



The Swinger

Publication of Hartford Jazz Society

May 31, 1965

No. 23

THE PROGRAM for Sunday evening, June 6: (1) Inauguration of new officers, 8:15; (2) Bix collector and biographer, Bob Harrington, speaks on "Bix and His Music," 8:30; (3) Count Stedwell Trio from Lil's in Waterbury -- Stedwell, piano, Bobby Coles, drums and Cliff Gunn, bass -- 9:15 till lights out. (The place, as usual: Jonathan Temple, 700 Blue Hills Avenue.)

THE NEW OFFICERS, to refresh the memory, are: Sam Johnson, president; Joe Jewel and Harry Lichtenbaum, vice presidents; George Cohen, treasurer; Sharon Clark, secretary; Phyllis Gordon, corresponding secretary.

RIM SHOTS: Cozy Cole scored so heavily at the Hofbrau that his two-week engagement was extended to four...Bruce Martin, instead of taking that vacation at home here in Hartford, has gone on tour as Chris Connor's accompanist ... Sadao Watanabe, HJS protege, is on tour with Chico Hamilton...Ray Cassarino is at the Camelot in West Hartford, his trio consisting of Fred Tinsley, bass and Ray Kalode, drums...Oliver Jackson, friend of HJS, is beginning to get the attention he deserves. Says Dan Morgenstern, reviewing in "Down Beat" the Lucky Thompson-Roy Eldridge band at the Village Vanguard: "Oliver Jackson is surely one of the best drummers around." The Canadian magazine, "Coda," having heard Oliver with the Earl Hines-Coleman Hawkins group (soon to be heard on tape through Educational TV) says: "Oliver Jackson must surely be one of the tastiest and most underrated drummers playing today."...John Birchard's Friday night broadcasts from WCCC invites requests...Danny Blume's WBMI broadcasts proved their popularity by an avalanche of responses to his poll on favorite jazz artists...Harry Lichtenbaum won praise for his performance in the Mascuers' production of "Sunday in New York."...A number of HJS members have already got their tickets for the Newport Jazz Festival, scheduled for the Fourth of July weekend.

RECOMMENDED: "Miles Davis at Lincoln Center" (Columbia) by Danny Blume; the Clark Boland band of American-European musicians (Columbia), by Walter Vaught; Andrew Hill's "Judgment" (Verve) by David Waid, who says, "He's avant garde, sure. If you're a casual listener you may miss what he's doing, but if you make an effort, he'll shake your wig loose."

YES, VIRGINIA, there will be a jazz cruise down the Connecticut in September. Furthermore, the boat will be (the Steamer Block Island). It will sail out of Middletown. There will be box lunches served instead of lines queued up for a buffet. The trip will be from noon to 8 p.m. instead of noon to 10 p.m. The general chairman will be Gladys O'Connor, and her committee will include Art Fine, Barbara Hurwit, George Cohen, Sammy Johnson, Harry Lichtenbaum, Dotty Murray, Lucy Marsters, Joe Jewel, George Malcolm-Smith, Sharon Clark, Graham Ralph and everybody else who will be kind enough to volunteer.

SUMMATION: The Hartford Jazz Society was founded nearly four years ago by a group of jazz-lovers and musicians with a dual purpose: to promote jazz music, meanwhile enjoying it and the friendships it engenders. It has held regular monthly meetings since its inception -- some excellent, some admittedly less than that. It has conducted a number of concerts, all artistic, though not financial successes. Its annual jazz cruise down the Connecticut has been its most successful project. The roster of HJS has never numbered more than eighty members. Many have come and gone, but, as in most organizations, a small group has remained constant, believing that eventually -- through increased public interest, growing prestige and financial competence -- the Society will succeed in fulfilling its purposes. A year and a half ago, HJS suffered a serious reversal: a concert it presented at the Bushnell Auditorium caused a debt of almost \$3,000. Today that debt, thanks to the hard work of the membership, has been paid -- an almost incredible achievement for an organization so small. Members say, "If only we had made \$3,000 instead of losing it, what couldn't we do?" No crisis could be more severe for the Society than those it has already survived. This year's jazz cruise holds great financial promise. HJS may still begin realizing its visions of accomplishment, prestige and enjoyment.

THAT SAID, let's consider a few of the responses to the questionnaire circulated among members and some non-members to learn how people feel about HJS. All were welcome and most are helpful; some are captious and others complimentary; a number show comprehension and a few are incomprehensible. Here, at random, are a few quotations:

"Could have a better meeting place...Raise dues to make better meetings...Socializing of the races is great...All members should at some time become involved in committee work...Discontinue live music each month if we can't break even financially...!Have more concerts...More publicity...Importance of liquor to the group makes it something different from what I wish to belong to...Meetings are dull, club is a bore. Music is oldish. Same old musicians playing same old crud...When music is being played, Society members pay more attention to their booze and conversations...Sunday nights are inconvenient...New members and guests should sit down and try to face the problems of HJS realistically.-- or forget it...Unless the performer is colored, he is kind of looked down the nose at by members. Also, there are some good musicians on the West Coast...Who could do better with so little in the treasury?... Some meetings are terrific, others are coffee klatsches without coffee or klatsch...Boat trip, which I didn't attend, was too crowded...The image of HJS in the community is bad -- worse than it really is...HJS illustrates the normal group dynamics: some choose to lead, most choose to sit by and occasionally complain that "they" have taken over...Don't charge guests; write it off as recruiting." Here is one to close on: "I wonder if the membership knows that many other jazz clubs have folded. Dallas, Detroit, Milwaukee, three in Chicago -- all dead. I would say that the Hartford group has done well merely by surviving."

KEEP your hands on the plough. (Old Song)