango sorbet at the end of a rich meal.

King sings as if born for this—no artifice, no holding back. Christofferson's 17 years with King show in his sensitive collaboration, a major factor in the natural beauty and warmth of *Straight into Your Heart*.

—**Sandra Burlingame**



odean pope trio  
**NINETY-SIX**  
ENJA

Philadelphia's legacy of producing innovative tenor players continues through Odean Pope. *Ninety-six*, Pope's latest CD, is deeply rooted in the groove and taps into the legacy of African music. Pope gained recognition in the '80s with the Max Roach Quartet and Double Quartet, and, because he was a student of the drummer, he has chosen a pianoless trio to bring out the intricacy of drummer Mickey Roker's playing. The trio, with Tyrone Brown on bass, creates an atmosphere swirling with dexterity and sincerity. The three beautifully fill the space, and yet they also let the songs breathe. Each composition allows ample time for unaccompanied solos, duets and conversations.

Looking to fellow Philadelphian John Coltrane for inspiration, Pope's rendition of "Coltrane Time" is primarily tenor and drums engaged in a fierce duet, and throughout the tune Pope remains true to Coltrane's rhythmic conception. But Pope maintains a sound of his own. His playing is usually slurred but above all constantly flowing and urgent. What stands out is his incorporation of multiphonics and circular breathing. Pope looks to the roots of these techniques, common in wide areas of Africa and Asia, as part of the foundation in his playing. But unlike many of his contemporaries, he avoids brainless showmanship.

"Knot It Off" begins with a line that is repeated, metamorphosing until it goes berserk and takes off like a Frankenstein monster. Pope incorporates circular breathing to give the line its propelling motion. The highlight of *Ninety-six*, "WL," opens with Pope and Roker trading off marvelous, unaccom-

panied solos. Pope's use of multiphonics is dramatic yet tasteful. Brown steps into the spotlight with a scrumptious solo that doubles as a groove, and, when the other two join in, their exceptional playing is fueled by Brown's previous statements.

Pope's brilliance continues to shine in "Ninety-six," a calypso number that gives a heavy nod to Sonny Rollins, both in structure and sound. Pope develops the theme in his solo much like "St. Thomas." But without pianist Tommy Flanagan to fill the space, "Ninety-six" comes at you with a rawer intensity. "Trilogy" and "Convictions" demonstrate his skill at mixing complicated melody lines with solos that embellish and continue them. "Trilogy," a serene 6/8 tune, is named for its bass line, drum pattern, and melody line, which enter independently.

Odean Pope should be better recognized. He is an individual with great respect for jazz as an art form, and his powerful artistic vision in *Ninety-six* proves it.

—**David Bratton**



**HANS KENNEL**  
*Habrigani Brass*  
HAT ART 6185



glenn ferris trio  
**GLENN FERRIS TRIO**  
*Face Lift*  
ENJA 9089

Trompeter Hans Kennel and trombonist Glenn Ferris share an interest in hidden sonorities, shades where multiplicities of similar sounds begin to sound and feel subtly different. This may explain Ferris' role as a collaborator with Kennel on *Habrigani Brass*. And with this newest venture into the "Habrigani" territory of a 1989 hat ART recording by a less brassy group bearing this name, Kennel intensifies brass sounds into a sonic environment that's freakily and compellingly smooth all over.

Where we expect jags from even the mellowest avant garde corners—here I'm thinking of flugelhornist Franz Koglmann—and from couriers of the avant garde like hat ART, there's hardly a jag or multiphonic jab on *Habrigani Brass*. Tunes move at such a leisurely pace that the all-brass-and-a-bass innovations slip by like shadows. The outer edges of Tom Varner's French horn dissipate, even when growling, across Kennel's and Heinz della Torre's precision trumpeting. A baroque feel peeks out at times, as does the initial hint of a stomp-fest on Thelonious Monk's "Little Rootie Tootie," but the emphasis here is on merging complex textures and stunning melodies.

