Wavelength (April 1985)

Connie Atkinson

University of New Orleans

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The Best For Lest

"Now serving the best for lest [sic] around town!" So reads the hand-lettered sign on the wall of Henry’s Soul Food and Pie Shop. It may not be great poetry but it’s not false advertising, either. If you rely on local food critics as a guide to find soul food, you may end up at Eddie’s looking for backbones or turkey necks, and you may end up asking how the place got its name. Like the music industry moguls who, in their walk down the middle of the road, have come to label everything from Lou Rawls to James Brown as soul artists, the local food press has never been funnier. So "someone vos served." To The Editor: I have been an avid reader of Wavelength since its inception. Since I have moved to Colorado (the state that soul forgot), I enjoy it immensely. My only disappointment with Wavelength is that Tipitina’s only rated last page coverage. Tip’s was one of the finest music clubs anywhere and I shed a few tears when I received the news that it closed. I think Tipitina’s, its history, musicians, the people that made up the organization, and all of the good times it provided deserved much more of a farewell than Wavelength gave it. I spent many hours there listening to music, dancing, meeting people and once I even got a little tipsy while the Radiators were playing. I’m so "someone vos served".

—Rick Hoffman
Buena Vista, Colorado

To The Editor: 

I just wanted to let you know that I was rather distressed by the headline, "Blues in Gayland," that appeared on my review of the San Francisco Blues Festival. Several people who then became acquainted with journalism and didn’t know that writers usually do not compose their own heads, approached me and asked if I had written it. While I explained that I had not, I neverthless remain embarrassed that such a stupid, insensitive headline accompanies my piece.

—Macon Fry

Published

FROM NYCNY IT CAME... BAD NEWS! So far there are just two issues of this remarkable new publication that reminds us of Raw before Raw got carried away with its own importance, but there are sure to be more forthcoming. Some of the cosmos' most adventurous graphic artists bring the Bad News together; we're talking Gary Panter, Peter Bagge, Kuz, Drew Friedman and many others. Writer David Mark's opus, "From Hooterville to Eternity" essay in Bad News No. 2, is worth an inextricable fortune to any TV junkie, and there is lots, lots more. So send $3 plus $1 shipping and handling for each copy now to Bad News, P.O. Box 2015, Madison Square Station, NYC NY 10015. You won't be sorry.

STOP! HAS FINALLY STOPPED! In case you haven't heard, STOP is a NYCNYkindsa publication, with special emphasis on the graphic artistry of John Holmstrom, Peter Bagge, Bruce Carleton, Kuz, Ken Weiner and others. Issue No. 9, the last of its kind, can be purchased for $2 (postage included) from STOP! Publications, P.O. Box 529, Old Chelsea Station, NY 10011.

GUT BLOWOUT No. 1! POPE CRYPTO'S, THAT ID-RACKING OFFSHOOT of the subGenius Foundation has outdone himself with Gut Blowout No. 1. All you have to do is send $1.50 to his unholiness at 16310 Park Ave., Spanaway, WA 98387, and in return you'll get one of the strangest graphic autobiographies known to man or beast. PoP Crypto's is both in spades, so 'nuff said. Send that dough! And don't forget to add 35 cents for postage and handling! May the Feral Baby Jesus visit you once a month.

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To The Editor:

I am saddened by its passing when this tome adorns your line, "Woo-woo" - Macon Fry

To The Editor:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to praise the many talented and dedicated music teachers in the public schools of New Orleans. [WL 53]. The teachers need all the recognition and support that this community can provide.

Al Kennedy
Communications Coordinator
New Orleans Public Schools

LETTERS

To The Editor:

I received the news that it has never been funnier. To The Editor: I was rather distressed by the head­

—Lee Hildebrand
Oakland, California

To The Editor:

To label San Francisco “gayland” is a gross insult to a city that has a large homosexual population but is not predominantly gay.

—Ivy Joe Hunter
Jesse Belvin
Ford Englin
Peter Wilgen
Medina, Ohio

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The Night That Started A Career

SPRING 1946 — Thomas Ridgley, a young lad from Shrewesbury, a section of nearby Jefferson Parish, hears about a weekly talent contest held at a new club on LaSalle Street, the Dew Drop Inn. Ridgley, who is harboring secret ambitions about a career in music, decides to check out the competition on a Monday evening. After a series of dancers, singers, and comedians have their turn, Ridgley musters all his courage and heads for the bandstand to try his luck. He decided to sing one of the more popular songs of the day, "Piney Brown Blues," and concludes it while the audience applauds wildly. Sporty Johnson, the Dew Drop's emcee, deems Ridgley the winner that evening and Ridgley captures the $5 first prize. Encouraged by the ease of winning the gigantic sum, Ridgley decided to consider music as a career, and we're Tommy Ridgley proud to report he's still going at it nearly forty years later.

Almost Slim

CARIBBEAN

GOLDEN MOMENTS

ROOTS OF THE RADICS

With the Italos, here's a rare opportunity to see and hear the band that is almost single-handedly responsible for today's reggae sound.

For the second time in less than two years a reggae tour will be passing through New Orleans and Lafayette, Louisiana, that includes Jamaica's hardest, most sought-after back-up band, the Roots Radics. Make no mistake, this show, which will feature the Roots Radics backing up the Italos and Don Carlos, scheduled to appear at Jimmy's in New Orleans on Thursday, April 11 and in Lafayette at Grant Street Dance Hall the next night, will be a rare opportunity to see and hear the band that is almost single-handedly responsible for today's reggae sound. Either the Radics or Sly and Robbie's Taxi Gang appear on practically 75 percent of the reggae records that make it to the States, backing up artists like Gregory Isaacs, Frankie Paul, Sugar Minott, Melodians and many, many more. With a roster of artists like that requesting their time, the Radics find themselves in the studio most of the time, but the Italos in 1983 and Gregory Isaacs last summer managed to pull them away for live performances in America. That the Radics would agree to tour with the Italos is not surprising, considering the success of the first tour. The Italos are a vocal trio that specialize in pretty harmonies and roots lyrics, and their Nighthawk album, Brutal Out Deh, is a good example of what they sounded like on the first tour. But I'll admit that almost two hours of the Italos music got a little bit boring, but that will be remedied this time around by the inclusion of another roots singer, Don Carlos. One of the founding members back in 1974 of the now-defunct Black Uhuru, Don Carlos left the band before it achieved its commercial success by teaming up with Sly and Robbie. His solo albums and singles have ranged from good to excellent, especially a cut called "Spread Out," and we'll be getting the chance to hear him at an opportune moment because his brand new album, Just A Passing Glance, is one of the finest reggae records to come out so far in 1985.

I'm guessing that the sound will be the same on this tour, and the reason goes back to the fact that backup will be provided by the Radics. A show with the Radics is a treat because they play in a clean, sparse, super-heavy bass style that virtually no other touring band except possibly Freddie McGregor's Studio One Band has the self-control and cool to play.

Back on March 8, dance hall star Sugar Minott appeared in Lafayette, and part of the New Orleans posse made the trip. For a number of reasons beyond the control of Sugar Minott, the show was less exciting than had been hoped, but the resulting interview turned up quite a few surprises. When asked why he didn't perform any water pumpee style music such as his big hit "Level Vibes," he amazed us all by replying that he
doesn't like to sing frivolous reggae style. "There are certain things that go on around you that make you sing revolutionary songs, 'cause you see things happening every day that make certain reaction. Sometimes you have to just rebel in your music, and things like water pump and things like that, to me it's kinda ungodly music." He went on to say that he prefers ghetto music, slow songs and "cool-listening reggae." His dance hall hits such as "Level Vibes," "Dance Hall We Deh," "Inna Dance Hall Style" etc., which have given the impression of Sugar Minott as dance hall king, are in his own words, "requested" most likely by financial backers (the ubiquitous executive producers) trying to perpetuate the cash flow.

Sugar Minott

The high incidence of gunplay in Kingston dance halls was another topic that we discussed with Minott, and again his reply flipped us out. He explained that most of the music about violence in dance halls, songs like "Gunshot," "Worries in the Dance," "Lickshot," ad infinitum, had been addressing recent problems, but that things had calmed down. "Everything cool now...everything kinda nice. Right now when you hear a gunshot in the dance hall, it's like more of a salute than a fight...instead of war. Like you might be singing and hear two gunshots... it kinda boosts you up. Even police and soldier, if they hear the gun and they feel nice...they lick shot! Thankfully, less bullets are going into humans, but it still sounds too much ina cowboy style to me.

So many good reggae and calypso/soca albums have come out recently that I couldn't do justice to them in the short amount of space I have left. Check back next issue for a review of Island Records' excellent new Reggae Greats series, a reissue by Shanachie of one of the all time great dub albums, King Tubbys Meets Rockers Uptown, albums by the Mighty Sparrow, Shorty and more.

Caribbean Show recommendations this month come from both Jamaica and Trinidad. Ina Jamaica 12" single style comes Shinehead with "Billie Jean"/"Mama Used to Say," and Barrington Levy with Jah Screw doing "Under Me Sense!" The latter uses an old Taxi Gang (Sly and Robbie) riddim called "Goalkeeper" with a really catchy trombone hook, and the lyrics expound a bit of truth with "Hey Babylon, you no like ganjamn, but the weed bring the foreign purse upon the island!" I like the new trend of including two different vocal mixes plus version of 12" Taxi singles, giving three different cuts for the money. And it's movie theme time for 12" singles, too, with Shinehead's intermittent whistling of the Fistful of Dollars theme on "Billie Jean," as well as a Ras release by Paul Blake and the Bloodfire Posse of the Pink Panther theme. From Trinidad comes an album of calyp­so and soca from Calypso Rose, called Run in Town, that is excellent, especially a cut called "Huttam Pullam." And a 12" single from Bally has three great songs, each in a different style with witty lyrics... "Gimme Piece," a funny plea to his "dou deu" to stop the fighting and give him a little peace (double entendre time), "Me Neh Fightin" and "Tax Monkey!" Trinidad Carnival 85 awards will be announced next month.
Dick Gregory and the AIDS Conspiracy

White jokes, black jokes; Harry Chapin lionized; but is it a performance?; and the latest from Albania (can you wait?)

Gregory's quests these days are spiritual-nutritional. He has used himself as a test animal to try out food stuffs that can be fed to people who are in advanced stages of starvation. Gregory staves himself for extended periods, then recovers using formulas made primarily from kelp. Similar approaches are being taken right now in Ethiopia. (Much of the food going to Ethiopia would kill the people if they ate it. The body can't take the shock of a can of creamed corn, after going without for a month.)

Gregory's favorite topic of the past is conspiracy. Most of us know who killed JFK and MLK but Brother Greg has come up with some theories that would scare anyone, even the President of the U.S.A. AIDS was researched and developed by the white racist power structure as a weapon against gays? The Secret Service was responsible for the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan? I suggest you see Dick Gregory and hear the rest for yourself. Meanwhile, get me a tape measure and some wheatgrass parts of the body.

Gregory is much more than a comedian, however. After softening up the crowd with so many white jokes, he addressed the blacks in chilling fashion. According to Gregory, American blacks are rotten on the inside, devoid of spirit, which is why they are so infatuated with the materialistic. America is the fifth largest economic power in the world, and the blacks are designated to be a big joke, a can of creamed corn, after going without for a month.

