

tege will impress anybody, at least the first few times, and it is interesting to hear what has become of *Two Degrees East*.

I suspect the musicians might have rehearsed more. Of the two soloists, Ronnie Ross reveals unusual control over the baritone sax, and his entrance into *Midsommer* is striking, but he does not really say anything of his own. Gerry Weinkopf plays a non-electrified flute, and has beautiful solos in *England's Carol* and in *Cortege*.

—Glenn Coulter

GEORGE LEWIS: *The Perennial George Lewis*, Verve MGV 8277.

Ace in the Hole; *It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary*; *West End Blues*; *Jambalaya (On the Bayou)*; *Wolverine Blues*; *Take My Hand, Precious Lord*; *Mack the Knife*; *Yaaka Hula Hicky Dula*; *Careless Love*; *Hindustan*.

Personnel: George Lewis, clarinet; Jim Robinson, trombone; Thomas Jefferson, trumpet; Alcide Pavageau, bass; Joseph Robichaux, piano; Joseph Watkins, drums. Vocals by Watkins on Tracks 1, 2, 6, and 9; by Jefferson on Track 7.

It's no news that the members of the George Lewis group have been together for a sufficient length of time to have developed the rapport that makes for a fine sense of ensemble work. The Lewis organization has a very even quality of playing (not only due to the similarity of tempos on the lp here); the results of their record sessions and in-person appearances deviate very little from their past performance standards.

And most everyone is acquainted with the polyphonic network of the New Orleans style front line where the lead trumpet furnishes the central line against which the clarinet fluently fabricates counter-melodies and the trombone alternates as a melodic and rhythmic voice. The George Lewis ensemble has what Nesuhi Ertegun refers to as fatality, or the quality of serenity and superiority evolving from discipline.

"*The Perennial George Lewis*" is his usual dignified, ingenuous self, at his best on *Precious Lord*. Jim Robinson's trombone is typically robust particularly in the contrapuntal relationship to the Lewis clarinet on *Ace in the Hole*. Thomas Jefferson's vocal on *Mack the Knife* carbon-copies Armstrong, but his trumpet throughout is less searing than Louis. Alcide Pavageau and Joe Watkins form two-thirds of the rhythm section; the latter has a few drum intrusions almost, not quite, à la Art Blakey on *Jambalaya* and *Yaaka Hula*. (I have always wanted to hear

Art Blakey with a New Orleans band; he is one drummer who could be transported rhythmically intact from an ultra-modern outfit to a mouldy traditional New Orleans unit to a Negro church service to an African tribe—I have heard his rhythms in all the aforementioned musics. Blakey's drumming has much the same waddling strut of the New Orleans bands; this experiment is not as far-fetched as it first seems.)

Joseph Robichaux's piano, which solos on nearly every track, intrigues me in its "things-to-come-that-have-already-come" aspects. Occurring here and there are elements of: a) Harlem piano (subtle tone clusters and his device of repeating the tonic, skipping to a blue third, and then back home to announce the end of his solo on *Wolverine Blues*, *A Long, Long Way to Tipperary*, and *Hindustan*); b) Earl Hines (use of glissandos); c) Milt Buckner (block chords, not close together but with some distance between each hand); d) Erroll Garner (tremolo, chromatically descending parallel thirds and sixths in high registers on *West End Blues*, contrasting dynamics, repeated melody notes and left-hand chords in *Ace in the Hole*); e) Rock and Roll style accompaniment triplets behind the *West End Blues* ensemble. Joe sounds nothing like any of the foregoing but had this record been cut during the New Orleans jazz era, one could trace the subsequent pianistic developments back to this type of playing. Robichaux forecasts these elements rather than sounding as if he had already absorbed them.

Watkins' singing on *Precious Lord* and *Careless Love* refreshes by not imitating Louis. The clarinet obligato behind the vocal enhances both tunes.

Personnel listing misprints Jefferson's instrument as drums rather than trumpet.

—Mimi Clar

WARNE MARSH: Atlantic 1291.

Too Close For Comfort; *Yardbird Suite*; *It's All Right With Me*; *My Melancholy Baby*; *Just Squeeze Me*; Excerpt.

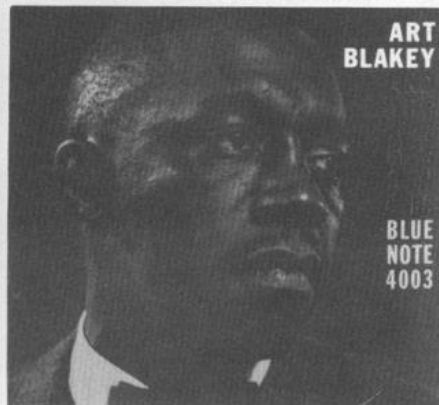
Personnel: Warne Marsh, tenor sax; Paul Chambers, bass; Ronnie Ball, piano on tracks 1 and 3; Philly Joe Jones, drums on tracks 1 & 3; Paul Motian on tracks 2, 4, 5, 6.

