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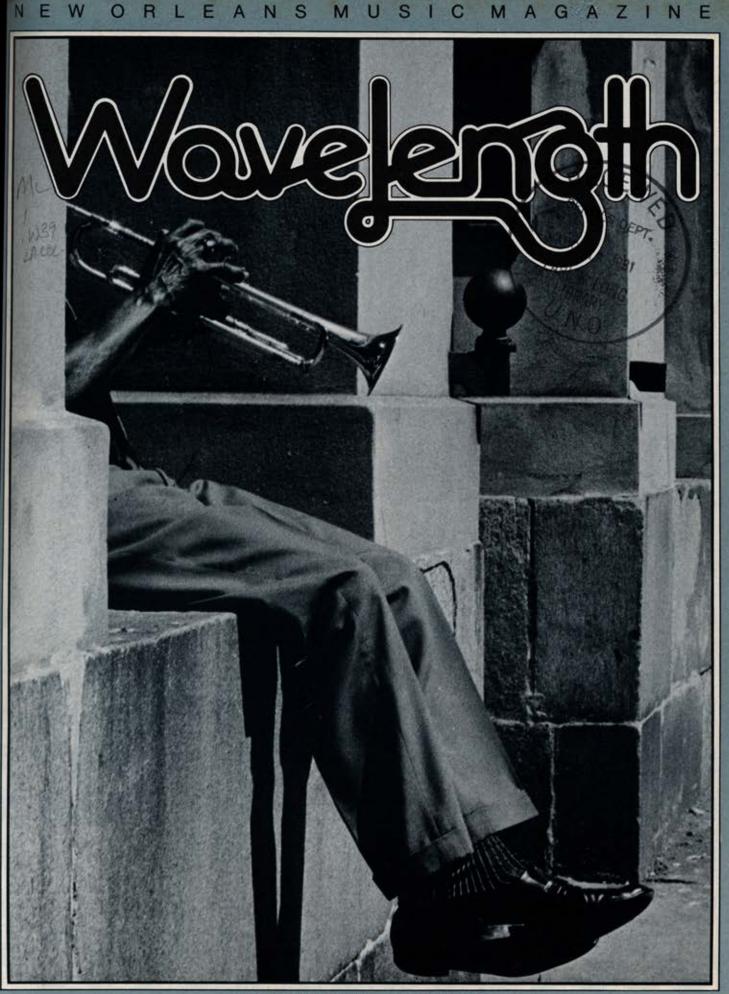
Connie Atkinson University of New Orleans

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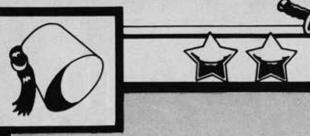
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JULY 1981 VOLUME 1 NUMBER 9



Summer

in the Superdome

Shrine

MON-JULY 13

A BIG BAND NEW ORLEANS JAM SESSION starring AL HIRT PETE FOUNTAIN FROGMAN HENRY AND HIS BAND

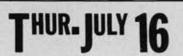
> WED-JULY 15 The Shrine-Country Show of Shows Starring

MERLE HAGGARD DANNY DAVIS AND THE NASHVILLE BRASS TAMMY WYNETTE with her Las Vegas show

HANK WILLIAMS, JR.

Shows Start at 7 pm

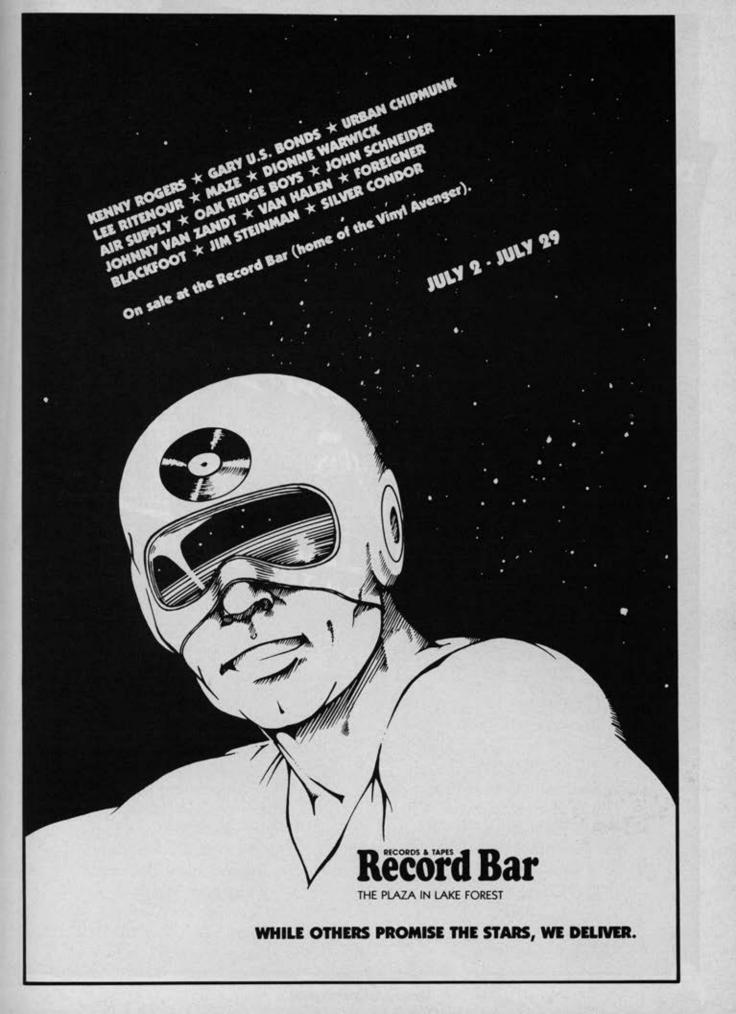
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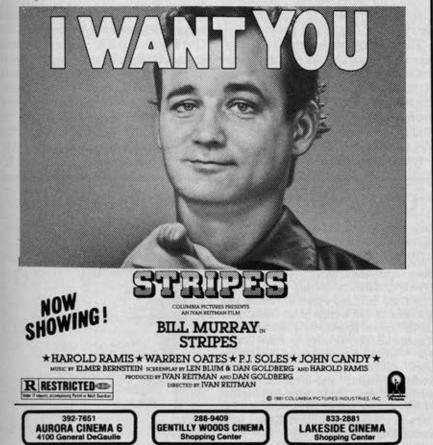


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Pablisher, Patrick Berry. Editor, Connie Atkinson. Advertising Sales, Steve Gifford, Ellen Johnson. Contributing Artists, Skip Bolen, Banny Matthews, Kathleen Perry, Rick Spain. Distribution, Gene Scaramuzzo, Star Irvine. Contributors, Carlos Boll, Bill Cat, Ron Caccia, John Desplas, Zeke Fishhead, Steve Graves, Tim Lyman, Bunny Matthews, Kalamu Ya Salaam, Shepard Samuels, Gene Scaramuzzo, Hammond Scott, Jim Schurich, Almost Slim, Rhodes Spedale, Keith Twitchell, Nancy Weldon.

Wavelength is published monthly in New Orleans. Telephone (504) 529-5962. Mail subscriptions, address changes to Wavelength, Box 15667, New Orleans, LA 70175. Subscription rate, \$10 per year. Foreign, \$15 per year. The entire contents of Wavelength are copyright \$1981 Wavelength.



WAVELENGTH/JULY 1981



Tacos Al Carbon 2 flour tortillas filled with guacamole & beef tenderloin with lettuce, tomato, cheese \$6.95 Steak Ranchero popular in northern mexico \$6.95

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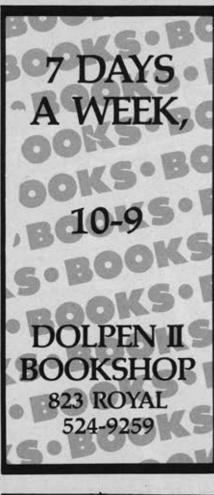
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July

COLD FEET

Kevin Radecker of the Cold beat Lenny Zenith of RZA in the first annual New Orleans Jump-Off at the Palace Saloon last month. Johnny Trout, owner of the club, was the impartial referee. Cold manager Bruce Spizer, in the heat of the contest, was seen slipping Trout a crisp \$20 bill. The next Cold single—a double A-sider— will be "Thanks a Lot"/"Never Alone."

ALLIGATOR INVADES NEW ORLEANS!

The much-needed boost that the New Orleans rhythm and blues community so badly needs appears to be just around the corner. Alligator Records, a Chicago blues recording concern, plans a three-album anthology of New Orleans rhythm and blues.

Owner and producer Bruce Iglauer has booked Ultra sonic Studios in July for 10 days, 24 hours a day! Local music buff Tad Jones, who is to coproduce the series, stated, "Bruce isn't coming down here to play around. He's coming down here to work."

The idea behind the series is to complement the successful *Chicago Blues Anthology* that Alligator did a couple of years ago. Alligator's other dabbling in Crescent City rhythm was the Professor Longhair *Crawfish Fiesta* album which had turned out to be the biggest seller to date on the label. hobby in 1970 while a clerk for Delmark Records, has turned a company that marketed records from the trunk of a car to perhaps the most influential contemporary blues label in North America. His roster of talent includes Lonnie Brooks, Albert Collins, Koko Taylor, Buddy Guy and Son Seals.

Although there have been no signing as yet, some of the artists rumored to be considered by Alligator are Huey Smith and the Clowns, Tuts Washington, Eddie Bo, Tommy Ridgley, and Al Johnson, among others.

ADDENDUM

An important omission in last month's recording studio listing was the Sound Doctor in Pineville. Add this information to your files:

The Sound Doctor, 833 Conti St., New Orleans; 2301 Military Hwy., Pineville, LA: 504241-6764, 318640-1121. Tracks: 8. Owners: Bob Vernon, Leo Nocentelli, Marion Deaton, Duane Yates, Mrs. W. G. Vernon. Manager and head engineer: Bob Vernon. Recorders: Otari 1" 8-track, Pioneer, JVC, Panasonic. Mixer: The Sound Workshop 1208. Outboard: DBX Comp-limiters, Lang EQ (they'll rent what you need), MXR Phasers, chorus. Instruments: Anything you need rented. Rates: Steady customers, \$25hr. (10 hrs. or more). Credits include the Meters, the Neville Brothers, Gaboon's Gang, Leo Nocentelli solo album, and many commercials and singles.

Iglauer, who started Alligator as a

GOLDEN MOMENTS IN N.O. ROCK 'N' ROLL

I.

April, 1947—Roy Brown returns from Texas completely broke. He learns that Wynonie Harris is playing down at the Dew Drop Inn, and hopes to interest him in a song he had written on an onion sack. Harris ignores Brown but a band member suggests he take the song to Jules Braun, who is auditioning talent for his Deluxe label. Brown sings the tune, "Good Rockin' Tonight," and is rushed into the studio by Braun. The record marks the first "Rhythm and Blues" record cut in New Orleans. "Good Rockin' Tonight" sold almost a million copies.



Top 20

If the heat doesn't beat you too badly this month, there's a lot of good music around. As hot as it may be in the audience or on the dancefloor, just remember it's probably hotter on the bandstand. A band that chooses to play in New Orleans in July deserves all the support we sweaty music lovers can muster. What follows is a list of upcoming musical occurences, some of which may qualify as "events."

1 WEDNESDAY—We'll begin the month in a traditional setting on Bourbon Street where the **Batiste Bros**. **Band** opens a four-night stand at the Old Absinthe Bar. A good family-funk ensemble, the Batistes offer an entertaining evening wherever they play.

3 FRIDAY—Gifted saxophonist James Rivers performs with his band, The James Rivers Movement every Friday and Saturday night, Tyler's, 5234 Magazine St.

4 SATURDAY—Tipitina's offers A Taste of New Orleans with Huey "Piano" Smith tonight at about 10:30. A Taste... consists of some local veterans of the R&B circuit led by David Lastie.

5 SUNDAY-Just across the Causeway on the left in Mandeville stands Mande's Restaurant, a favorite stop for northbound auto travelers from New Orleans. Today from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. you can sit on Mande's new sundeck under a "Cinzano" umbrella or get up and dance to the **Radiators**, free and outdoors. Bring the kids.

7 TUESDAY—The original Three Dog Night, famous for numerous hits ("One," "Eli's Coming," "Easy to be Hard," etc.) as well as for dynamic live performances, appears tonight only at the Saenger Theater.

9 THURSDAY—The original "Soul Men" Sam and Dave appear tonight only at Tipitina's, and if they are carrying the same band as last time in, the proceedings will be, as Art Neville likes to say, "serious."

10 FRIDAY—An undeniably entertaining R&B lounge band from Texas, Jimmy Don Smith and the Cold Cuts opens a two-night stand tonight at the Old Absinthe Bar.

11 SATURDAY-Tonight Jed's presents RZA featuring the remarkable Lenny Zenith and some earth-shaking dance music.

12 SUNDAY—Tonight spend "An Evening with Judy Collins," as the popular vocalist entertains at the Saenger Theater at 8 p.m.

13 MONDAY-Tonight the Shriners present their "Big Band New

Orleans Jam Session" at the Superdome featuring none other than Al Hirt and Pete Fountain. As is the case with all Shrine-sponsored events, proceeds will go to the Shriners' Children's Hospitals.

14 TUESDAY—Insect Surfers invade Ole Man River's tonight, and they'll surely be playing cuts from their new LP entitled *Wavelength* (no relation). Opening the show will be (who else) the Urban Verbs, of course. Don't miss this.

