Gene Lees
Jazzletter

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Names, Names, Names

As the *Jazzletter* approaches the end of its first year, I thought you might like to know who we all are. This is the list of subscribers, who made it possible:

Mike Abene, Sharon Aday, Gene Aitken (Director of Jazz Studies, University of North Colorado School of Music), Asa B. Allen, Steve Allen, Morgan Ames, Lloyd O. Anderson (Director of Admissions and Community Services, Bismarck Junior College), Wayne Andre, Ron Anton (BMI), Ted Arenson, Irvin Arthur, Kenny Ascher,

Harry Babasin, Bob Bain, Bill Ballentine (vice president, CFTM Toronto), Whitney Balliett (*The New Yorker*), Julius Banas, Charlie Barnet, Charles Baron, Shirley J. Beaty, Judy Bell, Malcom Bell Jr., Mr. and Mrs. (Gail McFarland) Mike Benedict, Candace Bennett, David Berger, Jay Berliner, Bill Berry, Gene Bertoncini, W.S. Bicknell, Fred Binkley, David Bird (CBC Winnipeg), Gus Bivona, Prof. R.L. Blackmore (Dean of Admissions, Colgate University), Charles E. Bloomquist, David J. Bondelevitch, Harry Boon (program manager, CJAZ-FM, Vancouver, Canada), Trace Borst, Mark C. Brennan, Clifford S. Briggin MD, Bernard Brightman (Stash Records), Carol Britto, Bob Brookmeyer, Peter M. Brooks, C. Robert Brown, Jim and Mary Brown (Jazzizz Records), H.M. Bryant, George H. Buck Jr. (Jazzology and Audiophile Records), Nico Bunink, Larry Bunker, Allan Burns, Mary Butterill (CAPAC), Norman D. Byron,

R.K. Caldwell, Gigi Campi, Canadian Stage Band Festival, John Caper Jr., Dave Caplan, Frank Capp, John Carisi, Ian Carr, Benny Carter, Oscar Castro-Neves, CBC Reference Library (Toronto), Edward C. Cerny, Jules Chaikin, John K. Chance (Department of Anthropology, University of Denver), Emile Charlap, Ray Charles, Chevy Chase, Don Chastain, L. Blake Cheney, Pete Christlieb, L.C. Claitor, Buddy Clark, Homer D. Clark (KBOO-FM, Portland, Oregon), Steve Clover, Robert P. Cohen, Al Cohn, Bob Colby, Charles T. Cole, Joseph Colizoli MD, Howard Colson (BMI), James B. Conkling, Bob Connolly, Willis Conover (Voice of America), Tom Coogle, Willian L. Cook, Cooper Records, Albert Copland, Harold Coralnick MD, Owen Cordle (Raleigh N.C. *News and Observer, Down Beat* etc.), Ed Corekin, Dale I. Corning, Jack Cortner, Sonny Costanzo, John Coulson (CBC-TV music, Toronto), Ralph Craig, Glenda E. Crawford, Steven M. Cristol, J. Bryan Cumming,

Meredith d'Ambrosio, George E. Danforth, James Datillo, Daybreak Express Records, Buddy DeFranco, Blair Deieremann, Fred DeLand, Leo de Lyon, Delmark Records, Clement deRosa, Vince deRosa, Manuel de Sica, Joseph DiBenedetto, Gene diNovi, Robert C. Dinwiddle (archivist, Georgia State University), Chuck Domanico, Arthur Domaschenz, William Donoghue, Bob Dorough, Len Dresslar, Kenny Drew, Marilyn Dunlap, Stan Dunn (KJAZ, San Francisco),

Wendell Echols, Rachel Elkind, Don Elliott, Jack Elliott, Herb Ellis, Ralph Enriquez, Gil Evans, Marion Evans, Tom Everett (Harvard University music school), B.G. Falk, Robert Farnon, Leonard Feather (the Los Angeles *Times* etc.), Victor Feldman, Allyn Ferguson, Don Ferrara, Clare Fischer, Richard Flohill (*Canadian Composer* magazine), Bill Fogarty, Chuck Folds, Frank Fox, Robert Frank, Don Freeman (San Diego *Union* syndicated columnist), Stan Freeman, Richard Freniere, James N. Friedman, Ernie Furtado,

Russell George, Terry Gibbs, David A. Gilmore, Jerry Gladstone (Los Angeles Pierce College), Ken Glancy (Finesse Records), Gerry Glantz MD, Howard E. Glazier, Robert Goerner, Ephraim Goldberg, William Goldman, Mort Goode, Allen Goodman, Bill Goodwin, Bob Gordon, Mike and Nita Gould, William A. Gracie MD, William F. Greer Jr., Ralph Grierson, Paul Grosney, Dick Grove Music Worskhops, Paul Guerrero Jr. (Richland College),

