

RECORD REVIEWS

SPOTLIGHT REVIEW

DIZZY GILLESPIE/ BOBBY HACKETT

GIANTS—Perception PLP 19: *Love for Sale; Autumn Leaves; Caravan; Jitterbug Waltz; Willow Weep for Me; Birks' Works; My Man.*

Personnel: Gillespie, Hackett, trumpet; Mary Lou Williams, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Grady Tate, drums.

Rating: ★★★★★

At the beginning of the year, when the concert at which this album was taped took place at the Overseas Press Club in New York, I wrote that it was unlikely that the musical peak reached at this event would be surpassed in 1971.

Well, it hasn't so far, and I would go further—this is one of the truly great jazz records of all time. That this summit meeting was captured for posterity is something to be grateful for.

The combination of Gillespie and Hackett may seem odd to those who pigeonhole their jazz in categories—historical or social. In fact, it is as logical as could be. Less than three years apart in age, the two trumpet giants are masters of the art of improvisation. Each man knows changes backward and forward, each has developed his own unique style. The fact that their styles are so individual enhances their collaboration.

The two men are friends (for a long time, they were neighbors) and respect and admire each other. In recent years, they have worked together on several occasions, notably at a Newport trumpet workshop. But never before in so perfect setting as this, with a superb rhythm section, no clock watching, and a warm and conducive atmosphere.

As a result, mutual inspiration reaches a level seldom surpassed—on record or live. There is a great deal of interplay, or if you will, collective improvisation. At times, as on the superb *Jitterbug Waltz*, ideas and even sound echo each other to a degree that it becomes difficult to tell who is playing—in the words of a trumpeter friend, "they sound as if they were married."

Indeed, interplay is the rule here. There are no individual features as such, even though *Willow* largely belongs to Hackett, and *My Man* is mainly Gillespie's. But even on these, the other man has his say. Unlike some highly creative encounters between players of the same instrument, this was not a cutting contest but rather a warm and intimate conversation on the highest spiritual plane. At a moment where an element of competition enters—the fabulous exchanges that climax *My Man*—Hackett yields to Gillespie after the latter has tossed off an incredible run. (On the record, there is a moment of silence before Hackett takes the number out; what happened was that Bobby gave Diz a

18 □ down beat

Records are reviewed by Chris Albertson, Mike Bourne, Bill Cole, Alan Heineman, Wayne Jones, Larry Kart, Joe H. Klee, John Litweiler, Terry Martin, John McDonough, Dan Morgentern, Don Nelson, Doug Ramsey, Larry Ridley, Harvey Siders, Will Smith, and Jim Szanton. Reviews are signed by the writers.

Ratings are: ★★★★★ excellent, ★★★★ very good, ★★★ good, ★★ fair, ★ poor.

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look that said: "Now, you don't expect me to play anything behind *that!*" A lovely instant.)

Gillespie is in tremendous form; this is easily one of the best records he's ever made, and that includes some great ones. Miles may be the current ruler of the roost, but Dizzy's still his daddy. He does some things here that stagger the mind. Ideas, speed, power, execution, and harmonic and rhythmic imagination beyond compare—he's got them all.

Hackett, though suffering from a not fully mended broken shoulder, rises to the occasion. The beauty of his sound is a true reflection of the beauty of his mind; his conception is the essence of musicality. Rarely (unfortunately) heard in a setting as "modern" as this, his approach is beyond category. Hear him on Dizzy's piece, *Birk's Works*, where he does some things that will surprise even his closest followers.

Mary Lou Williams, a most remarkable musician, is not only the ideal accompanist to



the heady work of the trumpeters, but contributes solos that maintain the level of inspiration. She swings like a demon, turns the changes inside out, and makes some musical statements that rank with the greatest jazz piano playing on record. The senior member of this gathering, she thinks and plays like a youngster, but with a dimension of wisdom beyond the grasp of youth.

Duvivier, who has no peers, takes only one brief solo, but he is felt at all times. His gorgeous sound and impeccable time and choice of notes add up to a perfect definition of the bassist's true role in this music: to give inspirational support.

Grady Tate says he'd rather sing than play drums. Maybe so, but there can be no question he enjoyed this date. I've never heard him play better. Like Duvivier, he knew what he was there for.

