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—Ernie K-Doe, 1979

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-Frogman Henry

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Features
Jazz is the Sound of New Orleans
Frogman Henry


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VIDEO WORKS
Harry Connick, Jr. is like one of those young East German swimmers who rake in the gold medals every Olympic — he's been perfectly groomed for success. Instead of swimming laps and taking steroids he's run scales and practiced chord changes for 13 years and at age 19 is at the beginning of a brilliant career in jazz piano. A duet album with bassist Ron Carter has just been released on Columbia Records; it could likely make Connick the best-known contemporary Crescent City jazz pianist.

Connick has achieved this status through hard work under the best teachers a New Orleanian could have. He started fooling around at the piano at age 3 1/2, began lessons at age six (his classical mentors included Betty Blancq and Dr. John Murphy) and by age eight he was playing the last movement of Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto with the New Orleans Symphony.

Around this time Connick started studying with the two pianists who would shape his playing the most. Ellis Marsalis is the finest of New Orleans' modern jazz pianists; in addition to educating his celebrated sons Wynton and Branford he taught Connick while he matriculated at NOCCA. "Ellis stressed gigging the most, and knowing music theory and history" explains Connick. "He really wanted his students to be well-rounded, not just able to play what was popular."

Pianist James Booker was Connick's other professor, and a man he talks about with unabashed reverence. "James was the finest musician I've ever heard," Connick recalls. "He could make music on a cardboard box if he had to." They got together "hundreds of times" over a period of seven or eight years, and yet "I can only remember one specific lick that James taught me. I didn't say, 'Now this is how you do this,' for instance. My hands were too small to copy what he was doing anyway. I just absorbed it by being around him so much. James was so special. He and my mom were very close — he grieved when she died and needless to say, James' death was one of the saddest events of my life."

My whatever way he learned it, Connick's ability to recreate Booker's sound is almost eerie. In addition to playing like Booker, he can sing like him and walk and talk like him. But Connick realizes the need to go beyond vocal imitation. "I still sing too much like James, but my own style is coming around. I used to sound like Stevie Wonder but that's fading too."

So with Marsalis opening up the gamut of jazz piano history for him and Booker instilling a profound sense of New Orleans funk, what do you hear when Connick plays? The first impression is incredible chops. Even by the virtuosic standards of modem jazz, Connick is exceptional. And he intends to get even better. "By the time I get to where I want to be I'll be able to play like Tatum or anyone who's ever played, but I'm not there yet. I haven't got anything to brag about." He intends to continue his classical studies, and perhaps to record a classical album in a couple of years, maybe the Chopin etudes. "I feel especially close to Chopin among the classical composers," Connick confides, "because melody is all-important. Well, melody and rhythm, that is."

When looking beyond the technique, one must conclude that Connick has not completely found his style. He is, after all, only 19, his playing is a pastiche but a dazzling pastiche. Bluesy Oscar Peterson licks fly by, skid to a halt for some Monkish minor-second humor and then rev up again for a ferocious Booker shuffle or some stride. The effect is dizzying and a bit awe-inspiring. One wonders how he could have learned all this in such a short time, and where he'll go from here. Will he develop into a monster funkster like Henry Butler, or a super-eclectic like Jaki Byard? My prediction (and Connick would disagree) is that while a player like Butler has tended to keep his modern jazz and his New Orleans funk sides separate, Connick will engineer a fusion; the funk and bebop will coexist in most of what he plays.

For the past 15 months Connick has been hanging out in New York, going to school (Manhattan School of Music and Hunter College), playing a lot of jobs (95% of them piano solo gigs) and making new friends (fellow pianist David Torkanowsky calls him "the Dale Carnegie of Jazz.") One special acquaintance he's made is George Shearing, "an amazing individual" who has "taught me a lot, musically and otherwise."

If the album does well he hopes to start touring; he is especially interested in sampling the European festival scene. And what does Harry Connick, Senior, New Orleans' district attorney and celebrity of sorts, think of his son's meteoric rise? "Dad's complete behind me. He calls me and tells me tunes to learn. He used to drive me to gigs and pick me up at three or four in the morning. He's one of the best fathers a guy could have." And surely Harry Senior could not have expected more from his teen-aged son.

— Tom McDermott
How to Get On
MTV Without
a Video

The Dino Kruse Band may go
down in MTV history as the only
band to perform on the 24-hour
music video channel without a
video. Or even an album for that
matter.

For the four days MTV broadcated “Live from Mardi Gras,”
the Dino Kruse Band served as house band and backed a number of
national acts, like the Bangles, Fleshtones, Night Ranger, Dixi­
national Yanlovich.

So how does a local rock group
score such coveted national
exposure? Coincidentally, says Dino.

The story goes this way:
Band leader Kruse was helping out Mason Ruffner; he was stage
manager for Ruffner’s two
comeback performances, when Ruffner opened for Dave Edmunds
on the S. President and later that
week for Stevie Ray Vaughn and the
Fabulous Thunderbirds.

He worked with MTV’s produc­
tion crew for days before anyone
found out that Kruse had his own
band. Then on the Tuesday night
before Mardi Gras the production
crew met Ruffner at Johnny White’s
for a few drinks and to see the Dino
Kruse Band. The producer invited
members of the band to compose
MTV’s house band for Saturday’s
homecoming performances, when Ruffner opened for Dave Edmunds
on the S. President and later that
week for Stevie Ray Vaughn and the
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Kruse Band. The producer invited
members of the band to compose
MTV’s house band for Saturday’s
live remote from Sounds of Brazil
in the French Quarter. After only
one day, Kruse and band were
invited to perform daily for MTV’s
total four-day stint in New
Orleans.

“The guy just called and said, ‘We’re going to crank you into
800,000 homes. You’re the luckiest
group in the country,’“
Dino said recently, relating the
story of the past week. “It was a
riot. We played four days on live
fucking TV.” — Gina Guccione

Radio Jazz Fest

Resignations, accusations and
takeovers make for exciting
times for WWOZ and its new
genral manager.

Imagine the Jazz Festival happening
365 days of the year. As of this past
January, the non-profit New
Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, Inc. has assumed control of
community radio station WWOZ.

Those familiar with the 90.7 FM
setting realize that Duke of Palihah and BB, Gentilly, Jr., Brother Bell,
Big Mama, Ukali, and a host of
other mostly volunteer programmers
spin records daily of just the kinds
of music highlighted at the annual
Jazz Festival. The transfer of the
broadcasting license to the Jazz and
Heritage Foundation is the result of
t elevated discussions between like­
minded people from both groups
and fairly complicated legal
maneuvers.

It all started with efforts by the
financially struggling station to enlist
support from the Foundation. In the
process, former station mana­
gger, Ken Devine, devised a brilliant
strategy.

“Instead of trying to psyche them
into how good it’s going to be for
the community if they helped,
why don’t we just given
them the radio station,” he thought.

The rest, as they say, is history;
but it was complicated by the fact
that the Jazz Fest at first did not
want WWOZ.

Walter Brock made the opening
proposals in 1984. Brock basically
had founded the station (it first
went on the air in 1978) and was
still serving as its general manager.
He was encouraged by the fact that
the late Allan Jaffe had just joined
his board of directors. Jaffe, a man
of tremendous integrity and accom­
plishments, gave the radio station
much needed credibility by just be­
ing associated with it. He set up a
meeting between Brock and George
Wein, executive producer of the
festival.

“The only day I went to the festi­
vial in the spring of ‘84,” Brock
recalls, “was to talk to George
Wein. He listened to what I had to
say, didn’t really look me in the
eye or anything, and turned to Jaffe
and said, ‘Why should the festival
own a radio station? That might
mess up our publicity support we
get from all the other stations in
town.’ And he walked away.”

The fact that OZ has now come
under the Jazz Fest umbrella re­
fects a subtle shift in decision‐
making powers at the Festival.
Although George Wein is tech­
ically an employee of the Founda­
tion, in the past his opinion was
usualy deferred to. Now, the board
of directors of the Foundation
seems to have a better-developed
sense of its own power and how to
use it to effect changes in the commu­

Brock and Devine were not

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bothered by the thought that the Foundation would become the new boss. The philosophies of the two non-profit groups were the same. Each works to promote “jazz, traditional music, folk arts and the cultural heritage of the city and region around New Orleans” (as stated in the ‘OZ sign-off pledge). Several of the board members had already worked on behalf of WWOZ. “They were the people we wanted input from anyway,” Brock continued, “people who had some sort of community leadership record and were also interested in music and traditional culture.”

Calculations still had to be made of the financial risks involved. Some saw ‘OZ as a “losing proposition” that would divert money from other worthwhile projects. Friends argued that its problems were typical of any new, underfinanced operation. Things would improve with the introduction of adequate support capital and good business practices. Other questions were raised about running a business with daily obligations and expenses. For the Festival itself, the Foundation simply hires George Wein and his staff to run the whole show. They know he can do it; they just get out of his way. There was no one like that for the radio station. Who would they get to run it?

It is true that the Jazz and Heritage Foundation has allocated $150,000 to WWOZ over the next three years. Almost all of the first year’s $60,000 went to retire old debts. Two years from how there will be no more subsidies. The Foundation wanted to find a person who could ensure the radio station could be fiscally self-sufficient by that time. They sfted through two hundred applications. They were looking for a candidate with grant-writing abilities and experience and contacts with national funding agencies. They selected John B. Dozier, a man from Charleston, South Carolina.

“This city does seem to love a certain amount of gossip…”

—Dozier

As chairman of The Friends of WWOZ, the legally-empowered governing body of ‘OZ, Al Gourrier was active in the search. “January first came real fast. After extensive reviews of backgrounds and interviews, Dozier and his qualifications were the best we could find.”
Dozier's resume has many entries under "job skills," "awards," "community service," "productions," and "work experience." But he was apparently rusty in the Dale Carnegie skills of getting along with people. He rode directly from 1-10 to the station and proceeded to severely antagonize the staff people with whom he was to work. Angry voices were soon insisting he had insulted their abilities and that his ideas threatened the station as we all know and love it. It was charged he wanted to turn 'OZ into a homogenized, NPR (National Public Radio) news station, that he was insensitive to women and minorities, that he was, and these now are his own words, "Attila the Hun at the gates of the Temple of Diana."

I asked the man about these charges, and he assured me he was not the barbarian scourge. Then, speaking with the woman who was the station's development director, I remarked that the man's ideas did not seem very dangerous or even inappropriate. "Everything can be said better in retrospect," she replied.