As one might expect, Kennel takes

**Cont'd p. 10**  
5/4 Magazine



## Listening in Cont'd

on "Boplicity," the collaborative piece from Miles Davis and Gil Evans that became a sonic definition of "the cool" in the 1950s. What comes of it here is a rich display of polyphonic ambitions. Horns shade each other, with the bass trombone of Richard Hager enriching Ferris' trombone. All the while bassist Jean-Jacques Avenel draws from this frothy brass group an on-time, post-bop grounding which casts a long spell.

Ferris is a trombonist of delicate measure, but he's also an adept theorist of music who lays out a delightful set of philosophical ideas about improvisation in the liner notes to *Face Lift*. His trio consists of cellist Vincent Segal and bassist Bruno Rousselet. Responding to inevitable questions about this instrumentation, Ferris says simply, "I think wood when I sing trombone."

This is, to put it mildly, a very woodsy but not at all wooden CD. Tunes emerge in hushed quietude, developing in ways the ear can barely detect. Cello plucks extend into steps—lower bass plucks while Ferris strolls with the harmony on trombone and makes the whole recording seem playfully diffuse. Of course, Ferris steps into brilliant solos full of calm smears and wide brushstrokes of sound. A ballad sneaks up, and before you know it the trio has moved into a wah-wahing blues, muted trombone and all.

The beautiful thing about these two CD's is that fans of more traditional brass ensemble music will dig trolled-energy settings.

—Andrew Bartlett

voiced lower than the contrabasses. These queer combinations of voicings and time signatures induce an odd feeling of unsettling tranquillity. Just as one feels ready to accept the bizarre modulating vamp as quite normal, the tension breaks with a fanfare, and the music is swirled into a different tempo and soloist.

"Peacocks & Unicorns" has a formalized feel, as if these stylized beasties of antiquity were parading in a medieval courtyard. The composition segues into "Chromazoid," a flash-forward to a science fictive future in which trumpeter Rob Blakeslee delivers a high note solo over strings and percussion until marimba takes over.

The musicianship is extraordinary, especially given that there were only two rehearsals in which to master the music's intricacies. Golia leans toward the ponderous and grandiose, favoring dense textures woven over a broad color palette. When listening to this music, close the door, block out extraneous thoughts, open your mind, and let the music take you away.

—Laurence Svirchev

fine arrangement, this is not Christy at her best. Will Friedwald, who compiled the collection, would have done well to substitute a selection from *This Is June Christy* (also arranged by Rugolo), which has a tricky take of "Bei Mir Bist Du Schon" and a memorable version of "I Remember April." But the remaining 17 selections show Christy effectively delving into the moody territory of "Day Dream," "When Sunny Gets Blue," and "Midnight Sun" as well as swinging through classics such as "It Don't Mean a Thing" and "Get Happy."

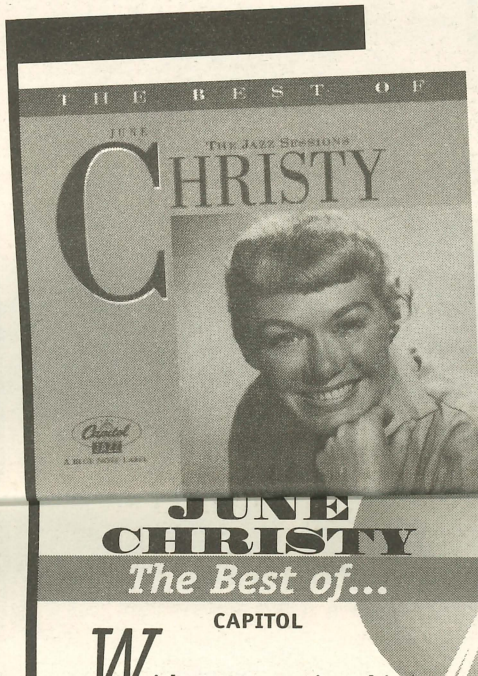
Christy's output is in many ways unique. Unlike most jazz singers, she almost consistently performed in big band settings, and unlike many popular singers who performed with big bands, her bands were definitively jazz bands—comprised of jazz artists and with arrangements clearly conceived by jazz writers. There are plenty of gems here to represent her 20 years with Capitol Records.

—Sandra Burlingame

Rabinowitz sink their teeth into this one, and Rabinowitz even inserts quotes from Charlie Parker's "Moose the Mooche."

