

seeker, since a strange, almost morbid bottom characterizes the arrangements, without much variation except for Hugg's delicate, somewhat Donovan-esque *Sometimes*. And yet the solo work by Living is always tough, his hard alto bursts on Mann's *Konekuf* the most avant pop moment I've heard, while Hugg's introspective piano and Mann's eerie organ maintain taut pace and emotive undercurrent throughout, now and then surfacing for a special glimmer, although generally more attentive to the dark passions of the sound. *Chapter Three* is unusually fascinating music, like the soundtrack to a fun nightmare.

Argent especially deserves a listen, as



bright, soulful but never rough, rhythmically intricate far more than merely beautiful, well-orchestrated, evocatively vocalized, all the platitudes. The quartet offers a quite uncommon invention in their compositions, particularly in their ability to punctuate and vary the mainly mid-tempo ballads of the date. One of the meaner tunes, *Liar*, opens with the verse above a bass/drum rumble, then explodes on the title accusation, with an aftermath of piano and guitar bursts; and this emphasis on melodic interplay rather than strict tempos is the root of the group's music. Seldom does bassist Rodford push any heavy lines, but weaves instead, as do the sensitive patterns of drummer Hewitt, so that the rhythm becomes far more participatory than the usual rock arrangements, even on fairly funky songs like *Schoolgirl* and *Lonely Hard Road*.

In this manner, Argent overcomes a distinct peril of most rock, as the burden of melodic energy is equally distributed among the four contributors rather than the vocalist or lead instrument establishing the tempers alone while the accompaniment simply follows without much initiative. And because of this special rhythmic nature, especially in its delicacy, much of what would normally seem bubblegum, the sugary lyrics of *Joy* or the folky harmonies of *Smoke*, escapes as a far more engaging pop, even though the instrumental forays by leader-pianist Argent and guitarist Ballard are seldom spectacular, if ever more than simply tasty.

*Stepping Stone* is by far the LP's best moment, featuring rambling but close interaction, smooth harmonies and considerable soul, and should have been a monstrous hit, as should the album—since "argent" does translate as "money" in French, and they deserve it much more than the more popular bunksters.—*Bourne*

## OPERATION BREADBASKET ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR

ON THE CASE—Chess LPS 1549: *I Wish I Knew; Nobody Knows; What A Friend We Have In Jesus; Precious Memories; Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing; Too Close; Nearer My God To Thee; Country Preacher; What the World Needs Now Is Love; We Shall Overcome.*

Personnel: Maury Watson, Hobie James, Cleo Griffin, Paul Serrano, Tim Galloway, trumpets; John Watson, Steve Galloway, Nadermer Butler, Charles Taylor, trombones; Charles Forester, Arthur O'Neil, Ben Branch, Edwin Daugherty, Johnny Board, Herman Bowden, reeds; Wayne Bennett, Warren Bingham, guitars; David McCollough, Floyd Morris, Donny Hathaway, Freddy Young, keyboards; James Willis, Phil Upchurch, bass; Master Henry, congas; Prince Shell, chimes; Terry Thompson, Morris Jennings, drums; The SCLC Operation Breadbasket Choir, vocals; Prince Shell, Gene Barge, arrangers.

Rating: ★★ ★

I recall once reading an article by anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits in which he observed that most spirituals do not use the words "hell", "damnation", and "punishment" and that they were, instead, an affirmation of God and Jesus. I think this album, if one were to scrutinize the language, would justify this hypothesis. It's a collection of religious and semi-religious songs sung by the Chicago-based choir. The songs are all very well arranged and, as music for music's sake, they are fine pieces of work.

However, I feel there are other implications to this album. These are political implications. Not that I think that music is not a very political medium. And people who do not think that music is political—just consider Nazi Germany and check out the status of the musicians and what they were playing. You might even check out whether or not political leaders through the ages had any musical talent.