Things did not cool off. No apologies were extended or accepted. The staff said they could not work with the man and threatened to take their case to the Board. The Board would not honor that stance and tried to mediate a settlement. It maintained its right to have the final say on important, long-range decisions. Elements of stubborn righteousness and over-reaction seem to have occurred on both sides, each believing it was only doing what had to be done. Finally, on March 13, four of the five staff members tendered their resignations.

John Dozier, meanwhile, is beginning to find his way around the city. He has heard it said that no "outsider" can understand what is needed here. I figure that if he is going to be the general manager of the community radio station, his opinions and outlooks should be open to public scrutiny. So here are his answers to the "outsider" and other questions.

Dozier: "Any town as unique as New Orleans is going to have that attitude, but I think the time comes when you have to address the basic skills necessary to advance the station. I think it is critical that we establish a rapport with national funding agencies, art agencies, and broadcast networks. I think that's something I have qualifications in that, frankly, no one locally had."

"I will rely heavily on the volunteers and others to keep me aware of local concerns. I am very
impressed with the quality of air work that most of the volunteers do with the station. Many are as good as any I have ever heard on the air. I think the station has been very, very lucky and privileged to have these folks.

I perceive the general manager's job as primarily giving people what they need to do their jobs. I think one of the first things that must be done is to upgrade and expand the production capabilities. This is a major priority if we are to be successful in the national production arena. I don't see any reason why local folks can't do it. Production skills are not difficult, but they require practice. We first of all need enough equipment to give people a chance for hands-on experience.

I have talked to a number of people who are not even aware of the station. This means my second job will involve promotion. We need to talk to folks in the corporate sector and the tourism business and make them understand how important it is for New Orleans to have a voice for its own music, the only voice of its kind in the city.

Thirdly, the physical plant. It's incredible the amount of stuff that has been done considering the very limited space we have available. I think there was probably some resistance to move from the top floor of Tipitina's where the station was originally located. There is always a great degree of fun and pride in doing a job well under very trying conditions. But once people have seen what additional resources can mean for them I do not think anyone ever wants to go backwards.

"I think the station really has done a superb job in presenting and preserving the best of the old musical and cultural traditions, as well as presenting the emerging art forms. We shall be striving not to decrease the commitment to the music scene and the musicians of New Orleans, but to serve additional cultural aspects as well.

"First, the station has to have a firm financial foundation. Someone's got to take care of business. If you're constantly worried about 'Can we pay the bill?' then the listener always seems to take a back seat to financial worries."

"This city does seem to have a certain amount of gossip and rumor and all that that entails. There is nothing necessarily wrong with that. It reminds me of the old Chinese curse: 'May you live in interesting times.'"

"It all makes for an interesting existence."

— Steve Armbuster

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Goudeau's Album Out 'In Nick of Time'

Jazz guitarist Scott Goudeau and his band celebrated the release of their first album, In the Nick of Time, with their first public performance as a band March 7 at Snug Harbor.

Besides the Snug Harbor date, the Scott Goudeau Band is scheduled to play at this year's Jazz and Heritage Festival.

The solo project has grown into a "cooperative effort" by the band's six members, Goudeau said. Members are: drummer Jay Hebert, bassist Jim Markway, saxophonist Tony Dagradi, pianist Mike Pellera and Jay Griggs on guitar and synthesizer.

Since recording the album, Pellera has moved out of town, and Dagradi didn't make the band's first gig, but as long as the rhythm section remains intact, the core of the project is there, Goudeau said. The guitarist describes his jazz/fusion album as being "closer to being jazz than being fusion."

Although Goudeau released a cassette, entitled Secret Lives of Children a year and a half ago, this is his first album. The six-track album was recorded at Ultrasonic Studios in New Orleans and pressed at CRT in Nashville. It will be available locally at Sound Warehouse and the Mushroom.

Goudeau said he hopes to begin playing on "a small but expanding scale." The band is looking for gigs outside of New Orleans but close to home.

— Gina Guccione

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A rose by any other name may smell as sweet, but the name “Tay Hogg” on a Jazz Fest program may mean not much to you, so we’ve put a little description by most of the not-so-well known names to make sure you don’t miss!

THE FIRST WEEKEND

Here is the schedule of who’s playing the first weekend of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. The festival will be held April 24 to May 3, and ticket mail order forms can be had by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to P.O. Box 2530, NOLA 70176.

Friday, April 24
Bud man Leon Redbone, CBS blues guitarist Mason Ruffner, Cyril Neville & Uptown Allstars, zydeco artist Terrance Simien, New Orleans saxophonist David Lasker’s R&B stars A Taste of New Orleans with Wanda Rouzan & Lil Sonny Jones, pix group ELS, Cajun band Fire, Tinn Tech Tuba Ensemble (40 tuba players!), rockers Woodenhead, ex-Phil Glass associate from Louisiana Dickie Landry, local pop vocalist Phillip Manuel, soul great Mighty Sam McClain Blues Revue with King Nine, brass band Storyville Stompers, Valley of the Silent Men SA & PC, Headstart Singing Angels, country/bluegrass with Buford Johnson & Poverty Hill, Sax player Paula and the Pontotoc, rockers Evil 209, jazz drummer great John Vidacovich Group, French student of Sidney Bechet Claude Luter (played with Louis Armstrong in the Fifties), Snakebite Jacob’s Zillarines, William J. Fischer Elem, Ray Bonniville Blues Band, Bayou Rhythm Band (zydeco w/Clifton Chenier), Mardi Gras Indian group Creole Ocecalis, Groups du Fuego, blues harpist J.D. & Jammers, blues guitarist Boogie Bill Webb, Bluesman Bro, Percy Randolph & Little Freddie King, rockin’ R&B with Skip Easterling, Cajun rockers Memou, NOCCA, Hammond St. School jazz drummer James Black, local jazz festers Fazz 2, percussionist Alfred Ugandas Roberts, Thunder & E.B. Skipper, Brian O’Connell Trio (trad. jazz), gospel singer Aline White, N.O. favorite vocalist Li’l Cowenier, Cultural voices, McDonogh #15, bluegrass country fiddler and guitar Harmony River, Famous Vocalaires, Miss Lillian Bennett, Cajun vocalists Marcus Lacouture & Lulu Landry...

Saturday, April 25
young blues guitarist Joe Louis Walker ("the young Robert Cray"). Fats Domino's brother-in-law and road manager Reggie Hall plays a mean piano, City Lights Orchestra, Brubeck/Lavem Trio (Dave's son), swamp pop's Al Ferrier, Santiago, Friendly Five, NOCCA Circus, Mardi Gras Indian Golden Star Hunters, bluesman R.L. Bums1de , Improvisational Arts, SUNO jazz band, Tulane U. jazz band, Calliope Puppet Theatre, Downtown Jammers.

Sunday, April 26


Allan Jaffe: Didn’t He Rumble?

Allan Jaffe, manager of Preservation Hall and one of the most faithful friends New Orleans musicians ever had, died March 9 of cancer. The Pottsville, Pennsylvania native, who began managing traditional jazz’s world headquarters in 1961, was 51 years old. Ironically, as he died, a group of Czech jazz enthusiasts were being transported to prison, guilty of promoting the same music to which Jaffe devoted his life. Leaving the courtroom in Prague, the Czech jazz fans proclaimed: “Long live jazz!”

Jaffe’s funeral, on March 12, was attended by hundreds of Jaffe’s friends and three brass bands — the Olympia, the Eagle and the Rebirth, as well as Jaffe’s own Preservation Hall Jazz Band, with which he played sousaphone and toured the planet. Rabbi Raphael Adler officiated at the services, declaring: “He was the rebbe — the spiritual leader — of New Orleans jazz.” In honor thereof, the 1987 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival will be dedicated to the memory of Jaffe.

Jaffe arrived in New Orleans in 1960 with his bride, Sandra, in search of authentic jazz. As Jaffe once told attorney and jazz critic Rhodes Speidel, Jr.: “Though the mid-40s revival of interest in New Orleans jazz may have helped Bunk Johnson and a few others, it really bypassed New Orleans and its musicians, centering on the West Coast. I came here because I could see the music was alive.”

Preservation Hall, at 726 St. Peter Street, was originally an informal concert hall owned by real estate tycoon Larry Borenstein and frequented by a handful of bohemians, jazzmen and other denizens of the Vieux Carré. What Mr. and Mrs. Jaffe did was to formalize the jazz proceedings, charging $1 admission (raised to $2 in 1984) and making sure that the musicians got their fair share. Today, four bands — the Olympia, the Kid Thomas Valentine Band, the Kid Sheik Colar Band, and the Willie Humphrey Band — regularly perform at the club and tour around the world under the aegis of Preservation Hall.

Shortly before his death, Jaffe donated a building on St. Philip Street to house a School for New Orleans Music. The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation has contributed $110,000 to the school and $1,300 in private donations were received the week of Jaffe’s death.

Preservation Hall will continue to operate, under the management of Chris and Jane Bottorf, and Resa Lambert, all of whom have been associated with the club for nearly two decades. There’s still no food or drinks or air conditioning, all part of Jaffe’s master plan: “I read an article once that none of the really great places of the world, such as the Taj Mahal or St. Peter’s in Rome, as well as New Orleans, like the ferry, the streetcar and the Napoleon House, were air conditioned.” Allan Jaffe was a man who took his “hot” literature literally. — Ronny Matthews
flavored detective yarn distinguishes itself from other movies of violence and bloodshed by its challenging exploration of the darkness of the human condition. I should preface any further comments on Angel Heart with the confession that I am completely biased and unobjective in reviewing this movie, having been part of its editing crew. There are obviously no surprises in the plot for me, and all the images that frighten or shock or please, I've seen countless times before. What did surprise me was what was left behind on the proverbial cutting room floor since the production left New Orleans. The editing process that begins in a couple of rooms in the Westin Hotel on Iberville — elegant rooms we trashed with moviolas and rewind benches — continued in Paris under the expertise of Gerry Hambling, veteran editor of Parker's earlier features (Birdy, Shoot the Moon, Midnight Express, Fame). Parker's substantial script was inevitably whittled down into something quite different from the one with which I was familiar. Putting aside personal attachments to certain scenes that were dropped, certain characters even, one still wants to love a movie after being so involved with it and in this case I emphatically do. There was something particularly rewarding about working on Angel Heart, something that separated it from other movies — perhaps the invaluable experience of working with Parker and his entourage of craftsmen and technicians and actors, combined with the story, one that brought me nightmares even after several readings of the script. And although the film's disturbing elements did not surprise me as they would a viewer unfamiliar with the story, I was nevertheless captivated in the tension of Angel Heart in its finished form.

