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Ernie K-Doe, 1979

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Unreleased Beatles Material Discovered

A tape recording heard at the Beatlefest held last November in Los Angeles has revived interest in unreleased Beatles music and may eventually result in some of this music becoming available.

The tape contained studio quality versions of songs such as a 1963 version of ‘One After 909,’ a version of ‘Come and Get It’ with McCartney on vocals, and several unknown McCartney ballads that hadn’t been heard before even by the music and memorabilia fanatics gathered at the Beatlefest. This prompted the Los Angeles Herald Examiner to carry out an exhaustive investigation which led them to officials of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) and EMI. (the Beatles’ recording company). Through their efforts it has been confirmed that there is a wealth of unreleased Beatles material.

Golden Moments In New Orleans Rock ‘N’ Roll VIII

October 1962 — During a rugged Minit recording session with a young Irma Thomas, producer Allen Toussaint calls for a break. During the short interlude, Mr. Toussaint swigs down a tasty Dr. Nut. Toussaint has been swabbing the floor with a mop and decides to relax himself before getting back behind the piano. While in the bathroom he composes the lyrics to “It’s Raining.”

New Jazz Albums By N.O. Groups

The second LP by saxophonist Tony Dagradi and his first with Astral Project is scheduled for release in the middle of May. According to the record’s producer, Jonathan Rose, delays have been experienced in the release date because of hassles over rights to the graphics for the jacket. The record is being released by a young, independent jazz/new music label out of New York, Gramavision Records.

Two other albums are currently on the way.

The tracks are all done for albums by Patrice Fisher and Jasmine, and Jimmy Robinson and Woodend. The discs were produced with funds procured by Musicians for Music and recorded at Sea-Saint Studio in New Orleans. Contract negotiations are under way for leasing through Inner City Records of New York.

— Brad Palmer

More Fun From The Amusement Tax

Last January, in our article on the city’s five percent amusement tax, the promoters we interviewed agreed that the assessment was a major factor in keeping a lot of major musical activities from coming to New Orleans. Apparently, Councilman Bryan Wagner agrees with this theory: on February 18 he presented to the city council Resolution R.82-32, requesting the governor and legislature to consider a plan whereby events coming into the Superdome would be exempt from the tax, and the city welfare department (which currently receives the amusement assessment) would receive an equivalent amount directly from the state.

According to Wagner, the removal of the five percent levy would make attracting events to the defici-plagued Dome easier. When asked by this reporter about lowering or abolishing the tax on live local entertainment to promote growth of our own musical climate, Wagner said he considered it but “the welfare department is already on my back.” A vote on Wagner’s resolution has been tabled until he can present more information to the city council on his plan for reimbursing the welfare department.

It’s important to note that although the welfare department spends much of this revenue on such truly charitable institutions as the Touro Shakespeare Nursing Home and the Milne Boys Home, the rest of it goes to the Youth Study Center and Youth Services Bureau, which are correctional in nature and could come within the criminal justice system.

Remember, the five percent amusement tax is added on top of the already existing seven percent sales tax on all live entertainment. With the proposed increase of the sales tax to eight percent, this would bring the total tax bill on local music to thirteen percent.

— Shepard H. Samuels

Luther And Trickbag Own Their Own

Pete Fountain and Al Hirt are no longer the only New Orleans musicians with their own club. Luther Kent and Trickbag have purchased the club at the corner of Conti and Dauphine in the Quarter, formerly the site of Clyde’s Comedy Corner and various other establishments, and will headline there regularly.

The grand opening festivities are scheduled for late April, with a tentative bash planned on the Riverboat President. Everyone is invited to the new club for the opening ceremonies. Look for Luther and the band to play til dawn.

While Kent and Trickbag are touring Las Vegas and Mexico this summer, other top local talent will be booked into the music club. Opening the club follows by two months the release of It’s In The Bag, Trickbag’s new album.

— Keith Twitchell

Local Musicians Get Political

After waiting about two years to see local politically positive action being taken in this community on a fairly wide scale concerning the safety of nuclear energy, it was a great pleasure to attend the Citizens for Safe Energy and Media for Peace benefit held at Tipitina’s on February 25th.

Most of the bands were well-
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known locals: Astral Project, the Radiators, Woodenhead, just to name a few. A few were relatively new groups, like the Echoes with Clark Vreeland, Susie Malone, Johnny Allen, Gene Searamuzzo, and Jim Hymel. Because the benefit was twelve hours long (from noon till midnight), there was a constant flow of musicians wandering around backstage, listening to the music or awaiting their own set. I was able to talk to a few of them about the benefit, and nuclear energy in general. Here are their responses.

Ron Cuccia (Emcee): You cannot stay isolated or be isolated. In order to be a musician you have to be a politician. In order to deal with one person you have to deal with the entire world. The community breaks down when musicians only deal with musicians. You have to be able to work within the entire tapestry of society; you need the kind of awareness that knows what's going on everywhere. How are you going to be able to do music if there's nowhere to play because of a nuclear accident?

John Magrie (The Percolators): I think nuclear power seems to be an inefficient way of producing power. It's been pushed so much by the big money that most people think it's the only way we're going to survive. Most people are scared of running out of oil and don't see solar energy coming along; it's mainly a lot of misinformation. I think the main thing that has to be accomplished is to change people's general attitude. There are other sources of power, nuclear power is not necessary. A benefit like this is a little step in trying to accomplish that, and inform people.

Spencer Bohren (guitarist): There doesn't seem to be much I can do to help the safe energy problem, and I think that if this will help I want to do it.

Earl Turbinton (jazz saxophonist): I feel like it's a very good cause. I was down in Honduras December before last and I could see some of the things that were building up there. Just the proximity of El Salvador and Honduras makes the threat of another World War or another Vietnam very real, and humanity doesn't need that. Anything that poses a threat to the development of human life I think we can do without. Three Mile Island and other incidences that have happened around the country are indications that there's no getting out of hand yet but it's a very good indication that it could happen, and I think we should study nuclear power more before we implement it.

Richard Cox (The Richard Cox Experience): When the suggestion to play came up I thought about all the kids and the younger generation. I'm still really learning myself, so I can understand what it's all about. The more I look at the news and read the newspapers, I can see that it just doesn't make sense. It seems like the world is destroying itself, and there's got to be a better way.

Clark Vreeland (The Echoes): My feelings about nuclear energy are not necessarily negative, although I feel that the present stage of development does have negative and harmful effects.

Eddie Volker (The Radiators): The only thing I have to say is that I'm glad you're doing this. I'm glad you're doing this and covering it, because it's not so sense. It seems like the world is destroying itself, and there's got to be a better way. It's going to take individual responses by highly talented and energetic people, like the people who are here tonight. If you took all the talents of the people who are here and directed that energy towards stopping Waterford III, they could do it. There's no doubt in my mind.
For the past year, the blues activity in Baton Rouge has centered around Tabby's Blues Box and Heritage Hall, on North Boulevard. The club has been the long time dream of proprietor and resident Baton Rouge bluesman Tabby Thomas. The tiny downhome club features live blues four nights a week with the city's best, and sometimes worst, musicians. The important thing is that everybody has a good time, and that the long-standing Baton Rouge blues tradition is still surviving.

Tabby opened the club with the money he had saved from his job as a chemical plant foreman (a job he still holds) across from the famed Temple Roof (''The Roof'' once was the city's top black nightspot). After Tabby purchased his building, renovated it, and set the opening date, it appeared that the club would not be able to open after all.

Unfortunately, Tabby had overlooked a city bylaw which states that no one can open a business and market liquor within 300 feet of a school. Guess what's catercorner to Tabby's? You guessed it. Luckily, one of the city's biggest blues lovers is also a lawyer (who asked that his name not be used), and he came to Tabby's rescue. A special hearing was held by the State Liquor Commission where Tabby's case was aired. Tabby was able to convince the board that the club would be helping to preserve a "cultural art form." All Tabby had to do was add "Heritage Hall" to the name of his joint, and the beer and whiskey flowed.

Besides the musicians, Tabby's is frequented by an odd blend of college students and middle-aged blacks. On weekends the club is usually jammed, with music featuring Tabby, Henry Grey, Silas Hogan, and/or Whispering Smith.

Since the club has opened, it has been the subject of New Orleans and Baton Rouge TV, educational TV, and even Scandinavian magazines. Tabby has become Baton Rouge's unofficial professor of the blues on these documentaries, fielding such questions as, "What does the blues mean to you?" Although he tries to act nonchalant, it isn't hard to see just how tickled he really is by all the attention.

Besides the previously mentioned musicians that play weekends, Tabby's also features a "Blue Disco" Mondays and Tuesdays. Wednesday is reserved as "Blue Jam" night, when Tabby lets anybody sit in. Be forewarned; though: I've been driven out of the door on more than one occasion by fuzz-toned collegiate guitarists and out-of-tune harp players in the process of getting down.

"Hoodoo Party"

Tabby Thomas was born in Baton Rouge. When he was a teenager his family moved to California where he made his musical debut in a talent show in 1952. The musical bug got Tabby and he pursued it upon his return to Baton Rouge in 1954. This was the heyday of the city's blues activity with the likes of Big Poppa, Lightnin' Slim, Harmonica Slim (later to become Slim Harpo), and Raful Neal dominating the scene.

Tabby was one of the first to make it
over to Crowley to record for J.D. Miller.

"Tomorrow" and "Mmmm, I Don't Care" were issued on Feature with little success and Tabby wasn't to return to Miller's studio for seven years. Meanwhile, Tabby took recording matters into his own hands, making records on his own to sell at his gigs. Thanks to Slim Harpo, Miller became interested in Tabby once again and brought him back to Crowley to record in 1961. Miller was unable to lease the first sides but thought enough of them to release them on his own labels, Rocko and Zynn.

Miller and Tabby finally came up with the winning combination later in the year and "Hoodoo Party" was leased to Excello. The jumping blues opus became a southern hit, thanks to DJ John R., on WLAC in Nashville, who featured it heavily.

Sadly, the follow-up flopped and Tabby had only one other release before Excello gave up on recording blues. By this time Tabby had begun raising a family and was working in a chemical plant, dabbling with musical endeavors on weekends only.

In the Seventies, Tabby became "T-Boo" on a release of "Prison Blues" that attempted to cash in on Calvin Leavey's surprise blues hit "Cummins Prison Farm." He also produced a Hank Mancie session that Mega Records released.

In 1979 Tabby brought his House Rockers to the New Orleans Jazz Festival where they shook the Fair Grounds with their pulsating rhythm. Not long after, Tabby and J.D. Miller teamed up once again to record Tabby's 25 Years With The Blues album which appeared on Blues Unlimited.

Lately Tabby has been concentrating on the guitar, abandoning the piano for the time being. The recent popularity of his club has given his musical career a second wind. Last summer he played in Washington, D.C., at the Smithsonian Music Festival, and he played at an outdoor Mardi Gras Dance in Spanish Town this year.

Summing up the recent turn of events, Tabby comments sheepishly, "I guess blues is comin' around again."

"Gonna Change My Way of Livin'"

One of Baton Rouge's most active bluesmen is Raful Neal. Born in 1936 in West Baton Rouge Parish, he grew up working on a farm. "I knew I had to play something after seeing Little Walter at the Temple Roof. I got me a three-piece band and went to New Orleans and started playing for Percy Stovall. I was about eighteen then."

His first group included the noted harp player Lazy Lester, who played guitar with Neal. Neal in fact gave him his first musical job. "I had to get Lester a guitar, 'cause he didn't have one. He played with me about two years. He was a lot of fun, he wasn't drinking so hard then."

Unlike his better-known contemporar-
ies, Neal never recorded for J.D. Miller because he didn't like the way Miller treated his artists. 'He told me, 'You don't get nothin', all you get is publicity. Take it or leave it.' Now poor Lightnin' cut all those records [66 sides] and all he ever got was a guitar.'

Undaunted, Neal finally cut a record for Peacock in Houston. But bad luck dogged him in the form of his nemesis, J.D. Miller. Neal explained, 'I had cut son, who got so good so fast he was snatched up while still in his teens by Buddy Guy for his Chicago band. Invariably each son would get his break by substituting for a member of Neal's band who didn't show up for a gig.

The Neal Brothers band now consists of Larry (23) on drums, Lil' Ray (22) on guitar (a killer too, I might add), and Noel (19) on bass. The group improved and two summers ago they played with Kenny Ray in Canada backing big Mama Thornton, and Buddy Guy. The group even got plaudits from Blues Unlimited magazine.

Papa Neal says 'It's a funny thing, I didn't even want 'em to play blues, but it must have been in 'em cause when they came back from Canada they was blues sure 'nuff!'

Neal's strong suit is his harp playing. In his hands the modest instrument becomes the focal point of his music. His amplified playing is surpassed by few. Neal plays the harp backwards from standard harp players, ironically the same way the granddaddy of all harp players, Little Walter, played.

Neal was recently approached by Royal Shield studios in Baton Rouge about making a single for which he is currently preparing. But as Rafal adds, 'What I really want to do is cut an album with my sons. I'm working on some songs now. Somebody's got to carry these blues on.'

"Lucky, Lucky Man"

Henry Grey lives in Alsen, a small community ten miles north of Baton Rouge. Although he was born in Kenner in 1925, he moved to Alsen when he was quite young. As a youngster he picked up an interest in piano. After he was discharged from the army in 1946, he moved to Chicago and fell under the influence of pianist Big Maceo. Henry joined Little Hudson's Red Devil Trio and became a fixture on the Chicago blues circuit. At
Cordoned with Little Walter, Morris Pejoe, and Billy Boy Arnold. However, it is his work with Howlin’ Wolf that stands out among blues critics. “I played twelve years with Howlin’ Wolf,” says Henry. “Played on lots of records and just about every city in the U.S.A.”

In 1968, Henry moved back to Alsen to join his family. Tired of the Chicago climate, Henry took a job as a roofer for the Baton Rouge Parish school board and began playing weekends in a group called The Cats. Chicago blues buffs wondered what happened to Henry. Some wrote him off as dead.

Surprisingly, Henry turned up on a Blues Unlimited session produced by J.D. Miller, performing the stunning “Lucky, Lucky Man,” and “Midnight Dream,” with Lazy Lester’s harp in support. Miller recalled that Henry was well into a fifth of whiskey before he and the studio group with Lazy Lester’s harp in support. Miller felt he needed a gimmick, so he would have to change Green’s name to sell records, and Miller came up with the romantic “Lonesome Sundown.” Thus began a nine-year association with Miller and the Excello label.

The biggest news on my latest trip to Baton Rouge was that Lonesome Sundown had moved to Baton Rouge, and is interested in getting a band together again.

Born in Donaldsonville in 1929, Lonesome Sundown’s real name is Cornelius Green. He became interested in the guitar when he saw his cousin with one on the way to work one morning. “I thought if I could learn to play, I wouldn’t have to go to work no more!”

After learning the basics of the instrument from his cousin, Green moved to Port Arthur, Texas, in 1953. Not long after, he met Clifton Chenier, who hired him as a guitar player. He even travelled to California to record with Chenier.

In 1955 he married and moved to Opelousas and began playing with his own trio. After hearing about J.D. Miller, Green decided to bring him a demo tape. Miller heard promise in the tape and asked Green to bring the group by.

Miller decided to record the group but felt he would have to change Green’s name to sell records, and Miller came up with the romantic “Lonesome Sundown.” Thus began a nine-year association with Miller and the Excello label.

Thirty-two sides were issued; some of the most outstanding were “Lost Without Love,” “Please Be On That 519,” “I Woke Up Crying,” and “Hoodoo Woman Blues.” Sundown’s records stood out from Miller’s other artists as he consistently used horns, thus attaining a more urban sound.

For nearly a decade Sundown’s group was a popular attraction throughout East Texas and South Louisiana. Sundown even accompanied Carol Fran, Slim Harpo, Lazy Lester and Lightnin’ Slim on an infamous trip to Chicago. Miller recalled that instead of playing their own numbers in the Chicago clubs, they tried
to play the latest B.B. King hits.