Robert Haber, Ami Hadani (TTG Studio), Charles M. Hall, Fred Hall (KOVA etc.), Dr. Gene Hall (Stephen F. Austin State University music school), Thomas M. Hampson, Mary I. Hanzlick, The Happy Jazz Band (San Antonio, Texas), Richard C. Harpham, Eddie Harris, Roger W. Harris, Lynette Hart, Don Hartford (president, CFRB, Toronto), James F. Hartley, Alan Harvey, Lester G. Hawkins, Mrs. Sophie Haynes (American Artists Management), Eddie Hazell, Alan Helfman, Luther Henderson, Bonnie Herman, Mathias C. Hermann, Bob Hester, Dale Hibler, Patrick Hollenbeck (New England Conservatory of Music), Bill Holman, Andrew Homzy (Loyola Campus, Concordia University), Elliot Horne (RCA Records), Murray Horwitz, Dougal W. House, John J. Hughes, Dick Hyman,

Jon A. Jackson, Jane Jarvis, Carl Jefferson (Concord Jazz Records), Larry Jeffrey, Gordon Jenkins, Peter D. Johnson, Bob Jones, Thad Jones,

Paul Karbel, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Kasimoff (Kasimoff-Bluthner Piano Company, Los Angeles), Roger Kellaway, Theron Kelley, Gene Kelly, James Kernan Sr., Maurie Kessler, Earl L. Kirkman, Alan Kishbaugh, Shirley L. Klett, Eric Kloss, Zane Knauss, Howard Kopet, Mrs. Catharine Koulouvaris, Jackie and Roy Kral,

Julius LaRosa, Bill Larkin, Dick Latham, Elliott Lauterstein, Everette Lawler, Leon Leavitt, David Lees, Gary LeFebvre,

Shelley Manne's definition of jazz: "We never play anything the same way once."

Linda R. Lehmann, Mickey Leonard, Frank Leone, L.M. Letofsky, Peter Levinson, Bobby Lewis, John Lewis, Barry Little MD, David S. Logan, Joe Lopes, Mundell Lowe, John (Jax) Lucas, A.J. Lukas, Bruce Lundvall (Elektra-Asylum Records), Dennis A. Lynch, Art Lyons, Jimmy Lyons (Monterey Jazz Festival),

John G. MacLeod, Dave MacKay, Mike Maher, Adam Makowicz, Harold Maller MD, Bob Maloney, Junior Mance, Henry Mancini, Johnny Mandel, Roberta Mandel, Shelly Manne, Dick Marx, Paul Maslansky, Joe Massimino, Dan Mather, E.R. McCandless, Rob McConnell, T.C. McConnon, Warren L. McDonald, Loonis McGlohon, Greg McIntosh, Ladd McIntosh, Marian McPartland, Ginger Mercer, Ken Metz, Larry M. Miller, Gordon Mitchell, J.R. Mitchell, Carl Miyagishima, George M'Lely, Steven H. Moffic MD, Lois K. Moody, W. Steven Moore, George Morgan, Henry Morgan, Dan Morgenstern (Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University), Chris Morrison, Joe Moylan, Gerry Mulligan, Lyn Murray,

Dick Nash, National Public Radio, Peter Newman (editor, *Maclean's* magazine), Chuck Niles (KKGO Los Angeles), Duke

Niles, Claude Nobs (Montreux Jazz Festival), Gene Norman (Crescendo Records), Rodney North,

Dale Oehler, Claus Ogerman, Ruth Olay, Omnisound Inc., Ted O'Reilly (CJRT-FM Toronto), William Orenstein,

Beatrice Page, Michael W. Paine, Chan Parker, Michael Parks, J. & R. Patterson, Lamont Patterson, Bruce Penticoff, Nick Perito, Harvey Phillips (University of Indiana music school), Mallory Pierce, Sy Platt (Media and Performing Arts, Bucks County Community College), Henry Pleasants (International *Herald-Tribune*), Arrigo Polillo, Al Porcino, Bill Potts, Mrs. Arden Powell, Frank Powers, Willard Pratt, Jerry Printz, Gene Puerling,

Bernie Rabinowitz, Vi Redd, John R. Reed, John Reeves, David R. Rehmeyer, Michael Renzi, Capt. Robert Resny, Alvino Rey, John M. Reynolds, Bob Richardson (Music Department, Auburn University), Jerome Richardson, Mike Richmond, Katharine Rogers, Terry R. Rogers MD, Bobby Rosengarden, Ric Ross, Ann Johns Ruckert, Norbert Ruecker (*Jazz Index*), Howard Rumsey,

Grover Sales, Bill Salter, Louis P. Schechter, Lalo Schifrin, J.W. Schooley, Tom Scott, Richard E. Schweitzer MD, Paul Seay, Robert B. Semple, Mike Serpas, Bud Shank, Nat Shapiro, Ed Shaughnessy, Artie Shaw, Peter Shaw (CBC Ottawa), Don Shelton, Bobby Shew, Sahib Shihab, Ben Sidran, Kirk Silsbee, Zoot Sims, Dan Singer (BMI), Josef Skvorecky (University of Toronto), Bob Smith (CBC Vancouver), Earl Smith, Ann Sneed (International Art of Jazz), Elmer C. Sorenson, Paul Spurgeon (CAPAC), Virginia M. Stearns, Lynford Stewart, Corky Hale Stoller, Alden R. Stone, Peter Straub, Gus Statiras (Progressive Records), Stan Sulzman,