Mickey Rourke plays the casual, slovenly Fifties private eye Harry Angel, hired by the enigmatic Louis Cyphre (Robert DeNiro) to find Johnny Favorite, a well known wartime crooner who had disappeared with a debt owed to Cyphre. A mysterious eccentric, Cyphre doesn't like messy debt owed to Cyphre. A meticulous crooner who had disappeared with a debt owed to Cyphre. A meticulous eccentric, Cyphre doesn't like messy debt owed to Cyphre. A meticulous eccentric, Cyphre doesn't like messy debt owed to Cyphre. A meticulous eccentric, Cyphre doesn't like messy debt owed to Cyphre. A meticulous eccentric, Cyphre doesn't like messy accounts and is willing to pay Angel through the nose to settle this one. In fact, he insists upon it. The detective story framework remains framework only for a mystery that becomes something more than a simple missing persons case. Where Angel Heart departs from the ordinary is in its bizarre religious subject matter, the Harlem church where Harry first meets Cyphre is marked by a money-hungry evangelist and the bloody traces of a suicide, referred to as an "unfortunate accident." Following leads down to New Orleans, Harry encounters Johnny's ex society girlfriend, Margaret Krusemark (Charlotte Rampling), a fortune-telling debutante formerly known as the Witch of Wellesley; Epiphany Proudfoot (Lisa Bonet), the teenage mambo priestess daughter of another lost love; and Toots Sweet, a voodoo dabbling guitar player played sweetly by bluesman Brownie McGhee. Along with the rituals practiced by Johnny Favorite's entourage, rituals that don't appeal to Harry's sense of humor or reality, a series of grotesque murders follow Harry and his investigations. Images of window fans, a shrouded woman, a shadowy freight elevator haunt Harry both in his nightmare and in reality. The idiosyncratic Mr. Cyphre appears along the way, checking on Harry's progress and dropping philosophical anecdotes — "You know what they say about slugs... they always leave slime in their tracks." DeNiro has a small role but the best lines in the picture, my favorite being "The future's not what it used to be, Mr. Angel." He delivers them in a calm, soul stirring fashion, being the eccentric that he is with manicured fingernails, hair in a bun, and silver headed cane. Harry Angel finds all of Favorite's past acquaintances reticent about the man in question. Johnny has left not only slime in his tracks, but ill will, bad luck, and a sense of fear and loathing. As young Epiphany says, "Mama said Johnny Favorite was as close to true evil as she ever wanted to get." Apparently many viewers, reviewers, and censors were also uneasy getting so close to Angel Heart's treatment of evil. The controversial love-making-nightmare scene between Rourke and Bonet that earned Angel Heart its original X rating was likely the scapegoat for objections to the gist of the entire movie; there was no body part or act of love or violence you haven't seen before in an R rated movie. Angel Heart is certainly not a movie for the faint hearted. But its violence and bloodletting are only superficial horrors. What makes it disturbing is its dealing with dark areas of the soul that most of us would

Lisa Bonet as the voodoo child Epiphany Proudfoot in Angel Heart.
rather not know. Harry Angel is con­fronted head on with his own inner ugliness and the extent of potential evil of which the human animal is capable.

The voodoo rituals and undercurrents of devil worship are crucial to the story, and give it its mysterious, ominous tone. But all the religious aspects grow a bit murky as the story down to New Orleans, making it visually and metaphorically more inspiring. In the book the action remains in New York City, with devil worship in the subways, and Epiphany a college freshman. The fine book is a highly recommended read, written in the voice of Harry Angel with wit and levity. I suggest reading it after seeing the movie, though. There are surprises that should not be given away.

Angel Heart is a gem to look at. The photography is by Michael Seresin and production design by Brian Morris. It is a well-crafted film, with every picture telling its own story. New Orleans hasn't looked so fine in the movies before, and locals will recognize Magazine Street, the Maple Leaf Bar, French Quarter courtyards and Jackson Square. Also featured are New Orleans actors Stocker Fontelieu, Eliot Keener and Pruitt Vincent as the detectives, and musicians Deacon John and Lillian Boutte in Toot Sweet's band.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Matchstick Productions of Los Angeles shot a two-hour pilot in the Houma area in March. If the pilot, titled "Three on a Match," is successful, the potential television series will also be partially filmed in Louisiana. How's Bayou, a low budget feature, and yes, a comedy, will be shot in the New Orleans area in April. Picture is being produced by Ron Small, a former New Orleans resident, ofRather Large Productions in L.A.
Sunday's Gumbo: A Tale of the Lost Gumbo

STEVE ARMBRUSTER

During the first incarnation of Tiptina's, I remember walking across Napoleon Avenue one Friday night, seeing the shoe shine men. It was a new business, and I was already doing steady business in the nook behind the Prince of Wales Social Aid and Pleasure Club, and the big trucks had reclaimed Tchoupitoulas Street for heavy industrial uses. It was quite curious. I moved closer and saw that they were poking and digging. They showed me pepper grass.

It grew in a ring of spear-shaped leaves with serrated sides from one central root, as if something had dropped into the grass and caused a symmetrical, jagged splash. Pepper grass. One taste explained its name. It had a slightly sharp, pleasant bite. And it was plentiful. Scanning the area, I began to focus in on dozens of the coarser-sized green discs. I wondered how many times I had tramped on this secretly tasty weed.

The outside ones were continuing their search-and-dig operation. The neutral ground stretched on for blocks. They did not look tired, and the morning was young. I walked away munching a piece of the spicy green, leaving them to their quest. I did not think much more about it until one evening several years later in Dooky Chase's Restaurant. My friend Gentle Ben and I were having a discussion with Leah Chase about an endangered Creole treasure. Pepper grass was one of her ingredients. The treasure in question was Gumbo Z'Herbes.

It has been called by some the "king of all gumbos." Yet few natives have ever tasted it; most have never even heard of it. It is rarely, if ever, found on a local menu; and it results in gross mispronunciations when it is. The name might seem Hungarian, with that strange Z right in the middle; but it is pure Creole. Also spelled "gumbo aux herbes" or "gumbo zairbe," it is a beautiful name for a most energizing and delicious food. Its fall into obscurity probably comes from two things. First, it was time-consuming to assemble all the ingredients and prepare it. Second, gumbo z'herbes was always eaten on Holy Thursday. When the customs surrounding that day were relaxed, everyone forgot about the 'green gumbo.'

When I first became aware of this forgotten dish, I combed various cookbooks to learn more about it. Published recipes all agreed that you should keep an impromptu quiz. "Dooky's" is another of the few places that still serves gumbo z'herbes on Holy Thursday. Leah Chase said her family has always made it with nine greens. She was not familiar with the notion of luck in numbers or their bringing new friends, but for some reason nine has always been their fixed total of greens. These could include spinach, cabbage, mustard, collard, and turnip greens, parsley, leeks, lettuce (usually romaine), and a few oddities such as pepper grass, the tops from radishes or carrots grown in the garden, and the blood-veined tops of beets.

"Those best tops," Leah insisted, "are the one green I've just got to have for my gumbo z'herbes. They give it a taste nothing else can match."

As we sat in her restaurant, I supposed the reasons some recipes suggested watercress, which does not normally grow nearby, was because they had lost the knack of foraging for pepper grass. My mind drifted back to those women on the neutral ground. Perhaps they had been planning a gumbo z'herbes of their own.

If they prepared it according to the Leah Chase version, generous amounts of ham, veal brisket, and pork sausage would be added to the onions that went in once the roux was brown. This mixture is soon covered with the pot liquor from the previously boiled greens. The greens themselves were then put through a hand grinder and turned into a paste. Now they too could be added to the pot, along with the various other seasonings precious to the good Creole cook, and left to simmer slowly until the flavors were mixed just right.

Mrs. Chase suggested finishing off the dish with a touch of file powder, the leaves of the sassafras tree ground as freshly as possible. Add this powder either to individual bowls or only to a batch that will be consumed in one sitting. File does not reheat well; it can get stringer and bitter. One other tip she gave was to avoid the bitter greens like dandelion, or else use them sparingly. Besides that, feel free to mix and match the greens according to their availability and your own tastes.

Serve all this, of course, over rice.
I also had some questions about the use of a roux. Most recipes had omitted any mention of it, and I wondered if this was correct. Assaults on old-time cooking methods by dieticians often singed the roux for adding unnecessary fats and calories. The file would help thicken the stew, so would the pureed vegetables. In this case, maybe “First you make a roux” was not appropriate.

“Ooooh, child,” the very thought of it put Mrs. Chase in a state. “Those old Creoles would turn over in their graves if you left out that roux. It wouldn’t taste right; it just wouldn’t be the same.”

The spirits of our more proper ancestors must be already tormented enough. Few people respect the old Lenten restrictions. Catholics, and New Orleans has traditionally had a preponderance of Catholics, used to be enjoined from touching any meat, eggs, or dairy products from noon Good Friday until sunrise Easter Sunday. To strengthen themselves for this fast period, the faithful was allowed to take meat on Holy Thursday. Add this to the fact that our generally mild winters allow almost year-round growth. By the coming of Holy Week, gardens can be bursting with greens. The combination of these factors resulted in gumbo z’ herbes.

But not many Catholics do much fasting anymore. The city does not shut down for Good Friday like it used to. Restaurants, nightclubs, and movie theaters stay open and do a brisk business. Downtown offices keep churning out their paperwork until it is time for happy hour, unlike the days when our fathers would be home by one o’clock in the afternoon. Back then, the business district would be a ghost town until Easter Monday. Today, there is no need for special Lenten menus.

Perhaps “green gumbo” will make a comeback because it is easier to prepare. Grocery stores now stock produce rarely found after the eclipse of the farmers’ markets. Frozen greens are readily available, and no great drop in quality is suffered by using them. Pressed for time, they can save you the chore of sorting through the leaves and washing them all carefully for bugs and grit. The job of pureeing the greens can also be done easily now with a food processor or blender. And having a freezer means you can put away portions of your effort for future enjoyment. This is not a dish designed for small batches anyway.

In case you would just as soon read your history as eat it, you must know of a small pamphlet with the same title as our venerable stew. *Gumbo Zhebes* is what the writer Lafcadio Hearn called his “little dictionary of Creole proverbs.” He compiled it to take advantage of the tourist trade at the New Orleans Cotton Exposition of 1884. Like many ventures connected with our other fair one hundred years later, it was a commercial flop. It has, however, left us a potful of folk wisdom from the same culture that gave us good cooking and jazz.

We could have already guessed our forebears might assert that “jadin loin, gombo gate.” (When the garden is far, the gombo is spoiled.) But without this pamphlet (reprinted by Justin Winston, a.k.a. Farouk von Turk), you might never consider this concept: “If the frog tells you the alligator has sore eyes, believe him! (Si crapaud die oux caiman tini mal ziex, coer-li!)” Or never ponder the claim, “Di moin qui vous aime, ma di vous qui vous ye. (Tell me whom you love, and I’ll tell you who you are.)”

