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W UNLEANS MUSIC MAGAZINE

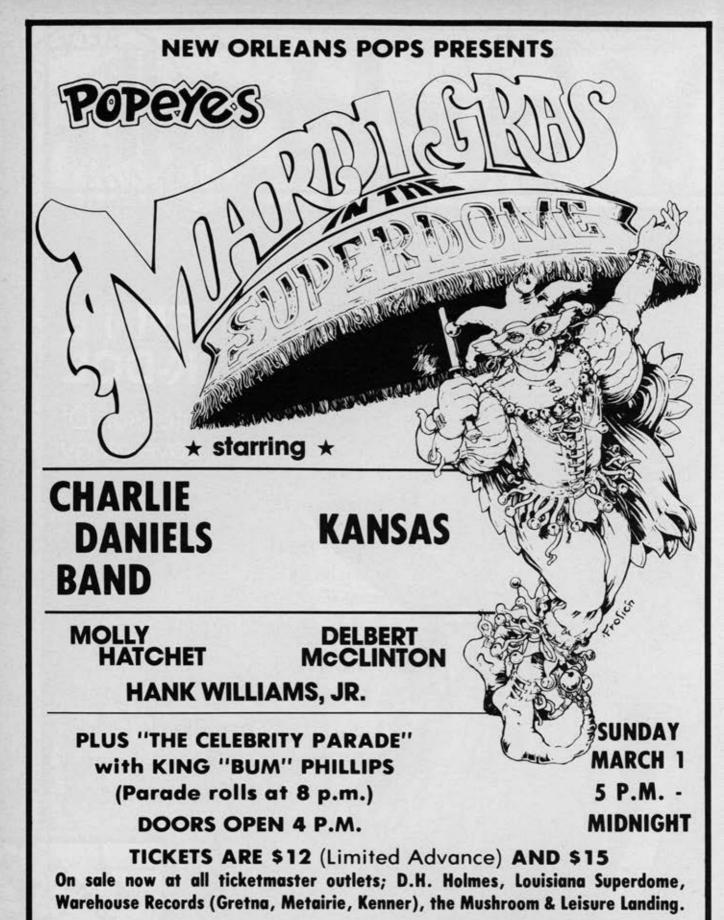
# MONSON OF THE PROPERTY OF THE

# ERNIE K-DOE

Professor Of Love-ology

Also The Black Pope Walter Lastie Woodenhead

Percolators



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# March 1981 Volume 1 Number 5

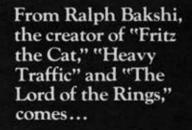
Features	
Ernie K-Doe	6
The Percolators	10
The Black Pope	12
New Orleans Songwriters	14
Walter Lastie	19
Departments	
March	4
Jazz	23
Rare Records	24
Reviews	23
Last Page	30

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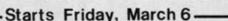
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# **JUST ARRIVED!**

Waylon Jennings & Jessi Colter "Leather and Lace"

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# March

# Jazz Fest Update

The New Orleans Jazz Festival has announced a tentative list of bookings. The Blues Cruise will feature Muddy Waters, last year's show-stopper, James Cotton, the harmonica ace who began with Muddy's band and Detroit bluesman John Lee Hooker, together for a moonlight cruise.

James Brown, The Godfather of Soul, and Junior Walker, Motown hitmaker, will be together for another boat ride. Brown will have a 26-piece orchestra with him and also hopes to reunite the original Famous Flames. Sounds like pure dynamite.

Roy Brown, late of New Orleans and the originator of "Good Rockin' Tonight," will accompany Charles Brown ("Please Come Home For Christmas") for a show; both may be backed by Dave Bartholomew's band.

Texas' hottest R&B group, The Thunderbirds, will be returning this year, with Texas bluesman Lowell Fulsom (remember "Tramp"?).

Prout's Club Alhambra will be a late night jam spot during the Fest. Watch for details. —Almost Slim

# News On New Clubs

Good news for live music fans: new clubs featuring local bands...

The Casablanca club in the Quarter has decided on new wave, rock 'n' roll, and blues for its live music format. The club looks great, and from 3 a.m. on, they'll serve a hot breakfast with homemade biscuits to the fans.

Clarity's on Rampart opened its doors on February 18. There'll be live music every night with emphasis on R&B and jazz. So far, they've lined up the likes of Li'l Queenie and the Percolators, the Aubry Twins and on March 25-29, G.G. Shinn.

The Dunn Inn opened its doors in February. Reggae and funk will be the fare on Magazine Street.

The Place, where you once saw Lydia Lunch, has new owners and a varied, expanded music policy. They also have a Chinese buffet.



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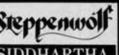
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PHOTO BY SYNDEY BYRD

#### BY ALMOST SLIM

Ernie K-Doe has been an integral part of the New Orleans R&B scene since the early Fifties. His first recordings were with the Blue Diamonds, a vocal group from the city who made one record on Savoy. In the late Fifties K-Doe had a couple of obscure records that were good but sold only within the confines of New Orleans.

In the early Sixties K-Doe signed with Joe Banashak's fledging Minit label. Then sparks really began to fly. This was the pinnacle of New Orleans' R&B popularity, as far as national sales were concerned. In 1961 K-Doe scored a number 1 national hit with the novelty tune "Mother-In-Law." The record changed his life. K-Doe followed with such favorites as "Certain Girl," "Popeye Joe," "Cried My Last Tear" and more, all on Minit.

Today Ernie K-Doe resides in the Seventh Ward of New Orleans. He works semi-regularly at a number of small clubs in the city. One of them is Winnie's, a restaurant bar on London Avenue, identified only by an old Jax beer sign. It is probably where K-Doe feels the most comfortable, and he has taken to hanging out there most afternoons. Everybody in the bar knows K-Doe "personally." It is here that K-Doe revealed the story of his upand-down career one recent morning. The interview also took place on the day of the release of Ernie K-Doe's latest single. His story is most definitely told best in the man's own words.

# THE IN-KREDIBLE ERNIE K-DOE

I was born Ernest Kador, in Charity Hospital, the second month, the twenty-second day, in 1936. I grew up in New Orleans, on Derbigny Street, 2419 South Derbigny Street, between First and Second.

In that neighborhood, Danny White stayed around the corner from me on Third and Johnson. The Neville brothers weren't too far from me either; they stayed in the old Calliope Projects. You see, from Erato going downtown, that's the old projects; the new projects weren't built yet. I stayed with my aunt during that time because mother lived in Chicago.

I started singing in the church, gospel, the New Home Baptist Church. I was the lead singer with the Golden Chain Jubilee Singers for about a year. Then my first cousin, Willie J. Williams, pulled out of the group and went with the Zion Travellers, so naturally I went with him. Both groups are very well known. We made "It Done Got Late In the Evening" and "When Jesus Calls" with the Zion Travellers. Me, Aaron, Art and Charles (Neville), Izacoo Gordon and Lil' Buckwheat (he cut a record with Huey Smith), we use to hang out together.

My mother came down and got me when I was 12½ years old and I went up to Chicago to go to school. I stayed in Chicago about two years, long enough to record "I Only Have Eyes For You" with the Flamingoes. We recorded on South Parkway. We did it for Chess, but it was on the Checker label, I sang the lead.

(Author's note: K-Doe's presence in Chicago is documented and recorded. As far as "I Only Have Eyes For You" is concerned, K-Doe's presence is "questionable." "I Only Have Eyes For You" was issued in 1959 on End

1046. K-Doe was in Chicago in the late Forties and early Fifties. By 1959 he was a fixture in New Orleans. An unissued session exists on Ernest Kador in the United records file. The titles include "Process Blues," "Get Out of Here Woman," "Too Drunk To Drink" and "Talking To The Blues." The session took place in Chicago, at the Universal Recording Studio, November 30, 1953.

I believed in my mind I could sing, but it didn't materialize until I came home from Chicago. I wanted to do some records and I was the lead singer for a group here in New Orleans "The Blue Diamonds." It was a rock 'n' roll group. We made a record on Savoy that was big here in New Orleans. That was a company out of New Jersey.

