

EAST COAST JAZZ SCENE



RECORDED from a concert given in the Pythian Temple on November 7, 1955.

First Playing: Station 2YD, November 1, 9.0 p.m.

AL "JAZZBO" COLLINS, prominent New York Disc jockey, arranged this concert, and as his taste in jazz is for that which is free, easy and relaxed, that is what he presented.

East Coast jazz has always been conscious of its swinging beat, and though it has progressed in recent years, just as jazz has everywhere, this beat has lent a spark of spontaneity to its work. This is well brought out during the concert, which I would be pleased to have attended.

After an introduction by Collins, the Larry Sonn Band takes the stand to play two swinging ripp compositions by Manny Albam, titled "Zanzu" and "Ida Bridges Falling Down." Sonn is an emphatic Count Basie fan, and accordingly his group, a fresh sounding and swinging one, reflects the influence. There is unusual orchestral voicing in these items which spotlight Jimmy Nottingham (trumpet) and Bobby Ascher (trombone).

The next three items, "Flying Down to Rio," "The Things We Did Last Summer" and "Darn That Dream," are played by the Gene Quill Quintet, featuring Quill (alto), Sherman (trumpet), Gubin (drums), Thornton (piano), and Jones (bass). Gene's style is amazingly fleet; he's a musician with a superabundance of ideas. The same holds true for Sherman, who, like Quill, is an old Claude Thornhill sideman, and who displays amazing control of his instrument.

The rest of the programme features three soloists backed by Hank Jones (piano), Wendell Marshall (bass) and Shadow Wilson (drums).

The first artist is Don Elliot, who forgets about his ability as a player of mellophone, trumpet, piano and guitar and as a vocalist and concentrates on his vibraphone. (Hence Collins's remark about Don "The Octopus" Elliot.) Don gives us his impressions of four famous vibraphonists, namely, Red Norvo, Milt Jackson, Lionel Hampton and Terry Gibbs, and they are brilliantly but humorously performed. What a wonderful asset is Elliot to any jazz programme!

Then comes the great Coleman Hawkins. First of all he takes us into one of his quieter moments, demonstrating how he would amuse himself in a reminiscing mood. There is a wonderful warm sound about his tenor, and when he broke into an up tempo arrangement of "The Man I Love," backed by the rhythm section, I was carried away. I could listen to music such as this all night.

Tony Frusilla, a new trumpet star, closed the programme with his arrangement of a "Blues."

Introductions are left to Collins throughout the show, and his witty comments break the ice right from the start.

Coupled with the Randy Weston Trio which follows at 9.43 p.m., and which

I review below, here is one hour of jazz which should not be missed.

Randy Weston Trio

PERSONNEL: Weston (piano), Giff (bass), and Hogan (drums).

Recorded: August 29 and 31, 1955.

First Playing: Station 2YD, November 1, 9.43 p.m. (approx.).

I WAS extremely disappointed with Randy Weston's first long-playing record, on which he played the music of Cole Porter. His latest, however, from which this session is chosen, reveals a more mature pianist and one to whom I thoroughly enjoyed listening.

Named as the New Piano Star for 1955 by *Down Beat*, this six-foot-seven musician is a member of the younger New York school of jazz. Weston is a lyrical pianist close to the style of Thelonius Monk, one economical in notes, searching for unusual chord formations. Throughout he plays with a firm beat, never failing to swing and never forgetting that the piano is played with two hands. His up tempo numbers do not sound driven or pushed, his slow tunes are not aimless wanderings. In other words, Randy Weston is a completely relaxed musician, whose work is most commendable and must therefore receive wider recognition.

Listen to this programme carefully; you, too, should enjoy it.

Tribute to Benny Goodman

(Jess Stacy and the Famous Sidemen)

PERSONNEL: Stacy (piano), Beau (alto), Russin or Musso (tenor), Elman (trumpet), Gentry or Koch (baritone), Vesely or McEachern (trombone), Reuss or Hendrickson (guitar), Shapiro or Corb (bass), Fatool (drums).

First Playing: Station 2YA, October 29, 10.0 p.m.

THE overwhelming drive that distinguished Goodman's music from 1935 to 1939 was contributed first by the rhythm section, and especially by Jess Stacy. A curious mixture of elegance and brashness, Stacy's style coaxes that big resonant sound from the piano, and as it swings irresistibly along, it unfolds sweet, simple and beautifully melodic variations. It seems strange at first, hearing this nine-piece outfit playing the compositions made famous by a sixteen-piece band, but the arrangements by Heinie Beau carefully avoid the use of a clarinet and showcase the talents of Elman and Stacy especially.

One or two of the numbers are not favourably suited to the smaller orchestration, although Beau attempts to keep a big band sound about them, but on the whole the album is a great success. I was extremely impressed with "Where or When" and "Sometimes I'm Happy."

Stacy is a pianist who always uses two hands when playing, and his delightful work on the trio (Stacy, Shapiro, Fatool) items emphasises this point. My favourites here were "You Turned the Tables" and "I Must Have That Man."

Perhaps the greatest compliment I can pay this programme is to say that I enjoyed it so much I went out and purchased the record. —Ray Harris

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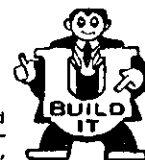
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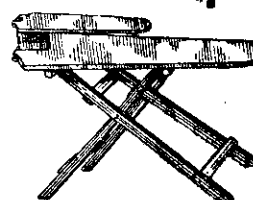


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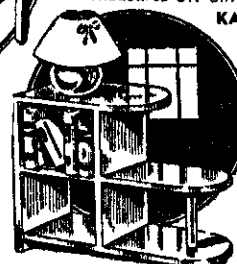


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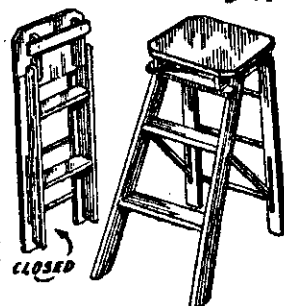
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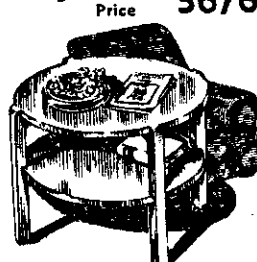
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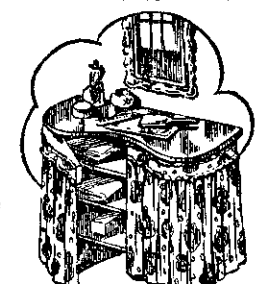
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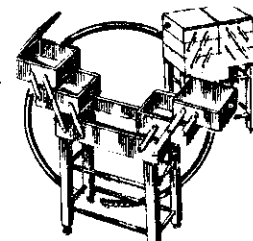
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