

THE JAZZ TRUMPET: BRINGING OUT THE HUMAN IN ME

by Ian Muldoon*



“My own feelings about the direction which jazz should go are that there should be much less stress on technical exhibitionism and much more on emotional content, on what might be termed humanity in music and the freedom to say all that you want to.” Booker Little, trumpet player (1938-1961) pictured above (left) with the drummer Max Roach... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST

**Ian Muldoon has been a jazz enthusiast since, as a child, he heard his aunt play Fats Waller and Duke Ellington on the household piano. At around ten years of age he was given a windup record player and a modest supply of steel needles, on which he played his record collection, consisting of two 78s, one featuring Dizzy Gillespie and the other Fats Waller. He listened to Eric Child’s ABC radio programs in the 1950s and has been a prolific jazz records collector wherever he lived in the world, including Sydney, Kowloon, Winnipeg, New York and Melbourne. He has been a jazz broadcaster on a number of community radio stations in various cities, and now lives in Coffs Harbour.*



“Play your mistakes” - advice to band members by Miles Davis (above), trumpet player (1926-1991)... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Why jazz trumpet and not just trumpet? Because jazz is concerned with the individual expression of the musician, more than it is with the nearness of the music to a “classical” standard. In this essay when I talk trumpet I mean trumpet, flugelhorn, cornet or pocket trumpet as played by jazz musicians in a jazz context. The trumpet is the first instrument, so to speak. It gives voice or power in homage to the first human cry, to the human desire to communicate and the evolutionary drive to dominate. Using lips, tongue, spit, arms, fingers, lungs, often upright on one's legs, the trumpet might be considered one of the most physical of musical instruments and as a consequence in part, one of the more difficult to master.

Our first sound is an outburst in response to the smack as the air gulps into our opening lungs. Our first sign of life. Then there is the yell to get attention to our needs. Later there is the drive to be heard over others.

Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing*, one of the greatest films, has a singularly memorable character Radio Raheem, tall and fit and weighing perhaps 120kg, wandering through his Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, neighbourhood carrying a boombox blasting one track only, Public Enemy's *Fight The Power*. By the end of the film this iconic character has entered cultural history as a remarkable emblem of not only the African American's tragic fear and ongoing destruction at the hands of “white” America (Radio Raheem is killed by white police) but also the extinction of reason (Raheem is a wandering philosopher who proselytises about Love and Hate) and the crushing of creativity.

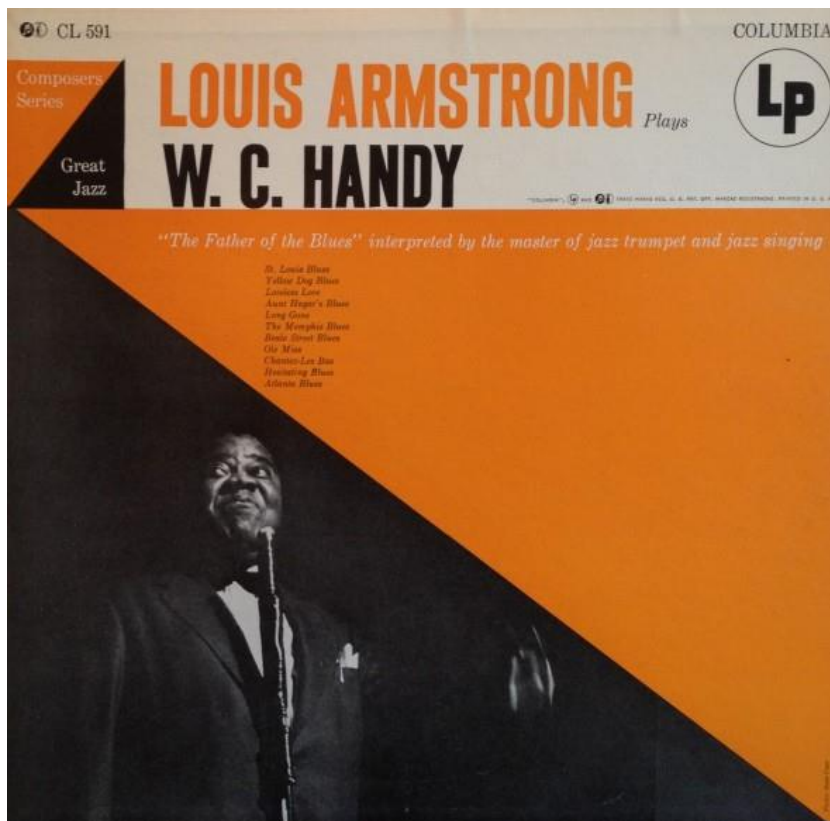


Spike Lee: director of “Do The Right Thing”, one of the greatest films...



Radio Raheem: his brief cinematic saga is one of the great cultural moments of modern times... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Radio Raheem’s brief cinematic saga is one of the great cultural moments of modern times. Raheem’s way is duplicated (in part) in a thousand ways around the world by the young, such as when they cruise with their car radios turned loud. Having no car in my youth, my way was to set up my speakers on the back verandah of our little house on the high point of Manly Vale’s (NSW) biggest hill, and blast the neighbourhood with the opening track of *Louis Armstrong Plays WC Handy*. The track was *St Louis Blues*. To have the majestic openhearted trumpet of Armstrong floating over the backyards and gardens of suburbia gave me an assertive thrill. It was childish, but it was some kind of primal fun to lord it over the “ordinary” lives in a safe suburban haven, as they listened to the ABC and *Blue Hills* or some Mantovani.



In terms of which jazz trumpeters' appeal, I am guided by my feelings, and by my taste and what I've heard; there are hundreds of seriously good jazz trumpet players I have not heard. Some trumpet players do nothing for me, such as Harry James, full of bravura technical brilliance and, to me, hollow sound. I prefer Yank Lawson to Bix Beiderbecke and I prefer Wild Bill Davison to Yank Lawson. James Morrison and Wynton Marsalis, despite their excellence and brilliant technical accomplishments, are not among my preferred listening experiences. My loss perhaps.



I prefer Wild Bill Davison (left) to Yank Lawson (see next page)... DAVISON PHOTO COURTESY JIM GODBOLT THE WORLD OF JAZZ; LAWSON PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN



Yank Lawson...

Although 1940's radio transmissions and the 1940s films featured much music including many trumpet players, the two trumpet players I listened to most intently were those featured on my first two 78" shellac records. The first was Herman Autrey playing with Fats Waller on *Blue Turning Grey Over You*, the B side of a 12" shellac disc with *Honeysuckle Rose* on the A side, recorded in 1938. On *Blue* Autrey lifts the music to another level with his brief muted solo after the drum break, and his closing open horn break in the final chorus.



Trumpeter Herman Autrey: he played on "Blue Turning Grey Over You"... PHOTO COURTESY TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

My other 78 rpm 10" record featured Dizzy Gillespie, and had *Things to Come* on side A, and *Emanon* on side B. It was recorded in New York City on July 9, 1946, with an 18-piece band. It included (side A) trumpet players Gillespie (leader and composer), Dave Burns, Elmon Wright, John Lynch, Kenny Dorham, and Talib Daawud. The contrast between the two trumpet styles of Autrey and Gillespie was stark. Autrey had lyricism, colour, rhythm, a range of pitch, and a burnished tone. Gillespie had speed, execution, with a consistently higher pitch, harmonic richness and complex rhythms. Both Autrey and Gillespie had their charms for me.



My personal favourite trumpet players who have provided a rich source of artistic and emotional satisfaction for me are Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Roy Eldridge, Miles Davis, Muggsy Spanier, Yank Lawson, Wild Bill Davison, Chet Baker, Dizzy Gillespie, Clifford Brown, Freddie Hubbard, Maynard Ferguson, Blue Mitchell, Tom Harrell, Johnny Coles, Nat Adderley, Booker Little, Don Cherry, Bobby Bradford, Baikida Carroll, Dave Douglas, Wadada Leo Smith, Ted Curson, Eugene Ball (especially in the Andrea Keller context) and Scott Tinkler.

Duke Ellington is not a trumpeter, but he is included in the belief that his band was an extension of his vision, his style, his very being. "I am my band" Ellington intoned. The following trumpeters are Ellingtonian players of that instrument: James 'Bubber' Miley, Arthur Whetsol, Jabbo Smith, Cootie Williams, Ray Nance, Taft Jordan, Shorty Baker, Willie Cook, Barry Lee Hall, Louis Metcalf, Freddie Jenkins, Rex Stewart, Cat Anderson, Al Killian, Clark Terry, Bill Berry, Johnny Coles, Rolf Ericson, Shelton Hemphill, Harold 'Money' Johnson, Herbie Jones, Taft Jordan, Al Killian, Eddie Preston, Ernie Royal, Dick Vance, Nelson Williams, and Gerald Wilson.



Duke Ellington (right) pictured with trumpeter Ray Nance...

Ellington's art and influence are for the ages and given (as just one modern example) pride of place in the Vienna Art Orchestra's *Duke Ellington's Sound Of Love* of 1999. (TCB The Montreux Jazz Label). There is a trumpet section of three: Matthieu Michael, Thomas Gansch, and Bumi Fian. Fian solos on the fast *Red Garter* (Ellington) while Gansch solos on *I'm Just A Lucky So and So* (Ellington). I remember Duke Ellington at the Sydney Stadium (I think 1964) playing on a rotating boxing ring calling out to the audience, even in those circumstances, "I love you madly!" *Sound Of Love* is an apt title. *Red Garter* opens with some solo clarinet not a million miles away from the Bigard sound, before the whole orchestra enters in all its glory with a powerful, prominent bass figure. The muted trumpet of Fian manages to soar over the orchestra.



US trumpeter Rex Stewart (left), pictured in 1949 with Australian trumpeter Roger Bell, who may be the most significant early trumpet player in Australian jazz history... PHOTO COURTESY NIGEL BUESST COLLECTION & AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

Rex Stewart played with Graeme Bell And His Australian Jazz Band with Roger Bell on trumpet. Roger Bell may be the most significant early trumpet player in Australian jazz history. Mainly self-taught and with parents both musically talented, he formed the Bell Band (c1941) and later was a mainstay of the Graeme Bell Jazz Band (1946 et al) which became the Graeme Bell All Stars (c1962). The album titled *Graeme Bell and His Australian Jazz Band* (GHB) which I believe was originally on Swaggie, features recordings made between 1949 and 1950. One track features Rex Stewart on his own *Mobile Bay*. The members were Roger Bell, trumpet and vocal; Ade Monsborough, trumpet and clarinet; Don Roberts, clarinet; Johnny Rich, trombone; Bud Baker, banjo and guitar; Lou Silbereisen, bass and tuba; Jack Banston, drums; with Rex Stewart, trumpet; and Graeme Bell, piano.



Rex Stewart (far right) with a group highly similar to that which recorded the famous “Mobile Bay”, L-R, Johnny Rich (trombone), Jack Banston (drums), Roger Bell (trumpet and vocal), Ade Monsborough (trumpet and clarinet), Bud Baker, (banjo and guitar, behind Monsborough), Bill May (bass), Don Roberts (clarinet), and Graeme Bell (piano)... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

Eleven tracks are with the band sans Stewart. Two are by Graeme Bell and his Orchestra which added Bruce Gray on clarinet and alto sax; Dave Dallwitz on trombone; and Bill Munro on trumpet. Two tracks are with a quartet. Roger Bell has a style reminiscent of the Bix Beiderbecke sound, somewhat fragile, and he is a capable singer. The band clearly is enjoying itself, and a sunny collective music is the result. It’s music more in the tradition of Chicago jazz - Benny Goodman, Bud Freeman, Eddie Condon, George Wettling - than it is of New Orleans and the Louis Armstrong New Orleans sound.



Roger Bell: a style reminiscent of the Bix Beiderbecke sound, somewhat fragile... PHOTO COURTESY NIGEL BUESST COLLECTION

The fact is that Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington (not just his trumpet alumni) and Miles Davis strode across the 20th century musical landscape like a colossus, influencing music of the world, not just the so-called Western world, but music wherever it was played. Some argue (see below the comments by Dr Bechet about the spread of jazz from New Orleans) that “it is entirely possible that had (Armstrong) not come along, jazz would never have become a fully-fledged art of universal appeal. After the Dixieland had faded, it might have remained a lively regional folk music. Even Ellington might have gone a different route, composing theatre and dance band music, had Armstrong not awakened his respect for the blues.”*



Louis Armstrong (left) ... and Miles Davis (right): musicians such as they strode across the 20th century musical landscape like a colossus, influencing music of the world...

**Weather Bird: Jazz At The Dawn Of Its Second Century*, Gary Giddins, OUP, New York, 2004, p 348.

Louis Armstrong, Buddy Bolden, Mutt Carey, Bunk Johnson, and Joe Oliver, trumpet players all, were the leaders in the burgeoning growth of jazz in New Orleans. Piano players such as Jelly Roll Morton were exceptional in taking on a lead role in the jazz fraternity. The trumpet was a street instrument, a lead in march music, and could be very very loud (cf Buddy Bolden). The piano was a useful instrument to entertain the patrons of the brothels. It's informative to quote from the book by Alan Lomax *Mr Jelly Roll* (3rd Edition, Cassell, London, 1955) about that period in New Orleans (c1880-1920):

Perhaps nothing in human history has spread across the earth so far so fast as this New Orleans music. Thirty years after its genesis it was as popular and understandable in New York, Paris, Prague, and Shanghai as in its own hometown. Of course the phonograph record and other means of rapid communication assisted in the diffusion of jazz, but this cannot explain its triumph over other forms of music, which were also broadcast and recorded. The worldwide impact of an expanding American economy undoubtedly lent great (though at times dubious) glamour to jazz in international circles. This, however, would not explain its triumph in America, where the plebeian origins of jazz were familiar to everyone. Jazz is sensual and jazz is African, but so are many other available musical styles which have never gained such widespread acceptance. These were all contributing factors but leave the central mystery unaccounted for.

Jazz became many things - frenetic, destructive, hysterical, decadent, venal, alcoholic, saccharine, Lombardish, vapid. It has enriched stuffed bellies; it has corrupted the innocent; it has betrayed and it has traduced. But everywhere and in all its forms, something jazz acquired at the moment of its origin has profoundly touched all its hearers. What was this thing that set folks dancing and smiling from the slums of New Orleans to all the capitals of the earth?



Jelly Roll Morton: we had all nations in New Orleans, he said...

“We had all nations in New Orleans,” said Jelly Roll. “But with the music we could creep in close to other people,” adds Dr Bechet... “Jazz was the hybrid of hybrids and so it appealed to a nation of lonely immigrants. In a divided world struggling blindly toward unity, it became a cosmopolitan musical argot. This new musical language owes its emotional power to the human triumph accomplished at the moment of its origin in New Orleans - a moment of cultural ecstasy. Two neighbourhoods, disjointed by all the sordid fears of our time, were forced to make a common cause. This musical union demanded that there be not merely acceptance and understanding, but respect and love on both sides. In this moment of ecstasy an interracial marriage was consummated, and the child of this union still jumps for joy wherever jazz is hot. Perhaps it is so wherever people share their treasures and a truly fresh stream of cultures begins to flow. Such moments of cultural ecstasy may occur prior to all great cultural movements just as seeding precedes birth. (ibid, pp 99/100).”

Jelly Roll Morton had a band called The Red Hot Peppers 1926-1930, at the epicentre of the so-called “Jazz Age”. Trumpet players in that band included George Mitchell on cornet (from 1926); Ed Andersen and Edwin Swayzee (1928); Boyd “Red” Rosser and Walter Briscoe (1929); Henry Allen (1929); Ward Pinkett(1930); Marc Pinkett and Bubber Miley (1930); David Richards (1930) and later Wingy Manone. Morton's great contribution was that the players were contextualised by the leader, which made the music strong. Another instance of musical leadership, composition, enthusiasm, and - in Jelly Roll's instance - very strong self-belief.

To traverse the incredibly rich source of trumpet available on record where the sound is unique to that player, I have chosen more or less at random a few examples to show how different the sounds can be, whilst achieving artistic excellence and emotional resonance. Sometimes restraint and control may house powerful feelings which are evident to the listener. Sometimes unrestrained joy is let loose. The astonishing range of the jazz trumpet is a constant source of wonder.



