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R.E.M. Michael Paulo Monterey Jazz Festival '84

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NOVUS

PUBLISHER - EDITOR
Burt Lum

MANAGING EDITOR
Gary Chun

GRAPHICS
Rochelle Tom

PHOTOGRAPHY
Mr. D.O.
Ron Hudson
Burt Lum
Mike

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Kevin Ching | Lesa Griffith |
| Allen Leong | Chris Planas |
| Daniel Warner | John Crawford (NY) |
| Joe Tori | Michael Hepworth (CA) |
| Patrick Webb | Bob "X" (TN) |
| Erin Bates | Gary Luczynski (NY) |

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This past October Gary and I both celebrated our twenty-ninth birthdays and were pondering our last year as sanctioned youths. We looked around us to see our peers become more and more complacent, entrenched in the day to day routine of adulthood. Where did the intrigue of youth go? Perhaps it transformed into raising families, making investments, paying for mortgages. Unfortunately as these priorities become more a part of a person's life it seems youthful intrigue vanishes, life becomes a day-to-day toil. The end result is a separation of ideals; of what we once believed in and what we currently believe. The older we get, the farther apart these ideals become.

As I round the corner making my way to the BIG Three-O, I realize that it's not so much to be youthful as it is to maintain the proper frame of mind that binds the generations. Curiosity is the key and openmindedness is the link. If we keep it alive within us our social awareness would increase and the cultural climate, in turn, improve. Worth thinking about peers of mine. Do it now before you become exactly what you sought to avoid.

In retrospect, I hope that everyone survived the elections, if not, I'd advise stock piling your canned goods. Why? Well you can never tell what the future will hold in these especially volatile times. With another four years of Rankin' Ron, who can guess what will happen. Just to insure NOVUS of a healthy 1985, we're going to a bi-monthly format. In other words, every two months. I just want to be around when the action starts.

As for the details, NOVUS will maintain this print format but will also include the addition of a cassette issue as a part of the yearly subscription. In the cassette issue, we'll be able to turn our readers on to some of Hawaii's more interesting music and to hear what the personalities involved have to say. We'll keep our \$10.00 per year subscription rate and will be sending out the cassette to all subscribers. The cassette will be available only on a limited basis so depending on how many copies we produce, they may not reach the newsstands. That's a clue to all you non-subscribers to think about subscribing.

B.

NOVUS Music Festival

The NOVUS Music Festival is happening on Dec. 9th at Anna Banana's, doors open at 7:30pm. The bands we have lined up are Cool Runnings, the seminal reggae band who are reuniting for this special occasion, the Pagan Babies, resident Afro-rhythm gurus, James Ganeko and Beano's new band, Shelf Life and pop-pranksters Mumbo Jumbo. All this on one night of intense music should not be missed. Yes this is a plug, but anything for the magazine. Tickets will be available from Hungry Ear (King St.) and Jelly's (next to Tower Records) or from any NOVUS person. If you can't tell who a NOVUS person is, give me a call at 545-4499 and I will personally sell you a ticket.

Radio: More is NOT better

I'm one of those types that like to dial up and down the radio band in the hopes to find some new sounds. Well back in October one new AM station popped out of nowhere and one made a format change. There was next to no fanfare for either station, only a onetime mention in

Pacific Business News (or was it the Advertiser?). The first one is KLNL-AM 1380, the old KPOI-AM frequency, whose playlist mirrors the older-than-adult contemporary format of KSSK, i.e., some old, some new, all tried and true. The second one is KWAI-AM 1080, which went by the name of K-108 or KIOE. Along with the name change came a sound that was pretty up to date, playing the hit makers like Paul McCartney, Stevie Wonder, Twisted Sister, Pat Benatar... know what I mean? Basically another Top-40 station. Their only saving grace is that they've included General Public on their rotation. These are the two new stations that I've managed to pick up. In terms of the airwaves getting more crowded the two have added to that. Their choice of programming is nothing new which is to me cutting up that commodity called listeners just a little bit smaller.

The change on the FM dial is KMAI's (93.9-FM) format. They've managed to inject enough new sounds to warrant something to talk about. Prior to October KMAI was an oldies station with schizophrenic bouts of liteness. Opting for an upbeat urban contemporary sound, they slowly eased out of the oldies business. They're now playing a hip variety of The Dazz Band, Billy Ocean, Ramsey Lewis, James Ingram, Rick James... Their playlist is very tight, rotating some songs several times a day, which can drive me batty with some songs. More importantly though is the couple of KIUHers there. Dan Sato and Andrew Sasaki have made that all-time step into the world of big-time commercial radio.

Press File

I got a press release from I.R.S. Records that reads: The Go-Go's have announced that Jane Wiedlin, one of three founding members of the group, has left the band to pursue a solo career. Kathy Valentine, heretofore the bassist, will now assume Jane's guitar duties alongside lead guitarist Charlotte Caffey. The band is currently auditioning for a new bass player while preparing to enter the studio to begin work on their next I.R.S. album.

A new, anti-authoritarian poetry rag called SEDITIOUS DELICIOUS wants poetry in any style, traditional to punk/reggae lyrics, including prose poems and experimental poems. They'll print those that most poetically and scrumptiously subvert the system of statism, racism, patriarchy, militarism, classism, lesbian and gay oppression, ageism, or any of the other nasty power trips we have to put up with. Send inquires or material to: SEDITIOUS DELICIOUS, P.O. Box 6981, New York, NY 10150.

