

A LABOUR OF LOVE

A few jazz musicians get rich, but most barely make a living from jazz alone – and all of them went into it for a love of the music, which depends for its survival in Britain on high skills poorly rewarded, and countless volunteers all over the country. In this issue and next, we attempt to take the temperature of the current UK scene. BRIAN BLAIN plays the intro...

MARK WALKER, Programme Director of Jazz FM proclaimed at the end of last year: '...jazz will be the big thing of 2004.'

Tell that to some of the best jazz musicians in the UK - for many of whom, even a hike in the price of petrol makes a significant dent in the economics of a band's typical two-car 400-mile round trip for a gig. British players of the stature of pianist Stan Tracey or trumpeter Ian Carr have often remarked that their jazz lives are largely untouched by 'next big thing' announcements like JazzFM's, that emerge every few years.

When Stan Tracey was a young man in the 1950s - recording for a major label, working most nights of the week - jazz really was a big thing. A playing giant still, Tracey now gets a only scattering of gigs (for which his fee bears little relation to equivalent creators in other fields) and records for his bassist Andy Cleyndert's cottage-industry Trio label. Yet thousands fill the Barbican and South Bank halls for international stars like Sonny Rollins (for whom a one-night fee is well into five figures) or Wayne Shorter. Nobody doubts the immense talents and pulling-power of those players, but they don't doubt Tracey's talents either. Why the difference?

The disparity between the funding and infrastructure of the bread-and-butter jazz



'The only way many can stay in the game and pay their bills is by making their principal living elsewhere'

scene across the UK - largely run on shoestrings by unpaid volunteers - and the prestigious concert-hall and festival circuit is an ongoing problem of the jazz economy. Surely neglect of the grass roots will only store up trouble for the future, particularly with so many enthusiastic newcomers - products of the '90s expansion in jazz education - coming on to the scene but having few places to play and for such small returns?

At the Arts Council of England, director of contemporary music Alan James agrees that the immense goodwill at the grass roots is a resource that mustn't be wasted, but he points to a big uplift in overall arts funding under New Labour (from around £180 million in 1997 to a likely £400 million in 2005/6) and the channelling of a growing proportion of it into non-mainstream musics including jazz, which satisfy so many of the government's new priorities of social inclusiveness and diversity.

'There's also a different type of administrator at work in medium-sized arts centres now,' James says. 'People who don't make the old distinctions between "serious" and "light" music. And even in the big concert halls, programmers are recognising changes in the demographic, how the profile of a city demands something different of its concert halls today. Jazz now has a much more significant place in that thinking than it used to. And in capital-funded and new-build projects, spaces are being built which now have to take on the widest possible musical remit'

James also welcomes expanded central funding for jazz tours (£270,000 in 2003/4), plus the eleven in the Contemporary Music Network's programme for 2003-2005. He also

points to newly-emerging funding provisions for individuals - rather than 'projects' or venue-related programmes - as a possible remedy for the grass-roots problem.

A valuable additional input to jazz has also come through the growing festival circuit. Festivals devoted to UK players include those at Ealing, Manchester and Appleby in the Lake District - the latter succeeding on the brilliantly eccentric individual programming of Neil Ferber and his access to regional funding and local business sponsorship. The 20 year old Derby Jazz now gets Lottery money to mount week-long jazz festivals and education work. Festivals also bring new money - public and private - to jazz by funding

Below: Stan Tracey - internationally respected for decades, but with little but his music to show for it; inset: Sonny Rollins, a star beneficiary of funding changes benefiting big halls and big names.



artist-in-residence schemes bringing together local and international players, and by encouraging commissions of new works from established UK composers and newcomers alike. But an enormous gap remains, of course, between jazz support and the resources given to classical music and opera.

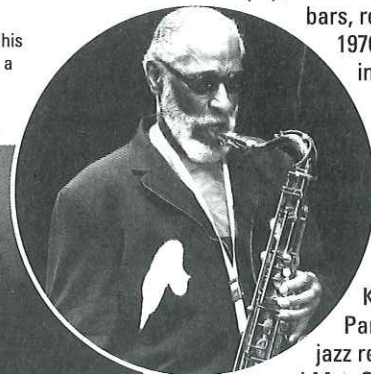
And the real-world jazz economy in Britain is still a hand-to-mouth affair. Very high levels of musicianship continue to receive very modest rewards. The only way many can stay in the game and pay their bills is by making their principal living elsewhere in the music business - teaching, theatre pit-bands, function bands for parties and weddings, pop/rock tours, dance sessions, wine

bars, restaurants. And, since the 1970s, the other key ingredient has been the continental European scene. From early fusion groups like Nucleus, Back Door, and Soft Machine, to more jazz-specific artists like John Surman, Mike Westbrook, Kenny Wheeler and Evan Parker, even popular early-jazz revivalists like Chris Barber

and Max Collie - they have all benefited from continental jazz enthusiasmt.

Jazz does have a built-in Catch-22 in that, as a subtle spontaneous music, often involving small groups, it's ideally suited to close contact in intimate venues. Problem number one - small venue means small audience, and the door money and bar takings

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might not meet a big-name artist's fee, even if the place is packed. Problem two: a six or seven nights-a-week jazz club may be busy at weekends but quiet during the week, but the overheads have to be paid just the same. America, as jazz music's birthplace, certainly sustained famous small venues like New York's Village Vanguard or Chicago's Pershing for years. But the story has been different in Britain, with only the legendary Ronnie Scott's (celebrating its 45th anniversary this October) achieving that status, and the 26-year-old 606 Club and the Dean Street Pizza Express other great survivors. But in general, a dedicated jazz-club scene in the UK has been a procession of dashed hopes. Recently London's Blue Jay and Shino's have confirmed it.

On the upside, Jazz Services' figures for last year (2002/3) showed almost 85,000 people attending their touring gigs, with close on £250,000 being paid to see the bands. For Chris Hodgkins, Jazz Services' director, the way to go is a circuit of supported live-music venues, including all styles.

Hodgkins says: 'the culture has changed, and the old back-room-of-a-boozier location for jazz doesn't work so well now. People want added value for an evening out. The ideal place has to take at least 150 to 200 people, run two bars and a food operation, be welcoming to women, have facilities for the disabled, provide good info. People want to know "how do I get there? What will the music be like?". But the latest national audience figures show 6.1% of the population regularly attending live jazz, and if you add the people who like it or listen to it on the radio, it might be 8% or 9%, competitive with other niche arts like opera or contemporary dance.'

What does Hodgkins' venue-network mean?

'Conversions of existing buildings, some of them maybe pubs, some not - perhaps 15 or 20 around the country. They might cost as much as a million a go, but the investment, probably public-private, would pay off. The volunteers who currently run gigs all over the country would then have proper funding, and could concentrate on programming entirely.

The music would have to be more diverse than a regular jazz venue. But that's the way it is now. Jazz Jamaica or Gilad Atzmon are jazz to me, but world-music to somebody else.'

At the legendary Ronnie Scott's, added-value, though they would run a mile from the term, has been the norm for much of the club's remarkable 45 years. Proprietor Pete King says: 'running a jazz club is very hard, and if I were trying to start this place up today I'm not sure I could now - at least not six nights a week. All kinds of costs have risen, council tax, PRS payments, waste-disposal, health and safety, you name it. But you have to give good value for more than the music alone these days, and I think we've done that for a long time. As far as public assistance goes, I'm for and against it. It's great to get help to put somebody worthwhile on, who perhaps isn't a star name. On the other hand, if you get money to put somebody on and do no business with them, it's no bloody good at all.'

Meanwhile the tireless jazz volunteers battle on. All over the country, they still present the best of the UK's musicians, and many touring international players - with very little support. Sheffield Jazz (led by local musician Jude Sacker), Cheltenham Jazz and Wakefield Jazz are all invaluable long-stayers, with Sheffield boosted by newcomer Simon Peat at the OneEleven Club. Notable also are Peterborough Jazz, Oxford's Spin and Boxford's Fleece. Saxophonist Tommy Melville's Rhythm Station continues at Rawtenstall, stalwart Essex promoter Kenny Baxter at Southend, Jim Greig and Joan Morrell in Cambridge. These enthusiasts work to very tight margins, with minimal marketing budgets to spread the word.

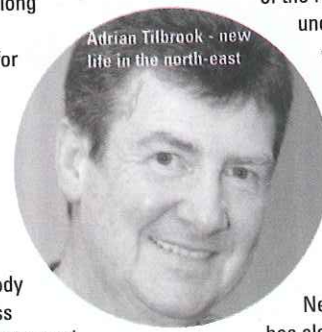
Adrian Tilbrook, at Jazz Action in

the north-east, is optimistic. He reports seeing more new local jazz bands in his area than he has ever known - other north Yorkshire and Tyneside stalwarts like Chris Yates at Jazz North East and Peter Bevan at Darlington Arts Centre confirm it. Ironically, these promoters have been developing their own touring schemes for local players in the way Nod Knowles did in the west country in the 1980s. It's as if, without a coherent infrastructure for jazz, good ideas like these have to be reinvented every decade or so.