> What about New Orleans, where the music stands still? At Don Marshall's Contemporary Arts Center we find authentic government-sponsored artsy fartsy Performance as opposed to the Mardi Gras and Eccentric Local Color Permanent Performance Pieces more readily available at the New Orleans Rock Concert. Don Marshall's CAB has a singular approach to the Performance genre. While Don Kirschen had his performers play to the theatre next door to where the audience would add the audience later, Don Marshall often gives his performances more than one audience at a time. Video feeds to another room? Live radio? No. Don Marshall's genius lies in scheduling, using random genre juxtapositions to create powerful aleatoric statements. The combining of the magnificent film documentary Soy Aman, Somebody with the dress rehearsal of a play in the theatre next door to where the film was showing said more about the temporal nature of life than either could have on its own. Dalt Wonk's Spiritual Gifts took on new meaning when combined with sounds from the Electronic Cabaret down the hall. Most films are easier to appreciate when you also get to列入 a theatre audience. Most films are easier to appreciate when you also get to列入 a theatre audience. Most films are easier to appreciate when you also get to列入 a theatre audience. Most films are easier to appreciate when you also get to列入 a theatre audience. After the audience had left, there was still the possibility of the audience.net...

The World's Fair as Performance

CARLOS BOLL

News from Albania... Astoria, Queens, is not Albania but it is one of the few places in the states to find Albanian records and rare qualities of paprika. I'm happy to report that Yugoslavian videos do exist. Ledi Breno is a singer with a band that spins the Boney M, ABBA, Blondie axis and has produced videos. In one of the videos, partygoers eat chips and dip while flirting. It is good to know that they have chips and dip in Belgrade.

Meanwhile... I found out what Harmelodics might be in a musical sense, which differs greatly from its use in journalism. Next month. Also, now that we know that we are what the world, what are you gonna do about it? Whatever you choose to do, don't forget... it's all music.
On Tour ...

Bronski Beat, the controversial British electro trio, bring their act to the stages of America supporting Madonna. Their tour of major arenas and halls begins in mid-April in Seattle and runs until June, when they hit the Big Apple. Though an unlikely contender for chart success based on image (elfin) and lyrical stance (deadly serious), the group has managed to top the charts in England and crack America's Top 40. Much of the credit goes to Jimmy Sommerville (seen here in T-shirt), whose high-pitched, even vocals are immediately recognizable on the band's hits "Why?" "Smalltown Boy," and "It Ain't Necessarily So."

In The Studio ...

Deniece Williams stepped by Sound Image Studios in Hollywood recently to cut some tracks with her co-writer Mont Seward and engineer Elliott Peters. Two American guitar greats met up in Texas a little while back. The studio was Austin Recording, where guitarist Lonnie Mack was overdubbing and mixing some tracks for his new album on Alligator Records. In the producer's seat was another six-string legend, Stevie Ray Vaughan. Vaughan, meanwhile, has been working on his own new CBS release at Compass Point Studios in Nassau, the Bahamas... Los Angeles' What Is This journeyed to Woodstock, New York, where they are cutting an MCA album with producer Todd Rundgren. The sessions are taking place at Rundgren's Utopia Recording. Chris Anderson is engineering. Kicking off a busy season, The Complex Studios in Los Angeles played host to The Jacksons recently. The group mixed their latest single, "Wait," at the studio. The project was engineered by Greg Ladanyi, who also mixed Don Henley's new single at the facility. Danny Kortchmar co-produced. Kortchmar also added some of his own touch when David Lindley tracked and mixed his latest solo album at The Complex. The disc was produced and engineered by Ladanyi and Tom Knox, with Murray Drakin as second engineer. Next up, Melissa Manchester was at The Complex, cutting her new MCA album with George Duke producing. Tom Vician engineering and Sharon Rice assisting. Last but not least, Complex owner and engineer ace George Massenburg engineered the soundtrack sessions for the upcoming feature film, A Certain Fury and an LP for top Australian act Goanna. And out at Sound Summit in Lake Geneva, WI, Cheap Trick are at work on their new CBS album. Jack Douglas is producing, Paul Killion is engineering and John Patterson is assistant engineer.

Critic's Choice:

Lain Blair Bows To His Royal Badness - Prince

The Star swept into LA for a six-night/ seven-night sell out at The Forum and predictably blew away all pretenders to the throne with a two-hour extravaganza that left fans and critics gasping for air. For it 1984 belonged to Michael Jackson, 1985 is already Prince's despite the inevitable backlash and escalating stories of Royal Brattiness. And on the strength of these supercharged shows his victory is well-deserved. After a rhythmically impressive but lightweight opening set, two Prince-isms; 5) thesurprise appearance of Sheila E., His Badness strutted on stage and unleashed the perfect opening number, "Let's Go Crazy," in front of an ecstatic audience that appeared to cut across all normal rock and roll demographics - young and old, white and black, the overdressed and underdressed all happily shared the gospel according to The Prince of Porn. And while a lot has been made of Prince's blatant sexuality and Bad Boy reputation, to see him work a stage is to see him as he really is — straight out of the grand tradition of great showmen who know exactly how to please an audience. For in truth, while Michael has his sequined glove and furry stage friends for some high-tech laser sword and sorcery, Prince has his royal sceptre, bubble-bath, ejaculating guitar — and more costume changes than Michael (or Diana Ross for that matter). And while his fine band may be called The Revolution, all these special effects and props, dazzling lights and slick choreography were strictly showbiz-as-usual at its most calculating and effective. The Kid's certainly come a long way since he was booted offstage opening for the Stones in '81.

Top of the Charts

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Albums</th>
<th>Singles</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>She's The Boss</td>
<td>&quot;Can't Fight This Feeling&quot; (EGO Speedwagon)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Eagles &amp; The Snowman Soundtrack</td>
<td>&quot;California Girls&quot; (David Lee Roth) (Warner Bros.)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Centerfield</td>
<td>&quot;The Heat Is On&quot; (MCA)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>No Jacket Required</td>
<td>&quot;Too Late For Goodbye&quot; (Julian Lennon) (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The Firm</td>
<td>&quot;Material Girl&quot; (Madonna) (Warner Bros.)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Building The Perfect Beat</td>
<td>&quot;Only The Young&quot; (Geffen)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Visiting Susan Soundtrack</td>
<td>&quot;One More Night&quot; (Phil Collins) (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Breakfast Club Soundtrack (A&amp;M)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Heartfelt City Cars</td>
<td>&quot;I Wanna Know What Love Is&quot; (Foreigner) (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Agent Provocateur</td>
<td>&quot;Loverboy&quot; (Tomita Mario) (Epic)</td>
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Personal Favorites

David Hidalgo, guitarist, vocalist, and accordion player with Los Lobos, names his five favorite songs: 1) "Rich Woman" — Gil Scott-Heron; 2) "Corral De Pedro Infinito" — Los Alegres De Teran; 3) "Anything You Want" — The Del Fuegos; 4) "Rebel Kind" — The True believers; 5) "Cumbia De Love" — Rick Ovaille Y Su Orchestra.
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**A New Star Rising**

The strong, beautiful voice of Congolese singer M'Bilia Bel is gaining popularity here.

As evidenced by the number of request line calls to both WTTU's World of Reggae show and WWOZ's Caribbean Show, a hot, new African pop star is rising named M'Bilia Bel. A strong, beautiful voice like hers could hardly go unrecognized, but her sudden rise in New Orleans is surprising considering she sings Congolese soukous style, a form of African pop that up until now has not gained much popularity here.

From Zaire, M'Bilia Bel has been for several years a protege of Tabu Ley Rochereau and has appeared on several of his albums as well as performed live in America during Rochereau's 1984 tour of the States. It was mentioned in this column back in May 1984 that it was our big loss that no New Orleans promoter at the time was willing to bring the Rochereau tour through New Orleans because the music sounded too much like Cuban music. It was our loss because every review I read of the tour was enthusiastic and always included glowing reports of M'Bilia Bel.

The album that has brought her to light is a new release on Shanachie called *Bameli Sow*, which presents four long cuts sung in French and Lingala (the majority language of Zaire). The opening cut, "Faux Pax," was a single and a big hit for her in Africa. The Congolese sound continues to be the biggest selling of all African styles throughout the continent and is having similar success in New Orleans thanks to the Shanachie release. For those who want to hear more, M'Bilia Bel can also be heard on several other records.

The most easily available is another Shanachie release called *Tabou Ley*, a compilation album put together to coincide with the Rochereau tour. Actually a Rochereau album, *Tabou Ley* features M'Bilia Bel on two cuts, most notably "Eswi Yo Wapi." And two African releases that occasionally show up in import stores are M'Bilia Bel with Seigneur Rochereau and L'Africa International, which includes two really fine performances of "Eswi Yo Wapi" and "Kethia;" and a recent release called *Bogarents Yo Mahala*, which I haven't heard yet but which got only a lukewarm review by Elizabeth Sobos in the Reggae and African Beat magazine.

The main elements of the Congolese soukous sound are the full, rich vocals, Cuban rhythms (rumbas, etc.) and the multiple guitar work that adds melody and percussion. But its being played in a single note style rather than chords. For those who would like to delve a little further into those sounds, there is another Shanachie release that features Zaire's most famous guitarist, Franco, teamed up with Zaire's most famous vocalist, Tabu Ley (Seigneur) Rochereau. The album, entitled *Onama Wapi*, is a reissue of a 1983 release called *L'Eventement* (The Event). It was truly an event...the first time these two superstars had gotten together on record. Two of the four cuts on this album, "Ngungi" and "Kabassele -- It Memorium," are beautiful in every sense — music and vocals. The release has mixed up the song titles so that the order listed on the jacket does not coincide with the order of the songs listed on the disc label. The true song order is which is listed on the album jacket.

While it is encouraging, and somewhat surprising, that soukous is finally breaking here in New Orleans, it will not be at all surprising if the new Orlando Julius album, entitled *Dance Afro-Beat*, becomes an overnight sensation. Three cuts from the album, "Dance Afro-Beat," "A Dara" and "Aye Leer," have been getting heavy airplay on WWOZ's Caribbean Show and the response has been enthusiastic. Orlando Julius (OJ) Ekemode is a recording star from Nigeria who began his career in the early Sixties and subsequently moved to Los Angeles. He and his band, Ashiko, have blended Afro-beat, juju, high-life and funk to form a sound that is guaranteed to make you dance.
The two main creators of Afrobeat, Fela Anikulapo Kuti and drummer Tony Allen, each have a new album out and both feature high energy music. The Afrobeat style is a complex array of rhythms for which James Brown, where every musician, whether he be playing drums, guitar, horn or keyboard, is adding to the rhythmic interplay. Tony Allen, who drummed for FelaAfrobeat, has ventured on his own to release what I believe is his third solo album, entitled N.E.P.A. The title is both the acronym for the Nigerian power and light company and Allen's critical renaming to Never Expect Power Always, a commentary on the company's frequent power blackouts. The album contains only two cuts but each features a "dance dub" after the vocal cut. The songs feature Tony Allen playing almost a train beat, fast and driving, that never lets up. I much prefer the dance dubs, which cook like nothing ever recorded in Jamaica but echo off into space like the best Jamaican dub. For overall effect, the closest thing I can come to these dance dubs is the waka version of "Ja Funkin'" that King Sunny Ade (who, like Allen and Fela, is from Nigeria) released a few years back.