*Gabrielle's Balloon* demonstrates that every instrument deserves a place in jazz, especially the warm/cool sound of the bassoon. It is important to emphasize that Michael Rabinowitz does not make bassoon albums but jazz albums.

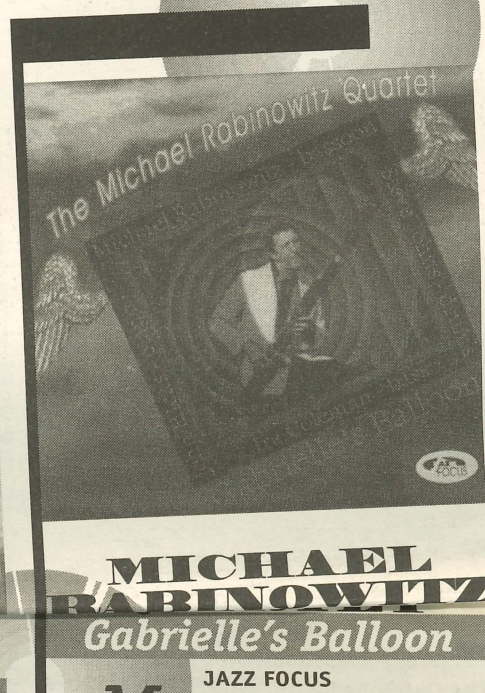
—David Bratton



**W**ith one exception this is a superb collection representing the best of vocalist June Christy. It opens appropriately with the title cut of her early '50s, best-selling LP, *Something Cool*, a ground breaking concept album arranged by the brilliant Pete Rugolo. The LP focused on introspective love songs that take a longer form than the standard AABA format. Billy Barnes' "Something Cool" has consistently been compared to a Tennessee Williams scenario, and Christy's warm voice with its slightly husky edge is the perfect vehicle for delivering the touching story with all of its complex emotional turns.

Christy consistently worked with the best arrangers (predominantly Rugolo and husband Bob Cooper) and the best instrumentalists on the West Coast, most of whom she had known during her years with the Kenton band. So in addition to Christy's superb vocals this collection is a veritable handbook for arrangers, and it's chock full of instrumental delights from Bud Shank, Buddy Collette, Lionel Hampton, Shelly Manne, Howard Roberts, Cooper and many others. Strings and woodwinds come into play on "Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most," a harp is subtly added to "My Ship," and the personnel is stripped down to a duo with Kenton on piano for "Baby, Baby All the Time."

On "Fly Me to the Moon" the accompaniment of guitar, bass and flute is marvelous, but Christy was having dental problems, and her lisped "s's" come out as "th's." Despite the



**M**ichael Rabinowitz is a pioneer on a mission to establish the bassoon's credibility in a jazz context. He has lived and performed in the New York City area for a decade. On tour as a member of Charles Mingus' *Epitaph* ensemble, he met pianist John Hicks and drummer Steve John, who appear with him and bassist Ira Coleman on *Gabrielle's Balloon*, Rabinowitz's second album.

A technical challenge in any genre, the bassoon is handled with authority by Rabinowitz, whose nimble playing makes the instrument seem a natural for a jazz quartet. Its sound, resembling a baritone or soprano saxophone, makes *Gabrielle's Balloon* both a surprise and a delight.

The title track, a Rabinowitz original, tosses away all preconceptions and stereotypes about the bassoon. The rhythm section lays down a hard groove that Rabinowitz floats over with intelligent soloing which incorporates phrasing much like that of saxophonists.

With Monk's "Eronel" the group reverses roles with Rabinowitz establishing the melody as the other members of the quartet encircle and accompany. Coleman is the first to step into the spotlight with a dexterous bebop solo which leads into joint soloing by Hicks and Rabinowitz. The bassoonist's solos are the post-bop ideal, with lines that carry a feeling and agility that many frontmen have yet to achieve on traditional jazz instruments.