Under my own name, the first record I made was for Ember, "Tuff Enuf" and "My Love For You." It did well locally. When I made that record the man came down to the Club Tijuana from New York. I was playing with Robert Parker's group at that time. The man came in the club and he said he liked the way I sang, so we went to the studio. That day they cut two sessions, one on me and one with Richard Penniman, better known as Little Richard. He cut "Tutti Fruitti" that same day; he cut on Specialty. (Note: I believe K-Doe has his facts crossed here. The session I believe he is referring to is "Do Baby Do" and "Eternity" issued on Specialty 563, under the name Ernest Kador, "Tuff Enuf" was released in 1958 under the name Ernie K-Doe, with Lee Allen, who had a hit on Ember then with "Walkin' With Mr. Lee.")

The Tijuana really inspired youngsters like I was. It was on the corner of Clio and Liberty, it used to be the Golden Leaf but they changed the name of the place. Johnny Ace used to come through there, Chuck Willis, Richard Penniman, Billy Brooks, Billy Nightingale, Bobby Marchan. I used to sing over at the Dew Drop and when I went across the river to play I played at Jessie's Place in Marrero, on Haynes Blvd. It was fun during that time, 'cause I used to want to be a good singer.

My actual style of singing (if you listen real closely you can hear it) is Archie Brown Lee of the Five Blind Boys. I listened to him very well, how he phrased words, how he says all his words on his records very clearly. You know, some records you've got to put your ear down to really here what they're saying. But Archie Brown

Baronne. What happened was Joe Banashack and Larry McKinley had Allen Toussaint doing the arranging. I signed with Minit in November 1960. When I signed with Minit, Allen Toussaint used to have his rehearsals in his front living room in Cabbage alley, that was back in Gert Town. You see, Minit didn't have no money to really put out, so we all had to sing behind each other. Like Benny Spellman did the bass singing on "Mother-in-Law" and I helped him out on "Lipstick Traces," Irma Thomas, Willie Harper, and Rose (Percy Stoval's niece) and a girl named Joyce, we all used to help out each other.

The first thing I cut was "T'ain't It The Truth" and "Hello My Lover." I



Lee,he never missed. Some people say Mahalia Jackson was the best in the world, but everyone is entitled to their own opinion. Mahalia was a good woman singer, one of the best. But to me whe wasn't *the* best. Archie Brown Lee of the Five Blind Boys was the best.

Before the new projects were built, they had a church back there called the Two Winged Temple. They had Mahalia Jackson, the Dixie Hummingbirds, Sam Cooke and the Soul Stirrers, The Highway QC's and the Rocks of Harmony. Out of all the groups I seen, I say this man was best. He was about 5'4" about 145 pounds, but his voice weighed about a million. When he sang, I don't care what it was, you had to move. You couldn't keep still.

The Minit Record deal came about with Joe Banashack at One-Stop Record Shop, A-1 distributors on had Allen Toussaint; he did the writing, Melvin Lastie was on trumpet. Al Boudreaux was on drums, Fred Fields was on the bass, Justin Adams was on guitar and Nat Perrilliat was on tenor. We cut at the old Cosimo's, but we used to do our rehearsing, like I said, over to Allen's house. (Note: The first Minit release was issued on Minit 604, "Make You Love Me" and "There Is a Will There Is a Way" by K-Doe.) Allen, he wrote and arranged those songs, he wrote them just for me. Those first records sold well locally and all over the country 'cause Imperial was distributing them. Minit was hitting then. Jessie Hill had "Ooh Poo Pa Doo," we had Irma, in fact I helped Irma write one of her hits "I Done Got Over."

When I recorded "Mother-in-Law," I was going through family problems, and I did believe my mother-in-law had something to do with it. You see,

when Allen wrote it he had thrown it away. Allen wrote lots of good songs that he just balled up and threw away. So one day I looked down at the trashcan looking at some of the words he had had and I saw this "Mother-In-Law." So I said, "Hey man, I wanna do this," and he said "You really want to do this?" I said "Yeah, I want to do this."

They released "Mother-In-Law" and immediately they wanted me to play the Apollo Theatre in New York and Dick Clark's show, too. I couldn't believe it, every place I went to sing, people be screaming', yellin', and carrying on. I always had to sing "Mother-In-Law" more than one time. "Mother-In-Law" set up the whole stage for me. I'm very proud of it. It did something for me. And I think I did something for the record. You got to have that foundation song.

Now the biggest battle of my life was with James Brown at the Municipal Auditorium and I came through that one on top. I wasn't much worried about that, that was in 1962. We had a capacity crowd about 5,000 standing on the outside that couldn't get in. James had "Please, Please, Please." I had "Mother-In-Law," "Hello My Lover," "T'ain't It The Truth," "Certain Girl."

Larry McKinley was the announcer, and he called me out there first. You see, it was a dressin' thing, New Orleans against Macon, Georgia, ya dig? So what happend was I was not gonna let my hometown people down. I had a royal blue smoking jacket on, but under that, nobody knew what I had on underneath. They could see ice blue pants, ice blue shoes, but nobody could see underneath. So Larry called me out first. Then James Brown came out in a brown suit, white shirt, brown polka dot tie. But while Larry was to talkin', everybody went to screamin'. You see, when I pulled off that smoking jacket everything else was ice blue. And on "Certain Girl" I changed suits nine different times! I had a clothes rack backstage. Everytime I'd get to a certain part in the song I'd just run straight around to the side, change my suit and come back out the other side!

Now those tricks I do with the mike stand, I learned how to do them by practicing with a broom and a numbereight thread. See, to get good working that mike stand like that it has to be part of you. Not just your mike stand

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After "Mother-In-Law" we came back with "Te-Ta-Te-Ta-Ta." Minit was very proud of me and I was proud of Minit. I always got all my singing royalties. While I was on the road, Allen Toussaint would write and arrange a song. When I would come back to town I would just dub the voice on a tape. See, the reason Allen felt comfortable doing this was because he could write a song in any key and I could sing it.

I wrote "Heebie-Jeebies," "Come On Home," "Beatin' Like A Tom-Tom," "She's Waiting," "Waiting at the Station," "Popeye Joe," "Where reached number 69 during a five-week stay on the charts, while the flip side, "A Certain Girl," peaked at 71 while being on the charts for four weeks; "Popeye Joe" sneaked in at 99 for one week.)

The only thing about all this that upsets me was giving up the Trophy. See, I had it from '62 to '65, James Brown took it.

After Minit sold out to Liberty in 1965 I went to Duke, with Don D. Robery. They had Al "TNT" Braggs, Joe Hinton, Bobby Bland, Little Junior Parker, Buddy Ace, Johnny Ace's brother. Larry McKinley helped me get with Duke; that's over in Houston.

At that time Don D. Robey had a club in Houston called the Palladium. Now he had never seen me perform

# 66 Now the biggest battle of my life was with James Brown 99

There's a Will There's a Way." Every song that Ernie K-Doe records comes out of part of my life.

Now there is a story behind both of these new records. In "I Can't Believe She Gives It All To Me," I'm speakin' about this woman who gives me diamonds, clothes, money, and all her good lovin'. So when a lady gives you all that, there ain't nothin' else she can give you, ya know. The other one, the fast side, is "Hotcha Mama," like a lady is hot. What inspired us to do this particular song, I think every woman in the world believes that no woman in the world can do something no better than she can do. That's the gimmick behind this record. Every woman believes she is hot, "Hotter than pepper she can make you scream/Sweeter than candy she's a sexy queen/She knock 'em over when she starts to sing/She leaves 'em droolin' when she shakes her thing." It's comin' out on the Sansu label. Oh, I can't wait till it comes!

I probably cut 37 songs for Minit. The Mother-In-Law album did all right. And I got a gold record for "Mother-In-Law"; I keep that at my mother's house. (Author's note: "Mother-In-Law reached Number 1 in Billboard Magazine, in 1961, and remained on the charts for 14 weeks; "Te-Ta-Te-Ta-Ta" reached number 53 for 5 weeks; "I Cried My Last Tear"

but he had heard about me so his manager told him, "I'm gonna tell you now, don't play K-Doe cheap." You see, people see me walk slow, they don't think I can dance, but it's a whole different ball game when I get on top of that stage. There is no crowd I can't get to. Now all things are possible, but it hasn't happened to me yet.

