

playing some "hip" ideas but not really improvising imaginatively.

Night, a tightly-arranged selection, is pretty much a waste. The arrangement is pleasant but nothing special, and the soloists don't have enough room.

James Moody's ballad, *Love*, a showcase for Owens, is a highlight of the album. Owens plays with considerable warmth and sensitivity, showing a Miles Davis influence, but not aping Davis. (On the other tracks, Owens' work isn't nearly as Miles-like.)

Despite having been let down by his playing here, I still submit that Owens has great promise. He's a fine technician with excellent range. Few men can handle the fluegelhorn as well as he. The horn doesn't seem to present him with any particular problems; he plays high notes strongly and cleanly, and produces a big, rich tone. And he has demonstrated in the past that he can play with daring and imagination.

I wish I could be as enthusiastic about Barron. He was once one of the most exciting young jazzmen. His recorded work of several years ago with Dizzy Gillespie and James Moody was brilliant. At that time, he employed complex single-note lines and sometimes played with considerably lyricism. His exquisite solos on Moody's *Another Bag LP* (Argo) remind me of Al Haig's work.

On this album, however, Barron's work is far less interesting. His solos are relatively simple and lack substance. Too often he employs common-property funky devices.

Maupin's tenor solos are the outstanding feature of the LP, though I get the feeling that he also has more going for him than he shows here. His spot on *Listen* is notable for its variety of colors and textures. He contributes good, hard-swinging tenor to *Gichi* and *John*. —Pekar

Nina Simone

SILK AND SOUL—Victor LSP 3837: *It Be's That Way Sometime; The Look of Love; Go to Hell; Love o' Love; Cherish; I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free; Turn Me On; Turning Point; Some Say; Consummation*. Personnel: Miss Simone, vocals; unidentified orchestra conducted by Sammy Lowe.

Rating: ★★

There are few singers who can grab an audience as effectively as Miss Simone, but on this album her usual intensity seems restrained. The performances are good, mostly; but with a singer of Miss Simone's capacities, one expects something more distinctive. Perhaps she just wasn't in the mood this time.

Three tunes, however, do strike the ear: *Turning Point*, *Turn Me On*, and *Cherish*. *Point* presents a little girl made aware for the first time—by her mother—of race. She tells the parent of the wonderful times she and her little brown playmate have at school. "Can't she come over and play dolls with me, ma? What? Oh." And another innocent is tarnished. The lyric is childlike, thoroughly befitting the circumstance, and Miss Simone treats it simply, without affectation, like a tot reading from a story book.

Turn Me On describes a lonely woman whose man has split. The pace is slow, almost funereal, but the singer evokes all

the forlorn weariness and hopeless hope of a chick that's been had but still wants the guy—perhaps only to end her loneliness.

Miss Simone harmonizes with herself (via tape, of course) on *Cherish*. Although the effect of the double voicing at times tends to obscure the lyric, the resonant beauty of Miss Simone's treatment brings it off. But it might have been just as effective had the singer merely hummed her way through.

The arrangements seem at times to have Miss Simone at their mercy. To these ears, she's best with a small group. —Nelsen

Al Tanner

HAPPINESS IS . . . TAKIN' CARE OF NATURAL BUSINESS . . . DIG?!—Touche TRLP 100: *Zaltanica; The Magi; Kuba; Poor Me; Bronson's Blues; Rolon's Groove*.

Personnel: George Alexander, trumpet and flute; Roy Henderson, tenor saxophone; Tanner, piano; Edgar Williams, bass; William (Smiley) Winters, drums.

Rating: ★★★

This is a solid San Francisco-based group that plays in the Jazz Messenger tradition. Though Tanner is the leader, the notes imply that Winters is the outstanding musician in the group. Apparently he is accorded a considerable amount of respect in San Francisco, though he has no national reputation. This isn't unusual. Many gifted jazzmen, for one reason or another, stay on their home base for years, playing well but attracting little attention, while other, sometimes less talented musicians gravitate to New York and make names for themselves.

Winters is a major leaguer—a crisp, authoritative accompanist and, if his playing on *Poor Me* is representative, a musical soloist who sustains the momentum in his spots very well.

Alexander isn't the most polished trumpeter around, but he is a stimulating soloist. I'm particularly impressed with his melodic inventiveness; his lines are complex and fresh. He has a bright tone and frequently uses the upper register; unfortunately, his high-note playing isn't too strong. His flute solos on *Kuba* and *Bronson's Blues* are rather amateurish. He doesn't have technical command of this instrument.

Tanner and Henderson are competent post-bop soloists. Henderson's style has been influenced by John Coltrane, though his work is simpler and he has a fuller, softer tone. I particularly liked his hard-swinging, melodically attractive spot on *Poor Me*. Tanner plays some neat, unobtrusive solos, displaying a good, prodigious left hand. —Pekar

Lucky Thompson

KINFOLKS CORNER—Rivoli LPR 44: *You Stepped Out of a Dream; Kinfolks Corner; Open Haus; I'll Be Around; Star Eyes; Poor Butterfly; Anthropology; Who Can I Turn To; Caressable*.

Personnel: Thompson, tenor and soprano saxophone; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Frank Anderson, organ (tracks 2, 6, 8); Wally Richardson, guitar (tracks 2, 6, 8); Willie Ruff, bass; Walter Perkins (tracks 4, 9) or Oliver Jackson, drums.