The one grainy photograph of Buddy Bolden that exists... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ A HISTORY OF AMERICA'S MUSIC

In the beginning there is the Buddy Bolden legend. It seems that the sound of Bolden's cornet was a most cherished memory to those who heard it, and its memory carried a spirit of rebellion and hope. Bechet supported this idea by claiming that playing *The Buddy Bolden Blues* could have thrown you in jail. Clarinetist Alphonse Picou said: "He was the loudest there ever was because you could hear Buddy's cornet as loud as what Louis Armstrong played through the mike." They also spoke of his outstanding charisma, and shared legendary tales of his womanizing.

According to Bunk Johnson, Bolden was "a good-looking brown-skinned man, tall and slim and a terror with the ladies." Bolden formed his first band in 1896. Cladys "Jabbo" Smith (1908-1991), orphaned at six years, by ten was capable on both trumpet and trombone and left the orphanage at 16 to be a professional musician. At 18 he replaced Bubber Miley with Ellington and on 3/11/27 recorded *What Can a Poor Fellow Do?* His muted solo on this popular song has been described as "tortured" and remarkable for a 19-year-old.



Jabbo Smith: at 18 he replaced Bubber Miley with Ellington... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST

A light swinging catchy sax chorus follows the opening piano on Ellington's *Drop Me Off at Harlem*, recorded 17/2/33. It concludes with the expressive, growling mute of Cootie Williams (1911-1985) in an exquisite swinging seeming vocalisation of the tune - reminiscent of the famous meaning behind the offbeat phrase 'hear me talking' to ya'.



Ellington's "Drop Me Off at Harlem" concludes with the expressive, growling mute of Cootie Williams (above)... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST

The septet up-tempo recording of Louis Armstrong's band (tuba and drums added to the quintet) of *Potato Head Blues* recorded 10/5/27, features a fine solo by Johnny Dodds and climaxes with a stop-time chorus by Armstrong, exemplifying his rhythmic and melodic genius on the trumpet. A mid-tempo tune *Hesitating Blues* (12/7/54) concludes with a powerful Armstrong solo, but also features his vocal, Thelma Middleton's vocal, and a fine Barney Bigard solo, a recording which attests to Armstrong's longevity (1901-1971) and his stamina. He was renowned for his use of the laxative Swiss Kriss and constant application of lip salve, a reminder of the physical demands of his chosen instrument.

Armstrong's transformations of popular song into what became jazz standards are legendary. One of his most well-known masterpiece performances is *Stardust* (Hoagy Carmichael and Mitchell Parrish, official title *Star Dust*) - a song whose composition was inspired by the friend of Carmichael, a cornet player named Bix Beiderbecke*.

**The Jazz Standards: a guide to the repertoire, Ted Gioia, OUP, NY, 2012, p 396.*

Beiderbecke's "spirit and style of improvisation seemed infused in the intricate phrases that make *Stardust* arguably the most melodically complex hit song in the history of American music."



A young Louis Armstrong: he recorded "Star Dust" on 4th November 1931, the day Buddy Bolden died...
PHOTO COURTESY THE GUARDIAN

Armstrong recorded *Stardust* on 4th November 1931, the day Buddy Bolden died. Thus jazz inspires popular music just as it uses popular music as a springboard into supreme artistic creativity. Armstrong's *Stardust* of 1931 has all the hallmarks of his rhythmic genius: a majestic trumpet sound and heart-stopping musical statements underpinned by the sweet melancholy of his interpretation of the lyrics. His power in investing the melody with his playing and singing, turns the song into art. Many examples of this are evident including, *When Your Lover Has Gone* (Einer Aaron Swan) also recorded in 1931, where Louis' interpretation may bring tears to your eyes:

*When you're alone, who cares for starlit skies
When you're alone, the magic moonlight dies
At break of dawn, there is no sunrise
When your lover has gone*

Note Armstrong's persona and many "fun" moments on tunes such as *Skit Dat De Dat* (Lil Hardin and Louis Armstrong), a 'stop-start' tune where on six or more occasions the band stops playing and leaves the soloist alone to improvise a two-bar 'break', and features his scatting. Louis Armstrong's Hot Five included Armstrong (trumpet), Kid Ory (trombone), Lil Armstrong (piano) and Johnny St Cyr (banjo). *Skit Dat De Dat* was recorded on 16th November 1926, and is a typical example, though still a musical masterpiece which includes his trumpet playing. His joshing around with the likes of Jack Teagarden or Bing Crosby seems to be the most memorable "Satchmo". To others he seems to be (and to me) most profoundly brilliant, glorious, majestic even, in the sweet melancholy, bittersweet numbers such as aforementioned songs, or the likes of *Black and Blue* (Waller and Razaf) or the blues. Again, this may be a matter of personal taste. As much as the "happy" music was stunning, the blues, well!... something else.

One of the great moments in music must be the opening track of *St Louis Blues* on *Louis Armstrong plays W C Handy* (12/7/54) where his openhearted, majestic solo is one for the ages. An interesting comparison - and just an indication of how profound an influence Armstrong has had on music - is Paul Smoker's (1941- 2016) version of *St Louis Blues* from the album *Genuine Fables* featuring Paul Smoker Trio: Smoker (trumpet), Ron Rohovit (double bass), and Phil Haynes (drums), recorded Cedar Falls, Iowa, 20/21/88.

*Smoker played straight-ahead gigs and even occupied trumpet chairs in orchestras, but he found himself most attracted to the more adventurous side of jazz. It wasn't long before he was playing and recording with top avant-garde players like Anthony Braxton. Over the last four decades, Smoker played on about 60 records. He collaborated with many artists, including Dave Liebman, Art Pepper, Lee Konitz, Joe Lovano, and Vinny Golia.**



Paul Smoker: free to explore the history of his instrument, free to play as he saw fit...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Smoker was an educator who ran the jazz studies programme at Nazareth College of Rochester, New York. The comparison between Armstrong's playing and Smoker's is an interesting cultural comment, as well as being about the evolution of this profoundly beautiful music. Armstrong was never really "free", whether bound by his African American heritage, or the persona he felt necessary to adopt (to entertain), or the limitations made by his perception of what "good" trumpet playing meant. Smoker on the other hand, was free: free to explore the history of his instrument, free to play as he saw fit, free to adapt to any style if it suited the moment.

**Rochester City Newspaper, 17/5/2016.*

Smoker's interpretation of *St Louis Blues* calls upon the whole history of the instrument, and references the Duke (Cootie Williams, Rex Stewart, and Cat Anderson) whilst being thoroughly modern. It hints at Louis in the opening section, but intersperses this with growls, blurs, ripples, shouts, trumpet talk a la Cootie, and with beauty, following the trajectory of the story, of the St Louis woman, of the blues. The second part of the same track has a solo by Smoker which is a study in the use of the mute, referencing Cootie, Stewart et al. This section really swings. Hints of the Gillespie mute. The final section returns to the melody with gurgles, moans and a deep growl. A small masterclass in modern jazz trumpet, supported by great bass from Rohovit and drums by Haynes. An amazing 12'10" of trumpet excellence and genuine jazz feeling.



Wild Bill Davison: he had a sound heavy with vibrato and frequently leaping wildly like a shout of joy... PHOTO CREDIT JAN PERSSON

William Edward "Wild Bill" Davison (1906-1989), renowned for playing whilst seated, had a sound heavy with vibrato, and was also renowned for frequently leaping wildly like a shout of joy, with his cornet pitched as in having a conversation, and his tone blurry but infused with energy. One of his great moments is in *How Come You Do Me Like You Do?* (24/6/54) with Eddie Condon's twelvetet, with his lead riding the outgoing chorus a joy to hear. He was once a member of Gene Krupa's Orchestra. It has been written about his style (perhaps by Philip Larkin who was a jazz fan, but only of traditional jazz):

A player of notable energy, he uses a wide range of conscious tonal distortions, heavy vibrato, and an urgent, bustling attack. At slow tempos he is melting, almost articulate. His stylistic mannerisms - the deep hoarse blurrings, the athletic in-front-of-the-beat

timing, the flaring shakes - are highly conscious (the 'Wild' is more a personal than a musical sobriquet), and, imposed as they are on a conventional Armstrong basis, make Davison one of the most exciting of white small-band cornetists. Sometimes each note is perfectly shaped and pitched as if the cornet were his speaking voice, in the style of his favourites (Louis) Armstrong and (Bobby) Hackett, and with an emotional immediacy always hard to parallel.

The Gene Krupa Orchestra playing *Massachusetts* (Andy Razaf and Luckey Roberts) recorded 13/7/42 with a vocal by Anita O'Day, stands out mainly because of the few bars played by trumpeter Roy Eldridge. *Boogie Blues* (Remo Biondi and Gene Krupa) has Eldridge playing muted trumpet behind Ms O'Day, making this track one of the great moments in swing (recorded 21/8/45). *Opus One* (Sy Oliver and Sid Garris) ends with a magnificent flourish by Eldridge (recorded 21/8/45). *Let Me Off Uptown* (Redd Evans and Earl Bostic) has a conversation between O'Day and Eldridge with O'Day intoning "blow Roy blow" and Eldridge obliges with a bravura display of trumpet showmanship (recorded 8/5/41). And on *Green Eyes* (Adolfo Utrera and Nilo Menéndez) following the vocal by Howard Delaney, Eldridge blows the schmaltz out of the water to make the track one of the greatest in the swing canon (10/5/48).



Roy Eldridge, at the Arcadia Ballroom, New York, in 1939, two years before he joined the Gene Krupa band... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ A HISTORY OF AMERICA'S MUSIC

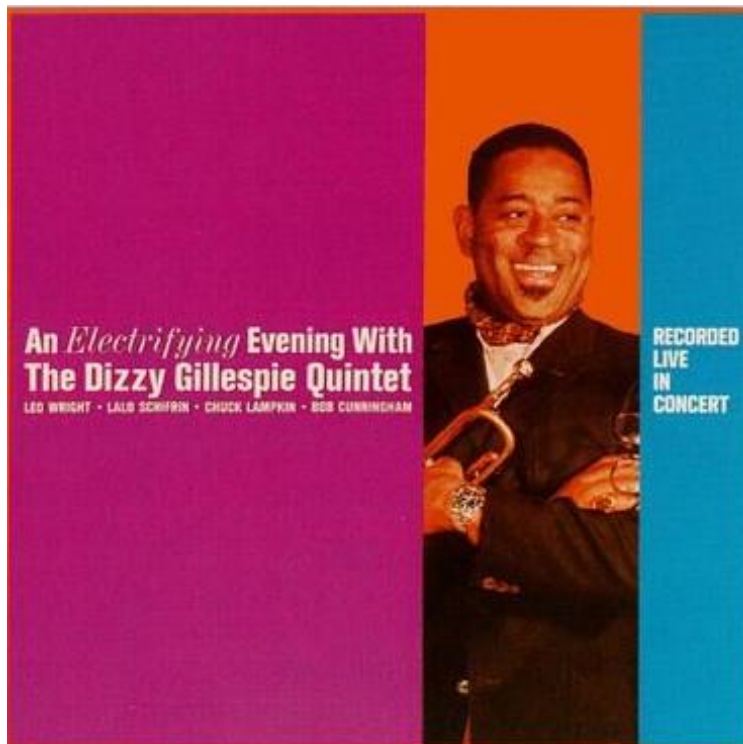
Over 103 musicians played in the Krupa orchestra, including the following trumpet players: Al Beck, Al Porcino, Dave Schultze, Don Fagerquist, Ed Badgley, Edward Cornelius, Gordon Boswell, Graham Young, Joe Triscari, John Bello, Mickey Mangano, Norman Murphy, Pinky Savitt, Ray Biondi, Roy Eldridge, Rudy Novak, Shorty Sherock, Tony D'Amore, Tommy Gonsoulin, Tony Russo, Tony Halten, Graham Young and Wild Bill Davison. The band lasted until December 1950. The band hit a musical sweet spot when Eldridge and O'Day were members, which helped make it one of the great swing bands of all time. It was significant too because it was a major transitioning band between swing and bebop and modernism generally, where many of its members went on to have careers with Rugolo, Kenton et al. In this regard, the way in which Eldridge transformed apparently ordinary melody or popular song, there is a parallel with Louis Armstrong who regularly transformed popular songs into masterpieces of music - Armstrong's version of *Stardust* (Carmichael and Parrish) being a case in point(4/11/31). Armstrong's lyricism is less evident in Eldridge, who favoured virtuosity and prefigured the emergence of Dizzy Gillespie.

Gillespie (1917-1993) was featured on a number of great swing tracks with the Lionel Hampton group, notably *Hot Mallets* (Lionel Hampton) recorded 11/9/39, when Gillespie was 21 years of age. Using the mute he dominates the track with his playing, (at least until Hampton solos) dexterity, power and surprise being the elements in Gillespie's approach.



Dizzy Gillespie in the forties, with John Lewis at the piano: he was featured on a number of great swing tracks with the Lionel Hampton group... PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY JAZZ FROM NEW ORLEANS TO THE NEW JAZZ AGE

One of my favourite albums, *An Electrifying Evening with the Dizzy Gillespie Quintet*, features one of his justly famous compositions *A Night In Tunisia* (Gillespie and Frank Paparelli) recorded at the Museum of Modern Art, NY, on 9/1/61 and is memorable for the stunning half-chorus trumpet break. But Gillespie may have felt most at home fronting an orchestra as in a concerto. One of the more interesting performances is with a big band led by Gunther Schuller with a suite (*Perceptions*) composed and arranged by J J Johnson. The band features the following trumpet players: Gillespie, Bernie Glow, Robert Nagel, Ernie Royal, Doc Severinsen, Nick Travis and Joe Wilder and was recorded by Rudy Van Gelder on the 18th and 22nd May 1961. Gillespie is in powerful form as the featured soloist at 45 years of age.



The rhythmic *Part 3 Blue Mist* opens with a 7/4 vamp and bass note. Gillespie's solo soars in his inimitable way. The orchestra does echo the sound of Kenton in its brass section (seven trumpets, two trombones, two bass trombones, four French horns, two tubas). *Part 4 Fantasia* opens with a trumpet chorus and solo by two harps, at a largo tempo, followed by muted Gillespie trumpet, replied to by the brass section. Gillespie's solo is backed by the harps. This section is noteworthy for contrast and colour and controlled dissonance. *Horn of Plenty* has the band set the stage for Gillespie to blow, and blow he does, with George Duvivier (bass) and Charlie Persip (drums) driving the rhythm, over which the trumpet soars, with the band punctuating the long solo from time to time with a soothing backdrop or exclamation points of shouting brass. *Perceptions* is an ambitious suite that succeeds on a number of levels, showcasing Gillespie's trumpet at its peak.

Noteworthy is what is often dubbed "the greatest jazz concert in history", featuring Gillespie (trumpet), Charlie Parker (alto sax), Bud Powell (piano), Charlie Mingus (bass) and Max Roach (drums). It was held, not in the "home" of jazz, New Orleans, nor even in the "home" of modern jazz, 52nd Street, New York, but in Toronto at Massey Music Hall, Canada on the 15th May, 1953.



Massey Music Hall, Toronto, Canada, May 15, 1953, L-R, Max Roach (drums), Gillespie (trumpet), Charlie Parker (alto sax): dubbed “the greatest jazz concert in history”... PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY PINTEREST

The top selling song in 1953, according to USA Billboard Charts, was *Song from Moulin Rouge* by Percy Faith, whilst (*How Much is That*) *Doggie in the Window* by Patti Page was number three. Meanwhile, Gillespie and his bebop colleagues were making musical history across the border in “boring” Canada.

Despite the physical demands of the trumpet, it's remarkable to recall that Gillespie at age 72, accompanied by his long-time colleague Max Roach aged 65, performed a 90-minute unrehearsed duet concert in Paris in 1989 - not in the USA it might be noted, but in a place which reveres the greatest music of the 20th century. It's not two ageing old guys - shadows of their former selves - but musicians playing with energy, power, imagination and delirious inventiveness. Gillespie is on trumpet with mute. Sometimes with consummate power (*Salt Peanuts*), sometimes with lyrical beauty (*Word*) or sweet delicacy (*Round Midnight*) or free inventiveness (*Messing Around*). He described the performance as "sensing, listening, conversing, sharing a very precious and magical moment in time."* Gillespie died 6/1/93. He was married to his wife Lorraine for 53 years.