In 1965 Sundown put away the guitar and joined the Church of Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Church of the World and began working a construction job in Opelousas. Despite attempts by many to get him back in the blues field, Sundown refused, playing only in church. Finally, in 1976, Bruce Bromberg got him into the studio and he cut a fine album on Joliet. Sundown's personal appearances were limited due to his church commitments, and he had no band. He did appear at the 1979 New Orleans Jazz Festival with a disastrous pickup band that hamstrung him.

Sundown's renewed interest in music is good news to blues lovers after losing him, so to speak, for fifteen years. The big question is, will he be able to recapture some part of his former glory?

"Out And Down"

Now in his 70s, Silas Hogan has been a long-time fixture on the Baton Rouge blues front. Silas lives in a small, comfortable house in Scotlandville, next to the Baton Rouge airport. Now retired, Silas plays weekends at Tabby's and a few other small clubs around town, including the Saturday matinee at the Purple Circle.

As a teenager, Silas was introduced to the guitar by his uncles, and henceforth he could be found singing and playing the blues in juke joints of the area on weekends. Music at this time was a hobby for Silas, as he mainly supported his family with a variety of manual jobs.

In the late '50s, at Slim Harpo's insistence, Silas purchased an electric guitar and formed his own band. Along with Sylvester Buckley (harp), Isaiah Chatman (bass), and Jimmy Dotson (drums), the blues combo became a popular attraction throughout the Baton Rouge area.

In 1962, Slim Harpo (who had a sudden success with "Raining In My Heart") brought Silas to Crowley to audition for J.D. Miller. Miller agreed to produce his records and Silas found himself with an Excello recording contract.

Silas enjoyed eight Excello releases between 1962 and 1966. Some of his more memorable sides were "Airport Blues," "You're Too Late Baby," and the striking "Trouble At Home Blues," for which Silas is best remembered.

Sadly, the popularity of true down-home blues was ending in the black community, and despite the high quality and originality of his releases, Silas just couldn't get the hit that would sustain his musical career. Although Silas' style is heavily in debt to Jimmy Reed and Lightnin' Slim, his own songs were charged with emotion and undeniably unique.

Disillusioned with music, Silas broke up the combo in 1966 and dropped music altogether until Arthur "Guitar" Kelly coaxed him to pick up his guitar again in the late Sixties. At the peak of the white blues revival in 1970, Silas was invited to record for Arhoolie (Louisiana Blues 1054) and for Blue Horizon (Swamp Blues 66250), who ironically leased the session to Excello for U.S. release. Since then, Silas and Guitar Kelly have been found playing music some place in town almost every weekend, and are a regular attraction around Tabby's Blues Box. Silas has also appeared off and on at the New Orleans Jazz Festival and last summer travelled to Washington to appear at the Smithsonian Music Festival with Tabby Thomas and Guitar Kelly.

"Let Me Be Your Hatchet!"

For the past fifteen years Silas Hogan's constant musical companion has been Arthur "Guitar" Kelly. Born in Clinton in 1924, Kelly never recorded until 1970, thus remaining somewhat of a blues obscurity.

Kelly, who now lives in Baker, was inspired as a youth to pick up the guitar from his brother-in-law. In 1946 he switched to an electric so he could be heard in the noisy jukes and cafes. Kelly played by himself until 1951 when he saw Lightnin' Slim playing with a drummer, and decided he needed one too.

Kelly never did get a chance to record for Miller, remaining in the background during the blues boom in Baton Rouge. In 1970, through Terry Patterson, Kelly made two sessions with Arhoolie and Blue Horizon, performing a couple of numbers on each.

Today Kelly sounds like Lightnin' Slim might sound if he were alive today, as his style is based around that of Lightnin's. Kelly also travelled to the Smithsonian Music Festival last summer, and was astounded at the acceptance his music enjoyed. Until recently, Kelly was a regular attraction at Tabby's, but he now refuses to step in the club because of a disagreement with the proprietor. Kelly again is looking forward to this year's Jazz Festival.

"How Many More Years"

Clarence Edwards is another Baton Rouge blues obscurity. Born in Lindsey, Louisiana, in 1933, he has lived most of his life in the country. He was inspired to pick up the guitar after listening to records by Kokomo Arnold, Sonny Boy Williamson, and Charlie Patton, the latter being the strongest influence in his playing.

Edwards has never been a full-time musician, but was recorded by Harry Oster in 1959 for his Folk Lyric label. The performances on Country Negro Jam Sessions are extremely primitive but interesting none the less. Clarence didn't record again until 1970, when Terry Patterson arranged the Arhoolie and Blue Horizon sessions, and Edwards turned up quite by accident.

This year marks the first appearance of Clarence Edwards at the New Orleans Jazz Festival, thus bringing his individual brand of country blues to a wider audience.
There has been much talk lately, in music journals both foreign and domestic, of "roots" music, a term generally used to designate any style whose currency waned with the onset of the 1970s. Those using the term, which tends to be bandied about as much for the purpose of condescension as it is for convenience's sake, feel that such basics provide a quaintly innocent base for the vital, "meaningful" music of today.

Similar attitudes can be found among those who regard any appreciation of 1950s music as nothing more than nos-which is equivalent to saying that those who listen to classical music do so out of a longing for 18th Century Europe.

The current rockabilly revival gives cause for a brief examination of the style in both its original and compromised forms. The differences between rockabilly then and the way it is heard today range from slight to vast, and are worth noting.

Since most attempted evocations of rockabilly's (and rock 'n' roll's) original style tend to reflect imagined history or sloppy revisionism more than attention to detail, it's obvious that the biggest difference is aural. The style today needn't be a case of mimicry for its own sake, simply a formal adherence to niceties which are no longer fashionable (especially since the advent of novelties like stereophonic sound).

Among the purest examples of the genre available on record is Johnny Burnette and the Rock 'n' roll Trio's *Tear It Up* on the Solid Smoke label. Johnny and Dorsey Burnette, plus guitarist Paul Burlison, recorded some definitive tracks for Decca in 1956 and 1957, seventeen of which are included in this compilation. Perhaps because of Decca's mishandling and other reasons, Johnny Burnette somehow failed to become a national star, though songs like "Tear It Up" and "Rock Billy Boogie" were as exciting as anything else being done in the style, and have since become classics.

There was a breathless urgency to Burnette's singing. What the group did was essentially emphatic country rock with a strong beat. From "Train Kept A-Rollin'" to a cover of Fats Domino's "All By Myself," there is exuberant, swooping, fat acoustic bass pulsations and aggressive guitar. Here was a group whose highly resourceful use of dynamics and good commercial timing should have pushed them to the top. There isn't anything primitive about these seventeen tracks, since the monaural masters are so vibrant and impeccable that the usual questions about recording crudity seem perfectly silly.

If one applies the purist's standards, Eddie Cochran couldn't strictly be considered a rockabilly artist, though he certainly did portray the style, at times to heroic proportions. By virtue of his use of the electric bass and vocal affectations that were more pop-conscious than unashamedly Southern, Cochran brought a studio production style to rockabilly. His appeal, then, was in his youthfully coarse voice and several prominent instrumental trademarks — stop-and-start themes, defiant bass mixed with an acoustic guitar style that became the foundation for scores of groups in England, where his influence has been far more pervasive than in America.

The Eddie Cochran Singles Album, a United Artist import, contains twenty tracks, including not only familiar hits.
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like “C’Mon Everybody” and “Summertime Blues” but also little-heard gems like “Weekend” (so drolly covered by the Move years ago) and “Cut Across Shorty” (not so drolly covered by Rod Stewart in 1970).

The diversity of Cochran’s output is explored by “Sittin’ In The Balcony,” which is syrupy teen pop, a version of “Hallelujah I Love Her So,” which is a production number with strings, and group vocal touches on “Lonely.” A Cochran curio, “Three Stars,” is a remembrance of what he lost in the Valens-Holly-Bopper plane crash. It’s labored and lugubrious, but unusual for a 20-year-old rocker. An ideal blend of rockabilly verve and production consciousness can be heard with a seminal but little-celebrated masterpiece, “Something Else,” which packs as much rhythmic excitement in its 2:04 as anything you are likely to hear in any style of music.

The style of rockabilly as it is practiced today is dominated by young revivalists who aim for varying degrees of authenticity. The creditable (though sometimes flawed) efforts of Robert Gordon and the Rockats (whose Live At The Ritz is a technically superior recording, though musically their attempted authenticity is frequently stifled by their visual aspects) appear to have made the deepest impressions. In hearing Gordon or the Rockats the experience of revivalism is heard in song form and instrumentation, not in aura. It appears that not even the most fervent of revivalists are willing to record in the manner of their models: with one or two microphones.

One contemporary group, the Stray Cats, employ the classic rockabilly instrumental lineup and timbres, but somehow balance it well with a modern sound. Their self-titled debut album on Arista/Fin-Up was produced by Dave Edmunds, whose personal stamp can be detected on every cut. “Runaway Boys” introduces the slapped bass and whack-drum sound, all of it boosted clearly, with affected, basically modern guitar figures slipping in and out of the song. “Stray Cat Strut” is jazz-like and “Storm The Embassy” is almost a heavy metal allegory.

What makes the Stray Cats interesting is that Edmunds, who has recorded virtually every known guitar style, makes the affair sound like a palatably affectionate tribute rather than a latter-day guitar-histrionics romp with concessions to the rockabilly style.

It should be noted that Edmunds has maintained the rockabilly style on record for some fourteen years (with occasional excursions into blues, country, heavy metal satire, Spector-proportioned teen pop and straight rock), regardless of the ebb and flow of fashion. Listen to his Get It, Tracks On Wax, Repeat When Necessary or Twangin’. For Edmunds, it’s obvious that rockabilly is a matter of loving ritual, not roots.

— Vincent Fumar
"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

—I. Timothy 5:6

Before we proceed any further, might I suggest that the ladies in the house skip this epistle and immerse themselves in something less likely to offend their curious natures. This one's for the boys — white boys, in particular. They've been abused, maligned, cursed and generally given a raw deal the last decade or so. They don't understand why. Is it their fault that women, minority groups and canines have been held in bondage for the last ten thousand years? They're boys — that's all. They intend no one any harm. They only want to have a good time. They don't want to grow up. They deserve your pity. They're unhappy. They're not sure why. Their girlfriends wear Birkenstocks and don't shave their legs. "Yuk!" the boys think but they don't say anything. Back when James Brown's hair was processed, it was a Man's, Man's, Man's World but no longer. Modern boys have to curb their tongues.

Their girlfriends read Sylvia Plath and Anais Nin. "Yuk!" the boys think. Their girlfriends want them to talk about "things." "Yuk!" the boys think. When they were growing up, the boys thought that one day, they would settle down with someone like "Miss December" or "Miss July." Someone with breasts like mirlitons and lips continually puckered with the slightest bit of a tongue poking out. The girls were supposed to curb their tongues — not the other way around. All they ever wanted was someone marinated in Jungle Gardenia, waiting patiently and tempestuously by the front door with a half-frozen Budweiser in one hand (long red fingernails, please) and a fat joint of $125-an-ounce marijuana in the other. The boys never wanted to know about female orgasms or yeast infections or pantyhose or cystitis or Estee Lauder Swiss Performing Extract or menstrual cramps or Perry Ellis knickers or how to make a quiche. Like I said, all the boys wanted was to have a good time.

Then the boys noticed something. Black men didn't seem to share their problem. In fact, black men (who were never ever called "boys" by their women) seemed to be able to get away with almost anything. It seemed as if the more they mistreated their girlfriends, the more these women took it. This was very mysterious.

Maybe a black girlfriend is the answer, the boys thought. Such a strategy worked well enough in 19th Century New Orleans, when white boys were presented with black concubines as soon as hair sprouted on their chins. Ah, but this was 20th Century New Orleans and like in Johannesburg, apartheid was the unspoken rule. It was certainly all right to
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Along came technology and along came synthesizers (which funk musicians have learned to use with a sense of humor — as Mr. Moog surely intended) and along came cocaine (which, for better or worse, has probably altered the course of contemporary black music more than any electronic foot-pedal or ephemeral dance craze). The beat's the same but now you've got a product as well-thought-out as the 1934 Chrysler Airflow Imperial coupe. Those of you who might criticize such obvious musical revisionism are probably the same people who spend half their wages on imported reggae albums. About Jamaican revisionism, I could write a multi-volume study but let's stick to the subject. I love Sly and Robbie as much as anyone, dig?

The ultimate contemporary black album, the one I would recommend without hesitation to anyone who can snap their fingers (white boys included), is Skyy's Sky Line (Salsoul SA-8548). "You might think I'm going insane," Skyy sings, "Hey baby, just break out the champagne." Indeed.

Skyy's brilliantly-concocted "Call Me," which ruled black radio charts last month, is a slingshot dragster of a song — steel tubing, propulsion and little else. The same stark, jittery guitar chord that commences the song deviates not a fraction until the last minute or so. "Call Me," when it suddenly speeds up — enticing the whole affair into the sort of tribalistic ngoma that sounds so bad on the box. (Speaking of which, Skyy shows no hesitancy at plagiarizing lock, stock, barrel, title and all."

"Call Me" is the story of your typical boy (black, white, Chinese or Cro-Magnon) whose girlfriend is giving him a rough time — absolutely unwarranted, as usual. With the nastiest beat since Al Green's "Tired Of Being Alone" supporting her, our boy's main squeeze's confidante slinks in and licking her lips with the tongue of a pit viper, she puts the make on the innocent lad:

"Gosh! She really digs me now that I've started listening to funk. Get down on it!"

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Though your girlfriend's a friend of mine — here's my number and a dime, call me anytime.

Our hero can't resist and while the funk throbs on, we hear him dial as directed, throwing intellect to the wind and succumbing to every item St. Paul considered verboten. This segment is symbolically represented by a satirical (I hope) electric guitar passage in tribute to Duane Allman. It's short and stupid, the staff of life radio guitar ride. It's no fun to have to figure these things out while you're driving around which is why you don't hear James Blood Ulmer on the radio and why Ornette Coleman never made a hit record.

Irene Cara, a mite skinny but a Kewpie doll nevertheless, was the teenage would-be starlet in the movie version of "Fame" who, without blinking a 15-year-old eyelash, agrees to meet this guy who introduces himself as a "director" in the shabbiest tenement flat in the whole South Bronx, where he proceeds to stage a "screen test" and inevitably, the cad asks little Irene to slip off her blouse for the video camera. Innocent to the core (native New Yorker or not), Irene acts surprised and with great teardrops rolling down her cheeks, she bows to the fellow's indignities.

Likewise, Irene protesteth not when Ron Dante, the producer of her Anyone Can See album (Network E-1-60003), suggested that she record the Four Tops' immortal "Reach Out, I'll Be There." Any other girl would've said, "Jesus, why not record 'Midnight Hour' or 'Respect'?" Which would've been tough because Irene's version is swell. Not another Amii Stewart doing "Knock On Wood," but certainly a surprise.

More of a surprise is Bettye Lavette's Tell Me A Lie (Motown 6000 ML). The theme here is adultery and the cover paints a crafty picture: Ms. Lavette, in red, is embraced by one of the most handsome men in the universe, who is simultaneously removing his wedding band. If you've been yearning for that Willie Mitchell sound that has apparently disappeared forever, Tell Me A Lie is the place to look for a suitable substitute (Steve Buckingham is the producer). Do not be so crude as to ask why a woman who sounds a lot like Gladys Knight would bother to cut two of Ms. Knight's greatest hits, "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" and "If I Were Your Woman." That would not be polite behavior, not to infer that there is a single polite second on Ms. Lavette's disc.

