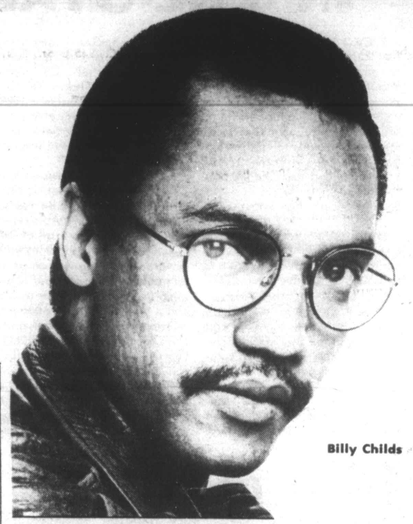
SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

BILLY CHILDS
"Twilight Is Upon Us"
(Windham Hill Jazz)

Wouldn't it be a dull world if every heavy metal song was about making love or the Devil? Or if every rap song played at precisely 120 beats per minute? Or if every jazz song was played in 4/4 time?

Of course it would. That's why we're thankful for musicians who are innovators, who aren't afraid to try a new twist on the tried-and-true, who aren't stuck in a rut of doing every song in the accepted "standard" format. Musicians like, for example, Billy Childs.



Billy Childs

The self-taught pianist was born in raised in Los Angeles, and early in his career he was a sideman with trombonist J.J. Johnson. Childs earned his first album credit on "J.J. Johnson Live In Japan" (Pablo).

Childs later formed the heralded group Night Flight, which featured acclaimed vocalist Dianne Reeves, among others.

His debut solo album, in which he invested one entire year and his life savings, was titled "Midland." His next LP was his first for Windham Hill, the critically acclaimed "Take For Example This," named for an E.E. Cummings poem.

Childs' latest album wouldn't be nearly as exciting if he didn't have a solid crew of skilled musicians backing him up. On the opening cut, "Mount Olympus," drummer Mike Baker competently handles the intricate rhythms and various meter changes; Reggie Hamilton complements the group nicely on bass; Bob Sheppard on sax and Joe Davis on trumpet are also in good form.

"Like Father, Like Son," another Childs original, finds Childs in a trio setting with Tony Dumas on bass, and Baker on drums. It's a pleasant little piece. But Childs' technique is best represented by "Maybe Later." Childs' piano notes don't just sit there and take a back seat to Sheppard's and Davis' horns, as entertaining as they are; Childs' keys ring with authority, and true jazz fans who really pay attention will be nicely rewarded.

It's not just Childs' scorching technique that makes this a worthwhile album; Sheppard, Davis, Baker and the others deserve credit for a fine team effort.

EXPOSE
"What You Don't Know"
(Arista)

The trio who topped the charts with the song "Seasons Change" a couple of years ago return with their second album.

In 1987, the group's "Exposure" album was a multi-platinum success. That LP included the hit singles "Point Of No Return," "Come Go With Me," "Let Me Be The One" and "Seasons Change."

The trio of Ann Curless, Gioia and Jeanette Jurado recently hit the top 40 on the pop charts with the title track from their current album, which was produced by Lewis A. Martinee.

The album also includes the similar-sounding "Stop, Listen, Look & Think," the hip-hoppish "Tell Me Why" and the new single, a ballad called "When I Looked At Him." The album sticks with the successful dance/pop formula of the first album; no surprises here. This LP will probably go platinum as well.

KEVIN PAIGE
"Kevin Paige" (Chrysalis)

Here's the debut album by a young composer/musician from Memphis.

Kevin played almost all of the instruments on this debut LP. Fred Maher, who has worked with such artists as Lou Reed, Scritti Politti and Information Society, co-produced four of the cuts.