**New York Times*, 7/1/93.



Gillespie (left) with his wife Lorraine Willies: he was married to her for 53 years... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST

Maynard Ferguson (1928-2006) came to notice whilst a member of Stan Kenton's Orchestra which was known for its shrieking brass section. *Kenton in Hi Fi*, a 1956 album, featured Ferguson on the number *Concerto to end all Concertos*. Beginning with a stately piano solo by leader Kenton, this work moves into an up-tempo surge of big band sound, topped by the trumpet section, followed by a mellow saxophone solo, then a motif by the reeds upstaged by a piercing trumpet solo by Maynard



Maynard Ferguson: renowned for his high register playing...

Ferguson, then a frantic conclusion... pause... The second part begins with a stately theme, this time by the band, a swinging interlude by the reeds, bass solo, band chorus building tension higher and higher in pitch, bass solo, change in tempo - fast, building sound, drum statement, then one climax on another, by the trumpet section (Pete Candoli, Maynard Ferguson, Ed Leddy, Sam Noto, Don Paladino). Maynard Ferguson (1928-2006) was renowned for his high register playing. He could play trumpet, flugelhorn, Firebird, trombone, valve trombone, superbone, baritone horn, French horn, and soprano saxophone. He won three *Downbeat* "best trumpet" polls in the early 1950s and appeared on 46 movie soundtracks.

The 1950s were also a high point for the cornet player Nat Adderley (1931-2000). In partnership with brother Cannonball and under the latter's leadership, they produced a series of quintet recordings with Junior Mance on piano, Sam Jones on bass, and Jimmy Cobb on drums. Frequently, as on *Lover Man*, the focus was simply on the leader's alto saxophone with the band bookending a long solo. But in an up-tempo blues like *Wee Dot* (J J Johnson and Leo Parker) Nat demonstrates his considerable dexterity and range in a solo of intricate power, recorded at the Newport Jazz Festival 5/7/56. Perhaps it was Nat who really demonstrated how the cornet, seen as more at home in "traditional" jazz, could be a brilliant bebop instrument. He recorded more than 100 albums.

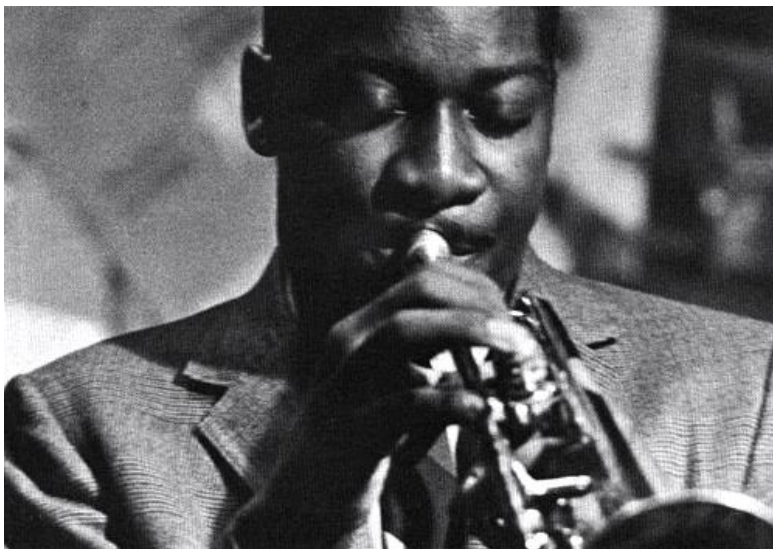


Nat Adderley: perhaps it was he who really demonstrated how the cornet, seen as more at home in "traditional" jazz, could be a brilliant bebop instrument... PHOTO CREDIT ROBERTO POLILLO



Dupree Bolton: he had a limited career but produced a few outstanding documents...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Trumpeter Dupree Bolton (3/3/29 – 5/6/93) had a limited career but produced a few outstanding documents including *Katanga* (1963) with Curtis Amy (tenor, soprano sax), Ray Crawford (guitar), Jack Wilson (piano), George Morrow (bass) and Tony Bazley (drums). At ease at speed, he is in complete control, with a big confident sound.



Booker Little: a truly accomplished player, with a strong open bright tone and also a composer...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Booker Little (2/4/38 – 5/10/61) who died at 23, was a truly accomplished player with a strong open bright tone, and also a composer. He composed all the tracks on his album *Out Front*, recorded with the creme de la creme musicians of the day, who clearly embraced his talent: Booker (trumpet), Julian Priester (trombone), Eric Dolphy (alto sax, clarinet and flute), Don Friedman (piano), Art Davis (bass), Ron Carter (bass) and Max Roach (drums). If *Out Front* was his only legacy, it is an impressive one.

Clifford Brown was one accomplished trumpet player who also passed too early (1930-1956) and as Freddie Hubbard remarked in 1991: "There's a lot of dead men's shoes in this business. I promise you, if Clifford Brown had lived, you wouldn't have heard of me or a lot of other trumpet guys." Ted Gioia has said: "His trumpet technique furthered this sense of positive energy; he had a full and beautiful tone, and even at the fastest tempos hit each note cleanly and with... 'intentionality'; his playing is noted for its warmth as it is for its flawless execution".*



Clifford Brown: a sense of positive energy, a full and beautiful tone, and even at the fastest tempos he hit each note cleanly ... his playing is noted for its warmth as it is for its flawless execution... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ REFLECTIONS

**The Jazz Standards, OUP, NY, 2012, Ted Gioia, p 213*

Brown could play at amazing speed (*Cherokee*, 1955); interpret standards, enriching them (*What's New*, 1955); play bebop with the best of them, as in Bud Powell's brilliant impressionistic masterpiece *Parisian Thoroughfare* (1954); provide up-beat lyrical beauty to Kurt Weill's *September Song* backing Sarah Vaughan(1954) and gentle lyrical sensitivity to Carmichael/Parrish's *Stardust*, (1955) as well as pen some jazz classics such as *Dahoud*, *Blues Walk*, and *Joy Spring*, about which Gioia remarks:

*The melody line of Joy Spring furthers this life-embracing vibe, with its phrases that constantly return to declamatory chord tones, and then modulation up half a step for the second eight bars - a common arranger's device for making a chart seem brighter and more insistent, but one that is rarely written into the lead sheet of a modern jazz combo tune.**

The performances with Max Roach in 1954 did much to make the hard-bop sound one for others to pursue, such as Art Blakey et al, and which was a mainstay of the label Blue Note period to follow. And then, in comparison, there's Chet Baker.



Brown (left): the performances with drummer Max Roach (right) in 1954 did much to make the hard-bop sound one for others to pursue... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST

**The Jazz Standards, OUP, NY, 2012, Ted Gioia, p 213*

Chet Baker could play the trumpet, but his playing was in an astonishing context of personal glamour, magnificent melodies from the likes of Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, leadership by brilliant musicians such as Gerry Mulligan, and the post-war economic boom of the USA, plenty of it focussed in California. His stunning good looks surpassed those of James Dean whose bouffant hairstyle he adopted. Thanks to photographers such as William Claxton, whose black and white photos graced some early albums of the Gerry Mulligan Quartet, Baker was just too beautiful for words.



Chet Baker: his stunning good looks surpassed those of James Dean; he was just too beautiful for words... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Added to that was the little boy, almost feminine, sound of his voice in singing such standards as *My Funny Valentine*, also sung by Matt Damon (almost as well) in the film *The Talented Mr Ripley*. Added to this was his indulgence in heroin. For a boy from Oklahoma, who became one of the hippest guys in the world, it was heady stuff. In reality, as sweet as his sound was, he was a one trick pony whose (beautiful) sound and technique remained much the same all his life. He was encircled by glamour, nostalgia and decadent charm, even though these faded quickly through the ravages of addiction. He was also white, which was advertising and performance gold.

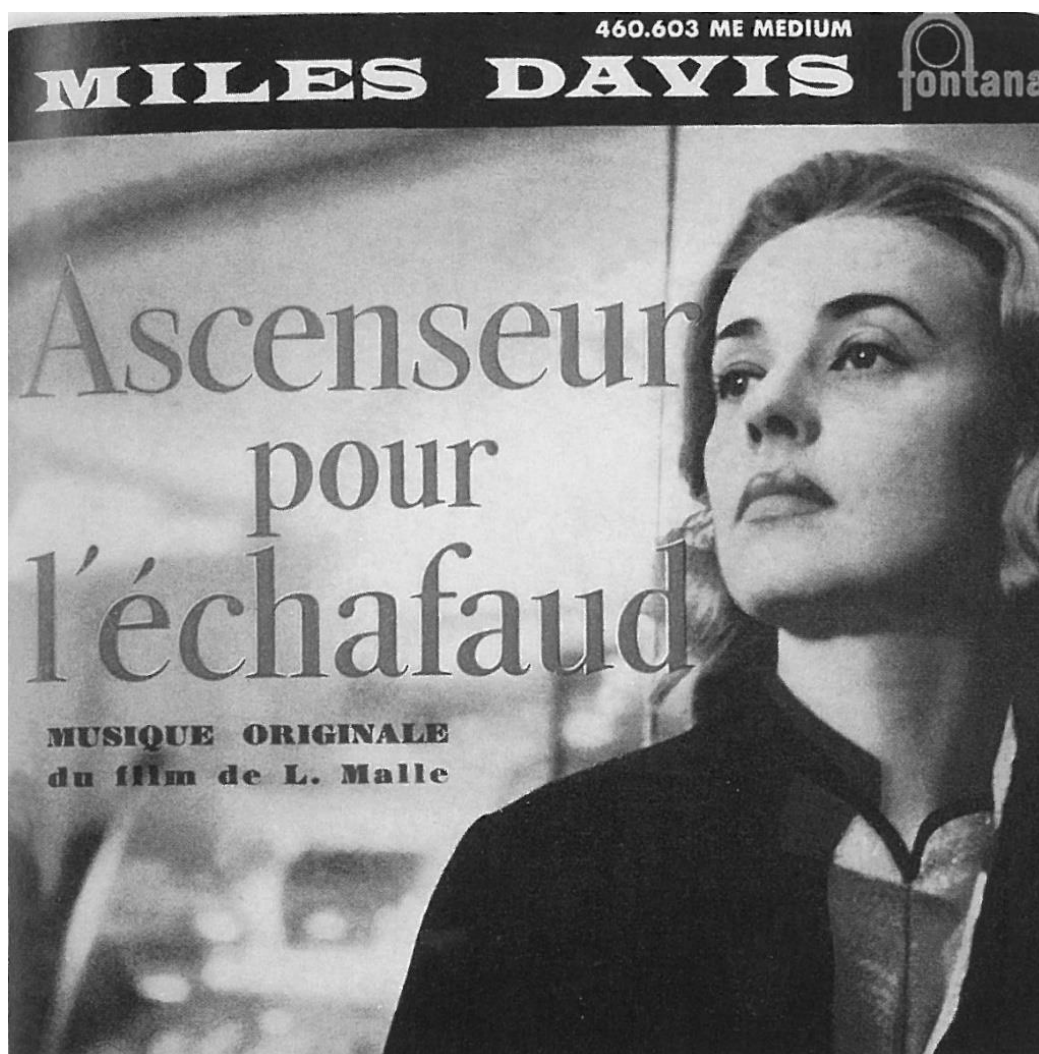
Terence Blanchard can play better than Baker in his sleep, as he proved on *Let's Get Lost: The Songs Of Jimmy McHugh* (2001) with Edward Simon (piano), Derek Nievergelt (bass), Eric Harland (drums), and Brice Winston (tenor). Blanchard is a modern complete trumpet player who can tease and squeeze and blow your socks off, or make you feel the rise of tears. Baker could boast he never had to practise and spent his life playing off his early reputation.



Terence Blanchard: he can play better than Baker in his sleep... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Not least has been Blanchard's journey into jazz for film (cf *Jazz in Film*, 1998 Sony, with Blanchard, trumpet; Joe Henderson, tenor; Donald Harrison, alto; Steve Turré, trombone; Kenny Kirkland, piano; Reginald Veal, bass; and Carl Allen, drums; a tour de force of film music covering *Chinatown*, *Taxi Driver*, et al). Blanchard composed music or played or both in the music for many films beginning with *Mo' Better Blues* 1990 (Spike Lee) and continuing under a number of directors including Sydney Pollack, Steve Carr, Gina Prince and Ron Shelton up to *Blackkklansman* 2018 (Spike Lee) and beyond. In 2019, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), named Blanchard their Endowed Chair in Jazz Studies, where he will remain until 2024.

The most distinguishing artistic quality in most of these films rests on the music of Blanchard. Though not one soundtrack by itself equals the masterpiece modern jazz soundtrack *Ascenseur Pour L'Echafaud* by Miles Davis for director Louis Malle, the music recorded 4-5 December 1957, Blanchard's contribution is impressive and substantial. Film and jazz are the quintessential developments in the arts in the past 150 years in terms of their reach and influence. And although Blanchard is far superior to Chet Baker in playing, writing, and achievements, the latter's celebrity lingers still - the classic instance of celebrity versus real achievement. Baker was a triumph for the media and the zeitgeist of the day. Blanchard's music, on the other hand, may be an unknown quantity to many of those who still champion Baker. No bouffant for Terence.



Louis Malle's film "Ascenseur Pour L'Echafaud", known in English as "Lift To The Scaffold"...

My thoughts on *Ascenseur*: 26 tracks all written by Miles Davis performed by at least two other legendary musicians - Pierre Michelot, bass, and Kenny Clarke, drums - with sterling support by Mr Wilen on tenor and Mr Urtreger on piano. With Mr Davis intoxicated by Paris and Juliette Greco, it brought out the very best in his first foray into film. A terrific album without one uninteresting musical moment, it must be regarded as one of the greatest film soundtracks ever.



Miles Davis: intoxicated by Paris and Juliette Greco (left) in 1949... PHOTO CREDIT JEAN-PHILIPPE CHARBONNIER

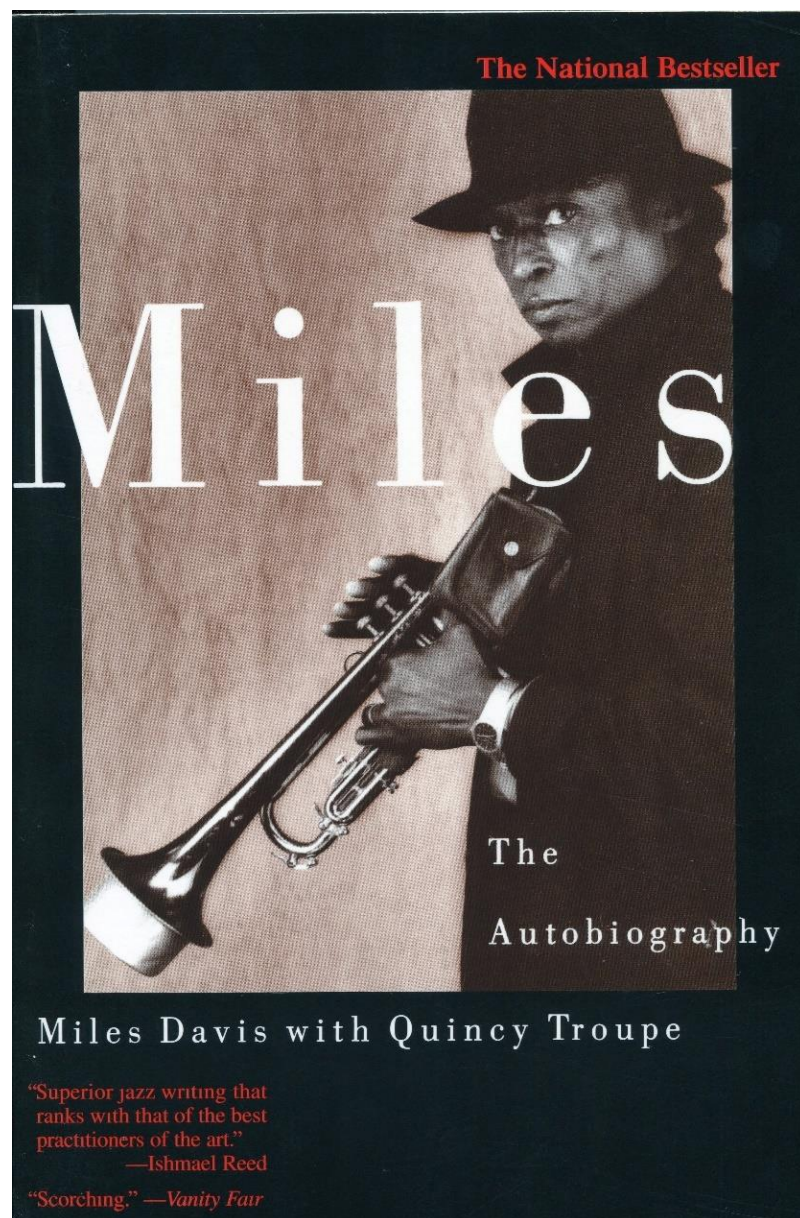
But on love, in 1949 in Paris, Juliette Greco “was probably the first woman that I loved as an equal human being. She was a beautiful person. We had to communicate with each other through expressions and body language... You have to go on feelings. It was April in Paris. Yeah, I was in love.”* Kenny Clarke, who urged Davis to stay in Paris where they had been treated so well, remained, whilst Davis returned to America. Paris was seen, and has seen itself, as something of a creative home for artists for the greater part of 100 years, up until the 1950s when New York began to rival it. In the USA where racism reigned and was part of daily living, Davis turned to heroin. Four years of misery followed.