Band Updates

Remember Keiko Bonk and His Master's Voice? They were featured in the November '83 (issue #13) of NOVUS. Residing in New York's East Village, the band has just released their first LP after "months of delays and music industry bull," according to Keiko who dropped me a line recently. As soon as we get a copy we'll be airing it on "Rough Take." I also received the November issue of EAST VILLAGE EYE, a New York newspaper that's great for the music and art happenings in the East Village. It featured a center layout by Keiko. Great abstract of a couple embracing in the foreground with a fiery passionate volcanic-looking fountain in the background.

Hat Makes the Man have reclaimed the Sun-Mon night spots at the Wave in Waikiki. More importantly they will soon release an EP produced locally by promoter Greg Mundy. On top of their two nights at the Wave the band's been working pretty hard, playing campus gigs, writing originals and opening for bands like R.E.M. I wouldn't be surprised if a West Coast schedule is being lined-up; one does not get famous playing in Hawaii!

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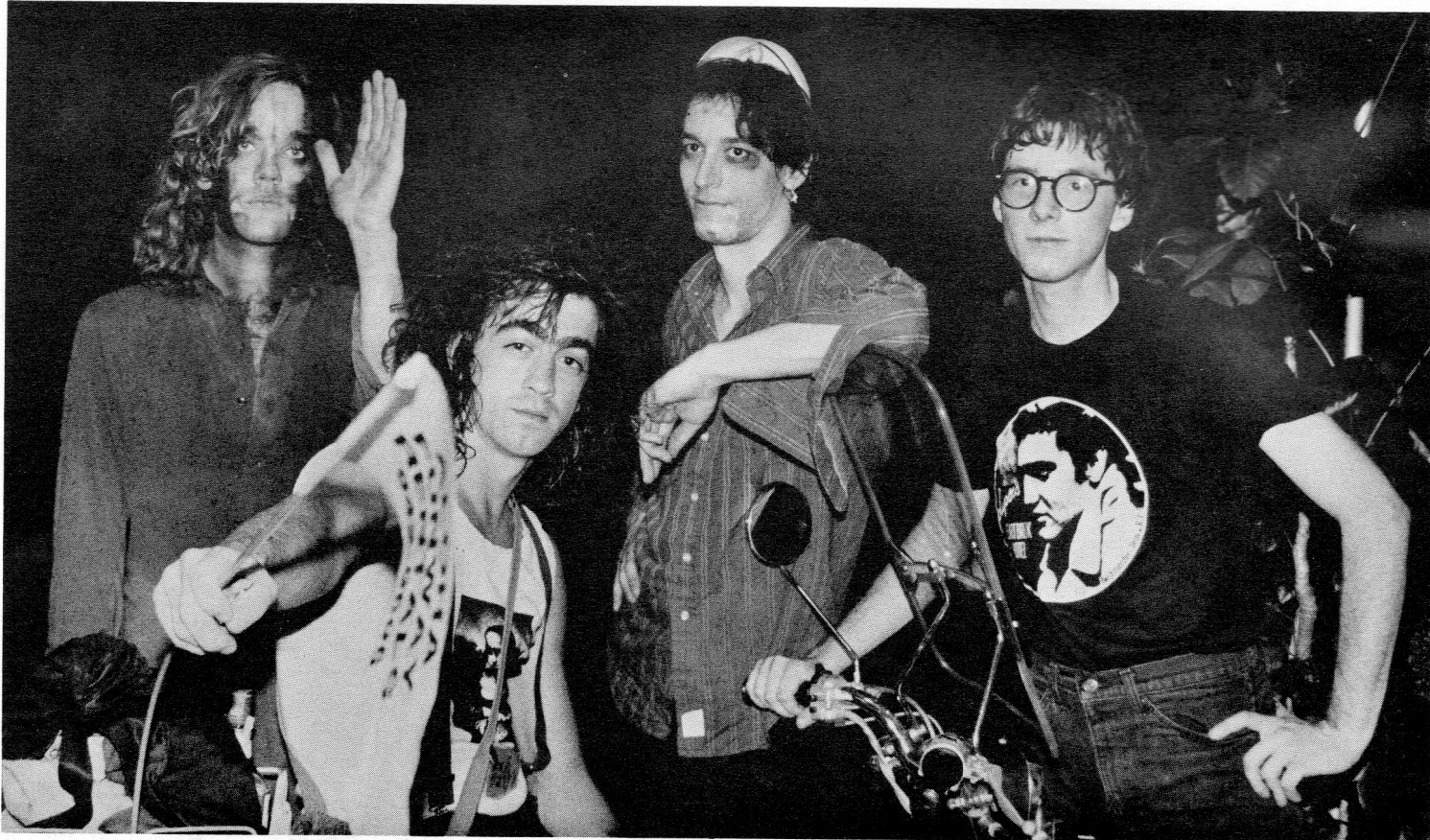


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R.E.M. No Disguises

photo by Burt Lum

Halloween afternoon, 1984 at Aloha Tower, once the beacon of Honolulu Harbor, now a mere dwarf among the high-rises and trade centers of the city. It's the first rock and roll production in a hall usually reserved for political party fundraisers or beerbusts, with the usual pre-concert frenzy of lighting and set-up. R.E.M. arrives together and the girl at the door doesn't recognize them, perhaps because they are dressed no different from the stage crew, t-shirts and disheveled hair. Manager Jefferson Holt graciously leads us backstage, where drummer Bill Berry is wheeling around in circles on a borrowed moped. He leaves and quickly returns, ecstatic, with a hot plate of rice and chicken curry. (Only in Hawaii, brah!) Michael Stipe, last seen looking around, absorbing the place and we settle in to talk with Peter Buck, guitarist for the most critically acclaimed new music band in America. Buck speaks with eyes wide open, one knee pumping up and down, reflecting some of the personal energy he brings to R.E.M.'s sound.