I feel you are entitled to receive this information in a story about gumbo because I consider it “lagniappe,” a little something extra, a small bonus just for being there. And the Creoles would, I am sure, agree with me. Hearn even mentions a Louisiana proverb that confirms it.

“Lagniappe c’ est bitin qui bon. (Lagniappe is lawful booty.)”

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New Orleans, Louisiana
Mail Order Riddims
To get the best of Caribbean and African LPs, don't be afraid to try mail order.

GENE SCARAMUZZO

No question is asked more often by listeners to the Caribbean Show than “where can I get these records you’re playing?” This question addresses the biggest problem that lovers of Caribbean and African music presently have here in New Orleans... the selection of this music in our local stores is very limited. And it doesn’t look too promising that a New Orleans record shop will soon begin to stock the great selection of both import and domestic label discs that were once available at Metro-nome. I fear we won’t be seeing those import discs again for quite a while.

The good news is that several record shops, like Sound Warehouse, Canal Record Center and Musica Latina, are beginning to expand their stock of domestic labels at the same time that some of these labels are branching out to broader horizons. Call your favorite record shop and ask if they carry discs on Shanachie, Heartbeat, RAS, Meadowlark, Rounder, Alligator or Celluloid... all domestic labels that should pose no problem for local record shops to stock, or at least special order.

Some of these labels specialize in small, but tasty, selections of African and Caribbean titles, while others publish catalogs which contain huge selections. The Shanachie/Meadowlark catalog, for example, lists not only many reggae classics (releases include Judy Mowatt’s Black Woman, Augustus Pablo’s Original Rockers and King Tubby’s Meets Rockers Uptown, Rally Round by Ras Michael and more), but also the source for the most easily available African discs. Shanachie compilations of S.A. township styles include mbaqanga sounds (Soweto Never Sleeps, Mahotella Queens, In-destructible Beat of Soweto) and vocal recordings by Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Fosatu Worker Choirs, as well as overviews like the movie soundtrack of Rhythms of Resistance.

Rounder Records’ catalog, called the Record Roundup, covers a wide

variety of reggae and African artists. Some very interesting pop and traditional discs from Mali, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa and Sierra Leone can be found in the Record Roundup.

A large selection of Fela’s music, as well as ‘new African’ Bill Laswell-produced records featuring African stars like Manu Dibango, Foday Musa and Sunu and Toure Kunda are available through Celluloid Records. While some of these discs are a bit too New York in their approach, some are excellent.

RAS Records has the largest catalog of African music, both new releases and classics dating back to the ska period. One of the more exciting recent RAS developments is Manila Music, which has just released an entire series of new Spanish acoustic releases.

One project that will have access to more incredible early music from the Studio One library. Over forty titles are being discussed, with the first releases scheduled to be the very first album by the Wailers (called the Wailing Wailers on this disc) and the first two albums by Burning Spear, none of which have ever been available here except as imports. To me, these discs represent some of the best music Jamaica has ever offered. I’ve often said that if I had to get rid of every reggae record except one, I would keep Burning Spear’s second album Rocking Time.

Catalogs are available, by request, from Rounder, Shanachie, Celluloid, and RAS, and in that many ways can become familiar with what’s available. Once the catalogs are in your hands, some thought should be given to the next logical step...mail-ordering. Those who are willing to venture into the wonderful world of mail-ordering will be rewarded with

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crucial selections of the latest hot discs from Africa and the Caribbean. Most people have a natural tendency to avoid buying records through the mail, myself included, until recently when I finally took the plunge. My experience over the last year has been that, with careful selection of mail-order houses, records arrive quickly, in excellent condition, and don’t end up costing any more than through a store, even taking mailing costs into consideration.

The one drawback to mail-ordering is in not being able to know exactly what you’re getting until it arrives, although this can occur even when buying from a store. This disadvantage is lessened considerably, however, for those who listen to the Caribbean Show and Gabou Mendy’s African Journey, both on WWOZ (90.7 FM). These shows give heavy play to many of the various discos available through mail-order catalogs.

Presently, the best and most reliable source of soul music is through two catalogs, RAS and Original Music. RAS has a distribution deal with Trinidadian record entrepreneur that enables them to stock the latest soca discs from the present carnival season. Original Music has the widest selection of world music, ranging from zouk, soca, reggae and salsa from the Caribbean, to pop and traditional musics of most African countries. Their catalog is informative as well, in that it dates many releases, identifies the country of origin, and critiques the disc in question. Musicologist John Storm Roberts is the man behind the Original Music catalog, which also offers a number of excellent, sometimes obscure music books, several of which were written by Roberts himself.

Another label that prints a brochure and presents a world music is Globestyle Records. Based out of England, Globestyle lists interesting discs from the French Antilles, South Africa and most recently, a two-record set of traditional and pop music from Madagascar.

Those who would like to get a well-rounded appreciation for the different groups coming out of South Africa would be wise to check out the Shifty label out of Bertsham, S.A. One of the label’s first endeavors, Fosatu Worker Choirs, will already be known to many since it was picked up last year for distribution by Shanachie Records. In addition to this vocal record, the label hosts a number of two-tone bands (Sankamota, Kalahari Surfers, Black Jack Band) that play a variety of styles ranging from traditional to jazzrock, always with an underlying S.A. feel. The common element in all the different groups on Shifty is the uncompromising socio-political (and always anti-apartheid) commentary in the lyrics. Shifty also publishes a bi-monthly newsletter which is an eye-opener in that it contains xerox copies of articles from S.A. newspapers which bring the reality of the struggle closer to our door.

Also available through the mail is a huge listing of cassette music (none of which appears on disc form), from Reach Out International Records (ROIR), which includes a handful of excellent reggae tapes. ROIR’s most recent release, the excellent 21st Century Dub, continues their foray into psychodelic dub music that they began several years ago with releases of the Adrian Sherwood tape, The Dub Syndicate-One Way System, Prince Fari’s Cry Dub, Dub Encounter-Chapter I, and another Japanese dub band named Muse Boat. Those who like the Mad Professor, Japanese dub bands and the other outside dub experimenters should definitely check the ROIR catalog.

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**Where to Order**

There are countless sources of mail-order records. Practically every West Indian record shop in NYC is willing to mail-order their stock, and many, in fact, print catalogs. Listed below, however, are those sources with which I have dealt, and which I feel are reliable and reasonably priced. Exclusion from the list doesn’t necessarily imply unreliability; it may be an untapped source. Consequently, readers’ comments are welcomed.

Since no record store yet seems willing to take up the slack for Caribbean and African records, we listeners will have to take the situation into our own hands, and the better off we’ll be.

**Shifty Records**
P.O. Box 27513
Bersham 2013, South Africa.

**ROIR (Reachout International Records)**
161 Broadway, Suite 725
New York, New York 10012

**Record Roundup**
P.O. Box 154
N. Cambridge, MA 02140

**Shanachie**
Dalebrook Park, Hohokus, NJ 07423

**RAS**
P.O. Box 42517
Washington, DC 20015

**Original Music**
Rt. 1, Box 190
Lasher Rd., Tivoli, NY 12583

**Celluloid**
330 Hudson St., 4th Floor, New York, New York 10013

**Globestyle**
48-50 Steeple Rd., London, NW10 7AS, Great Britain
I turned no one's head when in 1964 the songs on the Beatles' first album clocked in at an average of less than two minutes and forty seconds. In fact, in those days, no one thought a pop song could be longer than three and a half minutes. This was just great at the time, especially for programmers of TV shows like "Standig and Halftables," who could thus fit many more teen idols into their tight twenty-two minute programs. Then, as time wore on, the rock and roll song began to grow longer and longer as the Sixties evolved.

Many critics hold that this lengthening was due to the acceptance by the world of the pop song as a legitimate art form, while others blame it upon a variety of social factors, most notably the heightened amounts of dangerous drugs people were pouring into their systems with lethal regularity. Said one reformed ex-hippie, "People just had longer attention spans in those days." So songs grew longer and longer with more and more complex structures. After a while, it almost became a contest, with pop stars struggling to outdo each other to see who could come up with a longer, more complicated song.

By the time the Seventies rolled around, the endless drug trips had given way to musical ego-tripping, and so the concert halls of the "Me" Decade often reverberated with twenty and thirty-minute-long songs. At times it seemed that the headlining act was simply whoever could solo the longest. (One excellent example of this phenomenon would be Emerson, Lake and Palmer, who made a career out of playing nothing but solos, and not even really learning too many songs.) And so it went, and the record bins of the Seventies were flooded with live double record sets boasting five, four, and sometimes even three songs.

But then punk rock changed everything. These people couldn't even play songs, let alone solos. Since there were seldom any real tunes or melodies, song lengths again plummeted to new minimal lows. Eventually more music evolved out of the punk underground, into a ground that which carried the revived ethic of the two-minute pop song even today. The examples here are some, but not all, of the current crop of short-winded songsters:

**Firehose**

**RABID FULL ON**

From the ashes of the Minutemen (due to singer/guitarist D. Boon's tragic death in late

---

**Minutemen**

**BALLOT RESULT**

375 375 (P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, CA)

While Firehose who may have perfected the talky approach to music, it was the Minutemen who first exploded them in garages in Pedro to release their avant-garde onslaught upon the sleeping masses. Their position in unrivaled as an harmony of the current musical crop, the thinking person's hardcore band that never was a hardcore band at all. This double live LP retrospective shows the broad spectrum of styles and moods that made up the Minutemen's prolific catalogue of minimalist meditations. Selected by an extensive poll of Minutemen fans and friends, the twenty-eight songs here represent previously unreleased versions of their favorite Minutemen classics such as "Badges," and "No One." However, the true genius of the Minutemen shows through on side two of this record. Kicking off with Ethan James' punked-out sample happy cut of "No One" ("N N N- No One") the record then progresses into a long, intricate series of songs taken from a live radio concert broadcast. It is here that we see a sort of outline for the unique sense of structured improvisation that has come to fruition with Firehose, the rest of the side seems to run together in a series of frantic jams and tightly controlled bursts of solos. This move into improvisation had begun well before the Minutemen's uniform end, and it shown here in its earliest, roughest forms. This is microwave jazz, music to boil an egg to. Performances by the Minutemen (and now by Firehose) are not individual events, but steps in an evolution. The Minutemen were the foundation, the concrete and structure on which the elaborate glazing spires that Firehose construct will always ultimately be built.
Sex Clark Five

What if the bongo player for T. Rex hadn't checked to depth on a chewy bit? What if the Minutemen were from Huntsville, Alabama? What if the Violent Femmes' first album had only four members? What if the Beatles and the Minutemen were from Huntsville, Alabama? What if the Beatles had actually released longer than twenty minute sets? If one can imagine all of these questions being true, and somehow combine all of their answers into one nebulous concept, one would have a vague idea as to what this band and record is like. Sex Clark Five are a strange sort of cult item from Huntsville, Alabama who have been slowly gathering steam in the south over the last few years. Apparently the brainchild of songwriter and guitarist James Butler, the SC5 (who, incidentally, have little to do with sex, Dick Clark, or the MC5, and only have four members anyway) are on their way to the sort of celebrity/notoriety as Camper van Beethoven or early Tyrannosaurus Rex; only Marc Bolan fans wouldn't do so many drugs. Their influences range from the pure pop of Jonathan Richman to the go-lucky psychedelic folk of its sixteen songs, this album is the most classic Camper Van album to date. Propelled by the timely drumming of Crispy Derson ("How can I begin to tell you of Crispy Derson? Crispy Derson the wearer of wigs!" say the liner notes), and joined by ex-Checkers drummer and all around weirdo Eugene Chadbourne (who, the jacket tells us, "left one sock in Albuquerque"), Camper van Beethoven have delivered their strongest, most timeless album yet. This music will make you look at the world in a different way; you'll check the sky for UFOs, and be on the lookout for CIA agents disguised as giant rabbits.