* *Miles: The Autobiography, by Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe, Macmillan, London, 1989, p 117.*

In traversing the remarkable musical journey of Miles Davis it begins most dramatically and significantly with his involvement with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker:

Listen. The greatest feeling I ever had in my life - with my clothes on - was when I first heard Diz and Bird together in St Louis, Missouri, back in 1944. I was 18 years old and had just graduated from Lincoln High School. It was just across the Mississippi River in East St Louis, Illinois.*

Following two weeks in Billy Eckstine's band, Davis auditioned for the Julliard School in New York "and passed with flying colours".**



*Opening words to "Prologue" in "Miles: The Autobiography", by Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe, Macmillan, London, 1989.

***ibid* p 39.

After classes Davis was off to 52nd street or Minton's, and jamming with the likes of Fats Navarro. On the street it was Gillespie's speed and Thelonious Monk's use of space (more especially the latter) that influenced Davis. Later on Davis would cite Ahmad Jamal, who was renowned for his brilliant use of space, as his favourite pianist.

In October 1945 Davis joined Parker in a band at the Three Deuces with Al Haig, (piano), Curley Russell (bass), Max Roach and Stan Levey on drums. In that band Davis wrote: "I could quit every night. I had sat in with him, but this was my first real paying gig with him... When Bird played a melody I would just play under him and let him lead the fucking note, let him sing the melody and take the lead on everything. What would it look like, me trying to lead the leader of all the music? ... I was scared to death I was going to fuck up."*



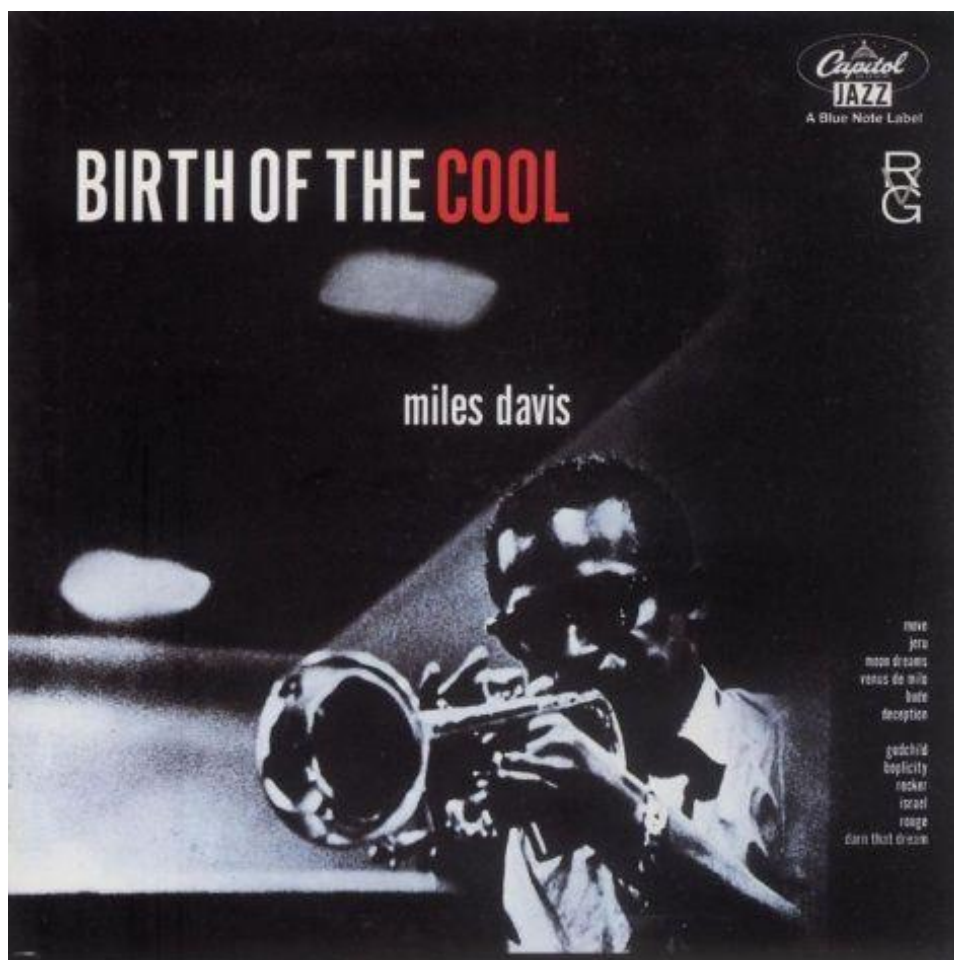
The famous shot of Miles Davis (right) performing with Charlie Parker, in Parker's group: Miles said, "I was scared to death I was going to fuck up"... PHOTO CREDIT WILLIAM P GOTTLIEB

* *Miles: The Autobiography*, by Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe, Macmillan, London, 1989, p 59.

Davis's biggest influences then were mainly Gillespie, but also Freddie Webster, Clark Terry and Thelonious Monk's harmonic sense. He learned phrasing by listening to Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole and Orson Welles's speech.

Miles Davis's first great moments were playing with Charlie Parker's quintet where in the beginning, especially on faster numbers (at age 19) he was unhappy, but by the time of *Parker's Mood* (10/48) he had grown in confidence and ability, for example *She Rote* (1/54) where Davis confidently navigates an up-tempo number on mute holding his own with Parker (alto), Davis (trumpet), Walter Bishop (piano), Teddy Kotich (bass), and Max Roach (drums).

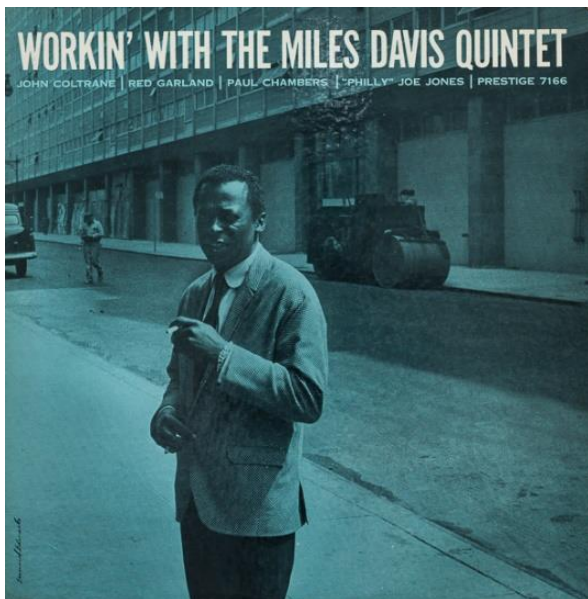
Then the collaboration with Gerry Mulligan on what is known as *The Birth of the Cool*: Kai Winding, J J Johnson, Mike Zwerin (trombones); Junior Collins, Gunther Schuller, Sandy Siegelstein (French horns); John Barber (tuba); Lee Konitz, Sahib Shihab (alto saxes); Benjamin Lundy (tenor sax); Gerry Mulligan, Cecil Payne (baritone saxes), Al Haig, John Lewis, Tadd Dameron (piano), John Collins (guitar), Nelson Boyd, Al McKibbon, Joe Shulman (bass), Kenny Clarke, Max Roach (drums), Carlos Vidal (percussion), Kenny Hagood (violin). From September 1948-March 1950 Davis, through his determination and leadership by ringing up and organising these sessions, and using the arrangements of Mulligan, Gil Evans and John Carisi, took jazz into a new world where the energy of bebop was channelled into new textures and sounds, for the genius of improvisers - such as Lee Konitz - to thrive.





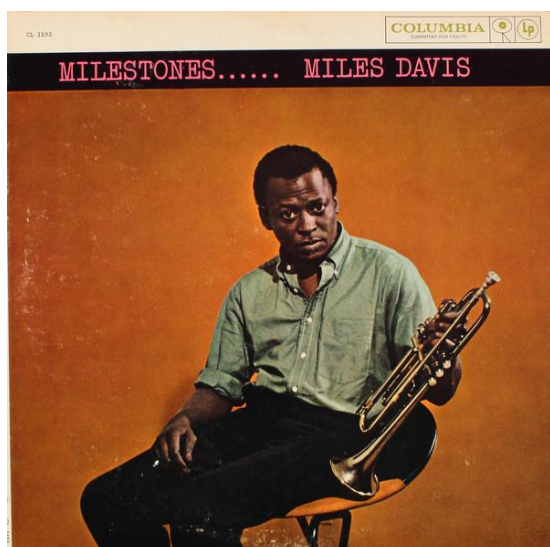
Birth of the Cool 21/1/49 session, L-R, partially obscured Junior Collins, (French horn); John “Bill” Barber, (tuba); Kai Winding, (trombone); hidden, Max Roach (drums); Gerry Mulligan, (baritone sax); Miles Davis, (trumpet); Al Haig, piano; and Lee Konitz, (alto sax) with the bassist Joe Shulman, to the right of the picture cut off. PHOTO COURTESY FRANK DRIGGS COLLECTION

His next serious move was the series of albums made in 1954 for Prestige - *Workin’* etc - with the quintet John Coltrane, tenor saxophone; Red Garland, piano; Paul Chambers, bass and cello; and Philly Joe Jones, drums. These are noteworthy for their interpretations of the so-called Great American Songbook, the use of mute by Davis on many tracks, and the potent swing generated by the superb rhythm section, as well as the musical closeness established with the tenorist John Coltrane. They represent a standard against which the classic modern bebop jazz quintet may be judged.



In 1957, in an extension of the “cool” nonet, he collaborated with Gil Evans on what was in effect a kind of concerto event for flugelhorn (*Miles Ahead*, 14/10/57) bringing into focus a distinguishing feature of his sound, a kind of melancholy lyricism. The collaboration with Gil

Evans that began in 1948, blossomed with the making of three more albums, *Porgy and Bess* (9/3/59), *Sketches of Spain* (18/7/60) and *Quiet Nights* (July-November 1962).



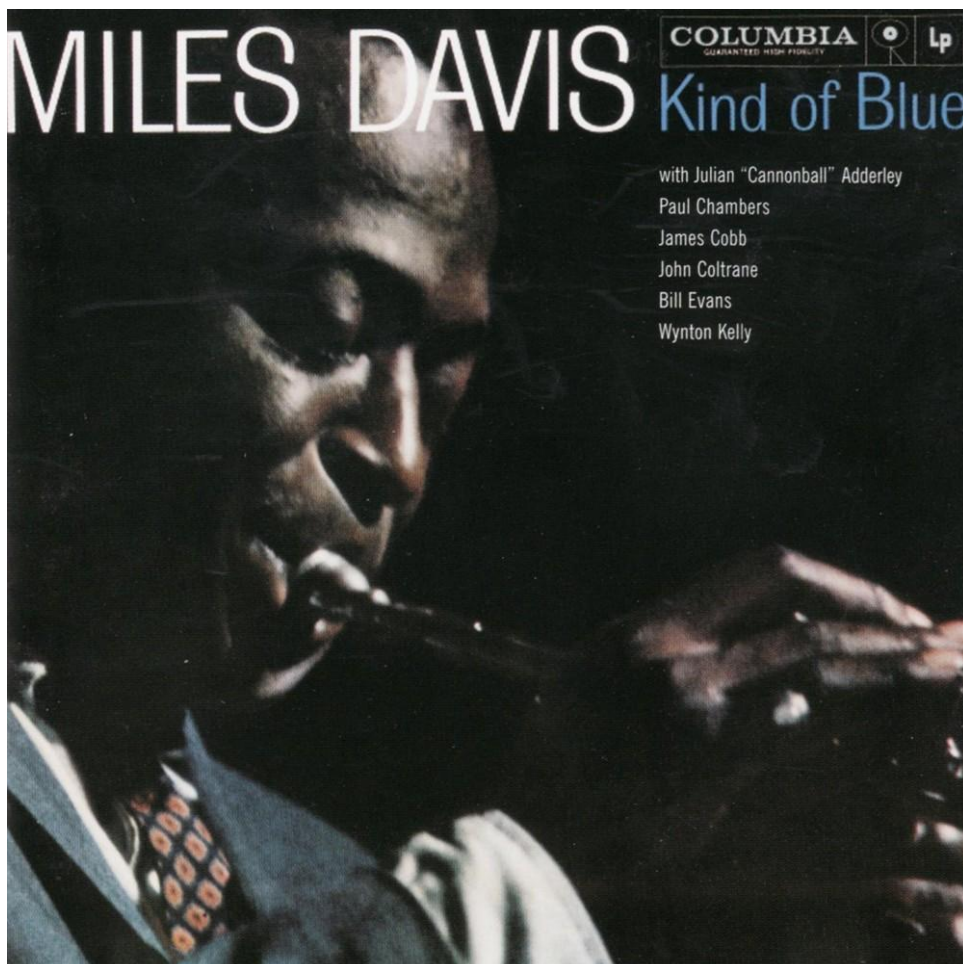
Milestones, one of my desert island discs, memorable for inter alia Philly Joe Jones's 'springing' drumming, was the first time Davis used the modal form which is seven notes off each scale, each note. Davis: "The challenge here, when you work in the modal way, is to see how inventive you can become melodically" (Miles, *ibid*, p 215). *Kind Of Blue*, 1959, distinguished by the presence of pianist Bill Evans, is a masterpiece which harnessed the lyricism of his trumpet and its melancholy brilliance with a sensitive sense of space, with Evans's impressionistic contributions, punctuating the solos with a memorable platform for the horns ('the sound he got was like crystal notes or sparkling water cascading down from some clear waterfall' (Miles, *ibid*, p 216).



At the "Kind of Blue" session, L- R, John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley, Miles Davis, Bill Evans...

It has sold four million albums, making it the best-selling jazz album of all time. I think it apposite to turn to Davis and his own words regarding his approach to his art:

*As a musician, and as an artist, I have always wanted to reach as many people as I could through my music. And I have never been ashamed of that. Because I never thought that the music called 'jazz' was ever meant to reach just a small group of people, or become a museum thing locked under glass like all other dead things that were once considered artistic. I always thought it should reach as many people as it could, like so-called popular music, and why not? I never was one of those people who thought less was better; the fewer who hear you, the better you are, because what you're doing is just too complex for a lot of people to understand. A lot of jazz musicians say in public that they feel this way, that they would have to compromise their art to reach a whole lot of people. But in secret they want to reach as many people as they can, too. Now, I'm not going to call their names. It's not important. But I always thought that music had no boundaries, no limits to where it could grow and go, no restrictions on creativity. Good music is good no matter what kind of music it is. And I always hated categories. Always. Never thought it had any place in music.**



* *Miles: The Autobiography*, by Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe, Macmillan, London, 1989, p 195).