On Duke I cut "Later For Tomorrow," "I'm a Dancin' Man," "Oh Why," and "Unitl the Real Thing Comes Along." "Until the Real Thing Comes Along" sold great. "Later For Tomorrow" and "Dancin' Man" were out of sight. Robey produced that stuff, and Willie Mitchell arranged it. I was with Duke about three years.

I signed back up with Allen Toussaint and Marshall Seehorn about nine years ago. I did "Keep On Lovin" Me," "Please Don't Stop" and "Stoop Down Baby," all that stuff. "Stoop Down," that was my latest till today.

I get along with them over at Sea-Saint, because I don't try to tell 'em their business. I know what I'm doing, I'm over there recording and that's all.

I've been working in hotels like the Marriott, the Hilton, supper clubs. Not too many one nighters. I play here at Winnie's Place, Bobby's and over to the Rose Tattoo. You see, I get along

with people when I'm on stage and that's the most important thing, I motivate the public. Some younger crowds, they're some surprised to see me doing the same dances that they're doing. It ain't nothin' but a thing to me! But I stay in the gymnasium all the time, the YMCA, 2222 Dryades.

Around town I work with Irving Bannister and the All Stars sometimes, Tommy Ridgley and the Untouchables, and David Lastie and his band.

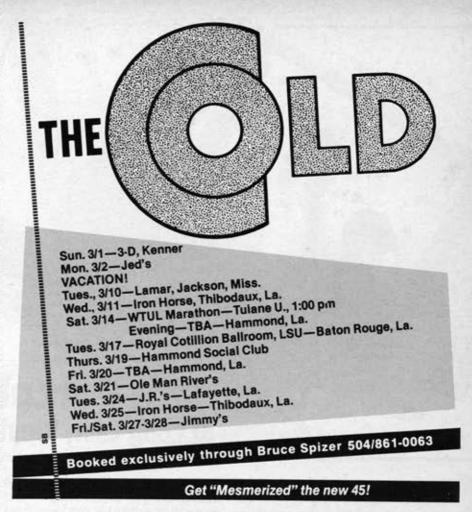
But we've got to bring the trophy back to New Orleans this year. We got to do it this year, we don't got no choice. 'Cause all the old singers is coming back into the business, and I feel like this: If I don't do it now, this year, it might slip away. Every record has got to hit, now we can't stand no misses. I'd like to have a record out every sixty to ninety days, 'cause you can catch up.

We're going back to the top, we're going back to the top. I think my new record's gonna be hit sides. I'm gonna hit the charts, I ain't worried about hitting the charts, I'm gonna hit the charts with flying colors. I want the whole country to understand that people like Irma Thomas, Fats Domino, we all coming back. We all driving in the same car, one way or another somebody's got to come out of the ice.

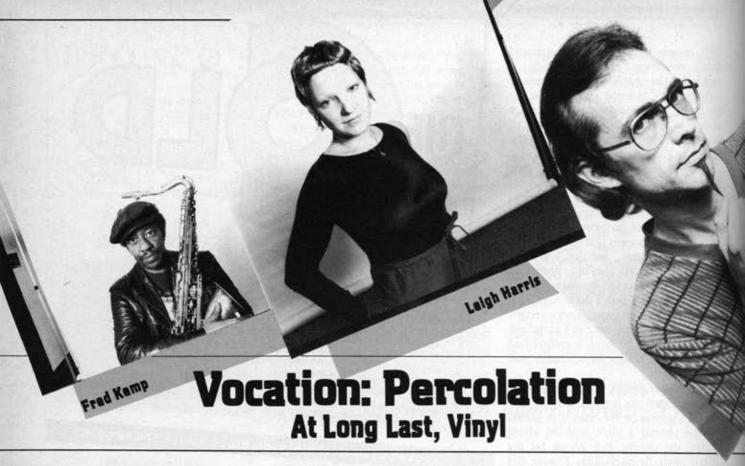
Truthfully, we don't play music here like people in the other parts of the country. Everything they play is straight; you can take any record that was made in another part of the country and you let a funky band out of New Orleans do it and it sounds all the way different. That's why people come here from all over the country to record. A friend of mine, Paul McCartney, came all the way from England to record at Sea-Saint. The first thing he asked for was Professor Longhair and Ernie K-Doe.

We got the sound here that groups come from all over the country to copy, but you have to be a native of New Orleans to get it. You might come close but they can't put themselves into the groove. I don't much blame 'em, though. They can try to copy our style but they can't do it.

I'll say it like this, I'm going back for all my brothers and sisters and all my kids. But especially for New Orleans in general. I have to bring the trophy back within a year. That's my goal.







# By Bill Cat

i'l Queenie and the Percolators, a fixture on the local club scene for nearly four years, is a band that has endured despite numerous personnel changes, a variety of management techniques, and the absence of any type of recording contract. Now, as the band approaches the outset of its fifth year of existence, its first record, a spirited, locally produced single, is at last being pressed.

"My Darlin' New Orleans," which first appeared on an album by the now-defunct Jazz Poetry Group, has been cut as a single by Li'l Queenie and the Percolators at the Ultrasonic Studios. Leigh Harris and John Magnie, leaders of the Percolators, were members of the Jazz Poetry Group and are prominent on that band's only album on the Takoma label. "My Darlin' New Orleans" is a Ron Cuccia-Ramsey McLean-Charles Neville composition. The "B" side contains a Percolators' original, a hot biscuit entitled "Wild Natives," a rollicking chunk of New Orleans funk that is sure to please the legions of the band's fans.

"We had to do it ourselves," explains Leigh Harris (Li'l Queenie),

the band's lead vocalist, "because nobody else was going to do it...help us put it out. No big producer from Hollywood was willing to pay for our Mardi Gras record, so we did it ourselves,"

Frank Quintini, who has functioned as sound engineer and general handyman for the band, produced and financed the project.

"We felt we were playing a good Mardi Gras tune, one that possibly could go on for a few years, so we decided to put it out," says John Magnie, pianist, songwriter, and leader of the band. If Li'l Queenie and the Percolators is a spicy New Orleans musical gumbo, John Magnie is the roux. He is the Percolator who began with Leigh in the spring of 1977, when the band formed from the remnants of a iam called the Backdoor Blues Revue at Tipitina's. He has, along with Leigh, supplied the heart and soul of the band's material since '77. He has kept the band working through good times and bad. Whether coping with heady popularity, or shaking off occasional disappointments, John has steadily guided the band with unswerving enthusiasm and optimism.

Among musicians and club people, John Magnie is universally respected. A native of Colorado, John has, in about six years here, absorbed the essence of the local musical flavor and redefined it through his own soulful compositions, tunes like "Black-Haired Girl" and "Inspiration."

Leigh Harris truly has become Li'l Queenie; she supplies the powerful lead vocals, the personna, the sex appeal, and the visual focus of the band. She has shown the ability to create tough ballads like "I Was Just Practicing," and she possesses the stamina to belt them out week after week in local clubs. If John Magnie is the gumbo's roux, Leigh is the cayenne pepper.

Occasionally a performer possesses the enigmatic magnetism of a star before being generally accepted as such. Leigh Harris is such a performer.

The 1981 edition of the Percolators is the funkiest aggregation that Leigh has yet put behind her.

Fred Kemp, once a regular with Fats Domino and Dave Bartholemew, is a monster on the tenor sax. His solos have the cutting edge of an oyster knife, and his ensemble playing is nearly always tasty.

Drummer Kenneth Blevins, a Lake Charles native, who came up playing Cajun music, has solidified a rhythm section that in earlier days had always meandered around the groove.



Kenneth is right down in it, driving the band with hot, precise chops.

Tommy Malone, in other bands a sizzling lead guitar virtuoso, would seem to be miscast in a band that features John and Leigh. But no—his rhythm playing is crisp and clean and his solos always fresh and inventive. In fact, Tommy's energetic playing coupled with Blevins' driving, second-line drumming has helped return the Percolators to their once-abandoned R&B roots. Tommy's tasteful playing almost never gets in the way of John Magnie's exciting pianistics.

The newest member of the band, bassist Ricky Cortes, is an experienced, versatile musician who has adapted to Blevins and Malone with apparent ease.

