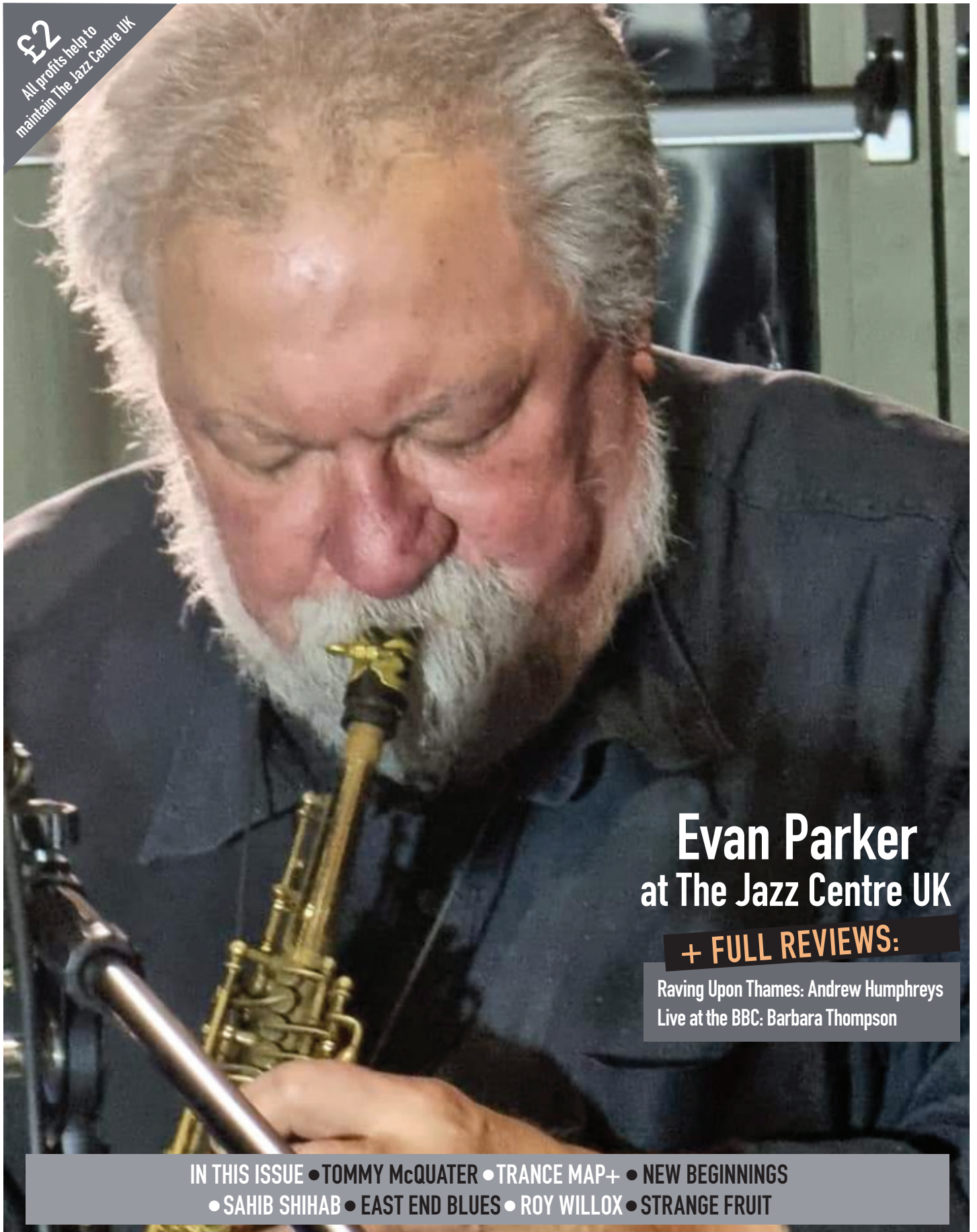


THE JAZZ CENTRE **Centrepiece**

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Evan Parker
at The Jazz Centre UK

+ FULL REVIEWS:

Raving Upon Thames: Andrew Humphreys
Live at the BBC: Barbara Thompson

IN THIS ISSUE • TOMMY McQUATER • TRANCE MAP+ • NEW BEGINNINGS
• SAHIB SHIHAB • EAST END BLUES • ROY WILLOX • STRANGE FRUIT

Centrepiece



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CONTENTS

- 03 Mark Kass CEO
- 04 My Friend Tommy McQuater
- 05 My Friend Tommy McQuater cont'd
- 06 Barbara Thompson: live at the BBC
- 07 Barbara Thompson: live at the BBC cont'd
- 08 Evan Parker Trance Map+
- 09 Evan Parker Trance Map+ continued
- 10 Live at The Jazz Centre UK
- 11 Live at The Jazz Centre UK
- 12 New Beginnings
- 13 Jazz Down memory Lane
- 14 Raving Upon Thames: review
- 15 Strange Fruit: The Documentary
- 16 East End Blues
- 17 Roy Willox: British Jazz Mainstay
- 18 Jazz on YouTube
- 19 Desert Island Jazz Discs
- 20 The Forgotten Ones: 2. Sahib Shihab



The Jazz Centre UK is open from Wednesday to Sunday 11am - 5pm.
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OUR MISSION — TO PROMOTE, PRESERVE AND CELEBRATE THE CULTURE OF JAZZ MUSIC IN ALL ITS FORMS

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TIME TO SPRING FORWARD . . . and let's not FALL BACK !

That headline says it all!

Such a lot has happened here at The Jazz Centre UK in the last few months, and you'll see from this very cool new edition of Centrepiece that we've taken more than a few chances ourselves to improve what and how we do this thing called jazz. "Speculate to accumulate", I think they say?

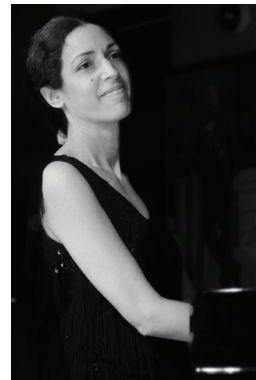
My incredible team of fellow Volunteers, Trustees and I are working crazy-hard behind the scenes to make The Jazz Centre UK not just a great local jazz centre, but a sustainable one with solid systems, processes and procedures and just plain, good ol' fashioned business sense in mind at all times, so we can all be proud of our fast-growing and unique NATIONAL asset in the UK's New City of Jazz . . . Southend City!

To make this happen we've taken our live events programme to new levels that demonstrate there are audiences in jazz for everyone and that Naysayers become Yaysayers as they witness some new form of jazz they'd never seen before!

Our cover pic demo's this nicely. The first week back after another crazy Christmas, we booked the irrepressible Evan Parker, the UK's doyen of free improvised jazz, a man of few words but the lungs of a deep-diving blue whale. Personally, free jazz ain't my thing . . . or so I thought. Evan literally blew my perceptions (and those of one of our largest audiences so far this year) out of the water. Read the fab review inside and you'll see I wasn't alone! By the way, for some more jazz pics check out Mick Gawthorp and Fred Morris' photos in our rather impressive Gallery centrespread, I love the way they capture the range and energy of our live musicians!

Watching this stuff live is what makes jazz special. Listening to jazz recordings and watching jazz videos just doesn't compare, although it is still one of the best things to do, of course especially once we've re-vamped our Jazz Film Club, our Listen In Sessions and our Hits & Myths presentations . . . watch out for news on these shortly!

We've made a huge effort over the last couple of months to host younger live bands. Read the review of our pilot "New Beginnings" jazz student support programme and you'll see that we can draw in new crowds and raise much needed



funds by taking risks with our programming. Education is of course, a huge strand of jazz important to all of us here at The Centre and Digby's book extract inside about his own exploits with his trumpet teacher just goes to show you're never too old to learn.

Our most recent "punt" was to put on our "Women in Jazz . . . in Essex" live music month in support of International Women's Day. To launch this, we were very chuffed to host the award winning and internationally acclaimed pianist Zoe Rahman and her band. Not only is Zoe a totally fab musician, but she's also a fun, witty and intelligent raconteur and very passionate about equality, diversity, and inclusion. Our next gigs showcased the gorgeous voice of Catherine Lima, the awe-inspiring sax of 19-year-old Emma Rawicz and the organisational prowess of Spike's Place founder and jazz promoter Susan May, who kindly donated to us the truly gorgeous Yamaha U3 upright piano that all our guest keyboard players now totally adore playing.

I hope we've helped shatter perceptions that jazz is not just music-for-blokes, but something that can fill a venue with some fab women and some incredibly talented young people who can and do play world-class music . . . after all, that's why we're here and doing what we're doing, isn't it?

Inside, you'll see we're still very keen on jazz heritage. Our volunteer reviewers cover jazz movies, jazz books and albums, biogs and in the case of UK sax heroine Barbara Thompson super-fan Ian Gibson, sharing his passion for Barbara's most recent huge 14 CD box set release!

And now the clocks have sprung forward, I hope this, future editions of Centrepiece and our newly re-vamped What's On events brochure, showcase how the Jazz Centre will spring forward, too!

Enjoy!

