SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

COOL'R
"Cool'r" (Ode)

The five-man band from Portland, Oregon known as Cool'r have their first album out on the reactivated Ode label.

Bassist Nate Phillips and guitarist Doug Lewis formed the band in 1982. Nate and Doug were former members of Pleasure, the group that hit the charts in the late 70's with such funk hits as "Glide."

After lead singer Andy Stokes had joined Cool'r, the band worked regularly around the Portland area and made an EP, "Let's Talk About It," released locally in 1986.

Lou Adler, who had produced Carole King's classic "Tapestry" album in the 70's (and who hasn't been in the studio for almost a decade), produced this debut LP for Cool'r.

I was disappointed with what I heard on this disc. "Victim" and "Boyfriend/Girlfriend" are forgettable standard-issue dance songs. There are a few worthy moments here, such as on "Kinky Lady" and "If It Were Me," but too much of the album is marred by stale songwriting and unexciting performances.

Other cuts: "Love Me All My Life," "Here's To You," "Dangerous," "If It Were Me."

OAKTOWN'S 3.5.7
"Wild And Loose" (Capitol)

Oaktown's 3.5.7 is a wild and loose female rap quartet from Oakland, California. Their debut album was produced by M.C. Hammer, whose singles "Ring 'Em" and "Let's Get It Started" were regional hits on his own Bustin' Records label.

I predict strong competition for Salt-N-Pepa from these ladies. And with fun tracks like "We Like It," I may never play J.J. Fad's "Supersonic" again.

XTC
"Oranges And Lemons" (Geffen)

This may be XTC's year. The year they get their first top-40 pop hit. And why not? Their long-awaited new Geffen album, "Oranges And Lemons," is their most consistent and accessible effort to date.

Guitarist Andy Partridge, bassist Colin Moulding and drummer Dave Gregory, three small-town British lads from Swindon, have been album-rock "cult heroes" for a number of years, and now mainstream acceptance seems to be right around the corner.

Their new album sounds somewhat less hard-edged than their 1980 "Black Sea" album which included the single "Generals And Majors." Such intricately-arranged tunes as "Garden Of Earthly Delights" and "The Loving" may remind some listeners of Tears For Fears' chart-toppers of a few years back.

"Here Comes President Kill Again" sounds like the sort of song John Lennon would create. "The Mayor Of Simpleton," with its clever lyrics and high-energy guitar playing, is an ideal first single.

With its 60 minutes and 35 seconds of music on two records (it could have fit on one disc, but squeezing that much music on one vinyl disc causes some loss in sound quality) this album is a treat for rock fans. It may be too "pop" for some XTC fans' tastes, but as far as I'm concerned this is one of the best rock and roll albums of 1989.

Cool 'R

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

$ MONEY $

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—Norman Connors

(Continued from Page 3)

soloist. He became a significant forerunner in the new jazz-rock-R&B synthesis that earned the title "fusion music." Among the players Connors recruited for his 1972 album debut "Dance of Magic" were Herbie Hancock, Stanley Clark, Ron Carter, Hubert Laws, Gary Bartz, Airto, and Dee-Dee Bridgewater, all key figures in the resurgence of jazz.

He did much the same on the following three albums; "Dark of Light," "Love From The Sun," and "Slewfoot." All of the albums went Top 5 on the jazz charts.

1975's "Saturday Night Special" brought Connors broader commercial acceptance. The album featured Jean Carn and the vocal debut of bassist Michael Henderson. Their duet of "Valentine Love" was a Top 10 R&B hit. Henderson continued to vocalize on Connors next album, the 1976 "You Are My Starship."

The album, which introduced Phyllis Hyman, hit the million mark, was No. 11 R&B album, a Top 40 pop album, and garnered three Top 10 R&B hits: the No. 1 R&B and Top 30 pop hit "You Are My Starship," the Hyman/Henderson "We Both Need Each Other," and Phyllis' remake of the Stylistics' "Betcha By Golly Wow."

For his 1977 "Romantic Journey," Connors, featuring Phillip Mitchell and Eleanor Mills, expanded his concept into a bigger sound that incorporated more than fifty musicians, known as The Starship Orchestra. James Robinson and Mills appeared on the 1978 "This Is Your Life."

Two years later "Invitation" introduced Miss Ada Dyer, who also sang on Connors" 1981 "Take It To The Limit" with Glenn Jones. In between those two albums came "Norman Connors and Pharoah Sanders Live At Montreux Jazz Festival." In 1982 Norman released "Mr. C" before deciding to take a break from recording, although he never stopped performing.

At that point Connors returned to Philadelphia. During the period of time before starting work on "Passion," he resided in Paris for two years.