Dick Griffey, who produced Lakeside's (why would someone name a band after a shopping center?) Your Wish Is My Command (Solar S-26), is yet another person I will not bother with my impolite inquiries. There is surely a philosophically-sound reason for Griffey encouraging Lakeside to record "I Want To Hold Your Hand." There has never been a nuttier cover of a Beatles song. Could it be that the upkeep on Paul McCartney's country farm is that precious? Funk it — who cares?
Miss Lou Ann Barton (the "Miss" a permanent addition to her name, in the manner of Miss Peggy Lee and Miss Piggy) is the Ft. Worth girl who New Orleans vocalists such as Leigh "Li'l Queenie" Harris and Becky Kury could have been — if only they had burned the right candles, rubbed their lucky beans, fondled the apropos black cat bone and winked their respective eyes at Jerry Wexler, the man who "created" Aretha Franklin and who is now embarked upon a full-tilt campaign designed to make Miss Barton the "Lady Soul" of the Eighties. Wexler and ex-Eagle Glenn Frey co-produced her debut album, Old Enough; Rolling Stone gave it four stars, calling it "one of Jerry Wexler's finest achievements as a producer"; and many of her local fans can hardly believe that this is the same Miss Lou Ann Barton once seen and heard on the stage at Tipitina's in the company of Stevie Ray Vaughan's Double Trouble. What happened? Backstage in Austin, after her first gig since recording the album, we attempted to unravel the mystery.

How did all of this come about, meeting Jerry Wexler and the subsequent album deal with Elektra?

I'd been singing in Fort Worth with these blues bands. I joined the Thunderbirds in 1975 for six months and then I went with Stevie Vaughan and Double Trouble for two and one-half years. Then, in 1980, I started touring with Roomful of Blues. I was with them at the Bottom Line in New York one night and Jerry Wexler came to hear the band. He didn't even know I was in the band. They brought me up halfway through the set. It blew his mind. He came back to my dressing room and said, "Hello, I'm Jerry Wexler." I was, like, gape-mouthed. And he said "I want to record you." We talked on the phone and he said "Why don't you go back to Texas? I know you're fixing to get married (now divorced; to Keith Ferguson, Thunderbirds' bassist), and start working on a demo. I will pay for a demo, that's one thing I will promise you." So, it was a matter of getting all the people I wanted on the demo in town at the same time and get it prepared. It finally happened about a year later. Keith kept saying, "How dare you make a man like Jerry Wexler wait?" But, you know what Jerry told me? "I really respect you for making me wait, instead of throwing me a piece of shit right at the first . . ." So, I did that and he was sold on it. We were looking for a label. (Wexler fortuitously played the demo for Linda Ronstadt and Glenn Frey one evening last spring. At Ronstadt's urging, Wexler approached Frey to co-produce the Old Enough album. By June, Lou Ann Barton found herself in Sheffield, Alabama, at the fabled Muscle Shoals Sound Studios, recording an assortment of cover songs, some obscure, some classic.)
One thing I noticed on the album is that besides your own voice, Greg Piccolo’s solo and Jimmie’s solo, everything on the album is real laid back, real clean. Your voice is the only really nasty thing on it.

Yeah, it’s true. Robert Palmer wrote that fantastic thing about modern technology getting in the way of making good records these days, with all the knobs and all that crap, and it’s true. Jimmie even came out sounding a little clean. But it’s the Muscle Shoals sound. I mean, it’s like, if we had done it any place else, think of the tragedy. Thank God we were there because I think it came out sounding pretty real. Not so much clean, but like on some of the shuffles, they weren’t quite what I’m used to, a Texas shuffle. Certain things, like the shuffle “Every Night of the Week,” that one in particular sounds like a white shuffle. I mean, all right, I’m white and all the people I work with are white, we do white shuffles, but we do white Texas shuffles, which is different.

Most people would see having the backing of Jerry Wexler and working with Glenn Frey as a real advantage . . .

Sure it is.

But can that be a disadvantage in that they might try to do too much with you?

People kept saying “What kinds of songs are they going to make you sing?” and now it’s “What kind of a band are they putting together for you?” I picked my own songs, I picked seven of the ten songs. I was in complete control.

What were the three songs that you didn’t pick?

“Old Enough” and “The Doodle Song” by Frankie Miller, the Scottish Otis Redding, which I got from Glenn and I love both of them. And from Jerry I got “Brand New Lover” from Marshall Crenshaw. I picked the rest. If I didn’t like something, Jerry said “Baby, this is like a tattoo. You have to wear it for the rest of your life. If you don’t like something, you say it right now, because if you don’t like it, you’re not going to be a hundred percent and that’s what we want.” I wasn’t told to do anything. Of course, your producers are there, to help you, and I wasn’t going to argue with their track records, but I was in control. I had the last and the final say.

How long were you in Muscle Shoals?

Seven weeks. We stayed there and mixed it and everything.

So you were there when they mixed it?

Yeah, Glenn and I, Jerry took off kind of early. He was there for the basics, the first three weeks. Glenn and I finished it up, adding any overdubs, backup vocals, hand claps, finger pops, little tasty things.

We did the finishing touches.

He was really wonderful. Glenn is really a soul singer. He’s doing “I’ve Been Born Again” by Johnny Taylor on his new album and it is tough. He uses the Jack
Mack horn section. It’s not like the Eagles at all; in fact, he made a great comment the other day. They asked him at this record party the company threw for me, they said “What about the Eagles?” He said, “The Eagles are back in the Seventies where they belong.” There’s certain things the Eagles did that I liked, all right; nothing I ever bought. Different veins completely, but actually we got along fine. Glenn is from Detroit; he’s a white nigger. In the studio I was really surprised, he would add the tiny little things, like on “Old Enough,” just that touch of organ.

What kind of a deal do you have worked out with Wexler?

I signed a production and management contract for five years with him. It’s like a partnership. He can’t do anything without my O.K., and I can’t do anything without his. We don’t have to discuss the business. The lawyers take care of it, there’s not any problem there at all. He’s never managed anyone before. I’m the first person he’s managed, but he did that for a protection thing, so they’ve got to go through him to get to me. I don’t have to get out there and get f*cked over by some asshole. They’ve got to go through the Big Daddy first.

Has it lived up to what you had thought it would be?

Oh, better than I would have believed. Of course I was a little scared. I thought, “Well, I don’t exactly know what I’m gonna do. I know I want to do it, and I trust him and I believe in the man, but let’s see once we get in the studio.” But, the man’s a dream, he’s an angel. He’s a big teddybear. The first thing about Jerry Wexler, he’s a music lover. That’s his main thing. That’s how he got into the business, but he’s so sweet and lovable and full of soul and warmth and jokes and funny as he is talented and that’s saying a lot. And he gets on my ass, like “Don’t drink that next drink!” He’s just kind of watching out. I say, “Well, if I need my ass jumped on, well, then do it. But trust me, I ain’t going to do anything but good.” But, don’t ask me, this was thrown in my lap. I can’t fucking believe it, it’s still kind of . . . if there’s any insecurity at all, it’s the non-belief that it’s really happening.

What separates you from other singers in your conviction? You’ve got a mojo.

Look, I’ve always been this way. It’s like, there’s no stopping me, and you can’t tell me nothing, but I’m the best. I think I’m the most wonderful thing that hit the planet earth. I like myself a lot. I think that’s the most wonderful thing that hit the planet earth. I think I’m the most wonderful thing that hit the planet earth. I think I’m the most wonderful thing that hit the planet earth.

What about the blues?

I went into a blues time warp for years. I wouldn’t do anything, I was like Jimmie Vaughan and all those purists, ten bucks a night. When I worked at the Bluebird in Fort Worth, I was making thirty bucks a week. That was it. I was living off of that, but I didn’t give a damn, I was going to do it. Blues time warp. A lot of people think that this album is me copping out because they haven’t seen me perform in a couple of years, but my tastes have changed. I had the FlipTops band for a while, and I sang with Alvin Crow, I do my country thing. I’m at the point where I want to do it all — country, rockabilly, rock. I don’t want to get in a rut, get typecast. I don’t want to be expected to do the same thing all the time. I don’t do it, I’ll tell you what. I don’t give a damn if I don’t ever hear a straight blues again in my life. You realize by the time I went with the Thunderbirds I had already quit singing straight blues. If I was going to sing something slow, I was going to sing a ballad. Jimmie would say, “Why don’t you sing ‘Part Time Love’?” And I would say, “Why don’t we do ‘Maybe’?” I was already tired of that, I mean, c’mon, haven’t we heard “Sweet Sixteen” enough to last us for the rest of our lives, or what? I guess the next thing is touring behind the album?

That’s what I’ve been waiting almost two years for. My thing; this will be my first band that I didn’t share the singing with somebody. I’m gonna kill ’em. They ain’t never seen anything like this.
At certain times in life, as a performer, it seems to me that everyone is asking me for advice. I’m so seriously nuts that I took on the task of being a barroom adviser and it became an obsession. Suddenly I found myself with no one I could ask for advice while everyone was doing it to me. I would become so conglomerated with other people’s problems that I sometimes noticed that I derived a great deal of solace from talking to this man; sometimes, drunk and maniacal as we could be, he somehow became someone I could ask for advice... it’s as simple as that...

Earl King.

— Clark Vreeland

CV: How’d you make it through the Jupiter Effect?
EK: I was worrying about that, man. I wanted to see what was going to take place. See, you may not know the repercussions of it till about a month later.

CK: Maybe longer.
EK: Yeah, who knows. But I’m really curious about what happens to the kid who was born on that particular day. I’m very curious about that, astrologically speaking.

You know — wow, I’ve given it some thought.
CV: Yeah, you know what somebody asked me to ask you? There was an article you did a long time ago in the Figaro, and you said you were a seventh son.

EK: Yeah, yeah. I’m a seventh son. See all the kids (the first six boys in his family), they died at birth or they lived maybe a month or so. They thought I was gone, too, man. But I intended to stay here a while, so I hung out. I wasn’t going anywhere. Not right then.

CV: (laughing) Waiting here, huh?
EK: Mm-m. I said that to somebody one day, they looked at me, and I said, “Look, I firmly believe, but I’m beyond the stage of belief in it, in reincarnation.” It’s totally impossible for all of us to be on the planet earth and live one lifetime, or what we call the span of man, and yet a tree will be around two, three hundred years. No, some of those big oaks will be around when some people be coming back here.

CV: Yeah... I got one of those aloe vera plants, and say you burn your finger, it will pick up and register that pain.

EK: I’m in accord with that.
CV: Very strange.
EK: Well, most plants are very sensitive. I got some plants, they always run my head... some of them wants attention, be with them a lil’ bit...

CV: And monitoring that kind of energy is so far gone from, say, radio waves, those kind of energies... EK: Yeah.

CV: That seem so primitive. Just like our rocket ships with, say, liquid fuel in it, when we got everything we need to do otherwise. I don’t know what’s holding it back, why we want to direct our energy into these primitive things.

EK: Well you see, we have always been a society of diversion, even in the scientific field. Who knows why they do what?... things. EK: Yeah.

CV: Words are the fickle things.
EK: Yeah. We devise all sorts of languages to communicate, but the only perfect language ever been devised is a
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But one of the things that makes me believe in reincarnation . . . take for example (James) Booker. I've tried to discern what the difference is between genius and ordinary people. Genius is carry-over from the past. It's people coming here to earth with all their psychic centers open. They can reach and call upon, in their subconscious mind, techniques that they learned in previous training, in previous lives. Whereas people with them closed, they have to work to re-open the seven psychic centers of the human anatomy.

CV: Do you think that whole groups of people reappear at the same time? Like the war babies or —
EK: Oh yeah yeah. I'll go along with that. It's my contention everybody on the planet now that's associated with one another, indirectly or directly, has been around in association before. Together. One instance I'll let you know: have you ever met that individual that you like, for some strange reason, instantaneously? And yet there'll be this other person, who you don't even know, but there was some kind of distasteful thing, you couldn't put your hand on it. In a previous life you had association with this person.

But, when we're talking about the life in which we live — overlooking the Indian philosophy about people coming back as cats and dogs and staff, because dogs have their own soul and they evolve too, that's why some dogs are easier to train —

CV: That philosophy is more like Egyptian —
EK: Hah?
CV: You go up and down...
EK: Yeah, but see, the Egyptians got a veiled thing. One of the philosophies they got is for the mundane folk and the other is for the people who function on the esoteric level —
CV: Like Buddhists —
EK: Yeah, they know a lil' better than that, but when you speak of it intelligently and think about it, some people have a knack and say, "well I can train this animal and that one," but there are some animals that you can't train. Very difficult to train. See, these animals that are easy to train, they've evolved too. And it's wrong to deprive them of their soul entity because everything living has a soul. We as people come back in our own souls to develop ourselves spiritually. One of the highest attainments is the people in the arts, all forms of the arts. They have a chance at the awakening of consciousness. We musicians hear things that people not connected with it don't. They may hear sounds on a certain level, but then sounds on another level up there, we have over a period of time awakened certain centers where we hear those sounds. Some of the sounds that may disturb us don't disturb other people.

I was with Professor Alvin Batiste — I think you know Alvin — and we were in a car riding one night some years ago. It was right after my mother died. We were talking — blah blah blah, blah blah — and I asked Alvin, I said — we was in the car with quite a few people — I said, "Man, did you hear that?" He said, "Yeah."
CV: Nobody else?
EK: No. And I say, "hum it." Hum it. And he hummed it to me. It was out there, man. And this happen to all music people, I find.

CV: Same thing goes for UFO sightings. Like this Israeli guy — I saw the UFO, I was driving in the desert with some colonel and some others, and he goes, "Look at that!"; they didn't see nothing.
EK: Uh-huh. Okay. Well it was meant for him to see, or his vision, more or less. Okay. To simplify that, what you're saying . . . People used to fantasize about people becoming invisible. In reference to this guy who saw the UFO; there is a thing called the shifting of one's consciousness. Let's assume there is someone you don't want to see. And yet they will walk right in your presence and they got a lot of people around. They will not see you! You haven't disappeared. Their consciousness has shifted to another level and they see everything but you. And you may run into them later on, and you say, "I saw you the day before, and I tried to wave at you," and they say, "I didn't see you!" And you was right there.
CV: That's happened to me a lot.
EK: Your consciousness will shift. Some of the old masters, they say, like Jesus, would disappear and stuff like that, he could shift your consciousness, and you'd think he's gone but he's still there. Simple as that. Because we as humans have a limit to the direction of our faculties. Most people say "control," but really it's the direction of our faculties; control is a naughty word.

To see auras . . . As you do it more often you develop a technique to see auras around the human body . . . around plant life . . . around things in general —
CV: Have you been able to do that?
EK: Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah. I saw something on television not long ago and it was quite amusing to me, a documentary. They were showing with a machine how to see the aura around a person. Let's assume a person has lost a limb. Wherever that limb was, you could still see the aura where that's at, and they was using some kind of gadgets to see this and I thought that was kinda cute. With certain light circumstances with the natural eye you can see this; that's nothing but a technique that's being developed.
We think of the aura, we call it a halo. On the pictures of some of the saints they show a halo around the head. But this halo is an aura that permeates the whole body. The purpose of the aura is to keep certain radiation from disturbing the human body. It fights off, it's a fighter. This is why you can tell when people are really sick by looking at their aura. It's low to the head, and when they're in good health, it stands up. People who are highly illuminated have an aura standing maybe five feet over their head. We can distinguish them automatically.

One of the biblical things... I like to think of it as Jesus was playing a prank on John the Baptist, telling him to baptize him, and he was mentioning to Jesus "You are without sin." It's not that he knew this in the sense of Jesus being without sin; (laughing) it's just that he detected that big white aura sitting up on His head. He knows that the only person gonna have that is someone who's totally out there. Because the color spectrum moves certain degrees, and the last degree is white. The last degree is total clear.

CV: All colors.
EK: You got to be a very developed person to see a white aura.
CV: Well, they were cousins.
EK: Yeah. Yeah. It's almost invisible.
CV: Do you think people are waiting for Jesus right now? Or not Jesus, but do you think people are waiting right now? Can you see that in the media, rock 'n roll, the whole thing? Do you know how there was sorta like a competition —
EK: Yeah.
CV: — built up... profits and everything up until Jesus arrived and that kinda contributed to why nobody believed in him — why there was so much skepticism — can you see that happening right now?
EK: Yeah. It's here. The thing is, some people hear me speak, man, and they assume that I'm atheist, because I speak direct — but see, my whole family was ministers. And at age eleven, I was a Sunday School superintendent, so I was involved deeply. I didn't have too much time to shoot marbles when I was a kid, and I had to really deal with The Book, as they call it.