Mark

PS for those that do, please don't forget to like, follow, and comment on our social media pages. You'll find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram . . . its simple just search for @thejazzcentreuk

MY FRIEND TOMMY McQUATER

In January this year The Jazz Centre UK was gifted the trumpet of Tommy McQuater, by his son Tommy Junior. Tommy Senior was one of Scotland's, and Britain's, finest ever trumpeters. Obituaries from the national press were rightly fulsome in their praise: "The most illustrious of British trumpeters . . . perhaps the finest lead trumpet in the business". (*The Independent*). "The grand old man of British jazz . . . was among the earliest local players to forge a distinctive personal style . . . one of its most admired instrumentalists." (*The Guardian*).

The following article is an extract from Digby Fairweather's forthcoming book *Six Things at Once*, published by kind permission.

I decided that it was time for lessons again and knew exactly who I wanted to see; the great trumpeter Tommy McQuater. Tommy, who lived on the outskirts of Ealing at 68, Glynwood Road, near Hanger Lane, was generally recognised as the greatest trumpet teacher in London as well as one of the nicest people. When not playing the trumpet he was usually busy helping other players to get over their problems (Tommy hated the word 'teaching') and otherwise spent many hours doing shopping for more elderly people up and down his street.

"Would you consider granting me a master-class Mr. McQuater", I asked, "and what would it cost?"

"I drink Black Label" said Tommy cheerfully.

At our first meeting, up the hill at Glynwood Road, Tommy showed me exercises which both relaxed my lip, and reconstructed a circle to my strained trumpet embouchure. His only payment, as agreed, was a bottle of Black Label whiskey, left on the sitting-room table for future consumption before our lesson began. And afterwards we walked to his club where Tommy drank whiskey with more old friends, teaching me the old rule that, in Brian Lemon's words, "there are good drinkers and bad drinkers".

Thomas Mossie McQuater had been born in Scotland and had made his name as a great lead and jazz trumpeter in the 1930s, working first with Jack Payne (whom he claimed to dislike; "He was a wee bit anti-semitic.") before replacing my hero Nat Gonella in Lew Stone's orchestra in 1935: ("I did my little thing on *St. Louis Blues*"); then going on to play lead in the Squadronaires (see photo bottom left). A friend from teenage years of the incomparable trombonist George Chisholm, Tommy was arguably Britain's greatest trumpeter (at least until Kenny Baker's arrival), and in later years played constantly with Baker and his younger colleagues, amongst dozens of other settings at the London Palladium in Jack



Parnell's great ATV Orchestra. I also saw him touring with Baker and John McLevy as the aptly-named 'Trumpet Kings' for a concert promoted by Ken Lodge at Barkingside where he played his favourite solo feature *It's a Wonderful World*.

Tommy was one of the music profession's strongest and most respected players; a great musician and big-hearted philanthropist. He also had a strong sense of fair play and a fatherly sense of protection towards his fellow-players, as well, when required, as a caustic sense of humour when confronted with anyone parading right-wing views.

This happened on one occasion when, during some high-society function he found himself in the lavatory, up against a cubicle and next door to the current leader of the conservative party, Edward Heath. Tommy leaned over and glanced down. "I see", he said to Heath, "we've got one thing in common!"

Tommy —whose booming voice easily projected across any orchestra pit— was a regular source of now-legendary ad-libs and (where necessary) justified admonishments. One of these was directed at the young Tom Jones, who —just arrived at the London Palladium at the height of his early stardom— was due to rehearse with Jack Parnell's Orchestra at 10am one morning for TV's Sunday Night at the London Palladium show. One and a quarter hours later, the newly-established superstar wandered casually in, unconcerned at having kept ranks of professional colleagues waiting for no good reason. From the trumpet section Tommy McQuater made himself heard with an altogether reasonable question:



Tommy McQuater, Archie Craig, Clinton French (trumpets); George Chisholm, Eric Breeze (trombones); Tommy Bradbury, Harry Lewis, Jimmy Durrant, Andy McDevitt, Cliff Townshend (father of Peter Townshend of The Who) (saxes); Ronnie Aldrich (piano); Sid Colin (guitar); Arthur Maden (bass and manager); Jock Cummings (drums); Jimmy Miller (leader, vocals).



Jack Parnell's ATV Orchestra in 1962

L-R back row: Jackie Armstrong, Maurice Pratt, Jimmy Wilson, Bill Geldard.

Front row: Basil Jones, Tommy McQuater, Bobby Pratt, Derrick Abbott.

"I suppose a bollocking's out of the question?"

Another day, he was leading his section at a rehearsal for Sunday Night at the London Palladium. Most of the stars, including Mel Tormé, had run through their acts in one professional go, but singer Sandie Shaw delayed proceedings with insistence on several attempts at her song. Tommy played on with increasing irritation through the rehearsals, until something approaching a reasonable result was audible. As the barefoot Sandie finally left the stage, Tommy stopped her with his foot. "I hope you won't mind me saying, hen" he observed resignedly, "but that was bloody awful!"

Another Palladium visitor was the legendary ballet dancer Rudolph Nureyev who, like Tom Jones, arrived late for rehearsal at the point where his orchestra was due for a break. Tommy met the visiting superstar head on. "You go and jump about on the stage laddie", he advised, "while the rest of us have a cup of tea!"

Perhaps my favourite story of Tommy however concerned the trumpeter Jon Faddis, a headliner whose talents Tommy was concerned to assess at Ronnie Scott's club one evening. After the set he introduced himself to the high-note phenomenon.

"Hey laddie", he said, "come back to my house tomorrow. It's Sunday and I'll cook you a nice big lunch with beef and potatoes 'n'all. We'll have nice dinner".

"Sorry", said Faddis, "but I'm a vegetarian". Tommy leant forward and perused the visitor closely.

"Well then" he said, "come back tomorrow, and we'll open a bottle of Scotch".

"I'm sorry", returned Faddis, "but I don't drink!". Tommy's head jerked back in shock before he made final revisions to his plan.

"Well", he said, "come round tomorrow and you can have a wee nibble at my hedge!"

By the time I met him Tommy's playing life had been curtailed after an accident with his great friend and fellow Scot, John McLevy. Sometimes on a Saturday night John and Tommy would go out together as a strolling trumpet-duo to sit in with the dance band run by Tommy's son—universally called 'Tommy Junior'—who played bass guitar. One night John sang *Ol' Rocking Chair*, ending the song with an extravagant arm-gesture which hit the bell of Tommy's trumpet and drove the mouthpiece back through his teeth. This, although the victim appeared to bear no grudge, was to signal the end of his serious playing career. So, at our first lesson, Tommy, devoid of self pity, said to me: 'I can still play the introduction to *West End Blues* but can never get the high 'D' at the end'.

Later at the 100 Club I organized a benefit for my new teacher to raise funds for qualified dental attention. My own dentist at the time was Lord Anthony Colwyn whose surgery was in Harley Street and who was himself a trumpet-player who led his own successful function-band. Many great musicians came to play for Tommy's cause and at the end I was able to present Anthony with around £600 in cash. But despite his best efforts to build a bridge for Tommy's teeth nothing could be done. One day one of Tommy's old friends asked him how the bridge was getting on.

"It makes me look like Kirk Douglas" said Tommy, who presumably had seen the movie *Young Man with a Horn*.

"The trouble is Kirk Douglas does'nae play the bloody trumpet!"

He was a kind man and generally reluctant to say anything bad about anyone in his profession. But at one point in his career he had toured with a well-known bandleader; a would be jazzman in whose band's ranks was one member who insisted on asking Tommy what he thought of his leader's playing.

The question was re-raised regularly until, after a few more whiskies than usual, Tommy decided the truth would be in order.

"The day that laddie plays jazz" he opined in his thick Scottish brogue "I'll shoot grouse outa my arse!"

Anything one-to-one with a potential opponent was generally even more out of the question, but on one more occasion a younger colleague who was far too big for his boots persistently asked Tommy what he thought of his playing until finally it was too much. Tommy relaxed back into his natural dialect.

When you dinna' ken, ye dinna ken", he began, "and when you dinna ken, ye dinna ken tha' ye dinna ken", he began, "and when you dinna ken, ye dinna ken tha' ye dinna ken".

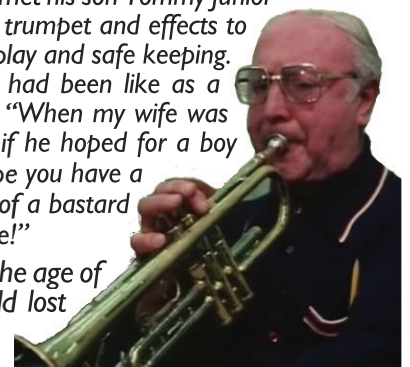
But (a pause for emphasis), "when you ken what ye dinna ken tha' ye dinna ken, ye'll know tha' shite!"

Later in 1998 Tommy was still getting back to playing, despite the loss of his beloved wife; making appearances annually at the nearby Ealing Jazz Festival, playing the odd tune or two at a nearby club, and making walk-on appearances to acknowledge his big contribution to British jazz history; notably at our first *History of the Jazz Trumpet* concert. This I had organized for an all-star team of five trumpeters including Kenny Baker, Guy Barker, Bruce Adams, Henry Lowther (and, after Kenny's death in 1999, Tony Fisher) for my friend John Woolf's eminent Park Lane Group, which regularly presented concerts for me—and many other younger musicians—on London's South Bank.

Tommy would live on for another ten years, but began to lose speed after his beloved wife died. Another staple in his life, the Black Label, would stay with him thereafter and sometime in his later years, this benevolent veteran would produce a self-written manual on how to drink regularly, but properly, without slipping over into alcoholism. A few years before he died he made one of his regular visits to the Ealing Jazz Festival, up the road where he was usually persuaded to play. Sitting on a chair he played *A Hundred Years from Today* and (said Bruce Adams): "it was one of the most beautiful things I ever heard".