15 WEDNESDAY—Tonight is the Shriners' Country Music Extravaganza at the Superdome featuring Merle Haggard, Tammy Wynette, and Danny Davis. Afterward, hit the Quarter and get down with Satisfaction, who open a rollicking four-nighter at the Old Absinthe Bar.

17 FRIDAY—The Dells (remember "Stay in My Corner"?) appear tonight and tomorrow at Prout's Alhambra on North Claiborne. Uptown at Tipitina's the Fabulous Thunderbirds make a triumphant return after two successful albums.

18 SATURDAY—Guitar guru Earl bassist Becky Kury join forces with the Mystery Monitors for an unpredictable evening at Tipitina's.

19 SUNDAY-Starting sometime in the afternoon it's the "3rd Annual Day of Rock and Roll" at the Superdome starring **REO Speedwagon**, Heart, Ted Nugent, and Foghat...not for the faint hearted. Later in the evening Son Seals plays some real live Chicago blues at Jimmy's, 8200 Willow St.

24 FRIDAY-Frankie Beverly and Maze open a weekend stand tonight at the Saenger. Denise Williams opens both nights at 8 p.m.

25 SATURDAY-Lace up your rock & roll shoes because tonight on stage aboard the steamer *President* will be the pride of Ferriday, Louisiana, Jerry Lee Lewis and his band tonight only.

26 SUNDAY—Making a rare New Orleans appearance at the Saenger Theater tonight is Manhattan Transfer, a longtime favorite.

29 WEDNESDAY-Leigh Harris and John Magnie, the heart and soul of Li'l Queenie and the Percolators perform as a piano-vocal duo tonight at Tipitina's. They don't do as much of this as they once did, so check them out, tonight only. And if you're on the West Bank tonight stop in at O.B. Suave's, order up a 25¢ draft beer, and check out Terrytown's own Rebels rocking and rolling tonight and every Wednesday night on Belle Chasse Highway near Terry Parkway.



3501 Chateau Blvd. 466-3333 466-3334

> Thurs., 7/2 RZA

Fri., 7/3 Dance Fever T.V. Show Final Auditions

> Thurs., 7/9 THE RAFFEYS

Sun., 7/12 ★SPECIAL★ Kick Boxing Tournament Full Contact Karate!

> Thurs., 7/16 THE LOOK

Tues., 7/21 RZA

Thurs., 7/23 THE RAFFEYS





By Ron Cuccia

WORKING BOURBON STREET

There are some god-honest musicians down there who treat their music with respect.

Her bottom lip protrudes almost as far as her tassletipped breasts. Her head is lowered. Her eyes are sunken. Her eyelids beat a playful disappointment as she stares into the man in the doorway. She sways toward him, lifting the sheer skirt, rubbing her hands along her thighs, up her stomach, over her breasts, through her hair, and, stretching herself full length, she spins toward him a petulant rear end when it becomes obvious that he is not coming in.

His wife is pulling him the other way. Three cruising cowboys checking out the pictures in front, the strippers inside, and other men's wives, stumble on the broken sidewalk spilling beer. The husband and wife can't get out of the way. They have been suddenly surrounded by a group of giggling Japanese businessmen fleeing the friendly terrorization of a tall, delicate black man wearing a shower curtain as a cape.

Once this knot untangles itself, the tourists will quite likely run into each other again, later on, in one of the Dixieland clubs. Certainly sex on all scores helps keep Bourbon Street alive, but how is the health of what was once the world's sexiest music?

Financially, it is being challenged by country music and street musicians. Spiritually, it is being challenged by an attitude. The most common response of musicians was a shrug-shouldered, "It's a gig." A bandleader said, "We're just five whores up there." It's understandable one can feel that way after playing every day for an audience that is mostly either shouting about football, or sitting there watching their pink drinks melt, or climbing on and over each other to get a picture of how much fun they're having shouting about football, or how relaxed they look sitting there watching their pink drinks melt. Music is just a worm in a sea of alcohol. The musicians are expected to supply the wiggle.

Another frustration is neglect, which is almost congenital amongst New Orleans musicians. Out-of-town writers give space to Bourbon Street musicians, but they aren't taken seriously at home. These tourist traps, however, are more than just a meal ticket. There are some god-honest players down there who treat their music with respect.

Compiled here is a list of cats who can blow. Two things should be kept in mind. First of all, the list is incomplete. Some acts are in transition, and some people simply weren't playing this particular week. Secondly, and most importantly, all the jazz musicians mentioned here were recommended by other jazz musicians currently playing on the street. In a sense, this is their own allstar team.

Hollis Carmouche can make you dizzy with his clarinet. His playing is like an optical illusion; he punctures the melody so often, it's hard to tell if he's inside or outside. Richard Knox on piano, swims softly underneath, always hinting, with an excellent imagination for chords. Hollis wraps melodic changes in spirals, then lifts off into long swirling birdlike phrases, up and up reaching thrilling peaks, diving into a million tiny turns, and then catching himself at the last second for a gentle recovery. He also plays an articulate and finely

PHOTO BY JOSEPHINE SACABO



wrought tenor sax, but his greatest power is on the clarinet.

John Brunious on trumpet plays a solid Dixieland foundation for Hollis' free-floating clarinet. Ken Allen on drums and Al Bernard on bass are both very accomplished technicians. The band plays with a respect for the music and each other that is uncommon on the street. When you play "The Saints" three, four, or five times a day, it's easy to get bored and repeat solos.

Not so with Hollis Carmouche and the Jazz Cajuns. They are at the Maison Bourbon Tuesday evenings, 4 til 9, Friday afternoons, 11 til 4, and Sunday nights, 9 til 2. If you don't mind standing in the doorway, you can get a 20 oz. draft to go for a dollar on the same block, listen to Hollis, and watch the kids tap dance in the street.

Playing nightly at the Paddock lounge is James Davis and his band. Mr. Davis is a nervous player with a hard attack on easy stuff. He tries to make it look like he's doing something by playing with a trumpet in one hand and a trombone in the other, but all it amounts to is simple chromatic runs. Also, he aspires to the singing style of Satchmo, but ends up somewhere between Captain Beefheart and Wolfman Jack. What's worse is that he's one of those bandleaders who interrupts someone else's solo for the sake of tourists, either to call them in or start then hand clapping. However, it's still worth going in to listen; that's how good Walter Lewis is on piano.

Walter Lewis is worth the price of a Bourbon Street beer. Supporting other musicians, he was always fresh and inventive, sneaking flourishes that never intruded. When he soloed, the bandstand and the whole barroom quieted down. He was captain, playing with all the wisdom and devilish humor of the old salt he looked to be. Roy DuBos is a sharp young bass player who can make a bass solo an eye opening experience. Frank Oxley is a strong drummer. Mr. Floyd plays trombone with the fluidity of an early model automatic transmission Oldsmobile changing gears. He's got power-glide, along with a sassy swing style, and great clarity of tone. I asked him if he spelled his first name with a "y" or an "ie." He said, "Well, lately I've been spelling it B-o-o-b-i-e." The whole band is enjoyable, and James Davis is not unbearable.

Johnny Horn is another average horn player with a great band behind him. Eddie Collins on piano is a recognized standout by all the other musicians on the street. Likewise for Irving Charles on bass and vocals; he, too, comes highly recommended. Duke Barker on drums and Charlie Mays on sax have all the know-how they need. Johnny Horn isn't bad, he's just boring, but the rest of the band more than makes up for that. They play a safe mixture of modern and Dixieland, nightly, at & Mo' Jazz.

The Camellia Jazz Band, at the Maison Bourbon every afternoon except Friday, 11 til 4, has an excellent trombonist in Freddie Alonzo. He has a full range of sounds from dinosaur to machine gun, and the intuitive subtlety to use them effectively. Also, on bass for the Cameillia Jazz Band is the old pro, Lloyd Lambert.

The unanimous choice, of all the musicians I spoke to, for best trumpet player was Thomas Jefferson. However, he was in between clubs on this particular week, and not playing. Word has it that he's beginning at the Famous Door soon. Richard Knox, whom I saw with Hollis Carmouche, is actually Thomas Jefferson's regular piano player. Richard was subbing for Phil Parnell. Parnell is a treat in himself, and, overall, I found Hollis and his Jazz Cajuns to be the best, the brightest, and most dedicated band down there.

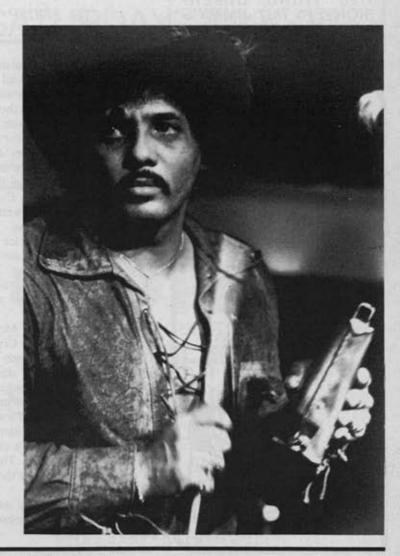
Researching these clubs was a lot of fun, and, if you haven't done it in a while, I strongly suggest a stroll down Bourbon. A 20 oz. beer and some Takee Outee on a stick should inure you to the sleaze. Along about my third trip, however, I was finding the tourist rap insufferable, and musicians who were bored with themselves depressing. For relief, I strayed aimlessly off Bourbon Street. A couple blocks later I heard what sounded like Dixieland being played too loudly on a cassette that was too small with batteries that were too weak. Sitting on a bench was a father strumming an adamant banjo, while his three sons, ages approximately eight to twelve, wailed away on trombone, sax, and clarinet. It sounded terrible, but they went stoically swinging ahead through solo and ensemble. They were a noble sight, and their mistakes had the awkward grace of a newborn. If their music didn't quicken one's step, certainly their spunk refreshed the heart.

aaron neville

by shepard h. samuels

aron Neville, lead vocalist of the four Neville Brothers and father of Ivan Neville, a fine musician in his own right, has become a local musical legend during the course of over two decades of recording. With the release of the album *Fiyo on the Bayou*, the Neville Brothers, with the right effort by A&M Records, should regain, on a permanent basis, the national recognition they've tasted in the past with prior record releases. These include brother Art's release of "All These Things" in 1962; Aaron's number one record in 1966, the original "Tell It Like It Is"; Art and Cyril's work in the Meters during the late 1960s; and their collective effort behind their uncle, the late Chief Jolly, on the *Wild Tchoupitoulas* album.

To those who don't know Aaron Neville, on stage he appears to be an enigma, an emotive voice second to none coming from a frame that defines toughness. Interviewing Neville is an enjoyable challenge; he has so much information to give, it's impossible to stick to one train of thought and at any moment the interviewer is likely to be treated to an impromptu song. What follows below are excerpts from a very recent interview which we've decided to limit to the subject of Aaron Neville offstage, reflecting on his music, his family, and his past. Foremost among his outside interests is his involvement in the planning of the Uptown Youth Cultural and Development Center, an idea of Aaron's which, when opened, will offer free educational, emotional, recreational, spiritual and vocational services to the youth of uptown New Orleans. In upcoming issues, Wavelength will cover Aaron's musical history more extensively and developments in the opening of the youth center.





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corner of Carrollton & Maple "A step off the trolley" Aaron, "Mona Lisa" and "The Ten Commandments of Love" are your two major songs on the new album. Why did you decide to record them?

They've been on my mind. "Mona Lisa" is a song I grew up on. My daddy bought the record when I was a kid. The first time I heard the strings it captured my heart. I knew I had to record it one day; it was in me all the time.

How did you pick up "The Ten Commandments of Love"?

That was one of my favorites back in the game. We were doing this thing in New York with the Persuasions, an a cappella group, crazy but nice. We had a few things in mind, "Danny Boy," "Crying In The Chapel," "Over the Rainbow." I want to bring Oh, definitely, man, it's too suggestive. Between the music and television, the kids have too much in front of them. They're showing them different things they can get away with and kids try them. It's so vulgar, the world's turning into another Sodom and Gomorrah.

Did you start out singing do-wop?

I wouldn't say that. I was a cowboy, yeah, I used to yodel. That's why I still got that stuff in my voice, because that is something that comes naturally to me. People use to try and get me to sing straight a long time ago. I thought something was wrong with my voice. But now everybody's trying to do what I'm doing. That ain't just no singing, it ain't just about no singing, that's feeling, that's emotion, that's.

'I ain't about that sex symbol thing. God gave me a voice to share with the world, not a body to share with the world...'

them back, that's the real music to me; the rest of the stuff is all electricity. The music today is either too vulgar or depressing and it's all in the same beat. The music of the fifties was good music to me. I feel like the same songs could be revitalized; they'd be new to the kids, and nostalgia to us. The stuff that's being played today has very little that catches my ear. I've gotten to the point where I want to sing something with meaning. The reason the Lord gave me my voice was to sing and deliver a message not just to be singing in some barroom. That's why I'd like to do spirituals, too.

What spirituals would you like to record?

"Yes, Jesus Loves Me," "Were You There When They Crucified The Lord," and "Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue." "Lovely Lady" was a poem I learned at St. Monica's when I was living at the Calliope Projects. It was a poem I always liked and wanted to put music to. Anybody can identify with it because we're all God's children, no matter how old we are. The only way to get to God is to have the heart of a child.

Do you believe that some of the music today is having a bad effect on people? things I've lived and seen other people go through. It's another source, that's used in me as an instrument. That's why I don't want it to go to waste, going up in the air in a barroom.

So you started out by doing cowboy music?

