

Jazz LPs

Data

Nat Adderley: *The Scavenger*. Adderley, Mel Lastie, cornets; Joe Zawinul, piano; Victor Gaskin, bass; Roy McCurdy, drums; Joe Henderson, tenor saxophone (on three titles); Jeremy Steig, flute (on one title); strings arranged and conducted by Bill Fischer (on two titles). Milestone stereo, MPS-9016, \$4.98.

Aretha Franklin: *Soul '69*. Aretha Franklin, vocal and piano; with big band arranged and conducted by Arif Mardin. Atlantic stereo, SD-8212, \$4.98.

Woody Herman: *Concerto for Herd*. Herman, clarinet, and alto and soprano saxophones, with sixteen-piece band. Verve stereo, V6-8764, \$5.98. *Light My Fire*. Herman, clarinet, and alto and soprano saxophones, with seventeen-piece band; Richard Evans, arranger. Cadet stereo, LPS 819, \$4.98.

Illinois Jacquet: *The King!* Jacquet, tenor saxophone and bassoon; Joe Newman, trumpet; Milt Buckner, piano and organ; Billy Butler, guitar; Al Lucas, bass and tuba; Jo Jones, drums; Montego Joe, conga and bongos. Prestige stereo, 7597, \$4.79.

Herbie Mann: *Moody Mann*. Mann, flute and bass clarinet; Urbie Green, trombone; Jack Nimitz, bass clarinet and baritone saxophone; Joe Puma, guitar; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Charlie Smith, drums. Riverside stereo, RS-3029, \$4.98.

Fats Waller: *African Ripples*. Waller, piano and vocal, in solo, with quintet and thirteen-piece band. RCA Victor mono, LPV-562, \$4.98.

The World's Greatest Jazz Band of Yank Lawson and Bob Haggart. Lawson, Billy Butterfield, trumpets; Lou McGarity, Carl Fontana, trombones; Bob Wilber, clarinet and soprano saxophone; Bud Freeman, tenor saxophone; Ralph Sutton, piano; Clancey Hayes, banjo; Bob Haggart, bass and whistling; Morcy Feld, drums. Project 3 stereo, PR-5033-SD, \$5.98. Gene Mayl: *On Parade*. Mayl, tuba and vocal; Bob Hodes, trumpet; Charles Sonnanstine, trombone and vocal; Ted Bielefeld, clarinet; Robin Wetterau, piano; Jack Vastine, banjo. Red Onion mono, 1, \$5.00. (Postpaid from Red Onion Records, Box 6, Walnut Street Station, Dayton, Ohio 45412.)

Gerald Wilson: *California Soul*. Wilson, arranger and conductor; with big band. World Pacific stereo, ST-20135, \$5.79.

Report

The two most satisfying performances in this thoughtful, workmanlike album are of "Sweet Emma" and "Bittersweet," both composed by Nat Adderley, and both possessed of themes of considerable intrinsic beauty. Violas and cellos are employed with unusual distinction behind

Miss Franklin has here rather surprisingly returned to a jazz context, this time with a big band. One thoroughly successful performance is of Sam Cooke's "Bring It on Home to Me," where the singer's shouting drive contrasts happily with the band's Basic-like riffs. "So Long," a torch song at slow tempo, also comes off well, with voice and lyrics communicating effectively over rhythm-section backing before the band

The Verve album, well recorded at the 1967 Monterey Jazz Festival, is the best by Herman in several years. The first side is devoted to an original composition by Bill Holman, "Concerto for Herd," that had obviously been rehearsed thoroughly. Attention to dynamics, not always the Herd's strong suit, is exemplary in the second movement, while color and tempo changes are brilliantly handled in the third. The second side contains a pleasing original by Don Rader,

Despite an irritating and inappropriate conga drum, this is a very enjoyable record, thanks in large part to the masterly rhythmic support of Jones and Buckner. The latter, who still plays better than anyone else the block-chord style he originated, switches convincingly to a lyrical vein on "Blue and Sentimental." Newman's trumpet is discreet but firm, and the underrated Butler contributes several guitar solos of excep-