In early February this year I met his son Tommy Junior who had brought Tommy's trumpet and effects to The Jazz Centre UK for display and safe keeping. I asked him what Tommy had been like as a father. Tommy Junior said: "When my wife was expecting I asked my dad if he hoped for a boy or a girl. And he said "I hope you have a boy so he can be as much of a bastard to you as you've been to me!"

Tommy died in 2008 at the age of ninety-three and the world lost a great trumpeter and an unforgettable man.



Lockdown Listening

Barbara Thompson – Live at the BBC – Repertoire Records

Jazz Centre volunteer Ian Gibson put lockdown to good use; he purchased the Barbara Thompson Live at the BBC 14 disc box set, listened to them all, and wrote this review for Centrepiece. The advertising blurb points out: 14 CD set containing 27 complete radio programmes constituting 14 hours of music. Over 100 remastered and restored tracks from 1969-1990 together for the first time on one release.

As well as catching up with some old favourites from my existing collection of jazz recordings during the recent lockdowns, I ordered the above anthology of Barbara Thompson at the BBC, performing with her own bands, as well as collaborations with other leading jazz musicians of the day. I understand that the recordings themselves were compiled from a number of sources, including Barbara's own collection, as well as the BBC archives. The fourteen discs are housed in a robust box with individual colour-coded sleeves and an informative booklet, denoting session details, personnel etc, as well as photos from the period. The quality of recording is generally of a very high sonic standard, given that many of the sessions are now over fifty years old.

I'm not going to attempt to give a track-by-track account, or even a detailed review of all fourteen discs in this extensive set, but rather an overview of the content from the perspective of my developing taste and appreciation of jazz during the same timescale as some of these landmark recordings. The relevance of these discs is further enhanced, given that a number of the original studio recordings of the same material are no longer readily available.



The first disc of the chronologically sequenced box-set kicks off with a series of recordings from 1969 by the New Jazz Orchestra, culminating in *Le Dejeuner sur L'herbe* by Neil Ardley, and conducted by the composer, with whom Thompson subsequently collaborated on several other major works, such as the highly acclaimed *Kaleidoscope of Rainbows*. There are then sets from the Dave Gelly Sextet and Barbara Thompson/Art Themen Quintet, as well as a couple of larger scale works for jazz orchestra, including a five movement Thompson original, playfully entitled *Entre Deux Terres*. Back in the day, Art Themen was still a working orthopaedic surgeon and there were occasions when he was unable to make jazz dates, having been called into theatre at short notice.

Whilst there have been many other significant female instrumentalists in British jazz, (e.g. Kathy Stobart, Annie Whitehead, Gail Thompson, not forgetting Ivy Benson, with whom Barbara played early in her career) I think it's fair to say that few have matched Barbara Thompson's influence as a composer and performer, which goes far beyond that of many male contemporaries. For example, the final track from the 2019 album by trumpet/flugel horn player Yazz Ahmed, *Polyhymnia*, is dedicated to and named after Barbara, as testament to her inspiration.

My personal interest is particularly drawn to the recordings by early iterations of Barbara's bands Paraphernalia and Jubiaba (Discs 3 to 5), given my frequent encounters with both outfits in the early to mid '70s. Primarily these would be at the Bull's Head in Barnes and often on Monday evenings, in the company of a number of old school friends, as my burgeoning interest in Jazz and its various crossover genres was developing.

Performances by the early incarnations of Paraphernalia were interspersed with appearances by Barbara's other group, the shorter-lived nine-piece latin/jazz/ rock ensemble, Jubiaba. The band's line-up included some very eminent British Jazz musicians of the day, including Bill Le Sage (on vibes and percussion here), Peter Lemer, Henry Lowther, Ian Hamer, Derek Wadsworth and Martin Drew (before he was 'head hunted' by Oscar Peterson), not to mention occasional appearances by such internationally known artists as Kenny Wheeler. There are three full sets by Jubiaba in this collection and many of the tunes (all self-penned by various members of the band) sound as vibrant and exciting today as they did fifty years ago! Particular numbers I fondly recall and represented here are; *Cuban Thing*, *Slum Goddess*, and *Black Macumba*; the latter featuring an eerie introduction in live performance by trombonist Wadsworth playing didgeridoo, to the delight of audience and band members alike, (although here credited to Lemer's synthesiser). It is also worth noting Bill Le Sage's tune, *Encore Ecuador*, which brings to mind earlier Latin-Jazz recordings by the likes of Machito and his Orchestra.



Paraphernalia had a pretty fluid line-up in its early days but, from the outset was primarily a vehicle for Barbara Thompson's own compositions, which were developing their own identity, whilst allowing plenty of scope for inventive improvisation. A particularly memorable and evocative, eastern flavoured number featured on the first Paraphernalia album, is *Temple Song*, which has a fiendishly ambiguous time signature, seemingly made up with a series of odd bar lengths.



A quick review of some of the musicians who performed with Paraphernalia on these early broadcasts, include Pepi Lemer on vocals, notably presented here singing on her then husband, Peter Lemer's composition *Aliyah*, which was a rare non-Thompson composition in the Paraphernalia repertoire. Then there is Peter Jacobsen who briefly appears on one broadcast and was an early exponent in Britain of using synthesizer, within a live jazz context, alongside electric piano. Like myself, Peter originated on Tyneside, but lived for many years in the Southend area, where he became a mainstay of the Essex Jazz scene. He also played with the likes of Bobby Wellins, Don Weller, Chris Biscoe and Tim Whitehead, as well as a stint with Morrissey Mullen, who recorded Peter's wittily entitled *Southend Pierre* as a track on their album *This Must be the Place*. Steve Cook was Paraphernalia's regular bass player for a number of years, but was replaced by Soft Machine's Roy Babbington on Fender six-string bass guitar, for the band's debut vinyl release. It is interesting to note that Cook subsequently turned up on a live Soft Machine album, *Alive and Well: Recorded in Paris* long after all the original members of that band had departed. There is also one section on Disc 6 of Barbara playing with the Don Rendell Five, also featuring Matt Matthewson on keyboards and taken from his bass-player brother Ron's archive collection.

Starting in mid-1979, the later discs in the set (Disc 7 onwards) capture Paraphernalia as it evolved through the '80s into the '90s. With Barbara's husband, the late Jon Hiseman now firmly ensconced on drums, (having put on hold, his own bands Colosseum and Tempest). Paraphernalia were now playing bigger venues, as they developed more of a jazz-rock orientated sound, exemplified by Hiseman's expansive double bass drum kit and attendant solos. Jazz credentials were kept intact,

however, by appearances at major festivals in the UK and across Europe, such as the now sadly defunct Bracknell Jazz Festival, which was a regular event in my calendar for many years.

During this period, Barbara was also composing larger scale works, such as the *Selfish Giant* from the album *Wilde Tales*, which is represented here in its entirety on Disc 7. After an extended period with a relatively stable line-up, bassist Dill Katz and Keyboardist Colin Dudman

left to form the band Twentieth Century Blues, as well as setting up their own rehearsal and recording studios known as The Premises in the Hackney Road in East London. The addition of another lead instrument in the form of electrified violin expanded the group's sonic landscape; firstly, Peter Hartley filled this role, then Anthony Aldridge, followed by Rod Dorothy and eventually Billy Thompson, all of whom can be heard on these radio broadcasts with

the exception of Thompson (no relation). The career path of both Barbara Thompson and Paraphernalia continued to progress well after the recordings documented here, also adding guitar to the line-up, which is represented on just the last couple of cuts by the group in this set. The final disc, however, is by the Barbara Thompson quartet, which is essentially a reduced version of Paraphernalia, with Jon Hiseman, Peter Lemer and Phil Mulford on board.

As all the content originated as radio broadcasts, there are the inevitable spoken introductions here and there. Whilst the temptation here is to skip to the next piece of music, it is actually worth listening to them at least once, given the knowledge of the subject by some of the leading jazz commentators of the day, several of whom were also performers; Peter Clayton, Charles Fox, Miles Kington, Humphrey Lyttleton, Dave Gelly, and Ian Carr, the latter two also playing on some of the earlier recordings in the collection.

Sadly, Barbara is no longer performing, as her Parkinson's disease progresses. However, revisiting these landmark recordings recalls happier times and may hopefully give other listeners a sufficient taste of the music to want to explore further. At the time of writing a newly recorded album, *Bulletproof* has just been released of her music; overseen by Barbara herself and performed by NYJO with remaining members of Paraphernalia, such as long-time collaborator Peter Lemer on keyboards, but without Thompson or Hiseman.

Ian Gibson (JCUK Volunteer)

The image on this page is taken from the DVD: *Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia: Live '05*. Filmed at the Theaterhaus in Stuttgart in 2005, it will be screened in The JCUK Media Centre on Saturday 16th April, 12 noon.

Evan Parker Trance Map+: A Kaleidoscope of Sound

The mission statement of The JCUK states: Our aim: to preserve, promote and celebrate the art of jazz in all its forms. The performance on Saturday 8th January at The Jazz Centre UK by Evan Parker's Trance Map+ was a jazz form on its outer fringes. The decades-long career of saxophonist Evan Parker places him firmly in the jazz tradition; early influences include Lee Konitz and Jimmy Guiffre, and later John Coltrane and Cecil Taylor. He was a stalwart of the free jazz scene from the 1960s onwards, a central figure in the Spontaneous Music Ensemble. Forming Trance Map with Matt Wright, on electronics, laptop and turntable, and Trance Map+ with trombonist Robert Jarvis, a whole new range of musical idioms come into play.

