

then, ★★★★★ For personal contribution in the tradition of jazz, ★★★ with hopefully more to come.

John Wilson contributes very interesting notes on the background and origins of guitar twosomes, though very early hangers-on at the old Minton Uptown may remember some fairly steady electric guitar duets involving Charlie Christian, Mary Osborne, Remo Palmieri, Tiny Grimes, Chuck Wayne and others, all predating the Barnes-Kress Duo Wilson lists as electrical innovators.

—Levin

JAMES BROWN

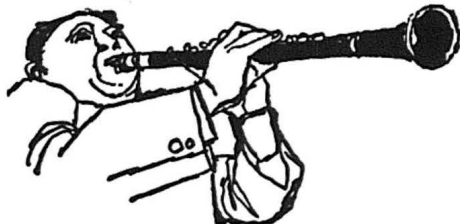
HOT PANTS—Polydor PD 4504: *Blues & Pants; Can't Stand It; Escape-ism, Part 1 and 2; Hot Pants (She Got To Use What She Got To Get What She Wants)*.

Personnel: Brown, vocal; others unidentified.

Rating: ½ ★

James Brown more and more sells mystique, not music: the all-American black-American multi-millionaire image, not the innovative rhythm-and-blues artist. Although his first Polydor album lacks his rhetoric, it is rampant with tedium.

Over clever and presumably infectious



rhythmic hot licks, Brown screeches and/or raps with sidemen equally unassuming and trivial. Even when the band cooks, as on some of *Blues & Pants* and elsewhere, little happens because Brown maintains his characteristically static temperament overall.

Maybe on stage this incessant sweating soul excites, but on record, the vapid stuff of such grooving is exposed. This is not the saucy showtime of *Papa's Got A Brand New Bag* or *Out of Sight*—this is only manufactured funk, the ineffectual and excessive posturing of Soul Brother Number One, now advertised as “a legend in his own time”.

—Bourne

STAN GETZ

DYNASTY—Verve V6-8802-2: *Dum! Dum!; Ballad for Leo; Our Kind of Sabin; Mona; Theme for Emmanuel; Invitation; Ballad for my Dad; Song for Martine; Dynasty*.

Personnel: Getz, tenor sax; Eddy Louiss, organ; Rene Thomas, guitar; Bernard Lubat, drums.

Rating: ★★★★★½

Recorded live at Ronnie Scott's Club in London last March, this two-record set offers an hour and 27 minutes of Getz' current group, which has received rave reviews from European critics.

As Getz' first straight-ahead jazz album since the memorable *Sweet Rain*, it is of course a major event. The leader is playing as well if not better than ever, and his instrumental mastery alone would make the

record a must. Unfortunately, even though the date was produced by George Martin of Beatle fame, the sound leaves much to be desired overall, ranging from brilliant to muffled and distorted. Perhaps the quality of the stateside pressing is in part responsible (side two on my copy is badly offcenter). In any case, the technical shortcomings are sufficient to often distract from the enjoyment of the music, which frequently is superb.

The group is into its own thing. In addition to Getz, it has two major soloists in Louiss and Thomas. The latter should be well remembered for his long stay in this country during the '50s and early '60s, which included recording with Sonny Rollins and J.R. Monte-rose. Originally a gifted disciple of Jimmy Raney, he has found his own voice and sound and must be ranked with the top jazz guitarists.

Louiss, who hails from Martinique, is a find. Those who may be surprised at Getz' working with an organist will understand after hearing him. He has chops, speed, inventiveness and, above all, taste and a sound that never becomes obtrusive. His footwork if fancy indeed—at times, when he plays only a bass line, you'd swear a topnotch bassist was present.

It's hard to form an opinion of Lubat, since the drums are under-recorded. His solo excursions are deft, and he surely is responsible for some of the group's drive.

The material is almost entirely original (*Invitation* is the only standard and *Mona* is by Albert Mangelsdorff; the other pieces are by Louiss, Thomas, or both) and so is the approach. Rhythmically, the quartet is very free, moving in and out of strict tempo with sure-footed grace. The music is very melodic but decidedly contemporary, if never modishly so.

Getz is a marvel. He plays with new-found energy and inspiration, always in complete command of his horn. His control in the upper range is astonishing, but he is all over the instrument, ranging from top to bottom, using his palette of sound like a master painter to achieve a startling variety of hues.

He achieves a wide variety of moods, too, ranging from warmly romantic on the ballad, *Mona*, where he sustains his long tones beautifully, to exciting and almost funky on *Leo* (not a ballad despite the title), *Emmanuel* (fantastic tempo) and *Dynasty*. On the latter, he has a lot of fun with a long, repeated quote from *It Don't Mean A Thing*, and his spirit here is just as joyful as on the memorable version of that tune recorded with Dizzy and Max Roach almost 20 years ago. *Martine* is a bossa, but in a much tougher vein than in *Desafinado* days. And on the profoundly moving *Ballad for my Dad*, Getz is elegiac.

Invitation is a solo feature for Thomas, beautifully conceived and realized. The guitarist also shines on *Sabin*, where Louiss gets into some spooky things, using a very wide dynamic range to build and release tension. (Getz' second solo on this track is a gem, and oldtimers will dig his tip of the cap to Lester Young.) Louiss' also gets off on *Dynasty* with some playing that is both funky and elegant.

There's a lot of music here (most of the tracks are long; *Sabin* lasts almost 17 minutes) and it is marvelous to hear Getz at the top of his jazz form once again. Hopefully, this group will get to play in the U.S. soon—it has something fresh and different to offer.

—Morgenstern

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