Yeah, I was a cowboy. I had the fastest mopstick in the project, mopstick was my horse, his name was Kimo short for Kimo Sabe. I use to yodel and daddy use to listen to Nat King Cole, Charles Brown, Clyde McPhatter, Pooky Hudson and the Spaniels, Sam Cooke and Larry Williams. Larry Williams who did "Boney Maroney," "Slow Dance," and "Short Fat Fannie" played a hell of a part in my life. He was the person who took me on the road and got me to record first. He use to say "all that singing coming out of you and you don't even move, you just stand up there.'

"Over You" was your first recording?

Yeah, that and "Everyday" back in 1960.

How did that come about?

I was in parish prison doing six months and there was a poem in the prison paper that gave me the idea. I took it and put my words to it and made that into "Over You." I had been wanting to record with Art and the Hawkettes working along with Larry Williams. He (Williams) always use to say "I'll get you one time" and sure enough he got me and I recorded with Minit.

There were times when you "took the wrong road?"

A lot of times I was forced to. When I was a kid we didn't have anywhere to play; that's one reason I want to build the Youth Center. So we had to make up our own recreation, doing foolish things, emptying garbage cans, paint ing cars, might have broke a few windows. Now they're killing people. It's scary now.

Is your singing a release valve for you?

I got so much inside of me if it was a ball of string it would go around the world at least a few times. Singing's my only release valve. I know what I am and what I'm supposed to be. Like when I was working on the riverfront, dudes use to tell me "you haven't any business working here." I said man, I got to eat. I feel other people's hurt. I always put myself in other people's place. I even talk to my cat and dog. People ask what are you going to do if you get to be a success. If I get to be a success we're all going to be a success because that's seeing that the people around me ain't going through no changes.

Do you find it difficult at times having to be on stage a lot and having to combine that image with family life?

I handle it. My family comes first. I ain't about that sex symbol thing. God gave me a voice to share with the whole world, not a body to share with the whole world.

How did you get the handle, "Apache Red"?

It's just a nickname. I've got Indian blood in me. I just dug the Apaches' make-up and took that name. I use to wear my hair with a bandana around my head. It was just me at one time in my life. At one time I use to be called "Moleface," they use to call me and my partner "Moleface and Melvin." They use to call me "Carrot Top" when my hair was red, then "Blondie." Right now I'm Aaron but people still call me "Apache." People say I look tough. In different circumstances I guess I had to look tough. I'm not really conscious of looking tough. Like I said, I've seen some tough times and walked some mean streets.



SATURDAY, JULY 25 8:00 P.M.

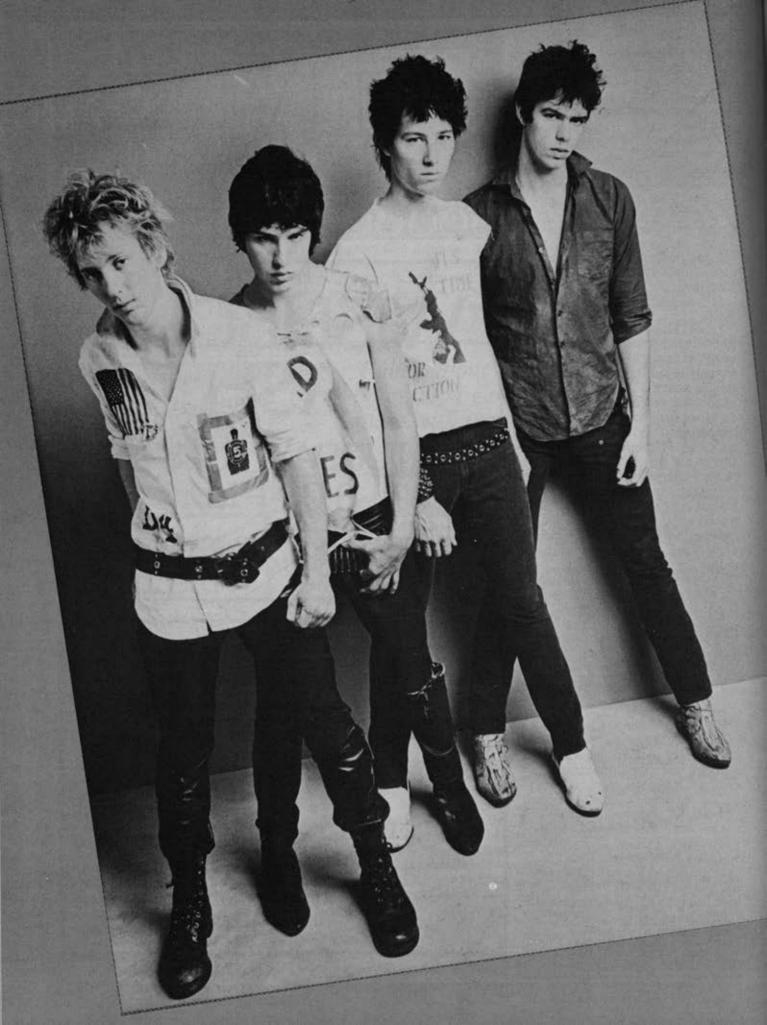
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WAVELENGTH/JULY 1981



The Red Rockers have a problemone that has been familiar to New Orleans musicians since the days of Jelly Roll Morton. The dilemma is that on the West Coast (where they have been spending most of their time lately), the Rockers' "Guns of Revolution" 45 vies with Adam and the Ants, the Clash, and Joy Division for radio airplay. Back home in the Crescent City, as fate would have it, they are lucky to get airplay on Jay Hollingworth's Tuesday evening new wave show on WTUL. As for the so-called "major" FM stations in the immediate vicinity, forget it-they don't play Adam and the Ants, they don't play the Clash, they don't play Joy Division and they certainly aren't going to play a record by a group of 20-yearold politico-punks from Algiers.

But that's not the only problem. People in New Orleans simply refuse to believe that the Red Rockers are so successful in other areas. So once and for all, pay attention, students—the Red Rockers are making it and making it where it counts. New Orleans is small potatoes and California—where they are currently idolized—is the biggest, fattest yam of all.

This summer, Sandy Pearlman, who produced most of the Blue Oyster Cult albums and the Clash's *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, will produce the first Red Rockers album for 415 Records, a division of Sire. This is a very notable achievement and not even the mighty Cold can claim the same.

The following interview was conducted in mid-June with lead vocalist/blond bombshell John Stunn and bassist Darren "Derwood" Hill. the absent Rockers are Patrick the

BY BUNNY MATTHEWS

drummer (originally from California) and Jimmy Jet, the tallest, wildest guitar player currently operating on either side of the river.

What are the origins of the Red Rockers?

John: Me and Jimmy graduated from high school together and started playing together that summer. In the fall, we went to the University of New Orleans and we met Darren. And Darren knew Geoff, our original drummer, and we all came to my garage and that was it.

Darren: That was the Rat Finks.

When was the first time you played? John: In October of '79...

Darren: With the Normals at the Showboat. We came in right when the Normals were going out. We came in at a good time.

Had you been playing music for long?

John: I went to school for music and stuff like that—played jazz and stuff in high school.

Darren: Me and Jimmy just picked up our instruments six months before we started the band.

What was your initial inspiration?

Darren: Boredom. The way the music is around here plus we had something to say. Music is the best way to say it.

John: We all write songs but Darren and Jimmy write the most. The 45 was done in the spring and summer of '80.

Darren: In Austin, Texas. There are no studios in New Orleans that ae comparable for the price. Studios are real bad down here. We didn't know what we were doing at the time but for our first try, I guess it's okay.

Our cuts on the No Questions, No WAVELENGTH/JULY 1981 Answers album are another mess totally. It was mainly the fault of the studio. I think it lost something going to the pressing plant. I was really disappointed with the outcome of that album plus it took so long coming out that it killed itself. It was dead before it even came out.

John: The majority of our gigs before we left were benefits for that album.

Darren: I think we made about \$300 total from all the gigs before we left New Orleans. We worked regular jobs before we left, saved everything, rented a truck and took off. Right after we left, we played a weekend in Houston at the Island and made \$1,000—ten times more than we ever made in New Orleans. Then we played Raoul's in Austin and in between Raoul's and California, our drummer left because he got scared. We had gigs to play in California within a week and no drummer. We were in really bad shape.

We had try-outs in California, advertised in record stores, called record companies asking about drummers. We were calling up this one company called Posh Boy, and Patrick, our drummer, happened to be working the answering service and he intercepted the message. He came and it worked out perfectly. His head is right where ours is.

When are you going to record next? Darren: In August. Sandy Pearlman is going to produce it. He saw us in San Francisco and fell in love with us for some reason.

John: San Francisco is 70 percent gay...

Darren: The first thing he said to me



July 10 JED'S (w†ones) July 17 SUAVE'S (West Bank) July 24 THIRD DIMENSION

June 30th KALEB'S (Fat City) July 3 JIMMY'S (wRZA) July 4 OLE MAN RIVER'S (wModels)

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was "You guys are just like the Clash in '76 only you guys can play." He's a pretty weird guy.

Where do you play in California?

Darren: We played with just about everybody-Dead Kennedys, Circle Jerks. We lived in Los Angeles but we would go on trips to San Francisco and play there two weeks at a time. There's a nice circuit all the way up the coast-all the way to Canada. There's a lot of clubs in California plus a lot of theatres where they put on shows. The scene is so much bigger than it is in New Orleans that it's really hard to imagine. It's because of the radio, too-the big gripe I have about New Orleans is the radio. That's how new music gets started-it's got to have radio support.

Kids in New Orleans don't get a chance to hear anything new. They're just being force-fed "Stairway To Heaven" and the Stones every day. They grow up on that and think that's the way it is. The only thing new on New Orleans radio is something that might sound like "Stairway To Heaven."

Even the M.O.R. stations on the coast play Adam and the Ants so much you can't stand it. No one here plays it.

John: Everyone out there is an Ant. All the high-class thrift stores stock pirate suits.

What are you going to do when you return to California?

Darren: We did a new single while we were out there but it hasn't been pressed yet. We're still trying to get up some money because we want to do this on our own. It's a different version of "Dead Heroes" and a song called "Can You Hear Them?" Our album is supposed to come out in September.

How many people do you draw when you play in California?

Darren: A lot. It's really weird-nobody believes us around here. We come back and we're nothing. The president of Sire Records called WRNO to announce that we'd been signed and they said, "Red Rockers? Who?"

Usually, you can count on your home radio station to break you. WRNO said they wouldn't play us until we had a national hit. I don't even want to give them a record-I don't want to support them at all. We're trying to figure out a plan on how to change the radio here.

TOMMY RIDGLEY STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

Tommy Ridgley is a survivor, and could teach young musicians plenty – if only they'd listen

BY HAMMOND SCOTT

Survival. That word comes up a lot in conversation with Tommy Ridgley. He attributes his undeniable success in the music business and in his personal life to "learning how to survive" at an early age. Many musical artists with hit records to their credit have not stood the test of time. Yet, Tommy Ridgley, with some 60 recordings since 1949, has managed to retain a topnotch band and a steady audience for his music without the benefit of ever having a real hit record. Even in lean times, Ridgley's good bands and good audiences have remained consistent just as his wife has stuck consistently by his side since their marriage in 1949. It must be added, though, that Ridgley's soulful, vibrant singing and piano work allied with his good business head and impeccable character have played a large part in his "survival?"

Ridgley is basically a loner, yet a very friendly, humble man with a wealth of good stories and strong opinions. He abhors being classified as "oldie but goodie" but instead refers to the rhythm and blues artists of his generation and calibre as "classic" R&B artists because their music has stood the test of time. Today, many popular artists are still re-recording rhythm and blues performances of the forties, fifties and sixties. Ridgley feels this music is enjoying its present revitalization because people have never quit wanting to hear good music even though pop and disco music have overshadowed the many fine rhythm and blues efforts that go unheard by the general public.

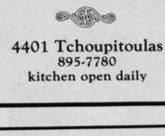
Tommy Ridgley was reared in a New Orleans section known as Shrewsbury. Born into a poor family with seventeen children (only 8 children lived), Tommy had to quit school in high school to help support his family. He had to find brass and silver to polish or shine shoes to help buy groceries. He learned how to survive on very little. He relates: "I used to take women's shoes and knock the heels off and wear several pairs of socks when winter came...just survive...and learned to appreciate anything I got."

Ridgley fit the typical pattern of today's rhythm and blues artist in that he learned to sing in the church choir and finally graduated to singing in a street corner quartet in what used to be known and Harlem Street where the corner of Endover and Causeway Boulevard stand today.

In 1942, Ridgley joined the Navy which he attributes as the "turning point" in his life because it removed him from "a bad environment." Stationed in Okinawa, he began to toy with the piano, learning blues tunes of the day such as "Junker's Blues" and "Yancey's Special." Tommy was



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thrilled by the sounds of T-Bone Walker, Louis Jordan, Wynonie Harris, Roy Brown and later Muddy Waters. These artists made Ridgley choose blues as his first love.

When Ridgley returned from the war in 1945, Roy Brown was a New Orleans resident and nationally one of the biggest rhythm and blues recording artists. Tommy began performing much in Brown's style and finally convinced Sporty Johnson, the M.C. at the Dew Drop Inn, to let him on stage. Inevitably, Roy Brown left New Orleans for the big time. Soon, New Orleans vocalist Mr. Google Eyes left town to join Count Basie as featured vocalist. This left Tommy Ridgley very much in demand around town, working with Dave Bartholomew. His recording break came in November 1949 with the release of "Shrewsbury Blues" and "Early Dawn Boogie" released on Imperial Records.

Tommy cringes at the recording quality of his early recordings. "It's like (Allen) Toussaint was telling me...the talent was there but it was such primitive conditions...there was usually always some instrument hard to get in tune. Allen hates to hear his early records; I do, too. I found I tended to sing a little sharp back then from pushing too hard."