In not quite four years there have been about twenty different Percolators. For this reason the band has had to struggle to attain a group cohesion. This current aggregation comes closest of any combo that John and Leigh have yet put together to forming a truly unified band. Time will tell if they are able to hold together and grow together.

"We follow the influences of the people in the band," John Magnie says, "and we've changed direction often over the years...jazz for a while; now it's swinging back toward R&B."

Li'l Queenie and the Percolators have over the past couple of years made three professional visits to New York. The band's appearance there has generated favorable reviews, but no recording contracts to date. One can blame the ever-changing personnel, inconsistent management, the tight-money state of the recording industry, the New Orleans gris-gris, and other factors. Despite exposure in The New York Times, Billboard, Cashbox, and, most recently, Musician Magazine, Li'l Queenie remains unsigned.

On the homefront the band has taken advantage of an improving local club scene, and they've maintained their local popularity despite the lack of a recorded product. They now look toward broadening their regional base in the hope of cultivating a potential record-buying market throughout the South, according to drummer Blevins. In these troubled economic times that factor could weigh heavily in their favor as they continue to seek a record deal.

To their credit, Leigh Harris and John Magnie have rubbed shoulders with many musicians of diverse styles. They survived the experience of doubling as members of the Jazz Poetry Group through much of 1978 and 1979. That experience with improvisational jazz affected their songwriting and performing quite differently.

"As a songwriter [the Jazz Poetry Group] figuratively constipated me," Leigh admits. "It opened me up as a performer, but as far as writing my own songs, it stopped me cold."

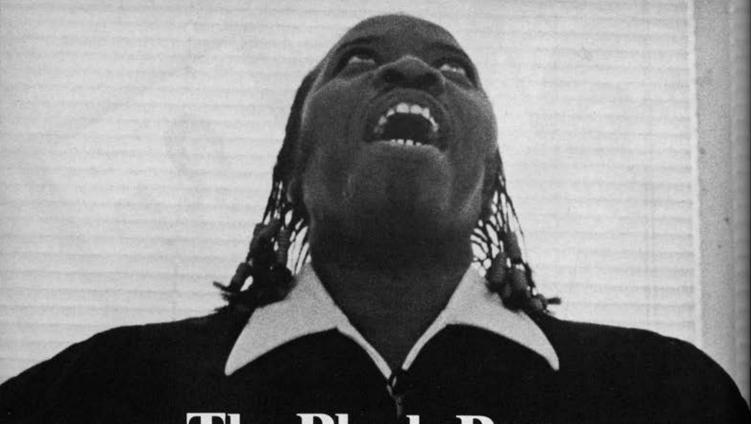
John reacted differently.

"It was positive as far as my songwriting, because I could supply the music for lyrics and stories that were already there, and it came easy for me. Working with Ramsey McLean, Charles Neville, and Ron Cuccia might have scattered me a little, but I liked it because there were so many new ideas around to absorb."

With that experience behind them, Leigh and John now have a band behind them funky enough to, in John's words, "get to people's feet and ass more than we ever have before. We can involve them physically in the music."

The long-awaited first commercial recording, "My Darlin' New Orleans" and "Wild Natives," which should be in release as you read this, has a funkiness that seems to illustrate John's point.

Hearing is believing.



# The Black Pope

By Almost Slim

"Wear It Out," "Wear It Out," you're hearing that phrase everywhere—on bumper stickers, t-shirts, making groceries, and at the corner bar and on the dance floor. But mostly you're hearing it over the airways daily on WNNR from the Black Pope. His real name is Shelley Pope and no disc jockey has taken the city and captured it the way the Pope has. When he gets behind the microphone, he throws the playlist away. You're just as likely to hear an old record by Little Johnny Taylor or B.B. King as the latest discofied release. His style is wide open, loud and wild. He has proven personality radio is far from dead. He is a one-man radio station. Here is the Shelley Pope story told one recent afternoon at WNNR between shows.

I was born March 25, 1934, in Birmingham, Alabama. My first job was in Cleveland, Ohio, at WMJO. I was about nine or ten years old; I got an early start. My uncle was a jock and I used to mess around with him. When he passed I was in high school so since I was so good after messing around with him and being a young teenager, well they just gave me the job. I worked in the afternoon on the evening drive.

I was playing Jimmy Reed, Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson, people like this. The good stuff!

My next job was in Huntsville, Alabama, at WEUP in Huntsville. I was Shelley Sputnik. You see, the day they sent the Sputnik up I signed up at WEUP on the air. So I went up as Shelley Sputnik! It was crazy but it was good, I had a good time. Shelley Sputnik, that's all you could hear around Huntsville, Shelley Sputnik.

The first job I had in New Orleans was in 1964, at WBLK. Stanley Ray owned WBLK, and he called me up in Columbus, Georgia, at WCLS, where I was working, and hired me right over the telephone. I don't know if he had heard me, but he must have heard about me, because I was widely known.

I was doing the evening drive. I loved New Orleans.

I don't care what town I was in, I took it by storm. All you could hear was Shelley Pope, or Shelley Baby. I just took, period, that's all you could hear. In '64 my big saying was "I'm boss, yeah" and everybody was saying that. It's just street talk, but you know you're sitting in a bar and somebody out of the clear blue sky will come out with something and it will stick in your

From WBLK, I went to Baton Rouge, WXLK, in the early '70s. Then I went to Orlando, Florida, WOKB. I also worked in Birmingham and in Beaumont, Texas. I been all around.

I came up with "Wear It Out" in Birmingham at WBUL. Me and the receptionist were just sitting around talkin' and after awhile she just said "Wear it out, Shelley, wear it out!" From that I came up with it. It's just street talk but I used it so much and so differently that everybody picks up on it. They be on the dance floor yelling "Wear it out, wear it out!"

But really, "Wear it out" meant I was wearing the other radio stations out. And I was wearing the other radio stations out. But everybody just took it and went crazy with it. So "Wear It Out" is just "Wear It Out."

I came back to New Orleans because I love it. And I had so many nice friends from when I was here in 1964. So when the chance came for me to come back to New Orleans, I just had to take it. I was workin' in Beaumont, Texas, and the man who owns also owns the station in Beaumont where I was workin'. This station was nothin'! It's just that simple, nothin' period. I raised so much sand in Beaumont they wanted me to come over here and get this station going, so there was nothin' else he could do but bring me here! I came back here in November and I had the afternoon slot. But I got into so much public demand, that now I'm pretty much on all day.

The Black Pope's drive comes from within. When I get behind the microphone I'm a different person. When I hit the microphone I'm wide open, but when I'm off the microphone I'm easy going. When I'm behind the microphone I'm loud and wild, I'm the Black Pope. Really I'm two different people. I have to be because the show takes a lot out of you, a lot out.

Really I'm no jock. I'm a human radio station! I'm the transmitter, I'm the tower, I'm the turntable, I'm everything. I'm very, very different from the other jocks. I play B.B. King, Howlin' Wolf, and everybody like that. Put it this way, I'm older. I'm older than the Rudi-poops. Yeah, that's what I'm gonna call 'em, Rudipoops. Young Rudi-poops. They only know their type of music. Something they can relate to. You see, I'm in the position where I can relate to them, their mother, and their father. I relate to everybody, and I feel glad doing it, and everybody can't do that.

Personality radio is coming back in full force, in full force. A lot of radio stations are going back to personality, and they're going back everyday. Black personality, white personality. In Birmingham I had one white jock giving me hell! He called himself "The Birdman." We were the only ones that had Birmingham.

Those were the good old days, the good old days. They say they're gone, but they're not gone, they're here, they're here again. Before, you could turn on any station and they all sounded alike. The black sounded like the white and the white sounded like the black. In fact, you didn't know what you had on! But now it's not like that anymore! And it's not just the blacks that want to listen to me.

I don't care where I go, it's the same identical thing, the same identical thing. I don't care who's got the city, who's number one or who everybody is listening to. In New Orleans or anywhere, when I get through, it's my city. Birmingham is my home but I had to leave home to get a job. I had to leave home to get a job. They had Shelley the Playboy, Tall Paul, Wild Child and all them guys. They owned the city for twenty years. I went to go for a job and they called me a Rudi-poop, a Rudi-poop! But that same guy they called a Rudi-poop came back to Birmingham, and I wore their head out-I wore their head out! Believe me, I knew I was no Rudi-poop when I went back. That's right.