NOVUS: How did the band R.E.M. get started?

PETER: Just kinda by accident. We never really had any great plans to be musicians or anything. The thing to do in the 1980s and now, is where we're from. A lot of the people who did form bands, people like the B-52's, Pylon, Love Tractor, were all kind of just hanging out and it just seemed like a good idea to form a band. Everybody realized that you don't have to be real professional to be in a band. It all fell out naturally.

NOVUS: When you first started playing music was it out of the desire to perform or just...

PETER: It was definitely for fun. It was our hobby basically.

NOVUS: And then what happen? Did you guys go out and look for gigs or did the gigs come to you?

PETER: People would come to us and ask us to play and we just found ourselves playing every weekend. Without

even thinking about it we got popular. People would call us up and ask if we wanted to play in Nashville and we'd say "Sure, why not?" In about a year we realized that we were playing almost every day. So we stuck with it. It was fun.

NOVUS: So the scene was open enough so you guys could play a lot.

PETER: Yeah. We played all through the South, a lot of these small local places, high schools, colleges, anywhere we could get a date.

NOVUS: In the beginning were you always making up your tunes or doing cover tunes?

PETER: We've mostly written our own stuff. When we started out we played some covers. We had a few because we needed to fill up time, but it was always at least three-quarters of our own stuff. We'd throw in a few covers just because most people never heard of us or any of our songs so it was a nice reference point for them to see us do a couple covers.

NOVUS: When you write songs how do they come about?

PETER: It's a group composition thing. Everyone writes, everyone plays different instruments so we always go home and make noise. When it's time to write songs we get together in our little practice studio and show each other little riffs and kinda put it together like a jigsaw puzzle.

NOVUS: Would you care to mention any kind of influences that you might have that are predominant?

PETER: Everybody likes different stuff in the band. I like the Velvet Underground a lot, so does everyone else. Michael listens to a whole lot of country & western stuff and Mike likes a lot of pop music. Bill likes soul a lot, especially Motown and Stax stuff. We agree on each other's tastes but we don't all have the same influences really.

NOVUS: When you do put a song together is there anything that motivates you guys to write certain types of lyrics?

PETER: Michael writes most of the lyrics and he writes pretty much from personal experience, from the

heart. Sometimes it's a little bit hard to understand exactly what he's getting at. All of us are tired of that whole singer-songwriter type confessional in rock'n'roll, where you bare your heart and everyone understands exactly what you're saying. Sometimes you have to sort of short circuit the whole idea of logic in rock'n'roll. You don't have to necessarily be writing songs that tell you exactly everything you need to know. A lot of the feeling comes from the music to. It's kinda like a map rather than a short story.

NOVUS: More like creating images or something like that?

PETER: Yeah, the songs are not just images but the images carry a lot of the weight. It's like a lot of the Stones stuff, like "Exile on Main Street." You don't you have to understand every single word or every single sentence to understand what the song is about.

NOVUS: Many of the rock critics claim that R.E.M. is more rebellious than many of the other rock bands. What are you rebelling against? Is it the rock format?

PETER: I don't feel that we're rebelling against anything. We're just doing what we want to do. Rebellion for the sake of rebellion, I always thought, was kinda stupid. We don't feel you have to follow all those rules that everyone seems to follow in rock'n'roll in order to get a hit; your video has to look like this or you have to look like this. We just don't pay attention to it. We're not really rebelling. We just felt it best to make the music we want to make and be the band we want to be. We'd be a lot more real.

NOVUS: Have you had the freedom to do what you wanted more or less?

PETER: Yeah, no one's tried to stop us. We could probably have been more successful if we followed the rules, but that's okay, we're pretty successful as it is. We don't feel the need to rush to the top of the charts by throwing away what's good about the band.

NOVUS: There's no pressure on you to do that from your record label or other sources?

PETER: There always the subtle pressure. People tell us, "Oh gosh, you guys could make so much money if you did this or that." Our record company is behind us and we don't really pay any attention to all the pressure we get. And everyone seems to trust us. Our record company (I.R.S.) knows we come up with the best stuff we can. It's usually a mistake to sell out just to make money.

NOVUS: How has airplay been for R.E.M.?

PETER: College radio has been really good. Commercial radio this year was pretty decent, not really great. Most commercial stations played us some but it wasn't like Duran Duran where they play five songs off their album every hour. There's a lot more awareness of us on commercial radio now. We're not one of the heavy rotation bands but we're getting to the point where we're getting played pretty much everywhere. It's a slow battle. We'd rather take our time and do it this way. Our next album may be on AOR more. We didn't find the need to do it like Duran Duran. It's better to take it slowly, one step at a time.