In part, Tilbrook puts the north-east expansion down to inspirational visits by John Surman and Michael Garrick, guesting with the local Voice of the North Jazz Orchestra under John Warren, an ensemble that also acts as an incubator for rising local talent. Star saxophonist Tim Garland's arrival as a musician in residence at Newcastle University has also helped. But so has the added-value shift Chris Hodgkins described.

'People can go to a local arts centre like The Maltings at Berwick, have a nice meal and hear the music,' Tilbrook says. 'Local bands are sometimes getting bigger fees than major names do in London, and the arts centres are getting bands at a really attractive price, so more of them are putting them on. True, the younger people who come aren't the traditional backbone of support - they may never have heard of Eric Dolphy or Zoot Sims. But they do respond to the sounds they hear.'

Chris Hodgkins agrees. 'I'm hopeful for the future,' he says. 'The audience is there - a mature one, growing all the time, and a new one now emerging. It's an eco-system. We all need each other.'



Adrian Tilbrook - new life in the north-east



Pete King (right), the great survivor at Ronnie Scott's. Also pictured, left to right, Ed Bicknell and John Elson.

SPIN DOCTORS AND i-TUNES – THE NEW WORLD OF RECORDED JAZZ

How do today's small jazz labels survive today, up against the pop giants, and changes in the way music is accessed? EMMA KENDON talked to some key jazz-label figures, and discovered that they're battered but unbowed in their determination to get the music out there.

LOOKING INTO the economics of recorded jazz in the UK for a project nine years ago, I unearthed the statistic that jazz record sales made up just 1% of the UK record-buying market at the time. Even that tiny percentage included such jazz-influenced pop performers as the singer Sade – the majors didn't consider jazz sales worth the cost of more detailed market research.

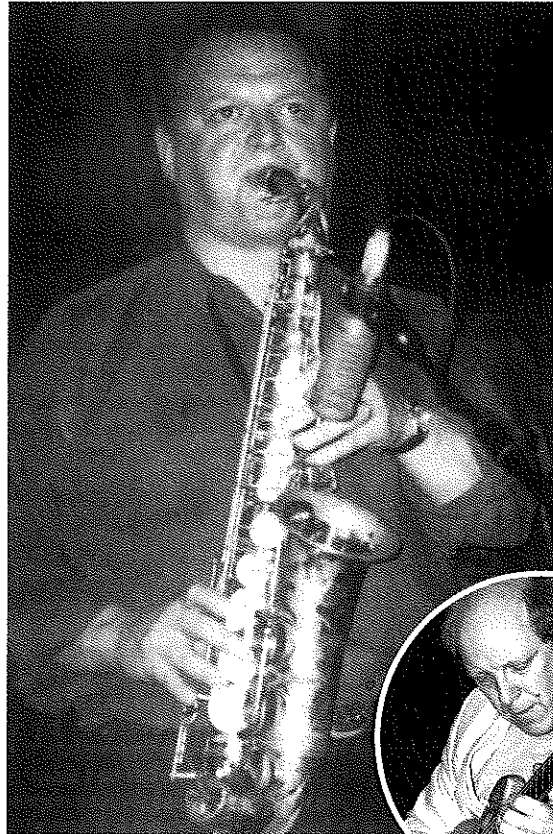
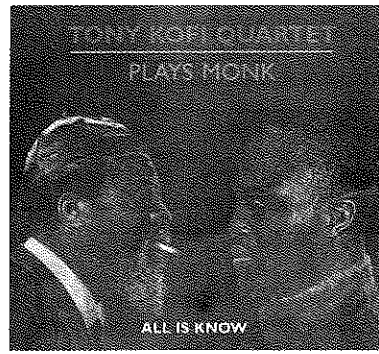
When the big labels touched jazz then (in the mid-'90s Polygram and EMI, were still making big profits, and the impact of the internet was yet to be felt) it was usually to reissue classics from their back-catalogues. They aimed across the board rather than just at the jazz market, with reissues of Ella and Miles albums backed up with £120,000 worth of TV advertising. Meanwhile, Britain's small jazz labels had to rely on reviewers to spread the word, one or two specialist radio shows, and what little advertising they could afford in the jazz press.

Today the large labels are still motivated by turnover, with the successes of jazz-inspired artists like Jamie Cullum reviving a curiosity about the idiom that has led to big record deals for singers Clare Teal and now Gwynneth Herbert. But, then as now, head honchos at the majors usually remain unfamiliar with most of the significant names in contemporary jazz. And the small labels, often run

by a tiny handful of enthusiasts or by individual musicians selling home-produced discs on gigs, still struggle against media indifference, the prohibitive cost of advertising space, and a dearth of distributors.

Paul Jolly of Luton-based 33 Records, says that recent years have seen 'a downturn in conventional sales and distribution, but an upturn in internet-based sales. The numbers of specialist shops are dwindling throughout Europe – Germany is a real case in point. But thanks to internet sales and distribution, we're now beginning to build much stronger sales bases in Japan – and the views of the critics are taken much more seriously there than in the UK too.' Jolly believes that without the Japanese factor, 33 Records would no longer be able to survive on its European trade alone.

But at South London's Proper Records (its sister company, Proper Music Distribution, is the UK's biggest independent record distributor), marketing manager Mike Bartlett reports 'something of a



Photographs: © David Sinclair.



Pictures, from top: Tony Kofi's Monk tribute brought budget-classics label Proper into riskier new-artist territory; saxophonist Alan Barnes, the Woodville label, and the place of family values; guitarist Pete Oxley and singer Tina May benefit from 33 Records' brand image, but understand DIY promotion too

renaissance.' Until recently, Proper was a very different operation to 33 Records, specialising in budget-priced reissues of classic jazz material by Count Basie or Johnny Hodges as opposed to Britain's fine but rather lower-profile contemporary performers. But Proper is branching out into something like Paul Jolly's territory now, with its new sub-label Specific Jazz and an acclaimed first CD by saxophonist Tony Kofi's Monk Liberation Front.

It's early to judge the success of the new venture, but Bartlett is encouraged by the belief that jazz record buyers behave differently. 'I would say that jazz sales have remained at a consistent level

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despite recent changes in the industry,' Bartlett says. 'The pop CD market has shrunk as people download or copy tracks, but people who buy jazz CDs seem more aware of the contribution they make to the music and musicians. I'm also optimistic about the knock-on effect of successes like Jamie Cullum's.'

Proper is big enough to have clout with the big retail stores. But for smaller companies it's a different matter. HMV and Virgin outlets are increasingly devoting floor space to diversification in their retail trade, and while a big branch in Oxford Street might make room for specialised jazz, the music is increasingly squeezed out of smaller shops in the provinces. 'They say there's too little demand' Jolly says, 'but our touring musicians are selling as many CDs out of London as in the city.' The contraction is helping Jolly's mail-order trade however, and it shows much wider countrywide sales than the big retailers would have had him believe.

With advertising costs at crippling levels for small companies, Mike Bartlett reckons 'a label should be looking at spending around £1,500 to get a new jazz record off the ground' - artists like Theo Travis and Tina May, who understand the marketing game and promote their discs on gigs, are crucial. Saxophonist Alan Barnes, who has recently established his own label, Woodville, has been known to point out his wife in the audience as 'the one in the rags' and ask the punters to buy a CD to keep a starving jazz family alive. He does, of course, play so well that nobody really makes the purchase out of charity.

Bassist Andy Cleynert, a regular with Stan Tracey, set up his label Trio Records to sell on gigs. He didn't advertise, but he took care to make sure the CD found its way to the right reviewers. Cleynert and Barnes both share any profits evenly amongst the musicians.

Paul Jolly, and Tom Bancroft of Scotland's Caber label, used to receive Arts Council subsidy for higher-risk projects, like Dick Heckstall-Smith's *Celtic Steppes* or Don Weller's big band. Supporting some of the UK's most talented jazz artists - from Iain Ballamy to 33's new sax discovery Alison Neale - those at Babel, 33 and Caber believe themselves to be part of a vital

archiving process, deserving of public funding as a significant part of the nation's cultural life.