The new Fela album, entitled "Cross Examination" (fortunately, a lyrics sheet is provided). The chorus of "You are guilty... yes you are..." is chilling, and to quote from the press release that accompanied this album, the lyrics "in the context of (Fela's recent) arrest and his previous history of harassment by the police, military and government of Nigeria... provide a powerful statement on African justice.

On this front, Fela's troubles continue, stemming from his arrest for currency trafficking as he prepared to fly out of Lagos airport last September for his first tour of America in 15 years. He compounded his problem when, released on bail but denied the freedom to leave the country, he called a press conference to "denounce the Nigerian government's actions and state his feeling that his travel to America was deliberately being obstructed due to his criticism of Nigerian establishment institutions." These statements resulted in his second arrest for "unauthorized public criticism of the government." Now, the government has effectively silenced Fela by sentencing him to five years imprisonment. The details of the arrest and subsequent trial show blatant prejudice against Fela, with probable motivation of preventing him from carrying his message to America. A movement began recently through many U.S. reggae publications and radio stations to bombard the Nigerian government with letters of protest against Fela's imprisonment. The validity of this movement is strengthened by the fact that Amnesty International has picked up the case and now is distributing press releases stating that Fela "may be a prisoner of conscience imprisoned for his non-violent political behavior rather than any criminal offense." They are calling for a re-trial by a court that is in accordance with internationally accepted standards of fairness, or that Fela be released. A short letter of protest written by the Nigerian Chief of Staff will aid in the overturning of this injustice to Fela. Letters should be addressed to: Major General Idiagbon, Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, Popan Barraeks, Lagos, Nigeria.
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REVIEWS

Los Lobos
How Will the Wolf Survive?
Stash 25177

Even though this is marketed
towards the rock-set, this one
has as lot to offer everyone. It's
really something different as their
premier EP from last year pointed
out. Basically it's lively LA-Mex
accordian music, having links with
our own Cajun music. It's dance
music, but I find it smoother than
Cajun music, as the lyrics to the
songs are just as important as the
rhythms. You can hear traces of
nearly every type of music, well
played and sung with positive
conviction.

"I Got Loaded", the Lil' Bob
Camile swamp pop classic, provides
a real Louisiana link, in a knees up
rendition. All of the songs are in
English so you gringos don't have to
worry. Recommended.

—Almost Slim

Dash Rip Rock
"Marsupial" / "Shake That
Girl"
Riprock Records

I was hooked on "Shake That Girl"
before I realized I was listening to
the wrong side of this record.
Clocking in at two minutes and six
seconds, "Shake That Girl" will leave
you shuddering and getting ready to
dance before you've figured what
it's all about. "I need a girl... to help
me shake the one before I'm out:
my sound like a lryic by a guy who
doesn't learn a lesson but the music
in these grooves is ample evidence
that singer/songwriter Bill Davis
has done his rock 'n' roll homework
(and perhaps had enough sense to
ignore most of what he's learned).

"Shake That Girl" features a
thumping bass and breakneck
tempo reminiscent of Gene Summers'
"School of Rock and Roll" but is too unpretentious to be
lumped together with any novusrockabilly.

Dash Rip Rock is three guys from
Baton Rouge who gig around the
Capitol, Lafayette, and sometimes
find their way down here. Their
material ranges from the R.E.M.-like
"Marsupial" to country standards
to the rave-up "Shake That Girl!"

—Macon Fry

Irm Thomas
Down At Muscle Shoals
Chess P-Vine 6013 (Japan)

Shouldn't this be called Up At
Muscle Shoals? No matter, since
Irm's late Sixties Chess singles were
hidden classics, the inclusion of all
four of them and some unused
material makes this a highly desire-
able album, even at its stratospheric
($15 plus!) import price tag. This
material won't be too familiar,
because according to Irma, Chess'
promotion was nil. Nevertheless,
Irm's really on top of her game
here, working through blues and
soul with equal ease. The arrange-
ments are typical of the Muscle
Shoals style, often sounding
like country and soul simultane-
ously—a sound that found its way not
only into the catalogs of Chess, but also
Dot, Goldwax, Fame, Atlantic and
Bell, thanks to producer Rick Hall.

The Offs Riddling cover, "Good
To Me" is the only "hit," as it made a
brief two-week visit in the national
R&B charts in 1968. Other covers
include "I've Been Loving You Too
Long," "Security" and "Let's Do It

Fats In
Las Vegas

Fats Domino
Fats Domino '65
Mercury 20070

While many R&B record col-
collectors have written off Fats'
post-Imperial releases as direction-
less stabs at pop music, this one is
positively an exception. Recorded
live at the Flamingo in Las Vegas,
this album faithfully captures Fats'
at his enthusiastic best along with
Clarence Ford's band. The songs
and style are right out of the Im-
perial songbook, but addition of an
electric bass and the dirty amplifi-
cation of Walter Nelson's guitar give
the songs a whole new drive. No
point in rattling off what's on this
one as you can well imagine. Let it
be said, however, that Fats definitely
sounds at home, as he spent much
time in Vegas during the period and
was known to throw the dice on the
odd occasion.

Even though there has been a rash
of live Domino LPs released in the
past few years this is by far the best.
Too bad it's been out of print for
years.

Found this one in Chester,
England, of all places last summer
at a book fair.

—Almost Slim
Over, which rival the originals. Irma really gets into the bluesy "Here I Am, Take Me" and "Somewhere Crying," which really burn. On the up side, "Cheater Man" and "I Gave You Everything" will give anyone the urge to boogaloo.

Playing time on this is just a shade over 32 minutes and unless you're fairly fluent in Japanese I'm afraid you won't make much sense of the inner sleeve notes, so buyer beware. Still Irma completists will already be reaching for the MasterCharge, as this one belongs on the shelf with the Imperials, Rons and Mints.

— Almost Slim

Rockin' Sydney
My Zydeco Shoes Got the Zydeco Blues
Maison de Soul 1009

I know I'm breaking a cardinal rule by reviewing an album I wrote the liner notes for and I've covered two other Rockin' Sydney releases in the immediate past, but the story behind this one needs to be told. Most importantly, this LP contains "My Zydeco Shoes," which is burning up every black jukebox in the state. Even though the record has been ignored by most radio stations for being "too downhome," the public's taste has discovered and according to the dean of Louisiana recordmen, Floyd Solomon, it is his fastest selling single in nearly a decade.

Once again Sydney supplies all the instrumentation, save the present drum machine. Everything on here is catchy even though a present drum machine. Everything on here is catchy even though a

The Bud Freeman Quintet
The Real Bud Freeman 1984
Principally Jazz Productions

Bud Freeman is back in America and back with an album, his first in seven years. He says it's his best work — and it is. At 78 his tone is better than ever — a rich and open vibrato — and his phrasing has become more varied. The latter has undergone a remarkable metamorphosis from the uncomplicated yet swinging lines of the early days. Somewhere in mid-career the phrases become intricate, the sound aggressive. We have some of that here, on pieces such as "Toot Toot," which is a fired-up version of "Look-Ka-Py-Py," to "Bud and the Boys," which cook at a high temperature. We also have cuts that swing steadily on a rolling beat and still others (two ballads) that move meditatively along. What Freeman gives us are different facets of himself and his art, an album mixing the self and his art, an album mixing five and the unexpected.

The four musicians who join him — drummer Barrett Deems, pianist Stu Katz, guitarist Bob Roberts, and bassist John Baney — all worked with Bud prior to this session, and it shows in the ensemble work. Deems, Louis Armstrong's drummer for eight years, is a man who fires up in a band as few other drummers can. Here he and Freeman work with be-bop players and the styles fuse perfectly. Katz in particular is a man gifted with a sense of swing.

These cuts are also available on compact disc. To reward those who buy the more expensive version, the producer threw in three extra tunes which rival the originals. Irma completists will already be

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Louis Armstrong: Jolly Rollin'.

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The migration north was at first slow and sporadic, but by the mid-Twenties almost all the great jazzmen were there.

Robert Wood is a Chicago writer and contributor for the Illinois Entertainer, where this series first appeared.

Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers. Left to right: Omer Simeon, Andre Hillaire, Jelly Roll Morton (seated), John Lindsay, Johnny St. Cyr, Kid Ory, George Mitchell. All except Mitchell are native Orleanians.
Mississippi riverboats and at the river-towns, such as Davenport, Iowa, were Bix Beiderbecke, the greatest white cornetist of the Twenties, born and first got his taste for the new music.

The outbreak of the war gave impetus to the growth of American factories, and the sudden need for workers spurred the migration of blacks in large numbers to the north. The choice for the musicians was Chicago. A few months after Storyville's shutdown, King Oliver arrived in Chicago and was met at the train station by representatives from two bands, both of which wanted him for themselves. Oliver pacified both parties by agreeing to play with each at different times the same evenings.

It was also in 1918 that a gifted young pianist, Jimmy Yancey, got off the Orpheum Circuit and settled in his hometown of Chicago. The 17-year-old Yancey had been singing and dancing in vaudeville shows since boyhood, touring Europe and America. Once back in Chicago he developed a varied style, one that at times had the swinging left-hand drive of what later became known as boogie piano, and at others had a soft and slow introspective movement. With the slower pieces, more complex rhythms were achieved. Because mostly everyone at that time had a piano, you know. And the kids would be out there and they would be having as they called them 'rent parties.' And they would be playing piano. It were quite natural just like the kids of today. They'd start up and go to dancing and whistling, you know. And you see, he came from a musical family... It was just in his blood. And that's the way he [started] taking his [music] up, I can tell ya.

With Yancey and Oliver (and Oliver's band) esconced in town, and with Jelly Roll Morton coming and going, Chicago was ready for the next development in jazz.

One of his songs, "Crying In My Sleep," begins with a surprising two bars of dissonance so similar to that of Thelonius Monk's work that one wonders if Monk had not listened to Yancey. And there are times when Yancey's hands pause, creating silences that are again echoed in later years by Monk.

Who was Yancey listening to? Where did he derive his style? According to his widow, Mama Yancey, "He wasn't listening to no one. Because mostly everyone at that time had a piano, you know. And the kids would be out there and they would be having as they called them 'rent parties.' And they would be playing piano. It were quite natural just like the kids of today. They'd start up and go to dancing and whistling, you know. And you see, he came from a musical family... It was just in his blood. And that's the way he [started] taking his [music] up, I can tell ya."