The dynamic interplay on "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes" is propelled by a Latin riff on bass. Improvising some fierce solo work, Hicks and



**TONY OXLEY  
CELEBRATION  
ORCHESTRA  
w/BILL DIXON**  
*The Enchanted  
Messenger*

SOUL NOTE

**A**fter a few cursory listenings I filed Tony Oxley's *Enchanted Messenger* away, a bad sign. The recent snowstorm happily changed its fate. Immobilized and secluded for five days, one has the tendency to become more creative, resourceful, and attentive.

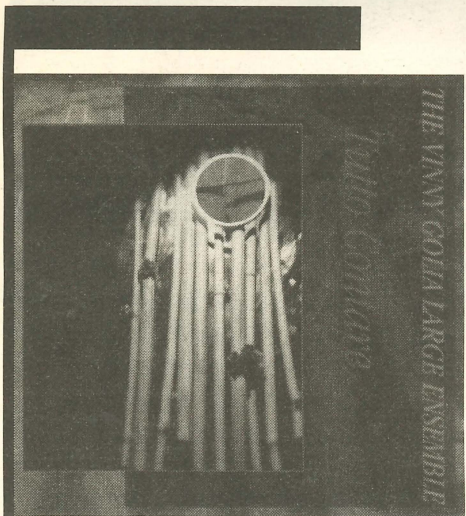
I had been listening exclusively to trumpeter Bill Dixon for a month, and I decided to resurrect Oxley's CD, on which Dixon is the featured soloist. To my delight I unearthed a gem. It required only the patience to listen and integrate its 19 sections, or, as Oxley prefers to call them, mobiles.

*The Enchanted Messenger* falls in line with the tradition of the free jazz genre pioneered by Albert Ayler's *New York Eye and Ear Control* (1964) and Peter Brotzmann's *Machine Gun* (1968). It has a close affinity to the conceptions of Butch Morris and reaches the scope of Cecil Taylor's epic *Berlin Project* of 1988.

On this live recording from the Berlin JazzFest '94, showcasing the Celebration Orchestra's 10th anniversary, Dixon plays in the lower subtone of the trumpet's range due to the lack of bass accompaniment throughout the performance. Oxley and the percussion section open, creating a wall of sound which introduces the trombone of Johannes Bauer and strings in section #2, followed by an orchestral frenzy in section #3.

Vocalist Phil Minton and Dixon perform an interestingly articulated duet, lent texture by Oxley's percussion and Pat Thomas' piano, making up sections #4 and #5, which are thematically restated by the orchestra in the two-minute section #6. The tenor solo by E.L. Petrowsky in section #7 is strongly reminiscent of Evan Parker. Frank Gratkowsky's alto and Bauer's trombone are featured in section #8.

The major mobile solos earnestly begin in section #9 with Phil Wachman's interpretive violin solo, backed by the string section and leading directly into section #10 with a beautiful trumpet solo by Dixon. The strings continue to set the mood, now joined by percussion and trombone.



**VINNY  
GOLIA  
LARGE  
ENSEMBLE**  
*Tutto Contare*

9 WINDS

**T**utto Contare celebrates the Vinny Golia Large Ensemble's 14th anniversary with a 25-musician concert recording: conductor, eight brass, seven reeds, four percussionists (including mallets), and five string players. Most of the music on the CD was to be presented with a dance company. When the company pulled out, the concert went ahead—good thing too, because the music, as far out as it is, contains mesmerizing grooves.

"Korean Lotus Driving Time" is built on a fascinating rhythm: one bar of 5/4, nine bars of 4/4, one of 2/4, and one bar of 5/4. The pulse is provided by cellos, contrabasses and muted trombones, with the cellos

5/4 Magazine



## Ross cont'd

she put on for the part, she said, "Oh, 15-20 pounds, just enough to be blowzy." Her performance stands out for its excellence among a list of high profile actors that includes Jack Lemmon, Lili Tomlin, Tim Robbins, Robert Downey, Jr., Tom Waits and cellist Lori Singer.

