Wavelength (January 1984)

Connie Atkinson

University of New Orleans

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IN THE SPIRIT

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"I'm not sure, but I'm almost positive, that all music came from New Orleans."
—Ernie K-Doe, 1979

Cover photo by Michael P. Smith

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1984

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Why Palmer Can’t Play

Earl Palmer, who was the world’s busiest drummer until his election to the post of secretary-treasurer of Los Angeles Musicians Union Local 47, dropped into town recently to attend a convention (of the International Foundation of Employee Benefits), visit with old friends, sample a few clubs and eat seafood.

Palmer did take off enough time to offer one reason for his prominence on so many records. “The engineers always liked the way I play because it gave them more control,” he said. “When you’re playing real hard and loud, they have much less control. I got along well with all of them, especially Bones Howe, who was one of the greatest mixers they ever had in California.”

As a union officer, Palmer is not permitted to play anywhere. It is a condition he accepts: “I feel it’s a fair rule. I don’t think it’s fair for an officer to go out and compete with a guy who’s paying his salary. I can live with the rule. Oh, I’d like very much to play. I could use the extra money like anybody else.”

Siren Eats

So after months of ill health, Tupelo’s has finally died, and Tip’s doesn’t really cotton to your brand of aggressive pop-rock, which leaves Jimmy’s as the only Uptown club you can play, and you can’t play there too often; and you know that out in Pat City, they’ll even pay you halfway decent, which is nice. ‘cause the guys in your band have a thing about eating—in their own apartments, no less—but new wave definitely won’t go over out there, they may throw stuff at you: so what do you do?

If you’re committed to being a working band—and in New Orleans right now, that’s a helluva commitment—you go to Fat City and play heavy metal, and slide in the occasional original; you play Jimmy’s and anywhere you can on campus and cover the Pretenders and so on and slide in the occasional original; you hope that somewhere in there you find and carve out your own identity.

Such is the pragmatic approach adopted by Siren, a four-person New Orleans band that characterizes its music as “upbeat progressive pop.” Formed about a year ago by lead singer/keyboardsist Dee Alvarado and drummer Keith Posey, the line-up also includes Jim Beckwith on guitar (he teaches the ol’ six-string at Campo’s) and Richard Bird on bass. Siren says that its influences range from Miles Davis to Emerson Lake and Palmer, which ought to be at least eclectic enough to get them by in the (mutually) exclusive environs of Uptown and Fat City.

“The musicianship is the key,” says Alvarado. “This is the best group of musicians I’ve ever played with.” And it is true, Siren is clearly a cut above your strum ’em-thump ’em-dump ’em garage wave band. Alvarado, a veteran of local acts Toulouse and Hijiynx, writes most of Siren’s original material; and this material, particularly a pair of tunes, “No Way Out” and “All Night Long,” allows the band to lay claim to a future that may promise more than playing their audiences’ favorite covers. On a demo tape Siren recently recorded, at bassist Bird’s own Visionary Studios, covers of the Motels and the Pretenders come across as competent, but the band’s own songs have much more enthusiasm—and some decent hooks. If Siren is able to expand on this side of the show and phase out the covers—and not go hungry in the process—look for them to attract some industry interest over the next few years.

In the meantime, do check them out, and when some beer-guzzling cretin yells, “Play Pat Benatar, man,” scream out loud and clear: “Do some of your own stuff.”

—Keith Twischell

Two Hundred Fifty Pounds of Baritone LaBeef

Do you know who Sleepy LaBeef is? About twenty-five years ago, he had a hit with his energetic version of Hank Ballard’s “Tore Up.” Back in those days Sleepy and his friends would copy the current hits of Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis for release on the popular 25 Hits for $2.95 albums. Sometimes those primitive tape recorders would even manage to capture some of his true talent as on “Somebody’s Been Bustin’ My Time,” a beautiful solo acoustic rockabilly tune that later appeared on the later Baton reprint Early, Rare and Rockin’ Sides album.

For many years Sleepy worked the roadhouses of the Northeast out of an old bus. A young music enthusiast named Scott Billington would occasionally stop in to chat and check out Sleepy’s set. Eventually, Rounder signed Sleepy to a contract and Billington produced the It Ain’t What You Eat, It’s The Way How You Chew It album and Sleepy’s ‘sleeping’ career began an upswing that is still going strong.

The old bus finally burned up and gave way to a 35-foot-long R.V. that houses all the comforts of home for Sleepy, including his wife Linda and his two beautiful little girls, Jesee and Melinda. Sleepy was pleased that R.V. aside Tipitina’s this December 7 and proceeded to rock that joint till the wee hours of the morning after wrapping up a Cox Cable Music City taping two days earlier in Jackson Square. Accompanying him on harmonica was none other than Scott Billington, who sounds like he’s dispelling the myth that most producers are calloused, jaded, frustrated musicians.

Sleepy’s compact but wide ranging medleys are played with such an unaffected integrity that it’s hard to imagine anyone not enjoying them. It’s not uncommon for him, in the space of one twenty-minute medley, to splice together the songs of Duane Eddy, Little Richard, John Lee Hooker, Roy Orbison, and even the Savoy Cats, and have it all come out distinctly Sleepy-fied. He just pumps those barre chords and bellows out that baritone and the band tags right along. This would’ve been great stuff for those dance marathons of days gone by.

Sleepy covers a lot of Louisiana material, too. Everything from the swamp pop-ish “There Is Something On Your Mind” to Frogman Henry’s “Ain’t Got No Home” to Smileys’ “Ain’t Gonna Be Your Dog No More.” But there are some decent versions of Fats: “I’m Ready” echoes Sleepy’s personal rock philosophy while showcasing his expressive phrasing on lead guitar. If that weren’t enough to win the Wavelength Seal of Approval, it turns out ole Sleepy can actually trace his ethnic roots back to the LeBouef family of Acadiana, which makes him not only an Honorary Couchus, but a registered one as well.

—Geoff Swarts

Marketing Moving Targets

Evan Baldwin (front center) is getting ready for that day when he and dad Geoff Baldwin (second from right) can team up on those Spirit-style harmonies that dad likes so much. Dad’s current band, Moving Targets, features Stephen Crouch, Chuck Gwaryn, Susan Voelz, and Guy Duplanier with progressive rock songs that are often ingeniously arranged, and definitely well played. Some listeners will also find these songs ripe with overused progressive rock cliches.
Extra, Extra:

X, X, X

"Here's another slow dance song for all you Fifties freaks," announced John Doe of X at their December 9 concert aboard the Riverboat President. Four nervous clicks from D.J.'s drumsticks and the band launches into a brutally manic version of their unofficial anthem, "We're Desperate."

Vocalist Exene Cervenka (who's been coolly surveying some of the most self-sacrificing slam dancing action seen in this area for a while) leans over the crowd, microphone extended, and is immediately suck ed into the human teenage whirlpool. Roadies rush to grab a leg each and wrench her back onstage but Exene just goes limp and seems to give herself and her microphone over to the carnage.

"Some people wanna tear my arms off," she sang, followed by several young voices chipping in from the P.A.: "Kiss or Kill!" Ninety seconds later the song is over and the adoring subjects return their queen to her throne as she deadpans: "That was supposed to be a singalong." Exene has been responsible for the lion's share of X's data-inspired album and promotional graphics. Last year she and Michael Hyatt produced a 1983 Xerox calendar that featured several of Hyatt's New Orleans photographs, including a nice shot of Irene's Zoo Revue, which will probably be a ritzy condominium before we know it. This year the duo has released the "1984 Calendar of Olympic Games, Music, and Orwellian Dates" which contains the mail art for South Louisiana: page 12 of their new songbook has a picture of a Mardi Gras doubloon from "The Time Machine" float 484 right next to the White castle, which aside from being a chain of Yankee hamburger joints, is the location of the world's largest plantation home, Nottaway, twenty-five miles south of Baton Rouge.

As an ensemble, X has never sounded better and their Riverboat gig found them playing a variety of material from their four LPs: "A Drunk In My Past" (dedicated to Jerry Lee Lewis), "The New World" (dedicated to America), and "We're Having So Much Fun" (dedicated to Lafayette punk personality Cecil Doyle) from the recent More Fun In The New World album on Elektra. By the time they made it back to "Johnny Hit and Run Pauline" from the debut album, bodies were flying around the President like psychotic life preservers on methedrine.

When it was all over, Mr. Doe gracefully thanked all the slammers and all the watchers for coming and paying and dancing, then slipped over to Tipitina's for some dancing himself to fellow Slashers Los Lobos.

As we walk down the gangplank reading the new song book, the lyrics from "Make The Music Go Bang" make a specially poignant epilogue to such a wild night: "I seen a lot of people with plenty of guns. They say make my music new and loud and rough. Give it a beat or give it a swing. In a dark sweaty club it's the same damn thing."

Exene: Overboard into the human teenage whirlpool.
A shy seventeen-year-old waitress at the Pimlico Club, on South Broad and Washington Avenue, convinces band-leader Tommy Ridgley to let her sing a few numbers with his band at the end of a set. The irate owner of the Pimlico fires the teenager for neglecting her waitressing duties. Ridgley, who recognizes the youngster's plight and raw talent, invites her to stop by his new engagement and sing once again. After a few promising cameos, Ridgley introduces the girl to Joe Assunto at Ron Records. Likewise impressed by her voice, Assunto decides to record her on a tune written by local songwriter Dorothy Labostrie. Almost overnight "(You Can Have My Husband But) Please Don't Mess With My Man" becomes a hit, and the teenager ex-waitress Irma Thomas is on her way to stardom.

—Almost Slim

DINOSAUR ROAR!

Dinah, oh Dinah, what makes your Dinah so sore? Better yet: what makes your dinosaur roar?

I can't tell you why, but the old-timers, the dinosaurs, are kicking up some sand, producing spirited work. At a time when the young lions—the Police, Talking Heads—aren't breaking new ground but locking into predictable patterns, here come the old greasers, flexing their muscle, mixing up old moves in fresh ways.

Infidels (Columbia QC 38819) contains some of the strongest work Bob Dylan's done in years. The uptempo numbers possess a determined drive; the ballads flow with a powerful gentleness. Jamaica's ace session men, bassist Robbie Shakespeare and drummer Sly Dunbar, provide a solid backbone throughout. Guitarist Mark Knopfler (Dire Straits) co-produced the album with Dylan and spices things up with his tasty fills. At the center stage is Dylan, who's traded his judges' robes for the colors of the Jokerman.