Bancroft is also reconsidering his budgets at the end of the three-year run of funding from the Scottish Arts Council's New Directions scheme, which allowed the label to start in 1998. 'It just wouldn't be possible to do what we did now,' Bancroft says. 'The Lottery funding available has gone right down, and the funds are spread much more widely.' Bancroft acknowledges the concern of some labels and artists that subsidy might encourage waste on low-quality output, or insulation from economic reality in a bubble. But he believes a mixture of funds injected into the business - any business - is important, but that for the independents this must include state support. 'It makes huge differences to the economy of producing a CD,' Bancroft insists. 'The sector needs to argue that jazz is a high quality niche artform, and needs to be supported if it is going to happen, in the same way as classical music and opera. Without it we are pushed to produce Jamie Cullum-type recordings of standards and can't support the more interesting music being made today.'

Thanks to sophisticated computers and audio software, many artists now come to a label with a virtually finished product, needing only pressing and distribution. The lowered overheads can allow the label to spend on its brand rather than the individual recording. Jolly successfully staged a 33 Records showcase week at the Pizza Express in Dean Street this spring to mark his 100th release. Oxford guitarist Pete Oxley was one of the beneficiaries, coming to 33 Records with his latest project *Curious Paradise*, after producing his last CD alone. 'In the end, you just can't get the column inches by yourself,' Oxley says. 'The 33 brand has been the important thing for me from that point of view.'

Mike Bartlett also anticipates that all the small labels will have to look at the role of the internet and the burgeoning MP3 trade. Together with his European distributors, Paul Jolly is looking into setting up sales through i-tunes websites. Mike Bartlett says: 'In terms of artists and their self-promotion, it's a lot easier and cheaper to post up the latest recording of your band on a website than it is to press up hundreds of CDs and send them out. Likewise for us, from the point of view of scouting for new talent, the internet is a great resource. Check out the F-IRE Collective's website (www.f-ire.com),' Bartlett advises, 'for an example of how to do it right'.

HAVE THE FANS OUTGROWN THE FANZINE?

Britain's jazz community still sustains a cluster of specialist magazines, and several hybrids featuring jazz alongside other contemporary musics. They all scramble for the same small stash of advertising, and the definition of a 'jazz' magazine is getting more elusive all the time. PETER VACHER looks at jazz mags then and now.

THE BIRTH-RATE of enthusiasts' jazz publications in Britain over the years is matched only by the speed with which most of them disappear from view. And the reasons are not hard to find.

Compared to the audience for pop or rock, the potential readership for a specialised jazz magazine is small - and so are the advertising revenues they depend on from jazz record labels, promoters and musicians. Moreover, the limited circulations of some jazz magazines may not get them on to the shelves of the high-street newsagents, so it becomes hard to raise the publication's profile. Latterly the internet, and a growing eclecticism that is seeing 'all-music' publications increasingly sideline more specialised ones, have made the competition tougher. Significantly also, a jazz magazine may be the work of a single devoted enthusiast, doing everything from typesetting to ad-sales. When that individual quits or passes, their creation often goes with them.

But with radio support for jazz in the UK still partial at best, TV showing little interest and national newspapers mostly seeing jazz as low priority for space and expert commentary, the jazz magazine still plays a key role.

The oldest surviving big-player in the field is the subscription-based *Jazz Journal*, with a circulation widely believed to be near 8000. Edited by Eddie and Janet Cook, it's a publication devoted to the more traditional aspects of the music, and its loyal readers are scattered worldwide. But the stylistic high

ground in Britain is currently occupied by *Jazzwise*, the glossy, full-colour monthly co-edited by Stephen Graham and Jon Newey. *Jazzwise* deals in cutting-edge contemporary players and star names, includes plenty of fusion and some 'world' music - and like its counterparts in the States, its agenda often ties in with artists launching a new CD.

Another comparative newcomer, *Jazz Review*, (published by Direct Music in Edinburgh since 1999) has taken on the mantle of the much-missed *Jazz Monthly*, with editor Richard Cook (co-compiler of *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*) steering a well-presented, thoughtful magazine that keeps in touch with contemporary trends without overlooking the music of earlier eras.

At 4000 copies, Cook's circulation is about par for the course for a mainly counter-sales UK jazz magazine over the years. He



Above: big noises in their different worlds - trumpeter Henry 'Red' Allen with *Melody Maker* jazz supremo Max Jones. Right: the main UK jazz mags today.



One that went, and one that very definitely stayed: *Jazzbeat* is long gone, though Annie Ross swings on; *Jazz Journal* has defied the odds by surviving over half a century.

estimates that of *Jazzwise* to be similar, but contends his overheads are probably lower.

There are also smaller fry like the Birmingham-based *Jazz Rag*, and *Just Jazz*, both representing more traditional interests. And then there's *JazzUK*, a freebie in a different numbers game with a print-run of 30,000 and distribution around the country's jazz venues and outlets - but inevitably more limited pagination and production values due to its total dependence on advertising and a small *Jazz Services*' sponsorship of its listings service.

All the current magazines struggle to share a small pot of record company and gig-promoting advertising. The problem forces editors to tread a fine line between topical, sometimes PR-driven features that might attract an ad, and the more considered or timeless pieces they might sometimes prefer to run.

'There's so little advertising around these days,' *Jazz Review's* Richard Cook says. 'The pie is pretty small and things are getting tougher. You might well need to consider including something your advertisers might want to see.'

Rather than all this fragmentation, would the UK scene be better off with a single substantial jazz magazine with wide-ranging appeal, along the lines of *Jazz Times* or *Downbeat* in the States? Cook doubts it, believing that such an ambitious venture might still struggle to make only 10,000 sales, even if distribution could be improved. For comparison, *Wire* (started in the '80s by promoter Anthony Wood, now with a strong overseas subscriber list for its mix of many contemporary musics) and the more dance and club-based *Straight No Chaser*, claim circulations around 30,000. *Mojo*, the respected rock magazine with occasional blues and a little jazz

content, hits an audited 105,600 circulation. The big sales figures for publications that now make jazz only a part of a wider contemporary-music remit are perhaps indicators of the way the cultural climate is now changing.

Almost eighty years ago, the jazz and vernacular-music press was very different. Jim Godbolt's *A History of Jazz in Britain* records that *Melody Maker*, the first publication to take notice of jazz, was launched in January 1926 as 'A Monthly Magazine for All Directly or Indirectly Interested in the Production of Popular Music'.

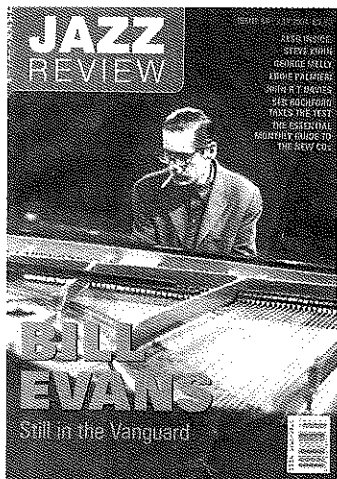
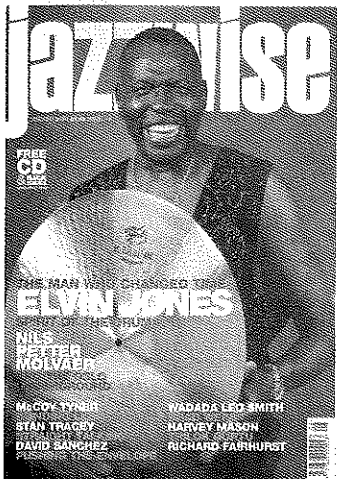
The paper became a champion for the likes of Armstrong and Ellington, and an essential read for British fans who could otherwise find little jazz information in the national press - where largely conservative and sometimes even downright racist critics usually dismissed the music as a vulgar temporary fad. Coverage in

Melody Maker was sometimes more well-intentioned than expert, but with the arrival of writer Max Jones in 1945, the paper acquired its most formidable jazz champion. Alongside his journalism, Jones even became a kind of roving ambassador for jazz in Britain, often acting as a one-man welcoming committee for visiting US stars as illustrious as Billie Holiday.

Jones finally retired in 1982, and *Melody Maker's* jazz enthusiasm, after 40-odd years of devotion, seemed to go with him - but its subsequent concentration on rock and pop did not save it from oblivion, faced with brighter, louder competition. Alongside *MM*, and expanding apace after World War Two, there had been a rash of short-lived small magazines produced by enthusiasts for enthusiasts - pocket-sized because of wartime paper shortages, and with names like *Fanfare*, *Pickup*, and *Jazz Forum*. *Jazz Music* was the best, well designed by typographer Ian Bradbery, broader in its outlook with reports from Europe and the US, and founded by Max Jones and discographer Albert McCarthy. McCarthy also edited the influential *Jazz Monthly*, including detailed discography, photo reportage, new writers and longer 'think' pieces, calling itself 'The Magazine of Intelligent Jazz Appreciation'. It eventually morphed into *Jazz and Blues* (under the scholarly Max Harrison) before closing in 1973. Longest survivor from that period is the legendary *Jazz Journal*, founded in May 1948 by *Fanfare's* Sinclair Trail, and still bearing the confident badge of 'The World's Greatest Jazz Magazine'. First funded by Decca Records, then *Billboard*, then Pitman's Periodicals, it continues under two former Pitman's staffers, Eddie and Janet Cook.