Frank M. Tack, Thomas Taksa, Jimmy Taylor, Clark Terry, Charles Therminy, Robert Thiele, Edmund Thigpen, Horace H. Thoman DDS, Will Thornbury (KCRW Santa Monica), Dr. Frank Tirro (Dean, Yale University School of Music), Ross Tompkins, Karyl Friedhofer Tonge, Cy Touff, Bill Traut (Head First Records), Oscar Treadwell (WGUC Cincinnati), John A. Tynan,

William L. Utter (general manager, WMUB, Oxford, Ohio), Art Van Damme,

Katherine Waggener, Ann Waldburger, Bob Waldburger, Dr. Alfred M. Wallbank (medical microbiology, University of Manitoba), Tom Walls, John R. Walsh (news editor, *Science News*), Alan Watts, Jeffrey Weber, George Wein (Festival Productions Inc.), Sam Weiss, Joel West MD, Paul Weston, Kenny Wheeler, Randy White, Jack Whittemore, Larry Wilcox, Floyd Williams (Department of Jazz Studies, Allegheny College), Patrick Williams, Ron L. Williams, Ted Williams, John S. Wilson (the New York *Times, High Fidelity*, etc.), Jimmy Wisner, Henry Wolking, Dr. Herb Wong (KJAZ San Francisco, etc.), Charles Wood, Phil Woods,

Betty Zanoni, Michael Zwerin (International *Herald-Tribune*).

Year One

Incredibly, the *Jazzletter* is a year old with the next issue. This has been accomplished at a loss of less than $3,000, which is astonishing.

The figures are as follows:

It costs just under $500 to print each issue. This works out to $1.25 per person per issue, plus of course 20 cents postage—60 cents for overseas. Bulk mail merely cuts the cost in half and is hopelessly slow. Eight pages is the maximum practical size at present, since at that size the *Jazzletter* sneaks through the mail at almost exactly an ounce. Eight pages, without pictures or advertising, contain approximately half the wordage of an issue of *Time*.

Since the printing cost of 1,000 copies is not much more than that of 500, the *Jazzletter* will start paying for itself between 1,000 and 1,500 circulation. Several readers have said that it is underpriced. Bill Fogarty, who is himself a magazine editor, said, "Almost ten percent of it goes instantly to postage." More, actually, because of the subsidiary correspondence. One reader urged that the price be doubled. But that would discourage readership among young people and others we are all anxious to reach out and find. Clearly, some increase is necessary, but I want to keep it to a minimum, and so the price for the second year is $30 in U.S. funds for the United States and Canada, $35 for other countries.

I plan to use the money not to assure the second year's production costs. That would be the sane and sensible thing to do with it. Instead I plan to seek out that lay audience without which no art can exist. If there is anything wrong with that extraordinarily distinguished subscription list, it is that it tilts too much toward the profession.

A number of important lists—from jazz clubs, record labels, and music festivals—are available to me, and I want to begin mailings to them *immediately*. Therefore I hope you'll resubscribe now. A pre-addressed postage paid envelope is enclosed, except with those copies going overseas or to Canada.

One of the most interesting phenomena of the *Jazzletter*'s first year has been the number of persons who have purchased subscriptions for others as gifts. If any of you, in resubscribing, want additional subscriptions for others, let's price them at $20 each.

I don't know what will become of the *Jazzletter*. Ultimately, it may turn into a full-fledged magazine, which will have to accept advertising. This would permit me to publish the work of many fine writers who at present have no appropriate outlet for their work. Or—as Owen Cordle, Mike Zwerin, Jack Tynan, Ben Sidran and I have been discussing—we may be able to start a second publication directed more toward the layman, but without that writing-down-to-the-boobs tone of so many magazines. I want writers to be able to go flat-out, the way good jazz musicians play. I know how well some of these people write. But they rarely do their best work for conventional publications, since every piece of writing has to be put through the tea-strainer of some editor's mind, some editor who thinks he knows the level of the "public" mind. I happen to have a high opinion of the general intelligence, however it is defined, and I do not think the reader should be subjected to that veiled condescencion that is implicit in so many publications.

Anyway, folks, it's resubscription time. And in the second year, we're really going to find our people and move closer to that co-operative distribution that has been one of the purposes of the *Jazzletter* since its inception.

It's been an incredible year. Thank you.

From Africa with Love

Continuing from January.....

A few years ago Anthony Quinn made a film in South Africa, an interesting picture that received negligible distribution. Since I saw it on television and missed the first few minutes, I cannot tell you its name. Quinn plays a hospital orderly with a terminal illness who wants to leave money to his daughter when he dies. The president of a black African republic is brought to the hospital for minor treatment. Quinn kidnaps him for ransom.

The Quinn character is an uneducated American. The black man is cultivated. In the course of their flight and the shared ordeal of it, they slip reluctantly toward friendship. Finally they are in a building atop a mountain, the upper terminus of a cable car. Quinn, on the telephone, is discussing delivery of the ransom when he is overcome by pain. The president takes the telephone and negotiates the terms of his own release; by now he wants Quinn to have the money. And the captive has become the captor.