"Jokerman" is the quasi-reggae song that opens the LP. It's got a hell of a melody and Dylan seems to be having a good time singing it. No longer judging and moralizing, he points to uncertainty, and in one line says, False-hearted judges die in the web they spin. "Sweetheart Like You" flashes with knife-like perception and humor. It's a bluesy ballad that recalls the acidity and black humor of his earlier work. Mixing sex, religion and politics, Dylan cautions the audience to fall in love, not in politics. "Judge John Blue" portrays the coming of the law as a murder of freedom. "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" has Dylan's done in years. The hip-fires light, and the teenage ex-waitress Irma Thomas is on her way to stardom.

Golden moments in New Orleans rock 'n' roll

The songwriter on the new release is The Rolling Stones, Undercover (Rolling Stone 7/0320-1). This
album moves relentlessly from Charlie Watts' first rim shot on the title track to the fade-out chant of the closing track, "It Must Be Hell." At first I figured Jagger was going lysergic again to be writing such intense ditties, but as stellar as the songs are, the performance of the entire group is compelling throughout. Not a wasted note anywhere. Far from it. And the production is so bright and sharp it's tactile—you can almost touch the edges of the music. This becomes evident when you're dancing to it, the best way to listen to Undercover.

The Stones haven't been this nasty and groovy in years—maybe they've never been this nasty and groovy ever. My current favorite nastiest track is "Tie You Up (The Pain of Love)," which is about as tight as a groove can get. It sounds like a tune they've been trying to get right for a long time and here it all comes together. Some may prickly at the images of sex and violence that keep coming up, but I find a sense of joy and liberation at the heart of Undercover, maybe even compassion. But listen to the music: these dinosaurs are having fun—you can have some too.

Tom Waits hasn't been kicking around the tar pit as long as these other guys but when he sings, he sure sounds like a dinosaur. Waits' latest, Swordfishtrombones (Island 90095-1) is a series of musical and lyrical sketches, in much the same way soundtracks for movies are. Visualizing Waits' lyrics as the music unfolds makes it even more movie-like. Instead of the rambling monologues of his previous albums, Waits here offers a musical travelogue, fully illustrated. The music shifts as the terrain and the mood changes, from the quiet sentiment of "Johnsburg, Illinois" to the sleazy Hong Kong slink of "Shore Leave" to the biting backwoods landscape of "Sixteen Shells From A Thirty-Ought-Six." Waits' lyrics are concise and evocative, and he calls on a myriad of musical tools to bring his images to life: bagpipes, marimbas, trombones, rusty-razor guitars to name a few. Swordfishtrombones is one of those rare albums that comes off like a classic on the first hearing.

rare record

The Gondoliers

LET'S HAVE A BLAST
Ric 2001

Although nineteen excellent singles appeared on the Ric label, to my knowledge this was the only album. Founded in 1969 by Joe Ruffino. Ric's roster included Johnny Adams, Eddie Bo, Tommy Ridgley, Al Johnson and Joe Jones.

The band used on the Ric sessions was the Gondoliers, led by guitarist Edgar Blanchard. The group first recorded for Peacock in 1949 and was often used by Pete Stovall as accompanists on tours and one-nighters with local and out-of-town performers. During the early Sixties, they often backed Johnny Adams on the road and had a regular job at Natal's on the Chef Menteur Highway.

Although the group recorded an excellent single on Ric, "Lonesome Guitar," this album contains none of their better musical moments. Instead it contains a string of poor, risque, double-entendre jokes with the band barely audible behind the party banter.

My guess is that this was recorded in 1960 or '61 and was unearthed in an unopened box of LPs when Joe's One Stop closed last year. I got one and Gordon DeSoto got the rest.

Almost Slim
JUNK MOVIE JUNKIE

Last month I suggested, frivolously of course, that 1983 be laid away in its box and put somewhere dry for a few centuries—close to the top shelf. But I realized that with year's end, I had given no badges, ribbons, silver bears and golden palms to certain deserving and undeserving aspects of the last year On Film. I've got a million 'em, as Jimmy Durante used to boast, but since this is Wavelength, we'll stick to citations Musical.

First, that grand old tradition the Production Number: (this is roughly in order of preference and one's definition elastic, so here goes) "Memories Are Made Of This" (Veronica Vos), Eric Idle's little ditty about his penis (The Meaning of Life), the Indonesian phatter party to "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" (The Year of Living Dangerously), "The Fisherman of Capri" (Lola—Lola and Veronika Voss), as well as the earlier Lili Marlene which is just one long Production Number, and Querelle—homosexual pathology as staged by Michael Kidd on the backlot at MGM—suggest that Fassbinder was moving inexorably toward the musical form, like it or not; these are followed at some distance by "Christmas In Heaven" (The Meaning of Life), the wedding reception (Easy Money), and last and least, Jeanne Moreau's corneau-chantant rendering of the love theme from Querelle (lyrics by Oscar Wilde, not Hammerstein).

Use of Existing Music to Make An Aesthetic Point (no order of preference): "Devil with the Blue Dress On" by Lee Lobes (Fatty Bunion); "Sonne Tot" (Veronica Vos); "Gloria" (The Outsiders), the transition from Rossini's La Cenerentola overture to the Silhouettes singing "Get A Job" (Trading Places).

Best Original Scores: The Draughtsman's Contract and Zeitig (Woody Allen and Dick Hyman composed the period pastiches about the eponymous character and each was perfect of its kind), Worst Original Scores: Hell's Angels Forever and Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence, Worst Theme Song: "Stay Gold" by Steve Wunder (The Outsiders). Most Rewarding Appearance by a Musical Personality: the dogmatic gruffness and complete self-assurance of Sallie Martin in Say Amen, Somebody (which could have used more of her).

And that's it—no room for Best Wigs, Best and Worst Sex Scenes, Candidates for the Motion Picture Country Home, or the rest of them.

Psychotronic... qu'est-ce que c'est? Although now defunct, Psychotronic was the brainchild of a guy
named Michael Weldon who began it as an out-of-control fanzine devoted to trash movies (and the word devoted strictly applies), run up and off on a ditto machine, and illuminating some of the murkier aspects of cinema history. Even though Psychotronic is gone as a publication, Mr. Weldon's collected wisdom has been gathered in a large-format 800-page paperback entitled The Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film (Ballantine Books, $16.95). This drowning-man's-life-before-his-eyes spin down Poverty Row and 42nd Street is at least as valuable as works like Sadoul’s Dictionnaire des Films, the Rotha-Griffith Film Till Now, Leslie Halliwell’s Filmgoer’s Guide (surely the wildest example of hobo scholarship ever—a WPA guide to The Film As Art, with thousands of entries cross-referenced and annotated, as of 1941). Weldon’s book (there are one or two other contributors, but the bulk of it is his) is useful for its useless data and diverting to read because of Weldon’s slaugerous way with words—he thinks nothing of ending each sentence with an exclamation, as befits someone who quotes ad copy, not critics.

This encyclopedia is composed by and large of lowlif genre films—horror, mad docers, science fiction, occult thrillers, teen pix, biker pix, snuff and body count movies, muscleman epics, jungle films, as well as considerable space given to films with appearances by Lorre, Karloff, Chaney, the 3 Stooges, Lugosi, Mamie Van Doren, Jayne Mansfield, etc. It also includes such disparate works as Cocteau’s La Belle et La Bet and Olsen and Johnson in Hellzapoppin’. Weldon not only knows his stuff, he is delighted with it (a good thing, too). Therefore, one can agree with most of his capsule judgments—favorites from my youth (and after) long unseen pop up, and yes, The Under­taker and His Pals (1967) is “totally tasteless… a classic of its kind,” and The Astro-Zombies (1968, with Wendell Corey and stripper Tura Satana) is “one of the all-time worst,” and Alligator (1980, script by John Sayles) is “a giant monster film that’s as good or better than the best of the ‘50s film’s resemble,” and Seeds of Evil (1974, with Joe Dallesandro as some sort of tree elemental) is “a talky fantasy filmed in Puerto Rico… terrible.” How succinct can you get?

This is probably the one film book and Johnson in Hellzapoppin’. Weldon not only knows his stuff, and Johnson in Hellzapoppin'. Weldon not only knows his stuff, he is delighted with it (a good thing, too). Therefore, one can agree with most of his capsule judgments—favorites from my youth (and after) long unseen pop up, and yes, The Under­taker and His Pals (1967) is “totally tasteless… a classic of its kind,” and The Astro-Zombies (1968, with Wendell Corey and stripper Tura Satana) is “one of the all-time worst,” and Alligator (1980, script by John Sayles) is “a giant monster film that’s as good or better than the best of the ‘50s film’s resemble,” and Seeds of Evil (1974, with Joe Dallesandro as some sort of tree elemental) is “a talky fantasy filmed in Puerto Rico… terrible.” How succinct can you get?

This is probably the one film book
After almost a year, we will publish our annual Band and Booking Agent Guide, a comprehensive list of the working bands and musicians in the New Orleans area, with all the pertinent information—addresses, phone numbers, members' names, what kind of music, agent's name, and anything else you might want to add.

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To get your band listed, fill out the form below and send it to us as soon as you can, along with a black and white photo (non-returnable) if you have one. A listing in the Band Guide is free of course.

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that will be indispensable after the next war—there's something apocalyptic about the idea of this mass beautification of junk—quiets of refuse. And of course, the book isn't perfect. There are a number of typos (Alun Owen, not 'Alvin Owen,' did the screenplay for A Hard Day's Night, the 1944 Between Two Worlds is from the play 'Outward Bound' by Sutton Vane, not 'Sutton Lane,' and it is Maxine McKendry, not 'Maxine McMenony,' who plays DeSica's wife in the Warhol Dracula, to name but three) but that somehow seems more in character here than with some expensive fake scholarly film book that would sell for four times the price.

A Prestige Picture used to mean, in Old Hollywood, something quite genteel and respectable, a 'property' (play or novel usually) that the studio bought for some vast sum so that the assembly line scribes could come up with something totally unrecognizable in terms of the original and all too recognizable in terms of Product. Also, I think a Prestige Picture was probably anything with Greer Garson in it, or Robert Donat or later Paul Muni or the middle-aged Ronald Colman. The notion, even if the boundaries are more obscure than ever, is a reek of prestige, yet couldn't be less alike. Danzon (filmed by over-the-hill Polish emigre director Andrzej Wajda) in France, to some disquietude from the French government) is nothing like Orphans of the Storm or Norma Shearer as brave Marie Antoinette—if only it were—and nothing remotely like Jean Renoir's Orphans of the Storm (which ends long before the Terror chronicled here). If only there were something as exciting as Danton's ride in Orphans of the Storm to save Henriette Giraud in a little film called New Year's Day, the road warrior. There are also some scenes of legal and parliamentary procedure under the Terror that look like, say, the St. Bernard Police Jury on a bad night.

