

# DAVE BRUBECK AND JAY AND KAI AT NEWPORT

AS a follow-up to the programme featuring the Duke Ellington Orchestra at the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival, listen to this session, which enables us to hear most of the material presented at the same festival by the Dave Brubeck Quartet and the J. J. Johnson-Kai Winding Quintet.

Dave Brubeck announced at the beginning of his portion of the programme that the quartet had come to the festival to play all new material. First on tap was "In Your Own Sweet Way," a ballad originally conceived as a piano solo but never before heard by the public as a quartet arrangement. This drew out the best quality of the group—it plays like a group. The fact that Brubeck, Paul Desmond, Norman Bates and Joe Dodge eat together, laugh together and talk together is no accident. Their personal unity is reflected in their music.

Although a reflective, almost sombre mood was set by "In Your Own Sweet Way," the Brubeck romanticism was at its richest and Paul Desmond, in superb form, swung through the performance in his own sweet way.

"Two Part Contention" followed, a challenging, interweaving effort much more complex than earlier Brubeck experiments in counter-point. Also written originally for solo piano, this 32-bar arrangement is neatly described by Dave in his opening announcement. Pianist Brubeck is in percussive mood on this one, and the whole performance builds to a terrific climax. The shifts of tempo which divide the composition into three parts are thrilling to hear and by the

end of the track I was overwhelmed with admiration for these four musicians.

From "Two Part Contention" the Quartet swung into an arrangement of "The Duke" (not included on this L.P.), and then into a new version of "Take the 'A' Train."

In the past, Paul Desmond has invariably used as a basis for his middle eight of the first chorus of "Take the 'A' Train" the "Peter" motif from Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. On this occasion, however, he used different "wolf" and "Peter" ideas. If you listen carefully to the first middle eight here, you will notice that the first four bars of the eight are based on "Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater," and the second four bars of the eight on "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf."

This version of "Train" rocks madly with Joe Dodge meeting Dave's percussive ideas as the train pounds to its destination. The excitement created by the exultant Dave at the piano is fully captured on this record, and goes to prove how wrong those people are who say that small groups are a "washout" at jazz concerts. Brubeck had the audience of 8000 in the palm of his hand.

The set wound up with another recent Quartet arrangement which started as a piano solo, "I'm In a Dancing Mood." It had acquired many new complexities, for reasons described by Dave in his opening announcement, and as with the earlier polyrhythmic arrangement of "Lover," it calls for precision as well as inspiration. As in "Two Part Contention," bassist Norman Bates and drummer Joe Dodge rise nobly to the heavy demands made upon them.

The Dave Brubeck Quartet shows that a personalised and rather highbrow approach to jazz improvisation can also be commercially successful without any concession to popular taste. Combos like the Dave Brubeck Quartet deserve success because their offerings are the product of study and an intelligent approach to jazz.

As Master of Ceremonies, Willis Conover, says at the beginning of the Johnson-Winding set, their performance at Newport constituted a sort of farewell appearance as a unit. The decision to break up the combo was a wise one, for despite the abilities they possess as trombonists, the horns are not flexible enough to sustain interest over too long a stretch. J.J. has since formed a quintet of his own, and Kai has a septet featuring four trombones.

At the festival Johnson and Winding were assisted by Dick Katz (piano), Bill Crow (bass) and Rudy Collins (drums). They opened with "Thou Swell" (not on this LP), then ran through a joint head arrangement, which had not been previously recorded, of "Lover, Come Back to Me." Listen especially for the now-standard ending which was first made popular by Nat Cole.

A beautiful rocking blues with some intelligent piano accompaniment and soloing from Katz followed the Romberg composition. Titled "True Blue Tromboniums," this was a Winding original written expressly for the festival, and featuring the tromboniums, new instruments developed by Johnson and Winding. The horn is an upright valve trombone, a cross between the trombone and

the euphonium, and is used by the boys as a gimmick.

To close the set, both Kai and Jay sparkled solowise on "Nwpt," Johnson's attractive up-tempo annotated tribute to the festival.

This three-quarter hour programme is a "must" for all jazz fans, and will most certainly rate as one of the recorded highlights of 1957.

First Playing: Station 2YD, June 6, 9.0 p.m.

## The Al Belletto Sextette

**Personnel:** Al Belletto (alto, clarinet), Jimmy Guinn (trombone), Willie Thomas (trumpet), Fred Crane (piano, baritone), Skip Fawcett (bass) and Tom Montgomery (drums, trumpet).

This is a superior modern jazz outfit with snappy, tight and swinging arrangements, and although it's a small group in size, it has a big band sound about it in the clean cut and well executed ensemble passages.

The quarter-hour opens with "Charity's a Rarity," an up-tempo swinger with plenty of solo spots. The trombonist Jimmy Guinn plays exceptionally well on "Spring is Here" in a lyric, moving fashion. There is a full and rich ensemble sound (with lead trumpet) in this Jack Martin arrangement. "Broadway" is not outstanding, but is quite pleasant. "Relaxin'" is a swingy rhythm theme written by Guinn in the fine Basie tradition. "Statue of Liberty" is a brisk number featuring excellent trombone and some good drum breaks. The over-all effect is too busy for my liking, however.

This group suffers badly in comparison with the Brubeck quartet and the Johnson-Winding quintet.

First Playing: Station 2YD, June 6, 9.45 p.m.

—Ray Harris



World Circle touring party in front of the Capitol in Washington

## WORLD CIRCLE TOURS

Invite you to call, write or use coupon below.

Manager, World Circle Tours,  
P.O. Box 450, Wellington.

Please send me brochure of your 1958 tours.

NAME .....  
ADDRESS .....

# OUR 10<sup>TH</sup> YEAR IN WORLD TRAVEL SERVICE

## WORLD CIRCLE TOURS

10 BRANDON STREET, WELLINGTON.

EACH TOUR HAS THE FOLLOWING FEATURES:—

1. Hotel accommodation, transportation, sightseeing excursions arranged in advance of your departure and ample time for leisure.
2. Personally escorted **ROUND THE WORLD** tours with professional multilingual guides where required.
3. Tipping, ticketing, baggage arrangements and transport (for all arrivals and departures) without worry to the tourist, **TAKING THE TRAVAIL OUT OF TRAVEL.**
4. **ALL THESE, PLUS OTHERS** at the **MOST ECONOMICAL COST!** It is **CONGENIAL, EXTENSIVE** and **WELL-PLANNED.**