Then came the recordings of the band which some have labelled the Rosetta Stone of jazz: *Miles Davis: the complete live at the plugged nickel* (1965) over seven sets, on the nights of 22nd and 23rd December 1965 at the Plugged Nickel Club, Chicago, operated by Michael Pierpaoli (1962 and early 1970s). The band was Davis, (trumpet), Wayne Shorter (tenor sax), Herbie Hancock (piano), Ron Carter (bass) and Tony Williams (drums). Miles said:

*I knew that Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Tony Williams were great musicians, and that they would work as a group, as a musical unit. To have a great band requires sacrifice and compromise from everyone: without it, nothing happens. I thought they could do it and they did. You get the right guys to play the right things at the right time and you got a motherfucker: you got everything you need.**



Miles Davis's classic quintet of the 1960s, L-R, Herbie Hancock, Davis, Ron Carter, Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams (obscured)... PHOTO COURTESY DEFINITIVE ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF JAZZ & BLUES

Certainly in this regard, and perhaps others as well, Davis in his leadership should be considered a great in the way Ellington is.

At the time when rock and funk were selling millions of records (c 1969) - Bob Dylan, Sly Stone, Blood Sweat and Tears et al - Davis was approached by Clive Davis, President of Columbia who asked Miles whether he was interested in changing his music to appeal to the

* *Miles: The Autobiography*, by Miles Davis with Quincy Troupe, Macmillan, London, 1989, p 263.

younger market. Initially angry, Davis agreed and the result was *Bitches Brew*, which was “about improvisation, and that’s what makes jazz fabulous”.* *Bitches Brew* became a best-selling album.



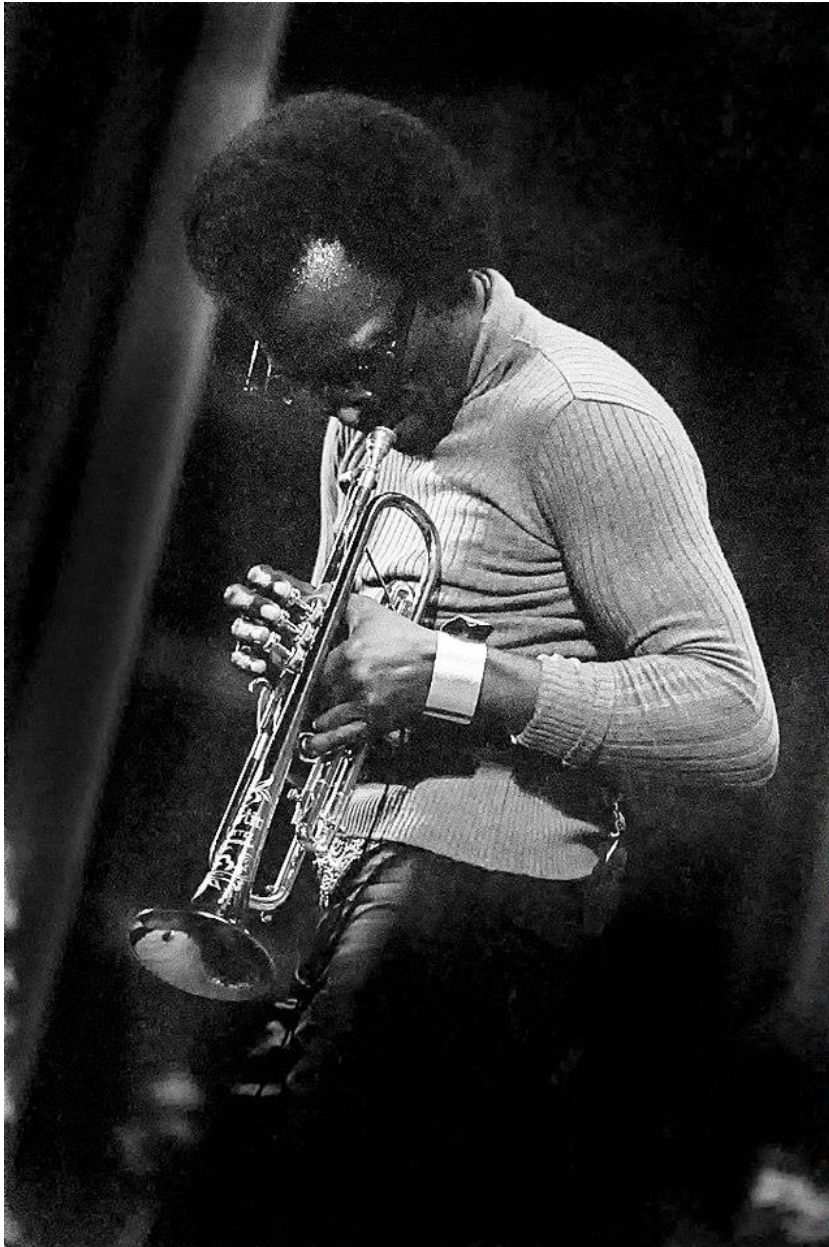
John McLaughlin related later that Miles told him to begin in the *Bitches Brew* recording session. On asking what he was to play, Miles told him to play whatever he liked. McLaughlin didn't freeze. Davis also told members to play their mistakes.



Guitarist John McLaughlin (right) performing with Miles Davis: at the “*Bitches Brew*” session Davis told him “to play whatever he liked”... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

*Miles Davis, *ibid*, p 290.

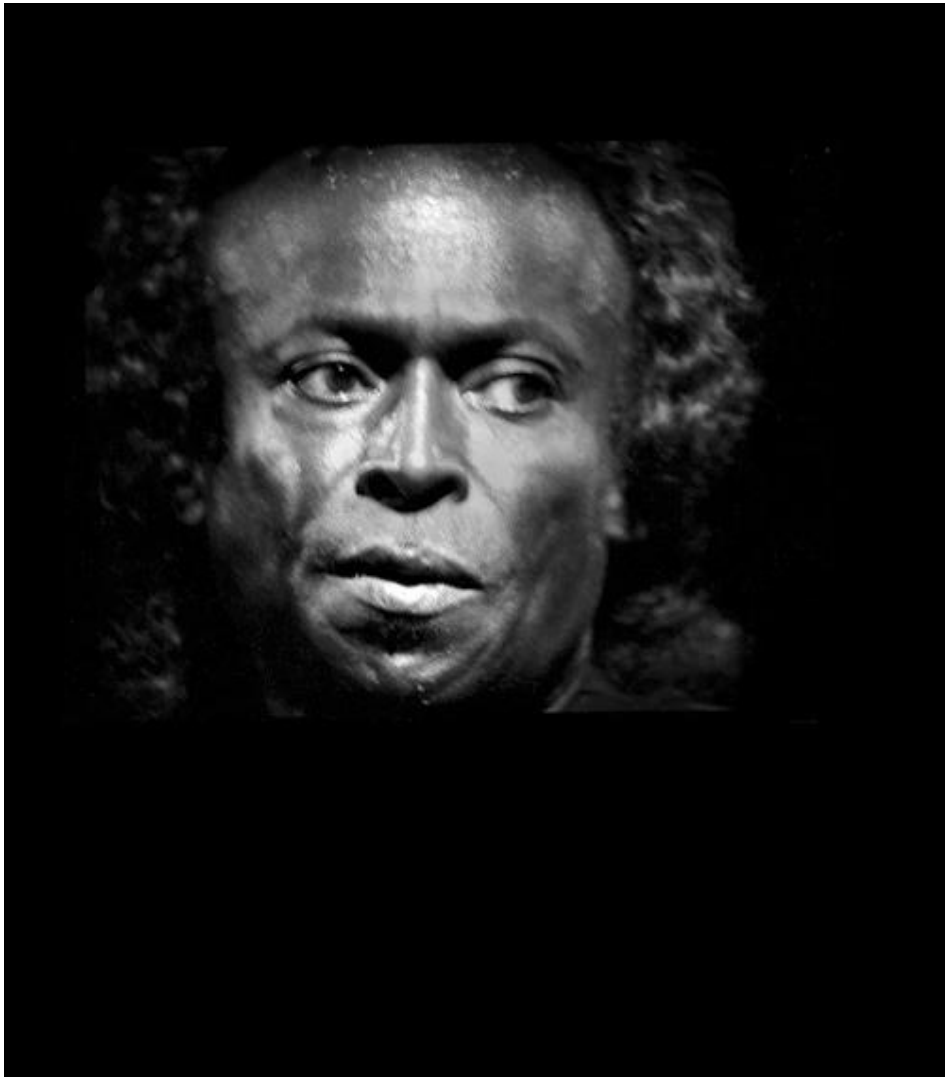
Funky Tonk from the Newport Jazz Festival (Europe) Dietikon, Switzerland, 22nd October 1971 with Davis (trumpet), Gary Bartz (soprano sax, alto sax), Keith Jarrett (electric piano, organ), Michael Henderson (electric bass), Ndugu Leon Chanler (drums), Don Alias (percussion) and James Mute Forman (percussion) at 25:43 is very much about the use of space, building a mood and rhythm. The wah-wah trumpet of Miles opens proceedings and the first section is quite largo, building some tension in repetition and rhythm. At nine minutes the greater expanded palette of Davis's music is evident, as the tempo picks up and the final section features some piercing trumpet, punctuating the churning rhythm section.



A shot of Miles Davis, taken in 1971... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

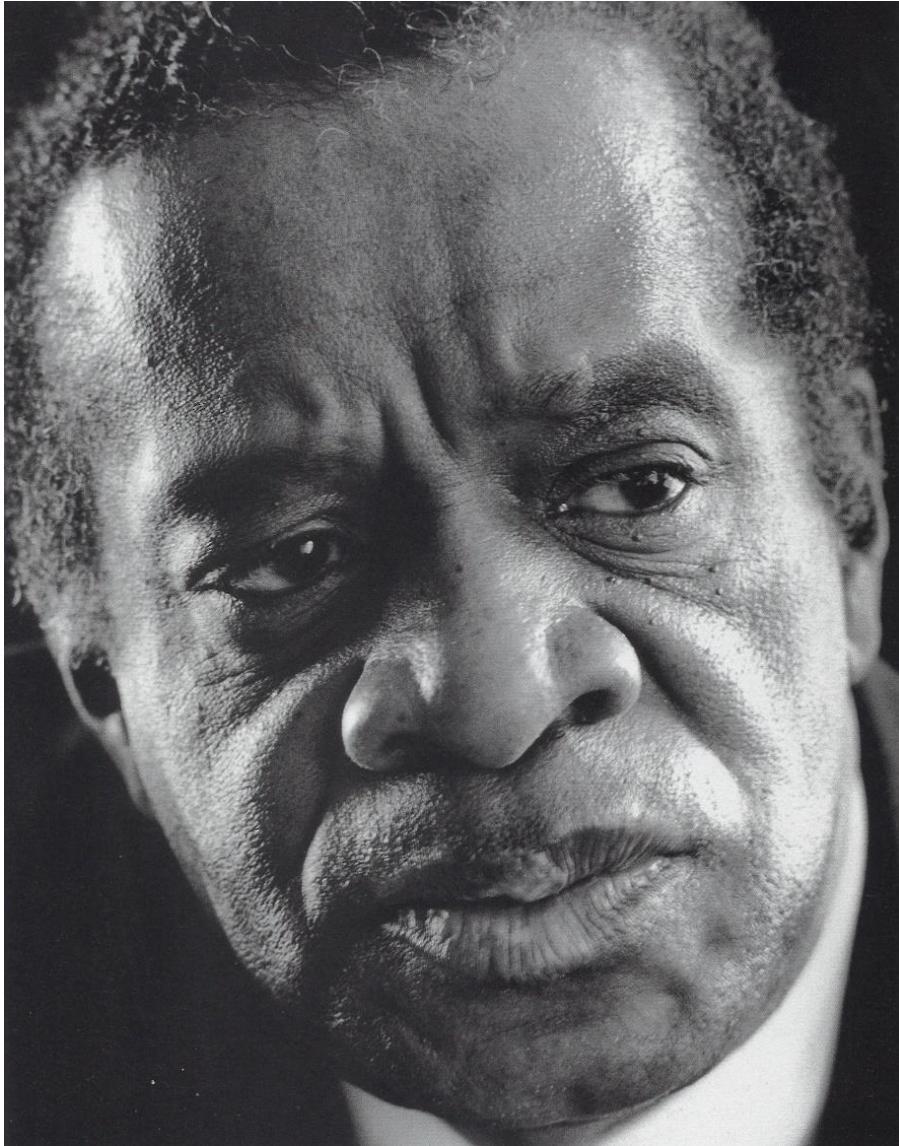
There is some music for a wide range of tastes in the Davis canon. But just as miniature masterpieces created by the demands of the three-minute limitation of 78" shellac records are works for the ages - *Parker's Mood*, *Ko Ko*, *West End Blues*, *Black and Tan Fantasy*, *Creole Love Call*, *Clarinet Lament*, *Body and Soul* (Goodman), *I Can't Get Started* (Berigan, 1937), *Body and Soul* (Hawkins); *Rose Room* (Christian), and many many others -

so will *Flamenco Sketches*, *Milestones*, *Autumn Leaves* (Adderley leader), *Oleo* (Plugged Nickel) for example in Davis's oeuvre, stand as some of the greatest music. In comparison to the meanderings and longeurs in such works as *Funky Tonk*, as fine as this music may be in parts and as enjoyable as it may be in a live context, it's not the art the others so clearly are.



Miles Davis in 1989: he is a rival to Duke Ellington ... in his willingness to progress in a continual artistic search using any available musical trends... but also, and this is crucial as it was in Ellington, his amazing leadership which I believe is, like Ellington, a transformative experience for anyone working with him.... PHOTO CREDIT HERMAN LEONARD

In my view, Miles Davis is a rival to Duke Ellington (and the Ellington trumpet alumni) in his individual brilliance on his chosen instrument, in his compositions, in his collaborations, in his willingness to progress in a continual artistic search using any available musical trends such as that involving the electric guitar, but also, and this is crucial as it was in Ellington, his amazing leadership which I believe is, like Ellington, a transformative experience for anyone working with him. He was also a cultural and social leader in his blindness to "ethnicity" - he welcomed white musicians Gil Evans, Bill Evans, Dave Holland, Chick Corea, John McLaughlin, Gerry Mulligan among others, both to his benefit and theirs, in making some of the finest music in history.



Donald Byrd: not just an accomplished bebop trumpet player but also a distinguished educator... PHOTO CREDIT JOHN REEVES

Dr Donaldson Toussaint L'Ouverture Byrd II (December 9, 1932 – February 4, 2013) or as he was known on his extensive recorded output, Donald Byrd, was not just an accomplished bebop trumpet player but also a distinguished educator (PhD) and financially astute musician who harnessed his copyrights to secure financial independence. He traversed successfully into electric music, jazz fusion and rhythm and blues. My preference is for his work in his early Blue Note period especially his album *Free Form* (11/12/61) with Wayne Shorter, tenor sax; Herbie Hancock, piano; Butch Warren, bass; and Billy Higgins, drums. Byrd at 30 is funky on *Pentacostal Feeling*, crisp and clear on *Night Flower*, lyrical on *Nat Nai*, and majestic and experimental on the brilliant eponymous *Free Form*. He recorded 43 albums as leader, some of them massive sellers like *Blackbyrd* (Blue Note, 1972/3).

I have the impression that some players at their most effective, produce their most beautiful and powerful work, when under the “leadership” of others. Freddie Hubbard springs to mind with his contributions to Dolphy’s *Out To Lunch*, or Oliver Nelson’s *Blues and the Abstract Truth*, or Dexter Gordon’s *Doin’ Alright*, or Wayne Shorter’s *Speak No Evil*, or

Herbie Hancock's *Maiden Voyage*, or John Coltrane's *Ascension*, or Art Blakey's *Three Blind Mice*. These are incontestable masterpieces of modern jazz, which have benefited greatly from the group commitment to the common goal, more than the individual brilliance of each of the participants.