Then comes a scene that struck me forcefully. I cannot vouch that this dialogue is verbatim, but the content is accurate:

The president asks Quinn, "Tell me, do you think we black people have... natural rhythm?"

Quinn laughs, shuffles, and says, "Don't put me through that. I've had that test tried on me before."

"Nevertheless," the president says, "do you believe it?"

"Well, I suppose I do."

"And why do you think it is?"

"I don't know. I guess it's a matter of culture. You grow up with all those rhythms, and the drums, and..."

"Wrong. Shall I tell you why? It is because Eastern civilization is concerned with the past, Western civilization is concerned with the future, and we are concerned with... *Now!*" And on "now" he claps his hands and starts repeating rhythmically, "Now...now...now!" And he begins to dance, discarding his Oxonian dignity. He tells Quinn, "Join me! Now...now...now!" Quinn, awkwardly, tries to dance but the pain takes him again and he slips to the floor. Both men end up sitting on the floor, laughing and breathless, their friendship now firmly forged.

Aside from its charm, the scene is memorable for its insight. Whoever wrote that script was aware of something important.

Western civilization is usually considered to originate with the Greeks—Archimedes, Hippocrates, Galen, Heraclitus, Zeno, and above all Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Socrates is to Western philosophy what Buddy Bolden was to jazz, and it has been said that "all philosophy is a series of footnotes to Plato."

The achievements of that system of thought have been astounding. Aristotle died 2,304 years ago, which is about 33 lifetimes — little more than a yesterday in the life of this planet. But the conquests we have made using intellectual disciplines derived from the Greeks—observation, classification, skepticism toward evidence, syllogism, induction, deduction—have been so prodigious that we now face the possibility and indeed the probability that no young man or woman of our time will live to see old age.

For all the achievements of this system of thought, almost everyone entrapped in it senses that there is something wrong with it, something that produces a feeling of incompletion and alienation. We are separated, it seems, from the universe, doomed to wander alone, now and then catching a glimpse through a candy-store window of the bon-bons of reality. A moment of love, a transcendental musical experience. Burt Reynolds told me that when he was gravely ill and had reason to believe he would soon die he picked up a flower and held it in the palm of his hand. It was a flower he had known all his life in Florida. But, he realized then, looking at its color and shape and startled by them, he had never really *seen* it before. Later on, he said, you try to recapture the purity and clarity of vision of such an ecstatic moment, but you never can.

The image of exile haunts the world's folklore, most particularly in our culture in the myth of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the garden for having partaken of the fruit of knowledge. A child finds this one of the most puzzling of all Biblical tales. Why is he being forced by parents and teachers to do what Adam and Eve were punished for doing?

But the story is one of the profound myths. We didn't have to wait for God's lawyers to serve the eviction notice to begin our exile. We were expelled from nature the moment we learned to speak, to attach meanings to vocal noises, to make symbols of sounds. Verbalization, whether audible or silent in the mind, enabled us to visit the past and describe it and wander in speculation through the future. We escaped from *now*. And we rarely find our way home to it again. We watch the ghostly future rushing toward us and try to seize it out of the incorporeal air only to find that it has already become the past.

Actually, Adam had a problem before he ate the apple, which was merely a trap set by a God already out to get him. His first mistake involved words. According to Genesis (the Oxford translation), God "brought (the animals and birds) to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name." He was in trouble right there. Perceiving that he had a presumptuous tenant, God sent the snake, the first functionary to practice entrapment, and then announced that the apples were not covered by the lease. We have been out here ever since, and it gets cold at times.

John I:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Again there is the emphasis on the importance of the word—the *logos* in Greek. In Genesis we find the story of the tower of Babel (Babylon). Adam's descendants, apparently not having learned how petulant and arbitrary the landlord could be, decided to build a tower to his abode, namely the heavens. For this impertinence he dispersed them and made them speak different languages so that they were now separated not only from nature but from each other. American slave-owners, who were nothing if not Bible-readers, applied the lesson of that story by mixing captives of different languages so that they could not converse and therefore could not achieve the political cohesion necessary to co-ordinated rebellion. This caused Africans in America to forget their cultures and customs and function as best they could in English which, ironically, they continue to this day to use with remarkable invention and poetry. Consciousness is a product of language. But the price we have paid for it is our separation from nature, the perpetual maddening flow of words through the mind, the unending observation of everything, including ourselves, the talking about existence rather than the direct and vibrant experience of it.

Julian Jaynes, the Princeton research psychologist who has caused a stir with his book *The Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind,* thinks that consciousness is assembled out of language—something I had always taken to be self-evident. What is new is that he thinks consciousness emerged no more than 3,000 years ago in Greece. (That of course manifests a cultural bias. We do not know how many civilizations rose and fell before that of Greece. Some scholars think the Vedas date back more than 7,000 years.) But Jaynes is undoubtedly right in thinking that consciousness is a comparatively recent phenomenon. And the thought processes of Western civilization do indeed descend from the Greeks.