Technically, the recording is not perfect. Hackett is frequently not favored by the balance, and one of the tracks starts with a mixed-up mix. The cover and liner notes are inadequate. But that doesn't matter at all; one would cherish this music if it had been recorded in mono on somebody's home equipment and issued on scratchy-surfaced acetates.

That music like this can be played and recorded in 1971 is an occasion for rejoicing. Sure, the passing of time brings change—that's a fact of life. But it is also a fact that certain values remain constant. The music on this wonderful record affirms the permanent value of truth and beauty. Run out and get it. Don't wait. Things this good have a way of disappearing fast. Get two while you're at it; I've already almost worn out mine.

—Morgenstern

GLORIA COLEMAN

SINGS AND SWINGS ORGAN—Mainstream MRL 322: *Bugalo For Ernie; Sunday, Monday Or Always; Fungi Mama; You Better Go Now; Blues For Youse; Blue Bossa; Love Nest; Fly Me To The Moon.*

Personnel: Ray Copeland, flugelhorn; Dick Griffin, trombone (both on tracks 2,4,6,7 only); James Anderson, tenor sax; Ms. Coleman, organ, vocal; Earl Dunbar, guitar; Charles Davis, drums.

Rating: ★★★

Three stars means "good" and that's just what this record is. It's not going to knock you out but you're going to dig some good sounds on an album that is thoroughly interesting, pleasant and good.

The only real complaint I've got is the continued lack of recognition given to the great Ray Copeland. His flugelhorn is part of the band on all the vocal tracks, but only on Kenny Dorham's *Bossa do Ray* and trombonist Dick Griffin get a chance to stretch out. Both are fine players. Griffin has achieved a measure of fame with Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Sun Ra, but Copeland is still relatively unknown. Ever since *Monty's Music* on Riverside, I've been waiting to hear more from this vastly underrated hornman. His moment of glory on *Bossa* is a delightful morsel.

Ms. Coleman's strong point as organist is her ability to vary colorations rather than setting the Hammond up with one combination and just leaving it there. As a singer, her strong points are taste, good choice of tunes and a soft, cuddly voice that is a welcome relief from some of the ladies who agonize their way through rock vocals today.

Heretofore unknown to me, tenor saxist Anderson plays quite well indeed, as do guitarist Dunbar and drummer Davis. The latter knows how to comp without bombing out the soloist.

Like I said, it's a good record. You can even dance to it.

LARRY CORYELL

BAREFOOT BOY—Flying Dutchman FD-10130: *Gypsy Queen; The Great Escape; Call to the Higher Consciousness.*

Personnel: Steve Marcus, soprano, tenor saxes; Coryell, guitar; Roy Haynes, drums; Lawrence Killian, conga; Harry Wilkinson, percussion. Tracks 2, 3: add Mervin Bronson, bass. Track 3: add Michael Mandel, piano.

Rating: ★★★★★

Coryell is heard here in a fine album, without doubt the best he's done so far.

The music is soulful jazz-rock fusion stuff in a relaxed but powerful groove, spaced by occasional free playing.

The album also features some of the strongest and most inventive playing in some time from Marcus. After the fragmented abstraction and Coltrane-copy playing on his own

albums of the most welcome *Queen* and *C* nor lines reflected

Coryell's solo expressed me plifier feedback intriguing solo flowing in and mind and is op

Haynes provides it as few son, both good Haynes' group added treat, p and sounding

The music rhythmic area and rock level

NATHAN

MAKATUKA—Ursula with *L. Perfection; I W*

Personnel: M soprano & tenor dy, piano; D Taylor, bass; G ger Humphries

This is a Davis. For th he lived for so he taught and the U.S. in th tion at the Ur tant Professor

Announc Ben Sidr which ma of his fir

Ben has been ground perso his career. He lot of fine art Rolling Stone and Jesse Da made signific as a songwriter player to seve Miller albums

Now he has a Black Talk, a as an alterna It's a new way black music a way of lookin culture in this

And he has a Feel Your Gro what his musi "He has appli to rock and r is amazing . . amongst the of all that I've I do respect." notes by Glyr Ben Sidran/s piano player-