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What if the bongo player for T. Rex hadn't checked to depth on a chewy bit? What if the Minutemen were from Huntsville, Alabama? What if the Violent Femmes' first album had only four members? What if the Beatles had actually released longer than twenty minute sets? If one can imagine all of these questions being true, and somehow combine all of their answers into one nebulous concept, one would have a vague idea as to what this band and record is like. Sex Clark Five are a strange sort of cult item from Huntsville, Alabama who have been slowly gathering steam in the south over the last few years. Apparently the brainchild of songwriter and guitarist James Butler, the SC5 (who, incidentally, have little to do with sex, Dick Clark, or the MC5, and only have four members anyway) are on their way to the sort of celebrity/notoriety as Camper van Beethoven or early Tyrannosaurus Rex; only Marc Bolan fans wouldn't do so many drugs. Their influences range from the pure pop of Jonathan Richman to the go-lucky psychedelic folk of its sixteen songs, this album is the most classic Camper Van album to date. Propelled by the timely drumming of Crispy Derson ("How can I begin to tell you of Crispy Derson? Crispy Derson the wearer of wigs!" say the liner notes), and joined by ex-Checkers drummer and all around weirdo Eugene Chadbourne (who, the jacket tells us, "left one sock in Albuquerque"), Camper van Beethoven have delivered their strongest, most timeless album yet. This music will make you look at the world in a different way; you'll check the sky for UFOs, and be on the lookout for CIA agents disguised as giant rabbits.
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Volume 2 (1958-1960)
RNL 70077

Gettin' Pahh Doo/A Certain Girl/Fortune Teller/Tick Tock/Thee Things/Will You Stand By/Ma Feather in Lawder/You'll Like It/That Sea Cruiser/There's Something on Your Mind/I Do

Volume 3 (1962-1970)
RNL 70078

Ride Your Pony/Lipstick Traces/Time Is on My Side/Release Me/Down Home Girl/You'll Lose a Good Thing/Working in the Coal Mine/Barefootin'/Get Out of My Life Women/Tell It Like It Is/See Something You Get/Wish Someone Would Care/I Won't Cry/I Do

A party or a rumble to make the slow-motion stabbing scenes in Gimme Shelter look pretty. Each side of volume one opens with a great ice-breaker - "Let the Good Times Roll" and "Ain't Got No Home." The only song I can imagine anybody dancing to is "The Things That I Used to Do" - a real gusset-wailer. Otherwise motion is de rigueur.

"Rockin' Pneumonia," "Rock-a-mo," and "Walkin'" with Mr. Lee sound better than ever though "Baldhead" has a few audible pops in it, owing, no doubt, to it being taken from a 78. The version of "Just Because" here is slightly different from the 45 and 16 Greatest Hits version, detectable in Lloyd's very "uhh huh" right before the line "I guess you thing you're smart.

Strangely enough, volume two also has a Mardi Gras Indian practice in the cover photo, by Sydce Byrd. The African motif on all three of the albums is also strange, but it works anyway. The album is dominated by Allen Toussaint-productions. Pan 'n' run note writer Don Weller, who was only 75% wrong when he state on volume one that both "Ain't Got No Home" and "Later Alligator" featured Paul Gayten's band, leaves out one Toussaint credit ("But I Do") and gives him another gratis ("I Know"). Harold Battiste, who lives way out west where this album was produced, and even the photos, wants you all to know that he played piano on "I Know." Though Weller's notes are not quite as offensive as in the past, anyone who uses the word "ribbiting" to describe
Frogman Henry songs on two different albums, has little room to call Toussaint's "Mother-in-Law" "less-than-divinely-inspired."

Anyway, volume two collects together nearly all of the 1960-1962 New Orleans one-hit wonders, including, thankfully, Bobby Mar­chan's legendary rap in "There's Something on Your Mind, Part Two" (the only song to feature the famous last words "Doo doo doo-doo doo-oo doo doo... "). Barbara George's "I Know," which was incredibly left off of EMI-America's Sue Records collection last year; and Earl King's "Trick Bag," which to my knowledge is making its first U.S. lp appearance here. One drawback would be the horrendous "Doctor-I-hear-voices-in-one-ear" stereo on "But I Do." All the songs feature the lightly-rocking style popularized by Toussaint. Frankie Ford's "Sea Cruise" from 1959, which fires an atomic foghorn blast across the bow before it even gets started, is somewhat out of place here, but oohh-woeie, baby, am I complainin'?

Volume three is somewhat more uptown in style, with several of the songs actually produced outside of New Orleans. Nonetheless, it is a superb collection, with New Orleans R&B playing around the edges of soul. "Ride Your Pony" has a different mix from what I've ever heard, with some amazing rapid chicken pickin' licks by Leo Nocentelli right up front. I was also glad to see Irma's later hits, Alvin Robinson's hard-to-find classics, and some recognition for Johnny Adams. Though there are lots of selections one might have argued for, no one can challenge the tastefulness and the impressive near-completeness of the Rhino set, insofar as containing the majority of the one and two-national hit artists. Like in their Neville Brothers history, Treacherous, these boys worked like police dogs to sniff out the hits, and the incredibly chaotic licensing agreements on all of them. Just for that fact alone, these albums are likely to remain the best single set of anthologies of New Orleans R&B, and I hope they sell a ton.

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ALMOST SLIM

Considering the prices that get made over the Mardi Gras Indians and their music, surprisingly little has actually been recorded and made available. Curiously, even though this particular album contains two of Carnival's most popular songs, "New Suit," and "Fire Water," it was never issued in the United States. Instead, its distribution was limited to France and Canada (a country of boundless merits and the Toronto Blue Jays) and only then for a short duration.

Produced by Philippe Rault in 1975, at Studio in the Country, the Wild Magnolias were backed by an all-star jazz aggregation that included the Turbinton brothers and Eving Charles. Besides the previously mentioned tunes, this LP also contains "They Call Us Wild," "We're Gonna Party," and "Jumalaka Boom Boom," all of which won't bow down.

Even though I once saw half a dozen of these in a department store north of the 49th, this is an exceedingly difficult album to locate. I recall a gentleman from New York offering me center ice tickets to a Ranger Maple Leaf game in exchange for its possession. If I were in the reissue record business I'd certainly look into making this one available again.

— Almost Slim

REVIEW

Tony Rice
ME AND MY GUITAR
Rounder 3031

I had last heard guitarist Tony Rice in 1974, and before I sampled this album I thought of him as a budding folk-rock singer in a Bob Weir vein. In the meantime, he's honed his jazz chops (immensely by gigging with David Grisman) and exploited his vocal talents in homage to his idol, Gordon Lightfoot. There are five Lightfoot covers here, and pieces by Bob Dylan and James Taylor. Rice executes these venturesomely, and throws in two back-to-back originals with the help of old friends Jerry Douglas and Vassar Clements. For the more blue-grace minded, a Rice/Norman Blake duet album will appear later this year.

— Tom McDermott

Men and Watts
THIRDS IN BLOOM
Irissonence Records

This record set by my turntable for about four months, and for some reason I never picked it up until recently. Perhaps it had something to do with the ugly naked old man pictured on the cover. It is strange sometimes how we let ourselves be influenced by cover art and appearances. But anyway, when I do notice it and discover a real gem, a sleeper of an album that was wise and quip, if not downright eccentric in places. Drawing on such unlikely influences as Captain Beefheart, Frank Zappa (as on the title track), the Butthole Surfers, the music of Ireland, a lot of Lightfoot, and the Young Fresh Set and their ilk. What Rice does, and sometimes indeed excels at, is to draw on his roots.
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Where did jazz come from? It sprang up from the sound and feel and taste of the city itself.

T

he Jazz Festival! What a silly idea! Almost as silly as that basketball team New Orleans used to have — the one now known as the Utah Jazz. Imagine: a bunch of white shirt/black tie/black pants Mormons, folks who prefer suicide over masturbation, rooting for a team named after a musical form which was named after copulation. Yes, yes — jazz me, baby!

Correctly, the Jazz Festival should be called the Oldies Festival. The majority of ticket-buyers are interested in hearing performers from the late Fifties; early Sixties heyday of New Orleans rhythm and blues. Festival-goers want to drink beer, sit (or stand) in the sunshine and listen to Irma Thomas sing "It's Raining." They want to see what sort of dinner jacket Ernie K-Doe will wear, giving each other the knowing nod when K-Doe appears in red polyester and black tie/black pants. The effect is prodigious and gives a polyphone impression of harmonic richness. The same need makes them put beads on the wires of their little "pianos" — a horror of the clean sound — a need to confuse and drown its contours.

The "horror of the clean sound" is the key difference between white/European music and black/African music. White music is orderly, precise, antiseptic; black music is freewheeling, raucous and dirty. White music is holding hands and black music, as I've said, is fucking. Throughout its history, black music — particularly black jazz — has been perceived as a threat to white society and white order. Henry Ford, one of the wealthiest capitalists of his day, devoted much of his time and energy to fighting the onslaught of jazz and promoting square-dancing, "that style of dancing," according to Ford, "that best fits with the American temperament." With his wife and a dancing instructor named Benjamin Lovett, Ford wrote a book entitled Good Morning; After a Sleep of Twenty-five Years, Old Fashioned Dancing Is Being...