The year 1952 saw Ridgley switch to Decca Records. As he remembers, "The biggest record I wrote was 'Tra La La' but you can't find it under my name, because after it took off pretty well, Deluxe Records threatened to sue Decca since Dave Bartholomew was on my record and he was under contract to Deluxe. Well, I still believe Cosimo (Matassas) and Bartholomew sold me out because since the record was selling well, they had a proven seller but were forced to withdraw my record. Next thing I know, it came out by a group called the Griffin Brothers who made a gold record with it ... and Pat Boone even covered it and I never saw a cent. So, I switched to Atlantic Records at my first opportunity."

Tommy Ridgley enjoyed a four-year association with Jerry Wexler at Atlantic Records and a steady stream of moderate-selling tunes. Over the next years Ridgley recorded for Herald Records and Ronn Records without any real hits. Ridgley seemed to always be able to hook up with record labels, however, because he gigged so regularly and maintained good bands which gave him a certain volume of record sales. But it was always the personal appearances where he made his money. Ridgley saw records as promoting his personal appearances.

Today Ridgley is looking forward to a proposed recording session for Chicago's Alligator Records (see news note page 6) which he feels will surely produce a fine session. Even though he is busy writing new tunes for this upcoming recording venture, the daily running of his band is his most immediate concern. Ridgley feels much concern over most of today's young musicians. He begged that it be printed that he is pleading for today's young musicians to "come off their big egos and learn to really listen" when they work in a band.

"I'd like to tell young musicians, in a nice way, that they need to go back and do some wood-shedding. Think about what you're doing and quit thinking you know too much for an older musician to teach you something. Your better young musicians seem to graduate toward blues and jazz because you have to have knowledge and ability to play good blues and jazz. Now, I play funk myself...you have to be able to play it. But, the thing I condemn is the way young musicians pay no attention to who is supposed to be featured.

"An example is when Solomon Burke, a 'classic' rhythm and blues singer, came to town recently. He was backed by a young local funk group. Solomon is singing and their attention should have been forced on him...their ears should have been wide open ...following him. Well, they were supposed to be playing a I-V-I-IV-V chord progression, yet they played I-IV-V, I-IV-V. Burke turned around and burned a hole thorough them with his eyes. I got nervous, I wanted to help Solomon so bad. I wanted to tell the young musicians they were doing wrong and not listening ... they expected the artist to change his hit record to play what they are playing.

"My biggest problem has been with drummers and bass players. If you get one who can play anything besides funk, he might try to play all shuffles, or driving jazz using the same lines on every one of those type tunes. Think about what you're doing. If you are doing two tunes, even if the chord progression is similar, every tune should be played with a different line...make every tune different...it only takes a little imagination."

DRUMVOICES THE ROOTS OF NEW ORLEANS RHYTHM

Since the first exodus of New Orleans jazzmen to cities of the North in 1917, New Orleans has produced a distinguished legacy of drummers who have contributed greatly to the shifting tides of popular music, both in the United States and foreign countries.

From Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton, who drummed for Louis Armstrong, to Hungry Williams, Earl Palmer, and Smokey Johnson of the R&B heyday in the middle fifties, down through the latterday drummers like James Black, Zig Modeliste, Johnny Vidacovich, Rick Sebastian, the late Walter Lastie and others, there is an unbroken strain of an identifiable drumming voice, an instrumental undergirding of that enduring "sound" for which the city is known.

It is a sound which few musicians from outside of New Orleans can adequately imitate. At root it's a parade beat, stemming from the French military brass band tradition, with snares and the beat of the big bass drum and then the interplay of brass and reed voicings—but it is a sound which in recent years has evolved to something more complicated than all of that.

Fifteen years ago, a decade even,

by Jason Berry

one could say with reasonable certainty that second line was the drumming sound, and anything else percussive had to fall in behind it. But with the emergence of popularity of the Mardi Gras Indians and their music, with the rise and too-brieftransit of Professor Longhair, there came another percussive element. There were chants, voices, tambourines and a remarkable folk culture, which had been around for years, but which musically few people understood. A possibility arises: is there something underneath the second line sound, intimations of an umbilical tie to Africa and those exotic, primitive drums of passion-is there a "second" New Orleans' sound?

Bear in mind that however different the second line and the second sound, the "Afro-Caribbean rhythm," may be, there is a similar force at work. From ancient hands on wooden drums to poundings on the military bass and snare drum, then cymbals and woodblocks, all the way up to Mardi Gras Indians who hit tambourines with no drums around— through all, we are searching for some common ground. The percussive consciousness was at work in New Orleans as early as 1815, when Congo Square gatherings began, slaves dancing and making music on drums and other instruments. But before the Civil War, whites outlawed these gatherings for fear that the drum voices would stir slave revolts.

If we suspend Congo Square in time for just a moment, and drift south to the islands, there is a deeper source of this dance-to-drum voices, as explained by John Roberts in *Black Music of Two Worlds*. He starts with the dance called *bomba*.

The bomba has many African elements; melodies of short phrases repeated a great deal; varied, complicated rhythms; a collective dance form involving instruments, dancers and spectators in which nobody is passive...All these qualities are true of a large number of Afro-Caribbean dances, such as the bamboula found in parts of the French- and Englishspeaking Caribbean and in the nineteenth century in Louisiana and Georgia...

As early as 1815, therefore, we find a dance-and-drum tradition linking New Orleans and the Caribbean, with Africa as a primary, though diminishing source. Already the French language, broken into black *patois*, enters slave lyrics. But in 1855, the drums are outlawed here, as in other parts of the South. If the literal African vocabulary of worddrumbeats no longer lingers in the slave memory—by now generations have passed—still the drums had great power, driving home the message of *freedom*, swept by winds of common fate to red-skinned tribes of the region.

There were Indians in the area surrounding New Orleans long before the slaves met at Place Congo. The Choctaw, Creek and Muskahogean had already retrenched geographically while the slaves were closed in on plantations. Driven deeper to the swamps and upriver to Mississippi, slaughtered out of a riverport now called Natchez, the tribes dispersed, leaving seeds of their culture scattered through the forests and bayous. Indians harbored fugitive slaves. To the east, in Florida, a Seminole chief married to an African slave, established an underground railroad for slaves. By the 1890s, griffon, which means "black Indian" joined the lexicon of the city's racial



Baby Dodds

classifications.

As early as 1847, blacks masked as Indians for Carnival in Port-Au-Spain, Trinidad. An essay by Andrew Pearse on 19th Century Carnival there (from the Caribbean Quarterly) observes: "Black Indians are thought of as African rather than Venezuelan (where tribes originally lived), and their speech is said to contain African words."

By the 1880s, when Mardi Gras Indian tribes appeared, the chants and dances, without drums, were both a parallel of Caribbean carnival rites and hearkened back to earliest African expression, before drums. Hands and voices: feet and dances. So too were ancient vocal patterns (calls by the leader; response by the tribe) now flourishing among Caribbean slaves. Thus Carnival became an outlet, common to New Orleans and the West Indies, where African traditions melded with the carnival processions of Christian pageantry-with the symbolic protest of Indian costumes. But an important difference now appears: on the islands, drum ceremonies endured, building rhythmic layer on top of layer, with the sound flowing into churches and other religious ceremonies of African derivationvoudou in Haiti: neo-Yoruba cults in Cuba like abakwe; spiritualist ceremonies of Brazil, candomble and macumba descended from Nigeria.

In New Orleans, the Indians kept alive remnants of the African-derived past, but in a ritual fashion more American than African. By 1898, with Buddy Bolden electrifying people on the first great horn of jazz, the Indians' carnival contained the distant



shadow of Africa, cast upon early ensemble jazz. The leader of an African tribe sang to the beat of the drums, while a chorus, often female, sang refrains behind him. With Mardi Gras Indians, the Big Chief led the tribe in song, the braves answered in chants, using hands or makeshift instruments for surrogate drums. In traditional jazz, a one-two thump of the drum begins the song or plays steady beat; the brassy trumpet performs the masculine call-roll, the reed instruments followed-sax, flute, clarinet-falling in like a female chorus.

Now let us depart the Indians, and $\tilde{\Xi}$ return to the dominant stream, the second line beat. Jazz emerged from a confluence of idioms. Ragtime lent the "stride" bass. In blues and the churches, a similar beat structure prevailed, and with churches too were crossrhythms of hands clapping, feet tapping. Parades were common here by the 1890s; the military bass gave the big drumbeat. Horns entered, as we've seen, like voices. Finally there were feet which insisted on moving, and jazz became, among other things, dance music.



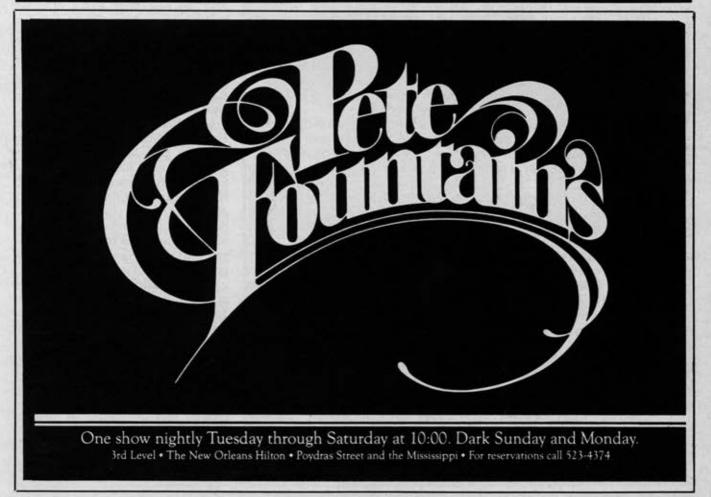
Zutty Singleton

Probably the greatest of the early New Orleans jazz drummers was Warren "Baby" Dodds, who played with Armstrong, as did his clarinet playing brother, Johnny. In a lucid autobiography, Baby Dodds said, "In my estimation, the drums should play according to the melody and still keep time. Those to me are the drummer's two specific jobs." What kind of drummer was Baby Dodds? Here is a description from Rudi Blesh, in *Shining Trumpets*, of a "drum improvisation" record, written in 1946.

This solo, by the greatest drummer in jazz history, was produced in a state that definitely resembled possession... The drums are meticulously tuned to intervals that correspond to those of African singing and the performance is at times as complex as that of the three-piece African battery. It must be emphasized, and moreover, that Dodds had no first-hand knowledge of African drumming and music. He thinks of himself, on the contrary, as a "modern" jazz drummer and evolves all of his effects directly from the unconscious.

The influence of New Orleans drumming reaches out to Chicago, and drummers who have not seen the likes of Dodds or Singleton. As the legendary Gene Krupa told Feather:

Any idea that I knew anything about those skins had to go out the window once I started hitting those Southside joints. For one thing, I had no idea of the wide range of effect you could get from a set of drums. I picked up from Zutty Singleton and Baby Dodds the difference between starting a roll or sequence of beats with the left or right hand and how the tone and in-



flection changed entirely when you shifted hands.

The monotonous pattern made you feel weary after listening to it for a while. Few of them realized that drums have a broad range of tonal variations so they can be played to fit into a harmonic pattern as well as a rhythmic one.

Pause for a moment here and extract drums from the brass band parade, isolate a few elements, and see how Dodds and Singleton acquired such a wide musical vocabulary. On a march tune like "Panama" the snare begins after the trumpet's bugle call, then rolls off to start the band, playing two measures with the big bass coming in on three sturdy thumps. Or, in a funeral dirge, the snare is muffled, while the bass plays a hard, slow toll. Krupa: "I had no idea of the wide range of effect you could get from a set of drums."

In 1927, the first recording of "Down by the Riverside" is made, taking the once-sacred song into the popular mainstream. Then in 1938, Louis Armstrong records "When the Saints Go Marching In," parade-style, using the second-line in another religious tune. The year 1927 is an important drum-turn for New Orleans: Frank Lastie, a grand marshall in second-line groups and avocational percussionist, introduces drums to spiritual church ceremonies. Suddenly, there is a link with the Afro-Caribbean tradition, flourishing in churches with rituals akin to the spirit cults of the West Indies and Brazil. (Lastie teaches his son Walter to play with his fingers, not the wrists as many others are taught.)

Thus the jazz beat cycles back through the church, with pianos, chants and hand/feet percussions, cross-rhythms fed anew by the drums, in those days a radical instrument for a church. (As late as 1971 in Mississippi, one rarely saw a drum in black churches.) Ironically-perhaps providentially-at roughly the same time Lastie brough drums into churches here, the conga drumming of Cuba, long a mainstay of spiritual cults, had spread to Europe and North America with the Cuban dance, the rumba. And as drums spread through local churches, they added a hard backbeat to emergent gospel music, the same rhythmic back beat which figures deeply in the rise of post-WW II rhythm and blues.

In the late 1940s, Cuban conga drumming and the rumba swept the U.S. again, this time more professionally, with men like Chano Pozo joining Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker on recordings. In New Orleans meanwhile, Professor - Longhair (Henry Byrd) had begun his collection of rhythms in the percussive-powered play of his keyboard. Over the years, some of the city's best drummers



PHOTO BY OWEN MURPHY John Vidacovich.

played with Byrd—like Hungry Williams and Earl Palmer (now in L.A.), Smokey Johnson, and finally Johnny Vidacovich.