Gerard Depardieu is always good as a lout, and even better when cast against type as a shifty bourgeois (as in La Femme d'a Cote and Mon On-
of prohibition beer, and the business about incest—Tony's excessive attraction to his neo-so- virgin (called Cesca in the original, Gina here)—made more explicit than necessary. This archives-as-thrift-shop notion is all dressed up—photography by John Alonzo at his most stupefying, nightmarish music by Giorgio Moroder. Al Pacino in a bravura performance that is sonically too close to Chotto for comfort, comically flashy direction edited for a lugubrious effect—and goes virtually nowhere. In the original Hawks Scarface, there is a scene where Paul Muni (Tony) shows his new apartment to the boss's wife, highlighted Karen Morley, who will soon be his conveniently widowed, and she looks around at the grotesque plush-pretzel decor of the place and says to Muni, "Kinda gaudy, ain't it?" There isn't a moment that good here—what DePalma shows are amounts of cash that Bredhmganger in scale. Pepe Serna (poor dear) being disemboweled with a chain saw, lots of people getting their kneecaps shot off, and the awesomely tacky interiors of the wealthy Cuban community in Miami (no wonder the Cubans object—the sets look like high tech versions of the windows at Muehlers Komfort). This diffuse, self-impressed picture has far too many scenes of people grovelling and pleading for their lives that are staged like talk shows. There's also a good performance by Stephen Bauer (who is a sort of better looking Robby Benson in the old thankless George Raft role).

Cristine ("from Stephen King's best seller," as they say in Lotus Land) is also not a prestige job, although John Carpenter is—for reasons that remain obscure to me—a critic's darling as a stylist within restrictive genre conventions. King's novel about a stag on wheels was framed in terms of car songs/love songs/death songs, and while Carpenter has scraped all the Jan and Dean and Hot Rod Lincoln bits, he probably does at least as creditable a job as music programmer for the film as he does in directing it (I especially like the heavy B-movie irony of the fat, suspicious, foul-mouthed garage owner being crushed lethally against steering wheel and dashboard while "Bony Motonie" rattles out of the car radio). The car is great, the actors suck with King's patented soiled-nerd characters barefacedly inadequate, and aside from Roberts Blossom and Harry Dean Stanton, they are unknown quantities.

Carpenter gives the whole thing a great deal of superficial gloss and the horrors are as disturbing here as they were unrequited in The Thing, but while he does a cool and competent job and the picture is decent entertainment, projects like this, at The Fog or The Escape From New York remain stubbornswap, despite the inventive and baffling. Hopeful note: "Cristine is an improvement on the other three (!) Stephen King movies this year, and one wonders how soon this one-man cottage industry will exhaust himself.
Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown
THE ORIGINAL PEACOCK RECORDINGS
Rounder 2039

If covers have anything to say about the music that they contain then this one has to be a killer. A vintage Gate seekers out of the cover of this one in a suit that, looks like it's about to swallow him and his guitar. Twelve of Gate's best Fifties blues sides are contained on this jewel, including two previously unissued. Even though many of the remaining tracks have been bootlegged in Europe, it's great to hear "clean" versions of these tunes as they come directly from the original masters in most cases.

Musically this album is classic and historically important. When Gate's not rockin' the joint we can dream along with him on some down home Texas blues. Instrumental cuts like "Ole Dokie Stomp" and "Just Before Dawn" will haunt you if they already haven't. But wait until you hear "Gate's Salty Blues" and "That's Your Daddy Yadda Yo"—too much. Gate sings with complete lack of inhibition and plays some of the hottest alley guitar ever put on record. His playing on "Dirty Work At The Crossroads" is just too amplified and dirty to be true. If you dig the modern-day Gatemouth, you'll go wild over this one.

JACKIE WILSON
THE JACKIE WILSON STORY
Epic

No record collection is complete without this two-record set (or the original tracks). Jackie Wilson is the epitome and personification of the golden throated shouters whose forte was a voice that boomed and an emotional disposition that ranged toward and beyond the extrovert. The album covers the time period October 1957 to February 1972. The cuts represent songs that hit the top of the Billboard R&B charts and placed in the top 100 of the pop charts.

Jackie Wilson had no particular type of song that was characteristic of him. He dealt with everything. However, every song, regardless of origin, became his song once he put his magnificent voice onto it. From schmaltzy pop songs such as "Danny Boy" and "Moonlight Bay," to Berry Gordy originals such as "Lonely Teardrops" and "To Be Loved," to Jackie's great hits such as "Whispers," "Dear One," "Lover, Lover, Lover," and —my personal favorite, which is currently on the Black charts by a contemporary group—"Doggin' Around," Jackie Wilson just poured pure emotion into the song, infusing each word with a meaning past its literal denotation.

A sixteen-year-old Golden Gloves champion, Jackie Wilson hung up his boxing gloves to entertain as a singer and dancer (he danced as well and as flamboyantly as he sang). A handsome man with incredible talent and stage presence, Jackie Wilson put on stage shows that rivalled James Brown in raw energy, plus he has "sex appeal." But in the end it was the magnificence of his voice, a voice that had incredible range and which Jackie controlled with a subtlety one does not often expect from a shouter. This record is a fitting tribute to a singer who gave far more than he received from the entertainment industry.

In 1975, Jackie Wilson suffered a serious heart attack while performing. He remains under medical supervision and is not expected to ever sing again. Jackie Wilson: no current male

REVIEWS

SAM BUTERA
THRU (TUES) JAN 3

JOE WILLIAMS
(WED) JAN 4--(THURS) JAN 12

PHYLLIS HYMAN
(WED) JAN 18--(TUES) JAN 31

THE FAIRMONT HOTEL
OTHER FAIRMONT HOTELS IN SAN FRANCISCO, DALLAS AND DENVER
singer matches his sex appeal, dancing ability, stage presence and vocal artistry combined in one body and soul. Jackie Wilson.

—Kalamu ya Salaam

John Delafose
UNCLE BUD
ZYDECO
Arhoolie 1988

This is Delafose’s second LP on Arhoolie and it is well up to the standard of his 1980 effort that produced the surprise South Louisiana hit “Joe Piret a Deux Femmes.” In comparison to the growing list of zydeco artists, Delafose’s style is much closer to the French side of the zydeco spectrum than the R&B. His impatient vocals and sweet accordion playing, backed by his sons (including 11-year-old Geno) on rumba and drums make for attractive listening.

Side A was recorded at the 1981 Festivals Acadiens, during a tres chaud set. The band sticks mainly to familiar zydeco samples, pushing and pulling their way through the likes of “Oh Negress,” “Petite Fille,” and “Jole Blonde,” much to the delight of us disciples and anyone who was lucky enough to attend the festival.

Side B is devoted to studio tracks, opening with the further saga of “Joe Piret,” who has lost both his women this time around. The real surprise is the zydeco adaptation of George Perkins’ 1970 hit “Crying in the Street.” Most of the rest of the material continues in the style Delafose introduced on his debut disc.

While one might say this LP suffers slightly from lack of variable material (the sophomore jinx?), it is certainly worth a listen.

—Almost Slim

Dr. John
THE BRIGHTEST
SMILE IN TOWN
Clean Cut 707

Anyone who enjoyed Dr. John’s last solo opus Plays Mac Rebennack will find this one appealing as well. But while Dr. John chose to vocalize on only one selection last time, on “Smile,” his New Orleans growl graces four of the album’s ten selections.

While it’s easy to cite the individual stylistic sources of Dr. John’s playing, it might be best stated that he embodies the best of all the New Orleans players. Make no mistake, there’s no gris gris or glitter here, just straight ahead enjoyable Dr. John music, with plenty of blues, boogie, rubboard and even the classics throughout.

The album opens on the lowdown side with “Saddled the Cow,” follow-
ed by the up-tempo “Boxcar Boogie,” completed with some startling flourishes of Dr. John’s right hand. The album’s hit back title track sets the stage for side one’s other two relaxed pieces: “Waiting For a Train” (with vocals) and “Monkey Puzzle.”

“Average Kind of Guy,” penned by Dr. John and Doc Pomus, keeps the ball rolling by opening side two with a humorous subtle message set off by some easy piano chops. The last vocal on the LP, “Marie LaVeau,” hints at “night tripper” days with his patented arrangement of the traditional New Orleans standard. The rest of the album’s selections spotlight Dr. John’s eclectic piano style, which rumbles through a variety of styles and tempos.

A Dr. John fan or anyone with a passing interest in New Orleans piano stylings will find this essential listening.

—Almost Slim

Arthur Alexander
A SHOT OF
RHYTHM & BLUES
Ace 66 (England)

Mention Arthur Alexander’s name to anyone mildly interested in rock history and they probably will only remember his early Sixties hits “Anna” and “You Better Move On.” But to R&B aficionados, Alexander is one of the greatest singers of all time. He links American country and western and rhythm and blues with the English sound of the Sixties. To underline his influence, his tunes have been covered by the Beatles, By Cooder, the Rolling Stones, Tina Turner and the Bee Gees.

Born in the red clay hills of Alabama in 1940, Alexander was responsible for pioneering the Muscle Shoals sound. He financed the original studio with his first hit, and was the original example of the studio’s distinct sound which would later be popularized by the Allman Brothers, Aretha and Otis. Besides the previously mentioned hits, this long overdue collection includes the best of his nine Dot singles from the Sixties and the lowdown “Sally Sue Brown” from 1959 on Starday.

As a ballad singer, Alexander defies imitation. His controlled emotional wails and plaintive vocals touch a nerve like no other singer of the era. Sadly underrated, Alexander’s best titles—“Shot of Rhythm and Blues,” “You Don’t Care,” “Pretty Girls Everywhere” and “Soldiers of Love” are included. So too is the languorous “I Hang My Head and Cry” which alone is well worth the purchase of the album.

A soul music like this doesn’t seem to get released in this country anymore and once again an English label has set an example for the American record companies.

—Almost Slim

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SUNDAY NOON-6
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AM records and cassettes

SALES WAREHOUSE
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"...where the sale never ends"
Hallelujah! the weary traveler must proclaim these days as he exits Moisant International Airport and heads through Jefferson Parish to his hotel room in the French Quarter.