NOVUS: Do you guys find it hard to create now that the critical eye has been on you and they have a certain expectation of you?

PETER: No, because the reasons that we write and the reasons that we create have nothing to do with any of that. We create for the sake of creating and we like to write songs and we like to play 'em. We don't really worry too much about what people expect from us. The last thing you should do is pay attention to that kind of stuff. I certainly don't want to worry about the critics or the fans. We just feel if we can become the best band we can become, that'll be the best thing we could do.

NOVUS: Do you have another album on tap?

PETER: We have some things recorded and a bunch of new songs. We haven't gone into the studio and really

done a new album yet. We'll probably won't start recording it until mid-February.

NOVUS: How do you see the band evolving or have you seen it evolve since you've been in it for this amount of time?

PETER: It's hard to tell from the inside. I know things have changed. I can't really say. I know our songwriting has gotten better, we're getting better at what we do, we're taking more chances. But as far as evolving, we don't really think about it we just do it and then we look back and try to do things a little bit different. We don't really think how or why.

NOVUS: On your last album there some sixties things, a little funk thing and it sounds like you're playing around with certain things...

PETER: We definitely don't want to be real stagnant. We try to throw new things into the mix all the time. There's a bit more country influence on this record just because it came up. And there's a lot of different things we listen to and different things we like that we haven't really approached yet. Seems like we're stripping out a lot of the unnecessary stuff to. The music is getting more stripped down, more direct.

NOVUS: Was there anything about the Athens, GA music scene that caused this new sound in American music?

PETER: Well, I don't think it was the scene or the city itself so much as it was the people in that time and place were open to new ideas. The whole punk thing pointed out in Athens that anybody can do it. So lots of people who had training in other types of art things, whether it be painting or poetry, kind of approached rock'n'roll with a real sideways view. That's what Pylon did and came up with something real unique. I think when people do that, approach rock'n'roll from a non-historical point, it brings out new things. We had about fifteen friends that were in bands that were happening at that time,



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Method Actors, Pylon, Love Tractor, B-52's, The Side Effects. It was something people did. Nobody thought it was anything real special. No one was trying for fame and fortune. It was something fun that everyone did. I think everyone on my block was in a band basically.

NOVUS: You did some recording with Warren Zevon. How did that turn out?

PETER: Pretty good. We just did a demo tape with him. A friend of a friend asked if we wanted to record together and we said sure why not. So he came to Athens. I would hope that sometime this year we'd be together to record some more. Those were just demos. We'd like to do a record with him.

NOVUS: Zevon's a guy that's been around for a long time and has a personal vision which I see R.E.M. as having, as opposed to a lot of MTV rotation bands who have a lot of style.

PETER: We're real low on style and try hard to transform what we are into music. It's like a reflection of ourselves. He is the same way.

NOVUS: Any other projects you have in store?

PETER: I produced an Athens band, a group called Dreams So Real. I did the production on their new demo that might be a single. They're real good. They're like one of the newest Athens bands, kinda like the Beatles's REVOLVER album but modern sounding. Real neat.

NOVUS: What is it that binds you folks with people like The dB's, Let's Active, Mitch Easter? I seem to hear a lot about that particular circle.

PETER: A lot of those people, Chris Stamey, Mitch, dB's and all them grew up together. But we all feel we have things in common with each other because we're less image oriented and more musically oriented. We have the same musical goals.

NOVUS: I notice that you also tend not to have too much techno-sounds. All the bands that you mentioned all have a very natural acoustic sound.

PETER: We're all more interested in getting the sound and the feel than complete techno excellence or computer sounds. Mitch is real good at production styles which have the natural feel. I don't have anything against electronic drums or synthesizers but it just doesn't give me the feel that I really want for our band.

NOVUS: In the process of traveling around and getting

the word out on R.E.M. I know you guys have played some pretty-off-the-wall places. I read in an interview where you played to an Air Force crowd and got boob off stage. Knowing R.E.M. is not for everybody, how far do you want go to spread the word?

PETER: We've always felt that you can buy a record and you can go see a band but it's important to do both to really understand a band. So we'll go anywhere that there are people that want to hear us. We'll take any chances we can. We've had some bad experiences and we've had some really great ones. Most of the time they've been good. We've always felt that we should go to every town we can, every small town, every backwards town in the Midwest and present ourselves that way. It's a real natural way to do it and it's only kind of fair. Records are nice but they're static. They're a picture of the band in a two-week period whenever they recorded the album. Playing live is a more honest, right to the minute thing. You can see and understand something more about the band than a picture in the newspaper. So we've always tried to tour a lot and play wherever we can.

NOVUS: How does your live sound compare to your records?

PETER: It's a bit rowdier. When you're in a band rock'n'roll tends to be more of a celebration on stage. There's less attention to texture and mood and more attention to just energy. It's a bit wilder, spontaneous.

NOVUS: Your tour continues to Japan and England. I can understand your popularity in England but what sparked your popularity in Japan?

PETER: I don't know. Our record company wanted us to come over and we said great. We've always wanted to go to Japan. It's just like here in Hawaii. I don't know if we're popular or anything. People have heard of us and we've sold a few records. It's a way to consolidate what following we've got and try to break through to another level and allow people to see us do what we do.

NOVUS: It sounds like you guys are coming from a real deep commitment to the band.