Prominent in the mix is the minimalism style of composers such as La Monte Young, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and Michael Nyman, the latter with whom Parker has recorded. Both Young and Riley started their careers as working jazz musicians, and jazz from swing to Be Bop and, (especially) modal played a crucial part in the creation of minimalism. Both Miles Davis (*Kind of Blue*) and John Coltrane (*Africa Brass*, *My Favourite Things*) are cited as seminal influences. Minimalism also drew on non-western styles, Eastern cyclical structures, African drum music, Indonesian Gamelan and Indian Raga, all of which in turn has fed back into contemporary jazz. All these elements can be discerned in the Trance Map groups. Likewise, the various techniques of minimalism; phase shifting layering, looping, sampling, sequencing, multi-tracking are all effectively utilised by Trance Map. Their set on January 8th was mesmerising, immersive, an ever-changing, modulating kaleidoscope of sound.

Parker's playing on soprano sax was lyrical, even during his prolonged circular breathing passages. It has

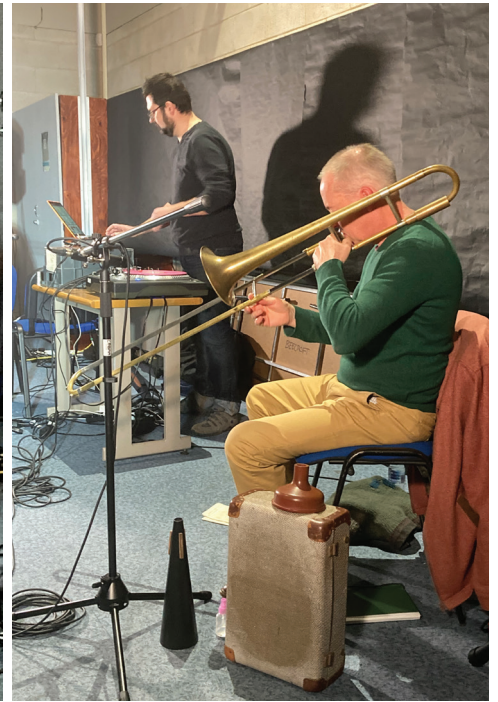
been described, accurately, as of "shamanistic intensity . . .

entering a kind of trance-state, a densely-textured sound." His Parliamentary awards citation describes the creation of "electronics-like textures acoustically, building a personal soundscape that avoids conventional tunes, but has its own arresting lyricism".

Robin Jarvis blew every conceivable sonority from his trombone, melodic fragments, moans and groans, at times sounding like a ship's fog horn, at other times like a motor bike starting up, but always blending seamlessly with Parker's soprano in the polyphonic passages.

As for Matt Wright on computer electronics and turntable, he was the fulcrum of the trio; sampling and modifying both wind instruments, then feeding back into the mix for the other two to improvise against. To get a complete understanding of his role in Trance Map an e-mail interview was conducted with Matt, and his comments deserve reproducing at length.





"I was taking live input from Evan and Robert, sometimes sampling and looping what they just played, sometimes using live delays and reverb to change the feel of the acoustic as they play live. In the old days all of those processes would have been in separate pieces of technology, but I use Ableton Live, which is a piece of software that I run on a laptop. It has almost infinite options for modifying pitch, frequency, rhythm and so on. When I'm playing, my screen looks a bit like an analogue mixing desk: I can see the volume and frequency of all the musicians around me and I can manipulate their sound live, or record little samples of their playing and return to those samples later.

"I can do this with almost infinite numbers of layers of sounds, so it's possible to build up really dense textures from small fragments of music. The software was originally designed for DJs, for loading up and playing pre-prepared playlists of music. But I am more interested in using the software as an instrument, starting with hardly anything pre-planned, and just listening out to capture and record the sounds of the musicians around me and remix that in real time."

"Evan's playing (whether solo, acoustic, or in an electro-acoustic group) is always about real time feedback, playing and listening and building the music up from reactions to the instrument, the acoustic of the venue, etc, etc. So, in this case, yes, when Evan and Robert play, I can capture their sound and spin it back to them, they in turn can then react. I can record or process their new reactions and the feedback can just keep growing. In fact, the most important thing is to stop every so often, so the feedback can start again with a new idea!"

"That sense of the infinite is something that I love about early minimalism and indeed Evan's language. Some Indian musicians evoke the infinite, being accompanied by a drone which never stops, and some of the early minimalist composers were very deeply influenced by Indian musicians (Philip Glass worked with Ravi Shankar for example, and Terry Riley's early work with saxophone and tape has a 'timeless' quality to it). So there's a natural feedback between the 'future' and the 'past' when working with this kind of music!"

Evan Parker has said of Trance Map: "The real seems virtual, the virtual seems real. It is the ambiguity essential to the power of dreams". He recommends listening late at night, on low volume to point to beautiful dreams. Maybe so, but his Jazz Centre performance, on a Saturday afternoon was, well . . . entrancing.

The written word can never express the complete experience of this, or any other type of music. So, some recommendations for YouTube can be found on page 18.

On Spotify you can listen to Evan Parker Trance Map's album *Crepuscle in Nickelsdorf*.

Evan Parker Electroacoustic Nonet on YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjnmlviewCI>

The fertile mutual interchange between jazz and minimalism continues still; try some examples on Spotify
 GoGo Penguin

Big Band Minimalism: Works of Mats Holmquist
 Pat Metheny: *The Orchestrion Project*.

The best example of the soprano saxophone-trombone front line combination this writer knows of are the set of recordings over many years by Roswell Rudd (trombone) and Steve Lacy (soprano sax) : *Schooldays*, is on Spotify.

Andi Schönheit



Live at The Jazz Centre UK



Saturday 29th January:
Mark Crooks – Leon Greening Quartet.



Saturday 12th February: Roberto Manzin.



Leon Greening.



Saturday 12th March: Catherine Lima. Paul Higgs on piano.



Saturday 5th March: Zoe Rahman.



Photos by Fred Morris.



Saturday 19th February: St. Barbe Trio.



Sunday 16th January: The 251s



Saturday 5th February: Steven Nichols Quintet.



Saturday 19th March: Emma Rawicz Quintet.



Saturday 22nd January: Earl Okin.



Saturday 12th February: Roberto Manzin. Dan Banks on piano.

Re-opening after lockdown, The Jazz Centre UK is going from strength to strength, with increasing audience numbers, and a variety of jazz styles in performance, from down-home blues to the outer reaches of the avant-garde. January featured Evan Parker's TranceMap+, the first of our Sunday Blues Lounge gigs with the 25 1s, followed by veteran jazz troubador Earl Okin, and Spike's Place Crooks-Greening Quartet.

We are collaborating with London's Royal Academy of Music with our 'New Beginnings' project (see page 12), promoting emerging new talent; the Steven Nichols Quintet a great example. International Women's Month featured full houses for superb performances from Zoe Rahman, Catherine Lima and Emma Rawicz, the latter only 19 years old and a rising star on the UK jazz scene.

There was a lyrical, mellow set from Mick Foster with the Dominic Ashworth Trio, and Trevor Taylor's Jazz825 gave us the outstanding Italian tenor saxophonist Roberto Manzin. James Maltby made a return visit with his new St. Barbe Trio.

As usual Susan May's Spike's Place rounded off the month with the Derek Nash Quartet.



Saturday 5th February: Steven Nichols Quintet.



Saturday 26th February: Mick Foster with the Dominic Ashworth Trio.



Dominic Ashworth.



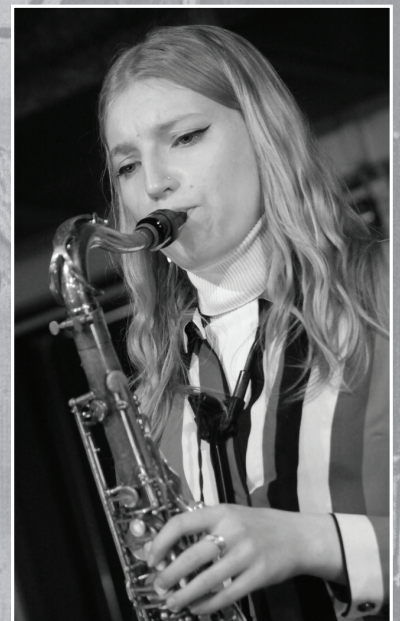
Saturday 29th January: Mark Crooks–Leon Greening Quartet.



Saturday 8th January: Evan Parker's TranceMap+. Matt Wright (turntables), Robert Jarvis (trombone).



Sunday 16th January: The 25 1s.



Saturday 19th March: Emma Rawicz Quintet.

Photos by Mick Gawthorp.

New Beginnings

The Jazz Centre's new live performance series aims to introduce exciting young talent from the Royal Academy and other London music colleges.

Fittingly, it was a student who gave us this idea...

In the early days of live music at the JCUK, talented guitarist/bandleader/composer James Maltby brought his 7-piece group Elephant Talk to play for us, and they impressed all who heard them with their exciting brand of contemporary jazz.