But as I got older I started to really look into things, because some of the things in The Book says, "seek and ye shall find." I think true knowledge is to be seeked, there is no true knowledge written in a book. Because knowledge is veiled from people who can use it for destructive means.

Most people confuse the masses. They talk to the masses and say, "Well Jesus is gonna come in resurrection." And here's a country over here that's dominated, and they say to themselves, "I haven't done anything! I been loyal, I been praying everyday, but nothing comes to help me." They are confused because somebody told them to wait. We all must learn that we have a karma to pay from previous lives. Some of the burdens we have, we must look at it in a positive sense and say, "I must gain knowledge out of this burden,"
and then go to a higher plateau, simple as that. The burden is just put on you as a deterrent, to make you think and go
around and elevate your consciousness.

See, we've been taught to take dictation from the brain. The brain, being selfish, the selfish "me," says to the sub-
conscious, or the mind power, "I'm gon-
na do what I want to do." I wanna go to
the corner and do such and such. But
maybe it's not right for me to go there and
I don't want to hear from my mind power.
I deal simply on the physical level of
brain. So, when I run into a hassle, I
didn't listen. How many times, everybody
on earth, they say, "If only I'd followed
my first mind."

I wrote an article one time years ago
when I first got involved in philosophy,
and I was talking about "I." People men-
tion to you, they say, "Hey . . . my arm
hurts. My head hurts. 'I' want to do such
and such." And I always ask, "If your
arm hurts, that means your arm belongs
to you; then who are you, that the arm
belongs to?" This is where I separate the
duality of the physical with the spiritual
psychic self. People say it all the time but
they don't realize what they saying.

They say, "God made man in his own
image." They wasn't talking about in no
physical image. God never took on no
physical image to make himself manifest.
It's image in soul essence, which has no
form, no structure. It's just a soul. So we
all part of one big global soul.

Another phrase that may be illu-
minating, people say, "Earl, why you
want to be cremated?" I say, "Well,
there are numerous reasons, but they say,
'ashes to ashes and dust to dust,' " and
most people who want to go in the
ground, well, it's up to them if they want
to do that, but I don't think I want to be
with them.

CV: You know I just dealt with that
recently myself, and I just come to that
same conclusion.

EK: Yeah.

CV: And I never gave it much thought
before, but after studying the mummified
things, and how there was entrapment—

EK: Yes!

CV: —Where that soul stuck with that
mummy—

EK: Yeah, man, look! Hey wait, I'm
glad you brought that up. Look, Clark:
that disturb me man—

CV: Me too.

EK: That disturb me so long, being en-
trapped with that mummy thing, then I
found out—oh God, man, during the
time they brought that King Tut thing
here, that's when it all fell in place, and I
then tried to figure. I say, "Now as smart
as the Egyptians were, and they believed
in cremation," I say, "what in the devil
would they be doing mummifying
somebody?" Then it all came back to me
and to oneness, more or less.

The guys who were put in mummies,
you dealing with not just astral projec-
tion, but that's a form of it all right. You
remember when the people was protesting
the Viet Nam situation—

CV: Oh yeah.
EK: — They were burning themselves.
CV: Oh yeah.
EK: Okay. Someone mention to me, he say, "Man, I saw this guy burning himself, he didn't flinch." I say, "He didn't flinch because there wasn't any consciousness in his body." He was gone already. He was dead before the fire hit him. As you call dead. I call it a transition, a change. Okay. I say, "He done projected out of his body." The only people can do this is what you call master souls. Christ could do it — when he got ready to depart earth, he just split out of his body.

So I'm saying that in this sense: the mummies, that were put there, some of these people were highly developed spiritually, and they had projected already. So they didn't have no detrimental harm of being earthbound, as you were talking about. Wait till that thing deteriorate, just hang here earthbound on earth. That's what confused me, man, so I said, "There's got to be something."

They had a movie one time — I don't know why they don't want to rerun this! — and the title of the movie was Kim.

It's a li'l boy, musta been six or seven years old, and he was a li'l rascal. And he met this monk on the way, and he was a lama. So this li'l guy, he had no home and no people, and he was travelling with the lama, and he used to make fun of the lama, he call him 'holy man.' He say, "Man, why don't you pray? You ain't got no food, no nothing," he say, "I gotta steal to feed you" — he's a li'l' bitty kid, man! A little Indian kid. And the lama didn't pay him any mind.

So they went through and they travelled and they travelled. One day, they had to cross a little moat of water, and they come upon a king cobra snake. So the li'l boy told the lama, he say, "Man, lama! Back up!" He say, "Be careful! That's a king cobra, you don't walk up there, with that.''

The lama, he smile at him, he walk straight up by the cobra and look at it. And the cobra backed down and went back down in its curl and close its hood up, and he told the little boy, "Come on, it's all right," and the li'l boy start looking at him.

But to get to the end of the picture, they portrayed a scene in there that's very important, and I believe most people who believe in religious doctrines shoulda saw that movie, because at the end of the picture, the lama told the li'l boy, he say, "This is where I got to depart from you." He say, "What do you mean? We jus' having fun."

He say, "I got to go." He say, "Well I want to go with you." He say, "You can't go with me." And he walked out into a scene, like it was a desert scene. And he opened his arms up and he looked up into the sun. His body collapsed on the ground, and you could see the ethereal parts of his body going up. And this is what we talking about "projection." This is a person that's not waiting to die.
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By Kalamu ya Salaam

Isn't it odd that although this society commercializes music into saleable units (record executives call an album a "product"), serious musicians often find it difficult to make a living solely as musicians? This paradox is particularly true of New Orleans, the city which claims to be the birthplace of jazz. After surveying the local scene, some would add New Orleans is also the deathplace of jazz — killed by uncaring civic leaders who promote the mythic image of New Orleans as a jazz city but do little to economically sustain the very musicians who create the music.

Isn't it perversely ludicrous that the numerous stages and concert halls in Armstrong Park remain silent most of the time, seldom featuring New Orleans music?

Moreover, it is not just the jazz musicians who suffer in New Orleans. As seminal as the New Orleans R&B scene was during the Fifties, one would think that the city would more actively support those hometown musicians who laid the foundation for much of today's contemporary music.

But alas, the reality of music life in "Big Easy" ain't what it ought to be. For musicians, struggling to make a living, it is difficult not to be bitter about this reality. Wilson Turbinton, bka (better known as) "Willie Tee," is a New Orleans musician, a piano player, singer and composer, who has somehow managed to come through the slaughter of the music business still committed to music without the bile of bitterness fouling his personality.

Born February 6, 1944, and a 1961 graduate of Booker T. Washington High School, Willie gave up his studies in drafting at SUNO when he had a major 1965 hit with "Teasin' You." In 1968, following his ups and downs of success with "Teasin' You" and "Thank You, John," a strong follow-up number which Willie wrote, Willie teamed up with his older brother, saxophonist Earl Turbinton, to establish the Jazz Workshop in a French Quarter hall donated for their use. There Willie and Earl, along with guitarist George Davis, bassist George French and drummer David Lee, created innovative modern jazz — Dizzy Gillespie was so impressed that he hired Davis and Lee, and Cannonball Adderly, similarly impressed, was instrumental in securing a recording contract for the Turbinton brothers with Capitol records.

Unfortunately, neither the Jazz Workshop nor the Capitol contract lasted. During the Seventies Willie made an album, Anticipation, and later cut "Cold Bear" and "Gator Bait," local hits with a band he assembled under the name of Willie Tee and The Gators. His most recent recording was "Concentrate On Me," a single which received strong local support.

Today, Willie Tee writes commercials, produces records and performs in a variety of settings, from jazz to cocktail piano bars. Just as many other great New Orleans piano players made a living playing piano in nightclubs, Willie Tee today makes a steady, although typically modest, income playing in various establishments.

Willie currently is holding down the copperplated piano bar at The Lake, a supperclub which offers a scenic view of Lake Pontchartrain. Using a wide array of electronic keyboards, Willie has broadened the cocktail piano concept by using prerecorded bass and drum lines on a tape loop, a technique which is similar to the modern procedure of separately recording the various instruments and voices, and then mixing them together at a later date. Willie feels that this is a significant improvement over the mechanical rhythm machines that some pianists use.

Willie is an active family man who leads a quiet working class existence with his wife and daughter in a brick home on Seville Street near St. Bernard and Mirabeau. He does not drive a big fancy car, nor sport flashy clothes while ingesting copious amounts of dope. He is the exact opposite of the media-projected image of the jazz musician as social outlaw. Willie Tee, like numerous other New Orleans musicians, is a community person with deep ties to the people of New Orleans.

For Willie Tee, a proud professional musician, music is a way of life as honorable and important to the community as any other vocation. And perhaps, this is the distinguishing characteristic of New Orleans music, a characteristic which has roots in the traditional role of musicians in West African societies: the musician is not an exotic personality, but rather, is an integral and necessary part of the community, integral in that they live and work there, necessary in that the spiritual level of such a community could often be measured by the quality of the music it produced. Thank you, Willie for persevering.

How did you get started in music? What made you decide to play music?

I came from a musical family; my old man was always involved in playing jazz records. He played trombone for a while, semi-professionally. When he got married he just hung it up but he always had a serious interest in the music.

We had a piano in our house. I was always attracted to play it. Earl had the technical training. Before I even got into that I was just trying to play songs. By the time I got to piano lessons and stuff like that, I had kind of developed my ears and learned to play a lot of popular songs.

About seventh grade I took lessons from Harold Battiste and Edgar P. Hornig. I was taking saxophone because Earl had a saxophone. You know, it was a matter of economics. I used to rib Harold.
So one day Harold came to my house and talked. I was dealing with the band, and whenever Harold would leave out the room, we would just jam and play some of the songs. So he came over to ask my momma if I could go on a gig with him.

What grade were you in?

Seventh grade. From then Harold kind of adopted me. In between that I met Solomon Spencer, who was band director at Cohen High School, but at that time he was involved in booking all kinds of fraternity parties. He used to have a talent show at Lincoln Beach and he picked us up—Aaron Neville, James Black, all of the cats who wound up being innovators and being consistent as performers played there. A lot of people would just react to me being small. We would win talent shows on the basis of just that, not that we were any better than James or them.

From there, it kind of evolved. Eventually, I met Melvin Lastie and he asked me about recording with him and Harold and so I did my first records for him. This was in the late Fifties.

When were coming up, what did you want to play?

Oh, I basically just wanted to duplicate all of the records that were out. Eddie Bo was one of my major influences. I used to really like the way Eddie Bo sang the really early things that he did. Tommy Ridgley, Little Richard, that kind of stuff. All of the jazz influence came from Earl. He was into the saxophone players and that kind of thing. I was into making the ladies like me. I came to this conclusion: whatever you’re exposed to you develop an appreciation for it, whether you appreciate it at the time or not. One of the major battles that Earl and I had was that he would always want to play jazz and I would want to play stuff that the majority of the people were into. My appreciation of jazz evolved out of that. Once I started learning more about what the music meant, then I started developing a stronger interest in trying to find out a lot of things I was doing by ear. I didn’t understand them technically, and by me being friends with a lot of guys who had all of this technical knowledge, I got to what it was through short cuts versus going to a teacher.

What does the music mean?

To me? Well, I see the music as just an extension of me. I realized very young that this is what I was going to do, and now I realize how significant it is to my existence because this is all I’ve ever done. When I was going to school my major wasn’t even music. My major was architectural drafting. In 1965 I just got out of school, and I had a major hit record and that kind of changed my whole direction of whether I was going to stay in school. I was going to Southern and when the record happened it was the first time I had a chance to experience going all over. Which record was that?

"Teasin' You." I had recorded a lot of things before "Teasin' You." I don't really know the exact dates, but in the late Fifties I recorded some stuff for Harold and them but nothing major ever happened with the stuff.

What made that song hit for you?

I think it was a combination of things. I didn’t like "Teasin' You." I didn’t write it. By the time I got to "Teasin' You," I had developed a thing of just wanting to write some jazz things. I had recorded enough where I wanted to have big productions and that kind of thing. I didn’t realize the company I was recording for couldn’t afford what I wanted to do. I knew that Wardell Querzergue had a greater music ability than the kind of things they did on me but they were thinking commercial. At that time all I was thinking about was having something that was really representative of what I was about. I always tried to write my own material but by that time I had started writing serious songs, message music. They weren’t into that then. The record came out and it hit and it surprised me.

Who wrote "Teasin' You" and how did you get that?

Earl King wrote "Teasin' You." Did he write it for you or were you just doing a session?

Yeah, he wrote it for me. They had a place in back of One Stop Record Shop where they would do all of their rehearsals. Earl, at that time, was writing a lot of stuff for different people.

I did a lot of traveling as a result of "Teasin' You." I was still living with my momma, and didn’t have any serious obligations. I had some gigs making fifteen, sixteen hundred dollars. I was just out of high school, didn’t know nothing about money. I would go to New York and buy...
three hundred dollar suits and loafers.

How old were you?

Eighteen. It was just a party to me and then when all of that stuff started tapering down and I'm looking for the money, I realized that I didn't make significant money in terms of the value of the song. So when I became aware I started investigating how to protect myself and where the money was. The smarter I became about the business, the more I started getting locked out. That's what happens to most of the cats.

How did you and your brother hook up to do the Jazz Workshop?

We lucked up and met Jules Kahn and he gave us this building. But we didn't know enough about the business or how to market what we were doing to get enough people out or how to apply for grants and all of that kind of stuff. So we operated for about a year and didn't even care about what people thought about the music. The people who came to the workshop came because they were into the music; cause if they weren't into the music after the first song, they were gone. Eventually we started getting a real jazz audience.

I eventually met Cannonball Adderley and he recorded a vocal album on me. They recorded a lot of the stuff that we did and never released it. A lot of people don't believe this but a lot of the music that came out that were hits for Cannonball and them, I can play you tapes of music we did before Cannon. Cannon wasn't a carbon copy, but you could hear the influence and the direction. At first I had a kind of hostility about that, but everything major that I learned about the business, I learned it through Cannon, through my association with him, so it was an experience that was important. I got a chance to meet people whom I would have never met who were receptive to me because I was with Cannon.

After that I got an opportunity to produce some records on the Wild Magnolias for a European record company. It went beautifully. By me being the producer of somebody else I was able to be more vocal in their behalf versus my speaking for myself. That was one of my major problems; I realized later that what proper management can do for you is speak up on your behalf. No matter how great you are, there is nobody who wants to hear you say it yourself.

From the Magnolia experience, by it being for a European record company, we got a chance to play phenomenal gigs. We played Carnegie Hall with the Wild Magnolias headlining over Freddie Hubbard and a lot of masters. There are a lot of things, unless it's people who really understand what's happening, I don't even get into because people think, "Awh, he's just showboating."

When you played Europe, what was the response?

The response in Europe made me not want to come home because they have a serious appreciation for what's happening.
They have people there who are aware of the history of not only what the Magnolias were about, but also what I was doing. They knew people in New Orleans that a lot of people here didn't even know — and they knew in depth. It makes you feel good when you go somewhere and people are giving you royal treatment. And it's not ego, I just thought it was stuff we deserved from the standpoint of our being sincere about what we were doing.

The ridiculous thing that is happening in this city is that you go to the Quarter and it sounds like everywhere else but New Orleans — like, the western bands that ain't got nothing to do with New Orleans.

Since everybody has become culture conscious, people who get the grants are people that are always on the inside, so they become culture conscious and use us for the information. They don't know nothing about what's happening, but because of our need for exposure, cats just run the information.