Many more fell by the wayside, and some stayed. Come and gone are *Jazz Illustrated* (1950), *Into Jazz* (1974), *The Jazz Scene* (an EMI Records venture in the 1960s), *Jazzbeat* and *Jazz News* - though the latter lasted almost six years. Traditionalist historian/discographer Laurie Wright's *Storyville* even made 162 issues, from 1965-95. Pocket publications for traditionalists like *Eureka*, *Footnote* and *New Orleans Music* (the latter still going strong under edito Doug Landau) have also played small but important roles.

The classy *Jazz FM* came up with the radio station and the 'British jazz boom' in the early '90s, edited by Tony Russell and published by *The Observer* - its final incarnation was *Jazz Magazine* under broadcaster Malcolm Laycock. *Jazz CD*, a pioneer



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of the giveaway disc, came and went after three issues, before the late jazz evangelist Jonathan Abbott stepped up to the plate with *Jazz on CD*, which also cover-mounted a CD for subscribers and lasted 15 issues. Newsletters sheltering under a venue or company umbrella have sometimes done better – like Pizza Express founder Peter Boizot's *Jazz Express*, a vehicle for his venues reinvented as the metropolitan leisure magazine *Boz*. And last but not least the durable, eccentrically witty *Jazz At Ronnie Scott's* (or *JARS*), edited by Jim Godbolt and still a house magazine for London's most famous jazz venue.

In a changing music world, is there still a place for the jazz-devoted magazine? At *Jazz Review*, Richard Cook still thinks so. 'All jazz needs is a few friends in high places and things can swing back in its favour,' he says. 'We have some good writers, and there's a lot of good jazz about. There are people out there who want some guidance. I'm optimistic.'

Don't miss Part Two of our survey of the state of jazz in Britain today - following in the November issue!

JazzUK writers, experts and insiders examine the new role of the internet, jazz on radio and TV, the role of the educators and much more!

the jazz economy PART TWO

FESTIVAL JUNCTION

It may be autumn, but plenty of festivals will still be in full swing, featuring British musicians from all over the jazz spectrum – with the London Jazz Festival, casting a much wider net, still to come in November. BRIAN BLAIN makes the summer's last roundup.

Clevedon (Avon) 12th Jazz Weekend September 3 – 5
Kicking off with the excellent Denise Lawrence Band, the festival keeps a fairly traditional profile with Crusty's All-Sorts, The Chicago Teddy Bears, Roger Bennett's Blue Notes and Richard Bennett's New Orleans Jazz Band. Tel 01275 343210 or 07778 003359 or go to www.lwe@clevedonjazzclub.co.uk

Hawick Jazz and Blues September 10-12
Otherwise known as Borders Jazz and Blues. A varied programme from Steve Waterman with Ben Presland Band, Just East of Jazz, Campbell Burnap to the Merseysippi Jazz Band and Esk Valley Stouppers, Fat Sam's Band and Nichola Farnon Quartet. Tel 01450 373 222 or check www.bfjab.co.uk

Black Bottle Islay Jazz Festival September 10 – 12
What a beautiful part of the world - and what a weekend, which includes Tommy Smith and the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra, from New York Donny McCaslin and from New Orleans Jesse Davis. Other include next wave Scots turks, Les Ecosais, Laura Macdonald, Julian Arguelles, Cathie Rae, Tam White and more. Full info 0131467 5200

25th Rotherham September 11– 15
Hasn't got the same scenic attractions as some of the others but a cracking mainstream festival nevertheless. Highlight is Alex Welsh Remembered, with Enrico Tomasso, John Barnes, Roy Williams and Jim Douglas with guests Campbell Burnap and Alan Barnes. Denise Lawrence's Band will be appearing and the Ella Fitzgerald Songbook with Barbara Jay, Tina May, Joan Viskant and Tommy Whittle's Quartet. That great local musician Dave Brennan will be on hand after 40 years in the business and,



Gwyneth Herbert - new star at Scarborough as ever, will kick-start the Festival with the Grand New Orleans Street Parade.

Scarborough September 17-19
What a line up... lots of fringe events around a great weekend with Gwyneth Herbert, Dennis Rollins, Alan Plater's *Songs for Unsung Heroes*, with the Alan Barnes All Stars, Martin Taylor, Anita Wardell and many more. The witty Barnes is comparing. Tel 01723 376774 or check www.scarboroughjazzfestival.com

Corsham (Wilts) September 17-19
NYJO, Critchinson/Themen Quartet, Bobby Wellins, Harry Beckett, Paz, John Law, The Strayhorn Project, Mark Nightingale, The New Jazz Couriers and more. Tel 01249 713607

Marsden October 8-10
Ben Crosland's Quartet, with rising star guitarist Stuart McCallum, Gilad Atzmon's Orient House, Alan Barnes Octet, Tim Garland's Electric Underground Orchestra and London Community Gospel Choir with Dennis Rollins. The standouts in a festival packed with great regional talent like Ken Marley and Al Wood and the Julie Edwards/Kevin Dearden Quartet. Tel 01484 843701 or check www.marsdenjazzfestival.com

Tyneside October 15 – 17 & 30 – 31

Those wonderful promoters Jazz North East bring something completely different to the festival calendar with a free-jazz weekend in the middle of the month with New York downtown stalwarts Alan Silva, Roy Campbell, and Assif Tsahar and British leading figures like Evan Parker, John Edwards, Pat Thomas and others. Their mainstream festival, at the end of the month, includes Alan Plater's *Songs for Unsung Heroes* with Alan Barnes's Octet, Lewis Watson with Don Weller and Paul Booth. Programmes from JNE, 19 Tynemouth Road, Walsend, NE28 0RA or email info@jazznortheast.co.uk



Evan Parker joins Tyneside Festival's free-jazz weekend

the jazz economy

PART TWO

Photograph by Alan Spencer



WHAT THE NEW OMNIVORES NEED FROM JAZZ

It's not just the jazz audience that's changing, it's the audience for creative activities of all kinds. Recent research indicates that the old pecking-orders of artistic quality are fading into history, and a new audience of 'omnivores' are willing to try anything. PETE MARTIN examines the implications for jazz.

FIRST THE GOOD NEWS.

Paul DiMaggio of Princeton University recently wrote that in the USA jazz has 'undergone an institutional transformation into a form of high culture'. Over the last 20 years or so, the music has been 'annexed by university music departments, highbrow critics, private foundations, government grantmakers and nonprofit music presenters'. In the same period audiences have increased significantly, with the number of Americans reporting attendance at jazz events up 14% between 1982 and 2002.

Of course, there's a downside. DiMaggio's American survey data also show that rates of participation in most cultural activities - from going to ballet to visiting a historic site - were either static or in decline, with the fall-off greatest among the younger age groups. Classical music concerts, ballet, and musical theatre were particularly badly hit, with declines of 12%, 7% and 10% in the same period. This is what's responsible for the phenomenon known as the 'greying' of audiences for music. As older people become 'non-attenders' (to put it politely), they are not being replaced by younger ones.

So will jazz, having finally achieved 'high culture' status, find that its only reward is to be dragged down again as arts audiences dwindle away? Well, only time will tell, and the data available at present is thin and patchy. However, and here we return to a more optimistic note, there are reasons for jazz people to feel more confident about the future than these figures might indicate. But to consider the reasons why, it's important to look at the bigger picture.

Until recently, the most solid survey of the jazz audience in America was carried out by Scott DeVeaux - who found, on the basis of data from the 1980s, that more than a third of Americans (63 million people) expressed a liking for jazz, while 5% (9.5 million) liked jazz 'best of all' musical styles.

Both these figures were considerably higher

than a decade earlier. Compared with the general population, members of the jazz audience tended to be better educated, have higher incomes, as well as being younger, predominantly male, and including more African-Americans. It's also notable that the number of people who said they had attended a jazz event in the past year was, at around 10%, almost a high as the figure for classical music (12.5%), and much higher than for opera (3.3%), ballet (4.7%) and 'other dance' (7.1%). DiMaggio's updating of the US data suggests that, since the 1980s, jazz has gone on to improve its position.

How much do these interesting figures tell us much about the British situation? Here, recent evidence comes from the Arts Council of England's survey of attendances, published in 2000. Though not directly comparable with the American studies, the UK information at least gives us an order of preferences: 6.2% of a national sample reported attending a jazz event in the past year, compared to 11.9% for classical music, 6.6% for both opera and ballet, and 4.4% for contemporary dance.