With Yancey and Oliver (and Oliver's band) esconced in town, and with Jelly Roll Morton coming and going, Chicago was ready for the next development in jazz. (Next month: Part II — Oliver, Armstrong, and Beiderbecke.)
Clarinetist, composer and educator Alvin Batiste is beginning to achieve the national recognition his talent and accomplishments deserve. As a clarinetist, Alvin Batiste is almost without peer in contemporary jazz circles. His solo piece is the highlight on the recently released Clarinet Summit LP, that features clarinetists Jimmy Hamilton, John Carter, bass clarinetist David Murray and Alvin Batiste working in a quartet format. In December he did a concert at Carnegie Hall that was extremely well received, and Batiste also did one night at the local jazz club Snug Harbor that featured astoundingly strong solo work by Batiste, especially on two ballads, Thad Jones' "A Child Is Born" and the Billy Eckstein standard "I Want To Talk About You" (which John Coltrane had nearly claimed as his own), and on a Batiste original "Picou." Not only does Batiste get around the horn with masterful authority, but his solo approach eschews repetitions of bluesy licks or virtuosic runs, for much more insightful juxtapositions and rearrangements of melodies framed by ingenious harmonic shifts. Drummer Herman Jackson's propulsive, subtly complex polyrhythms contributed the proper setting for Batiste's gem-like solos.

As a composer, the title cut of Batiste's recent LP, Musique de l'Afrique Nouvelle Orleans, immediately established Batiste's credentials. The nine-piece movement is complex without being convoluted, it's intellectually rigorous without being drained of emotional energy. The three companion cuts on the LP are also fitting additions to Batiste's composing resume - each of the three pieces establishes its own mood and has its own purpose. From the avant garde-ish experiments of "The Endocrine Song" which covers the entire audible spectrum of 20 to 20,000 cycles, to "Words of Wisdom" with its "sacred chant," Batiste has carved a high water mark for future "concept" jazz albums.

As an educator, Batiste is a key member of the Ellis Marsalis - Kidd Jordan - Alvin Batiste triumvirate who are collectively responsible not only for the development of key individuals such as the Marsalis brothers, Wynton and Branford, or the musical siblings Terrence Blanchard and Donald Harrison; this trine of teachers is also responsible for the development of contemporary jazz as a respected artform for both a career choice and a curriculum choice in school. It is too easy to forget that before these three men, there was no organized and expert instruction in jazz available in the New Orleans school system. What Batiste et al teach is far beyond high school and college "jazz lab bands" featuring Stan Kenton and Count Basie charts - these teachers have actually brought up a generation of musicians technically and intellectually prepared to raise and develop the music to a higher level both musically and intellectually. These teachers have given the world musicians who are more than entertainers, they have been the mentors of artists.

For Alvin Batiste, cultivating jazz musicians who are artists has been a conscious vocation. Batiste believes that "The beauty and profundity that an authentic jazz artist can bring to the human consciousness is a phenomenon that has captivated the musical mind of the 20th century."

A conscious advocate of his chosen artform, i.e., the music commonly called "jazz," Alvin Batiste recently wrote a guest column for a Baton Rouge newspaper in which Batiste grabbed the proverbial bull by the horns and attempted to wrestle with the thorny question of "What is jazz?"

His answer illuminates the intellectual insightfulness of this master of the clarinet:

"One may ask, what is jazz? Well, the answer can take many forms, but the essentials are pretty much constant. First, the art of jazz thrives through the use of the intuitive mind to make music in the African-American idiom. Second, individualism comes forth in a musical way that maximized self-expression in the harmonious excitement of the group. Third, there is an exhilaration that accompanies search and discovery during the musical process that has been known to spread to audiences."

In the following interview, Alvin Batiste offers more insight from one of the leading musical minds of the 20th century.

Why do you continue playing clarinet when you could be playing any of the other reeds?

That's the way I started. You know how it is when a child starts something. A child is very impressionable and that's the first instrument I started on.

Yeah, but a lot of New Orleans saxophonists started out on a clarinet because that's what the older musicians were teaching them and...

But they didn't start out hearing Charlie Parker, then after hearing Bird, hang out with Harold Batiste, Nat "King" Cole, James Black, Chuck Beatty and all those cats. We had a scene going during that time, so there was no reason for me not to play clarinet.

When I played with the Ray Charles band, I played baritone saxophone. When I played rhythm and blues gigs with Joe Jones or Smiley Lewis, you know just the regular Municipal Auditorium gigs where you played unionized gigs, I played saxophone then. But, that was just for professional purposes. For artistic purposes, not for one moment did I ever stop playing clarinet.

How much shedding (practicing) do you do to be able to get around your ax the way you do?

Right now I have the blues because I can only shed for about an hour and a half every day. Some days I can do more than that. Today, I only played about a half hour. But when things are really nice I go a lot longer than that. I have shedded for long stretches, like six hours a day. In fact, I have a reputation around New Orleans for being one of the "practicing-est" cats in New Orleans.

You've got to practice to be able to play the clarinet in the modern mode.

That's really something I'm just becoming...
I wasn’t aware of why it was so frustrating not being able to manipulate a lot of the things I was hearing. The instrument presents difficulties. I spent a lot of time just with the fundamentals. That’s where my association with young people helped quite a bit. I was always fortunate enough to be around a lot of young talented people. Like Earl Turbinton — I taught Earl, Donald Harrison, Branford Marsalis. I have a cat at school [Southern University in Baton Rouge] now named Webster Anderson, he’s fantastic. Then there’s Henry Butler, and of course Herman Harrison, HJarrum, people in your environment, you’re always learning something because not only do they have serious questions that they are trying to get answers to, they are also putting down some music that if you can’t come up to it, well then you’ve got to pay some dues.

Then of course Kidd Jordan and I married sisters. We were in school together and we were always people who practiced a lot. When a new baby came, they’d put the baby in the crib, the ladies would go shopping and we would practice. When we looked up, Kent Jordan was playing flute. He had been hearing his daddy play saxophone and his uncle play clarinet when he was in his mama’s womb.

Given that you have to practice as much as you do, why do you continue playing clarinet in a modern idiom when you could play saxophone and not have all the problems of squelching, staying in tune, fingering contortions to make octave jumps, etcetera?

Well, my daddy, who played a little clarinet, got me my first clarinet from a pawn shop. He bought it home in a gym bag. The cats used to rib me about that. I used to fantasize about having a real clarinet case. From there I just kept going into the clarinet. Now, I’m very glad that I did, because as I work with my students I find myself trying to help them expand their range on the saxophone because the saxophone has a very limited range in a homogenous sense. The sound of the saxophone changes radically as you move from octave to octave. It also has certain types of limitations in terms of flexibility. The clarinet, on the other hand, is very vocal, it’s like the human voice.

Who were your influences on the clarinet?

Initially, I didn’t have any influences on the clarinet other than my daddy, who said, “I’m going to put these pictures on the wall. These are some bad cats;” — he didn’t say “bad cats” but that’s what he meant. There was a picture of Edmond Hall from Reserve, Louisiana, and Benny Goodman. I used to listen to the radio all the time because my daddy was a chauffeur and he also ran on the railroad. I had a lot of time at home so I used to hear all those things on the radio, but this was way before I started playing music.

In fact, I went to art school during the latter part of elementary school and as a result of going to art school I met Harold Batiste’s brother. One day I was bringing him some artwork that I was doing for him. So when I went around on LaSalle Street — I lived on Loyola and they lived right across from the Dew Drop about three blocks away — and when I got there these cats were playing music and listening to music. I heard Charlie Parker playing “Now Is The Time.” I said, “man, what is that? That cat, hey man, that’s what I want to do!”

So I had the clarinet that my old man had gotten me in that gym bag. When I first got the clarinet I was really drug because I had to carry it in a gym bag while other cats had cases. So I stopped playing it. I had graduated from elementary school and was going to Booker T. the next year and it was during the summer before that I went around to Harold’s paid with the artwork. I heard this record and said, “man, I got a clarinet!” Harold said go get it. I went back around to my house, got my clarinet, and Harold gave me a lesson right on the spot and I have never stopped since then. I got in the instrumental program at Booker T. Washington and the next year I got in the band and just kept on.

Why did you decide to become a teacher?

I didn’t realize that I was going to be a teacher until my junior year at Southern University. The people said, “Batiste, you have to sign up for student teaching.” I said, “Student what? What is that?” I went to Southern because all of the hip cats who could play were going to Southern. You had Emory Thompson who is Umar Shariff, father of Jamil Shariff; Edward Sawyer, a lot of cats. I came from the ghetto so I couldn’t afford to go to Xavier or Dillard, plus Dillard couldn’t offer any scholarships. So we just went there to be in the band and they told us in order to be in the band you have to take mathematics, science, you know, the same thing that is happening now.

After I took practice teaching, in my senior year the supervisor from the instrumental music section of the New Orleans Public Schools came to me and said, “I want you to quit school and come and teach in New Orleans. I heard you are a good clarinet player, so you’ll make a good teacher.” I said, “Man, no way. I’ve got one more year and I’m not leaving!” He said, “Okay, when you finish, I’ve got a job for you.” I finished and came on down here. When I came to New Orleans I played with the symphony. Played the Mozart clarinet concerto which I had auditioned to play. I started playing with Nat Perry and Melvin Lastie.

In what year was this that you played with the symphony?

In 1954.

So you were one of the first black cats to play with the symphony?

Yeah, might have been the first. I don’t remember. Either I was the first or Richard Harrison was the first. In fact, that’s how I got my nickname, “Mozart!” Melvin Lastie came to the concert. I had to wear tails and Melvin had never been to a symphony concert before. At the time we were playing jazz at Fister’s up on LaSalle Street. So afterwards Melvin said — Melvin had a speech impediment, he stuttered — “Heyyyyy - heyyyyy
Alvin Batiste

This record was then an opportunity for me. When we got it, I said, "That was the Mozart clarinet concerto." He said, "Mo-mo-mozarttt!" So when we got on the gig and it was my time to solo, he hollered, "bbbbllloowwww MO-MOZARTTT!!" And of course, he was the official namer and that's how I got my nickname. He was really a heavy cat. Alvin "bbbbbllloowwww MO-MOZARTTT!!"

On your current album there seems to be an emphasis on composition.

Yeah! I was very happy to be able to make that kind of statement because in many instances, especially among the black intelligentsia, you don't find a recognition that there is an intellectual legacy associated with the music unless you go at it from a European standpoint. Of course, coming from New Orleans and being weaned as a child on parade music, the music of the Indians, the blues, the whole thing, that has always inspired me, so I thought that there had to be an intellectual counterpart to that in the music.

This record was then an opportunity for me to make an intellectual statement. The music had already been scored for orchestra but it cost too much money to get recorded with an orchestra, plus you would have so many stylistic problems that it would not have been done as easily as it was done with these great musicians.

Is there any other importance or reason for your wanting to make an intellectual statement?

I think at this stage in America's history, a lot of new musicians don't get history in school. They get the music but they don't get the cultural heritage. The neighborhood patterns, the whole cultural system that I came up under, looks altogether different now.

So the various melodies, rhythms and forms that you've incorporated into your suite are things that you heard when you were coming up?

In my own thinking as I was working through this piece of music, those forms you referred to were sort of archetypes. However, as I hear it back under different conditions, then I get other things together. The whole project has come out and expanded more in terms of its meaning to me and that's a very hip thing because in the way that I think about art, that's the way it's supposed to be. I don't think that you're supposed to grasp it all at once, not even if you are the artist. I think that true art comes through you. It's not something that you actually do, it's something that you invoke and in invoking the art, you as the artist are lifted up and you are lifted up as well as are the people whom you serve.