At the time every member of the group was studying at the Guildhall School of Music; it transpired that forming a group, creating a repertoire for it, rehearsing it and taking it out in public was a central part of their course. At a later performance at the Spice of Life, which this writer attended, Sam Knight, Elephant Talk's powerful tenor player, led the support band; with an utterly different musical policy, this band nevertheless displayed the same expert musicianship and originality. It became clear that there were probably as many fine bands at the Guildhall as there were students on the course, or at least students in the final year; and that was probably also the case at the Royal Academy, at Trinity Laban, at Goldsmiths...

When Elephant Talk returned to the JCUK a year later, James used the gig to fulfil a requirement of the final stages of his degree course, which was to document and analyse every aspect of an individual gig from first contact to packing up the drumkit and catching the train home. When I asked him about gig opportunities available to groups like his, he said that it was not always easy to secure bookings, and that covering their expenses was often more than they could expect in terms of reward.

It occurred to us that the JCUK was ideally placed to offer London's student bands a place to play: we're right next to an easy transport link from the city, and musicians can arrive and leave in daylight, and can invite their families and friends for a day out. Younger relatives would be welcome in our unlicensed premises, and JCUK volunteers would give the bands a warm welcome, while those with experience in the music business could offer some advice about promotion and performance.

But... would audiences turn up to listen to musicians who, by definition, have no reputation or marketable 'name'? We hoped that, even if they had not heard of these youngsters, our regulars would be sufficiently enthused by the idea of discovering new talent, and of being part of something that would support the future of the music.

We decided to apply for an Arts Council grant to support a concert series, offering filming and recording as well as a performance space. Chair of Trustees Gary Evans put time and expertise into preparing an application for them to consider.

And then came Covid...

When The Jazz Centre kickstarted its live programme again, in the autumn of last year, we decided to go it alone: forgetting the filming and recording, we would just say 'Come and play.' The Royal Academy proved the most responsive institution, its jazz director Nick Smart readily agreeing to put some bands in touch with us.

And so to our first New Beginnings gig, on February 5th:



Steven Nichols, Charlie Rees and Toby Yapp.

trumpeter Steven Nichols and his quintet were booked, the leaflets were distributed, the online listings and promotion were out there. Would the audience come?

Advance bookings were not exactly plentiful: it didn't look too good at first. If you were here, though, you'll know that it all turned out well; the band was terrific, full of the impressive playing and youthful enthusiasm that we'd expected, and a very healthy audience blended family and friends of the band with attentive local listeners.

Steven himself proved a fluent, expressive trumpeter, and his obvious pleasure in the performances of his bandmates was a memorable feature of the afternoon. Charlie Rees on tenor was real find, too, his tone and ideas commanding attention and respect, as did the playing of pianist Reuben Goldmark, while Toby Yapp and Jonah Evans on bass and drums supplied confident, responsive support. The whole band was a fine demonstration of the superb standards achieved at the elite institutions in London.

Importantly, we made a profit, and were able to pay the band more than originally agreed; they declared themselves very happy with the whole set up, and we now look forward to further dates in the series (settling in to the first Saturday in the month, we hope).

Do look out for the New Beginnings logo in our listings; you won't have heard of the performers, but you will hear the cream of the UK's young jazz talent before the rest of the jazz world has really cottoned on to them, and may be able to say in years to come, 'Oh yes, I heard them when they were youngsters; I knew they were something special from the beginning...'

The following New Beginnings gig: The Emma Rawicz Quintet on Saturday 19th March was another hugely successful day. Watch out for future performances.

Jazz Down Memory Lane

A Jazz Centre volunteer evokes memories of gigs and concerts attended from years past.

Back in the 1960s impresario Harold Davison brought many artists to these shores —the Ellington and Basie bands, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan— the list was extensive and star-studded, bringing superlative music to jazz hungry audiences in London. These were one-off events —the Woody Herman band was a frequent and welcome visitor— and there were other concerts featuring a range of artists such as *Jazz from a Swinging Era*, a celebration of mainstream jazz with a galaxy of stars such as Earl Hines, Vic Dickinson, Bud Freeman and Buck Clayton; and the Norman Granz *Jazz at the Philharmonic* concerts, which had been running annually since their inception in 1953, bringing together some of the finest musicians in a jam session melding diverse styles and different generations to produce an evening of unforgettable jazz.

In 1967 Davison went a step further and introduced the first week-long jazz festival. This was the *Newport Jazz Festival*, brought to London and re-named *Jazz Expo* and featuring a mixture of some of the finest British and American musicians at what has since become the Hammersmith Apollo, but at that time was plain old



Harold Davison.

Hammersmith Odeon.

To fans this was a veritable cornucopia of jazz —eight consecutive nights of amazing music, each evening featuring a different theme or genre played by legendary names.

Teddy Wilson, Earl Hines, Roland Kirk and Charles Lloyd, Thelonious Monk, Sarah Vaughan, Miles Davis and Archie Shepp were just a few of those who played that year, with the British contingent represented by Alex Welsh, John Dankworth,

Danny Moss and Joe Harriott / John Mayer with their Indo-Jazz Fusions. Alas, I couldn't afford to go to every concert, even though the prices ranged ridiculously between 8/- and 10/6d —(40p and 52.5p to those too young for pre-decimal prices) the most expensive concert being 16/6d (82.5p) for the Thelonious Monk Orchestra and the Herbie Mann Quintet!

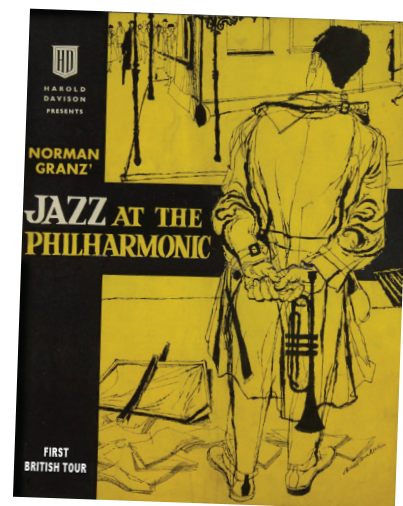
All of those concerts were memorable but the big surprise for me, whose preference was for swing and be-bop, was Archie Shepp, who closed the festival following a quintet comprised of Miles Davis, Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. Not an easy act to follow, but the total contrast worked in Shepp's favour and it was, for me, a brilliant finale to the week.

The following year saw a similarly stellar line-up and diversity of style, opening with Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan and the Don Rendell / Ian Carr Quintet, and ranging through the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, The American Folk Blues Festival, Gary Burton, Horace Silver, Muddy Waters, The Stars of Faith, The Stan Tracey Big Band, The Earl Hines All Stars and the Count Basie Band —what a week!

Once again, I had to pick and choose but how I wish now I had shaken every penny out of the piggy bank and gone to them all. I was lucky enough to see some of those artists several times over the years and from the distance of time I can't remember which concerts of theirs were when, only that they were all thrilling.

That year, Tuesday was a night of contrasts, with the Horace Silver Quintet opening with a storming set, followed by some Southern blues from the Muddy Waters Blues Band featuring Otis Spann (Muddy Waters' half-brother) on piano, plus 'Pee Wee' Madison, Luther Johnson and Paul Osher.

In a very different vein, they were followed by The Stars of Faith. This was a hot gospel choir and, boy, were they hot! A rendition of *Christ was born in Bethlehem* raised the roof —I have the impression there was dancing in the aisles, if there wasn't



there should have been— by the end of the evening there wasn't an atheist in the house!

The week ended in fine style with a double bill of big bands —Count Basie & His Orchestra, and The Stan Tracey Big Band. The much-anticipated Basie band generated a terrific atmosphere and, as always, swung like the clappers, the band enjoying themselves as much as we did and the set was over all too soon.

Stan Tracey's band which, unlike its American counterpart, had few



opportunities to perform together, such being the cost of maintaining a band of this size, nevertheless managed to sound as if they played together every night. Stan's unmistakable piano style and clever arrangements showed what a remarkably fine musician and capable bandleader he was.

I remember those concerts as if they were yesterday, so impressive was the music, so joyous was the feeling of being in a bubble of like-minded music lovers. We were so incredibly lucky to have the opportunity to see and hear so many of those musicians whose status is now legendary —alas, those times can never be repeated.

S.C.

Raving Upon Thames An Untold Story of Sixties London

by Andrew Humphreys

Paradise Press

£20

320pp.

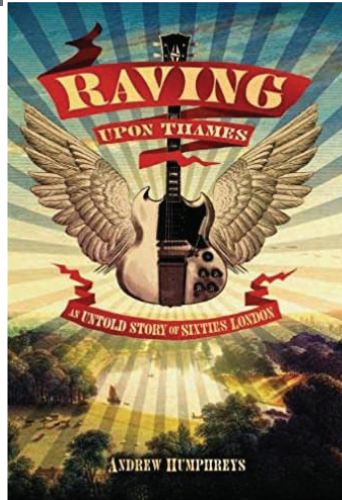
Liverpool and San Francisco; one the birthplace of the Beatles and Merseybeat, and of the sixties revolution in popular culture; the other the home of the hippies, psychedelic drugs and the freewheeling sounds of the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane. Each would be high on the list of seminal sixties places. Should we add to that list, er... Richmond and Twickenham?

It's the thesis of this fascinating book that the Thames Valley does, indeed, deserve to be mentioned in the same breath as those other iconic locations of musical and cultural change. The author has the significant advantage of not having been there at the time (after all, if you remember the sixties, as we all know, you just weren't getting involved), and with an outsider's care and attention has drawn together the strands of sociological and musical change, in a story which mixes well-known names —Ken Colyer, the Rolling Stones, The Yardbirds—with very obscure ones —Arthur Chisnall?— to entertaining effect.