PETER: Sure. It's not like we're actors. Rock'n'roll is what we love to do and the band comes foremost in what we do.

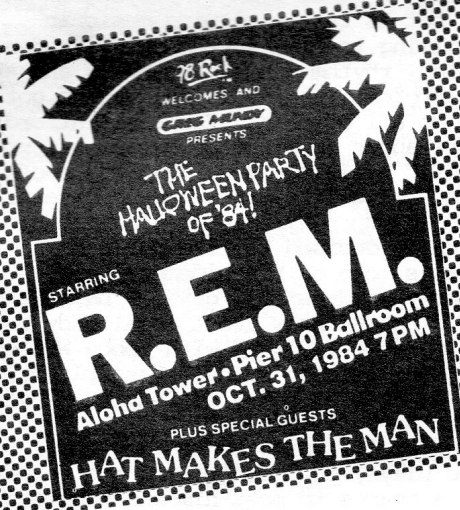
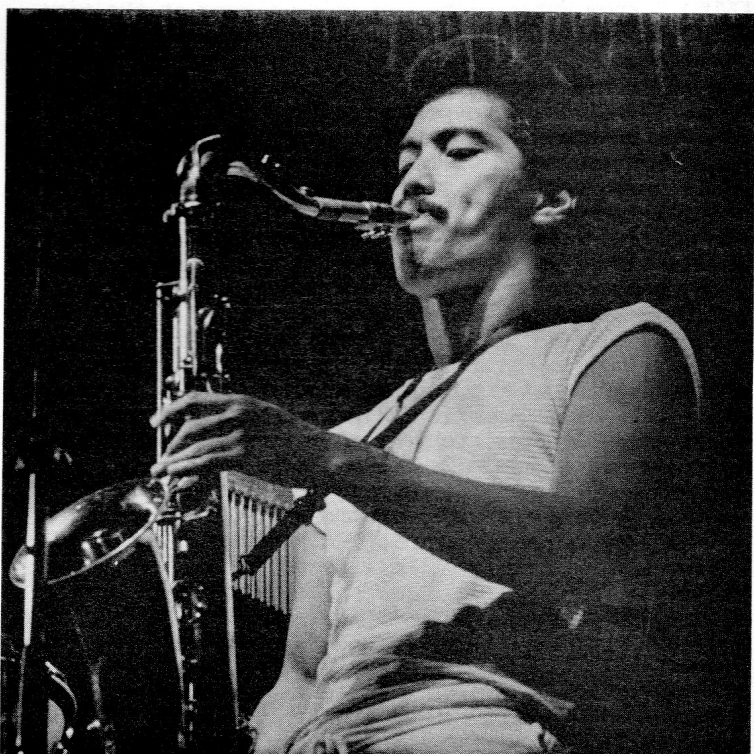


photo by Burt Lum



by Chris Planas

Michael Paulo Sax to Da Max

At first, R.E.M. seemed a natural for Halloween night. With their hide-and-seek lyrics and dark, churning sound, they play with a sense of both celebration and foreboding. But the event was billed as much a Halloween costume bash as a rare Island appearance by one of America's premiere new music bands and many party animals came with only the barest notion of who R.E.M. was. A few songs pop up on FM now and then, notably "Radio Free Europe" and "Pretty Persuasion," but their songs don't quite fit in with high-tech, high-image AOR standards. For a motley Halloween crowd of rabid cult fans and curious revelers, R.E.M. brought their instinctive melodic charm and garage band abandon to Aloha Tower, with no disguises.

They opened with Lou Reed's bittersweet ballad "Femme Fatale," acknowledging their obvious debt to the early Velvet Underground while also contradicting the rock cliché of starting a show with a fast rocker. But they did follow up with a whiplash version of "Harborcoat" and now R.E.M. was at full bore. Onstage the band was bathed in disjointed, colored light. Drummer Bill Berry and bassist Mike Mills proved to be a dynamic rhythm section, Mills' lines singing over Berry's backbeat, while both added rich, brooding harmonies. Guitarist Peter Buck favored a simple gimmick-less set-up, crisp and ringing. With painted face and a fern sticking out of his head, singer Michael Stipe was the only one to visibly reflect the holiday, clutching the mike stand as if it were the last rooted tree in a hurricane. In a baggy white suit befitting a jail house lawyer, Stipe brought new meaning to the word "frontman."

As Buck warned earlier in the afternoon, the band took chances. Songs like "Second Guessing" and "Pretty Persuasion" sparkled like rough diamond, combining 60s pop economism with post-punk punch. Mixed in with these were new songs, some with a distinct country bent, others that would dissolve into a curtain of free form feedback. They worked well with the three-piece format. Songs like "So. Central Rain" and "Talk About the Passion" lacked none of their drama and intimacy in performance. With Buck leaping into the air with his guitar, Stipe careening around the stage in blind frenzy, they recall the early Who and even the Sex Pistols.

They returned for an encore with an acappella version of "Moon River" that was actually chilling, Stipe's backwoods roots coming into clear focus as he exhaled each word. Then, their greatest hit (because it was the first), "Radio Free Europe," and I wondered to myself if I would ever see these guys again. Fifteen years ago, when radio was less formatted, R.E.M. might have become a major act purely on the strength of their sound and vision. These days, things aren't so simple and they make no attempt to flag you down with a salacious video or cheap posturing. They are a great American band that asks its audience to meet them halfway to the discovery and wonderment. And they've got their half covered.