But the troubled intuition that words are central to our problem has become widespread in recent years, dim and unexpressed though it usually is. It is the cause of our seeking non-verbal experience in drugs. It has given rise to any number of cults and to a fascination with philosophies from the Orient, including Zen Buddhism and transcendental meditation.

That extensive drug use and an interest in Oriental thought and disciplines, such as yoga, occurred simultaneously is not a coincidence. They grow out of an apparently desperate need to get "outside" or "above" or "below" our endless isolating verbalization.

Alcohol came into use as a food preservative. Some prehistoric genius discovered that if fruit juice is allowed to ferment, it can be kept into the winter and its nutritional content absorbed when it is most needed. Soon thereafter, no doubt, some other prehistoric genius discovered that if you drink enough of the stuff, life bothers you a little less.

The advocates of marijuana who claim its use is no different than that of alcohol overlook something important. While the cautious and moderate use of alcohol, the preservative of nutrients, was tolerated, getting loaded on it has always been frowned upon, and in certain circumstances is illegal. Among the Greeks, the drunken Bacchus was seen as a buffoon. So is Falstaff. So is Jack Norton, the top-hatted drunk who wanders ludicrously through so many 1930s movies.

So deep runs the disapproval of the drunken state that a body of rationalization grew up around it and rarely would anyone admit in uncorking a jug that the purpose was to get bagged. And a man

with a hangover would say that he'd had "one too many", implying that his condition was the consequence of mere miscalculation.

With the coming of widespread use of psychotropic chemicals, a drastic change in social attitude occurs. When one lights a joint or drops a pill, one does not pretend that the purpose of the exercise is to enhance affability or to enjoy the flavor of the substance. It is one's premeditated and unconcealed intention to get zipped. The rationalization has been abandoned. This is new, at least in western society. (The Arabs of course had been doing hash for centuries, and American Indians had a veritable pharmacopoeia of mind-bending groceries.) The fascination with drugs and Oriental philosophies indicated a growing if uncomprehended dissatisfaction with verbal linear thought, a suspicion that there might be another way of experiencing experience.

If the development of speech and thought-in-words expelled us from nature, the invention of writing increased the distance from it. By now, in so-called civilized societies (which is to say those that are working feverishly for our obliteration), literacy is widespread, and in some it is universal. As a consequence of the spread of literacy, everyone in Western society is the prisoner of Greek reasoning. And few people understand the extent to which they are slaves of their own thought processes, which are in turn the direct consequence of the tyranny of language.

As soon as one formulates an opinion, one tends to be enthralled by the logical structure one has erected in support of it and to protect it by the blinkered exclusion of any evidence that challenges it. One's very definition of the self involves an adherence to a complex of carefully-constructed verbal definitions. Therefore we do not readily accept information that challenges any of these definitions, since it threatens one's image of the self.

But verbal logic is treacherous. And it is the faint perception of this fact that has in recent years inspired a fascination with non-logical non-linear forms of perception.

It is believed by many scholars that the poet Homer did not exist, that the *Illiad* is a compilation of tales already extant in a pre-literate culture. Oral culture persisted a little longer in America and Africa than in Europe—about six seconds longer, in terms of geological time. It is extremely significant to American music that it did.

It is helpful to reflect for a moment on how recently the removal of Africans to America occurred. In 1983, the Constitution of the United States will be 200 years old. Eubie Blake will be 100. And the African culture was an oral culture. The very deprivation of formal literate education for blacks has had the effect of keeping a form of it alive well into our own time.

An oral culture is inherently different from a literate one, since speech is a spontaneous and improvisational act. That there is a vocal quality about jazz instrumental music has always been recognized. What has not been as widely recognized is the psychological influence of an oral culture on the music.

When Ben Sidran, the songwriter and singer, is sitting at the piano in a nightclub, doing his earthy and unassuming thing, few people in the audience realize that he has a PhD in history and sociology and is a superb writer. Ben wrote a book called *Black Talk*, first published in 1971 and now published by Da Capo press. It is a book I cannot recommend too highly, one of the most illuminating books about jazz that I have ever encountered.

"The elements of black music most responsible for the impact it has are the vocalized tone and the peculiarly 'black' approach to rhythm," Ben wrote. "These are essential elements of oral communication in general and allow for communication of a nonverbal nature, often at an unconscious level, to triumph over the rigid classification structure of any linguistic system and to continue in the face of cultural suppression. The vocalized approach is part of the greater oral ability to lend semantic significance to tonal elements of speech. Bornman has suggested that 'while the whole European tradition strives for regularity—of pitch, of time, of timbre, and of vibrato—the African tradition strives precisely for the negation of these elements. In language, the African tradition aims at circumlocution rather than at exact definition. The direct statement is considered crude and unimaginative; the veiling of all content in ever-changing paraphrase is considered the criterion of intelligence and personality.'" If I may butt in, we see immediately why black people and white people so often do not understand each other. They are using language in different ways. "'In music, the same tendency toward obliquity and ellipsis is noticeable: no note is attacked straight; the voice or instrument always approaches it from above or below. The timbre is veiled and paraphrased by constantly changing vibrato, tremolo, and overtone effects.