For instance, in the part where the two clarinets are playing together, the first time I did it, it was a single clarinet cadenza. Well then "The Saints Go Marching In" jumped up from my mind, I said, "Wow, where did this come from?"

But, it has a valid place there and it was done in a very unique way, which if I had planned it, I would not have done it that way.

So you're saying that in the process of laying down the tracks of that which you had planned to do, other possibilities came up?

Right. Often when I'm lecturing in the classroom or just talking to people, people want to know what my perspective of jazz is, I try to convey it and say that jazz is an art that uses the intuitive self participating in a duality with the brain consciousness. The two clarinets playing together on two different tracks sort of show that. The archetypes and the things that came as a result of the archetypes, or in spite of the archetypes, just happen in the process of jazz.

You don't really consciously with dialectics? Some of it consciously and some of it I can rationalize after checking it out. I'm not smart enough to say, "Okay, this is what I'm going to do!" But after seeing it, I recognize that this is something that should be passed on to young kids, especially in a mature material civilization in which we live. You can often feel that the material way alone, in its breadth and sophistication, is the only thing.

You're saying that there is something beyond just what you can see and feel?

Yeah, the material world, it's very weak.

Earlier you said the clarinet had the sound of the human voice, coupling that statement with what you just said about the weakness of the material world, you obviously see music in a deeper context than just entertainment.

On this album I began experimenting with — and I think it is a major omission in the scientific, artistic and medical communities — I am trying to serve the society by enabling people to hear music on its own vibratory terms. That's where the therapeutic impact of the music is. When you hear music coming through a microphone you are altering the wave form and the impact that that particular instrument has on the body. You know that there are some people who love the way a saxophone sounds, some people love a trumpet, some people love a drum. When they hear those instruments it's very therapeutic. It is either very restful or very energizing. We know from the time of the Egyptians that music, sound and color were used for therapeutic purposes. With the amount of music that is used now, just think about all the different types of radio programs that you can have, which utilize the therapeutic quality that music has. I would like to see people experience that. Thank you Alvin Batiste.
Independent record labels have played an essential role in the documenting and developing of jazz, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll. Independents, even as they provide an outlet for local, regional, indigenous creativity, must nonetheless compete with major labels for both local and national markets. New Orleans has a long tradition of independent recording that has recently been picked up by Hammond Scott at Black Top Records. I had a chance to talk with Scott recently and found him to be charming, engaging, and totally serious about the blues, quite willing to share what information he could, generous with credit to others, and eager to answer any questions on his work. If you’ve ever wondered what it’s like to run an independent label in New Orleans in the 1980s...

I know you’re a blues collector yourself; how does your own taste influence your business decisions?

Well, being a collector probably influences me to do a lot of things that aren’t all that commercial, even though for something that’s not all that commercial I try and keep commercial ideas in mind — not to have a bunch of instrumentals, trying to have a tune that has good little hooks in it, sort of a commercial, strong tune. Blues and R&B were very commercial at one time; it all depends on what the forces-that-be consider to be commercial. Take Stevie Ray Vaughn. Basically what he’s recording is what a label like mine would be recording, but the fact that it’s on a big label like Epic, now it’s considered commercial. Basically it’s a three-piece, raw, uncompromising type of music, especially his first album, so I’d really call that, by today’s standards, uncommercial as well. This shows that whatever people want to push can be commercial.

So throughout the history of folk music and black music in this country, there’s been a series of independent labels throughout the Twenties and Thirties and up to the Fifties’ rock ‘n’ roll that will record regional music, then when it’s considered popular enough, the major labels will take it over? That’s exactly right. If you think about Atlantic Records with Ahmet Ertegun, or even Chess records, the Chess brothers when they started that, or Eddie Mesisionier when he started the Aladdin label, which is not around any more, but let’s say Chess records. They started off as something in the back of the El Mocambo lounge in Chicago as the Aristocrat label, and it was just a small one- or two-man operation in the beginning. Muddy Waters was a very early artist for them; I think the first one was actually Sonny Stitt or something like that. They were trying to do jazz at first, but then they got Muddy Waters and the whole label built from there with his success.

When you stop and figure that Muddy Waters brought Chuck Berry to Chess and everybody considers Chuck Berry to be the beginning of, at least most people deemed to be rock ‘n’ roll, that label went a long, long way toward having an impact on American music. On the other hand, you look at a label like Atlantic Records, they started off recording mostly locally popular, territorially popular black artists doing blues and R&B; of course now they’re one of the biggest in the industry and they don’t even record that kind of stuff any more.

They kind of went the other direction?

That’s the usual trend. Now it’s getting a little bit harder. When Atlantic and those labels were coming up in the early Fifties, you had your big ones then like RCA and Columbia — even though Columbia had at that time what they would call a race division and RCA had a race division, like Bluebird — basically those labels sort of left, except for the most tried and true successful blues artists, they mostly left them alone. In other words, most large labels have a lot of overhead and unless they can see huge sales in something, they leave it alone, which leaves a gap for the small labels to fill, because there’s a demand out there. Probably a much larger demand than you realize from the sales of independent records, being that you usually have distribution problems. For what I sell, there’s probably a much larger market than what I’m getting to. The distribution thing, that’s a whole different story.

How did you get started into dealing with a record company?

Well, that’s sort of an odd story. Records were something I always liked a whole lot, as a hobby.

BLACK TOP
Portrait of a small record label

by William D. White
And blues music, especially, was closest to my heart. But then I like rhythm and blues — I really don't make too much of a distinction between R&B and blues, because to me it all comes out of the same tradition. The only thing is, in blues recordings you have that straight blues form, and R&B doesn't stick to a straight blues form, but it all comes out of that Black Southern tradition. So I lump everything together, from the most obscure blues guys you can think of right on up to James Brown or anyone who's really doing heavy black music.

So you were a collector...

I was a collector for a long time. I mean for a really long time, because I'm 34 years old today and the first records when I was 6 or 7 years old, because I liked to buy little 45s back then, when they first had 45s. It used to be a lot of black artists were played on the radio in the area that I was from [Alexandria, Louisiana], so I knew about Jimmy Reed and John Lee Hooker and a lot of the bigger names in the blues at that time when they were having their original hits. I always liked it, and then for awhile you couldn't find those records, every now and then you'd get an occasional one, like in 1966 I was delighted they were playing Lowell Fulson on the radio in my area. I was kind of surprised, 'cause you were starting to hear less and less of that type of music.

Slim Harpo had a few things right around that time, and I was lucky enough to get to see Slim Harpo and some of those people actually play, but for the most part it seemed like it was dying out. Then all of a sudden, this English invasion brought an interest in blues and you started seeing more and more records available again, and new recordings, a lot of which weren't so good. So I got more and more interested in it.

Is there any special sound you're after for the label as a whole?

That's the same thing that I really strive for, and that's what we've done along so far: recording live in the studio. Most of what people consider some of the best records, the most classic records that were made in the blues and R&B field, the thing that really makes 'em so infectious, I believe, is the fact that virtually all of them were recorded live in the studio. When overdubbing techniques were coming in some of them were overdubbed a little bit, but for the most part, they were five sessions, with everybody right out there on the floor together. Sometimes there's a tendency that happens in the stage having a good chance of being generated in the studio, so all of my records are recorded live.

How long does it usually take on a session?

About three days, to record. Then we come back and mix.

But hours at a time? Like four-hour sessions?

Eight to ten hours.

Straight?

Yeah. With breaks for fifteen minutes here and there, but usually I keep 'em going pretty hard; usually by the time I bring the session to an end, they're pretty tired. You can tell that you're not going to get anything that good any more. I average three days, 'cause I find that most of the time the first night is sort of a washout. The musicians come in, and they're real excited about it all, but for one reason or another, it just seems like you have a hard time really getting the ball rolling on the first night. You do cut after cut that you're not satisfied with. There may be some really great records that come out of that first night, but then you find that it just rolls real hard the next two days.

How much does it cost to cut a record? What's your typical expense?

Well, that the expenses keep going up all the time, to begin with. A lot of people don't realize how many stages are involved in the production of one record. Second thing I have to say about that, going into the independent record label business, you don't look at it as how much does it cost to do a record, because if you do a record, you won't be in business for long. You have to go into it, right off the bat, knowing that if you don't have the money to do three albums from the start, or at the least two, you'll never get paid. The nature of these various independent distributors all over the country is that if you just come out with one record that does moderately well — and you can only get so many of the bigger names in the blues at that time, because it's hard to get radio play and the distribution when you have your first release — if you don't have it being followed up by something else, chances are you'll never get paid for that first album by a lot of them. If you want the second record enough had, then they're going to pay you for the first one.

I'm still curious about how much it costs to make albums...

I'd say the average that I spend for the initial recording session, without paying the musicians, is about $2,800 to $3,000, something like that. Now that's doing it very cheaply.

How do you decide who to record?

I guess the way anybody would, by how much they affect me when I see them, what impression they make on me. To start out with I like a kind of tough sound. I'll hold the door open to anything. It doesn't have to be blues, it doesn't really have to be R&B, although for the most part those are my leanings.

What is your break-even point?

Well, it's different for every record, but I would say the average break-even point is about $6,000, and then after 5,000 copies and then after 10,000 copies you could probably on paper say that it broke even a little earlier, but for it to really break even it has to go over 5,000 copies.

How long is it after the record is finally made and released that a band or an artist might see some return?

Well, it depends on how much you got up front. Obviously the thing has to be past break-even. So you have to go to a second pressing, really?

Yeah, I don't see any way they can make money on a first pressing. Your costs are much higher on the first pressing to start off with. What is the best way for you to promote your releases?

The best place I can put my money is in giving records away, and usually we give away a minimum of 600 on up to 1,000 records at the time we release a new record. Rounder has established a list of record shops and radio stations, and critics all across the country who are on their mailing list, so they all get serviced with the record. Have you ever thought about television spots, or concerts?

Well, it's all so expensive...

...or even video?

If somebody approaches me with something that makes sense, I've thought about the video thing, we've talked about it but never gone past it. I don't know if there's a video that is spend all this money and there's no way to recoup the money except through the records, and I'm not sure whether if the video got played the records would get sold. Also you have the problem of, since we're a small label, whether they would even play the video, so I'd be afraid to put all that money out.

What kind of input do the artists themselves have on the selection of songs, cover art, the programs, and the type of publicity, the whole concept?

It goes different ways for different albums, but usually what we usually do is draw up a list of songs that the artist would like to do, then I draw up a list of what I'd like to do, and automatically we know we're going to do the ones that come up on both lists.

Most of your artists are from Texas. You almost couldn't call Black Top a New Orleans label, except for the fact that you live here. You don't record here?

That's probably true, except we're starting to get more Louisiana artists on the label, and I have plans for a lot of people...

Who are some of the folks you're looking at now?

I'm not going to mention too many names, because I'd hate for things not to come to fruition, but one artist I'm interested in doing, and this one's not even down the line yet, is this lady Katie Webster, a South Louisiana piano player and vocalist. She's a fabulous showman, great pianist and anybody who likes music that's real hard driving and tough and well-played with a lot of precision would have to really like her.

Is there anybody else that you're thinking of or talking about?