I went through a period of being hostile about what's happening and then about three years ago, I realized that if you have a gift, you've already been compensated. I take that attitude, and when I play now, I play for me and the maker. I don't go around professing it to cats 'cause a lot of cats think it's some wishy-washy stuff. But, since I've taken that attitude and gotten a firm grip on myself, the economic thing hasn't even phased me. I've been lucky to be able to work. I ain't making no phenomenal money, but I'm surviving and I'm not forced to do anything outside of the music and never have been. From that standpoint, I consider myself successful.

The lady I married understood from the beginning that this was what I was going to do and I know that is a special trip because I know cats who have much more talent than I have who still go through a thing of their ladies wanting them to get "a real job" and not really seeing the art as significant.

There are cats who are masters at what they do and because of how messed up and unappreciative people have become for the arts, well this is something that should be dealt with from a political standpoint. I think that it reflects terribly on this city being the home of jazz for the music not to be one of the priorities. They should promote jazz music as much as they promote the Saints, the Dome and everything else.

Can they make as much money? I think they can make more money. I think that's one of the problems with this city. A lot of people come from away, especially Europeans. They save to come to this city and leave here disappointed because they've got to look for it with a magnifying glass and when they see it, they don't see it in its purest form.

How do you feel about playing what some folks call cocktail music in order to make a livin'?
means of making a living, or is this the kind of music you really want to play?

I look at being able to survive playing music as a positive versus me having to drive a coke truck or something else. I would rather be able to just in the realm of the music I want to prepare, but I don’t know many artists who have been given that luxury, except for a very few cats who’ve been lucky enough to get with companies that are sensitive to their music, expose their music and give them an opportunity to perform.

Also, the times have changed, even the jazz innovators, the Herbie Hancock’s, all of the cats that are serious players, they have to resort to playing other things in order to be accepted in the market that companies are pushing. To a large degree, it becomes more of a spiritual thing if you don’t sell out. But, on the other hand, I don’t know if it’s selling out anymore, because your attitudes about just survival have to change, especially when you become responsible for more than yourself. You have a family and you’ve got to deal with that. I used to have hostilities about my music being controlled, but now I just appreciate having an opportunity to play. Even when I play cocktail music, I play what I want to play and do it in a style that I want to do it.

I don’t ever want to play music for people that they don’t dig. To me that doesn’t make sense. Music is supposed to be about positive vibes and ain’t nothing more of a drag than to just be playing something that nobody likes. You can’t get into it because you’re getting negative feedback from the people you’re playing for.

What do you listen to now? Do you listen to records, concerts, or what?

There is a lot of music out that I like, but not necessarily for me to play. Certain songs I feel don’t go with me.

When I go to a concert to hear some musicians I respect, I listen for the stuff that’s new. But the way music is controlled today, you don’t hear much new music. The newest music I ever heard was when I had an opportunity to go to Europe. Or you have to go to New York. For example, you’ll catch Weather Report in New Orleans and you go hear them in New York, they play a totally different thing because the audience’s mentality is just more in tune to being open to a broader thing. That’s not to say that you don’t have hip people here, but they don’t come out in big enough numbers where you can play something heavy and not play anything that’s commercial. You may have five people in the audience that can dig it. But when you only play for those five people there is no spiritual reward if you got four hundred people out there who are pissed off with the band.

That’s one of the reasons why me and Fats [brother Earl Turbinton] don’t play together more often. I’m capable of playing music way out there, but I don’t want to go in no room and piss people off. I mean I can appreciate playing hard
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but if you are at a party, they don't want to hear nothing about "let my people go" and messages music; they want music for partying. So now when I go, I go to knock people out.

Now, if it's a concert, I try to play something that's going to knock the people out first, and somewhere in there, I'm going to play something that I have prepared. If it looks like it's going to get boring, then I make it short, but at least I made an attempt. But my brother, no compromise! I admire him for that now, 'cause it takes a certain kind of strength to be like that and you definitely don't get the financial rewards that come with being commercial. But, there are stronger spiritual rewards that come from being true to yourself. I just happen to like all of it.

What do you think can be done to make the music scene in New Orleans hipper?

I think the cats outside the music who are sensitive to what the music means culturally should speak up for the music.

Because as long as the musicians speak up for the music, it comes off as a selfish thing to get employment. If I go to Dutch and say "you really ought to do something," it's not going to have as much impact as a bunch of cats going in saying, "hey man, the music that Willie Tee is making is more reflective of the kind of message that ought to be going out in the community."

At one time people could recognize you even when you weren't playing because you had a bald spot. Some folks thought that was a style you developed or whatever.

Yeah, cats come up to me and say, "what happened?" I say, "what you men, what happened? I chose to be bald earlier, now you are bald." I was going into Tyler's, a cat said, "Hey man, is Willie Tee your daddy?" I said, "Yea." He said, "why you ain't bald headed?"

So it just happened?

What?

Your hair growing out?

(Laughing) You really want to know what happened? Just like I woke up one morning and it was bald, well one day it just grew. Whatever happened to Willie Tee's baldhead? I don't know, but Willie Tee ain't worried about it.

At one time, when you're in pursuit of stardom and all that kind of stuff, then you go to caring about physical appearance and all that. I know a lot of cats who have had phenomenal success in terms of money, but most of those cats are looking for time off. You strive for that kind of success, but sometimes you want to be home with your old lady for three months. You've been on the road for three months, you've been everywhere in the world, had an opportunity to be with everybody in the world, but after you've done all that, what really counts are the things that mean something to you spiritually.

All I want to do right now is live a quality life.
Robert Tannen lives in a quasi-mansion on Esplanade Avenue (the bases of the columns on the front porch are spray-painted, in typical Tannen fashion, silver) filled with fishing rods, pottery, toy missile-launchers, a large portrait of Ronald Reagan over one of the mantles, several Martin Green paintings of outer space, other paintings rescued from defunct po-boy joints, stuffed birds, genuine "Fiesta-ware" (those orange and turquoise and yellow plates that your Grandmother had), a piano at which Professor Longhair once played (Tannen apologized because the instrument was out-of-tune and Fess told him to forget it because out-of-tune pianos were his specialty) and more and more and more.

A very typical New Orleans home, in other words — like a hit of primo-quality Owsley LSD as much as anything. Too much is just enough.

One recent Sunday morning, after a show of his ceramics (your usual flea market fare bound together with "Super-Glue") had opened at the Arthur Roger Gallery, Tannen kindly consented to an interview. The public and local artists were, as might be expected, confounded by this latest exhibition but I (and my youngest son, who's 2; Tannen claims an ardent group of very young admirers) considered it a heroic effort. What follows is a major excerpt from the interview. A stiff dose of bourbon in a plastic go-cup commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway (as Tannen offered me) could not help but make the whole thing go down easier.

Tannen, the perfect subject for an interview, begins without being asked a question.

It should be noted that a cassette player of Robert Parker and Guitar Slim (Tannen's "main man") played in the background as we talked. There's a theme that runs through everything I do — it's called "Be a good boy, Bobby." If you think of all the comments your parents make to you, the most memorable one is "Be a good boy" or "Be a good girl."
So you strive to be inoffensive? Well, I'm inclined to be a bad boy. I've tried to be a good boy as an artist but it hasn't worked out. As a result, you get a compromise and the work is half-ass.

Your parents and your community and your relatives and your friends are ever-present and certainly you don't want to offend the people who are close to you. There's a lot in art that can be pretty offensive.

For example, this is the oldest piece of work I have. (Tannen produces a small nude sculpture.) I made this when I was 6. Even at that time, little boys weren't supposed to make naked ladies. I was interested in big asses and big tits like all little boys are and it comes through in the work.

(Producing a pencil-sharpener from the 1939 World's Fair, Tannen continues...) This was a major influence on my life. My parents took me to the World's Fair in 1939 and 1940 in New York. It had a major impact on the way things looked. I was born in 1937 so I was about 3 years old when I went to the World's Fair and I saw things like this - even though this is a pencil-sharpener. This was the theme structure of the World's Fair - the Trylon and the Perisphere. Things like that just knocked me out because until I went to the World's Fair, the environment was filled with practical objects and utilitarian architecture. Then you come to this place that's filled with things of Tomorrow, things of the Future, made concrete, and that - perhaps more than anything else - was the reason why I moved more strongly in the direction of the arts and design.

My father was a rare book dealer. He would've liked me to become a rare book dealer like him. So he pushed books and my mother pushed art. As a result, I became very schizophrenic. My father had the authority but my mother seemed brighter or more interesting. I was encouraged to "Be good" but that was the schizophrenic situation: "Good boys" don't make nude sculptures or paintings or drawings.

My parents were part of a Jewish New York intellectual community. They went to parties where there were artists and writers and people who came in to visit from Europe and communists, socialists, anarchists - as well as capitalists. In the '40s in New York — during the war — it was a rather extraordinary experience for a little kid. There was a lot of intellectual ferment that went on after the war and still goes on in New York.

The way I relate this to New Orleans is that in New Orleans - while the arts have been here as long, if not longer — the intellectual side of it is a little repressed. It's there but it's not out-front and obvious. It's in the closet.

In my mind, probably the writers who had the greatest influence on my childhood and my education were Southern writers, even though I was a Yankee. Faulkner - I wasn't sure what I was reading but it sure sounded good. As a result, there was this romantic longing for the pastoral and the attitudes of the 19th Century, which is a lot of the reason why I'm here.

I was just totally immersed in the New York intellectual community. My father's bookshop was right in the middle of where it was all happening - it was on Park Avenue South. The New York school of artists - Jackson Pollock, de Kooning, Kline - all of those artists were just walking around my father's shop, buying books, reading, looking at pictures.

From 1940 to 1950, I was like a kid watching a party. All of this was happening but I was on the periphery. What became the New York school of art was exploding and there was this ferment that went on after the war. I remember seeing those great artist figures on the street but they seemed a million miles away. They were generations beyond me.

So in 1950, I had my first exhibit in a community art show and this (a small painting of a landscape) was the thing I showed. I was 13 and it's a pretty shitty picture. As an indication of my longing for leaving New York, it's titled "Dude Ranch."

I started going to art school when I was 6 — the Jefferson School of Social Science. It was a communist art school. John James Audubon was another early influence — all of the bird pictures. I used to go to the Museum of Natural History in New York and copy the stuffed birds and other animals to learn how to draw.

So in some ways, being in New Orleans now is almost a result of that longing for an urban yet a more archaic, pastoral agrarian environment - not that New Orleans is agrarian but it's somewhere in between city and country.

I went to Pratt Institute in New York, which was an art and architecture college, and I taught there for three years. I studied a combination of curriculums - I studied industrial design, some architectural courses. I had an instructor named
Bill Katavolos who had quite a profound influence on me. He did some really wild architecture. He was interested in architecture that would grow like plants. He spent ten years exploring organic architecture that could be grown with expanding plastics. Katavolos worked with plastic foams and his idea was to have a building that, instead of being constructed, you kinda mixed the goop in a pot and it grew like a plant. That thoroughly destroyed any ability I had to become a practical architect or designer. Katavolos was so far-out that if we did anything that looked like a conventional building, he felt we were uninteresting students. Your work became oriented towards conceptual rather than buildable architecture and to this day, I'm still not able to deal effectively with practical things you can build.

I visited New Orleans first in 1967. I was in Texarkana, Arkansas, working on a project and I had a weekend free so I flew down and spent the weekend here. It looked like some of the places I had imagined as a kid but it was real. This 19th Century environment was still there.

I came to Mississippi on assignment as an urban planner to assist in the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Camille. I was the guy who ran around figuring out what needed to be done to get the Coast built again and to build it right. I had a definite Yankee orientation in planning and I was working with some Mississippi planners. We developed some interesting concepts for the Coast, which have been implemented as part of the master plan for the area.

Jumping back to New York, I was too young when the New York art scene was first exploding to participate in that first wave yet I was there. It was like being in the wrong place at the wrong time. So I left the East to experience other parts of the country, especially the South. Living in Mississippi was thoroughly enjoyable.

I came to New Orleans after I finished working on a certain federal project. I met Ronnie Katz, who at the time was the head of Louisiana State Planning, and Ronnie was just beginning a study for the new Mississippi River Bridge. Ronnie's approach was a little bit different than what had been done previously. He had proposed to the state and the federal government that first, we do a comprehensive study of the whole transportation system and land use. Because of the sensitivity of the environment of Louisiana, rather than say, "This is where we're going to put a bridge," in Ronnie's view, the bridge — if a bridge at all — was a piece of this larger land and transportation system.

Ronnie was looking for a director to run this study and since I had just finished a study of a comparable size, we began to work together. So I decided to move to New Orleans in 1972. The study went on for seven years. It was originally planned to be a six-month study but because it was very complicated and because we were doing it in an open way, it went on and on. It was very difficult to complete it. The bridge is now under construction and won't be completed until 1988. The process started in 1970. But that's not unusual. Most large projects have that kind of life — the planning, design and construction process takes anywhere from 10 to 30 years.

Katavolos, as our mentor, gave us the impression that all the arts were just one thing. That engineering, bridges, painting — that was just all one stuff. I think I still operate on that assumption. I'm not sure it's a valid assumption but I function that way.

The largest suspension bridge in the world is the Verrazano Bridge. As you enter New York harbor, that's the first bridge that you see. I watched that bridge being built as an adolescent and that had a profound impact on me. Bridges have been a central part of my aesthetic thinking since I was very young. In some ways, watching that bridge being built was disastrous on my career as a sculptor because that seemed to be much bigger and better than anything I could possibly do.

The art that I did in New Orleans when I first arrived here was for my own personal amusement. I didn't want to exhibit it, I didn't want to involve myself in the art community. I was kinda burnt-out from the New York art world. New Orleans seemed like a combination of an escape and a relief. There was so much pressure in New York to function as an artist and as an intellectual. In the South, I was able to function more informally.

From 1967 to 1972, I didn't do any art except for my personal pleasure. It's fair to say that I stopped making "objects," that was the first time since I was a child that I made very little or nothing. Actually, I probably stopped functioning as an artist in 1963.

I remember that at one of the New Orleans Museum of Art's "Biennials," you exhibited a fishing boat wrapped in some sort of fabric and I thought, "This is art?"
That was in 1975. It was a boat tied in red fabric. In 1976, Jim Lalande, the Cajun artist, and I put on this show at this old church on Chartres Street. That was the first time I exhibited in years. Lalande and I put that on as an arrogant gesture to show New Orleans what real art was all about — not that we were producing real art but we just felt that the local galleries and museums were missing an opportunity.

The boat was the first thing I ever exhibited in New Orleans. I started becoming interested in Louisiana and local themes. That was a little fishing skiff and the idea was that it was a combination of a Mardi Gras float and a fishing boat and some other, older ideas. I proposed, for example, that a sail be put on the Plaza Tower Building. This would be the largest sail in the world and coming up the river, instead of just seeing buildings, you'd see a building that looked like a boat. This is another example of themes that are drawn from this environment.

What was the reaction of the powers-that-be?
Not very receptive. They'd probably thought it was crazy in New York, as well. I think any proposal to a city or a developer — any public proposal — takes a lot of selling and effort and convincing. Otherwise, it's just an ego-trip for the person producing it. If it's going to be something that the community is going to benefit from intellectually or artistically, to get to that point takes a great deal of marketing. I'm more aggressive marketing architecture than I am aggressive marketing architecture. I am marketing my own work because I feel that that's something that others might have an interest in whereas trying to push a sail on a building is much more selfish and self-fulfilling.

I don't think it's easier in New York, although there's more of that going on. It's a marketplace for ideas and a marketplace for aesthetic products. It's an arts supermarket whereas New Orleans is like a Ma-and-Pa grocery store when it comes to art. It's a smaller operation, even in architecture. The way we dress is similar to our architecture. We don't wear fancy designer clothes and we don't wear fancy designer buildings.

This is a very tough town to do art in. Every time I have an art show here, I get very disappointed. For one thing, there's not much of a market for the art. The loser is the art gallery owner. In the case of Arthur Roger, I don't know how many thousands of dollars he loses every week that my junk is in his gallery. It's not my principal source of income so I don't go into it with a budget saying that I've got to sell five thousand dollars' worth of work in order to eat or pay the rent. I go into it to make the stuff with no anticipation that anything will sell.