"The semantic value of tonal significance is thus carried over into instrumental playing....

"The black approach to rhythm, being a function of the greater oral approach to time, is more difficult to define in writing. Capturing the rhythms of African or modern Afro-American music with Western notation is a lot like trying to capture the sea in a fishnet.... It is really not enough to say that rhythmic tens[illegible] is sustained through the imposition of polyrhythms over a stated or implied meter. The complexity of this rhythmic approach is in large part due to the value placed on spontaneity and the inherently communal nature of oral improvisation....

"The essential nature of communication through rhythm is an unknown quantity due, primarily, to lack of interest on the part of Western science."

Don DeMicheal, being a drummer, used to muse on this phenomenon even more than most of us, and on the difficulty of defining *swing*. Aside from the known polyrhythmic factors, Don thought the phenomen of swinging was heightened if not achieved by a shifting back and forth around the center of the time. All drummers know that. But the impossibility of notating it or accurately describing it so bugged Don that he wanted to feed the sound of a good drummer into a computer to see if it could give us a universally acceptable solution to the mystery. (That's what he got for studying sociology. And Sidran has the same problem.)

When Artie Shaw and I were discussing intonation recently, he said, "A tone has thickness." And so it does. There is a point that is low on the tone, another in the center of the tone, and another high on the tone, which is how good lead trumpeters play and the way Oscar Peterson likes his piano tuned. If a tone has thickness, a beat has breadth. There's the place that's back of the beat, the place in the center of it, and that which is a shade ahead of it—"on top of the time". Nat Cole, in both his singing and his playing, used to play wondrous little games with the time, doing so with utter security. The Brazilian guitarist Baden Powell made a record in which his "rhythm section" consisted of a solitary metronome. By the way he placed his chords and notes around the dreary mechanical tick of the metronome, he made the metronome swing. It didn't seem to swing. It *did* swing. Oscar Peterson points out that when you shift the beat on top of the time, you induce a physical reaction on the audience: they begin popping their thumbs or tapping their feet. He cannot of course explain the complex neural-glandular-muscular-emotional response that produces the tapping. Neither can anybody else.

I asked Oscar, "But what happens in a trio, say, if all three of you go on top of the time? Haven't you merely shifted the center of the beat and therefore none of you is on top of the time?"

"No," Oscar said. "You're still on top of the time."

This brings us to the edge of the mystical—the displacement of

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If you ever get your guitar in tune, send it to me and I'll give you mine.

—Herb Ellis (1921-)

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time itself—and to a conception of rhythm that Bill Evans had. Bill drew an analogy to shadow lettering, that form of print that creates a three-dimensional illusion of raised letters by showing the shadows cast by them but not the letters themselves. Bill thought in terms of shadow rhythms, and he played that way.

Bill was committed to the unthinking spontaneity of jazz. When critics occasionally called him the most intellectual of players, Bill in private took issue with them. "Man, you *can't* think at those tempoes," he said to me once. I asked him if, presuming we could go in a time machine to see Chopin improvising, he would call that jazz. "Yes," he said without hesitation and added: "If I heard an Eskimo improvising within his own tonal system, assuming there is one, I would call that jazz."

Larry Bunker told me that during the several months he spent on the road with Bill—he gave up lucrative studio work for the inspiration of working with him—he learned that it was futile to start playing a drum pattern that fit into what Bill was wont to play in the head or the out chorus of a tune. The moment you tried to match Bill, Larry said, he would shift away from you, demanding total spontaneity of performance.

Bill wrote the liner notes for the *All Blue* album he made with Miles Davis. "There is," Bill wrote, "a Japanese visual art in which the artist is forced to spontaneousness. He must paint on a thin stretched parchment with a special brush and black water paint in such a way that an unnatural or interrupted stroke will destroy the line or break through the parchment. Erasures or changes are impossible. These artists must practice a particular discipline, that of allowing the idea to express itself in communication with their hands in such a direct way that deliberation cannot interfere.

"The resulting pictures lack the complex composition and textures of ordinary painting, but it is said that those who see well find something captured that escapes explanation. This conviction, that direct deed is the most meaningful reflection, I believe, has prompted the evolution of the extremely severe and unique disciplines of the jazz or improvising musician."

It is nonsense that no white man has ever contributed to the evolution of jazz, a position often taken by white leftist jazz critics who cannot keep their politics separated from their esthetics and who practice the aforementioned blinkered exclusion of information that challenges their complex of verbal ideas. It is a conviction that is achieved by overlooking the influence of Frank Trumbauer (who, it should be noted, was part Indian) and Bud Freeman on Lester Young, and that of Jack Teagarden (who was not, as is widely supposed, part Indian but all German) on the development of modern trombone. It is achieved by overlooking Bill Evans. It is achieved by overlooking Bix. An English critic said that Bix made history but did not influence it. Really? Because of his spaced, spare, selective choice of notes, I once asked Miles Davis if he had listened to a lot of Bix. "No," Miles said, "but I listened a lot to Bobby Hackett and he listened a lot to Bix." Because of the influence Miles has had on other musicians, the influence of Bix on jazz must be considered pervasive.