Well I have this record coming out right now with Anson Funderburgh and Sam Meyers, a partially-blind fellow from Mississippi, a long-term bluesman who worked with many of the great names but he always stayed down in Mississippi, and he's really an unartesian talent, because he's the perfect combination of the real tough sort of blues and at the same time the guy is such a superb vocalist that he could really sing just about anything he wanted to sing, whether it's jazz, blues, or country, he'd be one of the top living harmonica players around.

So every record you go for has to stand on its own?

It has to have several things going for it. It's not so much like I'm looking for a huge profit: the bottom line is they can't lose money. It should make money, because generally what I do is turn right around with the money that comes in and do other projects.

The big problem with a small label is in the average cost of the records you go to, anywhere in the country. I know there exists specialty record shops where the people really know a lot about records, even down to the most obscure records on small labels, but the average record shop is a chain sort of operation and the R&B and pop and rock-type store, one or the other, and they really only carry the hits. Where it all breaks down is that Rounder Records [Black Top's distributor] can do a fabulous job and they can really push it into their local distributors, but if the local distributor doesn't take it from there, then your records are so sporadically available that you're missing all kinds of sales. I really believe that everything I put out could sell three times more than what it is selling if I had better distribution, although now I have better distribution than 20 percent of the people trying to do what I'm trying to do.
Come up to Kool.

Kool gives you extra coolness for the most refreshing sensation in smoking.

A sensation beyond the ordinary.

Red Stick ROCKS

By R. U. Eddy

For more than a quarter of a century—at least since the advent of the popular conception of rock 'n' roll—the notion has persisted that Louisiana music could be defined purely in terms of New Orleans. In terms of The Big Easy's commercial and artistic impact on the national and international music scene, that idea was essentially an accurate one.

Unfortunately, New Orleans' rightful place in both the historical and popular musical imagination helped form a tangled, nearly impenetrable web of provincialism on the part of many New Orleanians, who tended to regard many legitimate Louisiana musicians with a certain lack of respect, if they were not from New Orleans. Even more unfortunately, many deserving Louisiana groups died on the vine (i.e., national recording contracts) simply because they lacked—to borrow a phrase from former New Orleans jazz poet Ron Cuccia—the "essential Big Tomato pedigree."

The occasional Johnny Rivers (a Baton Rouge High School grad) or John Fred (born and raised in the Red Stick) were either too commercial or too flash-in-the-pan to be taken seriously. Ferriday's Jerry Lee Lewis, North Louisiana's James Burton (a sideman for Elvis Presley), gospel star Jimmy Swaggart—are rarely considered when we speak of New Orleans, if they were not from New Orleans. Louisiana's uncommonly rich musical heritage.

Ironically, it is a New Orleans institution—the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival—that has been responsible for opening up the rest of Louisiana to the rest of the world. Simply by booking—and in some cases, aggressively promoting—a variety of Louisiana blues, Cajun, R&B, zydeco, rock, country, gospel and jazz artists from outside New Orleans, the NOJ&HF has educated provincial New Orleanians and national music biz and media moguls in understanding Louisiana's uncommonly rich musical heritage. As a whole. With all of its implied and obvious cross-culturation.

The next step is to consider the commercial potential (did I really say that?) of n'th-New Orleanians, non-roots music bands in the state. Baton Rouge, to get right to the point (finally), may have a bigger regional and national role to play in the coming months than anyone realizes.

Forget, for the moment, that Baton Rouge-reared Johnny Rivers was one of the Sixties' most recognizable and successful artists and producers. Forget that John Fred and the Playboys had an international number one hit in the late Sixties with "I Don't Wanna Be a Sucker for Your Love Anymore." Forget that Johnny Rivers is a magnificent talent.

Get real! If, for example, ex-LeRoux producer Leon Medica is able to do what some national music industry insiders are already saying he will do, he just may have one of the most commercially accessible albums projects to come out of Louisiana in some time, notwithstanding recent respectable efforts by the likes of the Red Rockers and Zebra, both New Orleans-aren't products.

Medica, an affable, easy-going sort, has spent the last year or so since LeRoux's break up producing tracks on the likes of the recently disbanded Shitkis, Lafayette-based Atchafalaya (whose second album, Defined, has produced healthy sales across the Acadiana region) and New Orleans' Lillian Axe, which is rumored close to an album pact of its own.

If these eclectic efforts surprise you, the efforts of this 39-year-old, self-described country boy on his own album project will impress you. Along with ex-LeRoux mate Tony Haselden, the aforementioned Duke Bardwell and a young, Steve Perry-type lead singer named Randy Knapp, Medica has completed 80 percent of the tracks for an MTV-oriented rock/dance music album that already has Medica's attorney, John Frankenheimer (who also handles Diana Ross, among others), flying coast to intercontinental coast with legitimate hopes of a major national label breakthrough.

Meanwhile, Medica has been working with another Baton Rougean, Bill Wray, who has released two albums on Capitol/EMI's Liberty label, the soundtrack to the pop movie hit Private School, and songwriting credits with The Motels and Diana Ross to his credit. Wray, incidentally, is completing work on the soundtrack of a Private School sequel which may be released as early as this summer and has written or co-written at least half a dozen cuts for the upcoming Loverboy album.

Another Baton Rouge product, keyboardist Rod Antoon, has been busy on a number of fronts as well. Besides working with fellow Baton Rougean Charlie Singleton on the last Cameo tour (which rebounded last year with the hit album She's Strange), Antoon recently completed an album session with soul meister King Floyd at Bogalusa's Studio in the Country.

Antoon was also a key figure in helping shape some of the instrumental layering on Medica's album project and sided Wray on a series of recent
song demos for the Pointer Sisters. Farther afield, Antoon has plans to produce a promising new Baton Rouge vocalist named Amy Bolen, plus an album of his own songs.

Most significantly, however, Antoon is reportedly a finalist in the search for a keyboard player in a new Prince project called The Family, a band the diminutive Purple Rain-maker’s putting together for his next movie.

Network — a group that trends a mainstream MTV rock/dance road — is also showing signs of breaking out. Composed of ex-LeRoux members Jim Odom and David Peters (who also played on Shad Weathersby’s recent debut album for George Winston’s Dancing Cat label), plus former Kansas pecking vocalist Terry Brock, Network is managed by topflight L.A. talent manager Bud Carr, currently shopping the band’s recently completed album.

Talent manager and producer Johnny Palazzotto, a longtime road manager for Loggins & Messina in the Seventies, who later managed ex-Fairport Convention-er Ian Matthews, Li’l Queenie & the Percolators and the Jacksons’ tour guitarist Greg Wright, has lately been working on a number of other projects. Recently returned from the prestigious MIDEM music conference in Cannes, Palazzotto announced last week that he had engineered a record deal for ex-Rockin’ Dopsie member Major Handy, a new zydeco artist with enormous promise. Handy’s upcoming album, WolfCochon, will be released soon on the GNP-Crescendo label.

Palazzotto also manages the Times, a Baton Rouge new music dance band which has been getting solid notices for its second album, Hip Isn’t It, and even more solid airplay from college and alternative music radio stations around the country. Palazzotto recently completed negotiations with national new music distributor Important Records to work the band’s latest album.

Speaking of Floyd Brown, in particular, and Baton Rouge’s country music scene in general, there’s a lot happening both above ground and behind the scenes. Brown’s winning the Nashville Cable Network’s “You Can Be A Star” contest netted him a single release on MCA, a tour with Bill Anderson, a featured role in a new Nashville Network daily variety show and the first appearance ever, as far as anyone can tell, by a Baton Rouge artist at the Grand Ole Opry.

Baton Rouge country music in general? A quick quiz: Name the recent hit by Lee Greenwood and Barbara Mandrell (it’s written by BR native Paul Harrison). Name BMI’s country songwriter of the year for 1984 (it’s BR native Lewis Anderson). Name a Baton Rouge-bred country songwriter with song credits for artists like Kenny Rogers and scores of others (it’s Casey Kelley, aka Danny Cohen, a former member of the legendary Sixties band, the Greek Fountains).

For still another slice of the Baton Rouge pie, try a taste of Our Favorite Band, a local country roots/new music band on Praxis, the label that released Jason and the Scorchers’ critically-acclaimed Fervor album. OFB’s guitarist Don Spicer sat in on a cut for the Scorchers’ upcoming album, a session that had the legendary James Burton raving about Spicer’s sterling slide guitar work.

Down the road a bit, you’ll be hearing from a wide variety of other Baton Rouge bands with such strange names as Twilight, Bridge Troll, Cayenne, Visitor, Dash Riprock, the Parallells, Exit, Doncat, Kenny Accriva & the House Seekers, River City, Jody Smith, Tim Smith (now with the Producers), Lenny Marcus (a former Alvin Batiste student), and the Gordon Lane Quartet — all ranging from new music and country to jazz and funk, and all from the same area that produced Slim Harpo, Robert Pete Williams, Moses “Whispering” Smith, and dozens of other authentic roots music legends — Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
George Wein, Executive Producer of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, announced the complete schedule for the festival, which will run April 26 through May 5, 1985.

Wein also announced that tickets for all festival events are now on sale at all Ticketmaster Outlets. Tickets for the festival's opening night concert with Miles Davis and Wynton Marsalis have been on sale for several weeks. There is also a second performance announced for the Wynton Marsalis/Miles Davis concert. Mr. Wein said, "Tickets for the Miles and Wynton concert have sold so well that we felt there was a need to add a second performance, so they will appear on Friday, April 26 at 7:30pm at the Theatre of Performing Arts, and again at midnight. Tickets for that second show are also on sale now!"

Artists making their first festival performances are Miles Davis, Sarah Vaughan, Run DMC, Ry Cooder, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Third World, Roy Ayers, Martha Reeves, Sippie Wallace, World Saxophone Quartet, and Dave Van Ronk... just to name a few. Some familiar faces who are returning are: The Staple Singers, Wynton Marsalis, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Allen Toussaint, Spyro Gyra, Bonnie Raitt, Roy Orbison, Dr. John, Doug Kershaw, Irma Thomas, The Neville Brothers, Willie Dixon, Kid Thomas Valentine, Doc Watson, and the Olympia Brass Band. Says Wein, "We have the best in every kind of music, and we have every kind of music that feeds in and out of the New Orleans music heritage: jazz (both traditional and modern), rhythm and blues, blues, gospel, cajun, caribbean, latin, rockabilly, country, bluegrass and folk."

Some things we won't miss at the fest are the New Orleans premiere of horn player Lee Allen, returning from L.A. playing with "Mr. Lipstick Traces." Benny Spellman. Also, one-time resident jazz guitarist Emily Remler... and the always-versatile and popular Ironin' Board Sam. Bourbon Street veteran Chris Owens also joins the line-up. Noticeably missing from this year's schedule are Al Green, Pats Domino and Chuck Berry. Notable local bands with a twist are L'Ili Queence and the Boys of Joy and returning reformation... The Continental Drifters.

The fair will have nine total stages, but only four large stages as opposed to the traditional five. Food vendors will be offering over 90 different dishes of Louisiana cuisine. New food items for this year include crawfish boul, gumbo z'herbes, grillades, fish court bouillon and caribbean-style vegetarian rastaburgers. For festival information call 504/568-0251. Brochures and tickets are now available at all Ticketmaster outlets. To receive a brochure by mail send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the festival at P.O. Box 2530, NOLA 70176

NEXT MONTH: Complete Jazz Festival Schedule, with stages and times. The May Wavelength will be distributed April 26, with all Jazz Fest information.