Longhair was a pivotal figure in the return of Afro-Caribbean music to New Orleans. "The rhythms he used," recalls Vidacovich, "made you adapt to new sounds, like the claves (simulating wooden sticks). The drummer was responsible for more sound; you had to be able to create the effect of a tambourine. You always had to be aware of him rhythmically, especially with his left hand in the lower basic patterns. By using the rumba, he made more of a syncopated, Latino Beat."

Longhair added a conga player, Alfred "Uganda" Roberts, whose first exposure to the drums as a boy in New Orleans shows the Caribbean influence now returning. Next door to his family home—

They had some seamen, cats from Honduras...And they used to come in and when they come in they gave a party. And they played those drums. I never could see what the drums looked like, but I always knew how the tone sounded. So my father, he bought me a snare drum. Then later as I grew older I found that it was congas and bongas and that's the sound I was lookin' for. I started playin' bongas.

Alfred Roberts' lightening-quick hands on the congas were the perfect counterpoint to Vidacovich's widening rhythmic work behind Longhair's driving keyboard. Fess is important in another respect, too: the way he incorporated Carnival into his music. If "Go To The Mardi Gras" builds on the snare and bass drum tradition of the second line, "Big Chief," cut in the early sixties, paid homage to the Indian tribes. The famous whistling (done by the writer, Earl King, on the original recording) was a move closer to the Indian tradition of chants and human percussive sounds.

By 1976, when the Wild Tchoupitoulas LP was done by the Meters, Neville brothers, and their uncle, George Landry (chief of the tribe), the Carnival street tradition had now come full-circle, into the recording studio, and with a repertoire strongly reminiscent of the Jamaican reggae music rising in American popularity. And, by now there was a drummer backing those New Orleans' Indian songs, Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste, who had given the Meters a driving second-line beat through their early instrumental work, which along with Allen Toussaint's music sent forth the New Orleans funky sound.

Like Baby Dodds, Early Palmer, Hungry Williams and others before him, Zig grew up in the second line tradition, and his reflections echo Gene Krupa's observations on early New Orleans jazz drummers. "A lot of people, when they hear music, don't hear tone and dynamics. Here, we have more of a march, a cadence, you start shakin' your head, snappin' your fingers; it's a uniform pattern."

Joseph Modeliste began drumming at 13 and learned much from Smokey Johnson, a stellar drummer of the R&B heyday in the fifties. Today, Johnson plays with Dave Bartholomew, Fats Domino's longtime arranger, and musical alter-ego. "I admired Smokey Johnson a lot," says Zig. "He had a style, his personality meshed with the drums. At times he was a wild man, fun cat. He took a liking to me. when I was coming up, the thing was 'keep the tradition going.' I wasn't thinking about being a star."

In 1971, the Meters' first album appeared, instrumental funk, and the group toured several Caribbean islands. "The music scene was really primitive," Zig recalls. He was fascinated by steel drums, and more primitive pans. "They'd take a torch and hammer to tune it up: no sending the axe to the shop. A lot of the sounds that came from that pan instrument, and by them playing on it with them rubber mallets, man, that sound had a lot in common with the piano sound that we have down here. I felt it was coincidence that when we went down there, the album selling like hotcakes, a lot of stuff we got into was like their music, that they could relate to, Caribbean music...I would have to say that a lot of it, even though we don't get credit for it in New Orleans, a lot of the drumming some parts of our music, contribute to what's happening there now. They don't emphasize on their bass drum as much as we do here. It's a real heavy thing for me to try to explain, as far as the relationship between the New Orleans second line beat and the reggae beat. Reggae is more syncopated, the emphasis goes on a different beat."

The music of the Mardi Gras Indians is built on a capella voices and tambourines for percussion. It is not reggae but structurally similar in the handling of meter, through syncopation. And in New Orleans today, as with any period when musical idioms struggle to emerge, you can feel the rumblings of something new within the currents of music as we know it. There are more conga players and Latin bands now performing, and various experiments at fusion beneath the surface of commercial waves.

But the Indian tribes, rising in popularity through records and films and nightclub acts, point to an uncharted region of the city's musical topography. Their street tradition is both a musical and spiritual link to the Carnival traditions of the Caribbean. Many people want the Indians to remain pure to origins of their music, but if they follow the dream of musicianship, into studios, changes are likely to occur. As the tribes compete for the commercial dollar, to the degree they add drums, so will the drumvoices demand new instrumental rhythms, the second-line tradition of New Orleans drumming, solid as a ship, continues on its forward course.



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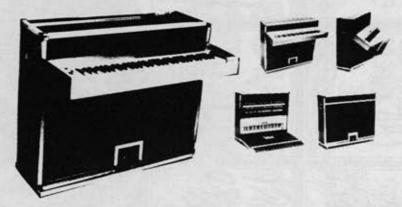
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Cajun Beausoleil: Just for the Music

BY NANCY WELDON

With names like Doucet, Comeaux, Vignaud and Verret, of course they're a Cajun band. Their group name is Beausoleil, they're based in Lafayette, they play great good-time dance music so compelling that one has a terrible tendency to get up and two-step instead of taking notes—resulting in a less-than total recall of exactly what they played.

They've been together about five years, perform variously with six, seven, eight or nine members, are expecting the release of their third (by some accounts fourth) album, don't keep publicity pictures, and say they've never solicited a job or a recording contract.

Sort of the "What me worry?" of cajun music.

Why worry, after all? On a recent appearance at the Maple Leaf (where they'll return in early July), the dance floor was full of perspiring customers -couples in jogging shorts and sneakers; girls with gauze dresses floating in the breeze created from ceiling fans and fast turns.

The seven members appearing that night were packed onto the little stage at the plate glass front of the club. A convenient extra front door allows Maple Leaf musicians to climb directly onstage from the sidewalk. It's also handy for hot weather air flow.

In spite of his sweat-soaked Hawaiian shirt, Michael Doucet's fiddle notes seem to rise effortlessly with the heat, blending smoothly with the rest: David Doucet (Michael's brother), guitar; Errol Verret, accordian; Billy Ware, percussion; Robert Vignaud, bass; Tommy Alesi, drums; Tommy Comeaux, guitar and mandolin. Not with the group this particular night were singer Annick Colbert and sometime-player Austin Sonnier.

It's a lot easier to wax poetic about Beausoleil's music than it is to pin a couple of them down for an interview—not that they're particularly



elusive, just busy. And there are lots of Doucets in the Lafayette Directory Assistance—including two Michaels and a Mike. But finally reached by phone, Doucet explains some of his musical background:

"My mother played clarinet. My father didn't play anything but the radio...but I think that was probably the best thing because he'd always bring me to hear musicians play. The rest of my family is avid musicians...Everybody speaks French. I mean, we're all Acadian."

Doucet, who has received grants and studied French culture in this country and France, also explained the New Orleans connection between jazz and Cajun music.

"Around the turn of the century, there was a lot going on before it was jazz, as far as the Buddy Boldens and the Bunk Johnsons, et cetera, who played in New Orleans. A lot of those people, those Creoles, lived down here...I go visit a lot of those people, and what it's termed now is traditional jazz...What happened, it started off being improvisational music, both black and white who spoke French and somehow it dropped that in favor of more of an Americanization."

Lafayette native Comeaux, the only band member who lives in New Orleans, says he's known Doucet since school band days.

Although Beausoleil has played at



Sundays John Rankin

Mondays Kurt Kasson

Tuesdays James Booker "The Piano Prince of New Orleans"

Wednesdays Louisiana Repertory Jazz Ensemble



Thurs., July 2 Pierre Descant "The Cajun Fiddler"

Fri. & Sat., July 3 & 4 The Nightriders

Thurs., July 9 Kurt Kasson & The Wheeler Sisters

Fri. & Sat., July 10 & 11 Beausoleil Cajun Music from Lafayette

> Thurs., July 16 Bourré Cajun Band

> > Fri., July 17 The Radiators

Sat., July 18 Louisiana Repertory Jazz Ensemble



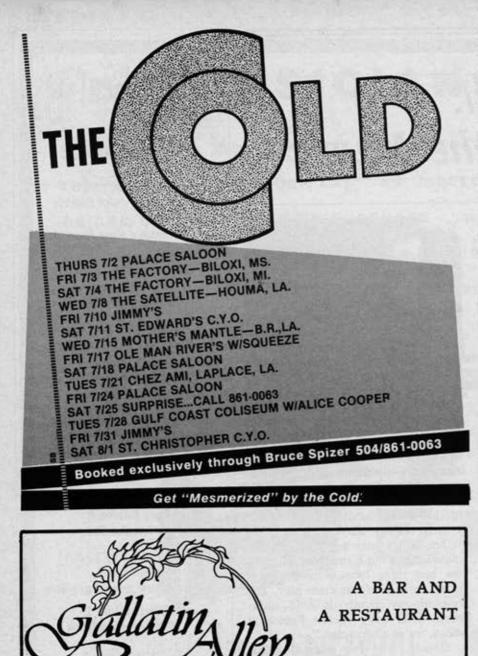
Thurs., July 23 Bourré Cajun Band

Fri. & Sat., July 24 & 25 Louisiana Aces Cajun Music from Eunice, LA

> Thurs., July 30 Bourré Cajun Band

> > Fri., July 31 Deacon John





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"Language would be one thing. The lyrics are all in French. It's a little harder to relate," says Comeaux, who himself, does not always understand all the lyrics. "Basically we're doing a type of traditional music. And traditional musics have never been really the mainstay of the airwaves."

Neither has jazz, in which several group members have an interest. Comeaux has played electric guitar, pedal steel and saxophone with the Gilbert Hetherwick group; mandolin with Hot Strings; and even appeared in a sax solo on the new wave N.O. Experience Necessary album.

He's also a medical doctor specializing in pathology, something he'd rather not talk about in conjunction with a musical conversation: "It's hard to be real credible as a musician, you know if you're doing something else."

Beausoleil members also include, among other things, an accordian maker, a graduate student and a postal worker.

But it's the music that brings them together the most—at gigs like the regular appearances at Lafayette's Red Garter, and at recording sessions.

Michael Doucet and some former members had earlier recorded an album called *Beausoleil—La Nuit*. With the current membership (mostly), Beausoleil has recorded *The Spirit of Cajun Music*, *Les Amis Cadjins*, and this spring an as yet untitled and unreleased album for Arhoolie records.

The newest album includes traditional cuts and originals like Doucet's "Bozo Two-Step." Most of the band's music has a traditional yet modernized, acoustic sound. Comeaux says one old-timer heard a Beausoleil cover, shook his head and said: "It's evolution."

And speaking for himself, Comeaux adds: "I don't know how to say it without really sounding like an idiot, you know, or some idealistic fool...We're doing it primarily for the music...not so much for what the music will do; we're doing it for the music itself." Jazz

Bill Russell Reminisces

BY GARRY BOULARD

It was past 4 a.m., a jazz band could be heard down the street and Bill Russell was searching for a faded photo.

The task of finding the photo was not as easy as it might seem, for Russell lives in what surely must be one of the most cluttered and dense apartments in the city. The 76-year-old musician, jazz historian and New Orleans legend uses the two-story residence located off Ursulines Street, as not just a place to rest his silverhaired head, but also as the library for a collection of music-related tapes, books, manuscripts and memorabilia numbering into the thousands.

Russell, on this early morning in particular, was concerned that an earlier concert performance he had given at Tulane University's Dixon Hall might not have been good enough. "Could everyone hear me?"

From all indications, Russell's worries were unfounded. The approximately 500 persons at the concert cheered for more as Russell and the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra finished their set. Russell is violinist with the band, whose performance that evening ran the gamut from Scott Joplin to Jelly Roll Morton blues.

His appearance at Tulane was just one night in a week of spectacular events honoring Russell and the work he has done as a jazz historian, critic, scholar, and musician. Earlier he was the featured speaker in a seminar on jazz pioneer Jelly Roll Morton, and two days later he would receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Tulane.

Russell simply waves away any profuse words of admiration with a direct "I never amounted to much. I haven't even worked a full day's work in 30 years."

But for many jazz fans and scholars, Russell has almost singlehandedly recused from obscurity a handful of New Orleans legends through his scholarly papers, and his



PHOTO BY ARMAND BERTIN many interviews and dissertations.

His work on Jelly Roll Morton is considered the most extensive of its kind, and Russell explained to a wideeyed Tulane audience that the first time he heard Jelly Roll, over 50 years ago, he knew he was listening to something "so different, so new, that I just had to get more of it."

Although Russell only heard Jelly Roll perform three times in person, he set out to collect all of the published and unpublished works on the noted piano player, a task with which he became almost obsessed after Morton died, penniless, allegedly from syphilis, in a Los Angeles hospital in 1941.

Russell's world and conversation is populated with thoughts and observations on musicians like Pops Foster, Louis Armstrong, Baby Dodds, Kid Thomas, Bunk Johnson and Tony Jackson, to name a few. But for all of his work in publicizing the works of lesser-known musicians, little is still known about Russell himself, who has been called the "Grand Lama of Jazz."

Born in Missouri, trained as a classical violinist and physical scien-

tist, Russell didn't become "hooked" on the music that made New Orleans famous until the late 1920s. At that time Russell was writing classical music and studying obscure forms of Oriental and African music. Teaching at a school in Staten Island, Russell had heard of Armstrong, but his jazz knowledge was limited and unignited until he listened to "Shoeshiner's Drag" played by Jelly Roll and His Red Hot Peppers.

That same period was also the height of the Harlem music club scene, and Jelly Roll was living and performing there. It wasn't until several years later that Russell began to amass his now formidable record collection. As the country was struggling its weary way through the Great Depression, Russell purchased hundreds of jazz records, some for as little as ten cents a piece.