Ross is enjoying a revival of interest in her vocal art with the release of her 1996 CD, *Music is Forever*, her first solo recording in years. On it she reprises two of her big hits with LH&R—"Twisted" and "Farmer's Market," for which she wrote the still hip and zany lyrics. She covers Arthur Johnston's ballad with lyrics by Sam Coslow, "Marijuana," written for a 1920's musical. Its inclusion may not be politically correct, but in light of measures passed in California and Arizona legalizing pot for medical use, it's certainly timely. She swings Basie's "Going to Chicago" with lyrics by Jon Hendricks and a coda by herself, lends humor to the depression era "One Meat Ball," and brings a bittersweet touch to standards like "It Had to Be You." And if "It Never Entered My Mind" sounds different, Ross sings Lorenz Hart's alternate lyrics, unearthed by a friend of hers.

As throughout her career she is surrounded by a gaggle of greats on *Music Is Forever*: Pianist and arranger Mike Renzi, bassist Peter Washington, and drummer Louis Hayes, with guest appearances by Tommy Flanagan, Jay Leonhart, Frank Wess, Al Grey, and Joe Beck.

Also Columbia has just reissued a two-CD set of the work of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, which includes their brilliant, self-titled 1959 release as well as LH&R *Sing Ellington* and *High Flying* plus eight additional tracks, four of which have never before been released. What's amazing about listening to this collection is the familiarity of the material, the realization that almost every song they did was a hit. And the material and performances are just as spicy today as ever.

Appreciation from the jazz community ran high during Ross' Seattle visit,

both from young musicians unfamiliar with her early work to seasoned veterans.

Vocalist/trombonist Andy Shaw, who spent five months on the road with Jon Hendricks & Company in 1975, says of Ross, "I love the way she was swingin'. Her sense of time is so profound. When she got to the bridge, her body would shift subtly with the different rhythm. She had to have grown up around a lot of jazz—the swing roots are in her bones."

Vocalist Jay Clayton, who has taken the jazz vocal tradition to new realms, said, "Lambert, Hendricks & Ross were the first group to inspire me. They opened up new possibilities for the human voice. I was moved to be in the presence of Annie Ross, to feel the depth of tradition, the honesty of the music."

Dorothy Rodes, who studies with Clayton, said "Ross' performance was complete, even though her chops aren't what they used to be. Every note doesn't have to be filled with voice for a tune to be satisfying. Her 'Lush Life,' taught to her by Billy Strayhorn himself, was as moving as any I've heard."

Trumpeter Floyd Standifer, who joined Ross on stage for her last set, is an educator who has worked for a decade with vocalists at the Janis Borla camp in Illinois. "With the LHR trio, Ross was orchestral, like a person in a big band section who knows how to blend and make the most of interior parts. As a soloist she has a spare sense of melody; she cuts to the essence of a song to tell a story. With her you have to be ready for involvement; she's hypnotic, like Miles. She doesn't over embellish, and she never imitates other singers."

Vocalist Nancy King, who was kept in Portland by pneumonia during Ross' engagement, simply said, "She's a goddess." ❖❖

## Malone cont'd

John Coltrane and Miles Davis.

Malone's other seminal influence was the undisputed king of the blues guitar, B.B. King, whom he also first met on television.

"I will never forget seeing B.B. King on *Sanford and Son* playing 'How Blue Can You Get,'" Malone says. "That guitar, plus his voice—he sounded like the minister in my church. He was preaching the blues. And it is also a good idea to emulate his humility."

Malone got to play the blues when he joined Branford Marsalis and a number of blues players on *I Heard You Twice the First Time*. He met Marsalis when after a Sting concert the sax player dropped by an Atlanta club where Malone was playing. Another famous New Orleans musician, Harry Connick Jr., also saw Malone playing and asked him to join him in the studio and on tour. The relationship lasted four years.

It was when he joined Connick that Malone got the deal with Columbia Records. It was for two records and an option for a third. The label didn't take that option but Malone isn't upset about it.

"I'm not bitter. I never felt that the music industry owed me anything," Malone says. "I'm always playing, and I can always get better at it. That's what's important to me." ❖❖

## Hahn cont'd

Since he has returned, Hahn has also been performing in local night-clubs. He plays solo every Monday at the Jazz de Opus; on February 6, he'll play at Jimmy Mak's with singer Mary Kaddery, and on the 7th and 8th he'll lead his own trio at that venue; on the 27th he's at Atwater's with Kaddery again. Often times, however, he has traded opportunities as a performer for the security and satisfactions of teaching.