Freddie Hubbard: he clearly knows how to shine in a three-horn frontline... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST

At the same time, the solo contribution of Hubbard (and the others) is often more striking, more powerful, more outstanding, than the work where they are (nominal or otherwise) leaders. It's as if the group circumstance gives the individual the freedom to excel in support of the musical goal, the music itself, as opposed to the individual voice of "hey, listen to me!". On the other hand, *The Artistry of Freddie Hubbard*, one of two albums the trumpeter made for the Impulse label during a hiatus from Blue Note, is a terrific album. This 1962 recording features the incredible line-up of John Gilmore on tenor sax (in a rare appearance away from Sun Ra's Arkestra), Curtis Fuller on trombone, Tommy Flanagan on piano, Art Davis on bass, and Louis Hayes on drums. I think it no coincidence that during Freddie's days with

the Jazz Messengers, his three solo albums -- this one, and the Blue Note album *Ready for Freddie* and *Hub Cap* -- are all sextet recordings. He clearly knows how to shine in a three-horn frontline. Great stuff.

In any case, leaders such as Art Blakey give their players moments to shine outside the group collective, such as when, in a live performance at the Renaissance Club, Hollywood, 18th March 1962, Hubbard is given license to shine on the ballad *Blue Moon*, and shine he does in a solo of delicate beauty, superb control, at one time of murmuring delicacy in low tones, at another bright beauty, a sensitive, poignant performance which fits the melody and lyrics of what may seem a trite popular song. In the title track *Three Blind Mice* he contributes a confident, open-horned solo.



Bill Hardman: his bright tone and bebop dexterity - witness his solo on "Evidence" (Monk) - lift the band... PHOTO COURTESY MOSAIC IMAGES

And it may be that Bill Hardman's (1933-1990) greatest moments are on Art Blakey's Jazz Messenger's *With Thelonious Monk* (May 1957) where his bright tone and bebop dexterity - witness his solo on *Evidence* (Monk) - lift the band.

Lee Morgan, whilst a member of Blakey's 1961 Messengers, did more writing then (1958-1961) for that brilliant sextet (Morgan, trumpet; Curtis Fuller, trombone; Wayne Shorter, tenor; Cedar Walton, piano; Reggie Workman, bass; Art Blakey, drums) than he did on his own albums of the period. On his composition *Calling Miss Khaduah* from the brilliant Blakey release *Indestructible* (April 1964) which has a fast waltz tempo, the bass opens proceedings, the piano enters, then Blakey's driving drums explode into the mix followed by the three fabulous horns of Fuller, Shorter and Morgan, punctuating the rhythm with their chorus of voices. Morgan then takes over with an open horn of piercing brilliance, showing great control and facility of expression at such a tempo. Wayne Shorter's solo which follows is a blast - how powerfully that man could play in this context!



Three members of Art Blakey's 1961 Jazz Messengers, L-R, Wayne Shorter (tenor sax), Blakey (drums), Lee Morgan (trumpet): Morgan takes over with an open horn of piercing brilliance, showing great control and facility of expression at such a tempo... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Wynton Marsalis (born 1961) entered with a flurry of brilliance in the 1980s especially with such documents as *Black Codes (From the Underground)* the eponymous track that opened that album recorded 7-14/1/85. It featured himself (trumpet), Branford Marsalis (tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone), Kenny Kirkland (piano), Charnett Moffett (double bass), Ron Carter (double bass) and Jeff "Tain" Watts (drums). Marsalis revealed a confident swinging classical approach to jazz trumpet, which in this performance is played with considerable passion and control, with a bright and polished tone.



A young Wynton Marsalis, pictured here in 1982... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Palle Mikkelborg on his own composition *View*, on Jakob Bro's *Returns* (2018) plays flugelhorn over a bass figure much in the style of Miles Davis with a husky, gentle tone, using space effectively such that the horn is punctuating with phrases the melodic figure of the bass.



Palle Mikkelborg, pictured in Sydney, Australia: much in the style of Miles Davis with a husky, gentle tone, using space effectively... PHOTO COURTESY HENK VAN LEEUWEN

Australian Phil Slater, whose lyrical, pensive sound explorations in the low and mid-range of the trumpet (cf *The Thousands*, 2007, all compositions by Slater) is playing in the tradition of impressionistic Miles Davis in that sonic search for quiet beauty on the trumpet, against the early establishment of the instrument as loud and declamatory, and in bebop, loud and declamatory and fast. But he can play fast and high and lyrical as he demonstrates on the title track. Slater is one of the most impressive modern trumpet players.



Australia's Phil Slater: playing in the tradition of impressionistic Miles Davis in that sonic search for quiet beauty on the trumpet...

Mark Isham, especially on *Blue Sun* (1995) with himself on trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn and electronics; David Goldblatt, acoustic and electric piano; Steve Tavaglione, tenor sax; Doug Lunn, electric bass; and Kurt Wortman drums; is in the Davis tradition. Isham is also a film composer of some note and has contributed music to 138 soundtracks including *Men of Honour* (2000); *Crash* (2004) and *Dirty Dancing* (2017).



Mark Isham: in the Davis tradition, and also a composer for film of some note... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

A trumpet player and composer in the tradition of Miles Davis's *Budo* and *Godchild* explorations with Gerry Mulligan et al, and the West Coast sound generally, including Stan Kenton, Shorty Rogers and Gerry Mulligan, is Franz Koglmann in his document *A White Line*. I find it especially interesting as it confrontationally addresses the issue among jazz lovers, myself included, between those who thought that "true" jazz was rooted in the blues, jazz out of the black experience. "White" jazz was anaemic, didn't really swing, lacked the heart, for want of a better word, of the African American's music. This view was in effect reverse racism but the politics of the time, especially that arising out of the post WW2 rise of such artists as Sonny Rollins, Max Roach, and Archie Shepp, gave the argument a bit of heft. Sadly some musicians, Max Roach among them, decried publicly what they saw as Uncle Tom behaviour displayed by Louis Armstrong. In musical terms the hard-bop sound, and music groups on Blue Note, seemed to be the way forward for "true jazz" and the overwhelming make-up of these bands was African American. But then there was Miles Davis. His priority was the music, and his early collaborations with Gil Evans and Gerry Mulligan, and his employment of Bill Evans, put paid to the notion that the best jazz was black jazz. *Kind of Blue* not only made a lot of money for Miles, it showed that his attitude of placing the music first was not only economically successful; it was also artistically triumphant, regardless of the cultural ethnicity of the musicians. Indeed, it was Bill Evans's playing that lifted *Kind of Blue* to another level, as Miles acknowledged.



Franz Koglmann: a greater affinity for the expressions of a melancholy decadence than the spontaneous joy of improvising... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Koglmann stated: "I have a greater affinity for the expressions of a melancholy decadence than the spontaneous joy of improvising" (*Notes to A White Line*, 13- 17/11/89 Vienna). He was interested in detached lyricism, lucid coolness and the "white line" of Bix Beiderbecke, Lennie Tristano, Paul Desmond, Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker. The musicians are Koglmann (flugelhorn, trumpet), Mario Arcari (oboe), Tony Coe (clarinet & tenor sax), Jean-Christophe Mastnak (French horn), Raoul Herget (tuba), Paul Bley (piano), Helmut Federle (accordion), Burkhard Stangl (guitar), Klaus Koch (bass) and Gerry Hemingway (drums). There are compositions dedicated to Stan Kenton, Shorty Rogers, Jimmy Giuffre, Red Nichols, and Lennie Tristano. In the actual music though, Paul Bley is a free player and adds distinction to what is music that, though it has some melancholy charms and some memorable themes - some wit - it is perhaps too precise for some tastes.

One of the most significant musicians of the 21st Century of any genre, is a trumpet player in the jazz tradition, whose first inspiration was Joe "Fox" Smith (nee Joseph Emory Smith, 28/6/02 - 2/12/37) admired by Fletcher Henderson as the most "soulful trumpet player" he had ever heard. His name is Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith who considers his namesake "the first really great lyrical cornet player" preceding Louis Armstrong. Wadada Leo Smith is the next great jump in jazz after Miles Davis.



Wadada Leo Smith: coming from Louis Armstrong, and being influenced by Miles Davis, Booker Little, Clifford Brown and later Don Cherry... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Wadada Leo Smith began on the mellophone, moving on to the French horn and finally the trumpet at age 12. At this age he composed his first work which was for three trumpets. He sees himself as coming from Louis Armstrong, and being influenced by Miles Davis, Booker Little, Clifford Brown and later Don Cherry. He joined the US Army and played for five years in a total of six different army bands, touring inter alia France and Italy. He joined the

collective known as the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) with Anthony Braxton. The collective's raison d'être was combining the music's African roots with improvisation. His first recording as a leader was a solo album *Creative Music - 1* which was the first release of the label he founded, Kabell.



Wadada Leo Smith: the next great jump in jazz after Miles Davis... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

He has recorded with Clifford Thornton, Leroy Jenkins, Marion Brown, Frank Lowe, Bobby Naughton, Michael Gregory Jackson, Philip Wilson, and Roscoe Mitchell. He has built relationships and played with Europeans Derek Bailey, Steve Lacy, Evan Parker, Lol Coxhill, Han Bennink and Peter Kowald. As a composer he has written works for solo piano, multiple orchestras, and string quartets. In 1970 he developed two basic systems of music that he has used in his music ever since: "the system of rhythm-units and the notation system he termed 'ahkrevention', which literally means to create and invent musical ideas simultaneously, utilising the fundamental laws of improvisation and composition. With the rhythm-unit concept, each single sound or rhythm, or series of rhythms, is accepted as a complete piece of music. Each performer, in turn, is considered as a complete unit with each having his or her own centre from which each performs independently of any other, whether performing in a small group or in an orchestral context. The independence of each sound-rhythm and

the independence of each performer contributes to the liberation from time as a period of development and to its employment as an element of space instead”.*



Wadada Leo Smith: he developed two basic systems of music that he has used in his music: “the system of rhythm-units and the notation system he termed ‘ahkreavention’...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

If Miles Davis liberated the trumpet sound from its (mainly) declamatory, powerful and loud beginnings such as practiced by Buddy Bolden, Louis Armstrong, Harry James, James Morrison et al, it was Duke Ellington who provided the orchestral platform for individual musical expression to be able to determine the colour and end result of a composition. Both these influences are suggested in Wadada Leo Smith’s musical concept. Regarding Duke Ellington, Smith says: “Ellington was special because ...every personality in the ensemble means something and you can hear them.” And rhythm is the bedrock. In that regard, his incredibly close relationship with NY bass player John Lindberg is instructive and revealing.

**Notes to “The Great Lakes Suites”, all compositions by Wadada Leo Smith, with Smith (trumpet), Henry Threadgill (alto sax, flute and bass flute), John Lindberg, (bass), and Jack De Johnette (drums). Recorded NY 20/12/2012 2CD, “A Suite in Six Parts”. His work for large ensembles has been performed throughout the world, since 1969 including by The Kronos Quartet; the Southwest Chamber Music; the Oxford Improvisers Orchestra, etc, etc.*



Wadada Leo Smith's close relationship with NY bass player John Lindberg (above, an early shot) is instructive and revealing... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

From the notes of *Celestial Weather*, a duo recording, NY 16/6/2012, I think it's informative, both as a listener, or as a musician, or as a music lover, to consider these (beautiful) words of bass player John Lindberg, on connecting with Wadada Leo Smith after having 'known' him for over a dozen years:

On a summer's afternoon, circa 1990, standing under a huge oak tree in the shadows of the resplendent Harvey Fite landscape sculpture known as Opus 40 in Saugerties, New York, this duo with Wadada Leo Smith forged its distinct identity in a most spectacular and seemingly unimaginable fashion. We had begun our journey as musical co-creators some dozen or so years earlier, already having worked in various ensembles together, as well as our duo formation. It was a strange gig from the get-go. Somehow, we had been booked for this afternoon performance, but I'm not quite sure neither of us was aware that it was actually some sort of social event where ambient live music was wanted, rather than a focused concert. We of course persisted nonetheless. Under that gigantic, magnificent oak tree, we played our hearts out for about an hour and a half, with hardly anybody actually listening to us, other than the furtive minute or two as they walked past on their way to the punch bowl or snack trays.

*They may not have listened, but they certainly heard. That part was not optional, we made sure of that. And, as we were making absolutely sure of just that, I noticed them for the first time. Green inchworms, Geometridae. At first, what seemed like just a few, here and there, dropping sporadically from above, then gradually increasing into a veritable onslaught. Eventually it was essentially raining inchworms on us. We simultaneously became aware of the phenomenon occurring, stolen smiles were exchanged between us, as we played on, resolutely. Upon ultimately striking the final note of our performance, followed by a scattered and scant applause from those still milling about the sculpture park, (and seemingly oblivious to our inchworm plight), we looked at one another's now sweat-drenched faces, and began to chortle. "Wadada, you have green inchworms crawling all over you... in your hair, going down into your shirt, just all over you, man!" "John they're all over you too, man.... your hair is full of them too, they're on your ears, crawling inside your bass, everywhere!" Yet, you see, we never paused, or wavered, from our intense focus on creativity during the performance - simply sheer grit and determination from beginning to end, come what may, we played our soaring hearts out, as that is the only way we know how to play. Thus, with our previously established substantive artistic and personal connection becoming fully forged at this juncture, we moved forward as astutely conscious interconnected creative beings - into the future of so much more great music and friendship, to be heard and felt for all eternity".**

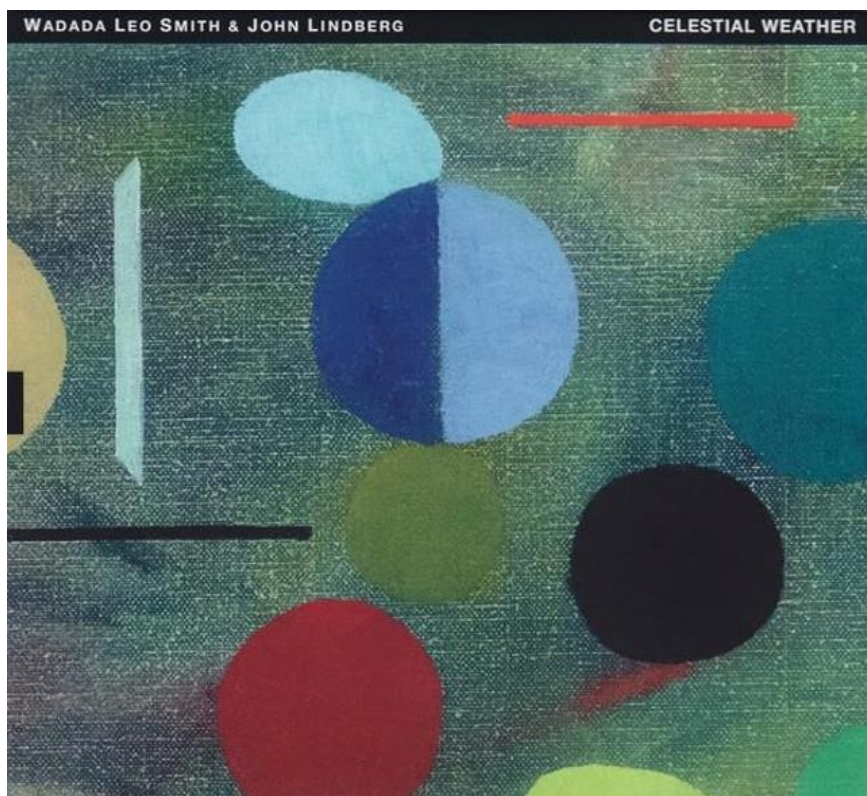


Lindberg: we played our soaring hearts out, as that is the only way we know how to play...
PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ TIMES

**John Lindberg, Notes to CD Celestial Weather: Wadada Leo Smith & John Lindberg, NY, 16/6/2012.*

These comments must be familiar to many creative artists, especially musicians where their audience, playing and focus are out of context. It also reveals the powerful connections made when two artists commit completely to joint creativity and the work, and revel in its outcome. We may recall comments made earlier by Dr Bechet on the origins of the music: "In this moment of ecstasy an interracial marriage was consummated, and the child of this union still jumps for joy wherever jazz is hot."

The immediate result of that connection was the duo document *Celestial Weather*, 6/6/2012, NY. It has a tribute to Malachi Favors, *Maghostut: A Monarch of Creative Music* by Smith in two parts; the five-part suite *Celestial Weather* by Smith and Lindberg; and finally, *Feathers and Earth* in two parts, by Lindberg. From the *Celestial Weather Suite*, *Hurricane* for example opens with short trumpet bursts of urgency underpinned by woody very rapid bass notes, then a bass solo of consummate artistry climaxing in very fast intense chords when the trumpet enters, and chorus, followed by trumpet solo replied to by arco bass notes. Quieter moments follow with a return to plucked bass, with mournful trumpet, back to arco, then trumpet fade out.