Reviewing this title for The JCUK's Centrepiece, I'd better admit that its jazz content is relatively small, though far from insignificant; but I don't know many jazz listeners whose interest doesn't extend into at least the more creative areas of rock and other genres.

It was jazz that started it all, though, down in South West London. We're talking about the trad boom of the 50s, and names like Ken Colyer, Mick Mulligan and Cy Laurie. Eel Pie Island (specifically a dilapidated hotel on that curious little haven on the Thames at Twickenham) was the venue, run by the first of the book's central characters, the aforementioned Arthur Chisnall, a curious figure who mixed music promotion with a kind of amateur social work. Required by local authorities to organise his music promotion more responsibly, Chisnall concocted a club whose members carried 'passports' to a place called Eelpiland, issued by 'Pan, the Prince of Trad's'.

Chisnall is one of the most fascinating characters in the book, more concerned to run his venue as a sociological experiment than as a money-making venture; over the years he received both serious academic interest in what he was doing, and unwanted prurient investigation by the tabloids. Andrew Humphreys rightly focuses strongly on those figures who, like Chisnall, ran the venues, managed the bands and sniffed out the musical trends: another is Harold Pendleton, who ran the jazz festivals which started



at Beaulieu, migrated to Richmond, then Windsor, and ended up as the Reading Festival, which still runs today as a major rock event.

The story of his festivals, recounted here, is the story of transition from jazz to rhythm 'n' blues as the favoured musical style of students/bohemians and the generally disaffected youth of the time. On Eelpiland, similarly, the trad jazzers are elbowed aside by Georgie Fame, Graham Bond, Alexis Korner, Long John Baldry, Cyril Davies et al.

A third major presence in the story is that of Giorgio Gomelsky, who ran gigs at the Station Hotel, bang opposite Richmond station, where the Rolling Stones built their reputation with a residency which packed out a sweaty pub function room week after week and presaged a new sound and style, based on the blues and R'n'B of black America. Gomelsky was another one-off figure, a chancer full of schemes, but without sufficient acumen to get the Stones to sign on the dotted line, for they were stolen from under his nose by Andrew Loog Oldham.

Gomelsky tries to make amends by replacing the Stones with the Yardbirds, and making sure they are under contract from the start. We're into more familiar rock history here of course; the Stones rise like a rocket, and the Yardbirds do well, as Clapton, Beck and Page pass through their ranks. Humphreys treats all this with a deft touch, maintaining interest even if you do know these tales from your Mojo back issues.

Just as interesting as the musicians' stories are the memories of regulars at these venues and events, which are given plenty of space and create a vivid impression of relations between teenagers and parents, the attitudes of the police and other authorities, and changing mores. As the tale moves into the seventies the vibe changes considerably; Eel Pie Island, closed at the end of '67, re-opens as a rock venue, hosting the likes of Hawkwind, Van der Graaf Generator, and the Edgar Broughton Band, but is finally closed down on safety grounds, and taken



The Eel Pie Island Hotel, photo taken from the Surrey bank.



The Rolling Stones at The Crawdaddy Club, Station Hotel 1963.



Strange Fruit: The Documentary

In their 31 December issue 1999 *Time* magazine named *Strange Fruit* as "Best Song of the Century". In 2002, it was selected for preservation in the National Recording Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant". The song started out as a poem, *Bitter Fruit*, written in 1937 by a Jewish teacher by the name of Abel Meeropol. The inspiration for the poem was a photograph by Lawrence Beitler of a 1930 lynching of two young black Americans.



Abel Meeropol / Lewis Allan.

Meeropol later set the poem to music, using the pseudonym Lewis Allan, and changing the title to *Strange Fruit*. The first performance of the song was given by Meeropol's wife Laura Duncan at a New York teachers' union rally. At some stage the song was heard by Barney Josephson, owner of the popular Greenwich Village jazz club, Cafe Society. Josephson recommended it to Billie Holiday. It is Billie's arrangement that made the song famous after she recorded it on the minor Commodore label, her regular Columbia label refusing permission. Invariably ending her set with the song, Billie Holiday and *Strange Fruit* became inseparably linked.

The song subsequently gained a life of its own, becoming part of the musical accompaniment to the burgeoning Civil Rights movement of the '50s and '60s in the USA.

In 2002 independent filmmaker Joel Katz made a documentary exploring the history and legacy of this classic song. It outlines the dramatic background to the poem and song's composition and its enduring legacy as one of the most influential protest songs of all time. On **Sunday 1st May** starting at **1pm**, there will be a screening of the documentary in **The Jazz Centre**, introduced by its UK 'ambassador', Glyn Robbins. This is a unique opportunity to see this award-winning film, which touches on the great stories of twentieth-century America: race and religion, McCarthyism, jazz, and New York from Greenwich Village to Harlem.

Strange Fruit

Southern trees bear a strange fruit
 Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
 Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze
 Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees
 Pastoral scene of the gallant South
 The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
 Scent of magnolias sweet and fresh
 Then the sudden smell of burning flesh
 Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck
 For the rain to gather
 For the wind to suck
 For the sun to rot
 For the tree to drop
 Here is a strange and bitter crop

continued from p.14

People have been making merry on Eel Pie Island since Victorian times and before . . . George Melly *Owning Up*

over by a hippie commune. It's a sad tale of drugs, dilapidation, eviction, demolition and a possibly suspicious fire; a housing development finally erased all traces of the venue.

Andrew Humphreys is new to music writing, and this book is something of a labour of love by someone who now lives in Richmond and felt compelled to tell its story while there are still witnesses to those times available; as a publisher, he tried to commission other writers to do the job, but none were interested. But he knows how to give this story life, and excite new interest in those heady days. And, if not quite up there with Liverpool and San Francisco, you'll agree that Richmond and Twickenham deserve to be far more than a footnote in musical history.

A.S.C.

It was not only in Richmond and Twickenham that the best of blues and R'n'B in London could be heard in the 1960s. There were clubs and venues all across the city. Just in the West End there was the 100 Club (still going), the Marquee, the Flamingo, and the Bag o Nails. Brixton had the Ram Jam Club, Hounslow the Ricky Tick, West London the Ealing Club and the Dog House Club, and Hackney the In Crowd club. On the following page we are reminded of some of the best venues for blues enthusiasts in East London courtesy of Jazz Centre volunteer Sue Coello.



Giorgio Gomelsky.



Ken Colyer's Jazzmen. The band recorded live in May 1957.



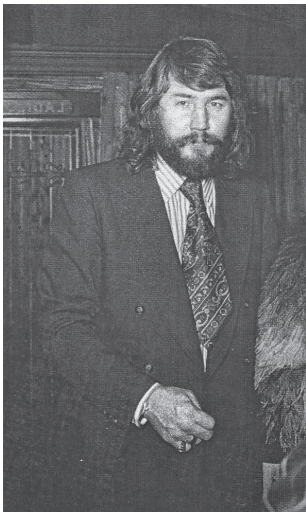
Arthur Chisnall stamps another raver.



The Eel Pie Island Jazz Club stage, with its modern art backdrop.



Eelpilanders.



Kenny Johnson.

East End Blues

Following on from the review of *Raving upon Thames*, chronicling the R&B scene on Eel Pie Island and south west London, there were other venues, east of the river, which rivalled those on Eel Pie Island and deserve a mention.

All over the area gigs popped up in Ilford, Romford, Dagenham, East Ham, Harlow, and throughout the East End. They were put on in town halls, rooms in pubs and any other venue with a room where people could be crammed in to listen to bands such as The Animals, Georgie Fame and The Blue Flames and the many young R'n'B bands on the scene in the 1960s. American bluesmen, some of the heroes of the groups themselves, appeared —John Lee Hooker at Poplar Civic Theatre and, unbelievably, Sonny Boy Williamson played to a small audience in the back room of a pub in Dagenham.

Kenny Johnson, a local impresario, was responsible for many of these, using Shoreditch Town Hall, The Spread Eagle in Tottenham and the Eagle and Child in Forest Gate, and West Ham Baths, where Jerry Lee Lewis drew a huge crowd in March, 1964. The Big Beat Club, located in Stratford's Two Puddings pub, was run by his brother Eddie where The Small Faces rehearsed.

Kenny ran The Lotus Club in Forest Gate which became a magnet for the young crowd of R'n'B loving mods. Holding six hundred people, it opened in 1962 and ran six times a week, most nights as a discotheque, but on Tuesdays seeing a full house of eager patrons troop up the staircase into what had been the Lotus Ballroom, to listen to one of the many British blues bands of the day. The Yardbirds, with vocalist Keith Relf, and Eric Clapton on guitar; The Graham Bond Organisation, with Dick Heckstall-Smith on tenor, guitarist John McLaughlin, Jack Bruce on bass and drummer Ginger Baker; Long John Baldry rasping out vocals with The Hoochie Coochie Men with Elton John on electric organ and Rod Stewart helping out on vocals; Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds; The Kinks; The Small Faces; Georgie Fame and The Blue Flames; John Mayall's Blues Breakers —the list was endless. Later, as the musical scope widened out, this included American artists such as Mary Wells, Little Eva, Martha Reeves and The Vandellas, and The Temptations.