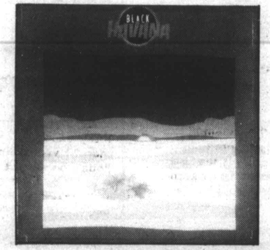
The album's opener "Anything I Want" and the single "Don't Shut Me Out," are typical danceable pop/rock. More interesting is the ballad "Black And White" (not the old Three Dog Night hit) in which Kevin sings, "I try to dream in color, but the world sees black and white."

VARIOUS ARTISTS
"Black Havana Dance Compilation" (Capitol)

"Black Havana Dance Compilation" is a dance music collection featuring such up-and-coming artists as CharVoni, Crowd Control and Keith Thompson.

This album will give listener a taste of Latin hip-hop, Jamaican house reggae and African and Brazilian beats. The LP includes a new single by CharVoni, a remake of Ronnie Laws' "Always There."

Also included: Songs by Keith Thompson, Madagascar, Sound factory, 3 Big Men, Trio Zero (featuring Ten City), Vice Versa, Glenn "Sweety G" Toby and Yemaya.



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ALL THAT JAZZ

with Bob Matthews

The summer doldrums are coming to a close for the jazz scene, and two of this regions premier jazz organizations are beginning their seasons on September 10.

The Left Bank Jazz Society kicks off their season with a moonlight jazz cruise aboard the MV Lady Baltimore. The ship will leave from Pier One, Pratt St., Baltimore at 7 p.m.

Featured will be **The Groove Holmes Trio**, a familiar group to this area's jazz fans. The usual restriction apply for this concert, in that alcoholic as well as non-alcoholic beverages are not allowed to be carried aboard the vessel.

* * *

The Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz will present a three-prong affair for their Tenth Anniversary Concert Sept. 10.

Headlining will be the **John Blake Sextet** with **Blake**, on violin; **Yasuni Tanaka**, piano; **Sid Simmons**, keyboards; **Gerald Beasley**, bass; **Leon Jordan**, drums, and **Doc Gibbs**, percussion.

Vocalist **Roberta Davis** will also be featured, along with the backup group **Reuben Brown Trio**. The third group to appear will be the **Modern String Quartet** headed up by guitarist **Jorg Widmoser**.

Session will be held in the usual place, the Sheraton Harrisburg East, which is off Exit 29 of I-83. Note too that this set begins at 4:30 p.m.

* * *

For your future planning, the CPFOJ will present a blockbuster on October 1. The group calls itself the Timeless All Stars. It consists of:

Bobby Hutcherson, vibes; **Harold Land**, tenor sax; **Curtis Fuller**, trombone; **Cedar Walton**, piano; **Buster Williams**, bass, and **Billy Higgins**, drums.

Was checking with Ruth Binsky, who says that indeed there will be a bus going up to Harrisburg for this one. If you remember the last time, when the bus was oversubscribed—better get reservations in early.

* * *

Saturday, Sept. 2, **Maurice Lyles**, drummer; heads up a tribute to **Philly Joe Jones** with a concert at First Congregational Church in D.C., 945 G St., NW.

On the set will be **Johnny Coles**, trumpet; **Reuben Brown**, piano; **James King**, bass, and percussionists **Baba Ingoma, Carter El and Doc Taylor**.

Emceeing the affair will be **Nap Turner**.

* * *

Guitarists **Joe Pass**, and **Cal Collins**, will appear at the Music at Gretna's International Festival of Jazz, Saturday, Sept. 2 at the Mt. Gretna Chautauqua Playhouse.

It will be a kind of homecoming for Pass who was raised in nearby Johnstown, PA. Appearing with Pass and Collins will be **Steve LaSpina**, bass, and **Terry Clarke**, drums.

Details (717) 964-3836.

* * *

Tuesday, Sept. 5, the **Miles Davis** group will perform at the Wolf Trap Foundation Filene Center. Also on the set this evening will be the **Modern Jazz Quartet**.

Neither one of these groups needs any explanation, for if you don't know them — you're really not a jazz fan.