Smith has turned to verse to describe his colleague Lindberg:

*His hand plucked corrugated steel,
a resonant boom set forth a transformational, swish, doome, ssssczz, and uuu -
A surgically precise signal targeted our hearts,
And he sounded out the music through perfect strokes,*

*His rhythms at times cross multiple sonic lines,
A blue and blush-orange hug was where the notes landed. In that enclosed organic garden,
John's musical vision - unfiltered - covered us On the other side of the world.*

*Now
I said that.
Yes, the mystery remains
Entangled in the soul of folks.*

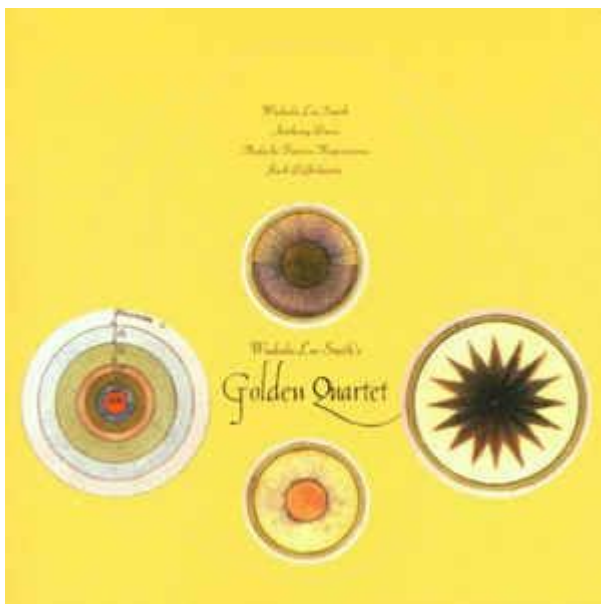
Smith uses Nature, especially life-giving water, as inspiration for his creativity, and his music in these works is not program music or impressionism. His long melodic lines feature sound and silence - space is used constantly to enhance his phrases. He says: “.... being a lyrical trumpet player means you can make extended melody that has the possibility of being a really large arc.”

Smith has experienced something of a purple patch since 2010 with a series of substantial documents. This is in complete acknowledgement of his work in 1978 on the amazing *Divine Love* (a composition, he said, which had multiple paths along which to construct each instrumental line, with the opening and closing sections being improvised) with Smith, Lester Bowie and Kenny Wheeler (trumpets), Dwight Andrews (alto flute, bass clarinet, tenor sax, percussion), Bobby Naughton (vibes, marimba, percussion) and Charlie Haden (bass); or his *Golden Quartet* of c2000 with Smith (trumpet), Anthony Davis (piano), Malachi Favors (bass) and Jack De Johnette (drums), of which he says “I wanted to create an ensemble of master composers/performers who could perform my music in the quartet form, which has all the condition of an orchestra, and is the purest, most complete unit in all music”.

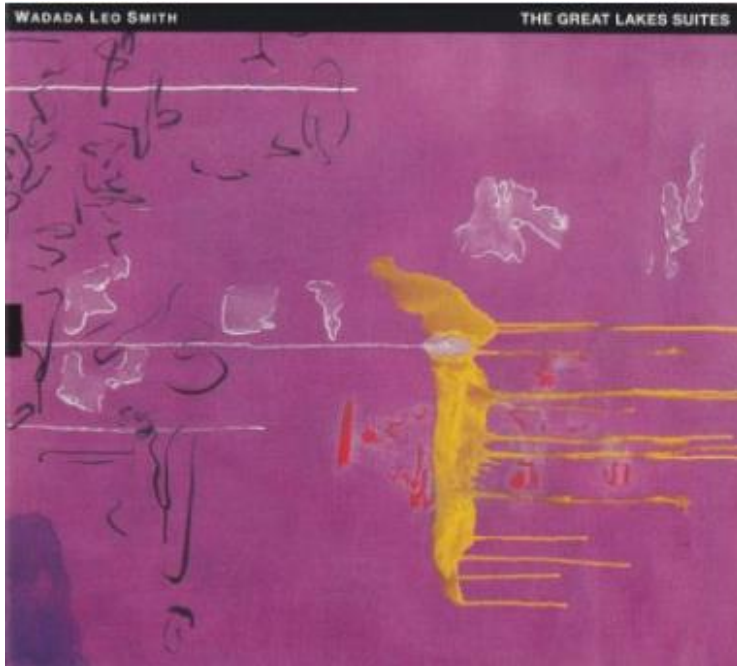




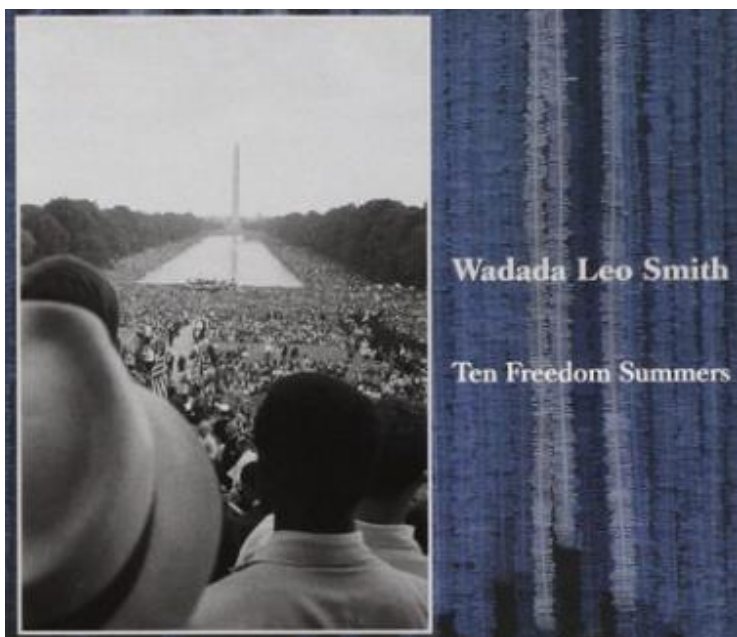
Three of the musicians who played on the 1978 album “Divine Love”, L-R, vibist Bobby Naughton, Smith and saxophonist Dwight Andrews... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN



The suite dedicated to the chain of lakes that contain 21% of the world’s fresh water, Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and Lake Michigan and one vying to be included as a “great”, Lake St Clair, is titled *Great Lakes Suites*, recorded 20/12/2012 in NY, with Smith (trumpet), Henry Threadgill (alto saxophone, flute, and bass flute), John Lindberg (double bass) and Jack DeJohnette (drums). It is in six parts. Smith is inspired by life-giving water, Nature and the "types and differences of species that makes their home in this great body of water."



In *Ten Freedom Summers*, the inspirations arise from the search and struggle for freedom by African Americans. It was 34 years in the making by Smith. It was recorded 4-6 November 2011, Los Angeles, with Smith, trumpet; Anthony Davis, piano; John Lindberg, bass; Pheeroan akLaff, drums; and Susie Ibarra, drums; with the Southwest Chamber Music ensemble conducted by Jeff Von Der Schmidt.



The parts are named after significant figures or places in the freedom struggle: Dred Scott; Malik Al Shabazz; Emmett Till; Thurgood Marshall; Equal Education; John F Kennedy; Freedom Riders; Medgar Evers; The DC Wall; Buzzsaw: the myth of a free press; the Little Rock Nine; desegregation for education; Rosa Parks; Black Church; Voter registration; Empowerment, 1964; Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society; Civil Rights Act, 1964; America; September 11; Fannie Lou Hamer; Democracy; and Martin Luther King Jr: Memphis the Prophecy.

When music is inspired by a great deal more than the desire to entertain, it enriches, inspires and moves like nothing else. A powerful narrative - such as Lloyd Swanton's *Ambon* - drives creativity to another level. Smith's *Ten Freedom Summers*, Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra, and Holiday's *Strange Fruit* are cases in point. The blues indeed, whether happy or sad, with their narrative, may be stronger because of that.



When music is inspired by a great deal more than the desire to entertain, it enriches, inspires and moves like nothing else, for example Lloyd Swanton's "Ambon" (left) and (below) Billie Holiday recording "Strange Fruit" in 1939 with guitarist Jimmy McLin.....
HOLIDAY PHOTO PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN



Smith's solo tribute to Thelonious Monk *Solo: Reflections and Meditations On Monk* recorded for the Finnish Broadcasting Company, Helsinki, 16/17 of November, 2014 and 8/8 2015, released in 2017, is a remarkable document with one of the finest, most beautiful renditions of *Round Midnight* I have heard. Smith can be fiery, quirky, muted or open, lyrical, meditative, mournful (cf, *Ruby My Dear*). Smith says: "Most people would never realise that I am closer to Thelonious Monk than to any other artist. What connects us is a vision of composition and its forms, music psychology, and our articulation of the ensemble as a trashing field for more information. With an illustration of silence, not as a moment of absence, or a space for resting, but as a vital field where musical ideas exist as a result of what was played before and afterward. Silence." (Introductory note to *Thelonious Monk: A Reflection*, New Haven, 10/7/2017)



A group he named Golden Quintet recorded the document *America's National Parks* (2CD) on 5/5/2016 New Haven Ct. The group included Smith (trumpet and director of the ensemble), Anthony Davis (piano), Ashley Walters (cello), John Lindberg (bass), Pheeroan akLaff (drums) and Jesse Gilbert (video artist). The work is a suite in six movements. The cello plays lead with the trumpet. The centrepiece, and darkest piece, is the suite inspired by the Mississippi River, which Smith calls "a memorial site which was used as a dumping ground place for black bodies by hostile forces in Mississippi. I use the word 'dark' to show that these things are buried or hidden, but the body itself doesn't stay hidden; it floats up. The river has been filled with these bodies, but these bodies call forth the idea of humanism".

Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith's trumpet and flugelhorn artistry, his compositional skills, his powerful narratives underpinning his compositions, and his artistic vision, place him among the greatest contemporary artists moving on from Miles Davis.



A young Kenny Wheeler: lyrical and beautiful melodies with considerable purity of sound distinguish his approach... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Canadian Kenny Wheeler (14/1/30) has been a prolific recording artist in the international scene. My first glorious encounter with this trumpet player, who chose flugelhorn for his debut ECM album *Gnu High*, 6/75 New York, had Keith Jarrett, (piano), Dave Holland (bass) and Jack De Johnette (drums) improvising on Wheeler's three compositions: *Heyoke*, *Smatter*, and *Gnu Suite*. This was an album that seemed all of a piece, quite perfect and quite perfectly fitting into the mood of the time. Lyrical and beautiful melodies with considerable purity of sound distinguish his approach. He has made over 28 albums, and collaborated in various ways on 108 others, including the stunning *Divine Love* with Wadada Leo Smith. His major work perhaps is *Music For Large and Small Ensembles*, which features himself on either trumpet or flugelhorn, and Alan Downey, Ian Hamer, Henry Lowther, and Derek Watkins in the trumpet section. It was recorded in January, 1990. Wheeler also features on the legendary album *The Baptised Traveller* (1969) by Tony Oxley (drums), with Evan Parker (tenor sax), Derek Bailey (guitar) and Jeff Cline (bass).

The lone trumpet sound on the opening track to the 2010 document *When the Heart Emerges Glistening*, is gentle, husky, moving upwards, repeating a theme like a lullaby. It is called *Confessions To My Unborn Daughter*. It is one of nine originals written for the recording. Ambrose Akinmusire (1/5/82) is the lead and trumpet (also celeste and voice), supported by Justin Brown, drums; Gerald Clayton, piano; Harish Raghavan, bass; and Walter Smith, tenor. Subsequent works such as *Origami Harvest*, *Imagined Saviour*, and *Where The River Goes* (in a support role) have confirmed his brilliance both compositionally and in the lyrical intensity and inventiveness of his playing, both live and in the studio.



Dave Douglas: politically alert to issues in the world... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Dave Douglas (24/3/63) is a prolific composer and educator, as well as trumpet player. His Soul Note albums brought him to international attention. But it is his superb leadership that has contributed so much to his art. Greenleaf Music is an independent music company directed by Douglas and jointly founded by him. He has released many albums on the label including the wonderful set *Brazen Heart LIVE at Jazz Standard*, with Douglas (trumpet); Jon Irabagon (tenor sax); Matt Mitchell (piano); Linda May Han Oh (bass); and Rudy Royston (drums) 19-22, November 2015. If it does not match, it certainly bears comparison with, Davis's *Plugged Nickel*. Apart from being a superb modern trumpet player, he is also politically alert to issues in the world in the same way as was Charlie Haden, and his music is invested with similar passion, even rage (cf *Constellations*, 1995) at civil war in the Balkans. I once said to him: "You've taken over the torch from the great Charlie Haden who recently passed?" He laughed.



Baikida Carroll, another outstanding trumpet player... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

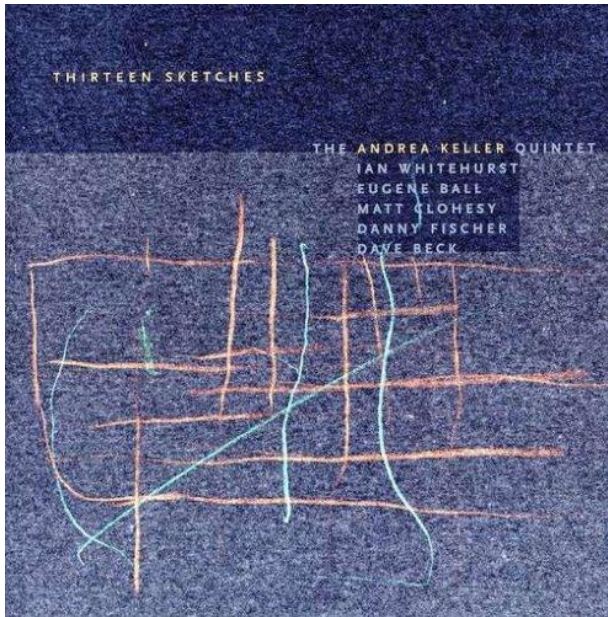
Other outstanding trumpet players include Baikida Carroll (15/1/47) (cf *I Don't Know The World Without Don Cherry*, 1996, Naxos) and *Marionettes on a High Wire*, (Omni Tone, 2001); Tom Harrell (16/6/46) (cf *Paradise* BMG, 2001); Ralph Alessi (6/3/63) (cf *Baida*, ECM, 2013 or *Quiver* ECM, 2016), and a trumpet player influenced by Chet Baker and Miles Davis, Tomasz Stańko (11/7/42 – 29/7/18 (cf *Leosia*, 1996, ECM); Ingrid Jensen (12/1/66), one of very few female trumpet players, is among the best, cf, *At Sea*, (Artists Share 2005). One of my favourite players is Ted Curson (3/6/35), not only with Mingus, but in such works as *Tears For Dolphy* (1964) with Curson (trumpet), Bill Barron (tenor or clarinet), Dick Berk (drums). It's an album replete with passion especially the title track. Curson wrote five of the nine tracks. Enrico Rava, a Miles Davis-inspired trumpet player and composer, is a prolific recording artist as well.