I love New Orleans music, too. It's great. I play it, and I'm about the only one who do. Because it deserves to be played. Just hit, hit, hit, it's great.

There ain't but one radio personality in town. The Black Pope. Wear it out, New Orleans, wear it out!



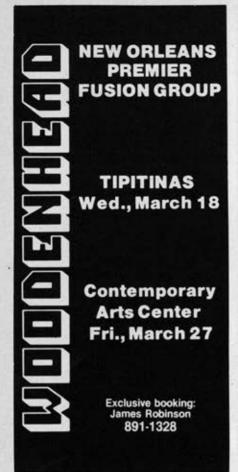
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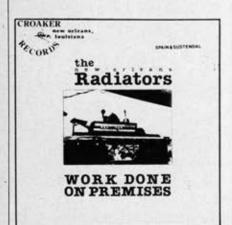




SHARON MARZONI

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M2 The Dream Palace S7 The Dream Palace W11 Luigi's F13 The Steamer President S14 The Dream Palace T17 Tipitina's F20 Jed's T24 Tipitina's F 27 The Maple Leaf



# YEW BREED OF NEW

BY BILL CAT

New Orleans has a rich heritage of songwriting talent. Professor Longhair, Earl King, Mac Rebennack, Big Chief Jolley, the Meters: all have been innovators, and their contributions to popular music in the form of fine original sounds and songs put this town on the map in years gone by.

But this is 1981, and the beat, as they say, goes on with talented young songwriters, as yet generally unknown. keeping up the tradition by writing the songs of the present day. Songwriters working in obscurity today may produce the classics of tomorrow.

So here's a look at two of the hardworking local songwriters of today; neither was born when Fess cut his first

Offstage the Uptights keep busy recording what Carolyn calls "basement tapes," four-track demos of the original tunes, in addition to broadening the band's repertoire. Many of the songs walk a tightrope between melodic complexity and pop simplicity, just as the lyrics teeter between coolness and warmth.

"Love Is Not a Theory," one of Carolyn's most engaging compositions, is full of startling couplets like: "You treat me like any other appliance/How can I possibly steal your heart away from science?"

Carolyn Edell

Rhythm guitarist with the Uptights. Carolyn Odell is a pretty, 23-year-old with a degree in mathematics and a talent for writing extraordinarily original pop songs.

"I began by writing poems, and then putting them to music," Carolyn explains. Indeed, the lyrics to her songs would be intriguing even without the musical arrangements. Carolyn's themes deal with the inherent conflicts between romance and science, between matters of the heart and those of the intellect.

On stage with the Uptights Carolyn is backed by lead guitarist Alan Hill, bassist Jimmy Hymel, and drummer Webb Burrell. Her stage presence is loose and unaffected, and she seems to genuinely enjoy performing live without taking on the mannerisms of a wind-up doll.

"If only my mom could see just what he does to me/She'd send up the army, police and cavalry..."

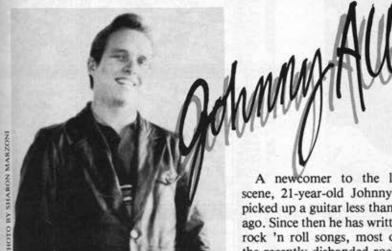
Carolyn seems to have learned the limitations of her singing voice, and, in the manner of Carole King, gets a lot of mileage out of what amounts to a sweet but ordinary "girl-next-door" vocal style.

"With the constraints of a fourpiece band, a lot of what we're doing has already been done," Carolyn says. "But the songs don't really fit exactly into the pop formula. Each has its little twists and turns that make it unique."

Working days in a record store, Carolyn Odell listens to music almost constantly, absorbing all types of songs, but writing with a distinctive flair. She describes her approach to songwriting as "meticulous," and is content when she is writing at the rate of one song a week.

Uptights drummer Webb Burrell, a veteran session musician, has helped Carolyn with the arrangements of some of the tunes, and has provided valuable advice on the recording of demo tapes.

# RLEANS SONGWRITERS



The Cartoons broke up in the fall of last year leaving Johnny without a working band, but he continued to write.

"Songwriting is the most natural thing I do," Johnny asserts. "I'm still a little awkward playing music because I have so little experience at it. But the easiest thing for me to do is to sit down and write a song."

While between bands, Allen has submitted some of his tunes to Li'l Queenie and the Percolators, who have worked a couple of them into their repertoire. He has also co-written one or two with Percolators pianist John Magnie.

Recently Johnny has begun to rehearse with a new band that includes the renowned local tunesmith Clark Vreeland on lead guitar, former Percolator John Meunier on bass, and drummers Bruce Raeburn and Steve Amedee.

Asked about his favorite local songwriters, Johnny replies with no hesitation: "Ed Volker, Clark Vreeland, and Earl King."

The prospect of forming a band with one of his local favorites has Johnny greatly enthused. "Clark was one of the first people I ever collaborated with on a song," Johnny says. "I'm looking forward to doing more of that."

Johnny Allen's advice to other young songwriters: "Get a band together, get out and play. Confidence comes from hearing a band play your songs in front of people."

It's fun, we might add, for the people too.

A newcomer to the local music scene, 21-year-old Johnny Allen first picked up a guitar less than three years ago. Since then he has written scores of rock 'n roll songs, most of them for the recently disbanded rock and blues band, The Cartoons. Begun primarily as a showcase for the considerable vocal skills of bassist Becky Kury, The Cartoons soon became a vehicle for the songs of Johnny Allen, as well.

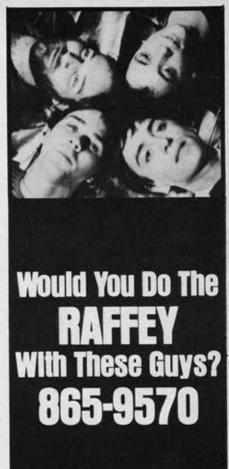
Johnny remembers his shaky start in the world of rock 'n roll.

"I was living with Tommy Malone (now guitarist with Li'l Queenie and the Percolators) on Dublin Street," Johnny recalls with a grin. "He called Becky and (drummer) Steve Amedee to come over and play one night. Becky came over and said, 'Why don't you play along with us?' I'd had my guitar only about four months, and knew only a few chords. I tried to play a couple of songs with them, and then I split because I was too nervous and freaked out.

"When I came back Tommy asked me, 'Hey man, you wanna play with us in a band?' I thought he was kidding. Two days later we had our first rehearsal. I could barely make it through a blues song. Ten days later we were playing at Tipitina's."

It was another eight months before Johnny had gained enough confidence to write a song and take it to the band. His first song, "Plenty Pleasure," soon became one of The Cartoons' favorites.

After a few more of Johnny Allen's songs were added to The Cartoons' repertoire, it became apparent that a distinctive style had begun to characterize the body of Johnny's songwriting work, a style that recalls the "Exile on Main Street" period of the Stones' Mick Jagger and Keith Richard.











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# Walter Lastie Passes-Death Of A Jazz, Player

BY JASON BERRY

Walter Lastie, one of New Orleans' most accomplished drummers, died of a heart attack last December 28 in the middle of a set outside Jackson Square. Only 42, "Popee" as he was known to friends and kin, had been making plans with an American agent in Germany for a European tour in March.

Lastie's death on December 28 draws the curtain on a year when Professor Longhair, Big Chief Jolley, and Wild Tchoupitoulas Indian leader Norman Bell also died—but they were older men, whose departures represent the waning echoes of a different generation. Popee was a portly, rapid-fire drummer whose father taught him rudiments of the instrument.

On a deeper, more profound level, Walter Lastie was the youngest son of a remarkable musical family, and the second musical Lastie to die within a decade. Melvin Lastie, a brilliant, pioneering cornet-trumpet player, a well-established artist who had moved to Los Angeles, died of cancer in 1972, also at 42. The band Walter played in locally, "A Taste of New Orleans," featured older brother David on sax, and sister Betty Ann, who made appearances on gospel piano and as an R&B vocalist. The Lasties had planned to tour together in Germany, with Popee laying the groundwork.