Michael Paulo comes from a family of musicians in Hawaii that spans generations. Son of Rene Paulo, Michael, made his first impression on me during a Kalapana concert in Seattle, Washington some ten years ago. His handling of the sax and flute arrangements not only spiced up the music but provided the added chemistry that made the event unforgettable. The future of Kalapana looked brighter than ever until band members and management splintered at which time Michael returned to the local scene and concentrated on projects primarily at home.

During this period Michael formed a band by the name of Watercolors which also featured vocalist Rachel Gonzales. Jazz-fusion was in its heyday and groups like Seawind were important influences on Watercolors. But as most groups will tell you, the Hawaii audiences can be a very fickle lot. Frustration with the local scene and musical stagnation are usually the impetus for many of Hawaii's most talented to leave the islands. The next thing I heard, Michael Paulo was in Los Angeles and of all things, touring with Al Jarreau.

The Mainland holds a lot of promises for Hawaii's artists. We were fortunate to catch Michael on an Al Jarreau tour and was able to pick up on some of the reasons, expectations and opportunities that the move to the Mainland presented this talented woodwind player.

NOVUS: I'd like to start by asking you about the time you spent playing with local groups like Kalapana and Watercolors.

PAULO: Being in Kalapana was a good experience for me--I did a lot of traveling, touring the States with them. On top of that, it was my first time to be part of a major recording band, playing in the studio as well as live before thousands of people. I did that for about three years. After I left Kalapana, I put together Watercolors because I wanted to continue to play in a live situation as well as to prepare the band for a move to Los Angeles, where we could work together. I got to play a lot more different kinds of music with this band, but, unfortunately, the band broke up before we could make the move to L.A. So, instead, I went there on my own.

NOVUS: I know Watercolors was going strong at the time, playing at Alioto's, and a lot of local people were getting behind the band. But, at the peak of its popularity, the group disbanded. What caused that?

PAULO: There were some personality conflicts and a disagreement as to what direction the band should take, so it was a losing battle.

NOVUS: Were you pretty much considered the leader of the band?

PAULO: Basically, yeah, but everybody had an input into the band. I just wanted to play some good music and get something happening locally because after Seawind left, with the exception of Music Magic, it was pretty barren here jazz-wise. It was hard because it took time for Watercolors to catch on, and when we finally did get popular, it was too late because it was financially difficult to keep the band going, besides the other problems that cropped up. I then helped my folks out with their nightclub after Watercolors broke up, as well as gigging around town, doing local recording sessions and club work for a few months; just enough to get some money saved to make the move to L.A. In fact, I toured with my folks's show on the Mainland for a couple of months in the summer of '81, doing Lake Tahoe and other West coast resort areas, and then stayed in L.A. after the tour. I did the move mainly for myself. The music scene is quite limited here and, sooner or later, you find yourself playing with the same people all the time, doing the same jobs, the same clubs, and it can become very stagnating. Going to L.A. presented a challenge to me because I had to find out where I stood as a musician. I mean, you can be considered really hot here, but when you go to L.A., you're at the bottom of the barrel all of a sudden. So you have to struggle and work hard to prove yourself. The calibre and quality of the musicians there makes L.A. a happening scene, so it was either sink or swim.

NOVUS: So what was it that you did to prove yourself in Los Angeles?

PAULO: Just going out into the studio and club scenes and finding my niche. To be aggressive and meet people, hang out and sit in on various gigs to be heard, practice everyday...and I was fortunate that the right people liked the way I played and accepted me, so I started working around town. It was one thing leading to another, finally leading up to my playing with Al Jarreau. As an instrumentalist, following along the lines of

jazz fusion was best because it opened up different areas to work in. I admit I enjoy playing in that vein the most, but as far as playing music in general, I'm willing to play anything. I've done rock gigs, fusion, rhythm and blues, swing and show gigs. To be a professional musician, you've got to be prepared to do all of that. You can't afford to have an attitude about any kind of music. If you want a job, and it calls for a certain style of music, you might as well try and enjoy yourself.

NOVUS: How did you end up playing with Al Jarreau?

PAULO: When Al finally decided to take horns on the road on a regular basis, one of his sidemen, Larry Williams (formerly of Seawind), gave my name as a recommendation. But Al knew about me already because he used to see me when I played with Bobby Watson's band in L.A. (Bobby is also Rufus's bass player).

NOVUS: I hope you don't mind this, but have you ever been compared to Dave Sanborn?

PAULO: Yeah! I grew up listening to the guy and I really like the way he plays, so I don't mind the comparison at all. I got a chance to meet him and hang out with him, play with him, and he's real nice. There's always a trendsetter that sets a particular style and Dave's had a large influence on a lot of people.

NOVUS: Who else do you draw your influences from?

PAULO: When I first got out as a pro, Grover Washington, Jr., Tom Scott, David Sanborn, as well as the jazz greats like Charlie Parker, Phil Woods, Cannonball Adderley and John Coltrane. I try to incorporate what I like about them into my playing.

NOVUS: Do you find yourself put in a group of young contemporary saxophonists like Chico Hamilton and Kenny Gorelick?