But there can be no question that most of the input and inspiration of jazz has come from black musicians. And the reason for this is not, as has been so often supposed, merely one of their early exposure to a highly rhythmic music. The reason is that stated by the kidnapped president in that movie.

A black child wishing to play jazz has a psychological advantage over a white child with the same ambition, because he comes from a culture that places a value on spontaneity. He is psychologically more attuned to a music that requires that quality—although we all know black people whose upbringing has not inculcated them with this ideal. I have known at least two black opera singers who have utterly square time.

It follows that those white cultures which, though to a lesser extent than the black culture, value spontaneity, are likely to produce more jazz musicians that those that extol control and linear logic, as do the Germans and the English. These more spontaneous cultures include the Scots, the Irish, the Italians, and the Jews, and the preponderance of white jazz musicians come from these groups and America's other minorities. Outcast anyway, they had a greater readiness to take up an outcast music.

During the time trumpeter Kenny Wheeler and I were in high school together, he played often with black musicians in the area around Buffalo and a number of his Canadian friends were black, descendants of people who had arrived there on the Underground Railway. When I visited Kenny a few years after he moved to England, I noticed that most of his musician friends now were from Scotland, and I asked him why. I have never forgotten his answer, whose significance neither of us could possibly have understood at the time. "I think," he said, "it's because they're like the Negroes. Wherever they are, there's happiness." A significant number of the best British jazz musicians have come from Scotland, and Benny Carter, when I pointed this out, recalled that the band he had in England in the 1930s was made up mostly of Scots. Wherever they are, there's happiness.... The quality of extracting from the moment whatever joy it offers, without thinking about past sorrows and future dangers.

There is a theory that the samba of Bazil, in which the feet move only slightly while the body moves sensuously and joyously, was developed by a people dancing with their feet in chains. When I first heard that, a startled thought went through my mind: What kind of remarkable people *could* dance with feet in chains? Would want to? Would have a need to? A people in touch with *now*.

Guido Basso to Johnny Audino: "Do you realize that we now have 700,000 Italians in Toronto?"
Johnny Audino to Guido Basso: "Do you realize that in Los Angeles, we have 700,000 Italian musicians?"

In a book called *Attack or Die,* a Southern history professor named Grady McWhiney has examined the question of why the South lost the Civil War when it had good arms, the better soldiers, and the better officers. There were, he says, two primary factors involved. One was the newly-developed rifled gun-barrel, which puts a spin on a bullet and increases a weapon's accurate range. The other was the ethnic composition of the opposing forces. The Northern forces substantially comprised men of English origin, the Southern troops descendants of Scottish and Irish settlers. The English tradition puts an emphasis on calculation and restraint and control and events-in-the-future. The Celtic peoples are more impulsive and emotional. The rifled gun gave the advantage to entrenched defenders. And yet the Southern forces kept charging, flinging themselves into slaughters like that of Gettysburgh.

A people prone to charge in spite of dangers and in defiance of logic has qualities that are useful in jazz, and they are more likely both to be drawn to the music and to be good at it than a people that puts emphasis on the stiff upper lip, concealment of emotion, and restraint. Composer Allyn Ferguson was watching a rodeo on television one day and noted that one of the champion riders, repeatedly risking life and limb, was also named Ferguson. Ferg thought, "If that crazy bastard were still in Scotland, he'd be tossing the caber."

The process by which someone from a culture that values restraint and the deliberate concealment of emotions—very English qualities—comes to play jazz, and for that matter work in any of the performing arts, is bound to be different. He must overcome inhibitions that simply are not present, at least to the same degree, in someone from a culture which values display, flamboyance, overt expression. Early Celtic art was notably florid. And look at that mad Irish love of words, of soaring rhetoric and spontaneous public-house poetry. If it is no accident that many of the best jazz musicians in England are Celtic, neither

is it an accident that so many of Britain's finest actors are also Celts, such as Alec Guiness, a Scot, Richard Burton, a Welshman, and Richard Harris, who is Irish. And look at how many playwrights (Sheridan, Wilde, Shaw, Synge) and poets and novelists the Irish and the Scots have given to the English language.

Actress Elizabeth Ashely, recalling the seemingly meaningless Actors Studio exercises she had endured (pretending you're a tree or an armchair or a dog), said she had finally figured out their value: nothing you would ever be called upon to do on a stage could be as embarrassing as those exercises. In other words, they get you beyond inhibition, free of the fear of making a fool of yourself, free to be spontaneous.

The Anglo-Saxon musician who takes up jazz is likely to go through certain psychological pains to achieve his freedom. Sometimes, I suspect, the very fact of the price he has paid may make him into one of the wilder and more impetuous players. Phil Woods and Roger Kellaway are Anglo-Saxons from New England.

In earlier periods of European musical history, the creator of the music was himself a performer. As what we now call classical music evolved, this began to change. The first "classical" composers were very much involved in performance, and most were virtuosi and skilled improvisers. This continued through the Eighteenth and well into the Nineteenth Centuries. Beethoven gave up his beloved improvising only when he became too deaf to hear himself. Chopin had a prodigious musical memory and his impromptus are apparently transcriptions of pieces he had earlier improvised. Perhaps if the recording process had been invented, he would have written far less than he did.