"Hallelujah!" the traveler says because he's just spotted the Mayor's brand-new billboard, erected high above a small parcel of Kenner. The billboard, festooned with a quartet of fleshy mermaids and mermen wrestling with a pair of alligators, informs the traveler—who's flown nonstop from Dullsville, U.S.A.—that he's safely landed in "The Most Exciting Place In The World." Not Kenner, you understand, but New Orleans, site of the 1984 Louisiana World's Exposition. "Hallelujah!" the traveler sighs, hoping that the surly cabbie with his mynez-flecked goatee doesn't decide to rob him en route to the city.

The cabbie, a part-time bass-player from Geat Town, yawns as he speeds past the landmarks of Metairie—the rotating Walker-Roemer cow, the headquarters of LAS Enterprises, the foul smelling sewage treatment plant near Bonabel Boulevard. The cabbie, having been born, raised and properly baptized in "The Most Exciting Place In The World," has dutifully encountered a lifetime of excitement. Right now, he wouldn't mind a little plain old boring sleep. And you can keep that "Hallelujah!" business, the cabbie thinks to himself. What he wants is a gig at the World's Fair for all the "li'l podnas" in his band. And a piece of change for entertaining tourists as they stroll about the fair site, braving heat and humidity of devastating intensity.

The Louisiana World Exposition will open on May 12, the birthday of both Socrates and Yogi Berra, and close on November 11, the birthday of Dostoevsky, General George Patton and Jonathan Winters. The theme of the fair is "The World of Rivers: Fresh Water As A Source of Life" and adults (12-54) will pay $15 per day admission (which includes unlimited monorail ride and all). Children and senior citizens get a $1 discount on the one-day ticket rate and infants up to the age of three will be admitted gratis.

World's Fair visitors will undoubtedly expect music—lots of music—and they will get it. The fair site will feature at least 15 "on-site" stages devoted exclusively to music, plus mobile roving stages, performing areas along the papier-mache and steel Wonderwall, the American Showcase (presenting non-professional talent, such as high school and college marching bands), the Frey Gazebo in Centennial Plaza (featuring local sounds from 100 years ago), the World Theatre (housing the World Theatre for Young Artists, the World Youth Orchestra and performing companies from around the globe), the International Amphitheatre (to be utilized for evening concerts by big-name stars, as well as presentations by the various international exhibitors) and the Jazz and Gospel Tent, which L.W.E. Manager of Music Programming Charlie Bering describes as "very much like the Jazz and Heritage Festival facilities."

The entertainment goes on from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. seven days a week and it is free and available to the public once they come in through the turnstiles.

Imagine the Jazz and Heritage Festival on a larger scale, 12 hours a day, seven days a week, with at least 15 on-site stages devoted to music—and all for the price of an admission ticket!
Applying
To Play
The following is the list of requirements for talent applicants:

1. A written request to be considered as a performer at the Exposition.
2. A biography or promotional package describing the performer/group, events, and/or places of past performance.
3. A recorded sample of your work. The recording can be either a phonograph record, cassette tape, or video tape.
4. A list of your availability for performance(s) by month, day of the week, and time of day. (Note: L.W.E. on-site entertainment will run May 12—November 11, 1984, seven days a week, from 10:00 a.m. until 10 p.m.)

The above information should be submitted to:

1984 Louisiana World Exposition
Attention: Manager of Music Programming
Entertainment Division
P.O. Box 1984
New Orleans, LA 70158

Materials to be returned should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

expertise lies in the field of traditional jazz—Edwin Morgan, Bill Farrell, Fred Harfield, Don Perry, Don Marquis and Jake Scambra. Eduardo Young will give advice concerning the realm of jazz and Latin/Caribbean music. Allison Kaslow will support the cause of Cajun and folk music. Dr. Bill Malone will examine the country/bluegrass troops, Sherman Washington and Milton Bourgeois will canvass gospel singers and the author of this story will analyze players of blues, new wave, heavy metal (perhaps the most popular form of music in "The Most Exciting Place In The World") and New Orleans rhythm and blues.

Musicians and performers from anywhere in the galaxy are invited to submit applications, with preference going to those in the immediate vicinity. All performers will be paid with both union and non-union players receiving equal compensation. Considering the scope of the World's Fair—imagine the Jazz and Heritage Festival on a larger scale every day for six months—virtually all local performers will be guaranteed bookings. But first—you gotta send those tapes in!

"Basically, the tapes should be a reflection of what the group would actually do at the fair," Bering says. "It's not necessary to go into a studio and send in something with a lot of overdubs because you really can't present that live. We don't really even need more than three selections. It doesn't have to be studio quality but the better the quality, the more it facilitates evaluation. When they send the materials in, it should be as complete as possible so we don't have to communicate with them again."

Back in the cab, the traveler spots the Superdome ("Hallelujah!" he sighs) and placards advertising "Poor Boys, Dressed" and "Yat-Ca-Mein." Halted by a red light at Canal Street, the traveler is admonished to "get right with Jesus" by a venetian上百ist and his evangelical dummy. The cabby proceeds into the French Quarter, where half the streets are plowed up in anticipation of re-paving. The traveler thinks he's seen this place before, but can't remember where. Then it hits him.

The French Quarter, our adventurous traveler contemplates, looks exactly like Beirut. Ah, but the racket comes only from Dixieland bands and jackhammers—not submachine guns and the mortars of Muslims. "Hallelujah!"

The cabby waits for his tip. He's got a hank handle in less than an hour but first, he's got to run all the way over by Bunche Village to pick up an amp. Shortcutting his LTD down Tchoupitoulas, the cabby spends 15 minutes maneuvering through a herd of cement-mixers bound for the World's Fair site. It begins to rain. "Damn!"

Jazz, gospel, blues, Cajun, country, R&B, rock—virtually all local performers will be guaranteed bookings. But first you gotta send those tapes in!
Come On Baby, Let The Good Times Roll’

Shirley and Lee, the ‘Sweethearts of Rock ’n’ Roll,’ participated in an on-going vinyl love affair for almost a decade, employing the cream of New Orleans’ session men.

As it turned out, Shirley’s ambitions materialized sooner than she could have hoped, while hers was a freshman at Joseph S. Clark High at the ripe old age of 13½. “After school we all go over to this girl Evangeline’s place, because she was the only one in the neighborhood who had a piano. There was about twenty of us and we’d sing, and she’d play the piano. We came up with this song ‘I’m Gone,’ which just went on and on, and we’d sing that for hours. We found out from my cousin where they made records, so we started going down to Cosimo’s studio every night after school and we’d knock on the door and ask, ‘Please, mister, can we make a record?’ ”

“We found out from my cousin where they made records, and we would go down to Cosimo’s studio every night after school and knock on the door, and ask, ‘Please, mister, can we make a record?’”
I

studio, Cosimo knew it was me right away, because

sent Dave [Bartholomew] and everybody out to try

I

die

just a bunch of kids who come in here to bug me

every day.'

'Eddie said, 'What kids? Lemme hear it.' So Cosimo

played it for him and Eddie went crazy over it. He
said, 'Who's that? The one that's screaming?'—because I've always had this really high shrill

voice. 'Where is she?' he asked Cosimo. 'Can you

find her?'

'Cosimo said, 'Man, you don't want that?' Ed-

die said, 'Yeah, I do. We got to find her.' So Cosimo

sent Dave [Bartholomew] and everybody out to try

and find us. He looked for several days and when he
did find us, we were scared to death. We thought

we were in some kind of trouble—because here was

this man looking for us who was trying to get rid of

us just a few months before. We thought, don't

believe those people, but we finally built up the

nerve to go back down there. When I walked in

the studio, Cosimo knew it was me right away, because

I had this little high pitched voice. As soon as he

heard me talking, he said, 'That's her, that's the

eone.'

'EddieMesner asked me if I'd like to make

records, and I said, 'Yeah, sure. But you'll have to

ask my grandmother.' Eddie said 'Okay.' But in the

meantime he wanted to put a boy's voice with mine.

He auditioned all the boys who were in the group.

He came up with Lee [Leonard Lee] because he had

deddy bluesy voice, and he thought we contrasted.

I had known Lee and his family all my life, so things

worked out between us.'

Being an avid church-goer, Shirley's grandmother

proved to be a major stumbling block. She didn't

want her granddaughter singing 'sinful music.' She

said, 'You're not going to make any records.' It took

a long time to talk her into it. Lee's mother talked
to her, Eddie's wife Recee talked to her. I begged

and pleaded and cried. But she still said, 'No

recordings!' Finally Eddie went to her and gave her a

thousand dollars, and all she had to do was sign a paper

and let me go down to the studio and record. That

was a lot of money in those days, some people didn't

make a thousand dollars in a year. Well, that chang-
ed her mind, and she signed the contract.'

Dave Bartholomew produced the first three Shirley

and Lee releases was set up to be a major stumbling block. She didn't

want her granddaughter singing 'sinful music.' She

said, 'You're not going to make any records.' It took

a long time to talk her into it. Lee's mother talked
to her, Eddie's wife Recee talked to her. I begged

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and let me go down to the studio and record. That

was a lot of money in those days, some people didn't

make a thousand dollars in a year. Well, that change-
ed her mind, and she signed the contract.'

The combination of a crack New Orleans band

and the novelty of such a youthful pairing (on their
debut, Shirley was 15 and Lee was 16) caught the

record buyers' attention. Shirley wholeheartedly

agrees. 'Oh yes, there weren't any young performers

back then except for Little Esther, who sang with

Johnny Otis. People were interested because we were

so young and glad we were getting a break.'

'The Sweetheart of the Blues' is now content to sing
gospel.
questions, and Shirley would answer in the perfect picture of sweetness and innocence. "Shirley, Come Back To Me" followed "I'm Gone," which was followed by "Shirley's Back," which in turn was followed by "Two Happy People," etc. Their early records rarely strayed from the 12-bar, or Louisiana ballad, structure.

"We tried to write the songs as an ongoing story. When we came in off the road, we'd go over to Lee's house and write another chapter. One day I'd be leaving, then I'd come back, then we'd get married, then we were feeling good. Eddie thought it was a real cute idea so it was his idea to call us the "Sweethearts of the Blues" (later to become the "Sweethearts of Rock 'n' Roll"). He thought if we were pictured as teenage lovers, it would make the teenagers buy our records, just to see what would happen next.

Many people were of the impression that Shirley and Lee were actually married. "No, no, no!" chirps Shirley, "People always thought that because we sang those songs about each other. We didn't have time for each other, to tell you the truth. I got married and so did Lee. We were real good friends, but that was all."

After Shirley's grandmother consented to Shirley's singing in public, Shirley and Lee took to the road, travelling virtually for the remainder of the Fifties.