"Yes," he muses, "I've always done that. Those 15 years in Kansas took me completely out of performing except on a local level. The reality is," he explains, "one has to make a living. I don't have nearly enough time to practice and write. Never have had the time."

Though Hahn was out of the circuit for many years, what once went around came around to him again when Columbia reissued *Live at Monterey: The John Handy Quintet*—electrified jazz that galvanized the 1965 Monterey crowd. The reissue resulted in a new Handy CD, *Live at Yoshi's Nitespot*, a double album recorded in 1996 with the original members of Handy's quintet. "It was just a thrill to play with those guys, to get back there and do it again," Hahn says of the band that's perhaps closest to his heart.

Hahn has also been expanding in other directions in his work with former Cream drummer Ginger Baker. (*Falling off the Roof*, featuring Hahn on one track, is due out in '97.) But the Kansas native, who got his start in a western swing band, believes he is at his best in a simple guitar trio setting.

"If I've got a great rhythm section, I'm in heaven," he asserts. "That's all I need." Though his newest CD features greater variety, we can hear the elements that distinguish his work in every cut.

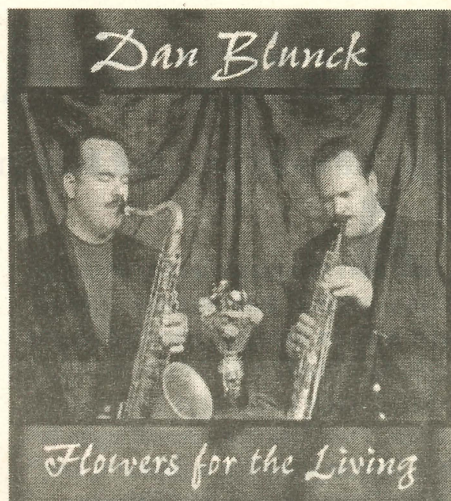
His sophisticated harmonic sense and inventive melodic variations suffuse the ballads and medium tempo tunes with intriguing depths. His unusual choice of notes and colorfully voiced chords create briefly passing dissonance that modulates into sweetly swinging phrases. Rhythmically, he produces similar juxtapositions, creating satisfying forward motion by combining off-kilter sounding sequences with in-the-pocket grooves. And then there's his distinctive tone.

You wouldn't quite call it a warm sound, though it has a burnished patina of restraint that creates a human glow around the electronic pitches. But the way Hahn bends notes, his legato single-note lines, and his lovely chords make his sound more sweet than hot, no matter the fleet intricacy of his uptempo romps.

Hahn's music radiates meticulous craftsmanship. Maybe that's the key to his sound. We feel a thoughtful care has been lavished on every phrase. And that warms us with the flush of beauty.

And yet here he is, newly lodged in a provincial city, embarking again on a teaching career, even if it's only part-time. "I almost went to New York," he explains. "But I realized that it might take me a couple of years to work into a teaching position there that would be good for me. "No," he says thoughtfully, "I've never made that move to New York. I probably should have done it years ago. But I'm not sure I want to pay those kind of dues. I'd rather live in a nice place like Portland. I feel very comfortable here."

Maybe it's the comfort, after all, that has been responsible for the quality of his playing. ❖❖



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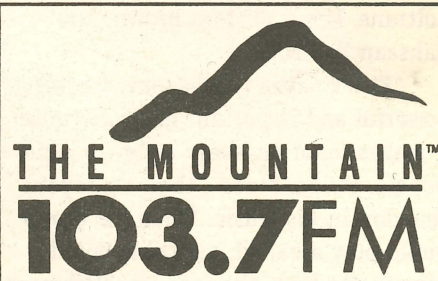
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## Listening in cont'd

This sets up section #11 which is the longest mobile and without a doubt the best, featuring a string/trombone/orchestra triad which is quite memorable.

Section #12 features a Minton solo of chanting and cat calls mirrored in electronics. The full orchestra reappears in section #13, followed by a wonderful clarinet solo by Petrowsky, complemented by strings and percussion in section #14. The electronics become more pronounced in sections #15 and #16, joined by Dixon, Minton, and the reed section. Percussion and strings lay down an awesome rhythm in section #17, accompanied by a smooth, higher register solo by Dixon. A short piano interlude follows in section #18 culminating in a full orchestra barrage creating a counterpoint for Dixon's trumpet.