But that's not the point. The point is that the liner notes say that this album represents Black people. At best, it represents a very small segment of the Black experience in music. It has none of the new music played by Shepp, Clifford Thornton, Ornette Coleman, Pharoah Sanders, Cecil Taylor, etc. It has none of the secular blues, no rock, not even any of the popular music sung by Black people heard on radio station after radio station throughout the land.

David Baker, in a *down beat* interview, made the point very emphatically that the music of Black people is a tremendous spectrum, encompassing many styles and periods. If we are going to represent that music and claim that this representation is the TOTAL experience, then the TOTAL experience should be reflected.

As Black people, we can no longer turn our backs on any one aspect of our musical heritage because we think it inappropriate. —*Cole*

## STANLEY TURRENTINE

ANOTHER STORY—Blue Note BST 84336: *Get It; The Way You Look Tonight; Stella By Starlight; Quittin' Time; Six and Four.*

Personnel: Thad Jones, fluegelhorn; Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Mickey Roker, drums.

Rating: ★★ ★ ★

SUGAR—CTI 6005: *Sugar; Sunshine Alley; Impressions.*

Personnel: Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Tur-

rentine, tenor saxophone; Lonnie L. Smith, Jr., electric piano (track 1); Butch Cornell, organ (tracks 2, 3); George Benson, guitar; Ron Carter, bass; Billy Kaye, drums; Richard "Pablo" Landrum, conga drums (tracks 2, 3).

Rating: ★★ ★ 1/2

Stanley Turrentine is a robust, straight-ahead tenorist who has developed a faithful following since making a name for himself with Max Roach in the late '50s. His sound has always reminded me strongly of Illinois Jacquet and his style has strong mainstream roots. He always swings.

On these two albums (the Blue Note was taped in the spring of '69, the CTI in the fall of last year), he travels in fast company but always holds his own.

The Blue Note is an unusually (for these days) straightforward jazz date with no commercial frills. It is greatly enhanced by the presence of Thad Jones, who is too rarely heard in a small-group format. He solos on every track except *Stella* (a ballad showcase for Turrentine at his warmest), and each solo is a little gem. Jones is a truly original player, a musician who uniquely combines the cerebral and the emotional. Using fluegelhorn throughout, he also adds spice to the ensembles. His compositional gifts are on display in *Quittin' Time*, an attractive and unusually structured piece with a surprise ending. Oliver Nelson's *Six and Four* is another good piece.

The rhythm section is faultless (Roker, an unsung hero, is among today's best all-round drummers), and Walton utilizes his solo space with characteristic thoughtfulness.

The programming on the LP is attractively varied, and this puts it a notch above the later record with its three long tracks, of which the first two are medium-tempoed, blues-flavored, and minor-hued. It is on Coltrane's *Impressions*, which at 15:30 takes up the entire second side, that the players really get into something.

This is not to say that *Sugar* and *Sunshine Alley* are uninteresting: Turrentine has one of his strongest solos of the two sets on the former, and Benson drives down the blues on the second. But the over-all conception and feeling are quite predictable in a contemporary soul-jazz vein, and enhanced mainly by Hubbard's inventive and sprightly work.

On *Impressions*, however, the feeling is looser and more swinging, and everybody stretches out. Organist Cornell (like drummer Kaye a member of Turrentine's regular working group) has a fleet, Jimmy Smith-inspired solo, Benson shows why he must be ranked among the top guitarists in modern jazz, Turrentine swings and stomps, and Hubbard unleashes ideas that are fresh and sometimes startling (particularly in his use of tonguing). He demonstrates that the freedom of invention offered by good changes and a swinging underpinning can still yield innovative results. It's "inside outside" playing at its best.

Carter is, as usual, the ideal bassist, and Landrum is a conga player with jazz soul. Smith doesn't solo, but comps effectively, and Kaye is a solid, uncluttered rhythm man. In all, a very good session of its kind, with Hubbard adding something special. The cover is, to say the least, unusual.

—*Morgenstern*