Jazz, as it developed in this century, often alienated the masses, a group ever-suspicious of the overtly artistic or intellectual. How do we know that those grim-faced jazzmen aren't pulling our legs? How do we know that jazz is not America's major practical joke? Do we hear genius, or do we hear junkies snickering at squares? Does jazz belong in symphonic concert halls, the car's cassette deck, or in the fearsome waiting room of one's dentist? The seriousness of jazz, as perpetrated by its players and generations of mostly European critics, is its downfall. When jazz was born in New Orleans, shortly after the Civil War, it was pop music — popular music. The players took the "hits" of the day and "jazzed" them.

The genesis of jazz in New Orleans has been a point of debate forever, it seems. The "serious" critics have asserted that while jazz was developing in New Orleans, other players were doing the same thing in Texas, Oklahoma and Baltimore. Digging deeper, researchers concluded that jazz came from Africa — an obvious assumption since man's oldest remains were discovered in Africa. The Garden of Eden was in Kenya, Adam and Eve were a black couple and it was the sound of jazz — and not a persuasive serpent — that caused the Original Sin. This is a plausible theory except for the fact that there were no cornets, clarinets or snare drums in prehistoric Africa.

What Africa had was polyphony, the simultaneous combination of two or more independent melodic parts. After André Gide published Corydon, his 1924 defense of homosexuality, he was forced by the ensuing scandal to sell his property and leave France for French Equatorial Africa, a journey later documented in Voyage Au Congo (Travels in The Congo). Gide's discoveries, as he wrote transcriptions of native songs, included polyphony: "In thinking it over last night, it seems to me that I transcribed yesterday's tune wrongly and that the intervals are greater than our tones, so that between C and the dominant below there is only one note. It may seem monstrous that I should not be certain of it. But imagine this tune yelled by a hundred persons, not one of whom sings the exact note. It is like trying to distinguish the main line among qualities of little strokes. The effect is prodigious and gives a polyphone impression of harmonic richness. The same need makes them put beads on the wires of their little "pianos" — a horror of the clean sound — a need to confuse and drown its contours."*

This passage is from the book "Good Morning; After a Sleep of Twenty-five Years, Old Fashioned Dancing Is Being..." by Henry Ford. The book was written as a response to the growing popularity of jazz music, which Ford saw as a threat to traditional values. He believed that jazz was a threat to white society and white order, and he devoted much of his time and energy to fighting the onslaught of jazz and promoting square-dancing as a way to preserve traditional values. The passage quoted above is from the book and suggests that jazz originated in Africa, specifically in Kenya, where the Garden of Eden was believed to be located. The author of the passage, André Gide, wrote about his travels in French Equatorial Africa and the polyphonic nature of the music he heard there. Gide's discoveries, as he transcribed the native songs, included polyphony, which he described as having intervals greater than those of Western music.

*The "horror of the clean sound" is the key difference between white/European music and black/African music. White music is orderly, precise, antiseptic; black music is freewheeling, raucous and dirty. White music is holding hands and black music, as I've said, is fucking.
Revived by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford and toured the nation, denouncing what Ford called "ultra modern dance." People who listened to jazz, Ford apparently surmised, would not make the best assembly-line workers.

By the time of Ford's anti-jazz hysteria, jazz had been prevalent in New Orleans for nearly thirty years. Why New Orleans? It's obvious — New Orleans was the freest place in America. Before Emancipation, black slaves could escape to New Orleans, where black skin was not necessarily synonymous with slavery. Indeed, the majority of slaveowners in 1850 were "persons of color." For white malcontents from Lafcadio Hearn to Allen Ginsberg, New Orleans was the place to escape to. It was a Catholic port in an ocean of Southern fundamentalist Protestantism. What passed for Baptist in New Orleans was to be the King of the Zulus.

The trombones are tugboats in the river's fog; the drum is the sound of jazz. The trombones are tugboats in the river's fog; the trumpets are drunk sailors on leave, flirting with shrill steelworkers, disguised as clarinets. The string bass is the late afternoon rumbling of a thunderstorm developing over Lake Ponchartrain and the drums are raindrops syncopating across crumbling balconies, down green copper spouts and onto the banquette of St. Joe bricks.

In 1941, Orson Welles proposed to Duke Ellington that he write the screenplay and compose the music for a jazz history film to be titled It's All True. The film was never made but Ellington did complete his research and a scant twenty-eight bars of trumpet music, for which he was paid $12,500.

"The way I visualized my story," Ellington later wrote, "the way the picture was supposed to start, the first scene was to take place in New Orleans, with a boat coming down the canal and the King of the Zulus getting off as the boat docked at Basin Street. The King of the Zulus was the big Negro man of the town; they elected a different one every year, in fact they still do. Our opening scene would show this big coronation celebration over on Congo Square. It was a Catholic port in an ocean of Southern fundamentalist Protestantism. What passed for Baptist in New Orleans was to be the King of the Zulus.

"Buddy Bolden was a guy who had a barber shop, ran a newspaper, played the trumpet and was quite a ladies' man on the side. He was a pretty progressive type kid. So one day when he closed his barber shop, we would see one chick putting a newspaper under her arm, and another putting a trumpet under her arm; one of them would have his hat and the other would have his coat, and down the street they would go, the three of them.

They would get as far as the hall where Buddy was going to play that evening. It was almost dark. While the chicks were going in to run upstairs and open the windows, you would hear Buddy Bolden tuning up. And when he tuned up on his trumpet it was not just like a musician hitting an A. It was melodic. And while he was using these little melodic ideas to tune up with, by the time he really called himself in tune, why, you could hear that powerful horn of his clear across the Mississippi River."

Ellington's story, while colorful, is rife with inaccuracies. As Donald Marquis points out in In Search of Buddy Bolden: First Man of Jazz, Bolden was neither a barber, nor newspaper editor. He was popular with the ladies and without dispute, Bolden was "a pretty progressive type kid."

The pianist Jelly Roll Morton, famed for embellishing his own contributions to jazz, painted a fairly accurate picture of the legendary trumpeter. "Speaking of swell people, I might mention Buddy Bolden, the most powerful trumpet player I've ever heard of that was known and the absolute favorite of all the hangarounders in the Garden District... Buddy was a light brown-skin boy from uptown. He drank all the whiskey he could find."

Charles Joseph "Buddy" Bolden was born to Westmore and Alice Bolden on September 6, 1877, in New Orleans. Between 1887 and 1905, the Bolden family lived in a shotgun house at 2309 First Street which still stands. On March 27, 1906, suffering from insanity aggravated by alcoholism, Bolden bashed his mother-in-law, Ida Bass, in the head with a waster pitcher and was subsequently arrested by the police. Two accounts of the incident, in the Daily Picayune and the New Orleans Item, are the only newspaper coverage afforded Buddy Bolden during his lifetime. On June 5, 1907, Buddy arrived at the state mental hospital at Jackson, Louisiana, where he would spend the last twenty-four years of his life.

The "First Man of Jazz" was not yet 30 years old. He had never cut a record and he would never perform in public again.

If there was justice in the world — artistic justice, at least, Louis Armstrong Park would be called Buddy Bolden Park. No one can deny that Armstrong was the great ambassador of jazz, the man who spread the gospel. It was Bolden, however, who was the great innovator, the showman, the "King." On New Year's Eve of 1913, when young Louis was arrested for firing a gun in the streets and sent off to the Waifs' Home (where he encountered his first cornet), Buddy had already been locked up in the loony-bin for six years.

Buddy Bolden's most revolutionary act was improvisation. There have always been two groups of blacks in New Orleans — the light-skinned Downers and the dark-skinned Uptowners. The Creoles were educated and predominantly Catholic; the Uptowners were considered "rough" and prac...
Sacrament. Most Uptowners couldn't read music, but Bolden could read music; his innovation was his choice to forego the limitations of sheet music and play whatever came into his head — loudly. The door was blown wide open for jazz (a term not utilized in Buddy's day), blues, rhythm and blues, rock 'n roll, funk — virtually all types of modern popular music.

The term "funky" can even be traced to Bolden and his bandmates. One night, during a gig at the Union Sons Hall (located at 1319 Perdido Street, now the site of the Louisiana State Office Building), the band began to complain about someone fouling the room's air with their gas, a complaint that evolved into the song "Funky Butt, Funky Butt, Take It Away." The song became Bolden's signature tune and the hall was thereafter known as Funky Butt Hall. As Rockin' Sidney would discover many years later with his hit "My Toot-Toot," a little naughtiness goes a long way when you're dealing with the general public.


The Eureka Brass Band, probably in Treme, circa 1940. The members include Red Clark on tuba and Albert Warner on trombone.

A major misconception in the history of jazz in New Orleans is that the early bands got their start in Storyville, the legalized prostitution zone which was closed in 1917. Among the scores of old musicians interviewed by Donald Marquis for his book, not one remembered playing in a Storyville brothel. Occasionally, a pianist was hired to entertain the patrons. The fact is that most people don't go to whorehouses to listen to music. Their minds and libidos are more concerned with entertainment of a sexual, rather than musical, nature.

In its early days (and in modern New Orleans), jazz was everywhere. Jazz was used to advertise all sorts of events — from baseball games to political rallies. Buddy Bolden himself would perform at large picnics held on the infield of the Fairgrounds, where the Jazz Festival is staged today. In the early 1900s, there were outdoor jazz concerts along Lake Pontchartrain, at Milneburg (immortalized in Jelly Roll Morton's 1924 recording, "Milneburg Joys") and at West End Park (likewise remembered in King Oliver's "West End Blues"). Between West End Park and Mandeville cruised the passenger ship known as Proud Mary, itself the latter-day subject of a popular song. Jazz and the Carnival celebration, of nearly equal vintage, have always enjoyed a symbiotic relationship.

Today, no skyscraper is erected without a jazz band (not much different in configuration from Buddy Bolden's) in attendance. No movie star or pro football team arrives at the airport unless a jazz band is there to issue a musical salute. And when asked why they never go to the French Quarter, locals invariably reply that it's because there's too many jazz bands down there.