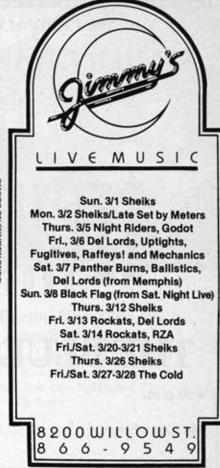
Seventy-eight-year-old Lastie,

Walter's father, is Deacon of the Guiding Star, one of the city's remarkable spiritual churches. Frank Lastie first introduced drums into the religious ceremonies in 1927, a radical act in those days. Popee began playing drums as a child under Frank's tutelage. He once recalled, "My father had a very rare style of playing. He played mostly with his fingers. He would use the tips of his fingers rather than his wrists to move the sticks. It's supposed to be something new and he been doin' it ever since I can remember."

Deacon Lastie is still active as a drummer in church and with a senior citizens' choir called The Silver-Haired Song Birds. Popee often played with David and Betty Ann in services at the diminutive Guiding Star Church in the heart of the Lower Ninth Ward.

Besides his father's instructions, Popee took lessons before reaching his teens from Fat Domino's drummer. "Every month they would have a children's hour at the Hot Spot, that's where Fats used to play, and his drummer, Cornelius Coleman, would stand behind me with his hands on my shoulders. He was left-handed and he'd cross his hands and play the beats on me and if I played it wrong he would slap me! So, I had to learn that way."

Walter's first gig came when he was





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sixteen, on a road tour organized by Freddie Domino, Fats' cousin. They played in Nashville, where Walter's brother David happened to be performing, and when work ran out the two barely had enough to pool funds and catch a Trailways bus back to New Orleans. In later years, Popee was Fats Domino's drummer and also served as road manager for the band.

It was the eldest Lastie brother, Melvin, who gave David and Walter deeper inspirations to play professionally. Melvin picked up the trumpet at five, rehearsed endlessly as a youngster, and was once mildly scolded by Deacon Lastie for playing in his room at three in the morning. Melvin promised to put a mute on the trumpet so as not to disturb neighbors.

There are many musical families in New Orleans in which the artistic gift is passed down from one generation to the next, like a biological gene reproducing. But Frank and Alice Lastie are special people, who recognized music as a spiritual force within the isolated neighborhoods of the Lower Ninth Ward, across the Industrial Canal and away from the city proper. Mrs. Lastie's younger brother is Jessie Hill, whose "Ooo-Poo-Pa-Do" is one of the city's more popular traditional R&B dance tunes. "Uncle Jessie"who was just about the same age of nephews David and Walter-began playing drums after Alice got a set for Popee.

They had a rare home, the Lasties, always opening doors to local kids who wanted to play music or be around the boys who were rehearsing. The great saxophonist Ornette Coleman drifted through New Orleans in the late 1940s-long before he was famousmet Melvin and stayed on for nearly a year as a house guest. For within the family environment, music remained a steady pulse. Deacon Lastie once said, with visible pride from the altar of his church: "All of my children started playing music in here-right in here. Isn't that beautiful? Not only my children, my grandchildren too."

And as the other Lasties grew and married and raised families, "Uncle Pop" helped carry on the tradition. He took time to show Joseph Lastie, Jr.—nicknamed Fish—how to refine the drumming technique the youngster saw his grandfather play in church; and then there was Riley, another nephew (Betty Ann's son), who plays

drums and trumpet. Both Fish and Hurlan are in their early 20s and active in local jazz groups.

Walter Lastie was nobody's fool. He often spoke with anger in his voice about the lack of professional opportunities in New Orleans, the absence of recording studios and shortage of club space. After his trip to Europe last year, he left a set of drums in Germany, to make himself return. The drums are there now, and I hope Fish or Herlin makes the trip to play those skins, because someone from the family should.

Walter's funeral on Saturday, Jan. 3, was an altogether different affair from others last year. Longhair's was a massive and uncontrolled; Big Chief Jolley's, a touching procession of Indians and traditional jazzmen from the Olympia band. But Walter Lastie's funeral was a *jazz* musician's send-off: more than fifty musicians, from the Olympia, Tuxedo and other bands came out. As one said, "Aint many cats could draw this many of us out—on a Saturday morning, to boot."

I don't think anyone there could recall such a presence, in recent time, of so many working jazz artists honoring a departed brethren. The crowd itself was not so large, perhaps three hundred people. There were no TV cameras; little press at all, for that matter. The procession left the Israelite Spiritual Church on Frenchman Street and moved slowly along Elysian Fields behind the big overpass, midway between the Quarter and the Lakefront. The notes of Milton Battiste's silver trumpet rose high into the cold, bright winter sky; the larger musical sound of accompanying brass, reed and drumming engulfed the crowd, and seemed to shrink the presence of people who did not have instruments.

So now let us praise Walter Lastie, a musician of uncommon talent and an artist whose struggle embodied the promise and endurance of his mates. The last song he played in the gig that Sunday off Jackson Square was "When the Saints Go Marching In." Even after he keeled over, his heart caving in, Popee kept thumping on the pedal of his big drum. Pop, you were one hell of a beautiful cat, and long after the wake and funeral have receded in our memories, musicians in New Orleans will remember one thing about Walter Daniel Lastie. He was a drummer and he went down kicking.



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# Woodenhead: For Export Only

BY YORKE CORBIN

Woodenhead may qualify as an underground organization. "We'll tell people we're playing," remarks guitarist Jimmy Robinson, "and they'll say, 'Oh, are y'all still together?' We practice three or four nights a week, and somebody asks, 'Are you still together?'" Certainly the band has little to do with standard notions of the New Orleans sound, and has had to work diligently at building a local audience. Playing a driving, complex fusion of rock and jazz-the Mahavishnu Orchestra and the Dixie Dregs are the best comparisons-Woodenhead has over the past four years evolved a musical style much at odds with the traditional rhythms of this city. But Inner City Records, a fusion-oriented label in New York, was sufficiently impressed with a recent demo tape of their music to begin talking about a record contract.

Amusingly enough, the warehouse where the band practices is filled with bags of red beans and packages of beignet mix ("stuff you can go down to Schwegmann's and get," Jimmy Robinson notes), ready to be shipped out to fans of New Orleans cuisine around the country. Woodenhead, if its members have their way, may also be ready for export. They seemed determined enough when I talked with them, with Robinson and drummer James Comiskey carrying the burden of conversation. The most recent addition to the band, keyboard player Fran Comiskey (she and James are cousins), listened in, looking bemused; bassist Edgar Lipps was absent. What emerged from the conversation was a strong sense of dedication among a group of musicians pursuing their along; but we do need to work more. We're learning how to present ourselves so that we don't completely alienate our audience-give them some strong body music for a while, then lay something else on them."

James Comiskey agrees. "We're working on our concert set and our



light show. You've got to give people just a little more of what they want with what you give them. If you look at our competition-stageshowside, creative inclinations, and a notion of the pleasure they derive from that pursuit.

The members of Woodenhead are rock musicians who went to college, studied classical music and began extending their musical horizons. (Fran Comiskey, trained as a classical pianist, is an exception.) "We got together around the music school at Loyola," Robinson says. "Maybe that contributes to our problem; we're all college-trained musicians too sophisticated for our own good. But this is a hard kind of music to play anywhere, so we don't moan and groan about it too much.

"We do make a lot of demands on the audience. I think that's good. There's enough music around for people who want to just lay back, and that's good too. But I think it's important to challenge people.

"What we're doing is hard, and we're getting better at it as we go





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# Fess' Best: Play At 78 Only

BY ALMOST SLIM

"In the Night"/"Tipitina" Professor Longhair Atlantic 1020

This isn't the rarest of Fess's records, but you sure can't pick it up at Joe's One Stop on South Rampart anymore! In fact, it was probably the biggest of Longhair's early sellers, managing to climb to Number 2 on the local R&B charts in March of 1954. However, it really didn't catch on elsewhere.

