

Anxiety of influence: Redman, Herring and several Carter disciples seek their own voices

J A Z Z

Finding an individual sound is one thing jazz is all about—even musicians who don't do it play lip service to the idea. Granted, most players start out emulating someone, but if they do the job right, another musician's style is the cocoon from which one's own sound emerges, like a butterfly.

Saxophonist **Dewey Redman** became known in the mid '60s as an Ornette Coleman sideman, with a tenor style indebted to Coleman's playful alto. Nowadays, as on his trio/quartet *Choices* (enja), Redman often features his own alto, ceding tenor chores to his son, young lion Joshua Redman. Dewey's style on the smaller horn owes a lot to Coleman, too—he uses alto on two very Ornettey tunes here, where father and son join forces—but he plays it with tenor heft and a distinctly darker tone. On tenor for "Everything Happens to Me," Dewey has a sound out of the grand tenor tradition, his balladry remarkably straightahead—he plays the changes. Joshua, bassist Cameron Brown and drummer Leon Parker get "Imagination" to themselves. For his age, Junior's an awful good balladeer, but Pop's deeper. This is worth a hear, even if without any of the long, ferocious tenor solos more ruthless rhythm sections goad Dewey into.

Altoist **Vincent Herring**, 27, gained his rep as a devotee of sizzling Cannonball Adderley, at a time most young boppers preferred Miles Davis' cool. On *Secret Love* (MusicMasters), Herring continues to distinguish himself from his inspiration—his sound is a little less acidic—while staying square in the postbop camp. He divides his time between smokers and vintage ballads like "Chelsea Bridge," abetted by a fleet rhythm section: Renee Rosnes, Ira Coleman, Billy Drummond. Herring's poised, assured, a thinker; he's not into stringing together licks he learned in school.

The late John Carter forged an original clarinet style, and wrote music which, in performance, derived much of its energy from the free phrasing of individual parts. By example, he encouraged musicians to find their own way—which helps explain why three CDs by Carter-inspired reedmen sound nothing alike. New Klezmer Trio clarinetist

Ben Goldberg, who cites Carter as a primary influence, teams with NKT



VINCENT HERRING

drummer **Kenny Wollesen** for *The Relative Value of Things* (available from 33 1/4 Records at P.O. Box 3095, Berkeley, CA 94703). There's no klezmer on this loose and limber set; instead there are two Monk tunes, free improvising, a fast "Salt Peanuts," a nursery rhyme, circular piping clarinet and West African beats—Wollesen knows his Edward Blackwell. Goldberg doesn't sound like Carter, but this duo's energy level, drive and broad conceptual base suggest his good influence.

Altoist **Chris Fagan** dedicates his debut, *Lost Bohemia* (Open Minds), to Carter, and employs the late clarinetist's associates Bobby Bradford, cornet, and Andrew Cyrille, drums. (Reggie Workman's the bassist.) Carter had doubled on alto before concentrating on clarinet, and Fagan's music draws on the post-Ornette Coleman quartet Carter and Bradford led together 25 years ago: texturally open but harmonically stable. The leader's playing has bite—sometimes he almost spits notes out—but it flows, too, and he swings, even when mixing it up in free exchanges with Bradford. The ballads associated with Bird ("If I Should Lose You") and Adderley ("Stars Fell on Alabama," in fetching two-beat rhythm) suggest he's really a

JAZZIZ NOTED THAT ERIC LEEDS'S "talents are formidable and should keep him around for the long haul."

BEATS SAID HIS DEBUT ALBUM *TIMES SQUARED*

"creates a lasting bond between the artist and audience."

INDEED.

But often the kindest words are in things left unsaid.

THINGS LEFT UNSAID

A NEW ALBUM BY

Eric Leeds

7.99 Cass • 11.99 CD

TOWER RECORDS/VIDEO
On Sale 3/26-4/9

ON PAISLEY PARK/WARNER BROS.
CASSETTES AND COMPACT DISCS.

©1993 WARNER BROS. RECORDS INC.

 Paisley Park

traditionalist placing himself in slightly unorthodox context. It works.