What these figures suggest is that jazz still gets a raw deal from arts funders in the UK. The ACE's own data show that the jazz audience is about the same size as that for opera, and bigger than that for dance and ballet. Similarly, it would seem that coverage of jazz in the 'serious' press seriously underestimates the actual level of interest, and that arts and features editors may be out of touch with the very people they're trying to attract. Data reviewed by Bonita Kolb of Long Island University in 2001 showed both the substantial decline of the classical music audience the USA and the UK, and the 'greying' effect. In considering this loss of younger people from the 'classical' audience, Professor Kolb emphasised two factors - the increasing ethnic diversity of city populations, and the growing 'cultural irrelevancy' of formal concerts in the European tradition.

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The figures show that people from non-European cultural backgrounds (even those that are relatively well-educated and affluent) tend not to attend these formal concerts; what's more, younger people from all backgrounds seem similarly alienated by them, as shown by research for the London Arts Board in the 1990s.

So how is all this to be explained, and what are the implications for jazz? One of the most influential explanations comes from sociologist Richard Peterson ('Pete' as he's known in the trade) of Vanderbilt University, who believes that what we are seeing is a change from a time when there was a single accepted hierarchy of cultural prestige - with classical music and opera at the top - to a situation where a wide range of art forms and cultural activities are now seen as equally valuable.

In Professor Peterson's blunt terms, in the past people who valued high culture were 'snobs' who saw other modes of expression (like jazz) as inferior. More people are now 'omnivores' who are attracted by all sorts of experiences, and value a wide range of cultural forms and styles. Peterson's theory is contentious, but it does explain the decline of traditional art forms, and the simultaneous increasing interest in such forms as the visual arts - and jazz, as a non-European style of music. These, it has been suggested, are much more appealing in a post-modern era which values multiculturalism and an openness to a range of experiences.

If this is right, we can conclude that the jazz audience is likely to continue its steady growth. However, we should be wary of presenting it in traditional concerts. If what today's audiences - and especially their younger members - value is informality, then there is a great opportunity to think creatively about ways of presenting a music which has always flourished when both players and listeners feel relaxed. Yet at the same time, both groups are sharing a sense of shared involvement in the creation of great music.

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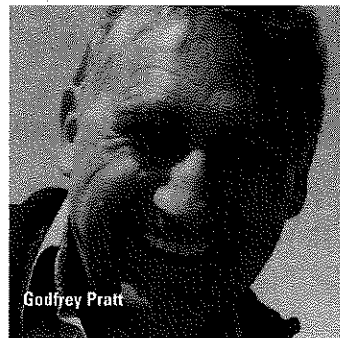
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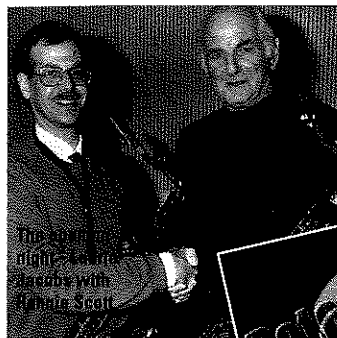
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SO YOU THINK YOU COULD RUN A JAZZ CLUB?



Godfrey Pratt



Laurie Jacobs with another person

'RUNNING A JAZZ CLUB' - No.53 in the series 'Work Hard, Have Fun, Make No Money'. The same axiom applies to No. 52 in the same series: 'Becoming A Jazz Musician'. Or so says Peterborough Jazz Club's GODFREY PRATT

It's a hard life running a jazz club. No, really, it is. Well, OK, you get to hear lots of great music, and you get sent loads of demo CDs, some of which are so good they can keep you sidetracked for hours. You can even blag your way into other clubs - not so easy at Frith Street, although a few intrepid adventurers have been known to manage it. And lots of very nice people want to talk to you, which is also usually great. Except for the ones who want you to realise they know far more about obscure 1930s big band sidemen than you ever will - or will ever want to.

But the hard part comes when everyone has gone home. You've paid the band, packed up all the kit, the PA, the CD stall, the flyers for other people's events and finished someone's bottle of wine. You sit down to cash up and find that, by the time you've paid for the room, what's left in the tin is less than you drew out of the bank that morning for the float.

It's not always like that these days, fortunately. But it was when Peterborough Jazz Club founder Laurie Jacobs invited a few of the regular attenders at the venue - Joe Dobson, David Moll and me - to get involved. That's when we realised what a hero he'd been, running the club as a solo act for eight years and putting his hand in his own pocket when there wasn't enough in the tin. And that's when we resolved that between us we would build a club that paid its way.

That first committee meeting went

on for ages, mostly because we spent hours talking about jazz, the way you do when jazzers get together. But before we all toddled off home (and before we even touched on obscure 1930s big band sidemen) we had figured out that we had to work harder at covering our costs.

Indeed, a shocking truth had dawned. We had to run the club as a business. We needed to talk the talk, the business-talk. So first we needed the right product. Laurie had set the club's musical benchmark from Day One by booking the Ronnie Scott Sextet for the opening concert. We all agreed that Quality had to be the club's mantra: top quality across all the genres of the modern jazz idiom. We figured that more folk would pay good money to hear top bands - for us it seemed a better bet than the alternative of fewer folk paying less money to hear 'hopefuls'.

So that was the product sorted. But it's no good building the best if you don't tell anyone you're selling it, so we started to do the unthinkable: we started promoting ourselves. Laurie wrote to everyone on the mailing list, we launched our website, sent out press releases and wooed our audience. We tried things that worked and a few that didn't. These are some of the things that worked:

- Allocate tasks. In our case it was David for the website, Joe for equipment and setting up, myself for commercial issues and Laurie for bookings and PR.
- Establish a clear vision of the kind of music you want your club to be known for.
- Book the best bands you can get
- Inform your audience with user-friendly programme notes and regular



mailings.

- Launch a Patrons scheme (we already had a membership scheme).
- Give added-value: we send our members a free copy of JazzUK!

- Don't let up on sending out press releases.
- Get sponsorship wherever you can.



- Produce club CDs - we

got excellent local and national coverage with ours.

- Involve local musicians.
- Introduce members' nights with special deals for club members who bring friends.
- Don't undercharge: it only undervalues the music.
- Try new things and don't stop working at improving your act.

We also incorporated the club as a registered charity which gives a greater air of respectability in our dealings with the outside (of jazz) world.

There are still nights when not enough people turn up. But fortunately there are now fewer nights when the cash tin doesn't cover the float, and over the years we've even been able to build up a small reserve at the bank. Laurie tells us we're saving up so one day he can book Michael Brecker. Laurie's still the gunvor round here, so anything's possible.

Meanwhile life at the club goes on. One promising new initiative was to start each season with a gig by one of the local big bands. We put these on with a low ticket price and we always pull in a good crowd made up of our regulars plus all the friends and relations of the guys in the band. The last one of these was just a few weeks ago and was attended by the hotel proprietor where the club holds its concerts. He could see the place was heaving, so it was probably no coincidence that the following week Laurie was told the room hire charge would be going up!

Like I said, it's a hard life running a jazz club.

Check out Peterborough Jazz Club at www.peterboroughjazzclub.co.uk, or call 07761 726343.

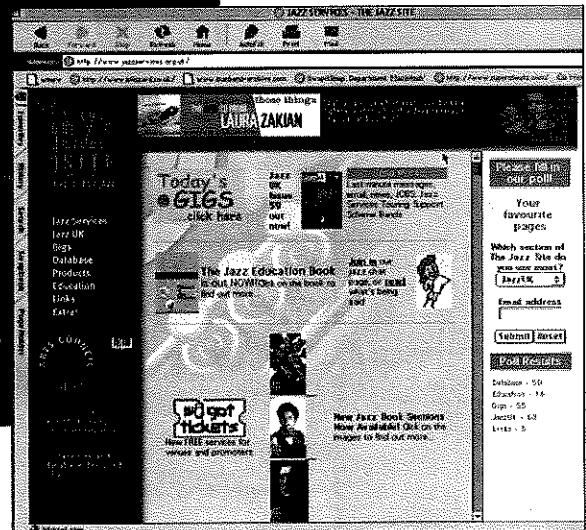
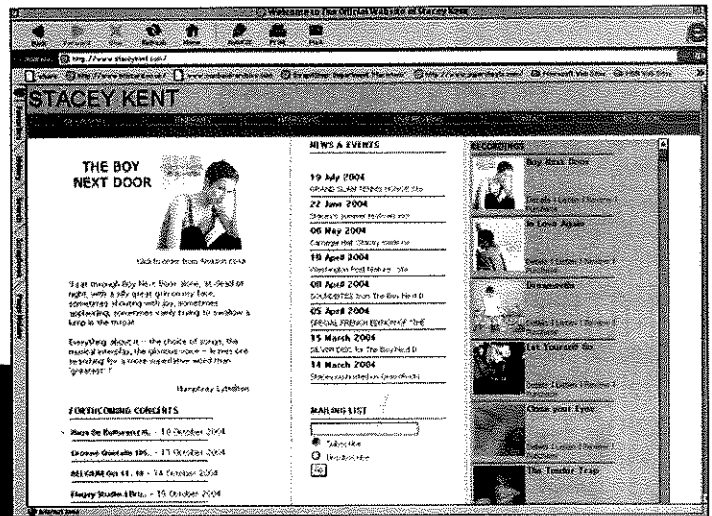
SECRETS OF ONLINE SWING

thejazz
economy
PART TWO

Ten years ago, hardly any jazz musicians or venues had websites, and snail mail and the phone furnished all the connections. Today, the expectation is growing that information should be reachable at the click of a button. **EMMA KENDON** looks at the influence the internet is having on the jazz economy.