Yes, the locals complain about jazz. New Orleanians complain about everything. We are all tough critics. We have the right to be. We know what the best food is because we eat it everyday. We know what the best music is because we hear it all the time. We have heard Buddy Bolden and Louis Armstrong and Freddie Keppard and King Oliver and Kid Ory and Jelly Roll Morton and Bank Johnson and Baby Dodds and the trumpeter Wingy Manone, who lost his arm when the St. Charles streetcar ran over it. We know that, like Buddy Bolden, you can be King of New Orleans one day, with a girl on each arm and a dozen more parading behind you, begging to light your cigarettes. We know that, like Buddy, you can flip-out, be carted off to an asylum and spend the rest of your life talking to yourself. And then you get buried, like Buddy, in an unmarked grave beneath the oaks in Potter's Field. Most of the people driving to the Jazz Festival go right past Buddy's grave and never know. But we know. We know it all in New Orleans. Our life is jazz.
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Ron Levy’s Wild Kingdom (Black Top BT-1034)*

Just released (but not pictured) are Snooks Eaglin’s Baby, You Can Get Your Gun (BT-1037), a gutsy and wide-ranging set from this New Orleans guitar legend, and Hubert Sumlin’s Blues Party (BT-1036), an all-star showcase for the ex-Howlin’ Wolf guitarist. Be sure to hear Black Top’s other albums by Ronnie Earl, Buckwheat Zydeco and Anson Funderburgh.

*These items are available on Compact Disk as well as LP and cassette.

Modern New Orleans Masters in Concert! Hear Alvin “Red” Tyler, Johnny Adams and Germaine Bazzle at Snug Harbor, Tuesday, April 28.
On the strength of his three superhits, “Ain’t Got No Home,” “But I Do,” and “You Always Hurt the One You Love,” the Frogman has been one of the greatest ambassadors for New Orleans rhythm & blues.

The lonesome frog finds a home.

RICCOLEMAN

WOO-HOO-000 WOO-HOO-000!

Who in listening to Nature can forget the lonesome cry of the *rana N'waleenzius* lamenting the contradictory conditions of anomie and restless in the modern world?

“Ain’t got no home! No place to roam!”

Certainly not Rod Stewart, who incorporated his slimy Linney frog call into “Some Guys Have All the Fun.” Nor Buddy Holly (if he recalls at all), Carl Mann, Buddy Channel, the Band, or Joe Ely, who recorded the lily-pad-lust dissertation in *total*.

And who can forget the nickname the song inspired, one that would make “the Boss,” “the Genius,” and the various “Kings” a handsome green with envy?

Neither should you forget that “Frogman” Henry has had many other hits and has been one of the greatest ambassadors of New Orleans music, both around the world and in New Orleans itself, where he played the French Quarter for 21 years.

But all handsome frog stories must have a beginning, so let us start there.

Clarence Henry, Jr. was born on March 19, 1937, in New Orleans, one of the six children of Clarence and Ernestine Henry. At age six Clarence talked his mother into taking the piano lessons that his sister shunned.

“She wanted me to play classical music,” says Henry, “and when she would leave to go to work I would get there and play boogie.”

Little Clarence’s boredom with the long-haired stuff seemed to be justified when, in the sixth grade, he shut down the little girl who was the school’s virtuoso with his black-and-red checked jacket and some lowdown boogie: “I was playing Professor Longhair and Fats Domino and the kids just went wild.”

William Houston, Henry’s music teacher at L. B. Landry High School in Algiers (where the Henrys had moved in 1948), put Clarence in the band playing trombone and also put him with Bobby Mitchell’s teenage R&B group the Toppers in 1952, who soon recorded with Dave Bartholomew for Imperial.

“Bobby was working at Spell’s Supermarket on Taft Street and sometimes he didn’t get off on time for the jobs when we’d go to Gonzales or Perridy or Raceland. It was at the Fun Pavilion in Raceland, Bobby didn’t show up this night, so they told me you sing. That’s how I started singing with the group. I started singing ‘I Got a Woman’ and all that stuff and the people just went haywire.”

“How I got away from Bobby was that during school about two months before I graduated I had a shotgun wedding. On the night of my wedding...
[April 1, 1955] we were supposed to play at Tony Amarico’s club on Royal Street and I couldn’t make it. Because I couldn’t make it and got married I think he fired me. He didn’t say it, but he wouldn’t give me no more jobs. But Bobby and I are still good friends and if he hadn’t fired me I never probably would have been on my own.

Henry’s marital bliss ended two months later when his 14-year-old bride didn’t want him using his music scholarship to Southern University. He ended up doing odd jobs until he landed a club job in Algiers at The Fat Man at $5 a night. Next stop was the Chicken Shack on Almyra at $7 a night. Then, fatefuly, Pops Marcello saw Henry and put him to work with his house band consisting of Eddie Smith (tenor), Eugene Jones (drums), and Walter Epps (guitar) at the Joy Lounge on Huey Long and Fourth Street.

“One night we started at nine o’clock and it must have been about six or eight o’clock in the morning, ‘cause the sun was out and we was still playing. Every time it was time to get off this guy would walk outside the club. I was angry, but I couldn’t say anything to him [Eddie], ‘cause he was my leader, so I just hit the piano — BAM! ‘AIN’T GOT NO HOME!’” was telling the people I wanted to go home and I started singing ‘You ain’t got no home, the man, the chicken, the frog, and everybody.’ I played it for Paul Gayten and he liked the song.

Leonard Chess [of Chess Records] came down along with Bobby Charles to the Brass Rail and they heard me sing the song.”

Gayten was at the time a popular bandleader and the talent scout/producer for Chess Records in New Orleans. Reached by phone at his home in Los Angeles last year, Gayten fondly recalled his “discovery” of Henry: “My wife was his teacher in Landry High School and he was just like one of the family. Beautiful young man, I think he had a lot of talent.

He was playing every Monday night in my place at the Brass Rail. When [Chess Records] asked me the best band, I told ‘em, ‘Frogman Henry.’ I just fell in love with him when I heard him singing that song. We took him into the studio. You know what? They didn’t want me to cut ‘Ain’t Got No Home,’ and that was one of the biggest records of that year. Nobody said that would be a hit.”

Frogman recorded the song with his band, plus Lee Allen, Edgar Myles, Frank Fields, and Gayten. “They told me to take out the chicken and all this other stuff,” says Henry, so we worked it up pretty good and I went in on September 1956 and recorded ‘Ain’t Got No Home’ and ‘Troubles, Troubles,’ and they made me on a trial disc. The leading disc jockey here in New Orleans, Poppa Stoppa on WMR [got requests for] ‘The Frog Song’ by ‘The Frogman — they didn’t know who was singing the song. That’s when Poppa Stoppa said, ‘Your name is FROGMAN HENRY.’

“Buy the Record — Get Him a Home”

“Ain’t Got No Home” only made number 30 on the Billboard pop charts, but on some local R&B charts, including in New Orleans, Frogman actually kept his idol Fats Domino out of number one for a week.

“I went on my first tour in 1957, January 2 at the Apollo Theatre with Clyde McPhatter, the Big Bopper, Buddy Holly, the Spaniels, and oh! we had a big show! Then I did Baltimore and Washington, D.C. My band came up in my 1955 Chevy. It was snowing up there when they met me in Detroit. I played the Motor City Arena and the Crown Propeller in Chicago. We picked up two guys out of Chicago — Leo Lackett [bass] and Charles somebody on baritone. We went down and around the states and down to Florida.”

All was not glory touring in those days of segregation: “I came through the era that when you’d travel on the road there was no place for you to eat. I’ve seen my band and me come all the way from Columbus, Ohio, eating Lance cookies and Coke when we could catch it in service stations outside. A lot of service stations we couldn’t use the restrooms — we had to stop on the highway and relieve ourselves. And to sleep, a lot of times we stopped on the highways and slept on the road. We couldn’t find places to sleep.

One of the most interesting road trips Frogman made during this time was his first overseas trip to Jamaica with Bullmoose Jackson, Lewis Lymon & the Teenchords, and Edna McGriff in early September 1957. Local teens were already showing a pronounced taste for New Orleans rhythms. Not only was Henry a big hit, Fats Domino fan club members abounded. “Blueberry Hill” was the biggest thing over there,” recalls Henry, “and I sang it.”

Frog’s hit gave him places to roam, and when the next records bombed, a place to sing at home. (The noble failures included “Lonely Tramp,” a masterpiece of angst ("I’m lonely, I ain’t no good..."), and two sequels to the hit, “I’m a Country Boy” [about the chicken, the duck, and the cow] and “I Found a Home.”

Frogman played local shows at the Safari Lounge with Roy Hamilton in 1958 and the Moulin Rouge in Marrero and then hit on hard times until he met the man who would become his guardian angel, Frank Carracci, at the 500 Club: “He didn’t really need me and he gave me a job, and that’s why I love him.”

After a 31-night tour with Chuck Berry in 1959, Henry got a steady gig at Carracci’s French Quarter monument The Court of Two Sisters, with the first of several contracts which allowed Frogman to tour anywhere he desired. Then the sun rose again.

“In 1960 Leonard Chess came down with Bobby Charles and said, ‘I wanna record him again.’ I said...
"I don't have any new material." We dug up "But I Don't Have Any New Material." We had written that one during the time of that Frogman has kept in an August western song.

We dug up "But I Don't Have Any New Material." We had written that one during the time of that Frogman has kept in an August western song. "Lonely Street," "On Bended Knees," and "A Little Too Much," the latter recorded in Nashville with Bill Justis — kept Henry on the charts through early 1962. Subsequent sessions with Toussaint and Wardell Quezerque produced some good records (especially Charles "Lost Without You"). But no hits. Frogman stayed on the road, though.

"Bob Astor was my manager since he met me at the old Joy Lounge until he died in '84. We had some wonderful times together. We've been all over the world — New Zealand, England, Germany, Ireland, the Fiji Islands, New Guinea, Jamaica, Canada... And he put me on some big shows, a lot of shows which made fans Domingo didn't work on, and it made me feel proud. I worked with the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Dick Clark, Paul Anka, the Shirelles, Ray Charles, Etta James, Dianne Eddy, Brenda Lee, Little Richard, Jackie DeShannon...

"I started going to England at that time. I was in a club where the Beatles were playing around Piccadilly Circus and they weren't real known then. Then a couple of years later here come the Beatles. So Bob Astor put me on a tour with the Beatles. I met 'em in Philadelphia and we did about 28 or 31 dates. We had a two-day vacation in West Palm Beach right out of Miami. We tried to get the Beatles to play the blues, like Jimmy Reed stuff, but they couldn't play that beat."

Back home Frogman finished off five years at the Court of Two Sisters, then went to the 544 Club, the ivanhoe, and Big Daddy's, where the revolution the Beatles started clashed with Frog's original rhythm 'n' gospel sound.

"At that time that's when this longhorn band started coming out with them guitars. Andy Walker [Creations], they would put me in their music in there and me out. That's when the club folded up."