"We played all theatres at first," recalls Shirley, "because we were too young to get into clubs that sold liquor. We never played a nightclub until 1955, at W.C. Handy's Club in St. Louis. But when we came on they had to stop serving drinks, and when we were through singing, we had to get out. Lee and I would present our show just like our records: we'd get real close and sing to each other. Then I'd tell Lee I was leaving and I'd have him dragging all over the floor. We had this thing where he'd turn to the back, and put his hands on his face when the audience wasn't looking. He'd start singing, 'Shirley Come Back,' and it looked like he was crying. Well, the people just stood up and started screaming! One time we were in Canada with Elvis and he came running out of the dressing room to see if Lee was really in tears!"

When the duo left town, they carried with them an impressive roster of New Orleans talent as part of their band. Nat "Perrillat, James Booker, Willie "Piano" Smith, and Allen Toussaint all toured with Shirley and Lee. Such was the popularity of the duo that there were a number of couples on the road making a good living impersonating "The Sweethearts of the Blues."

"I walked into a club in California one night and there was Shirley and Lee! We went into cities where they had Shirley and Lee's playing the week before we got there. We actually caught a pair in Little Rock [they turned out to be the duo Sugar and Spice] but we never did anything, I felt sorry for them, so we just asked them to stop."

Shirley relates that once they were accustomed to the studio, most of the recording sessions were simple and rarely took more than one or two takes. "Lee and I would write the songs over at his house, and then we'd go down to Cosimo's. We'd sing it to them, and they'd say, 'Yeah, I'll play this, man.' Ford [Clarence Ford] would say, 'O.K., I'll play this.' Then Earl [Palmer] would get a beat and Dude [bassist Frank Fields] would fall in. It was easy, it was like we were one big family. I even remember Fats chink-a-linking on a couple of numbers, because we all helped each other out."

"We didn't see Eddie Mesner too much, because he stayed in Los Angeles. He ran that whole company by himself, so I guess we didn't really have a producer, because Dave went with Imperial after the first few records. Eddie was real fair with us, we only got a one-and-a-half percent royalty, but that was standard back then. I guess they knew they could pay more, but we knew what we were getting into."

The year 1956 turned out to be the biggest year of all for Shirley and Lee, and they started it with a bang with their first release, "Let The Good Times Roll." "We had a kind of lull after 'Lee's Dream,'" continues Shirley, "We stopped touring and everything sort of got back to normal. We both went back to high school and lived like that for a while."

"I begged and pleaded and cried but grandmother still said 'No recording!' Finally Eddie went to her and gave her a thousand dollars."
Naughty Marietta

The GREATEST Singing Picture Ever Made!


The STORY

To escape a courtly-blessed but not heavenly-made marriage, Princess Marie pays off her maid in exchange for a berth as a casquette girl. En route the uncouth suitors suit her, Marie claims that her marriage cannot be realized, the girls are rescued by the good captain. Romance blooms, but alas, her real identity is soon revealed. Unless she agrees to wed her official fiancé, Captain Warrington will be killed. She promises, with hurt in her heart, but when the two ill-starred ones meet (at a ball, what else?) they can't help admitting their love. Happiness for them lies in the wilderness, far from the power of French villains. They soon depart therefor, amid the obvious support of the captain's trusted soldiers, all of whom just happen to be able to carry a fine tune as well as a musket.

Experts in the field will argue till their eyes bleed about which musical forms—bucket jazz, rock 'n' roll, rhythm and blues, and the rest—are combined and in what proportions to create the resulting Crescent City Sound. What they won't argue about is how much one particular form—operetta—contributed. They all agree: nothing. And they're right.

Yet, it was that everlastingly maple-flavored stuff itself, distilled from pure New Orleans sap, that greased the wheels of the MGM gravy train and sent it on one of its most successful trips to glory.

The somewhat unstable foundation for Naughty Marietta is the ever-blossoming tale of the casket girls those fair, fair maidens who were brought to Fred MacMurray's fame, and the result of what started as an unlikely operetta and grew into the making of a movie musical legend. The New Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture is the first pairing of Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy in a legendary-making career of screen romances. It raised a whole host of awards from popularity polls and critics' circles; it spurred the sale of no telling how many phonograph records and music sheets, and it riveted the attention of the film industry for an improbably long time.

What's more, it made a mighty mint for MGM.

Now, of course, it's an outright hoot. When it was included in the film's trailer, the result was more laughs than Tom and Jerry.

It has been spoofed and re-spoofed, and serious film students are apt to call it "an atrocity." "Yet," quoth The New Yorker magazine only five years ago, "it has vitality and a mad sort of appeal. When the two profiles come together as they sing 'Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life,' it's beyond camp, it's a realm of its own!"

Ah, sweet mystery of show biz.

That means New Orleans Music in Film, naturally. And, also naturally, that's the subject of a continuing series by New Orleans journalist Don Lee Keith. Upcoming: The Birth of the Blues.
Everyone will have a chance

Who Dat Say Dey Wanna Play Dat World’s Fair

The World’s Fair is coming and finally New Orleans talent will have the spotlight. There will be 12 stages with up to 14 acts a day on each. So, there will be ample opportunity for every local act to cash in.

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and dat’s dat.

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Steve Monistere
A Musician for the New Year

BY YORKE CORBIN

"And how does it feel to be the founding father of modern New Orleans jazz. Mr. Marsalis?"

Developing jazz in the early years of this century may be the strongest claim that New Orleans has on history. If, as the century draws to a close, the several currents of modern jazz coursing through the city converge—or at least emerge from the below sea level purview of the city's small jazz community, to teach a broad public, a future generation of jazz propagandists and New Orleans myth-makers might be searching eagerly for evidence of heroic figures who directed New Orleans back into history's mainstream. As glimpses of the future go, that's a bright though not altogether likely prospect. Anyone looking for a strong figure, however, to represent the process of teaching conservative and sometimes benighted New Orleans a modern jazz idiom is in luck. Indeed, it's only the stubborn reluctance of our hero to embellish the evidence that prevents the myth-making apparatus from swinging into operation right here and now.

"New Orleans is about to explode its own myth," declares Ellis Marsalis. One of the few individuals who can seem distinguished and cheeky simultaneously, the city's premier jazz pianist is indulging in some playful potshots at the reputation that New Orleans has begun to acquire as a fertile source of fresh jazz talent—a distinction owed mainly to Marsalis himself, who has sent several of his best students at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA) up to the big leagues of contemporary jazz. The best known are, of course, his sons, Branford and Wynton Marsalis; the others who hold major label recording contracts are trumpeter Terence Blanchard, saxophonist Donald Harrison, and flautist Kent Jordan. At the moment, though, Ellis is playing scoutmaster to a troop of earnest young players still somewhat shy of the requirements for earning merit badges in jazz proficiency, to say nothing of the fact that they just aren't jelling as a band.

The NOCCA Nippers are earning a little money
for their school, performing at the Louisiana Crafts Council’s annual fair, in one of the ballrooms at the Hyatt. Their teacher appears at the bandstand moments before starting time, his suit rumpled from the plane ride from Fon Wonh, where he has completed a weekend engagement at Caravan of Dreams, a snazzy new private arts center backed by Texas real estate millions. He offers pointers from the right of the stage, sits in for a couple of numbers on electric piano, and joshes the players when they take a break. Greeting a bystander with what Vincent Fumar of the Picayune once called the handshake of a blacksmith, Ellis Marsalis has a pronouncement to make: “Clean-cut kids cannot play jazz. You have to be wild and woolly.”

So much for the Wynton Marsalis look. So much for the whiz kid image of music at NOCCA. Ellis likes to keep things loose. “Most people are afraid of music,” he finds. “If they have not had some formal connection to it, they just get very leery about music.” And it’s possible to trace the mischievous strain in his demeanor back to some wild and woolly days: playing free jazz with Ornette Coleman in 1955—“I was really trying to figure out what he was doing”—and the modified Afro on view in some of his old photos. He has silver muttonchops now, and a foursquare stance, an easy swing to his shoulders and the determined cast of mouth of a man who goes his own way. Holding forth in the Hyatt ballroom on the dearth of young jazz talent in town, he makes a point of inviting a listener to hear the band he’ll bring into high school competition at the Louisiana Jazz Festival a couple of months hence. “It won’t,” he chuckles with a nod toward the bandstand, “sound like this.”

A visit to one of Marsalis’ classes at NOCCA offers a peek at the process of education in a program that (even at the risk of losing a gust of noisy rhetoric) must be called a success story in the New Orleans public schools. Process is a big word at NOCCA. “If you’re going to teach students how to improvise, you have to teach process. They must understand how ideas are realized.” Ellis illustrates this dictum in a session with a group of attentive kids who don’t quite make up a band. They’ve got a tenor sax and a rather sharp little altoist, a tentative pianist, an electric guitarist with a composed air about him, and a manfully struggling drummer. There’s no one to play the acoustic bass resting near the window. NOCCA students work as individuals; bands are put together only for particular occasions. Taking their places in a semi-circle, the students face their teacher, perched on a high stool behind a cluttered music stand, and a row of portraits of jazz greats tacked to the far wall. They grope their way through a Charlie Parker tune and they do not swing. Marsalis focuses his attention on the drummer. Does anyone know what’s meant by ornaments in music? What’s the function of the drummer in a band, anyway? At one point Ellis hies himself over to the drum... (Cont’d on page 33)
N

community.

culture, the spiritual churches, social clubs and soon-to-be-published book,

he brings up the roots of New Orleans Afro-American culture, the spiritual churches, social clubs and marching brass bands of New Orleans' Black community.

In many ways, Smith may be considered an expert on the living folk-life of Louisiana. Locally, he has been a professional consultant for the BBC and Independent Television. As a member of Sweet Molasses Productions, his photo-images have merged with Macha Philippoff's powerful graphics to immortalize indigenous cultural symbols in some of New Orleans' most popular posters from the "Boiled Alive!" Louisiana crawfish (which they insist on spelling "crawfish") to the blue-eyed Catahoula Cur. But Smith was not born into the "Spirit World" culture he has chosen to document. Quite the contrary: "I was raised here in New Orleans, I know what the real, upper-class family. But our family gathering were always very quiet and reserved. My initial fascination with the Indian tribes and the parades was because of their exuberance. They seemed to celebrate life itself."