As I understand from what I've read and heard, Warne Marsh's objectives include a concentration on linear, horizontal relationships rather than vertical ones, a superimposition of unrelated chords, and a search for melodic and harmonic atonality. Marsh's own quotes, which form part of the notes for this al-

blue note

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bum, express his musical philosophy, as near as I can pin it down, like so: ". . . not to have the music distorted by any elements of your personality that might tend to take away from it as music." He then goes on to differentiate between this, the *artistic* approach, and what he terms the approach of personality or using one's talent to express personality in music rather than to express the music itself, and sums up that "by doing it artistically . . . it is the essence of your personality that is transmuted into music; the 'I' is no longer italicized."

I must confess my own difficulty in following this philosophy. Regarding Marsh's statement as to "elements of your personality that might tend to take away from it as music," how do you ascertain which elements to keep and which to discard? And if the 'I' is no longer italicized, can a man's jazz possess individuality, or be any more than the realization of a tonal math problem?

It seems pointless to take issue over a few sentences, my interpretation of which could undoubtedly be clarified by a more thorough discussion; but unfortunately I find myself just as confused by the music as I am by the quoted statements. Marsh's "atonality" emerges as tonal music with occasionally peculiar intervallic leaps and a sour, off-pitch intonation which is neither blue nor cool, but which distresses my ear considerably.

Now, perhaps I am tearing down something "new" as when everybody carped about Lester Young's tone. With Young, though, the matter was one of personal preference (say, for the sound of Hawkins over Young, or vice versa, just as in vocalists one might receive more satisfaction from the timbres of Lena Horne's voice than from Billie Holiday's). But with Marsh, the matter is bound up with good taste, because of his actual pitch. Unlike Parker, Lester, and the rest who in the tradition of "blue" tonality produce a variety of quarter-tones and microtones deviating from the pure pitch of the equal-tempered scale, Warne's intonation sounds "unpracticed," as though he hadn't been playing his instrument long. Marsh is out-of-tune because he doesn't play any definite notes. Parker and the others are in-tune because they hit a microtone exactly on the head and that is precisely the note at which they aim. Blue intonation is a very delicate process, requiring tonal control and, contrary to generally-applied 'off-pitch' labels, it is very much "on-pitch" within itself. Marsh doesn't maintain this con-

trol and thus produces in the listener the same sensation as a singer who thinks he is hitting a note but doesn't make it.

Perhaps Marsh seeks to disassociate himself from a key center not by the notes themselves but by indefinite tones. But, since his lines strongly gravitate toward a tonal center, the tonal frame of reference of his off-pitch notes cancels out any possibility of successfully achieving atonal goals.

The reason for the lengthy examination of Warne's tone is that this reviewer found it so distracting as to have a hard time concentrating on the linear development of the music. The melodic ideas are nullified by the indeterminate tone, just as an inept violinist cannot do justice to a Brahms concerto.

I found *It's All Right With Me* the most alive track, not only thanks to the explosive Philly Joe Jones and to an adeptly executed bowed bass solo by Paul Chambers, but to Marsh himself, whose pitch meanderings momentarily straighten out. *It's All Right With Me*, *Melancholy Baby*, *Yardbird Suite* and *Too Close For Comfort* afford fleeting glimpses into Marsh's potentialities: he feels jazz, and phrases accordingly well, slurring up to varied peaks of accentuation at irregularly-timed intervals, somewhat like Stan Getz.

Other members of the group—Ronnie Ball on two tracks only and Paul Motian substituting for Jones on four tracks—fare well in solo spots.

Warne has the knowledge, ability and sincerity of purpose to carry him where he wants to go. As Nat Hentoff brings out in the liner notes, the path to self-discovery and recognition is not an easy one. Although I don't agree with his present approach, I hope Warne will be able to prove himself in the future and can receive from jazz the rewards he deserves for giving so much of himself to it.

—Mimi Clar

RED NICHOLS: *Parade of the Pennies*. Capitol T1051.

Red Nichols, cornet; Moe Schneider, trombone; Jackie Coon, Mellophone; Wayne Songer, alto and baritone sax; Bill Wood, clarinet; Heinie Beau, clarinet and tenor sax; Jerry Kasper or Joe Rush-ton, bass sax; Bobby Hammack or Bobby VanEps, piano; Allan Reuss, guitar; Morty Corb, bass; Jack Sperling or Rollie Cul-ver, drums; Ralph Hansell, tympani and bells.

"The idea for this session was to recreate some of the classic renditions by Red and the 'Five Pennies'" writes Heinie Beau in the notes for this album. I have only my memory