Record buyers turned a cold shoulder to Henry's home-spun recordings with Huey Meaux in Shreveport in 1964-66 and with Buddy Killen in Nashville (notably the hilarious "That's When I Guessed") in 1967, though Frog reports that he personally sold a ton of his fine New Orleans-made hits on record labels. The 1973 sessions with Huey Meaux, including a startling Texas blues shuffle called "It Went to Your Head," have been sporadic release on singles and the "Hit-Kickers" album series on Festival, but are soon due on a Gem Bear Family album.

Henry went back with Frank Caracci in the Seventies at the La Strada, the Back Stage, and the 500 Back Stage, where in '79, soon after the release of another good album of standard things went bad in a different way. "My alcoholism started fading me. I'd get dizzy and I was afraid of the stage for about five weeks. So what I did, I sat at the piano and played and I felt a lot better."

In September 1980 Henry quit his six-hours-a-day, five-days-a-week grind on Bourbon Street where he had employed a lot of fine musicians over the years: Eddie Smith, Warren Myles, Erving Charles, Gerald Adams, Placid Adams, Oscar Moore, George French, David Laste, Lawrence Guyton, Cornelius Coleman. "I decided I would do nothing but one-nighters or would never work steady again because of my health."

A 1983 trip to England showed Henry's popularity over there when after a three-month tour with numerous TV and radio appearances, he was invited back for three more months at the summer theatre in Scarborough. He recorded a disappointing, over-synthesized album and a single while he was there and he was even offered his own TV program. The single was a superb departure for Frogman, with a stomping, English muscle ball ambiance on "That Old Piano," and a rocking rendition of Jay McShann's blues classic "Keep Your Hands Off Her."

"The first time I felt like the people of New Orleans accepted me was at the [1984] World's Fair. I loved playing the World's Fair. The crowds were just great and they made me feel like I was over-seen."

Frogman's current hand consists of Al Bennis, Warren Nabonne, Clinton Charlotte, and Michael Pearce. His recent appearances have included the Jazz Festival and, fittingly, several benefits for the homeless.

Today Clarence Henry has found a home with his third wife Eloise, the younger members of his eight children, and hundreds of Frogs (though he gave away his mascot "Mr. Argo" to a child in a hospital years ago). He is one of the lucky few rhythm & blues performers who can afford to take it easier in later life. "A lot of people think the music field is easy. It's not. It's not what you know, it's who you know. If you've got the right people behind you, you can go forward, because you can starve, and I've had my times."

"Frank Caracci told me way back in '63, 'I don't want you to be like these old guys (jazz musicians), 80 or 90 making a living for your family. I want you to invest your money.' And I thank God that he gave me the place of business. He steered me out of real estate, and that's a thing I can kinda survive on. It doesn't bring in that much money, but it kinda helps me to pay the bills. And that's what I do. I live from day to day."
Friday 10, Saturday 11
Neville Brothers at Tipitina's. See the club's calendar in this issue for more information.

Sunday 12
Montreux at the Storyville Jazz Hall, 9 p.m., 1104 Decatur.

Tuesday 14
All Ages Hardcore Show, 7 p.m. Beyond Possession, from Canada, play with Victor's Family and Suffocation by Filth at the VFW Hall, 9110 Franklin Ave., 949-0131. So careful! The hall is hard to find.

Wednesday 15
Huffer Da. The next big thing in rock music plays at Tulane's McAllister Auditorium. Only dorks would miss this!

Thursday 16
Breaux Hendry and the Range, Tulane's McAllister Auditorium.

Friday 17
Bobby Blue Bland. Tipitina's, 501 Napoleon Ave. The blues great performs at 10 p.m.

From Friday 24
Jazz Festival Concerts. See story this issue.

Saturday 25
Los Lobos at Tipitina's. The band performs songs from their new album along with familiar tunes in the traditional but Spanish influenced rock.

Sunday 26
All Ages Hardcore Show at the VFW Hall, featuring SSF recording artist Painted Willie along with Acid Bath, Exsanguination, and升学. 7 p.m. To find the elusive concert location, hop off the Franklin exit of Highway 10 East, turn left on Franklin, right on Abundance, left on Esplanade, and left on Trueman. The VFW is not exactly on Franklin!

Swamp Thing. The humorous Wisconsin group performs their progressive hits such as "I Love Children," and "Waiting for the Messiah" at Jimmy's. With local support.

FRIDAYS
The Red Hot Jazz Band performs on the steps of the Cabildo, Jackson Square.

FESTIVALS
Fri. 3 through Sun. 5:
Tennessee Williams Literary Festival. Centering around Jackson Square and the Le Petit Theatre on St. Peter; the festival activities will include panels, workshops, and tours.

Sat. 4 through Sun. 5:
1987 River City Blues Festival. This Baton Rouge festival will have three stages. Music will be from noon to six. Main activities are located on Front St. near the LA Science Center and the state capital.

Thurs. 8 through Sun. 12:
Railroad Festival, DeQuincy, La. Call 318-786-7115 for details.

Fri. 10 through Sun. 12:
French Quarter Festival. The fourth annual celebration of the area's unique history. Call 504-5730.

Sat. 11 through Sun. 12:
Poches Toups Strawberry Festival. The crowds get bigger every year; so leave early! Just north of Hammond. Call 504-8991.

Thurs. 23 through Sun. 26:

Easter Sunday
Maple Leaf Poem Reading. Fiction by Bill Maddox, read by Everett Maddox. Al Perley will read from his own words.

4th and 5th
Easter Egg Hunt at the Audubon Zoo. Games start at 11 a.m.

APRIL

Friday 10 through Sunday 12
French Quarter Festival (see Festivals) climax in steamboat race between the Natchez and the Delta Queen. Mineral Gem and Jewelry Show, St. Bernard Cultural Center. Call 727-1505 for time and directions.

Palm Sunday
Maple Leaf Poem Reading with Gillian Connelly.

Sunday 18
Easter Egg Hunt at the Audubon Zoo. Games start at 11 a.m.

Jimmy Anselmo celebrates the ninth anniversary of his club Jimmy's April 10 with the Radiators. Jimmy opened his club on April 10, 1978, with Li'l Queenie and still digs seeing the local favorites play, although lately he admits he loves to see MTV stars grace his stage. What's his secret for longevity in a here-today-closed-tomorrow world?

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Keswick's, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays: from 1801 Rodeo. Live music indigenous to this area. April's schedule:

- Weds. 5:30 pm., Musicda Camera; Thursdays, 8:30 pm., Tom McDermott, Mondays-Wednesdays 5:30 pm., P1ano Bar, until midnight.
- Fri., 8 pm., Melvin Alford Chamber Ensemble; Fri., 9:30, Musica da Camera; Fri., 11, J. Monque d'; every Thursday, Black Stacks Swamp pop or Cajun band.
- Sat., 8:30 pm., Penny Post Coffee House, 1036 Storyville, 895-9405. See ad this issue.
- Sun., 7:30, Royalty; Sun., 9 pm., Bobby Dee; Sun., 9:30 pm., Charlie Davis; Sun., 9:45 pm., Montreux.
- Sun., 11 am., Jerry & The Spice of Life, cover.
- Sun., 11 am., Uptown Co-op, call for their program. The club features any, Thursdays from 1801 Rodeo. Live music indigenous to this area. April's schedule:

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**WEST BANK**


- Wed., 8 pm., Handel's, 604-0598. See ad this section.
- Fri., 8 pm., Tipitina's, 895-9279.
- Sat., 8 pm., N. Orleans, 866-9549.
- Sun., 8 pm., Storyville, 891-2227. See ad in this issue.

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**ART**


- Berges Gallery, 703 Royal. Ertle Nagel and Michael Hunt. Also a preview of the 1987 Jazz and Heritage Festival poster done by Hugh Rock. Call 529-7052 for dates and times.


- Cafe Brilli, 2900 Chartres, 847-0386. Call for information.

- C.A.C., 900 Camp, 523-1216. Sat. 11 through May: Louisiana Environments, a multi-media exhibition. Wed. 6: "Don't Start Me Talking," a one-man video-drama. Sun. 12: "Metropolitan Avenue," documentary of race relations in Brooklyn. Sat. 11, 2 to 4 p.m.: workshop. The CAC celebrates its 10th anniversary, so get out there and support the arts.


- Delgado Community College, 615 City Park Ave. Tue. 2 - Wed. 10: photography by students from Thurs. 23 film arts exhibit. Openings are from 7-9 p.m. on the first day of each show. Exhibits are on the third floor of building one.

- Downtown Gallery, 420 Julia St. All month: French artist Louis Ker's etchings.


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APRIL • Wavelength 41
he way we understand it, Today host Bryant Gumbel was born in New Orleans and fifteen minutes later, his mama and papa shipped him off to an Ivy League prep school, thereby depriving the lad of his inalienable right as a native New Orleanian to be cooler than all other species inhabiting the world. It's no surprise to us, then that Bryant often displays his ignorance of New Orleans culture (he'd never heard of a king cake, for instance, until this year) and music. Introducing Little Richard recently, Bryant informed America that the former Tulane Avenue dishwasher recorded such classics as "Tutti-Frutti" in Los Angeles, which everyone who got past fourth grade at Redemptorist knows wasn't even founded when Mr. Penniman cut his first disc.

After disclosing that he'd composed a memorial song dedicated to Rock Hudson for his new album (and adding, rather wistfully, that he'd never met the late movie star), Little Richard tiptoed around the question of whether or not he'd gone the route of Sammy Davis, Jr. and converted to Judaism: "My answer is I love God and... what's wrong with Judaism? If you ain't Jewish, you ain't hue-ish."

Now despite Bryant Gumbel's lack of inherent musical coolness, every "Under Assistant West Coast Promotion Man" and his brother want to get their acts interviewed on the Today show because they know that the people who watch Today are the same people who spend all their hard-earned money on records and tapes because these are the people who are just coming home from a rough night of head-banging and slamming when Today goes off the air. These viewers slip off their black leather jackets and/or miniskirts, pour a can of Coors on their Honey-Nut Cheerios and want to hear, from the lips of Bryant and Jane, what's happening.

Ivan Bodley, former WTUL deejay and contributor to these pages, is one such promotion man, employed by Epic Records, and it was into his cap that a feather was placed when he arranged for master-bassist Stanley Clarke to get the Today treatment. In fact, the feather was an electric bass from Stan's personal collection, given to Ivan (a bassist himself) for setting up the interview. Next thing you know, it'll be Eddie Volker (of the soon-to-be-signed-to-Epic Radiators) giving Willard Scott a rhumba lesson or Paul Sanchez (formerly of the Backbeats and likewise soon-to-be-signed-to-Epic) talk shop with Gene Shalit.
## Happy Jazz Fest '87

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## Other Events
- **April 15th**
  - **The Radiators**

## Contact Information
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