While acknowledging the ethnic and cultural barriers he has encountered during this project, Smith contends that these barriers are not insurmountable. "I came into this world from the outside; but when you come into such a wonderful and loving community as the Black community of New Orleans, you're real. You aren't thought of as 'white' anymore. 'White' is a term that is put on people who don't know how to relate because they're in such a different world. Perhaps it is the indifference of this 'different world' that inspires in Smith an obsessive drive for popular acknowledgment of this roots culture.

"The rest of the world is discovering how unique New Orleans is, but New Orleans has myopia. It just doesn't understand its own culture," he explains. "It cannot see the value and richness of its cultural wetlands. New Orleans has, over the years, come to recognize jazz, for example, as a commercial resource, so they began to promote jazz, but they still don't understand where jazz comes from. Traditional jazz and R&B and brass band music has been supported all along by the benevolent and non-profit black social clubs. The city came in long after the fact to recognize that jazz was a commercial resource and began to pick it up on it, but it has not, in any way, watered the roots, or even recognized what the roots are, which is Mardi Gras Indians and brass bands. You take the Afro-Caribbean drumming traditions that are housed in the Indian tribes and the brass band traditions in the horn sections of the brass bands, mix into that a little bit of some other traditions and you get all of New Orleans R&B."

"Alan Lomax has pointed out that the heyday of New Orleans jazz was in the '40s and '50s when Storyville was at its height and New Orleans Black musicians could actually make a living at their music and be respected citizens, and have enough free time to reorchestrate their music and present it to a recording world and to an international audience. It's been downhill ever since. You'll find world class musicians here who can't make a living with their music. I'm trying to drive a liquor truck! You now have a situation where the traditional authentic music of New Orleans is dying. About one-tenth of the Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs now compare to those who used to." Smith places the blame for this cultural decline squarely on the shoulders of the New Orleans city government, with the two primary villains being the 3% amusement tax and the lack of complimentary police escorts for the fall and spring social club and Indian parades. (Free police escorts are provided for the large white krewes during the traditional Mardi Gras season.) "These parades are a popular and beautiful expression of traditional culture in the city," Smith states in the afterword of his book. "They normally employ a large number of musicians much in need of the work, and they serve the recreational needs of a significant portion of the inner city population throughout much of the year. In addition, they contribute to a unique sense of community and allow an important network of intragroup and intergroup communication and social organization that stimulates a small town environment and deters crime. Relieved of the unreasonable expense of police protection, given recognition and allowed to grow up in their own way, there is no imagining what great benefits might result—both for the clubs and for the city."

The photographs in Spirit World are thick in the documentary vein: clear, straightforward, and printed full-frame. Most are in black and white (a small center section, primarily from parades, is printed in color) and are in the rectangular 35mm format. Several large square images, like the cover shot, have an August Sander-meets-Diane Arbus feel that allows the subject to become pictorially important as well as the manner in which it is rendered. The most successful photographs, however, are the ones where Smith pushes the medium to its limits, racking the lens aperture wide open and shooting off the cuff or combed on-camera flash and ambient light to creatively capture a spine-chilling moment. Several of the church photos are outstanding in this respect. "In The Spirit," photo No.1478, and "Infant Jesus of Prague S.C. 1972," photo No.1472/21A, are two particularly poetic images from this group. Although they contain valuable historical information and are successful in a documentary sense, some of the parade picture groups toward the book's end do not contain the same riveting simplicity as the church pictures. Smith's prints are rich and well-balanced; hopefully the book will display these same qualities in its printing.

Smith's Spirit World project has been funded by two photography fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and a one-year cultural resource management study for the Jean Lafitte Historical Park. All monies generated by sales of the book will be channeled right back to the New Orleans Urban Folk Life Alliance, a non-profit corporation which will work to bring the primary groups that support traditional culture and music in New Orleans the recognition, respect, financial base and protection from exploitation they require for their continued contribution to the authentic cultural heritage of the city.

Michael Smith is also currently organizing a "1984 Survival In The Inner City" symposium to bring noted speakers on traditional culture preservation. On January 28, C. Eric Lincoln will speak on "African Spirits in the New World"; on February 11, urban sociologist Howard S. Becker will discuss "Culture Power in the Inner City"; and on March 10, noted American musicologist Alan Lomax will speak on "The Power of New Orleans Music." For additional information on the series, call Tamra Carboni at the Louisiana State Museum at 366-6983. Spirit World is scheduled for release in January and copies will be available from The Friends of the Cabildo Bookstore at the Presbytere, 751 Chartres St., New Orleans.
"In The Spirit" Infant Jesus of Prague S.C., 1977

Avenue Steppers Marching Club, service before 1st annual parade, 1982

Ordination of Bishop, Israelites Universal Divine Spiritual Church, 1982
Rev. Mother Lydia Gilford, 1974

“Healing Hands” Bishop H. Brooks visiting Infant Jesus of Prague S.C., 1975
January listings

**LIVE MUSIC**

| Bistro Lounge, 4061 Tulane Ave., 482-9377, Saturdays and Fridays: Ruben Gonzales and his Spanish Band, from 10; Blue Room, in the Fairmont Hotel, 535-7111. Through Tues.3: Sam Butera. Wed.4 through Thurs.12: Joe Williams. Sun.18 through Thurs.31: Phyllis Hyman. Reservations, dancing, as well.|


**Concerts**

**French Market Concerts**


**Sunday, 1**

Kiss, Vandenburg, Riot, UNO Lakefront Arena; tickets from Ticketmaster.

**Tuesday, 3**

Pat Jolly's Birthday Party, with Ellis Marsalis, John Vidacovich, Jim Singleton, and others; Shug Harbor. 1983 Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, WWNO (90 FM) at 10 a.m. and thereafter.

**Wednesday, 4**

Leontyne Price sings Gospel—which makes perfect sense since most gospel singers have operatic ranges (including the ineffable Raynold Rasberry, who would have been a great hit in the era of the castrati, and wouldn't even have had to go under the knife as they used to say in the Galtine Chapel, 9 p.m. on Channel 12.

**Thursday, 5**

New Arts Trio, 8 p.m. at Dixon Hall, Newcomb Campus; information at 835-6541.

**Saturday, 7**

By George, a cute twist on: "By Strauss," one of Mr. Gardner's letter numbers; an all-Gershwin program by the New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony, including Moses Hogan being Apathy in Blue; Orpheum at 8, ticket information at 524-0504.

**Sunday, 8**

Music for Harpsichord and String Quartet, Christ Church Cathedral, 2191 St. Charles Avenue; John Paul is keyboard soloist. 3 p.m.

**Tuesday, 10**

Quiet Riot, Sage, Girl's School, Baton Rouge Centenals. I don't know about this group that's third on the bill—do you think they're a gaggle from, say, Focare or Miss Porter?

**Saturday, 14**

Exum's Concert Party, St. Theresa's Cafeteria (a location usually given over to beaches, bachelorette parties held by our Central American community). 1115 Prytania, 10 p.m. A Tribute to Art Blakey, two hour worth, WWNO (90 FM) at 10 p.m.

**Sunday, 15**

A Tribute to Martin Luther King, Orpheum, 8 p.m. Richard Harrison guest conducts the New Orleans Symphony. Information at 524-0404.

**Thursday, 19**

Joffrey II Dancers, Dixon Hall. Newcomb, 8 p.m. information at 665-5145.

**Saturday, 21**

A Salute to Duke Ellington, by the New Orleans Symphony, with Germaine Bazele and rehearsals, including the arrangement, Orpheum, 8 p.m. Information at 524-0404.

**The Bob Barker Games Show, UNO Lakefront Arena, 8 p.m.**

**Sunday, 22**

Exum's Concert Party, St. Theresa's Cafeteria, 1115 Prytania, from 10 p.m.

**Monday, 23**

Billy Joel, Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum, information at 601-388-9222; one assumes that Mr. Joel doesn't have the nerve to perform here in the Big Mischon, where no doubt hundreds of upwomn girls would be waiting at the stage door like frenzied maniacs, with results unchanged since Eudoping first wrote this sort of thing up. Valencia and Forty One Forty One and A T.L. I would empty out and the night would be filled with the sounds of sirens and SWAT teams vainly trying to control the ferocious future queens of Comus, Proteus, Attalians, etc.

**Tuesday, 24**

Billy Joel, LSU Assembly Center.

**Wednesday, 25**

Genesis, UNO Lakefront Arena; ticket at Ticketmaster outlets.

**Wednesday, 26**

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, Theatre for the Performing Arts, 8 p.m., with different selections each night from their extensive repertoire of dirty looks and dishe-on-the-head; you won't see anything like this at the Blue Odyssey, kids. Tickets from Ticketmaster; information at 587-3072.

**Saturday, 26**

Exum's Concert Party, St. Theresa's Callionta, 1115 Prytania, 10 p.m.

**Sunday, 29**

Charles Callahan in a recital at the organ, Christ Church Cathedral, 2191 St. Charles Ave., 4 p.m.

**Jerry Lee Lewis and the Memphis Beat, on Austin City Limits, 9 p.m. on Channel 12.**

**Lionel Ritchie, the Pointer Sisters, LSU Assembly Center.**

**Bo Diddley and Offspring, Tip's, Fri.13.**

**A Salute to Duke Ellington, by the New Orleans Symphony, at the Orpheum, Sat.21 st.**

**WAVELENGTH / JANUARY 1984**
Gazebo Cafe and Bar, 1016 Decatur, 522-0862. Afrofunk, ragtime piano each afternoon and again, as night is falling.

Houldin's, 515 Bourbon, 522-7412. Live music of a jazz nature outside on weekdays from 7 to 11. Playing Fridays: the music moves inside on weekends and starts two hours later.


Mannion's, 1101 N Rampart, 566-0464. Weekdays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sundaes from 1 to 10. Meagerville Montgomery. Fridays through Sundays: Lee Aldridge, also on Wednesdays from 7 to 10. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays: Linda's. Fridays and Saturdays: 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. Sandy Hannah alternates with the Adrigo. Weekdays, from 10-4 until 2 a.m. Mimi Guste and Becky (The Body Ailin'), and that's a duo for you.


Old Absinthe Bar, 400 Bourbon, 524-7761. Friday through Sundays: Bryan Lee from 8 until 11. The music is believed by the listener to be the one brought on by the whim of the music-man on his way, hey! Mondays and Tuesdays: Mason Ruffner at 3, Wednesdays and Thursdays: Bryan Lee from 8.


Penny Post, 5110 Danzelle Sundays, always open mike. Check the board as you enter for details of who's playing when.

Potchtrain Hotel, Bayou Bar, 2031 St. Charles Ave., 524-0981. Bruce Verter from 5 until 9, during the week, and is joined by Rusty Gilder on bass on Friday.