To make things better, the value of this recording does not stop with the music. The liner notes are quite informative, and the cover art is an extremely tasteful replication of the artwork of both Oxley and Dixon.

—Allen Platt ❖❖



# COMPOSER'S NOTEBOOK

-a conversation with

## Jessica Williams

by John Atkins

At the piano Jessica Williams delivers inspired performances of Monk tunes with an exacting standard no one but Monk himself would dare correct. "I do Monk tunes in the keys they were written. They just don't sound right to me if they're played in a different key," Williams says, tipping her Sherman cigarette in the ashtray. "I respect what other writers have done, so even if I do my own version of a tune, I still keep the signature elements of the tune intact. I'm very much into the history of music.

"Take a look at 'All Blues.' People are always playing it wrong," she says. "There's supposed to be an eight bar rest period and a trill in it, but most musicians never perform it that way. 'All Blues,' [from Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue* album] shows Bill Evans working with a cluster of chords all in the key of G—all white keys on the piano—but when you make the change, there's one black key, B flat. You've got to play it in the right key or it won't come out like that," she says.

Williams' early influences include Dave Brubeck and Oscar Peterson. "Oscar made me want to quit. Whenever I'd play *Tristeza*, and it blows me out of the water. What I gained from him is an assertiveness in my playing.

"Red Garland is a pianistic influence—a most elegant player. It's funny, he's certainly there in my playing but none of the critics have ever mentioned him," Williams lets out a hearty laugh. She says much of her style has been influenced by Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, Miles, Clifford Brown, and Rahsaan Roland Kirk.

"Kirk's music touches me. It's very powerful and important music because it makes room for every style—boogie woogie, stride, blues—there's a joyous abandon in his music. When his group would play a ballad, anything could happen. At first, the jazz establishment thought he was a charlatan, but he had a very advanced musical concept."

Williams' reverence for these masters has led her toward a kind of writing and playing imbued with spiritual perfectionism. "Coltrane

continues to be a strong influence. He was connecting with some deep spiritual currents, drawing them together with his audience. He created a feeling I call the Church of the Holy Eighth Note where everybody transcends the mundane and is brought together into one organism."

Williams finds two qualities that make a song durable: simplicity and familiarity. "My compositions have gotten simpler and simpler. I don't like complicated writing that is hard to learn and difficult and complex to play. But give me a Coltrane tune like 'Giant Steps.' It's everything I just named, but it has an inner logic that tells you where to go. Sonny Rollins' tunes are always a lesson in simplicity, but they've also got some little hook in them. I write tunes which are either 16 or 32 bars. There's not a whole lot of stuff you have to remember.

"The best tunes are the ones people think they've heard before," Williams continues. "I gave 'A Song That I Heard,' its title because it sounded like five or six different tunes that I know and like.

Piano + bass  
UNISON  
CLEAR BLUE LOU Jessica Williams  
CP 1982, ERKANIAN MUSIC

12 bar blues in C

The ones that have durability come to me whole. I throw away the ones I have to work out.

"Sometimes I get ideas for tunes while I'm doing other things. I wrote a tune called 'Little Dog Blues' after taking my dog for a walk one day and hearing him bark at another dog. The barks were coming in groups of three. Every time I play it, I hear my little dog."

Though she may be exacting at the keyboard, Williams says her writing style isn't as kosher as the classical style she was taught at age 8-16 at the Peabody Conservatory. "I write without using key signatures at the beginning of a staff. I just notate flats and sharps as I go along. Ornette calls it harmolodics. It works like this: I don't think of a tune in F, because a tune may have several key changes in it. Look at 'If I Were A Bell.' In the key of

F, it goes 2,5,1. When it changes from E minor to A7, you could think of that as 2,5 in D minor. Right after that, there's a 2,5 in A major then it goes back into F. For me, it's easier because I don't have to think about tonal relationships within the key of F. I can tunnel through by switching keys, and when you're learning to improvise, it makes it much easier to think this way," Williams explains.