Through his growing knowledge of the jazz world, Russell was inspired to visit the musical city of New Orleans in 1937, where he continued his research.

Russell made several recordings in New Orleans during the 1940s and '50s, and moved here permanently in the late 1950s. By 1958 he had made his mark as both a critic and performer, and was spearheading the creation of the William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane. That archive eventually grew to include over 1,500 reels of taped interviews with musicians, 6,000 photographs and 13,000 books.

He said he likes New Orleans because he likes the kind of music here. "If they were playing my kind of music in New York, I'd be there," Russell said flatly.

Since his first arrival here more than 40 years ago, Russell has completed many of his interviews and research work on jazz but has yet to finish his book on the work and life of Morton.

He still plays for special occasions with the Ragtime Orchestra. A sprightly man, Russell plays a violin that can be best described as "spirited."

Every evening he can be found at the door of Preservation Hall, where he helps out his old musician friends and feeds a tough and rather large tomcat he said is "smarter than Einstein."



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Rare Records Liberty Records Rides A Hit

BY ALMOST SLIM

Like It 'Tis Aaron Neville Minit 40007

The record industry is full of plenty of little "sneaky" tricks. In 1966, when Aaron Neville's

In 1966, when Aaron Neville's smash "Tell It Like It Is," was tearing up the national charts, Liberty Records decided to put this album on the market. After Liberty bought Imperial, and Joe Banashack's original Minit label, it became the owner of all of Neville's original masters recorded in the early sixties.

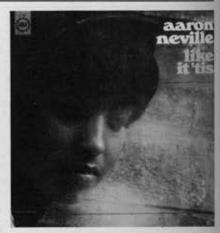
Had not the champagne-throated man from Valence Street had a surprise hit with "Tell It Like It Is," undoubtably his earlier material would have continued to collect dust in the Liberty vaults. However, some ambitious young executive decided there was a possibility to ride the hit by releasing the old tunes. Of course "Tell It Like It Is" is not on the album, but the title, Like It 'Tis, was close enough to fool some record buyers and still avoid a lawsuit from Parlo Records, which unfortunately would soon crumble despite the impact of a gold record in its first try.

Continued from page 29

Russell's daily routine, like the man himself, is somewhat out of the ordinary. He usually wakes up around 7 p.m., goes to Preservation Hall at 9, and stays until the last customer has left after midnight. Then he walks down Bourbon Street to his apartment with Preston Jackson, a trombone player in the Preservation Hall jazz band.

During the wee small hours of 2 a.m. to 7 a.m., the hours when it's too late for the average drinker, but too early for the rest of mankind to go to work, Russell conducts the bulk of his studies and research.

"I have so many things that need to be taken care of," he said with determination. "There just isn't enough



To further confuse the issue, Liberty had adopted the name "Minit" for its budget label. However, it had no connection with the original New Orleans Minit label.

The album itself is a treat, much better than the subsequent Parlo album. It contains Neville's early hits like "Over You," "Waitin' At The Station" (my favorite), "Sweet Little Mama," "Let's Live," etc. Copies of this album are extremely scarce. I found mine in a 99¢ bin about ten years ago in a Woolworth's. I would imagine copies likely trade now for \$20 to \$25.

time to do everything."

Searching through reams of paper, next to a stack of tapes over six feet high, Russell said he is determined to finish his work on Jelly Roll. His last book, "The Jazzmen" (1939) won high praise from musicians and critics alike for accurately telling the story of various New Orleans musicians. Now those who know Russell and follow the New Orleans music scene are anxiously waiting the completion of this latest venture.

"I'll get it done," Russell said. "Nobody has ever duplicated Jelly Roll's style. I believe he was the greatest of the New Orleans jazz figures. So, you know, feeling that way I want to do a good job on him."

Film

Betting the Future On the Musicals

BY JOHN DESPLAS

The young turks who are in the process of carving out their fiefdoms from the remnants of the Holy Hollywood Empire possess a shared heritage: unlike their predecessors, the new breed of directors and producers and scriptwriters were spawned by film schools where they not only served an apprenticeship but also immersed themselves in the history of the medium. Early practitioners more or less drifted into the profession-a highly disreputable one-from various other lines of work. They were adventurers, soldiers of fortune, who grew to like the work and the pay and became skilled in turning out an efficient product.

Today's acknowledged masters, domestic variety-Spielberg, Scorsese, Coppola, Lucas, De Palma, and lesser dieties-have spent their lives watching movies and making movies. They produced much of what was best in the art of filmmaking during the seventies. Their constant temptation, however, is to re-make the movies they came to love so passionately in the course of a lifetime dedicated to pursuing the flickering image. The obsessive infatuation with the cinematic past had its most disastrous manifestation in the self-conscious, academic films of Peter Bogdanovich. Ironically, his near-fanatical devotion to the gruff, job-of-work, action directors of the thirties, forties, and fifties (Hawks, Ford, Dwan, Walsh, Ray) resulted in some of the most stultifying, affected cinematic artifacts ever to reach the screen. Even his couple of likeable-enough glorified B-movies, The Last Picture Show and Saint Jack, evoked a former way of making movies with the vitality carefully drained from every frame. Like Alexander the Great complaining that there were no worlds left to conquer, Bogdanovich has been heard to whine that all the good movies have already been made. His career might be the most convincing proof of such



an assertion.

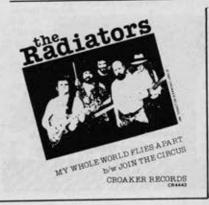
Fortunately, other directors have found ways to resuscitate the old genres they were weaned on with more felicitous results. Walter Hill actually beat some life out of what was widely thought to be a dead horse, i.e. the western, with his umpteenth re-telling of the saga of the James and the Younger Brothers in The Long Riders; Ridley Scott proved it was still possible for an Alien to throw a good scare into us without also winking an eye; De Palma continues to do witty variations on themes by Hitchcock (Dressed To Kill); and in Raiders of the Lost Ark, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas conspire to make us wistful about the days of Saturday matinee serials. So, what's left? The splashy Hollywood musical, that's what's left, and though it may be the genre most resistant to a successful revival, the temptation should prove to be irresistible to the magnum cum laude graduates of the film schools just now attaining power.

Actually, Martin Scorsese has already attempted something on that order in his Liza Minnelli-Robert De Niro Big Band musical New York, New York. (United Artists Classics, a new division of United Artists—itself recently gobbled up by the M-G-M



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JULY	1901
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3 FRI.	JED'S
4 SAT.	THE DREAM PALACE
9 THUR.	THE PALACE SALOON
10 FRL	TIPITINA'S
11 SAT.	THE DREAM PALACE
15 WED.	LUIGI'S
17 FRI.	THE MAPLE LEAF
18 SAT.	JIMMY'S
23 THURS	THE PALACE SALOON
24 FRI.	JIMMY'S
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29 WED.	MOTHER'S MANTEL
31 FRI.	TIPITINA'S





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lion-has recently embarked on a program of distributing worthy foreign films and unjustly neglected American movies; included is a re-release of the original cut of NYNY with the lengthy musical finale that was excised after the first week's run.) And Peter Bogdanovich almost singlehandedly finished off the genre in 1975 with At Long Last Love, a deluxe package of Cole Porter tunes "delivered" by Burt Reynolds, Madeline Kahn, and Cybill Shepherd; it was wan, musty, and listless and 20th Century-Fox would have to wait until it issued Robert Altman's **Ouintet** to experience another financial failure of such magnitude. Both films endeavored to emulate (especially the Bogdanovich) and extend (especially the Scorsese) the traditional Hollywood musical as it had come down from the studio system that had crumbled during the sixties. Though a film like Cabaret or Fiddler on the Roof occasionally drew a large audience, it was the rockoriented flicks that looked like the new wave in movie musicals.

But it wasn't simply a shift in demographics or changing musical tastes that made the big studio extravaganzas seem like the dinosaur of the industry. In the sixties, with the advent of highly portable film equipment, location shooting became the norm, so much so that the public would no longer tolerate painted studio backdrops and poorly matched process shots. No matter how silly the premise of a film, the setting had to appear real to the spectator's visually more sophisticated eye. So a stab was made at grafting a highly artificial genre like the musical on to naturalistic, super-real backgrounds, What resulted were movies like the Peter O'Toole-Petula Clark Goodbye, Mr. Chips; the first and only Clint Eastwood musical, Paint Your Wagon; the Julie Andrews Fiascos, Star, Thoroughly Modern Millie, and Darlin' Lili. Practically no one came to see these very expensive white elephants and the film companies went into a state of shock. None of the moguls had been savvy enough to realize that My Fair Lady and The Sound of Music had been the spectacular climax (financially, not artistically) to a whole era of movie musicals. Pathetic, sporadic attempts to revive it-Dr. Doolittle, Hello Dolly, a re-make of Lost Horizon-were total disasters.

Public obsession with realism and realistic backgrounds, however, may finally be dwindling as we timorously march into the eighties. No less a film eminence than Francis Ford Coppola is betting the future of his Zoetrope studios on such a perceived change in taste. During the past year, he has labored on giving birth to a gaudy musical set in the capital of gaudiness. Las Vegas; not the Las Vegas that lures millions of visitors each year with the promise of untold wealth through the spin of a wheel or a turn of the dice, but a Las Vegas completely contained on Zoetrope's sound stage. It was supposed to be a return to the kind of efficient filmmaking that existed in the no-nonsense days of the great movie studios where cast and crew punched a timeclock and spent the day, every day, toiling on an assembly line of major new motion pictures. Coppola planned to have them coming out of his studio like brand new Toyotas. In the new revisionist Hollywood, the old Hollywood has been restored to a hallowed place of honor. Coppola had even set up a special musical unit, modeled on the legendary Alan Freed outfit that turned out those glorious M-G-M musicals; Gene Kelly, star of so many of those sparkling classics, was to head up this new unit. Unfortunately the economic model of the Old Hollywood does not fit the realities of the New Hollywood; what was to be a modestly budgeted musical may now bring down Coppola's entire empire on his head.

It's not simply, however, a matter of economics. If the reports coming out of Zoetrope can be believed, and if Coppola's past behavior is any indication, the indulgences of a temperamental director may not be compatible with a smoothly humming movie machine. Coppola may have become his own greatest liability.

Should Coppola botch One From the Heart badly—and a recent sneak preview in Seattle suggests he has indeed done just that—it could be a long time before anyone else tries to revive the studio musical, one that wallows in its own glorious artificiality. Many of us sorely miss the Hollywood musical. Ernst Lubitsch, himself one of the marvels produced by the studio system, put it very well: "I've been to Paris, France, and I've been to Paris, Hollywood, and I prefer Paris, Hollywood." Street Music Mozart On Fifth And Royal

BY KEITH TWITCHELL



Redeemed By Music Mozart on Fifth Marengo DK 5581

Did you ever find yourself walking down Royal Street and suddenly being drawn, siren-like, to the sound of woodwinds drifting on the breeze? Did you follow the strains back to their source, three musicians calling themselves Mozart on Fifth? And, having found them, having been enchanted by their mixture of classical and ragtime music, did you ever drop some loose cash into their hat? If so, congratulate yourself, for you were part of a success story that-so far-has led these three street musicians to two Jazz Fest appearances, nation-wide touring, and a record album.

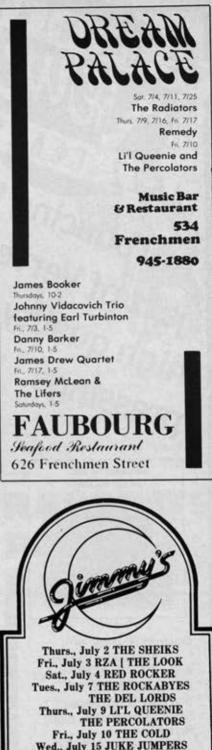
Mozart on Fifth dates as far back as 1976 and a loose set of ideas floating about in the head of clarinetist Richard "Bud" Goldfarb. Occasional work with clarinetist Dan "Cash" Kelley led to a partnership and a more formalized concept for the group, currently rounded out by bassoonist

Ronald Grun. Goldfarb and Kelley met and started working together in New York City, but it was not until a visit to Mardi Gras in 1978 that the act got rolling.

The Mardi Gras visit resulted in two major benefits to the band: one, the enthusiastic response they received in the streets—audibly and financially—gave them a welcomed dose of confidence in what they were doing. And two, it garnered them an agent, Bill Fegan, which led to bookings across the country.

Now there is an album, Redeemed By Music, self-produced, and it is most fitting that a sizeable portion of the financing for the project came from money collected on the streets of the French Quarter. While there are no definable New Orleans influences in the group's music, the sound of three woodwinds tootling merrily along seems strangely indigenous to the Quarter. The Crescent City is now Mozart On Fifth's home base, and city and band both seem a little richer for it.

Redeemed by Music was recorded



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in New York, with post-production work done by Skip Godwin at Sea Saint Studios. The album displays the various sides of Mozart On Fifth and the full range of their musicianship, from Mozart to Glenn Miller to Scott Joplin. These guys are symphonycaliber artists who have created a very different context for their playing; they have the freedom to innovate, improvise, chart their own course instead of being swallowed up in the anonymity of symphony performance.

Of course, not that many pieces are composed for two clarinets and a bassoon (although the long, beautiful Mozart piece which takes up most of

'We're Mozart On Fifth —three bums redeemed by music'

the album's first side was re-scored for just such an ensemble by the master himself) so considerable adaptation became necessary. All arrangements are done by the band, and the sensitivity with which they are done, on everything from Joplin rags to an incidental piece by Claude Debussy, testifies to the deep appreciation Mozart On Fifth has for the music it plays.