I don't think we've cultivated our local aesthetic sensibilities to the extent where the intellectual ideas in the work are very significant. That's not to say that people aren't capable of doing it — we're just not doing it.

I think that the art here is very shallow, very superfical, very pretty, very decorative. Stuff to brighten up a room as you would buy flowers.

The New Orleans Museum of Art, as far as being an education institution, has played a kind of low-key, eclectic role. Rather than being a museum of significant art produced here, it is a museum that shows a little bit of everything in the world to aesthetic sensibilities that are derived from local sources. That's not an indictment of the museum. I think that museum has made the choice to have a well-rounded collection based upon its limited resources rather than to say, "We're going to be an institution that will have the best of the 19th century Southern art or the best available more recent art."

The Contemporary Arts Center fills that void to some extent and I must say that "The Human Figure" show was a little disappointing to me. There's some very fine works in the show but the statement of having a figure show at this point in time, as a major fifth-anniversary undertaking, seems to be less innovative than the intent of the Contemporary Arts Center when it was initiated.

I'm not saying that New Orleans should be like New York or that New Orleans should be dealing with the issues that the art world in New York is dealing with. I think anything that we do here is going to originate from the sources that we have here. But I am saying that we are not digging deep enough into those sources. Faulkner went very deep into his roots. We're dealing with the surface to a large extent and most of my friends who are artists are responding to a local market that demands pretty things.

I think if you look at the art shows that are really successful for the artist and the dealer, they are the most decorative of shows. There are a few eccentricities like Douglas Bourgeois, who's a brilliant artist and every picture he does is gobbled up. He is able to do a combination of old-fashioned kind of painting with a lot of labor involved — so he's a craftsman on the one hand — and he's also dealing with some local sensibilities and local ideas that he's drawn from his own experience, not just from art school or museums. Bourgeois and John Hodge and Francie Rich and Elizabeth Shannon and James Lalande and George Febres and I could go on — these are people who are drawing upon their resources locally. They're not looking elsewhere for intellectual and aesthetic stimulation.

Speaking of aesthetics, where — in your opinion — is the best art to be found in New Orleans?

The best art — plural — are the New Orleans public high school marching bands. They're visual, performance, dance, theatre — all that together.
ROULETTE: TAKING CHANCES

Rock from the sons of In-a-Gadda-Da-Vida by Big Mama Thornton.

The economy is down. No news there. Clubs are closing faster than newspapers. Record sales are off. Unemployment rages. So why in the name of God would semi-sane individuals turn their backs on the stability of good 9-to-5 jobs to take up the fickle world of rock music? For members of the rock band Roulette, it was less than a good time. They are in it for the business.

In early 1979, around Jazz Fest time, four of the current five players in Roulette made their first rehearsal session. Jim Lockwood, lead vocalist, came from a crew, the show hit the road and touring schedule began to fill. Dean Vallecillo was playing bass for the band. Robert Schulte, drums, worked with Microfilm Company for the band? They gave me a choice...either cut down on the music or else. I took music. "I couldn't think of doing anything else." So much for dedication. Now the question is, how good are their chances?

Recently, I had the chance to catch Roulette's show twice in so many weeks. The first date at the Palace, Roulette and Heyoka staged a power rock orgy. Each of the two platforms at the Palace were piled high with lighting and p.a. gear. Threshold-of-pain power rock was the bill. Heavy rock, heavy show, make no mistake. The quality of both bands' shows was more than good, with Roulette typifying some kind of proud example of West End rock. The second night, at Foggy's, on the West Bank, was different. It is a smaller, closer bar, and the band felt the freedom to show off a little more independence in their selections, playing more original tunes. The time on the road and in the studio was a testing ground for the material and the style of Roulette. As the night progressed, the show moved along with energy. Somewhere in the second set someone shouted, "Play more Roulette!" Lockwood said, "Thank you."

Every member of the band has a big stake in making their band work, and "commercial, versatile, changing" describe the music and style.

"We want to please our audiences more than ourselves."

"We are not Van Halen and we are not Led Zeppelin."

Sounds like a battlecry. But they are Roulette, and let's hope their gamble pays off.

— Steven Kuni
The steel drum bands of Trinidad have a history similar to the Mardi Gras Indian gangs, even down to the often violent meeting of the gangs on Carnival Day.

A recent article about steel drum bands in the Trinidad Guardian serves as a reminder that New Orleans' Mardi Gras Indians continue to be one of our strongest links to Caribbean culture. In the early days of their history, the Indian tribes were glorified neighborhood gangs that would fiercely move through surrounding neighborhoods on Mardi Gras, boasting superiority and fighting bloody battles with other Indian gangs. Many New Orleans residents can remember the days of their childhood when they weren't allowed to go outside on Mardi Gras morning until after the Indians had passed. Over the years, the means of competition changed from physical battles to the aesthetics of Indian costumes and singing.

While the details are different, consider the similarities in the story of the "pan men" (steel drum bands) of Trinidad. "In the grimmer days of steel band warfare... (when two opposing bands met)... no band wanted to give way. At the time, the carrying of baseball bats was allowed on Carnival days. So too were heavy pieces of iron, and cutlass were made of wood. Beer bottles were either in hand or back pockets or in boxes. Several members of each band would charge into each other, since it was requisite that a man maintain his reputation as one to be respected and admired amongst the ladies in the process. The Mighty Sparrow, one of the Calypso Kings of Trinidad, immortalized the bad reputation of the pan men during this period in his calypso called "Outcast":

If your sister talk to ah steelband man,
She family want to break she han.'
Kick she out
Lickup every tooth in she mouth.

The days of violence and social castigation of the pan man have been over for years in Trinidad, however. "Panmen have replaced the fighting fervour with such things as 'Borrow tunes', normally classical tunes played in a semi-calypso tempo." The steel bands now spend the months before Carnival in the "panyards" practicing the tune which they hope will win the steelband competition called the Panorama. There are now big financial rewards to be gained by the winning steel bands, which has led to a cut-throat attitude among the panmen. The author of the Trinidad Guardian article laments that "Bands that do not achieve after the preliminary rounds often suffer a membership setback because panmen who do not owe any allegiance to any particular band (and there is an increasing number of such panmen) often run off to join other bands who have made it to the finals and the bright lights."

While the competition among Mardi Gras Indian tribes is not narrowed down to a specific event like the steel band competition, the popularity of the Mardi Gras Indians continues to grow. The author of the article laments that "Bands that do not achieve after the preliminary rounds often suffer a membership setback because panmen who do not owe any allegiance to any particular band (and there is an increasing number of such panmen) often run off to join other bands who have made it to the finals and the bright lights."

Rita Marley, widow of Bob Marley and famous member of the I-Threes, the female vocal trio behind Bob Marley and the Wailers, will be appearing on the Riverboat President for one of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival evening cruises. Rita Marley's latest record, "One Draw," on the Shanachie label, is on its way to becoming a hit in America after holding the number one spot in Jamaica all through the fall of 1981.

Listeners to the reggae and Caribbean shows on WWOZ have heard her version of the classic "Lady Sings the Blues" by Billie Holiday. The Wailers back in 1978 at the Warehouse, but this will be her first American appearance as a solo artist. More than likely her backup band will be the Fabulous Five from Jamaica's Tuff Gong Studios, and hopefully a Wailer or two will show up.

— Gene Scaramuzzo
PRICELESS TREASURES FROM THE OKEH VAULT

Okeh Records, which recorded the first black artist, dominated the "race" labels for almost fifty years.

Epic Records has made a major contribution to the enjoyment and understanding of a large part of our musical heritage with the release of a three-record set of double albums containing previously unissued or hard-to-find treasures from their Okeh record vault. Okeh Records released the first blues recording by a black artist ("Crazy Blues" by Mamie Smith) in 1920 and continued as a dominant force in "race" labels.

The first two albums, Okeh Chicago Blues and Okeh Rhythm and Blues, take on the formidable task of presenting the movement from Delta Blues to the Chicago Sound and the emergence and growth of rhythm and blues. Okeh Soul, the third in the series on black music, exhibits the strengths and pitfalls of commercial soul music from 1962 to 1967. The first two albums merit serious attentive listening, which should come very easily.

Okeh's Rhythm and Blues is as close to being the perfect anthology of diverse rhythm and blues styles as you're ever likely to enjoy. The album opens with two cuts from Smiley Lewis. Lewis's vocal abilities are well documented here, especially on "Tore Up," a fast-paced bit of local excellence featuring Huey Smith on piano, Lee Allen, Herb Hardesty and Red Tyler on sax, Frank Fields on bass and Earl Palmer on drums. The most formidable female vocalist after Bessie Smith on Okeh records was Big Mabelle, who belts out the first rendition of "Ham Bone," which illustrates the Latin influence on rhythm and blues as also heard on Titus Turner's powerful "Big Mary's." Speaking of power, Screamin' Jay Hawkins' "I Put A Spell On You," released in 1956, will make you question the origins of primal scream therapy.

The producers of this collection, Joe McEwer and Greg Geller, wisely chose to give exposure to the many approaches to tackling R&B as it evolved during the 1950s. The early jump-style approach of the Ravens and Chuck Willis are included as are later doo wop and bebop fusions by such groups as the Marquees and the Schoolboys. Even a token white is included on the album in the form of Johnny Ray's smash hit of 1951, "Cry," which provides an intriguing perspective on how white artists and producers handled the blues at that time. Several classic novelty tunes of the era are presented, including the Treniers' "Say Hey" and Red Saunders' "Ham Bone." "Say Hey" was released in 1954 and came to be known as the "Willie Mays Song" with good reason. The Treniers open this piece of swing with the sound of a home run ball being hit, a baseball argument ensues with a phone call to Willie Mays being made, who then takes over the lead vocals.

"Ham Bone," released in 1952 by Red Saunders and the Hambone Kids, would be a good subject for an ethnomusicology study. The song itself is sheer fun and sounds like a kid's handclap song in the vein of our "Jockomo" (Iko-Iko). The album's liner notes, which are well written and researched, state that "Ham Bone" was patterned on a hundred-year-old dancing rhythm called "Patted Juba," which consisted of keeping the beat by slapping various parts of the body. It sounds familiar if for no other reason than that Bo Diddley took the rhythm intact and dubbed over "Bo Diddley" and made it his theme song in 1956. Another novelty song on the album, "Peanut," by Little Joe and the Thrillers, was on the top ten charts throughout much of 1954 and features Joe Cook's falsetto, which must have set standards for such later groups as Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. In the midst of these
LAZY LESTER SINGS THOSE BATON ROUGE BLUES

True Blues
Lazy Lester
Excello 8006

Lazy Lester (Leslie Johnson) enjoyed fifteen single releases between 1957 and 1965, and all were of extremely high quality. This is a collection of most of the best. Sadly, it has been long out of print.

Lester's nasal vocals are the perfect foil for his simple but faultless harp work. There are lots of standouts here, headed by "I'm a Lover Not a Fighter," "Sugar Coated Love," "I Hear You Knockin'," "Made Up My Mind," and his earliest record, "Lester's Stomp."

The musicians on most of these selections are Lester (harmonica), Katie Webster (piano, organ), Al Foreman (guitar), Bobby McBride (bass), and Warren Storm (drums). Surprisingly, most of the musicians were white.

Lester now resides with Slim Harpo's sister in Port Huron, Michigan. He was in Baton Rouge on for Christmas, and Rufal Neal reports that Lester intends to move back to Baton Rouge in the very near future. Let's hope he does.

(Continued from page 45) novelty tunes are two fine selections from New Orleans in the form of Paul Gayten's "Don't Worry Me" and "It Ain't Nothing Happening," released in 1952. "Don't Worry Me" is a subdued swing number featuring Gayten and LaVerne Smith on vocals while "It Ain't Nothing Happening" is a celebration of the New Orleans beat, assisted by Wallace Davenport on trumpet Lee Allen on tenor sax, Peter Badie on bass and Frank Parker on drums.

There's not a selection even approaching mediocrity on Chicago Blues, even though the title is a misnomer; the only relationship most of these cuts have with the city is that they were recorded there between 1934 and 1947. Among the outstanding performances on side one are cuts by Victoria Spivey and New Orleans' own Champion Jack Dupree. Victoria Spivey originally came from the vaudeville blues tradition and by 1929 had a starring role in King Vidor's Hallelujah, the first sound film with an all-black cast. Here she does "Hollywood Stomp" in all her vampish glory, accompanied by a wild Dixieland combination of trumpet and clarinet. Champion Jack Dupree's version of "Weed Head Woman" is a bit of a mystery. Recorded in 1941 just after Dupree left New Orleans, "Weed Head Woman" has some great lyrics and displays some fine barrelhouse piano work but not a trace of his Creole and Latin combination for which he is famous. Dupree's method may be demonstrative of an older style used by such New Orleans pianists as Archibald and Cousin Joe.

Side two opens with Roosevelt Sykes, who left St. Louis for New Orleans over forty years ago and shows the city's quick influence on "15 Cents A Day," recorded in 1944 with some great street shuffle drumming in the back. The woman's point of view is given excellent representation by Memphis Minnie and the "Yas Yas Girl," Merline Johnson. Minnie's cut is the never-before-released "I'm Sailing," which has her waiting for a train to New Orleans. Besides being a classic blues vocalist, Memphis Minnie was a strong guitar player and backs her husband, Little Son Joe, on the next cut, "Just Had To Holler."

Side three consists of superb unreleased performances by Johnny Shines and Muddy Waters. Shines employs the field holler type of blues singing and never strays from his Delta roots. The Muddy Waters selections, all from 1946, show him at his most rural form.

Side four is totally devoted to Big Joe Williams on vocals and guitar with the original "Sonny Boy," John Lee Williamson, and his awesome harp workouts. The "King Biscuit Stomp" has both historical and musical significance. On this cut you can hear the fusion of country blues with the emerging Chicago sound as well as an attempt by Big Joe Williams to set the world straight that Rice Miller was not the original "Sonny Boy Williamson."

What you've read is just a taste of what awaits the ear on Okeh Chicago Blues and Okeh Rhythm and Blues. Okeh Soul is an uneven collection presenting the memorable by such talents as Major Lance and Billy Butler and some best forgotten sides from a wooden-sounding Walter Jackson.

Epic has also released Okeh anthologies of western swing and jazz. If this wasn't enough, Epic has also released two double albums of essential rockabilly entitled Rockabilly Stars. None of these albums are accompanied with the normal record company hype: perhaps it's because they so easily speak for themselves.

— Shepard Samuels
Shout! The Beatles In Their Generation
By Philip Norman
Simon & Schuster, $9.95

Is the latest "definitive biography" of the Beatles really an unrequited love story? Is it The John Lennon Story, with a supporting cast of rejects (ex-drummer Pete Best), tragedies (ex-bassist Stu Sutcliffe), dour, young tag-alongs (George Harrison), social climbers (Paul McCartney), and lucky working-class boys (Ringo, of course)? However you decide to classify it, one thing is certain: of all the literature written about the Beatles' development to star status, Shout!, by Philip Norman, is the most exciting to read and the first that could truly claim the title of definitive biography.

Previously published biographies, most notably The Beatles by Hunter Davies, concentrated on the phenomenon of Beatlemania and on the Beatles' recording career. These books were crammed with Beatle facts and trivia that were later corroborated by cross-questioning in countless interviews with John, Paul, George and Ringo. Their appeal is probably limited, however, to fans who experienced the phenomenon and might re-read them occasionally as a reminder of a special time in their life.

Shout!, on the other hand, reads like a novel. It is the love story of homosexual Beatles manager Brian Epstein and "the boys." Epstein, the proper young proprietor of North End Road Music Store (NEMS), who by night sought the "rough trade" (homosexual trysts with Liverpool dockers and laborers), was instantly attracted to the rebellious, working-class look of the Beatles as they performed in the Cavern Club on November 9, 1961. It is also an in-depth life story of each of the six Liverpudlians who at one time between 1960 and 1970 considered themselves Beatles.