"Tipitina" was probably one of Longhair's best records and is a classic example of early New Orleans rhythm and blues. A nonsensical lament to wine and a girl named Roberta, "Tipitina" captures Fess's unique rhumbaflavored piano playing as well as his strained intoxicating (intoxicated?) vocals. Session men include Robert



Parker and Red Tyler on sax, Edgar Blanchard on bass, and the ubiquitous Earl Palmer on drums.

A previously unissued take of "Tipitina" appears on Atlantic's fine Professor Longhair—New Orleans Piano. Of course, a certain Uptown music club pleasingly scotched the name, too.

Continued from previous page we've got a lot to learn. Maybe we'll add a little explosion after the last song."

At this, everyone breaks up-a fairly regular occurrence after a James Comiskey pronouncement. He's the one who talks to the audience between songs at a Woodenhead performance, and he could give Johnny Vidacovich some competition in the drummercomedian category. He's homing in, though, on a real point: Woodenhead, for all its esoteric antecedents in avantgarde music, springs directly from 1960s rock. Jimmy Robinson played Hendrix-style guitar as an "underground teenage rock star" with Ejaculation, a popular local psychedelic band of the hippie era. The members of Woodenhead joke about playing Preservation Hall fifty years from now, and their development as a band does provide an interesting perspective on the way that particular styles of music can branch out of, then return to, the mainstream.

One thing that such bands demonstrate is that this city, self-regarding and culturally isolated from the rest of the country, has been a testing-ground for a generation of young musicians resolutely dedicated to their art. With four years of commitment in the face of unsteady commercial fortunes behind them, the New Orleans musicians who make up Woodenhead are ready to make their music heard on a national level. They have the ability, and they're beginning to get the breaks. And it's worth mentioning that their view of their music in relation to making it commercially is as healthy as any I've encountered.

"After we've had a really good rehearsal," Jimmy Robinson remarks, "and we've got everything clicking the right way, I feel totally satisfied. You have to take that attitude. There are so many things about the music business that are degrading. You just have to keep your ideals up high and go with it."

# Reviews

### Rockers Meet King Tubbys In A Fire House Augustus Pablo Shanachie 43001

The Rockers (or rather, the Rockers All Stars) include the Western Hemisphere's most adept bassist, Robby "Rabbi" Shakespeare; Earl "Chinna" Smith, who practically invented the reggae guitar sound whence his middle name is derived; an assortment of drummers including Albert Malawi, Mickey Boo and Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace; percussionists Jah Teo, Sticky (as in herbal matter) and Jah Levi (as in demin?); the man who created the concept of utilizing the melodica (formerly thought of as merely a child's toy) in reggae and dub mucic, Augustus Pablo; and last but by no means least, the gents behind the mixing board-Prince Jammy, King Tubby and Pablo himself.

It might seem odd to some including engineers amongst an album's musicians (or "Players of Instruments," as they are usually titled on Jamaican records) but in the case of a disc such as the one in question, the engineers may very well be of more importance than the fellows with the vintage Stratocasters and the foot-long spliffs. For the art of dub (and let it be known that Pablo is the Dubwise Picasso) is the art of electronics and engineering, gently tempered with 666,000 watts of Jah Elevation, Swift fingers on the recording studio dials rate and don't hesitate because dub-style is your fate and don't be a doubter because the space is extremely Outer and I-man is here (hear!) to tell that Augustus Pablo has no equal except perhaps the Scientist and that's yet another sequel so wo-wo-wo-wo...

What and where the Fire House is remains a mystery but given the Jamaican fetish for being as literal as they are spiritual and as the back cover (Exhibit A) reveals, Pablo is a man who makes no jokes about smoke, the close listener might assume that the Chalice blazed a bit during these latest sessions. Likewise inexplicably, the Shanachie label bears a snowbound Victorian home with a horse and sleigh



in the foreground. Rastafarian detectives have their work cut out for them, eh?

The smoldering cuts include "Short Man Dub," "Zion Is A Home," "Dub In A Matthews Lane Arena," "Jah Say Dub," "Son Of Jah Dub," "Simeon Tradition," "Selassie I Dub," "Jah Mouly Ital Sip" and the title number. Enough riddim and echo to at least get you through Lent (or St. Joseph's Day for the terminally afflicted). Albums like this will one day help return the trombone to its rightful place of respect. The runner-up this month is "Hunting In The Congo" by the Bongos, three boys from New Jersey who favor black, silver and turquoise. Third place (and breathing hard) is "Dub Style: The Virgin Mary" by Lone Ranger and the Chariot Riders." -Dr. Babylawn

# There Must Be A Better World Somewhere B.B. King MCA 5162

Lots of excitement surrounds the latest release from the "King of The Blues." With Dr. John and Doc Pomus prescribing all the material herein, B. manages to gracefully walk the tightrope between blues, jazz and pop. But fear not, this is a blues album!



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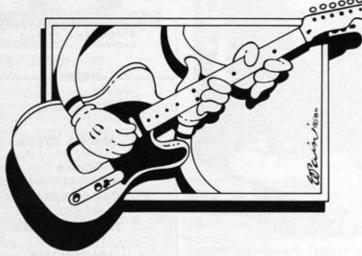
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B.B.'s singing and playing is as strong as I've heard perhaps since the release of the classic "Thrill Is Gone." In fact, many of the musicians used on that session are in tow here. Dr. John's playing is a driving force, too. In fact, Earl King told me he could hear stuff similar to "Gilded Splints" on the record. The horns of Hank Crawford and Fathead Newman blend well with Mac's piano and give the background a relaxed sound.

The title track ought to send King back in the charts in a big way. "The Victim" is similar to the stuff B.B. cut on Bluesway in the late Sixties, "More, More, More," my personal favorite, is as intense a number as I've heard recently from B.B. The choir-like backup adds to the haunting effect of the selection.

The whole album is fresh and exciting while still maintaining B.B.'s style. No bitches here, I can't think of anybody who won't like this latest effort, and if you do, where you at?

-Almost Slim

Folk Song Egberto Gismonti, Jan Garbarek, Charlie Haden ECM-1-1170

Louis Armstrong once said all music is folk music. Ramsev McLean once said it's all jazz. This three-way street here, Gismonti-Haden-Garbarek, synthesize both those statements, those wavelengths, into one.

The album's title is Folk Songs. The music seems to reach back, forward, to the core of nameless Tune, primal electric hum, from which sprout and generate the separate wavering petals and flowers we know as "songs." The opening selection is listed as "Folk Song," from a traditional source, the author, if one existed, having faded from human memory. But not time's memory. For the haunting and elegant strains of the theme are timeless, full of time-yet in a space outside of time.

Jazz is understood as a music that strives to release the dynamism implied by a theme. A song is the contraction of an experience; jazz is the expansion of that song-revealing the secret beauties and terrors that are only dimly suggested by the song, weaving our way back to the experience itself, out of which came the song. Jazz ensemble is dynamic animated conversationwaves crashing against each other's shores, walking each other's tightropes, doing away with each other's nets, becoming each other's nets.

Haden-Garbarek-Gismonti play the songs on this album meditatively and vibrantly. This is music of quiet, dark reverie. The sounds offer colors and shapes: images are suggested. Garbarek's sax is the secret sadness of a jester, the corridors of a young mind filled with ancient thoughts (the pungent yet languid musings on his composition, "Veien"). Haden's bass is the hushing forest, the rigging of a ship at midnight (his solo in "Folk Song"-breathless caresses, then an incredible full-blooded sigh). And Gismonti, a dreamer dreamed up by guitars and pianos and bells to unspring such a deep pool of music, flooding the world. Gismonti: what else is his music but the flight of birds, alighting on this branch, then the other, crying in the night, possessing the sky, releasing the sky. Sensuousness beyond sensuality, a spirituality that loves the earth. Half of the folk songs in here are his. "Cego Aderaldo," last track on side one, suggests, creates, celebrates an entire carnival.

Garbarek-Haden-Gismonti take themes that seem as old as the hills and meditatively, vibrantly expand these themes into experiences, till everything is texture, the longing of texture. For...? The object of desire is unspoken, unthought. A music of -Zeke Fishhead divine tactility.