In the view of annotator Nat Hentoff, "this is Herbie Mann's best album." Made in 1957, it has a restrained, limpid character unlike that of Mann's later work on, for example, the recent Atlantic SD-1513, where the inspiration is Ray Charles. The Riverside has more to recommend it—a good choice of material, excellent

The fifth Waller album in the Vintage series, this is compiled to the same pattern as its predecessors. There are three sides by the big band of 1938, ten by the Rhythm of 1937-38, two piano solos from 1929, and one—"African Ripples"—from 1934. This last is an unusual potpourri of early Harlem piano styles. The small

The first band scarcely lives up to its vaunting title, although there are several agreeable passages. Those familiar with previous groups led by Lawson and Haggart—and their part in the Bob Crosby band's fortunes—will not be disappointed, for Dixieland is always just around the corner. Among the errors of judgment are yet another version of the tiresome "Big Noise from Winnetka" and the application of the brilliant Ralph Sutton to "Honky Tonk Train." (Maybe the latter was inspired by memories of Bob Zurke?) On the whole, there seems to be

Crushing brass and shrilling piccolos give an undeserved dignity to several items popularized by rock merchants. That the numbers were essentially demeaning is suggested by the superiority of the interpretations of Lalo Schiffrin's "Down Here on the Ground" and Wilson's own "El Presidente." There are voluminous notes describing the leader as "an unencapsulated

the two cornets. Adderley outlines the theme in the second chorus of the first number with a small, delicate sound that illuminates the music appealingly, and his muted solos on the second and on "But Not for Me" are refreshingly understated.

comes in to create a warm feeling like Basic's "Li'l Darlin'." Mardin's arrangements are tailored intelligently, and the studio band plays them well but, despite handsome solos by Kenny Burrell and Junior Mance, a certain anonymity prevails. What the set suggests is that an alliance with Basic or Ellington might prove sensational.

whose years with Count Basic echo in the voicings, easy tempos, and riffs. The Cadet set offers another example of compromise—or collaboration—made in the forlorn hope of bridging the generation gap. Arranger Evans is, however, intelligent and resourceful, and the results are not distracting, the *mésalliance* with rock being discarded on some of the second side's tracks, among which is a rich but Kentonish "Impressions of Strayhorn."

tional quality. After a stiff theme statement in the opening number, Jacquet blows with commanding energy and drive, particularly on the up-tempo version of "The King." He improvises on bassoon in "Caravan" as Newman plays the melody and Buckner, Lucas, and Montego Joe respectively double on organ, tuba, and bongos. It is a performance that goes a little beyond the usual mock orientalia.


trombone by Green, pretty guitar solos by Puma, and a rhythm section in which Pettiford and Smith, both now deceased, work smoothly together. The great bassist is heard to particular advantage on his own "Swing Till the Girls Come Home."

unit excels in an instrumental version of its signing-off theme, but it is interesting to note how successfully Waller maintains the group's character with a sextet temporarily assembled in Hollywood during 1937. His piano-playing obviously had the power to invigorate and inspire any competent jazz musician.

too much trumpet by Lawson and not enough by the talented Butterfield, while Wilber and Freeman play with more taste than inspiration. Haggart's scores and the unusual instrumentation result in some exciting ensembles. The Mayl band has persevered in the presentation of the traditional Dixieland idiom for over twenty years, and its program includes old favorites by Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, and Richard M. Jones. The performances, with Dodds-inspired clarinet, often recapture the sound and spirit of jazz in the early 1920s with creditable fidelity.

man," quoting "noted psychologist Carl Rogers," and identifying most of the soloists, but nowhere is there a full band personnel. Since the emphasis is decidedly on the ensemble, this is an inexcusable omission, especially for a record in a double-fold cover. Producer Richard Bock, please note.

—STANLEY DANCE.