LOTUS CLUB
22/26 WOODGRANGE RD., FOREST GATE, E.7

TONY RIVERS AND THE CASTAWAYS
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8 to Midnite—7/6

XMAS PARTY!
SAT. 23 DEC.
8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

CHRIS FARLOWE AND THE THUNDERBIRDS

NEW YEAR'S PARTY NITE
SAT. 30 DEC.
8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

LOTUS Ballroom Club
TUES. 27 OCT. 7.30 6/-

POPULAR Civic Theatre
FRID. 30 OCT. 7.30 5/-

STRATFORD TOWN HALL SUNDAY CLUB
SUN. 1ST NOV. 7.30 6/-

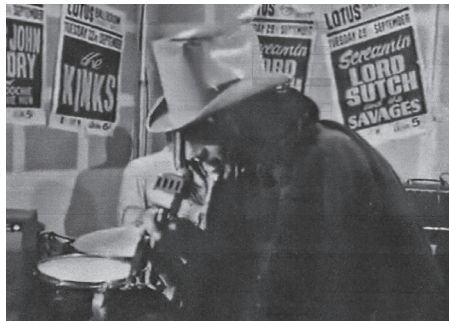
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GEORGIE FAME & the BLUE FLAMES



Georgie Fame.



Screaming Lord Sutch performing Jack The Ripper.



Graham Bond with John McLaughlin and Ginger Baker.

Screaming Lord Sutch was filmed there singing *Jack the Ripper* to a roomful of variously nervous and amused teenagers at the time he was standing for parliament in an attempt to launch an anarchic political career. This frightening performance can be seen on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnqWF_wwEUA

By the end of the sixties, licensing and health and safety regulations were starting to become more stringent and crowds of six hundred were no longer possible, affecting the club adversely. Despite this, the club remained until the 1990s but the heady days of the 1960s and the R'n'B boom were over.

Many of those bands, up and coming then, went on to re-form into 'supergroups', some to become international stars and find further fame and fortune, others to continue to peddle their own particular version of the blues —the majority of those who have survived are still playing the music they love today.

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Roy Willox: British Jazz Mainstay

Roy Willox is not a name that springs to mind when discussing great, or even prominent, British jazz musicians. Yet without the Roys of the jazz world, and thousands more like him, how could we talk about 'the greats' at all? His name does not feature in any of the numerous jazz histories alongside the Armstrongs, Parkers and Coltranes. There is no biography of him in *The Guinness Who's Who of Jazz*. In *Jazz: The Essential Companion* (Ian Carr/Digby Fairweather/Brian Priestley) again not a paragraph. There is, however, a telling reference to Roy in the autobiography of another British reed player, *I Blew it My Way* by Vic Ash. He talks of returning to England from Bermuda in 1969 and finding work hard to find, especially as a jazz musician. He says he finally managed to re-establish himself in the session world "but never in that top layer with musicians such as Roy Willox and Bill Skeat".

That small paragraph in Vic Ash's book says much about Roy Willox. For a remarkable seventy years he was a mainstay of thousands of recording sessions and many British big bands; a centrepiece of the reed sections. His playing career features a star-studded list, including Annie Ross, Frank Ricotti, Tommy

Whittle, Allan Ganley and Derek Wadsworth; in the big bands of Ted Heath, Geraldo, and Jack Parnell; in session work with Sinatra, Kate Bush: in dozens of TV shows (including Benny Hill no less), and on the *Harry Potter* film soundtracks with composer John Williams.

His son, Andrew, recently visited The Jazz Centre to gift us one of Roy's band music stands (and some of his golf medals), which was immediately put to use by a new, Royal Academy, generation of jazz musicians.

Andrew has written a biography of his late father, *I Think We Have a Find*. There is a superb review by Simon Spillett in *London Jazz News* from October 2020, and an extended interview with Roy on Soundcloud radio, with many examples of his playing; links below.

<https://londonjazznews.com/2020/10/29/andrew-willox-and-eileen-mann-i-think-we-have-a-find-a-biography-of-roy-willox/>

I Think We Have A Find: A Biography of Roy Willox by Andrew Willox and Eileen Mann is available directly from its authors.

Email [awillox] at [skymesh] dot [com] dot [au]

The Justin Swadling fifty minute interview with Roy on Soundcloud.

<https://soundcloud.com/justinswadling>



Above: Steve Nicholls, Toby Yapp and Charlie Rees.



Right: Digby Fairweather with Roy Willox' music stand.

Val Rylands' Photos

It is probably the case that every jazz club, every venue has a photographer documenting its live music. Chances are they will not achieve the fame of some of the greats; Herman Leonard, William Gottlieb, Roy DeCarava, or Val Wilmer. But they remain invaluable chroniclers of the local jazz scenes.

So when approached by a recent visitor to The Jazz Centre, who asked, "Would you be interested in looking at some jazz photos?" there was only one possible answer; the affirmative. The visitor, Chris Brooker, travelled from London with photos taken by Valentine 'Val' Rylands. Most of them of performances in the Windsor Art Centre.

Below Chris is shown holding an enlarged photo of George Melly with trumpeter John Chilton; and to the right are three photos of well-known British jazz musicians, including Barbara Thompson, Don Rendell and Bill le Sage; below, one of the leading lights of the 1950s skiffle craze, Chas McDevitt. Look out for the originals at The Jazz Centre UK.



Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia; Dill Katz (bass),



Don Rendell, Jeff Clyne (bass).



Bill le Sage, Lenny Bush, Bobby Orr, John McClevey.



John Chilton and George Melly.



Chas McDevitt



YouTube Jazz on Film

Continuing our selection of jazz on YouTube. This time we have highlighted some clips to augment the Centrepiece contents. Our selection for this issue of Centrepiece includes the best of 1930s British swing, Jazz at the Philharmonic in the UK, jazz-rock from Paraphernalia in Germany, one of the very best European-based big bands and free jazz from Evan Parker.

Tommy McQuater; examples of his trumpet/cornet playing in the bands of two American's resident in the UK: the great multi-instrumentalist Benny Carter, and clarinetist Danny Polo.

Benny Carter in London - Swinging The Blues

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEZGpR4oIgU>

Benny Carter in London Tommy McQuater, Duncan Whyte (tp), Benny Carter (tp,as,arr,dir), Andie McDevitt (cl,as), Buddy Featherstonhaugh (ts), Pat Dodd (p), George Elliot (g), Al Burke (b), Ronnie Gubertini (d). London, UK, late April, 1936.

Benny Carter in London - You Understand

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cu0ddTS3DfM>

Benny Carter in London Max Goldberg, Tommy McQuater(tp), Leslie Thompson (tp,tb), Lew Davis, Ted Heath (tb), Freddy Gardner, Andy McDevitt (cl,as), Benny Carter (cl, as, ts, p,arr, comp), Buddy Featherstonhaugh (ts), Billy Munn (p), Albert Harris (g), Wally Morris (b), Georg Elrick (d). London, UK, mid June, 1936.

Danny Polo And His Swing Stars - Jazz Me Blues take 2 - London, January 11, 1938

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjA4x05qXf0>

Danny Polo And His Swing Stars Tommy McQuater (cnt); Danny Polo (cl); George Chisholm (tb); Eddie Macauley (p); Norman Brown (g); Dick Ball (b); Dudley Barber (d) London, January 11th, 1938.

Evan Parker, Matt Wright, John Edwards:Trance Map+ Live at The Hot Tin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-yVrguWPV4>

Streamed live by RouteStock and The Hot Tin are very pleased to present our very first Artists Behind Closed Doors live event. Evan, John and Matt all perform solo pieces, before their Trance Map+ improv.

Trance Map @ Église Saint-Merry 5-18-17

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ruMWyHie20

Evan Parker - soprano saxophone Matthew Wright - live sampling, turntables Toma Gouband - percussion



Jazz at the Philharmonic at the BBC 1967

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-WwhDh894g&t=43s>

Clark Terry, James Moody, Zoot Sims, Dizzy Gillespie, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Teddy Wilson, Bob Cranshaw, Louie Bellson, T-bone Walker. Jazz at the Philharmonic 1967 BBC full concert.

T-Bone Walker w/ Jazz At The Philharmonic - Live in UK 1966

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFqK6PBq-hA>

Poplar Town Hall, UK Wednesday 30th November 1966, BBC TV. Featuring Dizzy Gillespie, Teddy Wilson, Louis Bellson, Clark Terry, Coleman Hawkins, Zoot Sims, Jimmy Moody, Benny Carter, and Bob Cranshaw.

Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia live in 1991 and 2005. Watch out for a DVD screening of the 2005 performance at The Jazz Centre UK.

Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia Stuttgart 1991

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNmeLGcImVA>

Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia Stuttgart 1991 pers. Barbara Thompson alto and soprano sax, flute, recorder; Peter Lemer keyboards; Malcolm MacFarlane guitar; Phil Mulford bass; Jon Hiseman drums.

Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia - Close to the Edge

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aulh5vtU25Y>

Barbara Thompson's Paraphernalia Live '05 feat. Jon Hiseman, Peter Lemer, Dave Ball, and Billy Thompson.



Sahib Shihab plays in three different settings demonstrating his multi-instrumental skills.