Rating: ★★★

This is Thompson's best album since that fine Jerome Kern set of a few years ago. The program of great standards and excellent Thompson originals is varied and

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well-paced, and the leader's playing on both horns is consistently admirable.

Lucky is one of the great "loners" in jazz. He refuses to compromise his musical and personal standards of integrity. This may have cost him public acclaim, since he does not work with the frequency that his talent merits, but it has kept him sane in mind and body. And judging by this record, his chops haven't suffered a bit.

It would be a mistake to equate Lucky's principles with a lofty or disdainful attitude towards music. His use of an organ on several tracks here, for instance, is hardly an indication of aloofness. And the title piece features some really down, haunting blues from Lucky's tenor.

What he does have in the highest degree is taste. On that blues, he never uses the devices so dear to tenorists in this kind of groove: no rasps, no honks, no growls. The playing is clean and utterly musical, yet has all the intensity one could ask for. It is emotion without pose. And very neatly arranged, one might add—making good use of Richardson's talking guitar and Anderson's well-modulated organ.

Each track could be cited for something of particular merit, but a special treat is the original approach to *Anthropology*. Playing soprano, Lucky takes it at a relaxed medium-bounce tempo that brings out new aspects of this time-tested bebop anthem. It is delicious, and so is Flanagan's piano spot. (Now there's a pianist who needs more exposure!)

The soprano, which Lucky plays in a manner quite his own—subtly, with an oboe-like sound, beautiful control, and perfect intonation—is featured on *Dream*, *Haus*, and *Star Eyes*, in addition to *Anthropology*. *Dream*, especially, seems to "lay" just right for the instrument.

I'll Be Around, a lovely tune, is a mellow, moving performance on tenor, by a master of the horn. *Turn To* is the best interpretation I've heard of the piece, and *Caressable* is a delightful Bossa Nova original; melodic, gentle, and warm, done with the right touch.

The rhythm sections are tailor-made for the occasion. Flanagan has no peers as an accompanist, and his solo spots are all superior. Ruff surprises with his fat sound and fluid drive; I've always known him to be a first-rate musician, but didn't know he could swing like this. Jackson is Mr. Taste personified.

Being on a small label, this record might not be readily available, but you can write to Rivoli Records, 1650 Broadway, New York 10019. Highly recommended.

—Morgenstern

Father Tom Vaughn

MOTOR CITY SOUL—RCA Victor LSP-3845/
LPM-3845: *How About You*; *Girl Talk*; *The Nearness of You*; *Motor City Soul*; *Tenderly*; *I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free*; *So What*; *The Shadow of Your Smile*; *The Girl from Ipanema*; *The Party's Over*.

Personnel: Father Vaughn, piano; Dan Jordan, bass; Dick Riordan, drums.

Rating: ★

There are plenty of fine jazzmen in this country; men who deserve national exposure but can't get it; men who can't even make a living at music. Then there are musicians with little to offer, such as Father Vaughn, who are making it.

Father Vaughn has cut LPs and appeared on network TV shows and at the Newport Jazz Festival primarily because he is a curiosity—a clergyman who is also a jazz musician.

If this LP is representative, however, he is a mediocre jazz musician. It's difficult to describe his style (if it be conceded that he has one). He has borrowed devices from a number of musicians. Unlike, say, McCoy Tyner, who has picked up ideas from several sources and synthesized them to form an original approach, Father Vaughn hasn't done much melting down—mostly he's just borrowed. His vocabulary consists of too many common-property cliches that sound hip to those who haven't heard much jazz. He's obviously been influenced by Oscar Peterson (directly or indirectly) but has picked up things from a number of other musicians.

Father Vaughn's approach is eclectic; some of his *Motor City* work is out of a quasi down-home bag; on *Nearness* and *Party* he sticks pretty close to the melody, sounding like an anonymous cocktail pianist. He is also given to flowery, overly romantic playing, as *Tenderly* demonstrates.

So What is his most ambitious effort. He uses space quite a bit and throws in some "far-out" devices and techniques, such as tone clusters and piano string strumming, and some romantic bombast as well as the usual jazz cliches.

So what?

—Pekar

Denny Zeitlin

ZEITGEIST—Columbia CS 9548: *Dormammu*; *Put Your Little Foot Right Out*; *The Hyde Street Run*; *Here's That Rainy Day*; *I Got Rhythm*; *Maiden Voyage*; *Offshore Breeze*; *Night and Day*; *Mirage*.

Personnel: Zeitlin, piano; Joe Halpin or Charlie Haden, bass; Oliver Johnson or Jerry Granelli, drums.

Rating: ★★

Zeitlin reminds me of certain fashion models, with their straight noses, even, flashing eyes, and perfect mouths. So much polish equals a flaw in itself—a flaw which is hard to pin down. He has technique, involvement, breadth, and even swings occasionally. And passion. But that passion doesn't reach me. I find my thoughts wandering from his music. I continually have to discipline myself to listen.

Why? His voicings are tight and move well. His improvisations are well-planned and always under control. But I find the music faceless, like those models. While I might stare at that perfection, I can't really get hot about it one way or the other.

A word about Charlie Haden. Fantastic! His solo on *Mirage* is a miracle of lyricism and clarity. He isn't afraid of silence, and unlike some of his contemporaries, doesn't feel the compulsion to play violin cadenzas all over the place all the time.

But in general, the rest of the rhythm section is sublimated and not very sublime.

I tried very hard with this record. I wanted to like it. Attractive, cleanly modern, certainly musical, my mind finds no fault with it. Only my chemistry just won't respond.

—Zwerin