—Kool Moe Dee

(Continued from Page 3)

down as a reference, the producers will mirror my delivery. Like, if I said a rhyme low-key, they'll come up with low-key music. That would make for a lackluster record."

Kool Moe Dee, born Mohandas Dewese, was destined to be a rap star. He grew up fascinated by rhyming: "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas excited me," he recalls. "I was also into Muhammad Ali, not only because he could box. He had poetic style."

As rap developed, Moe Dee added MCs like Lovebug Starski and Hollywood to his list of heroes. "I would go to (hip hop hangout) the Audobon. Forget about dancing, I would be right up front listening. Then I would go home and write my own lyrics. The first thing I came up with was about getting a girl using things that were 'cool' at the time."

Later, Moe, a college graduate, hooked up with buddies L.A. Sunshine and Special K to form the seminal crew the Treacherous Three. In 1981, it released "Feel the Beat" on Harlem-based Enjoy Records. Its subsequent releases, including "Heartbeat" and "Yes We Can," came out on New Jersey's Sugar Hill Records.

In 1985, Kool Moe Dee left the Treacherous Three. Then he left Sugar Hill. He recorded "Go See The Doctor" for Harlem-based Rooftop Records. "I put cursing in there," he says. "I made it a funny story with a good groove. But it had a message! I'll do whatever I can to get people's attention."

Jive took heed, and "Go See The Doctor" became omnipotent. Moe Dee recorded "Kool Moe Dee" and "How Ya Like Me Now" for the label.

Last year, he was nominated for a Grammy Award and a Soul Train Music Award. He also contributed to "Self Destruction," the all-star charity record by the Stop The Violence Movement.

"I wanted to write lines for the song that would grab the ear," he says, "something that will give the best picture of what's being discussed. I came up with 'I never had to run from the Ku Klux Klan/And I shouldn't have to run from a Black man.' I thought it would be memorable." It was.

With "Knowledge Is King," Moe Dee is again invading the brainfuzz. "You can feel what I do," he says. So punch the clock and go to work.

—Night Life

(Continued from Page 3)

Maryann Yahya.

Oh yes, I could go on and on — Sonny Fowlkes, organ; Jim Poduirsky, guitar and the fabulous Mr. Nightlifer himself, Mr. Walter Carr on piano.

Yep, I know everybody wasn't named, but heck, there's only so much space in a newspaper.

Next year, maybe you'll be lucky enough to be among the music lovers asked to bask on Pope's back yard.

* * * * *

Earlier in the month, the crowd was up in Churchville, outside Aberdeen for the Melvin Spears back yard bash. Melvin's the society pianist of Baltimore who holds forth at the Society Hill Lounge every year. He also has his friends from the music world in concert.

Spears and Pope have the swingin'est back yards in Maryland. And, the music just makes the ribs taste better.

* * * * *

And talk about swinging — you should have been at the Sphinx Club for Frances Tilghman threw a birthday party with friends that, to say the least, was most fabulous. Frances, Beta Dotson and Bob and Bob Breuning celebrated jointly and the Virgo splash was awesome.

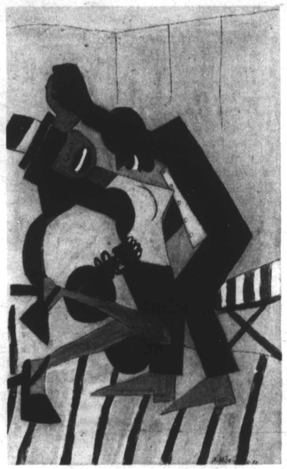
* * * * *

Backyards and birthday parties can often make it all worthwhile. Who ever heard of the daytime Nightlife?

You just did.

WASHINGTON PROJECT FOR THE ARTS

THE BLUES AESTHETIC:
BLACK CULTURE AND MODERNISM



William H. Johnson, *Jitterbugs*,
20" x 15", Morgan State University, Gallery of Art.
Circa 1942, Gouache on Paper.

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