Dutch clarinetist/tenor saxophonist **Ab Baars'** *3900 Carol Court* (Geestgronden) is named for Carter's street address; Baars studied with Carter, and some of his avian swoops recall the master. Still, Baars has his own approach; he may insistently honk one note or repeat a single phrase or fragment for awhile. Like pianist Mal Waldron, he wants to milk each idea dry before moving on to the next. If that sounds heavy, bassist Wilbert de Joode and drummer Martin van Duynhoven keep things buoyant. Baars' method is daring, but it's not for everyone; this rigorous formalist may strike some as merely obtuse.

Holland's known for musical weirdos, but even by Dutch standards, singer **Greetje Bijma** is an odd duck—imagine Edith Piaf's passion and vibrato combined with the crazed invention and extended vocal techniques of Shelley Hirsch, if that helps. Bijma's *Tales of a Voice* is on Tiptoe, a subsidiary of enja. Like Hirsch, she immerses herself totally in different characters. Like Piaf, she gets so far into the material you wonder if she'll escape alive. Not that she takes everything so seriously; the track "Haden" gently parodies bassist Charlie's "Song for Che," and his interest in Spanish Civil War songs. She refigures the war and wins.

On **Paul Motian** on *Broadway, Vol. III* (JMT), Haden and altoist Lee Konitz join the drummer's trio-regulars, guitarist Bill Frisell and tenorist Joe Lovano. (The tunes, by the way, are all standards, but not all show tunes: They include Nat Cole's "Weaver of Dreams" and Hoagy Carmichael's "Skylark," with Konitz on soprano.) As usual with Motian's crew, everything's in flux: Tempo, tonality and melody can melt like a Dali clock. In this shape-shifting context, Konitz shows he's a master improviser by not displaying one consistent voice; he may bend his sound to assume Lovano's plaintive melancholy, or Frisell's liquid pitch. Haden lays out on some tracks, which makes things that much more slippery. Motian's trio is one of the premier working groups in jazz; Konitz makes this album even better than usual.

Drummer **Cindy Blackman** dedicates *Code Red* (Muse) to the late Art Blakey. In truth, she drums with more fire and variety than latter-day Blakey, who wouldn't have hired

altoist Steve Coleman either, though the M-BASE maverick has always had a keen harmonic ear. Trumpeter Wallace Roney and bassist Lonnie Plaxico are Blakey alums; the great Kenny Barron's on piano. Blackman's in-your-face energy and complex syncopations propel the band more than they get in its way. She ditches the old notion you have to be laid-back to play tasty. There are three things here we could do without, however: a six-minute drum solo, yet another "Round Midnight," the tacky cheesecake cover. Muse specializes in them, but this may be its first featuring the date's leader.

If you—unlike Sonny Rollins—understand why folks would rather hear a burnin' 30-year-old Rollins record than the less compelling music he makes now, check out Italian tenorist **Stefano D'Anna's** trio disc, *Leapin' In*, on Splas(h). Clip-clop woodblocks on one track, à la Rollins' *Way Out West*, are but one giveaway



JOHN CARTER

who his hero is. D'Anna evokes Rollins' swaggering rhythm and (on "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face" especially) phrasing with amazing fidelity, but he doesn't out-and-out impersonate him; D'Anna lacks Rollins' beautifully harsh tone and genius for thematic improvising, though his thinking is lucid. This may be the best new Sonny Rollins record since Steve Grossman's 1987 *Way Out East, Vol. 2* (Red). ■

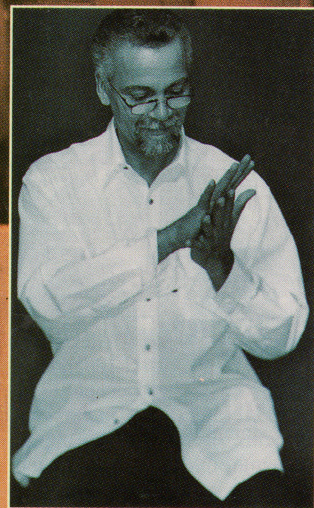
Kevin Whitehead is a jazz critic for NPR's *Fresh Air*, *New York* correspondent for *Coda*, and writes about improvised music for lots of publications.

"I extend to you an invitation
of timelessness, classicism,
and an insight into the great
gifts of those who have come
and gone, and those who
continue to give."

joe sample

invitation

Jazz trio and orchestra, produced by Tommy LiPuma,
on Warner Bros. Cassettes and Compact Discs.



7.99 Cass 11.99 CD



©1995 Warner Bros. Records Inc.

TOWER RECORDS | VIDEO
On Sale 3/26-4/9