### The New Jazz Ouintet Old Absinthe Bar January 18-21

You can read it on a hundred different garish t-shirts along Bourbon Street: "New Orleans, birthplace of jazz." That birth was a while back now, and the jazz child is older, reaching middle age at places like Crazy Shirley's and playing on past retirement at Preservation Hall. Younger musicians may be found walking hand in hand with it in a few places, particularly Tyler's, but on the whole New Orleans has not been receptive to the children of jazz, the newer members of the family.

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Fusion jazz is a notable member of this new generation, one that has achieved considerable success with the work of people like Stanley Clarke and Chick Corea. Yet one New Orleans fusion group, the New Jazz Quintet, has more trouble getting gigs than a tourist looking for a hotel room at Mardi Gras.

This is really a shame, because as the dates at the Old Absinthe Bar proved, the NJQ is a fine, distinctive band, fully capable of drawing decent crowds. The Old Absinthe is a pleasant, very personal place to hear music; the band, overflowing the tiny stage ("We left the rest of our equipment at home"), brought the mood even closer to the audience.

Movement in the music is the most striking thing about the NJQ's performance. The originals they play (which make up about half of each set, interspersed with tunes by Cobham, Ponty, Corea) have titles like "The Last Journey" and "Distant Horizon" and cover varied and definitely scenic musical terrain. Rather than staying in one place, the songs flow, build, explore diverse plateaus. The intensity level, while generally high, is changed enough to avoid monotony. Strong originals are vital to any band hoping to break into bigger time; each member of the NJO has contributed quality compositions. Although the endings and some of the bridges seemed a bit sloppy and unsure, these numbers are consistently tight on the inside, displaying well-structured, dynamic phrasing and a good ear for an effective riff. These are good tunes.

Especially potent are Randy Webber's keyboards. He is far and away the most gifted member of the group; every time his finers leap into a solo he is exciting. Webber has the most playing time in the show, and believe me, you can't hear too much of him. Band leader Dave Emilien on drums and Harold Scott on bass provide a solid rhythm section, and if they take few flights into fancy themselves, they do provide a strong base for the other members to take off. The guitars of George Scott and Lonnie Morris are less emphasized; they could contribute more but they underscore the general effect successfully. Scott and Morris produce very different sounds with their instruments, an important contribution to the overall diversity that is the core of the NJO's potential.

-Keith Twitchell

# Classifieds



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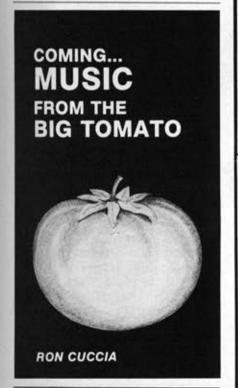
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# The Last Page

Ladies, get your smelling salts ready.

Reverend Al Green, from whom Talking Heads borrowed their greatest hit, will be the sanctified headliner at the "Joy of Love Concert Spectacular," March 17 at Municipal Auditorium.

Reverend James Cleveland will open and it's a Rufus Production.

The Radiators album is soon to go into its second printing...Elmore James' nephew resides in New Orleans and is full of stories of the legendary bluesman...Jessie Hill revue is picking up steam. Al Johnson, Ernie K-Doe and Huey Smith all have recently been part of the "Ooh Poo Pa Doo Revue" ... Watch out for Dr. John's Gumbo to be reissued in Japan. List price is \$14.98—ouch! German MCA also plans to release Get Away With Fats Domino from an ABC session from 1964...Mercury also is going to reissue the 1965 live Las Vegas set Fats Domino Live. Vintage Fats; get it!... Other vintage New Orleans sets to be reissued include Bobby Charles (P-Vine-Japan), and Shirley & Lee (Manhattan).

Lee Dorsey's Body and Fender Shop on Elysian Fields Avenue is closed and no longer in operation but where is Lee? Must be riding his pony... Marshall Sehorn is back at Sea-Saint after three weeks in Europe...Sessions are lined up this past month at Sea-Saint for Earl King and Tommy Ridgeley...Sammy Ridgeley is working with his brother, looking and sounding dapper...Irma Thomas has added a cowboy hat and the tune "Nine to Five" to her show...Aaron Neville's house is for sale.

Nice article on Al Johnson and Mardi Gras music in the March edition of New Orleans Magazine—check it out...Irving Bannister and the All Stars could hold the record for longevity in the city. This unit has been together for 12 years now and plays every Thursday at the Rose Tattoo across from Tipitina's and at Winnie's on London Avenue every Sunday evening with an assortment of vocalists including James K-Nine and Ernie K-Doe... Walter Washington has been in the studio for a session at Sea-Saint with Senator Jones.

Big concerts coming up in March: on March 1, in the Saenger, the Original Meters, the Wild



Tchoupitoulas, the Nevilles and Joyride celebrate Mardi Gras. At the Superdome on the same night: Charlie Daniels Band and Kansas entertain with other acts. Pat Metheny visits McAlister Auditorium on Mar. 25; Emmy Lou Harris is at the Saenger Mar. 26; B.B. King and Bobby Blue Bland put aside their differences at the Saenger Mar. 27, and Santana visits on Mar. 28, 29.

A.J. Loria, who's playing nowadays at the Fountain Bay Club, has a 45 out for Mardi Gras, "Ain't Nothing Like It"/"If Ever I Cease To Love," produced by Richard Lazes Co. (it's the soundtrack for Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras film). Loria's backed by John Vidacovich, Jim Singleton, Lady BJ, Charles Neville, and Branford and Winton Marsallis...Jean Knight has a 45 out soon, recorded at Sea-Saint, "Anything You Can Do"/"Gossip," by Soulin' Records produced by Isaac Boldin. Also produced by Boldin is a new 45 by Premium, "You Know You Want To Be Loved"/"Girls Are Made For Loving."

B.B. King's new album is comprised of all Dr. John tunes...Ramsey McLean has an album scheduled out in April...Look for Coteau reunion at Jazz Fest.

March 17 issue of *Billboard* magazine will feature New Orleans music scene. We'll be interested to see its comments.

A sneak listen to the Nevilles working on their new album was a treat. Sounds like a hit in the making.

News from WTUL: The Survival Marathon will be held March 13-15 on the quadrangle. WTUL's only fundraiser will feature three days of live music (Basically, it's a party, says 'TUL's Rick Arnstein.)...Mark

"Ace" Eckerle's Global Folk Show on WTUL has been moved to Sunday afternoons. Ace features live concerts on the air. Tune in at 2 p.m. every week for acts like Angelle Trosclair, the Hot Damn Jug Band, the Bad Oyster Band and many more.

Brian Brain (a.k.a. Martin Atkins), former drummer of Public Image, will be at Jed's March 17 with Peter Jones, on bass (formerly with Cowboys International) and Bobby Surgeoner on guitar. Another Pontchartrain Production...Creole Cooking, featuring Antoine Domino Jr. on organ, has started its own restaurant on Chartres Street, called Victor's.

Gilbert Hetherwick fans (you know who you are) will be treated to another alive concert by the Hetherwick Band at Jed's on the second and third Thursdays of March. Other band members are Tommy Comeaux on guitar, mandolin, sax & steel; Mike Campbell on bass and vocals, and Steve Wheless on drums...We heard from the talented Fourplay band recently. Members John Reeks, Nick Compagno, Nick Hecker and Karl Hymel are playing around town during Carnival.

Tabby Thomas of Excello Record fame has opened "Tabby's Blues Box" on North Blvd. in Baton Rouge across from the old Temple Club. Some zoning laws had to be bypassed before a liquor license could be granted, but the grand opening came off this past month. Tabby hopes to bring Silas Hogan, Guitar Kelly, Henry Gray, Raful Neal and The Neal Brothers, and Whispering Smith to the Blues Box. Lazy Lester is reported to be back in Baton Rouge for a short time in January before returning to Michigan...Henry Gray is back after a two-week tour of Germany...Other clubs that have live blues are the Snowflake in downtown Baton Rouge and the Barn and the Snowflake in Port

Vincent Monroe, a.k.a. Mr. Calhoun and Polkadot Slim, is alive and still singing and playing harp in the depths of the Ninth Ward. Unfortunately Slim has fallen on some extremely hard times as of late. He had a leg amputated due to diabetes and is also suffering from tuberculosis. Perhaps an appearance at the Jazz Fest could lift his spirits some?

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