ENTERTAINMENT

New jazz from old masters

Steve Hacker

Columbia Records has put together another set of finds from its vaults of unreleased sessions of some jazz masters and, fortunately, four of the series have been released in Canada. One of the most interesting is Miles Davis live at the Plugged Nickel, a 1965 double set featuring the influential quintet - Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams. This session is from the early days of that classic combination, and Davis was definitely in a playful, more

adventurous mood. Two songs written for the landmark Kind of Blue album are performed, but in a much quicker tempo. The strong performances of Shorter and the twenty-year-old drummer, Tony Williams, are just hints of the important music that was to come from these men.

The Master is a previously unreleased Stan Getz recording from 1975. This hard blowing session is a personal favourite of our female editor. The other two albums in the series are a live date with the late Thelonius Monk and his quartet, Live at the Jazz Workshop which mainly sticks to the Monk songbook (Well You Needn't 'Round Midnight) and a double set of assorted live performances from newport Jazz Festivals of the early '60's with the likes of Ben Webster

The Nightfly (Warner Bros.) Donald Fagen's first post-Steely Dan effort may provide these fans who suffered through the "Gaucho" period with a pleasant surprise.

and Lester Young.

Fagen has eliminated the whining edge his voice had picked up over the last few albums and the lyrics have improved too. No longer do we have to endure songs about being trendy in California. Instead, Fagen has collected songs that represent (as the liner notes reveal) his fantasies as a suburban youth growing up in the late Fifties and early Sixties. The lyrics are nostalgic and optimistic: Love in the Bombshelter ("New Frontier"), the all night jazz D.J. ("The Nightfly") and, of course, the single "I.G.Y.

The music itself is upbeat and jazzy and the producation is slick a la Steely Dan. Many of the studio people Fagen has employed in the past are back, but gone thankfully are the Tom Scott horn arrangements.

There certainly is life after Steely Dan for Donald Fagen, but what of Walter Becker?

Fellini favorite

For that Fellini lover on your gift list, Amarcord Nino Rota (Hannibal Records) is sure to please. The late Nino Rota was the composer whose themes coloured Fellini films such as Eight and One Half. Juliet of the Spirits, and La Dolce Vita. The

TRACKS

Wild Things Run Fast **Joni Mitchell**

Geffen Records

Howard Goldstein

There are those who think that middle age has brought contentment to Joni Mitchell-Contentment that Great Evil,-that most tepid of states. The thinking is that this new smugness has taken away the cutting edge that was the heart of her work for many years.

On the basis of Wild Things Run Fast, one has to wonder where these critics get their information from. For while it is true that her new album

is superficially a fun, fast paced recording, beneath it one can still detect enough of Mitchell's traditional bittersweet depictions to question her supposed contentment.

The album seems to borrow from each of her recent recordings. Aided by such able and diverse musicians as James Taylor, Lionel Ritchie, and Wayne Shorter. Mitchell has combined the best of her previous recording styles in a favourable way. The rock and roll energy and guitars of "Court and Spark": the outright jazzines of "Mingus"; the meditative introspection of "Hejira"-they are all here. And they are brought together with those two qualities that make Joni Mitchell stand out among pop vocalists - tast and intelligence. A must for those who take popular music seriously.

PATHS, PRINTS **JAN GARBARET** ECM RECORDS **Howard Goldstein**

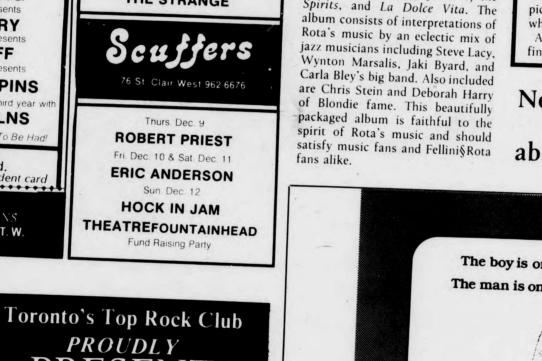
Paths, Prints is Norwegian reed player, Jan Garbarek's newest recording for ECM. For the most part, it features the same band that he brought to Toronto to highlight the recent ECM Jazz mini-festival (the only change being Jon Christensen replacing Michael DiPasqua on drums).

The album contains a wide variety of different composition from the jungle atmosphere of "Footprints", to the straightforward upbeat "Kite Dance". In each instance, it is Garbarek's playing that dominates and sets the mood. Whether it is on bamboo flute or tenor saxophone, Garbarek manages to inject the passion and high energy needed to make this otherwise lethargic music catch the listener's ear.

He is helped by the German electric bass stylist, Eberhard Weber, and American guitarist Bill Frisell (who sounds like a good 'ole countrypicker' who got an echoplex for Christmas); but in the end, it is Garbarek who makes the difference.

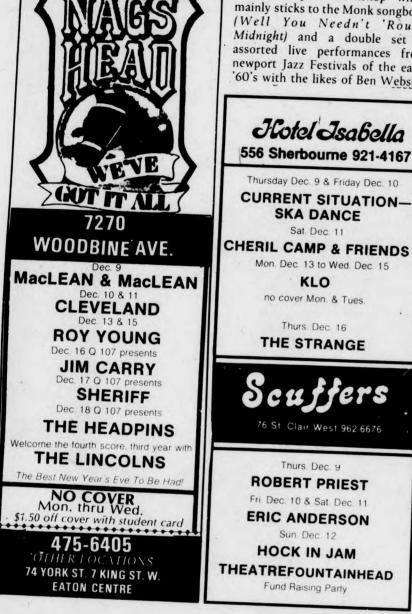
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