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Over 4,000 Musicians to Perform at 1985 Jazz Fest

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Jazz Fest

Notes and Reflections

The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival is thought by many to be the best music festival on the face of the earth. To some, the Jazz Fest is a religious holiday. Seekers flock from around the globe to get a nine-day dose of sonic guidance. The Jazz Fest is well organized, most always on time and amazingly comfortable considering the large crowds. One could rush for hours over great performances at Jazz Fest past. The Jazz Fest is a fine presentation of what New Orleans is famous for. Who could ask for anything more?

Well, having just received the Jazz Fest schedule and press release, let's see what's up for 1985.

Friday, April 26... Friday is traditionally the lightest day at the Fair Grounds and this year is no exception. Looking over the schedule, looking, looking, looking but nowhere can I find Kidd Jordan's Elektrik Band. Seems the foremost "now" jazz group in town is not going to be at the Jazz Fest. OUCH! As I peruse the schedule and discover Bourbon Street stripper Chris Owens will be appearing on the final Sunday, I begin to sweat and wait for the Twilight Zone theme music to begin playing. Friday does have some great music: Mars, Jasmine, Batiste Brothers and Sally Townes are some folks I've heard and enjoyed. Friday is a good day to get your legs, spend hours in the gospel tent, check out all the food and run into friends from all over the world. Horrors, there are no coolers allowed on the infield! This may have been Jazz Fest policy from way back, but I'm afraid I've been too altered during the fest itself to recall.

After the Fair Grounds, rest up for the Heavyweight Main Event. The Davis/Marsalis concert is the Event of the Jazz Fest. Whether it will be the musical event of the fest remains to be seen. Pianist Kenny Kirkland plays with Wynton Marsalis is someone I would go see solo, with Mr. Rogers or with Marsalis. Kirkland is one of the great unknown, unsung piano players.

At the same time as the Davis/Marsalis gig there is something billed as Jazz and Film: The New Generation at Prout's Club Alhambra. They will show films of John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, Lester Young and many more. There will be a jam session during "old" New Orleans players such as Earl Turbinton and Ellis Marsalis with "young" players such as Mike Pernia, Marlon Jordan and Herlin Riley. This is a jam session and jam sessions can go either way.

Before getting on to Saturday, let's note that there is one less big stage during the week we find a steady diet of jazz, blues and rockabilly. Of course, one expects to see and be seen by something veteran Jazz Fest goers have never found to be a problem. Unofficially, the loss of one big stage would seem to be connected to the cost overrun on the renovation of the Jazz and Heritage Foundation's Rampart Street headquarters.

Saturday, April 27... The Bar-Kays had a big hit with "Soul Finger" 18 years ago. They are still at it, with a new look and a new direction. They give new meaning to the word Frazoakid. Aside from the Bar-Kays, Saturday brings us the magnificent Irma Thomas, the suddenly heard in these parts more Willie Tee, The Rising Star Drum and Fife Corps, great and good friends Emily Remler and Larry Coryell, Boogie Bill Webb, Lee Allen and Benny Spellman, Walter Payton and Ballet File, and, in what seems likely to be his last Jazz Fest appearance, Clayton Chenier. Strange booking: Leo Kottke, Delfeyrya Marsalis Quintet (gimme a break), and Martha Reeves.

Saturday night we find part two of the Jazz and Film gigs, this one called The New Direction. This night features what used to be called "out" or "outside" players, meaning they played outside the changes or dispensed with changes entirely. The program mixed New York and New Orleans players. This I will go to see. "Out" jam sessions are preferable to be-bop based soloist-oriented cutting sessions. To hear David Murray and Oliver Lake mix it up with Alvin Batiste and Kidd Jordan should be a treat.

On the boat that night we find The Staple Singers, Allen Toussaint and The Dirty Dozen Brass Band. The Staples are just wonderful. The Dirty Dozen are always worth hearing live. The problem with this show is Allen Toussaint. With all due respect to the great records the man has written, arranged and produced, his live shows are simply embarrassing. He can't sing. So... go up on the deck during Big Al's segment and watch the river flow.

Sunday, April 28... The Staples are also appearing on Sunday. The incredible World Saxophone Quartet is a must see. (I'm sorry that the New Orleans Saxophone Quartet is not playing this year.) Other Sunday highlights: Sippie Wallace, Dr. John, Roy Orbison, Earl King with Timothea, the Savoy/Doucet Cajun Band (which I consider to be the best Cajun band around anywhere), the bizarre Tim Williams, Rockin' Sydney with Katie Webster, Willie Dixon, Lee Dorsey, Earl Turbinton, and, of course, the Neville Brothers. Don't forget the gospel tent.

During the week we find a Sarah Vaughan concert at the Theatre of Performing Arts on Tuesday night. We also get Spyro Gyra and James Rivers on the boat. Spyro Gyra is one of the world's most popular fusion bands. I find them to be overly calculated but enjoyable. Spyro Gyra is like musical prime time network television. Why are they at the Jazz Fest? Perhaps to give them to be overly calculated but enjoyable.
April 26 - May 5

to hear people like James Rivers, Johnny Adams, Alvin Batiste, etc., not to hear Spyro Gyra. Spyro Gyra already plays all over the world. Bitch bitch.

There are two nights of Jazz at Storyville, featuring original New Orleans jazz and performances on film. If you like this sort of thing, this should be great. The New Storyville Jazz Hall is spacious and comfortable. I'm not sold on all these European bands who recreate Old New Orleans music. Sounds like shit to me. Guys in striped coats and straw hats. Gimme a break. Go back to Norway, Holland, England and Italy. Write scholarly diatribes on Kid Ory. Help! I hear the Twilight Zone theme creeping through the mist after me.

Thursday night on the boat we find the Guitar Explosion. Stevie Ray Vaughan, Albert King and "Gatemouth" Brown all have working bands, tight and ready to rip. Marvel at the way Albert King yells at his band while remaining charming to his audience. Should be a knockout.

Friday night on the boat it's time to Funkify the World with Brazilian singer Mariah Carew, commercial reggae group Third World and the Neville Brothers. You like to dance? Go for it.

Saturday, May 4... Back at the Fair Grounds. The admission price is so low you can't imagine what you're getting. I told you a million times not to exaggerate!
CONCERTS

Saturday, 27
The Staple Singers; Allen Toussaint; Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Steamer President; 7 p.m. and midnight. Jazz & Film: The New Direction, Proul's Alhambra, 723 N. Claiborne, midnight, see page 24.

Tuesday, 30
An Afternoon with Sarah Vaughan, with Ella Mearins, Theatre for the Performing Arts, 8 p.m. Hall and Oates, UNO Lakefront Arena, TicketMaster.

SYMPHONY

Wednesday, 3
Ruggiore, or The Witch's Curse by Gilbert and Sullivan, on WYES Channel 12 at 7 and simulcast on WWNO 90-9 FM.

Wednesday, 17
Simon Boosey, Verdi's Venetian Verdi, an operatic version by Verdi, revised extensively by the composer, is a great favorite of ours. but for some reason-and suggested it might be a good idea to consider the idea of bringing back its leading baritone role or its emphasis on politics-it is not a great favorite in the general repertoire; anyway it will be part of the wonderful Live From The Met series, on WYES Channel 12, tonight at 7:30 and will be simulcast on WWNO 90-9 FM.

SYMPHONY

April 9, 10, 11
Orpheum, 8 p.m. James Paul, conductor; Yehudi Menuhin, pianist; Brahms' 'Tragic Overture', Pinto's Symphony No.4, Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.5.

April 12
Orpheum, 8 p.m. Joel Levine, conductor; Superpops IV, sing-along with Arthur Fiedler's 'old-timer' friend.

Friday, 1
Andrew Massey conducts a free concert as part of the French Quarter Festival, at 4 p.m. on Bourbon Street.

Friday, 11
Special Concert for Empire City, Andrew Massey conductor, Peter Collins, pianist; tickets through City Hall at 564-3143.

Saturday, 12
Orpheum, 9 p.m. Maxim Shostakovich, conductor; Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet, Shostakovich's Symphony No.5. and Borodin's in the Steppe of Central Asia. Tickets for Orpheum subscription concerts are available through the Orpheum's box office (525-6500) and TicketMaster outlets.

VIDEO

Cable Access Channel 8 looking for independent video programers. Contact Community Access Corp., 864-9400.


NOVAC, 2010 Magazine, 504-6692, offers continuing programs and classes in editing, camera operation, etc. Call for information.

FESTIVALS

Festival Of Art, Sat.9-Sun.14
West Disney's Magic Kingdom On

Saturday, 7
Marketrevee Easter Egg Knocking Contest, information on oom-poom-pum-pum, Ayvuelles Paristyley, at 518-2573-7678.

Fri.12-Sun.14
South LA Creole Festival, Houma, which ought to remind us that at this time it was the Pelican State. the Creole State according to 19th century geographers. More at 504-876-7635.

Sat.13-Mon.15
Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival, from the town that also brought you Irma Thomas and Elmer's cheese. Information at 504-545-8000.

Saturday, 20

Sat.20-Sun.21
River City Blues Festival, Baton Rouge. Information at 504-546-6588.

Historic Washington Annual Pilgrimage & Arts and Crafts Festival, Washington, D.C. Information at 504-625-3626.

Sunday, 21
Blessing of the Shrimp Fleet, Chalmette. Information at 504-594-5555.

Festivals in April

Festivals in April include: the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, continuing through the first weekend in May. Information at 504-888-4700; or 1-800-555-5151 for out of town ticket orders.

Tues.30-May 12
Contemporary Arts, Lake Driving. Information at 504-316-5508.

ACTS

The Second Annual French Quarter Festival, is slated for April 12-14 with entertainment in Jackson Square, the market, and other festivals around the Quarter. All free and the list of bands includes Muddy Waters, Bonnie Raitt, Janis Ian, and many more. for more information, call 601-232-5993.

Saturday, 27
Independence Italian Festival, featuring up to 115 bands from Italy, including the famous Capodimonte Band. Information at 504-666-6650.

Sat.27 & Sun.28
New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, extending through the first weekend in May. Information at 504-888-4700; or 1-800-555-5151 for out of town ticket orders.

Tues.30-May 12
Contemporary Arts, Lake Driving. Information at 504-316-5508.

OUTTOWN

Theatre At Sea '85—sailing from Port Canaveral on April 12 but not performing Out in the Round on any of the ships, and not performing at any hotel or theater, is the Royal Caribbean's 'Sail Away' with Patrice Neal, Lynn Redgrave. Dick Shawn, Larry Kei. James Coco aboard. The ship sails from Alexandria, Athens, Carpi, Jerusalem, Malta, and Rome. Information at 212-259-5404.

Prague and Israel, trips to which are being organized by NOMA in conjunction with the prestigious Legacy exhibition, April 18 through May 4; information at 486-2628.