At the same time, they avoid taking themselves too seriously. The album's title comes from an introductory line they used to use on tour: "We're Mozart On Fifth—three bums redeemed by music." A look at the inner sleeve, a mock-up of the music trade ads from the Soho Weekly News, offers a pitch for the "sado-musichistic" sounds of "Mozart In Chains" and other irreverent delights.

It is the mixture of this cunning glee and the true dedication of serious classical musicians that makes this album such a pleasure. The swaying, flitting woodwind sounds vary from wistful to whimsical in their effect; the music smiles out at the listener in such a way as to elevate anyone's mood. Listening to Redeemed By Mozart is a unique and highly rewarding experience, and you can play it for your grandmother as well. It is available locally through the label, Marengo Records, P.O. Box 53203, New Orleans, La., 70153. The price is \$6 plus \$1 postage and handling; New Jersey residents add a \$10 surcharge.

Caribbean Ras Michael and The Sons of Negus

BY GENE SCARAMUZZO

More than any other Jamaican recording group, Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus tread in that gray area between roots reggae and grounation. The central band members are Nyahbinghi drummers who traditionally provide the rhythmical inspiration at grounation ceremonies, the prayer gatherings of the Rastafarians. This drumming style, featuring akete or burra-type drums, is steady like a heartbeat and even more mesmerizing than reggae. An example of this drumming can be heard on Jimmy Cliff's version of "Bongo Man" which features the Sons of Negus. But beyond its grounation beginnings, the group has played with a wide range of musicians resulting in diverse but always interesting records.

Collaborations with guitarist Earl "Chinna" Smith, bassist Robbie Shakespeare, pianist/organist Geoffery Chung, and founding member of the Wailers, Peter Tosh, have resulted in the Sons of Negus' most reggae sounding albums. These records include Movements, Kibir Am Lak (Glory to God), and to a lesser extent Rastafari. Earlier albums, more grounation in over-all content are Nyahbinghi, Tribute to the Emperor, and Dadawah (Peace and Love). Nvahbinghi is the simplest, consisting solely of drums, flute and singing. Tribute to the Emperor sounds similar to the jazzy grounation of Count Ossie and the Mystic Revelation of Rastafari and features the songwriting and musicianship of organist Jazzboe Abubaka. An added treat to this album comes from the fact that it was recorded at Sir Coxsone Dodd's Studio, creating a sound different from the rest of Ras Michael's albums which were recorded at Dynamic Sounds Studio. The album Dadawah, possibly the most beautiful of his albums, doesn't have Ras Michael's name on the jacket. But listen to the slow, moving version of "Zion Land" and you'll know who's singing.



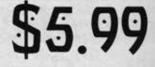
As a whole, the new album Love Thy Neighbor (Jah Life Int'l 005) leans toward grounation. Absent are reggae influences like bassist Robbie Shakespeare, trap drummer Mickey Richards, and producer Tommy Cowan. Also sadly missing is the Dynamic Sounds Studio mix, even though the album was recorded there. On first hearing I wondered if it was a live recording because it has the same over-echoed, informal, almost unrehearsed sound that the Sons and Daughters of Negus displayed when they performed in New York in late 1979. The echo on the voices does give the songs an ethereal quality which is in keeping with their music, but I couldn't help but get annoyed at the way it takes away the punch from the bass and drums on many of the songs. (Could Lee "Scratch" Perry be responsible for this?)

I'm not saying this is a bad album, but it does suffer from the sound mix. It's possible that Ras Michael was experimenting with a new producer, and no artist should be blamed for trying something new. Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus is one of Jamaica's most versatile groups and deserves credit for its never ending musical experiments. However, for those interested in buying their first Ras Michael album, I would recommend *Movements*.





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Reviews



Fiyo On The Bayou The Neville Brothers A&M Records

When I was asked to write this review, there was some talk about "Don't write anything too negative." To tell you the truth, such commands drive me nuts. I don't write "negative" reviews. What I genuinely attempt to do is write honest reviews—based on my personal tastes, likes, dislikes, fetishes and whatever. That's all I know. And I refuse to write "puff pieces"—the sort of junk that you can find every week in Billboard.

So this is how I feel about Fiyo On The Bayou. It's a review of the record—not the Neville Brothers, who I think are wonderful fellows, or their manager, Bill Johnston, who I know has worked extremely hard to get this project off the ground and into the nation's record shops.

Aaron Neville, an enigmatic character if ever there was one, reads his Bible every day and I try to do the same. In Paul's *Epistle to the Philippians*, the apostle writes: "Finally, bretheren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." With those regulations in mind, let us proceed-cut by cut.

1. "Hey Pocky Way"—The Meters already cut one version of this and inspired, highly funktional (note spelling) it was. This rendition is fuller, a hair faster, embellished with sterling horn charts by Wardell Quezergue and exemplary vocal harmonies, but in the end, what's the big difference? There isn't any, I'm afraid.

What the producer (Joel Dorn) had in mind here, I reckon, was that the American masses were unfamiliar with the Meters' "Hey Pocky Way," that the song pretty much summed up what the Nevilles are all about and that there was no good reason not to do it again. Actually, it seems as if this logic was applied to the whole album since there is not a single cut that has not been recorded before—either by the Nevilles and associates or other artists.

Now it's one thing to gather up some old chestnuts and run them through the broiler again until they come out unrecognizable (and improved, might we hope). Recording artists have been doing this since the advent of the phonograph needle and it's certainly no crime. But what is the purpose of merely duplicating the past? This is the glaring fault I find with Leon Redbone, another artist under Dorn's direction.

Friends of mine from New York who are involved in the recording industry found it incomprehensible that Dorn was producing the Nevilles. "He



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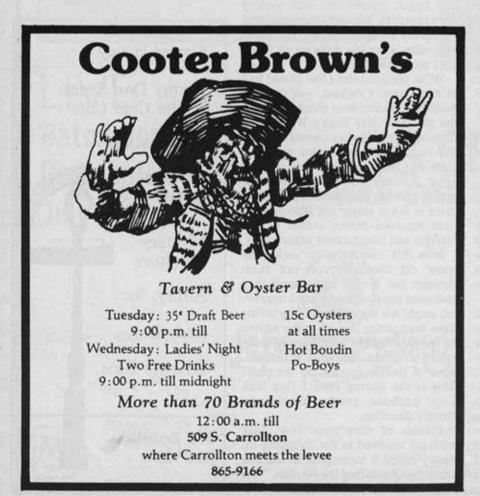
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hasn't had an original idea in ten years," they told me. "Why not a black producer?" the New Yorkers (and Nevilles fans, it should be noted) asked, "Why not someone from New Orleans? Why not Toussaint? Why not Quezergue? Why not Cosimo Matassa?" Why, you might as well ask, are crawfish red?

2. "Sweet Honey Dripper"—This one was originally released as a local 45 and to prove that the Nevilles could do disco as well as anyone else. Okay, swell...so what?

Art Neville's singing (I hope it's him—my cassette lists no credits) is fine and could come from nowhere else by New Orleans. The rest of it could be from Philadelphia or Detroit or Los Angeles or Miami and from three or four years ago, too. Modern disco has gotten funkier all the time and more and more like the Meters, if anyone. And the Nevilles—who could be the funkiest band of all—have seemingly backtracked. Check out Bill Summers or better yet, Grace Jones—that's what the Nevilles should sound like.

3. "Fire On The Bayou"—I will never tire of this song's masterly syncopation. I love the Meters' original and I grow fonder of this new gem with every playing. The arrangement is all but identical in both cases. The new one has horns and ladies (I think) singing harmonies. And who's to debate that this tune is anything less than a credo for three-quarters of New Orleans' population? Some pills, some joints and a bottle of wine—the staff of life in Orleans Parish.

4. "The Ten Commandments Of Love"—When I was a kid, I used to spread butter all over white bread and then put mounds of white sugar on top and (gulp!) eat it. This cut reminds me of that particular excuse for nutrition.

5. "Sitting Here In Limbo"—Remember what Eric Clapton did to the Wailers' "I Shot The Sheriff"? The Nevilles have now done it to Jimmy Cliff. Art's been singing "Limbo" since the days of the Meters and doing a respectable job but that's no reason to stick it on an album that is supposed to change the face of music and send the record biz multitudes scurrying to New Orleans in search of gold, platinum and other precious metals.

6. "Brother John"/Iko Iko"—The cowbell and "off" bass drum (played by Aaron) in the beginning of this are truly a stroke of genius. The Nevilles keep things sparse and chunky, it builds like a (sorry, Mom) motherfucker and this one song is ample enough reason for anyone to buy the disc. Leo Nocentelli is the guitarist, if my desiccated memory serves me right, and he deserves a year's supply of Zulu coconuts for getting it all in the right place at the right time and being awesomely selective with his licks, as well. Best lines: "We gotta Queen all dressed in red,/That girl'll bury your axe in your pretty head..."

7. "Mona Lisa"-Nat "King" Cole's original is beautiful. Aaron's new version is likewise and Willie Nelson's version is on the current charts. This latter fact is yet another stroke of bad luck for Aaron because you can be sure that the nation's radio program directors aren't going to play two revisionist versions of one ancient song in the same year or even decade. Nevertheless, if this doesn't turn your girlfriend into a puddle of tepid molecules, you'd better get yourself some dimmer lightbulbs or some Old Spice or brush your teeth more often because something's very wrong, Jim. 8. "Run Joe"-In its original form,

this was a paean to rum-running. In the Nevilles' new version, the topic is cocaine, a drug only record executives can afford. If I had produced the record (and how come nobody asked me?), "Run Joe" would've been about T's and Blues, the favorite cocktail in housing projects everywhere. Must Jamaicans be the only musicians in the world concerned with Social Realism?

Okay, there you have it—eight songs, not one of them previously unrecorded. A&M is supposedly prepared to hype and promote this album like nothing else in company history. I wish them luck, I wish the Neville Brothers luck and if they manage to get a hit out of it, I'll douse my cassette-player in Tabasco and eat the thing.

-Bunny Matthews

Symphony in Black New Orleans Theatre of the Performing Arts May 22, 1981

It was worth it just to hear tenor Colenton Freeman sing spirituals Andy Capp's

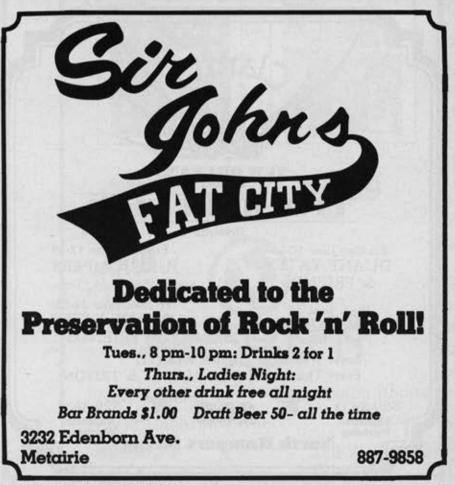
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"Honor, Honor," and "Let Us Break Bread Together" with the New World Ensemble; soloist Barbara Shorts as "The Wiz's" witch with "Don't Nobody Bring Me No Bad News"; the premiere of Alvin Batiste's "Musique d'Afrique Nouvelle Orleans"; and the dulcet tones of narrator Roscoe Lee Browne.

Those were just some of the highlights of the second annual Symphony in Black—a program designed to spotlight black talent backed by the full New Orleans Symphony Philharmonic Orchestra.

And it worked, in spite of typical Theatre of the Performing Arts irritations: intermittently poor sound, patrons (and a few ushers) who talk continuously while their seatmates snap (prohibited) flash photographs and allow infants to wail unchecked.

It's a wonder the musicians bother, but they do, perhaps because there are so few local outlets for this type of production.

The sold-out performance (coordinated by Moses Hogan) opened with William Grabt Still's "Festive Overture," immediately followed by local composer Roger Dickerson's "A Musical Service for Louis" (A Requiem for Louis Armstrong)—which was just too lugubrious a choice to begin the evening.

But the pace picked up with the New World Ensemble's spirituals; highlights of Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess"; and excerpts from "The Wiz," featuring the New Orleans Contemporary Dance Company.

"Musique d'Afrique" closed the evening with a dramatic flourish which composer Alvin Batiste says is reminiscent of African talking drums—drums which were once a prime method of communication for a culture.

A fitting finish. -Nancy Weldon

The Best of the Bumper Crop Of New 45s

"I Believe in You"/ "It Only Rains On Me" Johnny Adams Hep Me 160

Another full house dealt by the "Tan Canary." Both sides are solid ballads, with a definite country flavor.

WAVELENGTH/JULY 1981

"I Believe" is "wearin' out" the R&B radio waves and rightly so. Get this.

"My Whole World Flies Apart"/ "Join the Circus" Radiators Croaker 4443

This single is culled from the soonto-be released second Radiators album. "Apart," the A side, is the type of tune you love to sweat to at Radiator gigs. "Circus" is fun, too. -Almost Slim

Oh What A Night Marc Savoy Arhoolie 5023

There's something about good Cajun music that makes the listener know that, somehow, things are going to turn out all right by the end of the last chorus.

Cajun musician and accordian maker Marc Savoy's new album is a prime example. For instance, a cut called "La Talle de Ronces" (a "she done me wrong" song), has a selfpitying tale to tell:

Hey, pretty one, I know you are sorry

Hey, my doll, the flames of hell Hey, my doll, even though you're caught up in something bad You could come see me at least once a year...

Hey, pretty one, me, heartbroken, Hey, I took to the road and left.