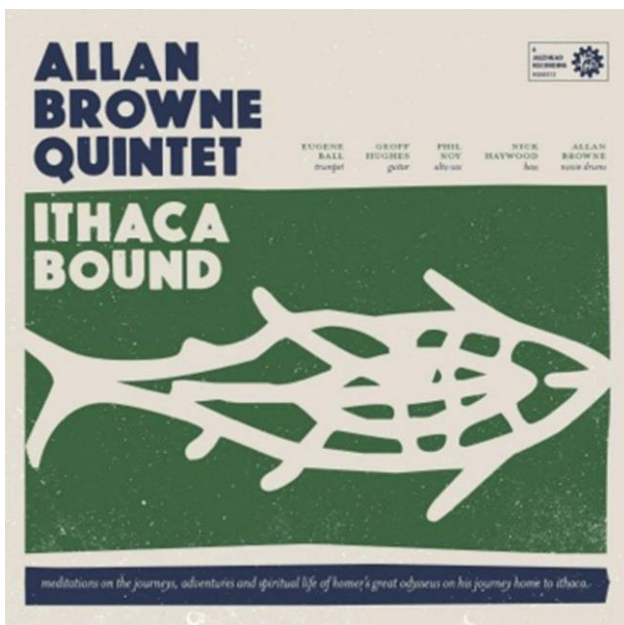
Tomasz Stańko (left) is a trumpet player influenced by Chet Baker and Miles Davis, while Australian Eugene Ball (below) is an example of dedication to the collective musical goal... BALL PHOTO COURTESY AUSJAZZ.NET



Australian Eugene Ball is an example of dedication to the collective musical goal. He lends great presence to Andrea Keller's *Thirteen Sketches* (2001). On the track *Empty Boxes* (Keller), the tone is delicate and flugelhorn-like, and he provides timely and beautiful punctuations to the piano solo. He provides a beautiful solo on the opening track *Reservoir Dad* (Keller), a murmuring solo of consummate, lyrical delicacy on *Dreaming the Glorified Bass Player* (Keller) and cheeky, fun, sometimes blurry, sometimes beautiful tone to *Blue Arsed Fly* (Keller). This is his role in a classic modern jazz quintet of tenor, trumpet, piano, double bass, and drums. See also his performance at the Adelaide Arts Festival, *Prince of Darkness* (2012).

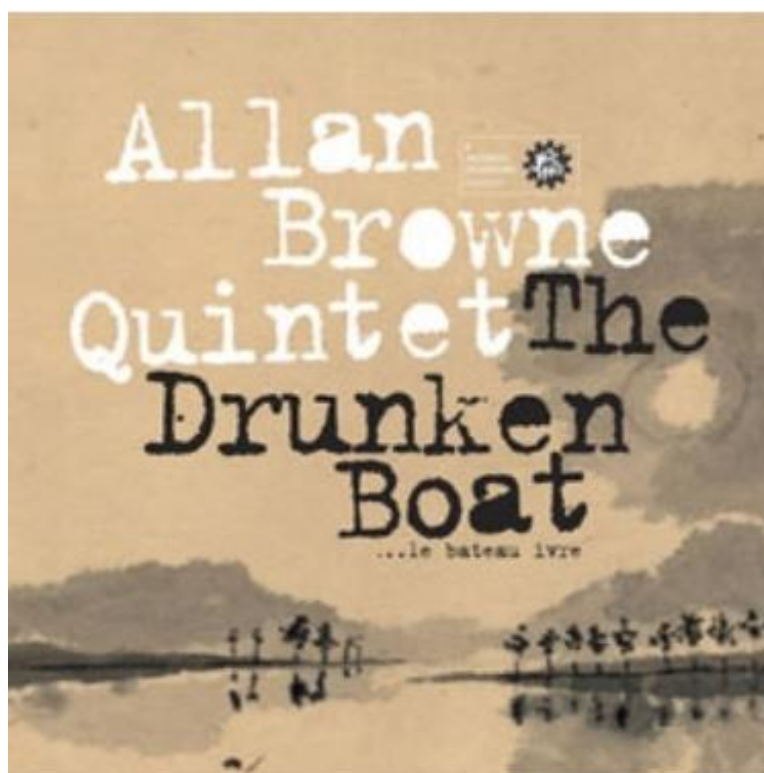


His work on *Ithaca Bound* (2014) with the Allan Browne Quintet, especially on his two compositions *Sanctuary* and *The Lotus Eaters* reveal his range of sound, open, blurred, soft, burnished, growling, but it is his self-confident, intelligent use of that sound in all his work that reveals his value to the group and to the goals of the composition - dedication to the music at the highest level.





“The Drunken Boat” rehearsal in 2007, L-R, Scott McConnachie holding the alto, Eugene Ball (in glasses), guitarist Geoff Hughes (foreground)... PHOTO CREDIT ALLAN BROWNE



The document by the Allan Browne Quintet *The Drunken Boat*, (2007) a 25-track suite inspired by the work of Rimbaud and dedicated to the bass player Gary Costello (1952-2006) is a very good instance of Ball’s compositional skills and playing. Of the 25 tracks 13 are by Ball and 12 by Geoff Hughes (guitars). The first notes of the album are by Ball on the (Hughes) track *Unguided On Impassive Rivers*, and Ball’s trumpet playing can be variously, haunting, on *Released to Wander* (Ball); fierce and rapid on *Lost in the Furious Lashing of*



Inspired by the work of Rimbaud “The Drunken Boat” was dedicated to the bass player Gary Costello (1952-2006), pictured above in 1988, when he was a member of the Australian Jazz Orchestra... PHOTO CREDIT PETER SINCLAIR

Tides (Hughes); perky and wild on *Seawashed Of Wine and Vomit* (Ball); cheeky on *Devouring Azure Verses* (Hughes); dancing up- tempo then a lyrical ballad tempo on *A Dawn Extolled As A Flock Of Doves* (Ball); anguished expressing cries of pain on *Mystic Horrors* (Ball/Hughes); brilliantly mournful on *Pregnant Moths Like Hysterical Cows* (Ball); lyrically swinging on *Nacreous Waves, Skies of Embers* (Ball); haunting on a long-held note on *Ineffable Winds, Fish of Gold* (Hughes); delicate, sensitive almost flugelhorn tone, hesitant, and searching in musical conversation with others on *Electric Moons, Skies With Burning Funnels* (Ball). This document is an excellent example of the intelligent musical brilliance of Eugene Ball, who puts the music - not bravura playing, which he's undoubtedly capable of - at the centre of his playing. That dedication to the group musical goals, added to his individual compositional and performance skills, defines the artist, not just the player.

Again with the Allan Browne Quintet on *Cyclo-Sporin* (2004) with Geoff Hughes (guitar), David Rex (alto), Nick Haywood (bass) and Browne (drums) Ball is lyrical and upbeat on *At Times the Fool* (Hughes); delicate yet powerful, holding a long note on *Seek* (Ball); exhibits dexterity and beauty on *Snoring Waters* (Hughes); and speed and humour on *Rexy's Rag* (Rex).



Scott Tinkler (far left) pictured here in 1994 as a member of the Mark Simmonds Freeboppers group, with L-R, Steve Elphick (bass), Simmonds (tenor sax) & Simon Barker... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ & BLUES MAGAZINE

Scott Tinkler (2/10/64) is to me the most interesting, compelling and accomplished world-class Australian trumpet player of recent times, whether on *Fire*, with Mark Simmonds Freeboppers (1994) or on *The Future in Today* (1997) with Ian Chaplin, (alto sax), Philip Rex (bass) and Scott Lambie (drums). On this last, he composed four of the nine works, and helped propel the album to the 1998 ARIA Award for Best Jazz Album. On *Noazark*, an up-tempo number by Ian Chaplin, Tinkler's open horn over a rumbling, churning bass/drums is inquisitive and curling whilst showing brilliant control and expression at high speed, with a range from high to grumbling low. On his own composition *Luc Warm*, his rapid, high and squiggling, teasing bustling phrases are a marvel. Similarly, *Spinning Topper*. He opens proceedings dramatically, majestically, on the album with his own *One Up, One Down*. It's a spectacular album which however does not reveal a lyricism in Tinkler.



Scott Tinkler (left): the most interesting, compelling and accomplished world-class Australian trumpet player of recent times...TINKLER PHOTO CREDIT LAKI SIDERIS, while Simon Barker (below) was stunningly and memorably outstanding at the Adelaide Festival with Chiri... BARKER PHOTO COURTESY FACEBOOK



One of most thrilling live performances I've experienced was that by the group Chiri at the Adelaide Arts Festival, 2012, where a small group of us listened to Tinkler, Simon Barker (drums) and Bae Il Dong, a Korean vocalist of astonishing energy and power, who practiced his art in Korea whilst in the close proximity to a waterfall. Amazingly, the trio has been effectively captured on CD on the eponymous *Chiri* with eight tracks, *Chirisan Sinawi, Pt 1 and 2, Echo, Empty Creek, Sobaek, Chiri, Five Companions* and *Links*.

On *Sobaek*, for example, Tinkler opens with a single long note, then traverses an amazing range of sounds punctuated by drum phrases from Simon Barker, who moves into a martial beat, whilst the melancholy, stunning sounds of Tinkler reach for the heavens (it seems). My understanding is that these works are all joint compositions created during performance through listening to each other's improvisations. The performances do have structure, climaxes, and light and shade. It's a truly remarkable, electrifying listening experience, and a credit to the performers. Simon Barker is stunningly and memorably outstanding. Bearing in mind the Australian Art Orchestra presented the large-scale programmed *Prince of Darkness*, a tribute to Miles Davis, featuring the great Eugene Ball, I still thought Chiri was the musical highlight of that Festival.

Mat Jodrell on the title track of Sam Anning's *Across A Field As Vast As One* (2018) provides a well-constructed solo of burnished beauty replete with feeling.



Mat Jodrell: a well-constructed solo of burnished beauty replete with feeling...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

My personal choice for a lifetime's trumpet aficionado's listening pleasure to return to as the mood strikes:

**Robert Parker's Jazz Classics Duke Ellington 1927-1934*, (ABC) with Arthur Whetsol, Freddie Jenkins, Cootie Williams, and Louis Bacon on trumpets, sheer heaven.

*Louis Armstrong, *The Big Band Sides 1930/32* (JSP).

**The Complete Columbia Recordings of Eddie Condon* (Mosaic) for Wild Bill Davison.

**Wildflowers: The New York Loft Sessions* (1976), with the following trumpet players: Olu Dara, Leo Smith, Ahmed Abdullah, and Ted Daniel and the cream of New York modern jazz players of the day. Endlessly interesting, beautiful and moving.

**Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus* (1960) with Ted Curson (trumpet), Eric Dolphy (alto sax, bass clarinet), Dannie Richmond (drums) and Charles Mingus (bass and leader). Curson is "on fire" on this album, perhaps responding to the leadership of Mingus and the cohort.

**The Complete Columbia Recordings 1955-1961 of Miles Davis with John Coltrane*.

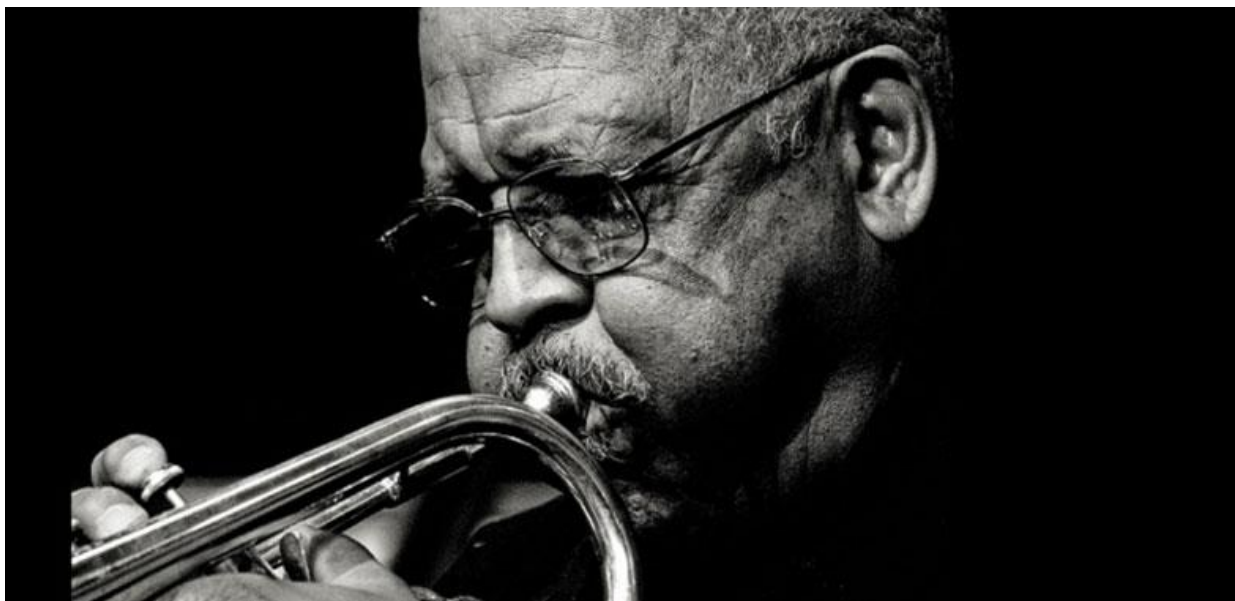
*John Carter and Bobby Bradford (born July 19, 1934), *The Complete Revelation Sessions* (Mosaic Records) with John Carter (alto and tenor sax, clarinet, flute), Bobby Bradford (trumpet), Tom Williamson (bass) and Bruz Freeman (drums), 16th January 1969, Occidental College, LA, Carter (alto sax and clarinet), Bradford (trumpet), Bill Henderson (piano), Henry Franklin (bass), and Bruz Freeman (drums), 9th November 1971, Occidental



John Carter (above) and Bobby Bradford (below)...PHOTOS COURTESY WIKIPEDIA



College, LA. Carter (alto sax and clarinet), Bradford (trumpet), Nate Morgan (piano), Louis Spears (bass) and Leon Ndugu Chanler (drums), 4th April 1972, Occidental College, LA. Carter (clarinet) and Bradford (trumpet), 7th July, 1979, Westlake Studios, LA. On *In The Vineyard* (John Carter) Bradford is dextrous at high tempo; on *Karen On Monday* he is lyrical and expressive with feeling; On *Sticks and Stones* up-tempo brilliant; on *Seeking* (John Carter) husky, melodic, expressive, lyrical and conversational on this original ballad; and on *Song for the Unsung*, capable of an angry cry. In the duet CD the Carter composition *And She Speaks* serves, at nearly 18 minutes, as a remarkable instrumental demonstration of the range of these two instruments to express a mood that might be experienced in a conversation between a man and a woman. In the beginning the trumpet is husky and hesitant in concert with the clarinet which is pitched higher. Then the trumpet solos (male?) traversing a range of sounds with open horn, sometimes beautiful sometimes not, as if building a narrative whilst the clarinet gurgles in the background from time to time. There are some slow bold notes. Halfway through, the conversation becomes more chirpy and up-beat, then turns thoughtful, and searching, melancholy under a piercing clarinet (female?). The piece ends with quick chattering, screaming in concert, quiet, sweet unison, laughter, and ends in a slow, sweet segue of both instruments. It's a remarkable performance. Bradford appears on the masterpieces *Ornette Coleman: The Complete Science Fiction Sessions* (1972), John Carter's *Dauwhe* (1982) and Vinny Golia's *Sfunato* (1998). In October 2009, Bradford became the second recipient of the Festival of New Trumpet Music's Award of Recognition, a non-profit organization founded by jazz trumpeter Dave Douglas to encourage aspiring trumpeters.



Bobby Bradford: the second recipient of the Festival of New Trumpet Music's Award of Recognition...

*The Art Ensemble of Chicago and associated ensembles (21 CDs) featuring the following trumpet players: Lester Bowie, Stanton Davis, Malachi Thompson, Rasul Siddik, Bruce Purse, Leo Smith, Kenny Wheeler, Hugh Ragin, and Corey Wilkes. The music was recorded between 1978 and 2013.

*Any work of Eugene Ball with Andrea Keller, and any work of Scott Tinkler.



Andrea Keller (second from left) with Eugene Ball (third from left) pictured with Ian Whitehurst (far left) and Joe Talia (far right)... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

*Any work by Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith on the label TUM (Lithuania).



Spike Lee (far left): thank you Louis, thank you Duke, thank you Miles, thank you Ishmael Wadada...

As Spike Lee may have said about trumpet players in his classic film *Do the Right Thing*, “Thank you Louis, thank you Duke, thank you Miles, thank you Ishmael Wadada.” I say, on behalf of music lovers on the local scene, thank you to those trumpet players whom we can hear live, in the moment, and experience the joy of their creativity, which can’t really be replicated by recording, as good as recording may sometimes be in the hands of a genius like Miles Davis. So thank you Scott, thank you Eugene, thank you Miroslav, thank you Phil, thank you Chris, Eamon and Peter, thank you Vince, James, Matt, Gemma, Gavin et al, for bringing this beautiful music into our lives. It’s love that drives you, and it’s love we feel.