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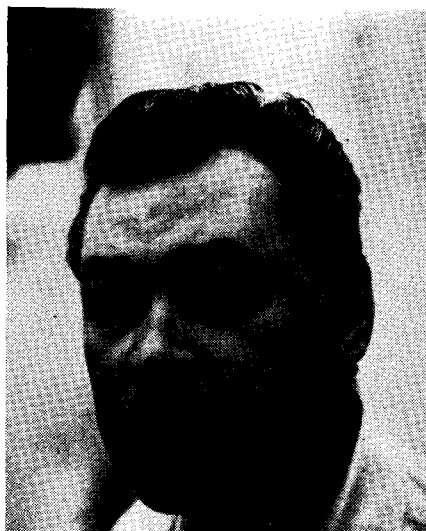
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Getting Along with Lunceford

THE first billing was the "Chickasaw Syncopaters," and the band came out of Memphis in the late 1920s. By 1930, the group had made its first recordings, and five years later it had become one of the most successful swing bands in the country. Along the way, it had been decided that "Jimmy Lunceford and his Orchestra" would be the name, and it was a much more appropriate billing than the former, for the group was not a cooperative of instrumentalists but very much a leader's band.

Lunceford's recording career began at Victor, with two titles in 1930 and six more in early 1934. (These six would make half a good Vintage album.) Then, beginning in late 1934, there were five years at Decca. Following came a couple of years at Vocalion and Columbia. These latter are well, but not ideally, represented on Columbia's *Lunceford Special* (stereo, CS 9515).

There are two new Decca releases, *Jimmy Lunceford Vol. 1 "Rhythm Is Our Business"* (1934-1935) (enhanced for stereo, DL 79237) and *Jimmy Lunceford Vol. 2 "Harlem Shout"* (1935-1936), (DL 79238), and these present the first two years with the company very well or rather badly. Very well, if the plan were to offer an average of what Lunceford actually recorded and played for the crowds. Rather badly, if the idea were to offer the best of Lunceford recordings from those years that are apt to be the most interesting thirty-plus years later.



—Phil Stern.

Willie Smith—"one of the five or six best men on his instrument."

The first set begins with some versions of Ellington pieces ("Mood Indigo," "Black and Tan Fantasy," and a tune, "Rose Room," Ellington had adopted) in versions that are deplorably lightweight, almost deliberately "cute." Before long, we encounter the kind of good lightweight material that was more appropriate to the Lunceford showmanship, vocals and solos on a piece like "Rhythm Is Our Business." What we do not encounter often enough is the kind of rousing, powerhouse instrumental best represented by a piece like "White Heat"

(which was not done for Decca), but well represented by "Oh Boy" and "Runnin' Wild." Meanwhile, we hear far too many deadpan ballads, too many vocal trios and the like, some of which are really dreadful.

One thing that was clear at the time is clearer still in retrospect: with rare exceptions, Lunceford was not interested in his soloists for the best that soloists can contribute, but only as pieces in a pattern of ensemble discipline and showmanship. Solos were effects to this band, effects among all the other effects it could achieve, and not the chief effects.

Not that Lunceford didn't have some good improvisers, and even some very good ones. Indeed, alto saxophonist Willie Smith was, at the time, one of the five or six best men on his instrument in jazz. But, whereas one might listen to Ellington for ten minutes and know what an exceptional alto soloist Johnny Hodges was, for knowledge of Smith's abilities, he might have to listen to Lunceford long and hard.

ONE might therefore expect, as I imply above, that the arrangements would be exceptional. Some few are. And others have good moments. (It's interesting, in rehearsing this chart on "Avalon," to realize how many of its effects were borrowed by others.) But by and large, it was a general attitude that sustained this band, a kind of good time, stomping shout, or easy, middle-tempo swing that can be heard on "Bird of Paradise," "Stomp It Off," "Organ Grinder's Swing" (probably the best), "Sewanee River," or "Harlem Shout." These moods were quite genuine while they lasted (and this ensemble could swing a "two-beat" accented arrangement as none other).

Fletcher Henderson's best recordings survive their time because he showed what big band jazz might be, showed that the individual improviser and the composer-arranger might work together, and often enough showed they might work together with excellence. Ellington, simultaneously both earthier and more sophisticated than Henderson, showed that the individual player and the composer-orchestrator might both be brilliant and yet produce a whole greater than the sum of its parts. The Count Basie band gave spirited reaffirmation to the role of the soloist in episodes that both opened up the future for the individual improviser and survive on their own as spontaneous melody in an appropriate context. But Lunceford, I fear, the pleasures of his music being granted, was much more of his time. His music would therefore have been better served, in my opinion, by a carefully selected LP or two than by the series which these two new Decca albums inaugurate.

—MARTIN WILLIAMS.

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