"The things on 'Passion' I've been thinking about for the last five years. The Minnie Ripperton song, 'Loving You,' I've been wanting to do for a long time; with Gabrielle it was just right. I definitely like to stay in tune so I listen to all types of music. Personally I enjoy listening to the classics: Frank Sinatra, Sarah Vaughn, Duke Ellington."

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DREAMGIRLS

MARCH 25—JUNE 4

ALL THAT JAZZ

By Bob Matthews

This weekend begins the month-long celebration of the 90th birthdate of **Edward Kennedy (Duke) Ellington**. The kickoff comes at two places.

One, at the Duke Ellington School for the Arts where "Omnipresence," an art exhibit of Duke and related subject, featuring paintings by Elizabeth Turner Hall.

The exhibit will be on display until April 29. And, at the Smithsonian Institution Museum of American History, a concert entitled "Introduction to Duke" will be held at noon and 2 p.m.

Featured will be violinist **Joe Kennedy** and his quartet. Admission is free. The exhibit of Ellington artifacts opens April 4, and there will be a music presentation daily in the Carmichael Auditorium.

* * *

Talked with Bob Israel, the manager of Blues Alley Baltimore, who gave us a rundown on acts which have been booked as a part of the changeover to an enlarged jazz policy.

He was quick to point out that the acts which had already been booked will appear, so you can't expect the major jazz shift to be operational until the middle of April.

There will still be those big-ticket acts appearing, all of which will have tickets available in advance. For example, **Sarah Vaughan** comes in April 20-23, and **Nancy Wilson** is also on the schedule.

Some of the acts upcoming through June, and in line with the new lower prices at the club include **Mark Murphy, Jean Carne, Tommy Flanagan, Oregon, Emily Remler, David Fathead Newman, Kenny Burrell, Les McCann, Dakota Staton,** and our own **Bob Butta** whose trio will be used as a backup group to some of the artists.

The New Dictionary

Most dedicated jazz fans are familiar with the Leonard Feather books, Encyclopedia of Jazz in three volumes. In the main, these were collections of biographical sketches of various jazz artists.

Now comes the "New Grove Dictionary of Jazz" in two volumes of 700 pages each. And unquestionably this is the definitive reference book on jazz.

Not only does it have the biographical sketches expected, there are extensive discographies, with over 4,500 articles about jazz items. There are categories such as modal jazz, instruments, free jazz, and all the rest.

They are explained and illustrated, sometimes with musical notation accompanying. Then there are the photographs, some never before published of noted jazz artists.

Ask any oldtime jazz lover about the **Savoy Sultans** and they immediately smile beatifically, and say things like: "that was the swingingest band in the land."

So, to check this fantastic new set of dictionaries, we looked up **Al Cooper**, who was the leader of the Sultans. Sure enough, there was a short biography of Al, and the notation: "see Savoy Sultans".

Whipped over to that listing, and sure enough there was a complete description of the group, the personnel listed, and a discography of all of the recordings made by them.

Needless to say, we were impressed, so much so that we can wholeheartedly recommend this set of dictionaries (they're kind of expensive) for any true jazz lover.

It should be an absolute must for libraries, and jazz programmers.

For example: did you know that **Barney Bigard**, clarinetist who played with **Louis Armstrong** for years, came from a New Orleans family which had two other jazz musicians.

There was Emile Bigard, violinist, and Alexander, Jr., drummer. There is much more about them in this new dictionary. Highly recommended: Further information 1-800-221-2123.

Duke Ellington's Band of 1940

—The Night Life

(Continued from Page 3)

as I get word.

Also at the concert, **Thad Edwards,** a native Baltimorean who now serves as tour manager for **Earth, Wind and Fire,** says the group goes into the studio to record another album around the second week of April and they plan to tour late summer or early fall in support of the album's release. We're looking forward to hearing some new music from this group as well as seeing them perform. Was sort of disappointed with their last album and tour but that's another column, isn't it?

OTHER HAPPENINGS: Got a call from **George Gilliam** who tells us that he's bringing **Regina Bell** to Martin's West next month. More on this at a later date.

* * *

The **Commodores** are leaving at the end of March to begin their 1989 "Rock Solid" World Tour which will begin in the United Kingdom for most of April, then to Japan, Korea and surrounding Far East countries, Mexico and returning to the U.S. for summer dates. They'll also hit the Scandinavian countries and then perform throughout Canada.

No word yet on if they'll play the Baltimore/Washington area, but we'll keep you posted since this is one of our favorite groups. (We feel somewhat responsible for their success since we were the first publication to write about them when they first came out of Tuskegee, Alabama.)

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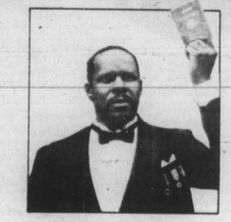

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