PAULO: Not at the moment because I'm still trying to establish some sort of reputation in L.A. But as far as an individual sound I don't think I'm there yet. That's where I'm headed for, to be a soloist doing my own thing. But I want to take my time and don't rush into it. I had an opportunity to break out as a soloist six years ago when I did an album in Japan, TATS IN THE RAINBOW, but as I look back, I wasn't ready because I was young, doing my rock thing with Kalapana, and then I had to do this jazz album, which was pretty "out" for me. Kalapana was signed to the Japanese Trio label and, as part of the deal, our management worked out that each band member would do their own individual projects as a spinoff from Kalapana. I was glad I was able to do the record because I learned a lot, but I



wasn't ready then.

NOVUS: Are you pretty much content with the musical direction you're going in?

PAULO: Yeah, more or less. After my stint with Al, I'd like to do my own thing, a performer out on my own. It would represent musical freedom for me because I would then be in control of my own situation, whereas, although Al is a real nice guy to work for, I don't want to stay in the sideman role in the future.

NOVUS: What would indicate to you the right time to go solo?

PAULO: My own feelings at the time. If it makes sense for me to leave at some future time, I'll do it if the move, say, is lucrative enough. But, right now, I'm in a secure position playing with Al. I enjoy it and I don't think I'll ever be tired working with the guy because he's such a phenomenal singer.

NOVUS: While Hawaii will always be your home, I foresee you probably doing most of your work on the Mainland

PAULO: Yeah, that's why I moved to L.A. in the first place and I don't plan to move back to Hawaii in the future, even though my family lives here and my roots are here...unless I retire.

NOVUS: Being of Filipino-Japanese ancestry, did you find it difficult at first finding work in L.A.?

PAULO: When I first moved there, I did, but I expected it for different situations--like, I wasn't black, I wasn't white. In fact, I did a lot of Latin gigs because I look Latin more than anything else! But you just have to learn to overcome that and when you become proficient enough, your worth as a musician isn't based on how you look or what race you are but how you play.

NOVUS: I heard a rumor that Miles Davis called you on the phone to play with him.

PAULO: He did, just this past summer, but I was ready to tour with Al again. During that time, I was playing at a club, Dante's, in North Hollywood, and his nephew came down, heard me, and asked me later to make a tape because Miles Davis was looking for a saxophone player. I thought he was pulling my leg, but, I figured, what do I have to lose, so I gave him a tape. Apparently Miles did get the tape and when he came to town for the Grammy Awards, he called me and said he heard the tape, really liked the way I played and would like to use me on his gigs. I told him straightforward that I was rehearsing to go on the road with Al at the time so if he had anything definite in mind to let me know because I didn't want to leave Al on a limb.

I talked with Miles a couple of times after that but nothing really materialized--he did do a couple of dates but nothing substantial enough to make me quit the gig I had. But I was flattered that he listened to my tape and wanted me to play with him because it would have been some heavy company to get into, but it just wasn't the right moment. I would've done it if I hadn't been doing anything else!

NOVUS: Are there a lot of opportunities for musicians like yourself to move on in the business?

PAULO: Yeah, there's a number of people from Hawaii who are doing well now. There's a guy, Derek Nakamoto, who's also a St. Louis grad, he's out with Barry Manilow now, but he helped produce Herb Alpert's latest album, and he's also played with The Pointer Sisters and Hiroshima.

NOVUS: Finally, what would it take to liven up the jazz scene in Hawaii?

PAULO: If people had enough interest to support it economically, that would help, because it's hard for a musician to devote himself to the art and, more often than not, the jazz musician is a starving musician. There's not enough public support here--that's what I encountered during the time with Watercolors, which was unfortunate, but that's the way it goes and you can't fight it. (But we'll die trying! -Ed.)

NOVUS: So I assume you're not starving now?

PAULO: (Laughs) No!...in fact, I'm going to eat right now!



Wynton Marsalis - Hot House Flowers

Columbia

One could question the motives of Marsalis for making a "soloist with strings" album a la Charlie Parker or Clifford Brown (both superlative players in search of a broader audience), especially since the results of those previous efforts were, more often than not, a mismatch of jazz passion and cloying romanticism. True to form, however, the young trumpeter has sidestepped those problems with taste, intelligence and style. Part of the record's success is due to the more contemporary attitudes of orchestra arrangers like Robert Freedman, who seem to be more familiar with the so-called "third stream" that fuses classical and jazz together. On *HOT HOUSE FLOWERS*, Freedman (and bassist Ron Carter - the credits are vague as to who did what) provides sympathetic arrangements that are lush and romantic but simultaneously expand Marsalis's vocabulary beyond his regular five piece group.

Much of this album is devoted to the trumpeter-as-balladeer, but Marsalis's modern sensibilities are given exposure as well; the familiar stop-and-go arrangements are present on "When You Wish Upon a Star" and the title cut. There are also surprises throughout the album to trip up the ear - the switch to 3/4 time on the solo section of "Melancholia," for example, and the many fascinating chord substitutions. In "Django" there is drama, in the title cut there is starkness, in "I'm Confessin'" there is lightness and levity, and in "When You Wish..." there is turmoil. This variety helps to make *HOT HOUSE FLOWERS* less of a commercial concession and more of an effort to blend lush orchestral textures with contemporary jazz adventurousness. Well, it's not that earthshaking, but the record reflects more direction and thought behind it than one would expect from such a project. Where Marsalis is concerned, though, forethought and care in execution seem to be standard practice.