While the world was presented with The Beatles as a unit on the Ed Sullivan Show on February 9, 1964, readers of Shout! begin to see four individuals who were bound together for an incredible (and surprisingly short-lived) trip. More than half the book is devoted to the Beatles' lives preceding their appearance on the Sullivan show, and we learn their individual personalities so well that it becomes impossible to view them collectively. Several books have attempted to credit the Beatles individually for their achievements. The most comprehensive of these is All Together Now by Castleman & Podrazik, which stands as the definitive reference book on the Beatles, but it's a listing of facts, limited in appeal, and very dry reading.

Shout!, on the other hand, is fun to read. The reader gets so intimately involved with each Beatle that he/she suffers with them and experiences the thrill of their successes. Time-worn Beatle stories and quotes come to life as never before. The reader might want to cry along with original drummer Pete Best as he gets the boot from the Beatles on the eve of their long-sought recording contract. He/she will realize how unprepared and genuinely amazed the Beatles were to see the unruly crowd of 5,000 fans waiting for them at Kennedy Airport on February 7, 1964. "The Beatles had no idea it was for them," Dezo Hoffman (Beatle photographer).
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— Genie Scarumuzzo
ABOUT SONGS ABOUT CLOTHES

From black leather trousers and motorcycle boots to tan shoes and pink shoelaces, clothes were, in all the best decades, a subject for songs.

Now my clothes are snappy, now my tailor's happy, I'm the cat's meow, my wardrobe is a wow!” sings the ebullient chorus boy rehearsing his long-planned solo in “Gypsy” and how typical: this is the perfection of the Tin Pan Alley myth: If You're Lookin' Good, You Must Be Feelin' Good, snazzy clothes bring you plenty of hotcha and swell dolls, an attitude as down-the-line bourgeois as cleanliness-next-to-Godliness, etc.

The personification of the idea that the garment is of more consequence than the flesh beneath: the great periods for songs about clothes are themselves great sartorial periods — the pre-World War I period and the 1930s and the Neolithic period of rock 'n' roll, after which the genre which contains many peculiar and choice items but could hardly be called prominent as subject for songwriters seemed to wither abruptly. No one much cared how they looked in the 1960s and 1970s, and the New Wave look (variations on variations on an old theme) doesn't seem locked into the content of the music so much as the style. In a crummy song like “A White Sport Coat and A Pink Carnation,” the content is the style and any pretense of any sort would just get in the way of the efficiency of the piece; the same for such treasures as “Pink Shoe Laces” and the ineffable “Black Slacks” by Joe Bennett and the Sparkletones.

The music of certain periods conjures up immediately the look of the period (can't really say that for the past two decades) but quintessential images occur: the picture hats and bowlers and bustles and mutton-chop whiskers and violin-shaped figures of the Belle Epoque, and certain bits of 1930s music naturally conjure men in formal wear and women in glittering Paquin and Schiaparelli and Lelong gowns and crimped and marcelled 'dos, and the 1950s evoke the D.A. and the ponytail and denim — the great sartorial musical image of the 1950s is the brilliant Lieber-Stoller “Black Denim Trousers and Motorcycle Boots,” an image not new at the time and eventually co-opted and subjected to rococo transformation by outlaws and queens.

Shoes and hats make the most musical appearances — despite a few oddities like Billie Holiday's “Violets For Your Furs” and the great cawing stridency of Vivian Blaine performing, with her Hot Box Girls, “Take Back Your Mink” in “Guys and Dolls” and a few cloaks and suits and dresses cropping up from the time of the Alice Blue Gown. Shoes are a musical natural because of the intimate connection with dancing; hats are a more difficult matter to pin down — only because everyone wore them? Easy to find that you're in the rotogravure in any case. And despite all the shine-on-your-shoes-and-a-melody-in-your-heart and shoes-with-wings-on-and-living-has-no-strings-on and sand-in-my-shoes-and-from-Havana! lines, the best 1930s tunes about clothes are about neither. The fine Dietz and Schwartz number, “Got A Bran' New Suit,” from the revue “At Home Abroad,” was recorded in October 1935 by two very different virtuos — Louis Armstrong and Eleanor Powell. The Armstrong record, in which a peculiarly poignant amount of wheezing turns up in the vocal and there is more than the usual custodial shuffling in the rhythm section, is of great interest for preserving (in the manner of the early G&T operatic recordings done often in one impulsive-convulsive take) A Great Sour Note. The record begins with a series of pinwheel introductory figures, then Armstrong plaintively mangling the lyrics bringing a Third Ward touch to his pronunciation of “goil” and putting several additional syllables into “dispute” and then running through the inventory of the lyrics — “tan shoes, gray spats, double-breasted vest,” not to mention the pearl stickpin, and then those Notes which are enough to turn blood to sand — Armstrong playing with and then against the other brass and as flat as cardboard both times. Clearly a milestone.

That poisonous bonbon, Eleanor Powell, claimed a dancing as well as vocal credit on her record; Powell, the best
woman tap dancer I've ever seen but a startlingly witchy screen personality when not dancing, was probably the only woman who looked as good in tails and top hat as did Astaire (Dietrich and Bea Lillie run vaguely close seconds) and she sings the lyric about a bran' new suit and a bran' new girl with no gender change (brava!) in her crisp, precise voice while aside from a few bits of hoty-totsy trumpet the band does a skating-rink sort of doodling as background for the percussive passion of her tap-dancing which actually sounds like an instrument rather than someone clumping around Studio B at Symphony Hall with metal on their heels.

The other songs-about-clothing from the 1930s and the 1940s (a strange transitional period, a DMZ, of fashion with its clamped-down hairdos and mannish clothes for women ending with Dior's almost vengeful New Look at the end of the decade and the ultimate absurd exaggeration - zoot suits - for men, personified in the ten-gallon look of Cab Calloway, who looks merely foppish against the genuinely tasteful dandyism of Armstrong or Ellington or Hines) are largely novelties. They range, like most novelties, from the sublime to the Not At All So, from such insanities as "A Sarong and A Sweater and A Peek-A-Boo Bang" and "Sam, You Made The Pants too Long" ("You feel the evening breeze up and down the knees, the belt is where the tie belongs, 'cause Sam, you made the pants too long") to the nearly unknown Fats Waller number, "Hi De Ho Eligh," about a jive academy uptown in Harlem where "you don't have to dress deluxe, right off the bat, zoot suit and black hat."

Probably the last great clothing song after the Lieber-Stoller masterpieces of the 1950s ("Black Denim Trousers" and "The Last Clean Shirt") is an undeservedly obscure 1960 work by The Coasters, "Shopping For Clothes." This is the great layaway tragedy: the backing vocals are ominous, the instrumentation sparse, and the blood tells the elevator girl imperiously, "dry goods flo'," the sharkish salesman (the bassman) approaches with such remarks often made on South Rampart, Dryades, Canal and other great shopping avenues as "look in the mirror and dig yourself," "that suit is you," "that collar's pure camelhair," etc., but when the credit is checked, and is found wanting after being weighed in the balance, there is only despair — already heralded by a bereaved sounding sax solo — "pure, pure herrin' bone," mutters the disappointed shopper while the salesman, imperious now, chimes in, "That's a suit you'll never own." And as we pause on the edge of the volcano in a period of $75 sneakers and $20 t-shirts, it seems more appropriate than ever — the part of the musical about snappy-clothes-and-happy-faces that the other songs neglected. You've got to pay for them, like everything else, eventually.

— Jon Newlin
It seems that the phrase "R&B" is being used more often these days than a few years back, and to better descriptive effect. I'm not at all sure it means that there is anything like an R&B revival going on; it seems more likely the term is simply pulling more weight as the catchwells "rock," "rock 'n' roll," and "rockabilly" have been broadened by recent musical trends. Before attributing too much density to the distinction, however, it is well recalled that the phrase was at least in part devised in the Fifties merely to distinguish race in contrast with rock 'n' roll.

All this comes to mind because Big Twist and the Mellow Fellows' sound is as central to what this reviewer conceives to be rhythm and blues as any modern band on the horizon. The music on this their second album is first and foremost interpretive; which is to say that the songs, and specifically the treatments of them, are the focus, rather than any virtuosity or innovation. Beyond that, the interpretations are firmly, unwaveringly blues-based (as one might have guessed by now) and very (though not innovatively or in any kind of up-front way) rhythmic.

In Chicago, which this salt-and-pepper outfit calls home, the reviewers have compared them with the Blues Brothers band, which doesn't seem too apt; the music on this record possesses little of the showiness connoted by "soul" and performed tongue-in-teeth by the erstwhile comedians. Roomful of Blues is closer but a little too historical-minded. The Asbury Jukes is the best I can do.

Certain touches further my centrist notions: an imposing lead singer (an impression garnered from the wax, though his back-jacket-cover girth and promotional claim to have secretly penned the Chubby Checker smash from Hank Ballard's drumkit are no imposition to his imposition); rhythmic, ensemble born playing a la the Blues Scholars and other great R&B sections; in-house, tasty-but-not-flashy backing vocals (oh, they pulled in a couple ringers for some cuts, but I'll chalk it up to studio perfecto-phobia or do I mean phi); and range of tunes.

Those tunes: "Rescue Me," their paean to covering the recognizable; Leo Nocentelli's "I Got The Blues"; James Taylor's "Lo and Behold" (no surprise to me but certainly news to Taylor's reputation); four originals from various combinations of singer, guitarist, keyboard man, and producer; and two others.

It seems pointless to go beyond these distinctions into the smarmy realm of judgment. That's not about what they're up to. So I'll recommend this disc only to those fans of these songs. But I'll recommend them live, when they blow our way with the initial Jazz Fest winds, to all of you-um that like to have fun.

— Tim Lyman

Tony Dagradi
Portraits & Sketches
Contemporary Arts Center
February 19, 1982

The weekend of feasting prior to Mardi Gras and the restraint of Lent was celebrated at the Contemporary Arts Center by the premier performance of Tony Dagradi's composition, "Portraits & Sketches — A Suite of New Music for 11 Pieces." A group of eleven of the Crescent City's finest musicians was led by Dagradi in a series of portraits and sketches, some of which represented influential musicians in the Afro-American idiom. Funding from the
National Endowment for the Arts and the Louisiana State Arts Council made the composition, the performance and the WWOZ live broadcast possible. "Portraits & Sketches" marks Tony Dagradi as a major composer of New Music. The performance was a fitting send-off for Dagradi who was on his way to New York for rehearsal with Carla Bley in preparation for a month of touring in Europe. Dagradi will be back in town at the end of March, and will be here through the Jazz Festival. May should see the release of his second album on Gramavision. Featured with him on the album will be Astral Project. As a listener, it is good to know that the tenor saxophone is in the hands of young, creative musicians such as Ricky Ford, Chico Freeman and Dagradi.

A capacity crowd heard the performance start with "Two Colors" in which Dagradi was breathing fire. This piece is included on his forthcoming album. Next was a tender "Ballad for Mingus," which bowed to a musician known for his extremes of emotional response. "Strange News" let Kidd Jordan loose on his alto sax with an intensity not often heard in this city. The first part of the suite ended with Jim Singleton and Dagradi driving "Gurudev" along.

The second part opened with a "Salutation" to Sun Ra, featuring Dagradi and Jordan in a passionate exchange that had the musicians and audience glowing. "Morning Star" allowed the listeners to relax before the tribute to "Miles." "Miles" allowed Mark Saunders to demonstrate his vast array of percussion instruments while Clyde Kerr sounded eerily like Mr. Davis "walking on eggs." The program ended with "Space Escape" and the knowledge that Dagradi's compositions not only set up the form of the piece of music but left the space for improvisers to comment.

The work "Portraits & Sketches" would work well as an album — perhaps Dagradi's next trip to the recording studio as a leader will be to this purpose.

— Kevin Martin

Beautiful Vision
Van Morrison
Warner Bros. BSK 3652

Is the "Beautiful Vision" you see with the inner eye the "Beautiful Vision" once seen in the play of a child? On his new LP, Van Morrison plays the vision of days gone by against the vision of inner light. Imagination is the realm of the untrue and memory the realm of the true, isn't it? When we dream, imagining and remembering intertwine. When we dream, we play as children once again. The image of mothers calling children opens the album, and the last words heard are these: "Across the bridge where angels dwell..."
Children play.” Van Morrison entreats us to dream, to clean the windows of experience.

“Cleaning Windows” is a funky walk down the streets of memory, when Van made his wage being a window-cleaner. He offers a litany of the poets who cleaned the windows of his soul: Jimmy Rodgers, Leadbelly, Blind Lemon, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, Muddy Waters, Jack Kerouac. Nice bloozy horn charts from Pee Wee Ellis. In “Aryan Mist” Van sings, “There’s so many people/Going down by the river/To get clean.” The tune has a peculiar ‘hovering’ sensation — maybe like the mist Morrison sings of. The shuffle feel is tentative and almost breaks into full gear on the chorus. Almost, but not fully.

This mist hovers “along the bridges.” Throughout the album we hear of windows, bridges, stairways, doors. To my ears, the album’s centerpiece is not the title cut, but “Dweller on the Threshold.” Most of Morrison’s songs are variations on the same changes; “Dweller” is something different. The relaxed but insistent beat coupled with the constant repetition of the same two chords yields a very hypnotic experience. Morrison identifies himself as a “Dweller on the threshold/Waiting at the door/ I’m standing in the darkness/ I don’t want to wait no more.” Something in the way Morrison delivers this last line with understatement but declaration gives it enormous power. As if there were a screaming cry for help behind it.

Further on in “Dweller,” Morrison sings, “Let me pierce the realm of glamour/So I know just what I am.” Glamour must be the dirt of accumulated experience that gathers on the windows of the soul, obscuring the child. What is the “Great Illusion” in the lines, “Let me go down to the water/Watch the great illusion drown”? The liner notes acknowledge “The Tibetan” and a book by Alice Bailey on glamour as sources of inspiration for the songs “Aryan Mist” and “Dweller on the Threshold.” Could Time be the Great Illusion? Does the illusion of time separate memory from imagination, darkness from light? Anyway, Pee Wee Ellis’ horn charts on “Dweller” are wonderful; they’re especially playful towards the fade-out, turning bittersweet with some sourful notes in the right place.

A number of songs suggest personal love as a trigger for spiritual light. Morrison sings “Vanlose Stairway” in a strange, stiff manner. The band lays back, hitting hard on every other beat, giving the song a processional feeling (as if they’re slowly ascending/ descending stairs). Morrison is telling someone to send him “Your picture . . . your bible . . . your pillow . . . your guitar/On the Vanlose Stairway.” Van manages to mix in Krishna, too. As the song proceeds, Morrison gets stiffer, starts trembling. He sings the words of the third verse, almost gagging in spasms of desire, “Send me some lovin’/Send me some
kissing/You know what I'm missing."

The harmonica solo that follows is amazing, Morrison crying/humming as he plays the harmonica. Van the Man is Van the Lion. "Vanlose Stairway" fades out much too soon.

"Northern Muse" is about someone from Morrison's earlier days. "She shines light all around." The memory of this someone serves as an inspiration to Morrison: "If you see her, say hello/She's someone I surely know/When I was young/She made me roam from my home." The inspiring light of memory. And then there's the "Beautiful Vision" of "mystical rapture" — "You are my guiding light." Morrison ever searches his memory and his imagination for light. He finds an end to separation in dreams, he finds an end to time. Time ends in the play of a child, a child fascinated, forgetting where, when. "Across the bridge where angels dwell/Children play."

We are no longer children (or is that an illusion?) — but we can dream. "Close your eyes/In fields of wonder/Close your eyes and dream."

— Zeke Fishhead

Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes
At The Saenger
February 13, 1982

Southside Johnny has long worked in the shadow of the other guy from New Jersey, Bruce Springsteen. It hasn't helped matters that his early albums were produced by Miami Steve Van Zandt of the E Street Band who along with Springsteen wrote much of the material to be found on those records. Throw in the fact that they also shared sister record companies (Columbia/Epic), and you can begin to see how difficult it has been for the Jukes to establish an identity of their own. But through the years, if Springsteen has proven to be the rock & roll heart of Asbury Park, then Southside Johnny Lyon would most certainly have to be the blue eyed soul.