But a bifurcation grew gradually wider during the Nineteenth Century. The composer became king, the players merely vassals to his will. Thus the composer was separated from the performing and the performer from the creating of the music. An inevitable dessication began to set in. Music moved toward being an exercise in logic and form, more "written," more "literate," if you will. In the Twentieth Century, this trend progressed toward disaster, and among those who considered themselves cognoscenti of classical music there is a certain condescension toward those composers whose music is accessible and overtly emotional, and a relegation of their work to a lower rank—Grieg, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff. I went through a period when I managed to convince myself I did not like Grieg, who wrote lovely though not monumental music. I mentioned this once to Bill Evans. "I went through that phase too," he said. I said, "I know what happened to me, but what happened to you?" "The intellectuals got to me." "Same here."

It is significant, I think, that Rachmaninoff, whose music is intensely emotional and communicative, was one of the great virtuosi of the piano, and an improviser. One evening when Bill and I were sharing an apartment, he played me several Rachmaninoff preludes—at sight, I'd like you to know, and at tempo, beautifully. I think that was the occasion when he said to me, "Any music that is not in some way in touch with the process of improvisation is likely to be sterile."

"But what," I said, "of a composer sitting at a manuscript paper and not touching the piano?"

"He may be improvising," Bill said.

And he may not. He may be working at the creation of a logical exercise according to some stringent set of rules, such as the serialism descending from the work of Schoenberg or the mathematical system taught by Schillinger. It is significant that both names are German. That Schoenberg was also Jewish is irrevelant. He was a deeply German composer.

The question of whether a people invents a language expressing their national character or whether the structure of their language influences the evolution of the general personality is unanswerable. But a correlation between character and language will *always* be found. Descartes could only have been French. German is probably the most rigidly logical of all Western languages, perhaps of all languages. The German people are like their language. And if the black culture puts a high value on spontaneity and the impulsive, the German culture places the highest value on *ordnung,* order. It is inevitable then that German composers would strive to develop orderly *systems* for making music, systems that eliminate as much as possible the variation and fallibility of human judgment, systems that free the composer of responsibility for his own acts, systems that would, after the work was completed, provide irrefutable justification for the way it was made and eliminate in turn the variability of the listener's response to it.

And though Debussy took ardent issue with the German dominance of classical music, its influence is still there. Thus Twentieth Century classical music still is preoccupied with systems and logic for which the composer can be proclaimed brilliant rather than with emotion, and it has wandered farther and farther from what the Greeks thought was the purpose of tragedy (and in my opinion is the purpose of all art), namely catharsis, the freeing of the emotions by the pity and terror induced by events in the lives of the characters.

It is axiomatic in all schools of psychology that repressed emotions fester, giving rise to any number of problems from neurosis to ulcers to hysterical conversion to total mental collapse to murder. No one since Freud has seriously questioned this, except screwball right-wing Christian fundamentalists. And nothing has the capacity to release emotion like art, and no art like music, and no music like jazz.

Jazz, through its rhythms and its difficult-to-define swing, sets up a hypnotic receptivity. Hypnosis is a process by which the conscious rationalistic judgment is suspended, allowing the hypnotist directly to address the subconscious, which lacks the critical faculty and accepts whatever suggestion is made to it. Jazz, to a greater or lesser degree, dependent on the listener's ability or willingness to submit to it, gets beyond the process of conscious judgment, of verbalizing, of observing-yourself-in-the-act-of-listening and thinking about your responses, which very act can make those responses evaporate. It opens as it were the doorway to the soul and gives the music direct access to the inner person. One is able to know, when one is attuned to jazz (whether playing it or listening to it), a truly spontaneous and unpremeditated emotional experience. This is exhilarating.

Jazz is black music not because only black musicians can make it or even because black musicians invented it—as a matter of fact, we now seem to be producing jazz musicians of brilliance all over the world—but because to *be* jazz the music must be made in a black way, which is to say in accordance with a tradition of spontanteity that is linked to an oral and sometimes even sub-verbal culture.

Africa restored to Western art something it was in danger of losing, spontaneity, both in the creation of and response to music. It is possible that the constant exposure to this music over a period of years provides a qualitative change in personality, for certainly jazz listeners on the whole seem to be a warmer, more emotional, more open, more liberal, more tolerant kind of people, though this is by no means universal.

William Blake spoke of "the marriage of Heaven and Hell", reason and the emotions, that would lead us to the New Jerusalem. I know of no art that embodies and illustrates that marriage the way jazz does. This is why we *feel* that there is more to this music than meets the ear, something that, as Bill Evans put it, escapes explanation. Everyone who loves jazz is aware that there is something in it that is somehow comforting, somehow healing.

I suspect that this is because every once in a while, if only for a few bars or a chorus or two or, when the groove is good, as much as an hour, it takes us home to our lost garden, the eternal and resonant *now.*