Jessica has recorded the accompanying composition, "Clear Blue Lou," on three separate albums: *Update* (Clean Cuts) with Eddie Harris on saxophone; *Next Step* (Hep), a solo piano version; and with Dick Berk and Jeff Johnson on *Inventions* (Jazz Focus). Normally the first four bars in a song comprise 16 beats in 4/4. But the way Williams has grouped them, 5/5/6, the accents fall in a way that makes the tune shift its center of gravity. ✕✕

## Mike on the SOUND

by Mike Marlin

As the full moon peeks from behind the mist and the calendar makes flipping motions on my refrigerator, I am reminded of some electrifying notes that rained omnidirectionally to close out the year for creative music. And as musical

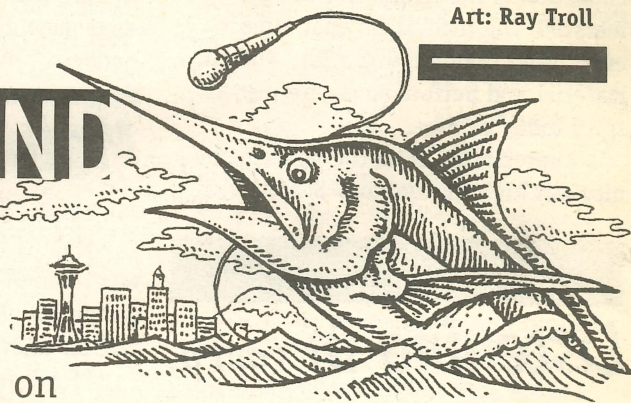
categories continue to spread thinner, I would not be surprised to find bins for "Acid Polka," "Ambient Yodeling," "Trance C&W" and "Hip Hopera" at local CD stores soon.

The beauty of the continual surge of improvised music in Seattle is precisely the ability not to get stuck in one mode, but to keep pushing the envelope. Ongoing series, such as Other Sounds at the Speakeasy, Friday and Saturday evenings at Anomalous Records, and the Acceleration Couch gigs at Moe, not to mention sporadic performances at The Compound in Ballard, are providing the space for musicians and enthusiastic audiences alike.

A refreshing quintet, **UnFolkUs** has been making the rounds recently with open minds and ears. The group features guitarist Bill Horist, Chapman stick bassist Rob Bageant, percussionists Evelyn Graaf and Seymour King, and Paul Hoskin on contrabass clarinet.

Whether quietly introspective or raucously inventive, the soundscapes created by UnFolkUs transfix and, on more than one occasion, have been known to drive audiences into delirious rapture.

Other projects to venture into serious texture weaving are **Bolt** (Jessica Lurie—alto, Angelina Baldoz—trumpet, Paul Hoskin—contrabass clarinet, and Greg Powers—trombone), **Gleet** (a clarinet quartet), and the mystical **Incubus Octet**. Incubus, remarkable for its ability to play around an unstated melody, is a group of dedicated souls: Randall Dunn—clariphone and saxophones, Brendan Wallace—trumpet & flute, Steve Moore—trombone, Lori Goldston—cello, Andrew Drury—percussion, Bill Horist—guitar, Troy Swanson—unconventional electronics, and Hoskin. These are just a few groupings of improvisers that can be found regularly at the above mentioned series.



Who says the turntable isn't a viable musical instrument? A recent visit to the Art Bar from Bay Area trio **Invisible Scratch Pickles** reaffirmed that evolution coexists nicely with revolution. The Pickles, a trio of the turntable scratching, sequencer laden DJ Qbert, MixMaster Mike and DJ Short combined for an intricate mesh of polyrhythmic scratches, sub bass and tastefully chosen samples—as if Ornette, Charlie Haden and Ed Blackwell had picked up turntables and unobtrusively schooled everyone in the house.

Big name jazz is still alive and well in Seattle too, as witnessed by a solid outing from **Joshua Redman**. The superb tenor man brought his quintet to the King Cat Theater for a rousing set of originals and tunes by Sonny Rollins and Trane. Redman's energy was infectious, his phrasing buoyant and clever. I found myself shedding my cynicism for the "young lions" movement and enjoying the hell out of the show.

Enjoy 1997 in all its musical incarnations. ✕✕

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