Soul, by the way, was the name of the game at the Saenger when the Jukes played before a modest sized yet enthusiastic audience on February 13. This is a band that's damn near a revue; with eleven members including two female vocalists and a four man horn section, they play soul music as it was defined over two decades ago in Memphis. You could call the Jukes a horn band, not to be confused with Chicago, who gave the whole genre a bad name, but more in the tradition of James Brown's Famous Flames.

And I thought this stuff had gone the way of mohair suits and high heel sneakers.

The concert started out (for me anyway, thanks to parade traffic) with the fully arranged R&B flavored ballad "Without Love" from the album This Time It's For Real. The music then built,
as it would again and again throughout the night, to have the tempo brought back down with “Little Girl So Fine,” a Springsteen/Van Zandt composition that still sounds to me like it should have been written by Willy DeVille. Following was an unexpected twist; an a capella version of Manfred Mann’s “Do Wah Diddy” (Talk about British invasion street corner doo-wop). As could be expected, the Asbury Jukes are big on medleys, mixing in their best material with the music of Sam Cooke, Tom Petty and, would you believe, James Bond. “Live And Let Die” never sounded so good.

Throughout the evening the band played like a well-seasoned team, with Southside Johnny acting as captain and spiritual cheerleader. He called all the shots, played mean harmonica and sang about as black as any white boy since Eric Burdon. The crowd was on its feet well before the closeout of “Bring It On Home To Me” / “Havin’ A Party,” and the first encore, Sam & Dave’s “You Don’t Know Like I Know,” made for some pretty good dancing in the aisles. “Let The Good Times Roll” (the Ray Charles version) finished the show as the second encore, although somewhat anticlimactically.

Looking back, the set seemed too short, even at one and one-half hours. I guess at $10.50 a head for the better seats, one would hope for a bit more than a perfunctory performance. This leads up to my one criticism of the concert; the band appeared uncomfortable and somewhat remote from the audience, not usually a problem for a good R&B band in this city. Maybe playing at the Saenger was part of the problem, the atmosphere perhaps a bit staid for havin’ a real party. But I tell you, if the Jukes ever come back to play a place like the President, don’t get caught without your dancing shoes. I think they were invented for bands like this one.

— Steve Graves

High Heeled Blues
Rory Block
Rounder 3061

Here’s a successfully pleasant album from singer/guitarist Rory Block. The term “successfully pleasant” is used because “pleasant,” these days, often represents damning, or at least insufficient praise, as in, “Pleasant? (yawn) So what?” As if such music somehow doesn’t deliver enough. But Block’s High Heeled Blues presents us with nice singing, accomplished acoustic guitar and subtle accompaniment that manages to satisfy. In all, it’s thirty or so minutes of, well, pleasant music.

Block grew up listening to the bluesmen who passed through Greenwich Village in the Sixties, and studied for a time with Reverend Gary Davis. The largest group of numbers on the record directly reflects these influences. Three Robert Johnson numbers make the album, with “Walking...
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Blues!” leading off side one to announce that this woman knows the basics. Skip James’ “Devil Got My Man” is a further compliment to this group.

But Block’s voice is a little too sweet to pull off a full LP of such material, so the record is wisely peppered with other things. A honky-tonk “Down in the Dumps” with piano help from Warren Bernhardt is especially nice. Block’s own compositions (there are three here) are more folk oriented, and all are hummable. There is also an instrumental rag and a mountain gospel tune, which closes out the album.

The only thing that doesn’t work is the inclusion of the standard “The Water is Wide.” The idea of including a number with hammer dulcimer accompaniment is fine, and very softly makes the point that the mountains and the delta are not really that far apart. But these pusses can be easily lost to the fact that the song is done so often that a reaction of, “What, that one again?” is hard to overcome, and we might tend to overlook the fine points.

Block gets occasional harp and guitar help from John Sebastian. Like all the accompaniment here, his playing is happily unobtrusive. It’s Block’s guitar that we hear most. She’s solid, though never startling, and the style is even enough throughout to keep the record from being as eclectic as it might seem in print.

All in all, this is a nice album. It might surprise you, pleasantly.

—Jerry Karp

Orgonomic Music
Jessica Jennifer Williams
Clean Cuts 7031

A one word description for this record is “fresh.” The music played here by Williams and her band is best comprehended as bop for the Eighties. While the tunes vary in bop influence, the electricity inherent in bop music is a thread sustaining the underlying fabric of the package. The title refers to “orgone,” the primal cosmic energy, and according to Williams, the music is inspired by the beliefs of Wilhelm Reich. Whether you agree with Reich’s theories or not, my guess is that you will find that they have had a positive effect upon the music on this record.

Williams’ choice of instrumentation is provocative. The seven-piece band includes Eddie Henderson, trumpet and flugelhorn; Jim Grantham, tenor sax; Henry Robinette, guitar; Dave Tucker, drums; and on several of the tunes, Williams uses two bass players, Richard Saunders and Kim Stone.

Williams’ fingering is very fast, yet precise and clean. Her left hand is reminiscent of McCoy Tyner, while her melodies fall somewhere between Chick Corea and Joanne Brackeen. These comparisons give a good idea of the complexity of Williams’ style and her high degree of individuality as a pianist.
Her talents as a composer and arranger are almost as impressive. The average length of selections is 4:62, which is too short to allow the musicians to stretch out. Yet Williams' arrangements take full advantage of every second.

The use of two bases is an interesting device and attests to Williams' ability as an arranger. Uncontrolled, the effect could result in a most unpleasant droning. Here, the double bass parts are used sparingly and with great purpose. "The Weapon of Truth" is an up-tempo blues with a swing that uses the bases playing parallel lines. The effect is an overall fullness, particularly in the region just below the middle range.

Henderson and Grantham make good use of the space given them. Their exchanges are smooth and natural. The blending of the horns gives the melodies a crisp, bright sound, contributing to the record's positivism. "Experiment XX" is the most organomic selection on the album. The guitar pops up here to take part in some very enjoyable collective improvisation with the whole band entering in. The spasmodic rhythm is punctuated by orgasmic flourishes. However, the abrupt ending is a bit of a let down and leaves the tune somewhat unresolved.

Other selections include a quiet solo piece by Williams; and a piano, bass and drums rendering of Coltrane's "Dear Lord." The other four selections fall more into the bop vein with a variety of rhythm structures.

Wilhelm Reich said "Love, work and knowledge are the wellsprings of our life. They should also govern it." It is obvious that Jessica Jennifer Williams has pulled from each of these resources to create Orgonomic Music.

— Brad Palmer

New Orleans Blues
Various Artists
P-Vine 9034

Although this is the first issue of P-Vine's "Black Music in the Fifties," every track on this one dates from before 1949. What can you say about an album with vintage material from Dave Bartholomew, Mr. Google Eyes, Chubby Newsome, Blazer Boy, The Johnson Brothers and Erline Harris, except keep it comin'!

This is a tremendous album, including some of the finest examples of early New Orleans R&B. Although available at a slightly inflated import price, the cost of a 78 from this collection would buy two copies of this set.

I'm pleased that at last people can hear Bartholomew's "Country Boy" and "Gert Town Blues" easily. Bartholomew gets most of the spotlight on this LP and his work is superb; he's really a fine vocalist, too. Erline Harris and the Johnson Brothers team up for some great jump numbers, and Chubby Newsome is real...
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gone on "Hard Lovin' Mama."
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— Almost Slim

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Sweet and delicious like the honey from
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Don't ever become sour or tart like the
lemon on the lemon tree.
Willows weep for you... silently stretch
their limbs into galaxies, beyond outer
space.
Don't go nuts over the coconuts, way up
high and out of reach, if you aren't a
climber.
Stay forever luscious as the butter from
the shea-butter tree in Timbuktu.
Golden seed of beauty.
You are the fuel for lamps which thy seed
grants thee oil.
Be as complicated and simple as the
pomegranate.
The bamboo said a prayer:
"When you were born, way down yonder
on earth's riverbeds/ the reeds and
bushes
Rustles and blows a scale of notes that no
flute can every play. Empress of music/
May you have my gift to be one with the
secret life of the plants."
Sound rolls off your tongue as if a
nighthenge lived in the larynx.
Love birds and all God's creatures flock to
your branches to hear your wind calls.
Black orchid, stay as sacred as the ancient
baobab from the Garden of Eden.
Oooooohh-We! Tree of sincerity! Eternal
strength!
Known that the roots of life are the
infinite love of Mother Nature & Father
Universe.
Fertilize soil with the spiritual joys of
living.
Godness man! Be a queen of plenty like the
scents from an incense tree.
Flowin down the rivers of time on a bed of
lotus blossoms.
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African woman of love.

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WAVELENGTH/NOVEMBER 1982
Wavelength receives mail from at least three corners of the world each week and the most-asked question is inevitably “Who is Almost Slim?” Well, don’t expect us to expose the poor fellow (we’ve heard the same rumors that you’ve probably heard — that Slim’s a bigamist from Montana, an escaped lunatic from a little town in Costa Rica, etc.) but we can tell you that his real initials are the same as Mick Jagger’s girlfriend, WWL-TV’s sports anchorman and the author of “The Tar Baby.” And if that’s not enough to whet your ravenous appetite, we’ve even come up with this somewhat blurry photograph of Slim and his childhood idol, Bobby “Blue” Bland, taken within the luxurious confines of Mr. Bland’s personal bus one Sunday evening last year. At the time, Slim was attempting to land a job as B.B.B.’s valet and as you can see, Mr. Bland was quite serious about the matter — going so far as to give Slim the routine physical. Here he is shown checking Slim’s pulse. It was a bit off so Slim didn’t get the job and was forced to sell his antique Thunderbird in order to pay his rent. Anyway, Bobby “Blue” Bland felt so bad about the whole thing that he promised to return on April 9 to give Slim another chance. Figuring that he might as well give a recital while he’s in town, Mr. Bland booked himself a job on the President for the same evening. Slim will be there, pressing Bobby “Blue” Bland’s pants, and we hope you are, too. Next month: a candid photo of Wavelength’s editor in a mini-skirt that once belonged to Mary Quant.

Breaking up is hard to do. Among the most recent ruptures we’ve come across are the dissolution of Stephie & the White Sox (her lead guitarist was stolen away by the Models, whose new lineup is rumored backstage at Ole Man River’s footling around with some mirrors and some sort of powder — alas, it turned out to be pancake make-up!) and the end — after but two gigs — of Mandeville Mike and the Feeling. Of the latter ensemble, we heard nothing but very positive reports. Nevertheless, we look forward to seeing M.M. in Delgado’s production of “Porgy and Bess.”

The Nightriders are back in town (where did they go?) with a few new members including someone named Hack on saxophone. What sort of mother would name her infant son Hack?! What sort of mother would name her bubbling boy Snakebite? By the way, where are you, Snakebite?

The Dream Palace, with a very large padlock on the front door, is now temporarily closed and the Blues Saloon has permanently departed for Cocktail Lounge Heaven. Ronnie Kole, inventor of the goatee, has a new album entitled Kole Hands and Warm Voice; Wardell Quezergue, the Creole Beethoven, did the production. The newest rock club on the scene: the VFW Hall in Gretna. Leased by Kill Zone Productions, the Hall can hold up to 2000 fans (1500 legally). Bob Durel declares that his new F&M Patio Bar (actually, the F&M Patio was across the street back in the days of the Basement Wall and that notorious woman who was arrested there for impersonating Aretha Franklin — what a crime! — but who cares about truth and accuracy in this city?) will feature live music beginning in May.

The Nora Wixted Band can be heard at the 711 Club on Bourbon Street, WWOZ will play the Bo Diddley Story on April 17 at 3:30 p.m., Brook Benton is completing an album at Studio In The Country and ditto for the Neville Brothers, who are cutting demos, and the Uptown All-Stars, who are preparing a new single — all at the same Bogalusa facility.

James Brown has been signed to Island Records, Hammond Scott has signed the Cold Snake to his Black Top label and Buckwheat Zydeco and the Ils Sont Partis Band now includes Little Richard’s longtime saxophonist. The Toiling Midgets, who have absolutely nothing to do with New Orleans but we think they have a terrific name, are Rough Trade’s latest U.S. signing.
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SAT. MAY 1 - "Swamp Jam", Dr. John with David "Fathead" Newman and Hank Crawford; Clifton Chenier; Riverboat President - 8:00 P.M. - $13.50.
SUN. MAY 2 - "Big Band Dance!"; Woody Herman & The Thundering Herd; David Bartholomew's Big Band; Chuck Easterling's Big Band; Riverboat President - 8:00 P.M. - $13.50.

TUES. MAY 4 - Syzygy; Gato Barbieri; Saenger Performing Arts Center - 8:00 P.M. - $15.00.

WED. MAY 5 - "N.O. Rhythm & Blues", Allen Toussaint; Irma Thomas & Aaron Neville; James Booker; Riverboat President - 8:00 P.M. - $15.00.

THURS. MAY 6 - Hubert Laws; Freddie Hubbard Quintet; Stanley Turrentine, Riverboat President - 8:00 P.M. - $15.00.

"Jazz Colloquium" - Tulane Hot Jazz Classic, New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra; William Russell; host; Dixon Hall - 2:45 P.M. - FREE ADMISSION.

"Jazz Film Night" - Tulane Hot Jazz Classic, Ellington, film collector, will present a program of New Orleans Jazz in the movies. Dixon Hall - 7:00 P.M. - $5.50.

"New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival Jam Session", with Ellis Marsalis, David Torkanowsky, John Vidacovich, Alvin Fieder, Smokey Johnson, Clyde Kerr, Jr.; Earl Turbinton, Kidd Jordan, Tony Da Gradi, Red Tyler, Alvin Batiste, and more.

FRI. MAY 7 - "Caribbean Meets N.O.", Rita Marley; The Neville Brothers; Exuma; Riverboat President - 8:00 P.M. - $15.00.

Tulane Hot Jazz Classic - "The Fingerbreaker" - Max Morath; Morten Gunnar Larsen; Dixon Hall - 8:00 P.M. - $9.50.

SAT. MAY 8 - "Blues Boat", B. B. King; Etta James; Lil' Queenie & The Percussionaires; Riverboat President - 7:00 P.M. and 12:00 midnight; New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra. Dixon Hall - 8:00 P.M. - $7.50.

SUN. MAY 9 - "Jazz at Tygers", Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis; Sonny Stitt; Ellis Marsalis; James Black & Jim Singleton; Tygers Beer Garden, 5214 Magazine Street - 8:00 P.M. - $9.50.

"Jazz at the Faubourg", Cedar Walton; Buster Williams; Billie Higgins; Earl Turbinton, Clyde Kerr, Jr.; Tony Da Gradi, Faubourg Restaurant, 626 Frenchmen Street - 11:45 A.M. - $9.50.

"Traditional Jazz Reunion" - Tulane Hot Jazz Classic, Oldtimer's Jam Band with Willie Humphrey; New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra - Riverboat President - 6:00 P.M. - $20.00.

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SUNDAY, MAY 2 - Dr. John; Chuck Berry; Percy Mayfield, Olympia Brass Band; Gatemouth Brown; Odetta; Sadie Courville and the Mamou Hour Cajun Band; Clarence "Frogman" Henry; Lee Dorsey; Kid Thomas & His Aligators Stompers; Jimmie & His Agronians; Clinton Chenier, Ernie K-Doe, Tommy Ridgely, Ellis Marsalis, Golden Eagles, Russell & the Rustlers; The Radiators, Blind Sam Myers; Louis Carracharis, Ronnie Kole, Jessie Hill, Ollie Troy, T. L. Deramus & the Country Kings, La State Fiddle Champions, Willie Metcalfe, Laverne Butler, New Jazz Quintet, N.O. All Star Women's Jazz Ensemble; N.O. Spirituals; Seastreaks; EXPO; Sony; Scene Boosters; Christian Youth Choir.