But the tempo is so upbeat, Savoy's accordian and Mike Doucet's fiddle so light, you're sure the singer's heart will mend before the night is over. Even a "Drunkard's Dream," which translates to "Le Reve des Soulards" and a Cajun sound, seems hopeful. Other cuts focus on Mardi Gras, Natchitoches, and heartbreak—all familiar to Louisianians.

The album was recorded at Savoy's home and store near Eunice, Louisiana, and at Master Trak Sound Studios in Crowley. It features Savoy, his wife Ann Savoy, Frank Savoy, Doucet and other friends.

Savoy's album and some sauce piquante easily add up to a bon temps—even without the sauce piquant.

-Nancy Weldon



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Ron Cuccia Music From The Big Tomato Oblique Records

Music from the Big Tomato is a powerful, inconsistent, eclectic record from Ron Cuccia and friends. The music ranges from contemporary jazz sounds to gospel, including a Gregorian chant and some stripper music. The words, similarly, extend from snappy lyrics through cool raps to straight poetics.

The Big Tomato Band that you may have seen in one of their Jazz Fest week performances, it is important to note, was without the singing talent that dominates the pleasures of this record: John Magnie, Lois Dejean and her Youth Inspirational Choir, and Lise Cousineau.

Cuccia's previous album was most noteworthy for his writing talent coming together with some excellent music to produce the brilliant lyricism of a single cut, "My Darlin' New Orleans." Similarly, this album has a selection that stands head and shoulders above the others as it closes the first side, "Waterfall Me."

After listening to the cut almost two dozen times it still sends chills through me. It's a tune like none I've ever heard, a true spiritual without the specific religious trappings of the genre. John Magnie raises the foundation of the song to amazing heights-something he does habitually . . . do people really know what this man means to an ensem ble? - with vocals at the same time passionate and understated; the choir is utilized perfectly in a wondrous round: and above it all soars Lois Dejean like an eagle. The vocals are so good it's a magic moment when the accompaniment stops, leaving the finish a cappella.

Much of the success of the cut, though, comes from where your phonograph needle has been the previous 17 minutes.

Side One begins with some monkey shines, a light-hearted cut with Ron doing some delightfully connected quick-jive and Lise Cousineau pliantly shading the melody, particularly when the beat walks towards the end. Overall the song isn't quite as funky or loose as the idea woud warrant, but it sets the tone for "When the Heat Comes Down," Cuccia's most successful extended poem on the record, a tremendously evocative paeon to that day in June when all of us stop thinking and start surviving until October.

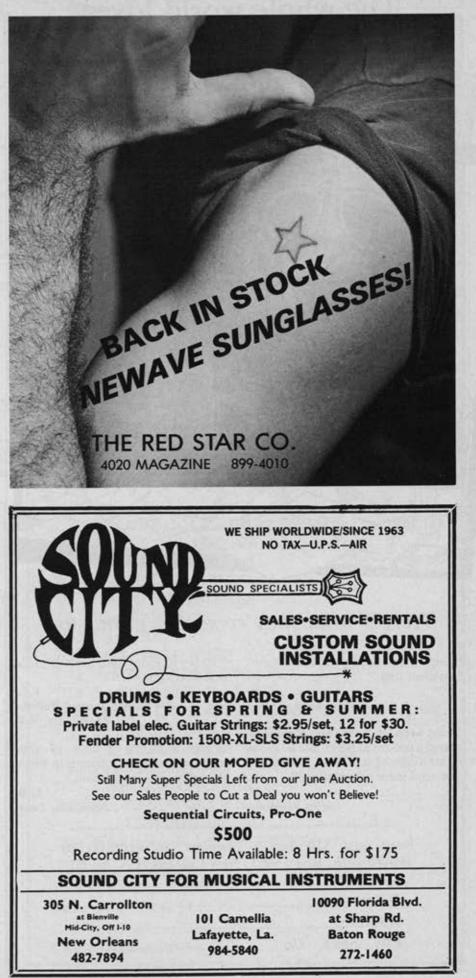
It's then a natural progression into "Bignonia," a truly funny comeon to all those ripening vines in their little things in the summer hothouse. The depth of Ron's love of language, particularly the mother tongue, can be heard in his rhymes with the middle syllable of the flower in question: learn (spelled loin), burn or is it bone, showing/growing/throwing, and don't forget being careful of his hernia honey or even horn, ya honey. And then there's Jerry Lee Loo and his El Doo, Great stuff.

As RonCo and the Blenders (reportedly Magnie's phrase) slip away from this, the stripper vamp, the table is strangely set for the formal tones of "Water Rise: Well Within." It's Cuccia's most abstract poem with a gorgeous violin from Rick Perles and voices charting its progress. The effect works; its solemnity without stiltedness keeps the side in a sense of progression.

In the opaque lines of this number is an example of how I generally experience wildly varied responses to a significant amount of Cuccia's poetry: the line "She made a small sound/like a cigarette hitting water" stops me plumb dead in my tracks; I barely recover by "More waves; another horse;/every hoof engraved," lines that move me and seem to capture the feel of the composition, just as inexplicably. My reactions continue to waver through the work, albeit not so dramatically.

Side Two opens with "Ain't It Just Like Me," a nice uptempo number featuring a hilarious synthesizer by Larry Sieberth, a pleasant, convoluted theme riff, and Magnie step ping up to belt out the title with enough heart to be worth the price of admission alone. The segue from the poem to Magnie leaves a little to be desired both times round, losing tempo, but it's still a pleasant number, more so if you approach it lightly rather than heavily.

The rest of the record, the final 17 minutes, is the "Creation Suite." It opens with Dejean and her choir soaring once more in "Create Yourself," although the poem in the middle and the last go-round of the chorus seem



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to ennervate more than amplify the power of her full delivery.

Then comes Ron's long (10-minute) poem, "Enter: The Dream." It's not readily accessible (some would argue that poetry never is), but inroads are sensitively provided by-it's about time they were mentioned-those erstwhile Astral Projectiles, John Vidacovich, Jim Singleton, and Tony Dagradi. The poem goes through many moods and movements, some of which I apprehend better than others; I get lost at the critical juncture in the sense of the words "freedom," "dream," and "fantasy." But that shouldn't be of much moment, since I confess to having plenty of difficulty with those words anyhow.

Then on to the finish, "Tryin' to Sing." Ron *is* trying to sing on this record, you all should know; a few times he gets into it quite nicely. But the main improvement, immediately noticeable, is how well he speaks the words compared with his last record. His voice is much more confident, pliable; his delivery is crisper, more mellifluous.

But back to the final number: it doesn't work for me as well as the others. It seems the delicate balance between all the elements of this amazing congregation of musicians, between the catholic and parochial if you will, breaks down. I can't tell if the mood is serious or light. Funny that this of all the tunes is filled with "God" and "Jesus" and "Mary" and "Devil" and the like. But Vidacovich does a terrific drum roll near the end.

In closing, I think it's necessary to stand back and take a look at this record in a total way. It's an incredibly ambitious and, for all its levity, serious work. Really, one must acknowledge the pure courage in Cuccia to blend all the music and language, all the *life*, around him into this tapestry of tomato.

This reviewer has never had more difficulty in trying to pick out responses that aspire to be universal, the reviewer's job. It is a record that elicits highly individualized responses. And that, dear friends, is very close to what I conceive art to be. Consequently, I recommend this album very highly. It lives, it breathes, it changes ... it is art. Your record collection needs it.

-Tim Lyman

WAVELENGTH/JULY 1981

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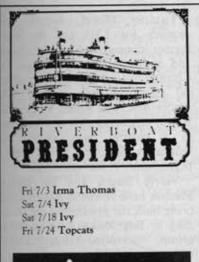
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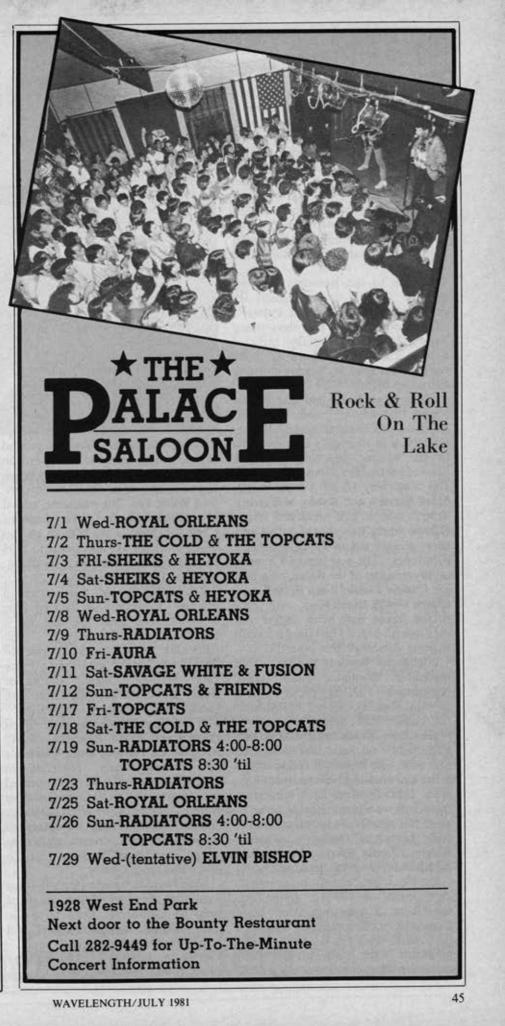
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Last Page

Luther Kent and Trick Bag have made a move from the Blues Saloon to Crazy Shirley's...Video artist Stephenson Palfi tells us that he's scripted and produced a short piece of Tuts Washington performing at Tipitina's to be used by WYES as an Interlude, airing occasionally for two years. It marks the first time Washington has been on TV. Tuts performed "Arkansas Blues," the tune Allen Toussaint used in his tribute to Tuts Washington at Xavier.

Thanks to the late-night gang at WWNO for the update. Seems we neglected to mention **Brad Palmer's** "Common Ground" jazz show heard Saturday morning (Friday night) 1 a.m.-4 a.m., same hours as **Jerry Karp's** blues show on Sunday morning (Saturday night).

Tony Dagradi, the jazz saxophonist whose first album, Oasis, met with good reviews here at home and nationally, is getting ready to go back into the studio, this time with his hometown buddies John Vidacovich, Jim Singleton, David Torkanowsky, Mark Sanders, and Bobby McFerrin.-Tony, who's just returned from Europe where he's toured with Carla Bley, says the album will be mostly his own tunes... The new band 69 is made up of remnants of the Relics; members are Charlie Tassin, Brian Bertheiume, Chuck Welch, Butch Hart...Any truth to the rumor that Mick Jagger will play a small concert on board a certain floating dancehall this month?

Nighthawk Records has sent us an incredible six-album blues series, Nighthawk 102-106 (review next month). Slim says it's one of the finest collections he's seen of post-war blues...Keep an ear out for WWOZ's "Spotlight" on Saturdays from 3:30 to 5 p.m. The show will feature interviews and music by New Orleans musicians (our favorite) and interesting musicians who pass through town. In store this month are spotlights on the New Leviathan Orchestra, Tommy Ridgley, James Rivers, the Neptune Jazz Band from Zimbabwe, and more.

In the "You think we're nuts" department, we've just gotten our hands on a new magazine from Charlotte, N.C., completely dedicated to beach music. It Will Stand magazine (you oldie-goldies will remember that hot tune) covers the



very-much-alive music scene around Myrtle Beach. Included are reports on shag dancing, concert reviews, beach festivals, and an ad for New Orleans' own Willie Tee. The magazine, edited by a fellow with the unlikely name of Chris Beachley, is available to all you beach buffs for \$10 and a note to 1505 Elizabeth Ave., Charlotte, NC 28204. More on these guys later...

Gatemouth Brown's been at Studio in the Country to record for Rounder...The Dells are due for a mid-July appearance at Prout's Club Alhambra...A pox on the Disease for their recent poster depicting a black youth holding a sign "Atlanta or Bust." Come on, guys, let's keep it to good, clean, disgusting behavior,

A new Barbara George single is on the market...From England, Charly Records has reissued Irma Thomas's In Between Tears, recorded in 1971...United Artists has also released a collection of Fats Domino's singles cleverly entitled The Fats Domino Singles Album...Some of Marshall Sehorn's first production work is contained in Elmore James's Got To Move disc from Charly.

King Floyd is expected back in town soon after spending the last couple of years in California. Let's hope the man who gave us "Groove Me" will be performing in New Orleans soon... Von Dyke, one-time vocalist with the Drifters, who resides in New Orleans, is back on his feet after a serious shooting accident...Johnny Adams was in the studio in June cutting a Christmas album. Senator Jones hopes to have it out on the streets by this month.

PHOTO BY CLEVE BRYAN

Tommy Morel, former wide receiver for LSU and the Saints, former manager of the Mushroom, and author of the tune "Love That Chicken From Popeye's" is running a ski resort in New Mexico. When you're hot...The Front, starring Skip Bolen, premiered their new wave thing at a generic bash recently...Fats Domino's European tour, due to begin June 17, was cancelled.

Velvet Touch and the Pleasure Masters have vowed to singlehandedly bring back the psychedelic era. According to Ray Moan, guitarist for the group, "Get those Nehru jackets out of the cleaners, folks."

Barbara Hoover's new club, the Beat Exchange, on the site of the old Luthjen's dancehall, will be opening this month.

New Orleans was saddened by the death of New Orleans native Roy Brown whose hit, "Good Rockin" Tonight," was a rock 'n' roll classic in the heyday of New Orleans R&B. Brown died May 25 in Los Angeles where he's been living for several years. His last performance here was at the 1981 Jazz Festival. (See "Golden Moments" page 6)

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