Stacey Kent - using the new media to the full



STACEY KENT's sophisticated website, up and running since 1997, has a wonderful quote from Humphrey Lyttleton right at the top - and information on all of her CD releases, with thumbnail pictures each linked to background info, sound clips, reviews, where to buy, regularly updated news items, forthcoming concerts and an invitation to join her mailing-list.

It's a superb example of a jazz musician reaping benefits directly from the information technology revolution of the past decade. The feel of the site complements Kent's classy, romantic style, and it's so well organised that straight from the homepage the fan - and for that matter the journalist and promoter, can find what he or she wants at once. Running across the top is a menu offering a biography, itinerary, interviews, live reviews, contact details and access to the guest book.

Stacey Kent says: 'I can't tell you specifically how it has affected CD

sales but I can tell you generally that it has made an enormous difference. Let me give you a perfect example.

'In 1998, a very popular news and arts TV show in the USA called *CBS Sunday Morning*, aired a 12-minute piece on me. I was just at the beginning of my career and Candid Records had almost no distribution in the USA. Up until I came along, Candid's catalogue was full of jazz classics, such as Charles Mingus and Booker Little CDs, so they had a hard time getting any new CDs on to the US market.

'However, after *CBS Sunday Morning*, which is nationally broadcast, there was a very big demand for my albums. Up until then, nobody could find my CDs in the USA shops, but thankfully, on account of the internet and people being so resourceful, new fans went surfing in search of information on the internet. They came across my website and across amazon.com, because we had no store distribution but were being

sold on amazon. My current CD at the time was *The Tender Trap*. After that TV show, it sold over 10,000 copies on amazon.com in one weekend alone. We hit number 2 on the USA Billboard Charts the following week. After that, Candid was able to get a distribution deal and things have been radically different for me and for Candid in the USA ever since.

'Without my site or amazon's, that never could have happened. Being on a minor label, where publicity resources are not abundant, we discovered that the internet made an absolutely crucial difference.'

This is by no means the only kind of feedback Stacey Kent has had through the internet - there has been an immense amount directly from fans. Kent waxes lyrical about the emails she receives in the late evening after a gig when punters have rushed home and gone online

immediately to tell her how much they enjoyed the show.

Even if you don't yet have your own website, it's vital for musicians to be aware that many audience members now rely at least partially on websites offering listings for gigs in their area, and some are also subscribers to local email bulletins giving listings.

In the Brighton area, pianist Terry Seabrook of Cubana Bop religiously maintains a weekly email bulletin covering as an area as far afield as Worthing, Hastings, Haywards Heath and Eastbourne as well as Brighton. Users of these bulletins may not bother looking in printed listings in their local papers any more. Bands now have to familiarise themselves with such online services in their area, and make sure they send the info to people like Seabrook.

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As the market diffuses and expands, these developments are inevitably going to involve a downside as well as an upside for musicians. Players and promoters alike now have to find time to produce online information in an appropriate format. If the technological revolution had swept away all that had gone before it, this might not present a problem in terms of time-management. But jazz musicians who may never have been raised with the ubiquity of the internet now have to get to grips with the learning curve it involves - but at the same time continue to be producing traditional marketing in terms of printed fliers, posters and brochures. With the internet, however, you do have a far greater chance of reaching your target audience. And email, once you get the hang of attachments and scanning flattering pictures of yourself to display to the world, generally does make distributing biogs, press releases and images much faster.

Alison Byard, Sales and Marketing Manager for the Cheltenham Festivals, is at the beginning of a fearsome audience development project, revamping the Festivals' website. 'The current site was put together about three years ago,' Byard reports, 'and it's and is pretty basic. I think the internet revolution simply hasn't reached the arts.' The new site, expected to be up and running by the end of January, will cost an initial outlay sum of approximately £30,000, with help from the Jerwood Foundation (who are keen on audience development) and from the local council, who are under pressure to harness new technologies and the opportunities offered by digital media.

The expansion will give Byard the chance to offer music clips online, and recommendations for people booking one event to consider booking something else that might appeal to them. Online bookings will be possible on the new site. This will relieve the pressure on her hard-working box office staff, but will have the added invaluable benefit of capturing more data on their audience, which in turn will help the festival organisers with their future programming and marketing.

'We'll be able to offer much more appropriate means of communicating with our customers, whose feedback has included requests for on-line diaries and PDFs of the brochure which they can look at on their computer or print off for themselves.' As for the bookings, it may come as a surprise how many people prefer to book tickets online, in spite of perceived concern about the security of our bank details. Speaking to the

Edinburgh Festival Fringe, who updated their website to harness current technologies, Alison Byard discovered that they had processed 25% of their bookings through the website in the first year, and 44% in the second year.

'£30k!' you cry. The Cheltenham Festivals currently spend about that sum on printing their brochures and then have to cover the cost of postage on top of it. Those audience members savvy with the internet, whose numbers are growing in the jazz market, will save the Festivals money in the long run. For those who still want the physical brochure, either in print or as a PDF, the print and website will work together, driving traffic to and from one another. There will also be a CD to tempt audiences to try something new.

As Stacey Kent says, the internet users out there are so resourceful, it makes sense to put some of your own energy into getting to grips with it. The opportunities for a non-commercial and idiosyncratic artform like jazz are immense.

**Don't miss
Part Three of our
survey of the
state of jazz in
Britain today -
following in the
January 2005
issue!**

**JazzUK writers,
and experts from
all over the
scene, look at
jazz on radio and
TV, the role of
the educators
and much more!**

**the jazz
economy
PART THREE**

AIRWAVES

BBC RADIO 3

90-93 FM

JAZZ ON 3

FRIDAY NIGHTS 23.30-01.00, BBC Radio 3, presented by Jez Nelson

NOV 5

Dave Green Trio (Iain Dixon and Gene Calderazzo) with special guest Evan Parker, plus CD Roundup

NOV 12

Specially extended live broadcast to launch the London Jazz Festival - 22.15-01.00, from Pizza Express in Soho - featured festival artists include Jason Lindner Quartet and Ravi Coltrane.

NOV 19

Carla Bley & Gilad Atzmon DOUBLE BILL (recorded earlier that evening at the London Jazz Festival)

NOV 26

'A Day at the Festival' - including: Jack DeJohnette, John Scofield, Larry Goldings, tribute to Tony Williams

DEC 3

BEST CDS OF 2004 - round table discussion

DEC 10

Sam Rivers Big Band (LJF)

DEC 17

Cecil Taylor with Bill Dixon and Tony Oxley (LJF)

DEC 24

Anthony Braxton (LJF)

DEC 31

New Year's Eve Special!

JAZZ LEGENDS

4PM FRIDAYS BBC RADIO 3

NOV 5

MAL WALDRON - Alyn Sipton on the great piano accompanist for Abbey Lincoln and Billie Holiday.

JAZZ LINE-UP

4PM SATURDAYS BBC RADIO 3

NOV 6

Stacey Kent previews the London Jazz Festival.

NOV 12

DAVE BRUBECK-Julian Joseph interviews the master composer about his memories during World War 2, and tracks from his collection of war time tunes *Private Brubeck Remembers*.

NOV 13

The first of three broadcasts from the London Jazz Festival. Julian Joseph introduces saxophonist Freddie Ljunquist, plus Damon Brown and Doug Raney.

NOV 19

LONDON JAZZ FESTIVAL SPECIAL - presented by Julian Joseph - John Rae and his Magic.

NOV 26

SHIRLEY HORN presented by Stacey Kent

NOV 27

Featuring the BBC Big Band conducted by Lennie Neihaus and introduced by Julian Joseph.

DEC 3

JOHNNY MANDEL presented by Stacey Kent

DEC 4

Stacey Kent and a roundup of new CD for the Christmas buyer - plus Alyn Sipton on his book *A Handful of Keys*

DEC 11

Martin Speake, recorded exclusively at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden.