Sahib Shihab with the Clarke-Boland Big Band

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKKdjkGfqYM&list=PL_jBdaGxqQqw3lPSZPO4uhkflxGg7tVV&index=3

Dexter Gordon / Lars Gullin / Sahib Shihab Live in Copenhagen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSFjlvWEIFA>

From the German TV-program: *An Ort und Stelle*. Jazz in Kopenhagen. Dexter Gordon, Lars Gullin, Sahib Shihab, Harold Goldberg, Benny Nielsen, Alex Riel, Live at the Jazz Club Montmatre 1962.

Dizzy Gillespie Reunion Band 1968

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmjm2fo52ds>

Dizzy Gillespie Big Band plays *Ray's Idea*. Live in Copenhagen. Sahib Shihab on baritone sax.

Sax No End - Clarke / Boland Big Band

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzBhGTbkxAl>

Here's a 1968 recording of Francy Boland's *Sax No End*, featuring one of the best saxophone sections of any jazz orchestra ever. Soloists in order are: Johnny Griffin, Tony Coe, Ronnie Scott, Sahib Shihab & Derek Humble.



Desert Island Jazz Discs

Jazz Centre UK volunteer Melvyn Westlake chooses his Desert Island Jazz Discs. Fourth in a regular feature.

I don't claim this set of tracks is necessarily my definitive selection. Next week, it could be a completely different set. Such is the richness of the jazz canon. But certainly each track chosen would bear much repetitive playing on my island before I ever tired of it.



After Hours – Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Sonny Stitt

First, a classic slow blues from the album *Sunny Side Up*, recorded in New York City in 1957 by jazz impresario Norman Granz. This session brought together six top-flight musicians, including Ray Bryant (p), brother Tommy (b) and Charlie Persip (d), who gelled perfectly. *After Hours* begins with a long, moody opening from Ray Bryant, that still leaves plenty of space for sublime solos from Gillespie on trumpet, and Rollins and Stitt on tenor saxes.



Out of nowhere – Dave Brubeck Trio & Gerry Mulligan

For a sharp change of pace, this track comes from a live recording of the stomping, high-energy concert given by Dave and Gerry at the Berlin Philharmonie in November 1970. Every piece performed at that legendary concert—which was said to have ended at 3am—received an ecstatic reception. This piece was the first of the evening. While Mulligan's wonderfully mellifluous baritone sax riffs and weaves, Brubeck provides powerful momentum with his patented block chords and a blazing solo.

I'll Be Seeing You – Billie Holiday

A Billie vocal would seem essential. This haunting song of lost love was recorded with pianist Eddie Heyworth's Orchestra in 1944 shortly after Holiday re-joined the independent Commodore label. Billie wrings every ounce of pathos from the song composed by Sammy Fain (music) and Irving Kahal (lyrics).



Stormy Weather – Bruce Turner

This is a beautifully lyrical rendition of a well-worn standard torch song, written in 1933 by Harold Arlen and Ted Koehler. Turner recorded the tune more than once. But the version recorded live at St Pancras Town Hall, London, in October 1975 is easily the best—and longest. The concert was given by the Jazz Masters, a sextet led by Turner (alto sax/clarinet) and Johnny Barnes (baritone sax/clarinet). *Stormy Weather* is played by Bruce on clarinet, with Keith Ingham on piano, plus bass and drums.



Autumn in New York – Clifford Brown, Max Roach All Stars

Trumpeter Clifford Brown has seldom been better than on the August 1954 album *Best Coast Jazz* from which this track comes. The album's title has no particular significance beyond the fact it was recorded in Hollywood, less than two years before Brown died in an automobile accident on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The four long tracks give the seven musicians—including Herb Geller(as), Joe Maini (as), Kenny Drew (p), Walter Benton (ts) and Curtis Counce (b)—plenty of space for great soloing. Brown is masterful throughout, as is Roach's drumming. The final piece, the buoyantly lyrical *Autumn in New York*, takes the album to a climactic peak, after a blistering rendition of *Caravan*.



Brother Can You Spare a Dime? – Sonny Criss

Sonny Criss is one of the less well-known—and underrated—alto sax players in the hard bop tradition. But he developed a compelling bluesy tone. This composition, written in 1932 by E.Y. Harburg (lyrics) and Jay Gorney (music), became the anthem of the US "Depression" years. It suits Criss' style completely. And, in this 1975 recording, he gives it great emotional power, helped by the brooding piano of Dolo Coker and bass of Larry Gales.



Baby, It's Cold Outside – Ray Charles and Betty Carter

This song, with its overtones of seduction, has become controversial in the wake of the #MeToo movement. In earlier times, it had been a popular and much-recorded film tune. In this Ray Charles and Betty Carter version, the two vocalists complement each other completely, with perfect timing and phrasing. Written by Frank Loesser in 1944 as a call-and-response song, this 1961 recording gets a wry, warm and witty treatment from Betty and Ray, who also plays piano, backed by the weighty blast of a 10-piece band.



Funky Blues – Charlie Parker

This selection of Desert Island Jazz Discs is book-ended by the blues. This last piece, a "slow drag" blues, is from a jam session arranged by jazz impresario Norman Granz who produced a series of concerts in the 1940s and 1950s known as Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP). In 1952, Granz took a JATP Jam Session into the recording studio. Although Charlie "Yardbird" Parker was a star attraction, he was really sharing the honours with nine other front-rank musicians, including Johnny Hodges, Benny Carter, Flip Phillips, Ben Webster, Charlie Shavers, Oscar Peterson, Barney Kessel, Ray Brown and J.C. Heard. The session also became known as the "Alto Summit" as it involved three of the era's best alto sax players blowing against each other (Bird, Carter, and Hodges). The set concluded with the sultry mellow groove of *Funky Blues*.

The Forgotten Ones

2. Sahib Shihab

Jazz Centre volunteer Brian Robinson looks back at the career of this versatile saxophonist, and flautist.

Edmund Gregory was born on the 23rd June 1925 in Savannah, Georgia. After studying at the Boston Conservatory in the early 1940s, he joined the Fletcher Henderson band in 1944 for a two-year stint. During this time he mainly played the lead alto parts.

In the 1940s many Afro-American jazz musicians turned to the Islamic faith, many taking Moslem names. Edmund Gregory converted to Ahmadiyya Islam, becoming known as Sahib Shihab.

From 1947 his reputation grew rapidly. He played variously in the bands of Tadd Dameron, Thelonious Monk, Art Blakey and Dizzy Gillespie, the latter marking his switch to baritone sax. In 1957 he played the big sax alongside John Coltrane. The recordings with Monk between 1947-1951 are regarded as some of the classic cuts in Be Bop's recorded history, including the original version of *Round About Midnight*.

In the late fifties he recorded and toured with his close friend Quincy Jones. Jones' Harold Arlen's musical *Free and Easy* tour in Europe marked a turning point in Shihab's career. After the second tour with this show he decided to remain in Europe, settling eventually in Denmark. He lived there from 1959 until his death in 1989, mostly in Copenhagen. Denmark's capital was home to several other American exiles, including fellow-saxophonists Brew Moore, Ben Webster and Dexter Gordon, trumpeter Thad Jones, and pianist Kenny Drew, and he found the appetite for modern jazz there very much to his liking.

In a 1963 interview with *Downbeat* he explained his reason for the move to Europe: "I was getting tired of the atmosphere around New York and I wanted to get away from some of the prejudice. I don't have time for this racial bit. It depletes my energies."



The Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band: Derek Humble, Ronnie Scott and Sahib Shihab.

In 1965 Shihab composed the score for a jazz ballet based on Hans Christian Anderson's *The Red Shoes*. Always an in-demand sideman, over his career he recorded with a plethora of jazz greats; including Art Pepper, Dizzy Gillespie, Phil Woods, Randy Weston, Abbey Lincoln, Benny Golson; really too many to list. Showing his musical versatility, 1984 found him working with Sarah Vaughan on a project *The Planet is Alive*, featuring massive orchestral backing.

Quincy Jones wanted him to come back to the USA; answering the call he returned in 1973. For three years he had a remunerative job, and economic stability, with the Ramada Inn hotels. Unfortunately, they went bankrupt, and in 1976 he returned to Copenhagen. In Denmark, as well as performing, he worked for the Copenhagen Polytechnic, and wrote scores for television, cinema and the theatre. With Kenny Drew he ran a publishing and recording company.

He finally returned to the United States in 1986, sadly passing away from liver cancer in Nashville on 24th October 1989. So ended the career of a well-regarded, and highly talented musician.

He was respected as a very deep thinker and a very meditative person. His hobbies included photography, chess and Tai Chi which he practised from around 1970. He made a dozen recordings as leader between 1957 (*The Jazz we Heard Last Summer*), and 1998 (*And All Those Cats*), the most highly-rated being *Seeds* in 1968.

The website Bandcamp features a selection of his music from all stages of his career, *A Guide to Hard Bop Legend Sahib Shihab*: <https://daily.bandcamp.com/lists/sahib-shihab-critical-discography>

In the next issue of Centrepiece Brian will look at the British alto saxophonist Derek Humble.



Kenny Clarke and Francy Boland formed their iconic big band in 1961. Sahib Shihab became a member of the band for the whole twelve years of its existence. It truly was a conglomeration of international jazz stars, including, among others, Benny Bailey, Idrees Sulieman, Derek Humble, Duško Gojković, Nat Peck, Ronnie Scott, Tony Coe, Jimmy Woode and Kenny Clare. Belgian pianist Francy Boland organised the harmonies, whilst drummer Kenny Clarke — together with Kenny Clare — laid down the propulsive underpinnings. The band made seventeen recordings all of which make highly enjoyable, swinging listening.