Preservation Hall, 726 St. Peter, 523-8939. Along with Galetto's and K-Paul's, one of the three places in town that consistently draws a long and deserved line outside; the only amenities are the musical ones. Sundays: Harold Drjan and the Olympia Brass Band. Mondays and Thursdays: KC Thomas. Tuesdays and Fridays: Kid Sheik Colar. Wednesdays and Saturdays: The Humphrey Brothers.


Tyler's, 5234 Magazine, 891-4999. Modern jazz, good raw oysters. Call for current schedule.

Germaine Wells Lounge, 833 Bienville, 525-6533. Fridays and Saturdays: Mike Peller's Jim Singleton and Jeff Boudreaux, from 11 p.m. Although you know the place really should be shucked in crepe, and have a black wreath, or Easter bonnet, on the day.


Willie's, 2304 London Ave., 945-9124. Call the club for details.

LA. CLUBS


WAVELINKAGE / JANUARY 1984
Dan Hicks at Tip's, Tues.17.

The Big Apple, Highway 1, Larose, 693-8688. Seats 2000!

Booker's, 1040 Texas Ave., Shreveport, 318-425-2255.

Chief's Southside, formerly Trinity's, 4365 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, 386-9384.

Circle In The Square, Shreve Square, Shreveport, 318-222-2216.

Clancy's Landing and Brick Street Tavern, Shreve Square, Shreveport, 318-222-2216.

Desperado Saloon, Highway 90, Raceland, 1-537-3647.

Emporium, 2183 Highland Road, Baton Rouge, 387-6538.

Enoch's-A Cafe, 5922 Desiard Street, Monroe, 318-343-9950.

Gibson Street Lounge, Covington, 1-892-7057.

Granct Street Dance Hall, 113 Grant Street, Lafayette, 318-322-9003.

Harry's Club, 517 Parkway, Breaux Bridge, 318-332-9568.

Humphrey's, Shreve Square, Shreveport, 318-227-9611.

Iron Horse, 403 Phillip, Thibodaux, 1-447-9991.


Mulato's, Breaux Bridge Highway, Breaux Bridge, 318-222-4648.

The Oil Corner Bar, 221 Poydras, Breaux Bridge, 318-332-5515.

Pam's Place, Old Town, Slidell, 318-332-4648.

Papa Joe's, 121 S. Buchanan, Lafayette, 318-332-5313.

Party Town, Military Road, Slidell, 1-537-3647.

Ruby's Rendez-Vous, Highway 190 in Mandeville, 426-9393.

Rusty Nall, 540 E. King's Highway, Shreveport, 318-227-9611.

Slick Music Hall, Highway 31, St. Martinville, 318-394-3867.

Steamboat Annie, Shreve Square, Shreveport, 318-727-7539.

Toby's Drive, 1303 Grimel Drive, Shreveport, 318-222-9003.

Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp, 523-1216. Wed. 18: Black Wax, a film by Gil Scott-Heron. Wed 25: St. Clair Borne screens two of his works, In Motion: Miri Baraka and The Black and The Green. The following evening, Borne will present a workshop on Documentaries in the Commercial World, and show his film Big City Blues. By admission.

Loynas Film Buffs Institute, 595-3196. Tues. 3: Kiss Me Deadly, Robert Aldrich's 1955 Mickey Spillane film noir, in which the Great Whatsit that everyone is in search of is actually an atomic Pandora's Box, plenty of double-crossing dames, bombs, beatings, hypodermics, Cloris Leachman, darling old Fortunio Bonanova (Susan Alexander's singing teacher in Citizen Kane) and Ralph Meeker as Mike Hammer: indispensable. Wed. 4: Badlands, Terence Malick's 1973 debut film is both a fluke and one of the great American films of the past decade: crisply beautiful and hauntingly flat, with Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek (who narrates in a stilted, tru­ confession style that is curiously moving) as the Starkweather and Fugate types. By admission.

Kiss Me Deadly at Loyola, Tues.3rd.

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Jerry Lee Lewis on Austin City Limits, Jan.29.

the Kingdom of Lilliput, Still Movie and Spooky. The shorts begin at 3:30 and are free with Museum admission.

The Return of Martin Guerre, directed by (an unknown quantity to us) Daniel Vigne, set in 1597 and with Gerard Depardieu as a (no doubt loutish) young-age Enoch Arden—a peasant returning from the wars—which reminds us of Billy the Kid, the genre staple for the film, he most wanted to make. A Middle Ages romance about the Crusades beginning with the tale: going off to fight the Saracens and locking their wives into their chastity belts. "The rest of the story," said Wilder, "can be the villain, played by Cary Grant." Fri.6 through Thurs.19. Koyaanisqatsi (Los Angeles film or something like it...why the Crusades?) will play this for 2 weeks and then book, say, The Draughtsman's Contract or Fassbinder's obviously monumental Berlin Alexanderplatz for one is both mysterious and extremely interesting. From Fri.22: Pauline at the Beach, by the much overrated makers of fake faces and fake manners Eric Rohmer, who (when not working from an "original" screenplay) made one of the best films of the Seventies, La Marquise d'O. TUSC Series, McClain Auditorium, 865-5143. Mostly new films. Sun.15: A Streetcar Named Desire. Wed.16: Kelly's Heroes. Fri.20: The Lords of Discipline. Sat.21: Superman III. Sun.22: The Dirty Dozen (Robert Aldrich's subsequently much-maligned film about a-cap military team made up of convicted criminals). Wed.23: Heaven Can Wait. Sat.24: The Twilight Zone. Sun.25: The Good the Bad and the Ugly (the 1367 extravaganza—distinctly related to the medieval Spanish poem and the Corinellian dramas—with Charlton Heston and Sophia Loren, and if I recall rightly, Hunt Hattfield as the villain; not the best of the early Sixties spectacles but not the worst either.)

PLAYS

Contemporary Arts Center, 500 Camp, 522-1216. Thurs.5 through Sun.25. Blues In The Night, with Della Reese whose gospelnfluenced personality is part of the world now. Fri.6 through Sat.26, James Dean, Elvis, and Rocker. Sun.27: Blackie and Blanche in the Inferno, 1974, a Film by Andy Warhol. Tues.29: Mountains of the Moon, a thrilling and dramatic film about the African mountain kingdom.

To receive the Radiators' monthly newsletter, write:
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P.O. Box 791027
New Orleans, LA 70179-1027
504-488-4893
Sundays Open

Pytho by Tom Young at Mario Villa Gallery.

ART


Arthur Roger, 3005 Magazine, 895-6287. Sat.7 through Fri.27: 36 inches—not a porno revue, but a selection of work by gallery artists not exceeding 36" in height. From Sat.25: Ed Whitehead's reconstructed papers (and Cousin Herriott, here is the Boston Evening Transcript).

Billeville Gallery, 1800 Hastings Place, 523-5899. Sat.7 through Fri.27: Paintings by Fred Trenchard (a good deal resident in Hawaii these last few years which could be because some of Fred's more opulent creations have often looked deranged designs for Hawaiian skirts.)

Contemporary Arts Center, 500 Camp. 521-1216. Sat.7 through Feb.5: Exhibition in Black, work by contemporary black artists in Louisiana. Also: paintings and drawings by Alex O'Neal, Contemporary Ministries. Sat.7 through Thurs.25: large scale sculpture by Arthur Silverman. Sat.28 through Feb.10: figurative paintings by Robert Hausey with a group show by John Cole, Dino Pelliccia, Melodie Guichet.

Gallerie Jules Laforgue, 2119 Decatur. 945-7379. Mon. through Sat.28: paintings, drawings and sculptures by Andrew Basile who is (some of the time) sorcerer's apprentice to Gis Kohnn.


Gaspet Folk Art Gallery, 831 St. Peter, 524-9373. Through the end of the month: contemporary folk artists from the south, including David Beller. Moose Toller and Juana Rogers.

Historic New Orleans Collection, 533 Royal Street. 523-4962. Through Jan.27: Sugar Bowl: 50th Anniversary Exhibition, a show of memorabilia of happier times when Tulane Stadium was still among the living, including ancient pigskins, trophies, photographs and a 30-minute film.


Louisiana State Museum, on Jackson Square and elsewhere. At the Old Mint on Esplanade, New Orleans Jazz and Carnival in New Orleans; At the Presbytère, continuing: Spirit World: Photographs and Journal of Michael P. Smith, Louisianans, Exploration and Settlement. Which is cartographic in nature.

Mario Villa Gallery, 3009 Magazine. 877-5731. Sat.7 through Sat.25: Pre-Columbian sculpture and paintings by Tom Young, who instructed your humble servant in art at about the same time—it seems now—as those Pre-Columbians were knocking out their steles. Sat.26 through Feb.15: Paintings by Rosalia Robertson and marble furniture by Bruce Benedict—this letter, intriguing as it sounds, would not be the sort of thing to lounge on in any state of undress.


Optima Studio, 2025 Magazine, 525-9295. Sat.7 through Wed.25: paintings by Carolyn Harrison. Sat.28 a photography invitational, juried by local photographer Hank Nielsen.

Tilden-Poley, 4119 Magazine, 897-5300. Sat.7 through Thurs.25: paintings by Larry Williams (no, not that Larry Williams) and Louisiana Photographers, curated by Josephine Saccio. Sat.28 through Feb.15: sculptures by Terry Weid and paintings by Maragret Wirstrom.


UNO Fine Arts Gallery, Lakefront Campus, 285-6483. Through Fri.27, a show of undergraduate work. Sun.29 through Feb.17. UNO faculty show.

Voices of the New Orleans Movement, 4901 Chef Menteur Highway, 944-1512. Through Sun.15. We'll Never Turn Back, a photo exhibition of the Civil Rights movement of the Sixties.
Shirley & Lee

"They put 'Shame, Shame, Shame' out without even a B-side. I cut it on a Wednesday, I was back to work on a Friday, and by the weekend it was a million seller."

ordinary kids. Then "Let The Good Times Roll" came out and that was a whole different story.

We were on a show one night when this guy came up to the bandstand and said, 'Hey baby, let's record a couple of the good times roll!' I turned to Lee and said, 'You hear what he said? We thought this was a good idea for a song, so we went home and wrote our parts for it. We'd been strictly R&B up until then, but after that night it..."}

Shirley was amazed that people in Europe knew "Shame, Shame, Shame," issued on Vibration Records, proved to be an instant world-wide hit. Cut in late November 1974, Shirley had already made three trips to Europe before Christmas. In retrospect, "Shame, Shame, Shame" must be considered among the earliest examples of what would be known as "disco music."