DEC 18

The Christmas Round Table. With Claire Martin, Jamie Cullum, Martin Taylor
(No Transmission on Christmas Day)

BBC RADIO 4

NOV 23

13:30 *A Love Supreme* Celebrating the 40th anniversary of John Coltrane's legendary album. Jez Nelson looks at how this classic grew to prominence and captured a mainstream audience. Contributors include McCoy Tyner, Elvin Jones, Alice Coltrane, Ashley Kahn, Steve Reich, Reverend Franco King, Evan Parker and voices of the fans.

BBC RADIO 2

DEC 7, 14, 21, 28

9.30-10.00pm. Radio 2

A Love Supreme - John Coltrane's Jazz Revolution

More celebrations of that landmark album from a variety of fans and witnesses.

COURTNEY PINE'S JAZZ CRUSADE

DEC 6, 13, 20, 27

JAN 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Courtney Pine returns to Radio 2 to present the seventh series of his *Jazz Crusade*, featuring the best of contemporary Jazz.

The new series involves nine programmes, featuring interviews and music from established and upcoming artists. Pine plays the cream of new jazz releases, classic tracks from the back catalogue and meets musicians with a passion for jazz in all its forms - either as players themselves or fans of the genre. Guests from the last series included Deborah Harry, Paul Weller, Chick Corea, Amy Winehouse and Harvey Mason.

CHANNEL FOUR TV

NOV 13

19.00-20.30

It's A Jazz Thing

Presented by Branford Marsalis Prime time slot for saxophonist Marsalis in collaboration with Jazz on 3 producers Somethin' Else, filmed in the US and Europe and dealing with the immense variety of the music today.

RADIO AND TV JAZZ - STILL THE POOR RELATION?

The BBC opened the door to jazz - though as 'light entertainment' - 60 years ago. But, despite a raised profile in the 1990s, and Radio 3's backing for the London Jazz Festival, the music still struggles for 5% of airtime - and ostensibly jazz-dedicated station JazzFM finds much of the music incompatible with its bottom line. But as the pioneering BBC4 mega-documentary *Jazz Britannia* approaches, BRIAN BLAIN and JOHN FORDHAM ask the programme planners if this troubled relationship could possibly be on the mend at last.

FOR DECADES, JAZZ LOVERS have believed that the BBC gives the music a raw deal.

It's a legacy of the founding influence of patrician Director General Lord Reith's hostility to the Americanisation of mass culture. But Reith's ideas dealt with a pre-war and immediately post-war world that is now over half a century distant. Is a Reith-shaped assessment of the proper role of jazz in British culture a fair reflection of the situation in broadcasting today? Is Jazz FM really a lost cause? Talking to some of the movers and shakers directly involved in music radio and television today presents a very different picture. Unexpectedly, perhaps, we found the mood to be decidedly upbeat.

It has to be said at the start that the past was not always bad news. The extraordinary Humphrey Lyttelton has been broadcasting on jazz for close on 40 years; *Jazz Record Requests* has been on Radio 3 (formerly the BBC's culture-station, the Third Programme) for 50. Enthusiastic and informed presenters like the late Peter Clayton and Charles Fox served jazz superbly, and were looked on with real affection. For many years a long procession of bands, in all styles, made their way to the BBC's Maida Vale studios to record jazz, often in a near-gig setting in front of enthusiastic audiences.

Yet somehow it all seemed like a drop in a bucket. If you went across the channel on holiday, you could stumble on Oscar Peterson, Miles Davis, Lester Young or the Ellington sidemen, on radio at all kinds of daylight hours on France Musique, a station that oozes precisely the elitism that was leading the BBC to keep jazz severely rationed. Jazz on radio seemed normal there. From the early 1970s onwards, the newer generation of UK musicians like John Surman, Mike Westbrook, Ian Carr, John Marshall and Jon Hiseman would speak of visits to European radio stations where the climate of artistic adventure backed by serious financial commitment seemed like activity on another planet. The frustration led to an unprecedented meeting in the 1960s, organised by the Musicians Union, between a group of musicians including Ian Carr, Gordon Beck and Sandy Brown, with the then Head of the Third Programme, Howard Newby. The jazz musicians pressed Newby for more space on the network, for what the Gilles Peterson *Impressed* generation would now deem cutting-edge music. They left empty-handed.

It would be hard to look at the situation today and deny a change in atmosphere for the better, although it has probably

become increasingly difficult for all those excellent - though possibly not cutting-edge - UK musicians who do not fall into the experimental and eclectic *Jazz on 3* remit to get broadcasting space if they aren't members of the BBC Big Band. But on Radio 2 you can still hear Humphrey Lyttelton, one of the finest broadcasters on any network, and in recent years

Roger Wright took over the station six years ago. Though he faced some tough opposition from the classical music lobby (and still does, from such quarters as *Independent on Sunday* critic Nicholas Lezard), Wright set out to broaden Radio 3's music brief, responding to changes in audience tastes by backing eclectic all-music shows like

Andy Kershaw's and *Late Junction*, endorsing the radicalism of *Jazz on 3*, and driving through the station's high-profile support for the London Jazz Festival. Like Dave Barber at Radio 2, Wright puts the proportion of

jazz programming on his station at a pretty modest five percent. 'But it's very important to remember', Wright says, 'that you can't talk about Radio 3 without dealing with the totality of it. You have to think about speech, drama, world-music, classical music, opera, jazz, only then are you actually talking about Radio 3. It's worth noting that Gillian Reynolds recently gave a number of good reasons in the *Daily Telegraph* why jazz should have an important place on Radio 3, and that she regarded the main one as simply being that it's good music. That's our guiding principle, whatever the genre.'

Wright agrees that the

is now more personality-based and less scholarly or erudite. Geoff Smith or Alan Shypton are steeped in the tradition and thoroughly professional, but perhaps presenters today are expected to wear their erudition a little more lightly. The important thing is that these people are great broadcasters who have an enthusiasm they want to share with an audience, they want to share their passions.'

Wright's willingness to ally himself with Radio 2 in the presentation of the BBC's British Jazz Awards is further evidence of the station's willingness to descend from the eyrie from which it used to judge everything that wasn't classical music. At Somethin' Else Productions, Jez Nelson (presenter of Friday night's *Jazz on 3* and a former *JazzFM* DJ) says he feels more comfortable under the Radio 3 umbrella than he ever has. Nelson believes that a developing trend for listeners to stream jazz radio programmes from the internet up to a week after they were originally broadcast is going to result in a crucial improvement in the music's troubled relationship with broadcasters. 'We know that last October, for instance, there were 20,000 people listening to *Jazz on 3* online. As a proportion of the on-air figure, these listen-again figures are strong by the general standards of the business. And this is an international audience. There aren't many places around the world where you can hear the kinds of things we do on the show, and we get a lot of emails from the States - I don't think

anybody's recording free-music for radio out there, as far as I can tell. Radio 3 has a fantastic history of recording jazz of all kinds. But a big step forward for *Jazz on 3* is that we were asked to run concerts virtually in their entirety. This is very rare for jazz, and it's something jazz fans certainly want. It's not a substitute for the studio recordings that used to be done more often, perhaps, but times have changed. The BBC is certainly there to be a patron of



Claire Martin - rise of the performing presenter.

another fine musician-turned-broadcaster representing a different jazz constituency, Courtney Pine. As well as his regular *Jazz Crusade* slot on the station, Pine has also presented a multi-part documentary on John Coltrane, hardly a mainstream easy option. Other Radio 2 shows have been fronted by Branford Marsalis at the contemporary end, and George Melly, enthusing about Bessie Smith, at the more traditional.

Radio 2's jazz output, however, could be seen as still falling within a remit that goes all the way back to its predecessor the Light Programme - accessible music performed by expert enthusiasts, with the repertoire currently being revitalised by the success of what Radio 2 Head of Specialist Music Dave Barber calls 'the return of the



proportion of jazz airtime is still hardly generous, but the profile of the music and the regularity of its appearance has seen a change. 'Jazz is now in some daytime slots, and that's a difference - notably the 'jazz zone' on Saturday afternoons. There's also been a shift to presenters who are out there working in the field, like Ian Shaw, Claire Martin, Stacey Kent. They've all helped to talk the music up, both in terms of broadcasting and within the organisation. But I don't accept the criticism that jazz presentation



Jazz on 3's Jez Nelson and [Jazz] Radio 3 boss Roger Wright



British music, but it's not there just to promote every musician's feeling of entitlement to their yearly session.'