Sunsmash '85 at the University of Mississippi. Sunset Week Week (Sun.27-Thurs.2), concludes with a full day of music, with the famous New Orleans Jazz Band, the Kickers, and the Haymaker. Information at 242-2732. For information, call 504-316-5508.

Good Friday Crawfish Boil. Friday at the Vermilion Queen, in Lafitte, La. Information at 504-316-5508.

LIVE MUSIC

UPTOWN & CBD

Benny's, Valence at Camp. Live–but nospetite—music on Monday.

Blue Room, in the Fairmont Hotel, 504-522-0347. Though 's plans to play Wed. in the French Quarter, and announce whom about words are fairly superficial though

Tues.23: B.B. King, one of the few kings
The Veranda, in the Intercontinental Hotel, 525-5566. Sundays, 11 to 2:30 in the afternoon, the LeRoy Jones Trio.

- LAKEFRONT


- MID-CITY

Capps, 111 N. Carrollton, 484-6554. Call for information.


Inko's Place, 1710 N. Broad, 944-9337. Sundays: Chuck Jacobsen and the Wagon Train Band.

Parkview Tavern, 910 N. Carrollton, 428-2880. Fr.5: Snakelove and the Cottonmouths, featuring Johnny Price. Fr.12: Paula and the Pinchers.

- METAIRIE


McAllister's, 3619 Fat Oly Avenue, 456-1524. Live heavy metal music every Tuesday.

- NEW ORLEANS URBAN WATERFRONT

WATERFRONT

The Bank, 7437 Lapalco, 345-2945. Call for information.

Bronco's, 1409 Roman, Gretna, 368-1000. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, Mississippi South.


Pat Cota, 505 Gretna Blvd., Gretna, 362-0959. Jazz workshops every Sunday from 7-11.

- FRENCH QUARTER MARIGNY


Bonaparte's Retreat, 1007 Decatur, 561-8473. Music changes daily—walk by and check.

Cajun Country, 327 Bourbon, 523-8630. Thursdays through Sunday, the Gaye Karo Band. Mondays and Wednesdays: Mike Casco.

Center Stage, 1501 Burgundy, 561-8018. Progressive jazz on Sundays; call for information.


Gazebo, 1029 Decatur, 115. Tuesdays: Amasa Miller, 11 to 1 on Saturdays and Sundays, sometimes accompanied by those armfuls of sweetness and clutcho bags full of harmony, the Pilster Sisters. From 1 on weekends Chris Burke's New Orleans Multitudes, plus Breeze rapture piano each day noon until 4.


Landmark Hotel, 454 Bourbon, 524-7611. Every night save the sabbath, ELS and the Aubry Twins, featuring Johnny Adams and Walter Washington with the House Band. Monday—Thursday; weekends.


Marriott Hotel, Canal Street, 581-1000.

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R.L. Burnside, grand old man of country blues, Carrington Station Mon.13 and Saug Harbor Wed.15.

Jorge Maestro from 8 in the River View.


Maxwell's, 400 Burgundy, 523-0679. Call for listings.

Old Absinthe House, 400 Bourbon. Wednesdays through Sundays, Bryan Lee and the Jumpstreet Five. Mondays and Tuesdays, also Saturday and Sunday afternoons, Mason Ruffin and the Blues Rockers.


Royal Sonesta Hotel, 300 Bourbon, 586-0830. Call for listings.

Rusty's, 521 Bourbon, 441 Bourbon, 525-7626. From 9, Mondays-Saturdays, the Celtic Folk Singers.


Tues. 7:50, Focal Point with Willie and Earl Turbon, Jim Carter and Elliott Horn. Mon.8: Bitty Bonneville Blues Band. Thurs.11: Mason Ruffin and his Blues Rockers. Fri.12: Preservation Hall, 945-2222.

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Les Lobos, cuatro guspos musicales, sobre el banco Presidente, el sueño de abril. No se pierda!
Hons and hows, brays and barks of Happy Birthday J.J. Audubon

Honks and howls, brays and barks

Jazz
at 11:15.

Placide Gargan as a prison priest getting gunned
couple victimized by the law-good robbery
scenes, the gratifying sight of William
slightly overrated 1937 film about a young
1964 drama of post-industrial anomie; with
French
Hamilton, Chic
New Year when debts are paid and scores
"Remember
ashes-in-the-mouth last lines in movies; with
loni,
timer novel
example of rotting charm. Mon .22 :
Mike Mazurki as the coolie, Albert
—of course—the
Thirties). Fri.26:
Dreams,
the depressive married couple who sludge
figure. Films are shown in Bobet
Fellini's
Munson, hair twisted about
Sylvia Sidney
25.

ART

Loyola's Film Buffs Institute, 895-3106. Tues: 6:30. Deserto Gas, Antonio's a
lugubriously beautiful, repulsively picturesque 1964 drama of post-romantic
actors, with Monica Vitti, Richard Harris, Carlo Chionio.
Wed. 10: You Only Live Once. Fritz Lang's
slightly overrated 1937 film about a young
couple victimized by the law—good robbery
scenes, the gratifying sight of William
slightly overrated 1937 film about a young
1964 drama of post-industrial anomie; with
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Burn K-Doe Burn was almost a reality. An out of control 18-wheeler jumped lanes on I-10 and made straight for a car driven by Ernie K-Doe. Sorry — obit fans and would-be entrepreneurs holding one of a kind K-Doe tapes: Naugahyde heaven will just have to wait! K-Doe escaped the crash with minor injuries. The car no longer has an engine. Teaser has returned to a three-man line-up... Chip Collins on drums and vocals, Mike Rapier on bass and Randy Couch on guitar. Bombay Management is handling the group's bookings. Now we know New Orleans is low on good booking agencies, but... According to ITT representative Vivian Lucier, a three-minute call to Bombay will cost you $12.26 plus tax. Write when you get work.

Leroy Jones will be accompanying the Original Camelia Jazz Band to Singapore for a three-month gig at the Singapore Holiday Inn Parkview. The other Camelia members are Otis Bazoon on reeds, Quintin Batiste on piano and Trevor Howard on drums. A three-minute call to Singapore during the day will run you only $5.22 plus tax.

Yes kids, there are living musicians in New Orleans, even a few who actually make livings. To honor these select few, April 29 through May 3, 1985 has been designated New Orleans Musicians Week. The purpose of such a week is to make school children more aware of living musicians. Now, how about a field trip to Dorothy's Medallion Lounge? More info is available through the Public Info Office of Orleans Parish Schools.

The ballad "Hard to Please" off the She's The Boss LP by Mick Jagger has astute listeners arguing over the possible influences behind Jagger's unusual vocal styling. After one reviewer likened the sound to Bob Dylan singing "Lady Lucy," Jagger admitted he was trying to sound like Aaron Neville. Jagger's secret to getting that patented Neville sound? According to a source close to the Stones, "Mick says novenas, gargles honey, lemon and cayenne, with occasional Zatarain's crab boil and pumps iron."

What is the name of the period in the earth's evolution when the first land animals appeared? Silurian is the answer and also a band whose press release says they are, "loosely known and loved for having made a huge dent in the Uptown area." You figure it out. Silurian also claims to feature intricate leads and the ability to move your soul. Move it to where, Bombay?

Two of New Orleans most popular bands, The Cold and The Radiators are also becoming popular in the "land of fruits and nuts," the beautiful state of California. The Rads just returned from an extended tour while The Cold will be visiting and performing in Southern California April 9-15, playing such spots as Madame Wong's (east and west) and The Music Machine. A three minute call to L.A. will run you any where from $1.60 to $5.25, depending on what long distance service you use and the time of day.

VNNO covered over $87,000 in pledges during their marathon for minutes.

In all of South Carolina there was but one radio show playing the Gary Irwin hosts "Blues In The Night," which airs on WSCI-FM in Charleston. Irwin plays much New Orleans music on the show, featuring Fess, Earl King, Huey Smith and The Neville Brothers on a regular basis. Irwin also reports, "Crawfish production is gaining strength in South Carolina. They have converted many old ricebells into crawfish ponds..." Nexus owner Noah Hopkin plans to open R.S.V.P. as News Uptown.

Atchafalaya is travelling acro the Atlantic Bayou to perform in Turkey, Morocco, Czechoslovakia and Portugal. According to Vivian Lucier at ITT, a three minute call to Turkey will run you close to $10 if you dial direct.

The Jools of The History of Jazzasize comes The History of Jazz, a series of TV shows on whose else, jazz history. Wynton Marsalis has been signed up to narrate the Trumpet Kings segment, which will feature King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Cat Anderson, Chet Baker and Clark Terry.

Disregard any and all rumors about a change in music programs at Snug Harbor. According to Mike Molliere, now in charge of booking at the club, there will be no changes. Jason Patterson will act as a booking consultant. Patterson and Jerry Brock are now associated in booking agency (N.D.T.E.) whose goal is quality out-of-town bookings for New Orleans acts. Brock continues as full-time program director for WWOZ.

Harbor Music, (no relation to Snug Harbor) is now in business doing music for films, video advertising. Composer Jay Weil is the head up Harbor and can be reached at 504-691-3290. The first Harbor project is a Weigel orchestration for the A&M Records tribute to Louis Weil LP, which will feature New Orleans musicians Steve Maksowski, Johnny Adams, Jack Jones, Kidd Jordan, Ralph Gilchrist, Aaron Neville, Stephanie Sieber and Mark Bingham. Phew.

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ALWAYS FOR PLEASURE (1978, 56 min.) 
Starring Professor Longhair, the Wild Tchoupitoulas (with the Neville Bros.), Art Ryder's Electric Street Band, the Olympia Brass Band, Kid Thomas Valentine, Mardi Gras, Jazz Funerals, magnificent fusion of jazz, R&B, New Orleans jazz, and blues with zydeco music, a pulsing old time country, wind his music through the bayous and the countryside. $49.95

HOT PEPPER (1972, 54 min.) 
Clifton Chenier, the greatest blues accordionist ever, mixes rock and blues with zydeco music. In addition to Clifton belting it out in sweaty dance halls, the film winds his music through the bayous and the countryside. $49.95

DRY WOOD (1972, 37 min.) 
Featuring "Bots Sue" (Dry Wood) Ardoin, his sons, and Cenray Fontenot. Old style Cajun, a rollicking country Mardi Gras, work in the rice fields, a music film clips of Charlie Parker, Kansas City Drummer, the Olympia Brass Band, Kid Thomas Valentine, Mardi Gras, Jazz Funerals, magnificent fusion of jazz, R&B, New Orleans jazz, and blues with zydeco music, a pulsing old time country, wind his music through the bayous and the countryside. $49.95

SPEND IT ALL (1972, 41 min.) 
The Bebop Brothers, Marc Savoy, Nathan Abshire and others provide the music. Also Cajun quarter horse racing, coffee roasting, accordion building, cooking and eating. A marvelous film about the white, French-speaking Cajuns in Southwest La. Tap your feet and get hungry. $49.95

THE TEMPEX ALL-STAR JAZZ SHOW Nov.10, 1969, CBS-TV. Jackie Gleason, host, with Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, Dizzie Gillespie, George Shearing, the Dukes of Dixieland, Gene Krupa, Jo Jones, Roy Eldridge, Bobby Hackett, Coleman Hawkins, many others. The greatest jam session ever. $44.95

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