Vibration followed the single with a hastily produced album. Besides containing a mixed bag of material, it featured a horrendous cover that pictured Shirley pointing her finger at Richard Nixon! "Ugh!" comments Shirley. "I didn't like it. They wanted to get it out so fast, they used demos. We went to Europe and they put it out before we could finish it."

Shirley was amazed that people in Europe knew she was one half of Shirley and Lee. "Every place I went, I had to do 'Let The Good Times Roll.' They knew who we were. No, they wanted me to record with them, where they recorded them, I couldn't believe it."

But back in America it was a different story. "Nobody knew. I never was asked to do any of those old tunes. Nobody tied the two together, even when I came back to New Orleans."

Shirley toured off "Shame, Shame, Shame" until the middle of 1976. After that, she returned to California briefly, before moving to New York to be near the studio. "We were going to do a revelation record—between gospel and pop—but they never could get it together. I stayed around for about a year, and then just decided to come home in 1979."

Today, Shirley lives by herself in a comfortable shingle house, only a few blocks from where she grew up. Occasionally, she'll get requests to go back to the nightclub to sing, but she always politely refuses, content to sing spirituals at home and in church. "Really, I just want to sing spirituals," she says firmly. "I really believe in it. I've been saved, I'm saved."

Shall and Lee, "issued on Vibration Records, proved to be an instant world-wide hit."
Marsalis (cont'd from page 27)

kit to demonstrate how a drummer plays fills to im­
part rhythmic definition to the band. The student
 drummer, obviously tense, works through whatever
he's asked to do with great solemnity. The teacher,
for his part, keeps the distance between performance
and expectation in scale with a series of gentle wise­
cracks. While pointing out how far these kids must
reach to meet professional standards, he's establish­
ing a camaraderie of shared expectations.

Classes completed for the day, Marsalis settles back
at his desk to talk about his work. As he speaks his
gaze wanders now and then, to a Duke Ellington
score he's preparing for a performance with the New
Orleans Philharmonic, a burden he'll shoulder once
he finishes explaining such matters as how one goes
about teaching jazz improvisation. "It's like teach­
ing a process, like teaching a language. You can look
at it in many ways. One is the technical parts of it.
There's that part that has to do with sound reprodu­
cation and vibration. If you're playing a trumpet, you
have to learn how to get the air through the horn,
how to form the lips, and all that.

"And the mechanics of whatever it is you're try­
ing to do. By that I mean, you organize the subject
matter so that you teach the vehicle of expression.
I have found that it's easier to teach blues as a be­
ninning form. So it's almost like teaching somebody
how to make a container, and then after they learn
how to make the container, what to put in it. Well,
blues as form is what I've found to be the easiest
place to start with somebody who knows nothing
about improvisation. So we start learning blues scales,
which relates to that form. We listen to sound record­
ings of people who have played in this form, and
play you different types of blues pieces, and talk
about their expression, their ideas, how these ideas
manifest themselves. I try and get the students to
imitate what they hear on the recording so that they
can begin to simulate the same thing in a practical
situation that they would have to be in. You set up
objectives, if you will, objective criteria that you're
going to test on."

In the current educational climate, school arts pro­
gram themselves are facing some severe tests of
relevance. Marsalis is forthright in outlining the edu­
cational relevance of the arts. "There are a lot of
people who don't believe in the arts as being serious.
They think it's play time, with the Play Doh or
whatever.

"I think the American public is in a process of
growing, in a way, and I'd hesitate to estimate how
many years are involved. Ultimately, I think we're
going to have to come to the realization that the arts
are no less intellectual than math and science, and
that interaction between the areas is inevitable. It's
just that it has been compartmentalized by some
people who, maybe even for the right reasons, did
it without fully understanding. And in some cases
I think that the arts and objectives of music teachers
are not as realistic as they could be: People with
serious attitudes who are anti-jazz, which was always
dumb—but today it's even dumber."

"If a person decides that he wants to be a concert
artist, a pianist or violinist, and understands the
odds that are stacked against him, fine. If a person
decides that he wants to be a jazz artist, and unders­
stands the odds that are stacked against him, okay. When
you have people in positions of authority in major
institutions who are so totally ignorant of anything
other than European music—and in some cases I
think they're even ignorant of that—you have an
attitude which is being postulated which supersedes
the essence of the educational process, which is really
to better the quality of your over-all education.

"If I had to talk to a parent about a child coming
here, the essence of the situation would be that
if the child has a serious interest in any of the arts,
it should not be looked at as an either-or situation. Either
you take this or you take that. The student should
be allowed to grow as a person. The arts play a signif­
ificant part in the way that one will grow.

'Self-motivation is encouraged here, because the
only way you can really help the whole of a produc­
tive society is to create very strong individuals inside
of that."

Strong artists can direct their energies toward social
benefit, an idea that Ellis demonstrated as well as expounded.
In his nine years of teaching at NOCCA, he has helped create, with
his students Lorraine Allan and John Beaudoin, a small, highly
individualized public school music program that has realized substantial
dividends, as the best of its graduates have won conservatory scholar­
ships and professional acclaim. After playing jazz professionally for
almost thirty years, Ellis has reached

A paradoxical point in his career where the successes
of some of his former students, most notably his
two eldest sons, has spurred increased public attention
to his work.

The new year finds Ellis Marsalis moving into high
gear. A select handful of wealthy arts patrons, plus
a few freelensing journalists, will exchange toasts on
New Year's at the strains of the Ellis Marsalis
Triplet at a gala Symphony benefit at $150 a ticket.
Paradoxes being what they are, he'll be back at
Tyler's, the uptown jazz joint, two nights later at
his regular Monday night gig, a buck fifty at the
door. More than ever, it's one of the great bargains
in American music. Ellis will play at Blues Alley in
Washington, D.C., with the Wynton Marsalis Quintet—"My son has
hired me to play for a week in his band"—and pick up some more national
exposure with a Marsalis family concert on National
Public Radio's "Jazz Alive." Back home, he'll perform a
tribute to Duke Ellington with jazz singer Ge­
rmaine Bazzle and the New Orleans Philharmonic.

He's also doing an Ellington concert at Snug Har­
bor, the Marigny jazz Mecca, and an evening of
Horace Silver compositions at the Snugs. A new
album, Synaesthesia, is out on the Elm Records label;
it features several of Ellis's compositions and was pro­
duced by another of his sons, DelFayso, a trombonist
studying at Berklee School of Music in Boston.

There's yet another musical Marsalis, by the way—
Jason, a seven-year-old violinist with perfect pitch,
who'll probably be spotted at some of these gigs,
bopping quietly in his seat and keeping time with
a Big Ben. And of course Ellis can take any slack time
by working with his NOCCA students toward the
Loyola Jazz Festival.

Not a bad January, all in all.

One of the advantages a mature artist enjoys is
perspective, the ability to view one's shifting fortunes
with equanimity. Ellis Marsalis reflects, "My career,
quote unquote, hasn't suffered. As it goes for
New Orleanians doing various and sundry things. By that I mean.
I've never really treated music like a career. I was in and
out of it, teaching school. And sometimes when I
was in it, it was on jobs that I had to do just to make
a buck, and I had to try to make the best out of whatever
that situation was, to keep a creative spark going,
because it's very difficult sometimes. I've seen
some fellow just have the creative spark... just kill­
ed off. And I don't think it's anybody's fault but
theirs. You have to be responsible for seeing that
the spark still goes."
Frontal nudity in the T-P? Betsy Mullene is writing a story on Wynton Marsalis for the Dixie Roots and George Dureau is doing the pictures. Hopefully Dureau will shoot Wynton the way he shoots other young black men, naked and in good light… We received a neat cassette of Marcel Richardson, at缭ionary of them has hairy palms... West Coast correspondent one’’) is the brand-new 3-D Beat featuring former board was Richard Bird who has a very mobile poetaster and vocalist Ron Tomato)...

At the Snug Harbor, Great version of “Straight No Coffee” heard. There was a comment about the Jazz Fair he did about them a decade ago—but perhaps that set of G.S. Children has grown up now, in several senses of the word)… There’s more Jazz on Sunday afternoons (that hallowed period usually reserved for cruisin’ down the river, or beer busts at gay bars); John Vidacovich, Tony Dagradi and Jim Singleton will be raising some racket at Tyler’s during the afternoon time—4 to 8, but whether cucumber sandwiches, tiny cake, biscuits and cups of pekoe and oolong will be making the circuit, we really couldn’t say… Ray Ganucheau, formerly of APT.B, is now readying a solo act and will open for the Backbeats on January 20. Whether Mrs. Ganucheau, the former Barbara Menendez, fondly remembered by many for her energetic renditions of the Pony and Hully Gully, will participate is conjectural at press time… Mrs. Bates, which is a band and not Tony Perkins’ old mummy dearest (“So you’re puttin’ toe in the fruit cellar, you think I’m fruity? Huh, boy?”), recorded a demo at Studio Solo produced by Backbeat and cover boy Vance DeGeneres, who is interested in producing any bands in Pirandellian Search Of such (cheap). Between basketball practices, the Backbeats are writing bunches of new songs and corresponding with Eliott Maier, Neil Young’s producer, on future projects.

Attention! There’s a new venue for local bands in town City called Spaghetti Eddie’s. Proletarian hill-billiy-tationist Johnny J. and his notorious Hitmen cooked up a two-night Christmas gig there… Reggae buffs will keep their eyes peeled for upcoming gigs by former Three of Judi Mouat and a benefit featuring African Dreamland… John Broven reports from England that Stuart Colman did a ten-minute James Booker tribute November 13 on that bastion of wavey orthodoxy, BBC Radio London… N.O. songwriter David Doyle has completed an album called Goodyear with Jimmy Spheres and Paul Delph producing. The album was recorded in L.A. and will be released on Damaged Goods Records.

This month’s lei-draped fanzine spotlight shines on the omnipresent beam of literary light on Noise (P.O. Box 152, Honolulu, HI 96810), a wide-ranging and well-produced little rag, that seems to adequately cover the Hawaii music scene (a scene we’re honestly not too familiar with, even though our appreciation of Gabby Pahinui and Artis Isaacs is as complete as any average continental American). Most of these fanzines contain great homemade cartoons that poke fun at a variety of hard-core and other music and this one is no exception. The first frame of “Uncle Ed’s Music Store” opens with a plartic little character asking Uncle Ed: “Why Uncle Ed, got any copies of ‘You Filthy Swine’ by the Herpitos?” Aloha.

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