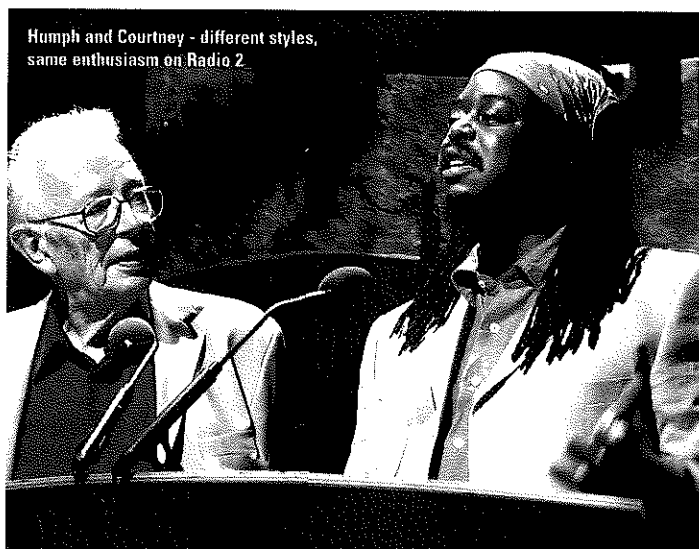
Jazz on 3 does run a dozen special studio sessions a year, however, and Nelson thinks that probably only five out of the 50-odd they've done have not featured British artists, with around 40% of all the *Jazz on 3* output over the years featuring musicians from the UK.

Radio 2, the BBC's most listened-to station, has the

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popular songbook. The new UK generation that includes Jamie Cullum, Clare Teal, Gwyneth Herbert and Stacey Kent has made a significant impact on our daytime programming.' But it is on Radio 3 that the most noticeable programming changes have come, since the musically liberal



Humph and Courtney - different styles, same enthusiasm on Radio 2

Photos: © David Sinclair

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longest-standing links with jazz, but in more recent times there has been a more confident and upbeat approach to the music, possibly helped by its mature, rock-oriented audience reaching a time of life at which it's prepared to try other things that also have their roots in African-American idioms and the blues.

In this context, Radio 2's Dave Barber points to the success of *Big Band Special*. 'We're very proud of that,' Barber says. 'When that red light comes on and a 20-piece band kicks in, there's nothing quite like it, and it reaches out to all kinds of audiences. Jools Holland offers a broader palette on the station, but jazz has an important place within his show too. And of course there's Parky and Russell Davies, both of whom have a big interest in jazz.'

'It's been a very significant decision for jazz, I think, to have brought Helen Mayhew to the station from JazzFM. This is a three-hour show going out in the early hours of Sunday, but we're already getting very positive feedback about it, particularly considering the time of night. We replaced a mainstream pop and rock show with Helen's, so perhaps that's an indication of an important change. You can also listen to it any time for the next seven days after broadcast via the website, and that's an important change too.'

The November 2004 decision of Ofcom, the regulatory body for radio, let JazzFM off the hook on its obligations to play jazz in the daytime. The decision was greeted with dismay by many, including Jazz Services Chair Ivor Widdison - who immediately fired off a blast of objections to the watchdogs, which were greeted by the inevitable bland response. The Guardian Media Group, owners of JazzFM, had promised consultations with 'the jazz community' about the station's objectives, and a few had indeed occurred. But the discussions seem to have made little difference to decisions about the once jazz-devoted station's purpose in life.

Most serious jazz listeners gave up on JazzFM a long time ago, but a fair appraisal of the station's output does reveal that not playing jazz during the daytime is a policy not so different from that operated by the supposedly more respectable BBC, with its independence from the grubby business of selling advertising to survive. When you add up JazzFM's jazz-dedicated broadcasting in the evenings - Sarah Ward's three hours a night, Mike Chadwick's six-hour *Cutting Edge* slots at the weekends,

Campbell Burnap's *Mainstem* (two hours), the total is a lot more presentable in comparison with Radios 2 and 3 combined than any of the station's detractors might assume.

This February sees a landmark in jazz television broadcasting as far as the British scene is concerned - a three-part, thoroughly-researched (*Impressed* guru Tony Higgins was on the team) documentary series on BBC4 called *Jazz Britannia*, examining the history of jazz development in Britain since the end of World War Two. Though the series isn't showing on a terrestrial channel, it's going to be flagged enthusiastically on BBC1 and 2 (and may well transfer to the latter, as John Akomfrah's Stan Tracey documentary did last year), and a weekend of concerts at the Barbican in February is set to help it on its way. Does this mean a real change to jazz's place on our TV screens?

At Somethin' Else, Jez Nelson isn't convinced. Though his company made the eclectic Branford Marsalis-fronted documentary *It's A JazzThing* for Channel 4 last year, he isn't convinced it's the start of a trend. 'The bottom line, unfortunately, is that music on TV just doesn't rate,' Nelson says, 'and we're living in a world that's ratings-obsessed. But BBC4 is now right there where Channel 4 was when it started, and that's a promising sign. Mark Cooper at the BBC loves music of all kinds, and he's commissioned a lot of jazz programming. And there are rumours that Greg Dyke's successor Mark Thompson wants to give music a more central place on the BBC.'

That's a hope that fuels the work of Mark Cooper, head of Music and Entertainment at BBC TV. 'Music programmes certainly don't get ratings like *I'm A Celebrity*, *Get Me Out of Here*,' Cooper says. 'But they have a passionate audience, and that's something that, in a diversifying broadcasting world, is increasingly important. Nobody's mentioned music as seriously at Mark Thompson's level in the hierarchy for years. Jazz has very little profile on BBC TV at the moment - the odd show, from Brecon or the London Jazz Festival. And BBC4 is a small channel with a small budget, but it's having an impact. Talent shows rate higher than any music programming on TV - we'd rather watch people mimicking gifted artists in the hope of success than watch the real thing. But hoping that can change is the point I start from. My real hope is that *Jazz Britannia* will be a landmark.'

AIRWAVES

BBC RADIO 3

90-93 FM

JAZZ ON 3

FRIDAY NIGHTS 23.30-01.00, BBC Radio 3, presented by Jez Nelson

JAN 7 Best of Sessions 04

JAN 14 Gilad Atzmon and the Orient House Ensemble, recorded at the Queen Elizabeth Hall during the 2004 London Jazz Festival.

JAN 21 Joel Harrison with featured saxophone soloist Dave Binney recorded at the Spitz in London, playing music in singer/guitarist's *Free Country* vein, and material from a forthcoming George Harrison tribute.

Critic Brian Priestley also presents a landmark feature on the classic 1965 *ESP* album by Miles Davis.

JAN 28 Brad Mehldau solo piano, the first of two memorable nights playing without amplification at the Wigmore Hall in the London Jazz Festival.

FEB 4 Session tbc, but possibly the Brotherhood of Breath revisited from the last night of the London Jazz Festival, plus CD roundup.

FEB 11 Charlie Hunter, Bobby Previte, DJ Logic recorded at Birmingham's CBSO Centre.

FEB 18 Huw Warren and Peter Herbert - the Welsh pianist/accordionist and the American virtuoso violinist, recorded at the Freestage during the London Jazz Festival. Warren starts his *100 Things...* quartet tour with Mark Feldman tour on February 20.

FEB 25 Ganelin Trio recorded at the LJF. Plus feature on the Ganelin story - how jazz in the former Soviet Union broke on to the world stage with the fearless Ganelin group in the 1980s.

JAZZ LEGENDS

4PM FRIDAYS BBC RADIO 3

JAZZ LINE-UP

4PM SATURDAYS BBC RADIO 3

BBC RADIO 2

COURTNEY PINE'S JAZZ CRUSADE

JAN 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Courtney Pine returns to Radio 2 to present the seventh series of his *Jazz Crusade*, featuring the best of contemporary Jazz.

The new series involves nine programmes, featuring interviews and music from established and upcoming artists. Pine plays the cream of new jazz releases, classic tracks from the back catalogue and meets musicians with a passion for jazz in all its forms - either as players themselves or fans of the genre. Guests from the last series included Deborah Harry, Paul Weller, Chick Corea, Amy Winehouse and Harvey Mason.

BBC 4 TV

JAZZ BRITANNIA

JAN 28, FEB 4, FEB 11

A landmark in jazz broadcasting on British television, the *Jazz Britannia* three-parter, each film an hour apiece, looks at the history of jazz in Britain from the the postwar trad boom of the late 1940s (pioneering bandleader George Webb is one of the first interviewees in programme one) through to the emergence of Jamie Cullum, Soweto Kinch and Amy Winehouse in the 21st century.

It's a big story to tell in three hours, and plenty of jazzers will inevitably grumble that something they care passionately about has been left out. It might also be argued that Programme Two, concentrating on the 1960s, has veered too much toward the televisual appeal of Hendrix and Cream. But groundbreaking British composer/players of the first wave of British jazz independence - like Stan Tracey, Garrick/Rendell and Joe Harriott get their due - and so does the free-jazz scene of John Stevens and Trevor Watts. Too tight and too low-budget to be perfect, but a major leap forward.



Ganelin Trio on Radio 3