Red Hot Chili Peppers

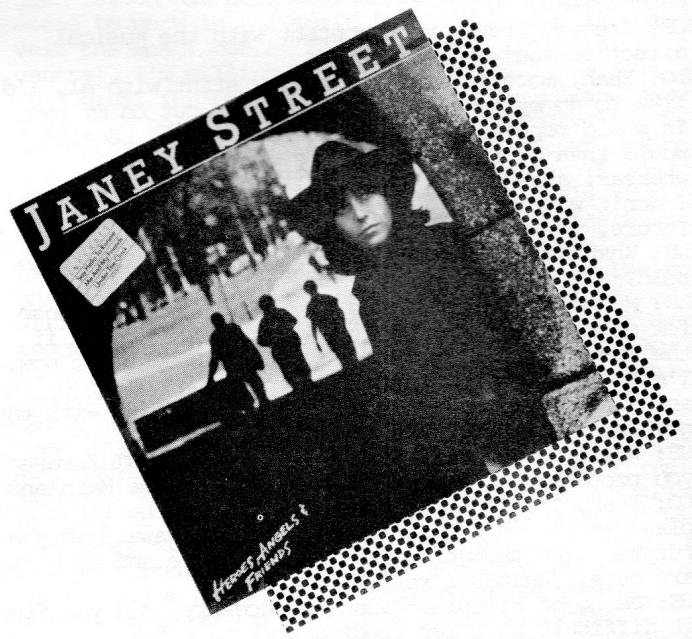
Enigma/EMI

Eventually I lost track of the Gang of Four, despite their obvious integrity and muscular punk-funk, because they rarely sounded like they were having any fun. Maybe that accounts for the "punk" part, but hell, the Pistols were loads of fun (so was James White, if unintentionally). Could be that's what attracted ex-GOF guitarist Andy Gill to the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

From the Daddy Roth-style cartoon cover to the goony faces they pull on the inner sleeve, the Peppers treat their musical existence as a running gag. With good reason; their fusion of urban hip-hop funk with Huntington Beach hardcore has the slimmest chance of denting any airwaves. That doesn't prevent them from putting the pedal to the metal every chance they get. Bassist "Flea" is, as Isaac Hayes woulda said, "a bad mutha," slamming and popping on "Get Up and Jump" and "Out in L.A." while Anthony Kiedis raps at breakneck speed. Producer Gill gives Jack Sherman a fat, echo laden guitar sound for power chords and feedback solos reminiscent of Jimmy Page, of all people. Drummer Cliff Martinez keeps everything down light and on the money.

Andy Gill successfully weaves horns and background vocals into the mix that doesn't intrude on the band itself, and on songs like "Green Heaven" and "True Men" they display a sense of Hollywood black humor similar to X or the Dead Kennedys. But it's hard to take a band seriously when they rarely do themselves - a song like "Mommy Where's Daddy," about child abuse, comes off in bad taste, period. This band is promising as hell; maybe next album they'll stop trying to be the Four Stooges.

CHRIS PLANAS



Janey Street - Heroes, Angels and Friends

Arista

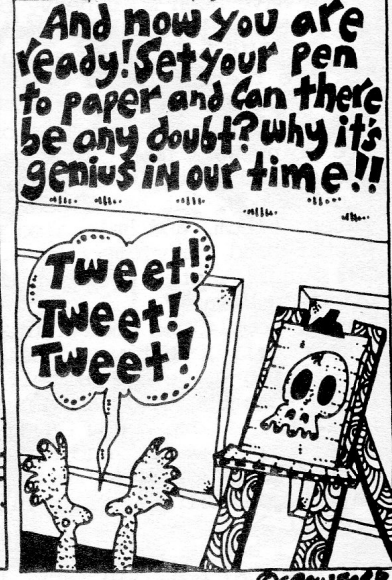
As a new release per se, it is above average in many ways. However remarkable that may seem, to be a debut and above average well, that's something that merits attention.

HEROES, ANGELS AND FRIENDS reflects and embraces the character and attributes of a graduate from the school of Springsteen, with post-graduate studies done in Stevie Nicks, (though Janey's voice isn't so whiny, has more toughness and is huskier) and Rickie Lee Jones.

With the skillful saxophones and the big beat pounding of the drums, Janey has created those sound qualities familiar to urban rock'n'roll. The songs themselves, range from the shuffling, finger snappin' doo-wop, street corner sound of "Under the Clock," to the more powerful ballad "Say Hello to Ronnie" and the upbeat and very danceable "Me and My Friends."

Given, like I said, the unusual degree of substance with this, Janey Streets's debut recording and some genuine support from Arista, Janey could emerge as a new talent potent in commercial and artistic possibilities.

PATRICK WEBB



©Crawford

Julian Lennon - Valotte

Atlantic

Bits and pieces of VALOTTE have wafted through my car radio for a couple of weeks before I knew Julian Lennon's first album existed. I had never heard a dee-jay back-announce it so I passed it off as Yoko releasing more of John's work recorded shortly before his death. (What's she gonna do when she runs outta his stuff?) Anyway, I listened to the album. My gut reaction, "Is he doing that on purpose?" was accompanied by a case of the heebie jeebies.

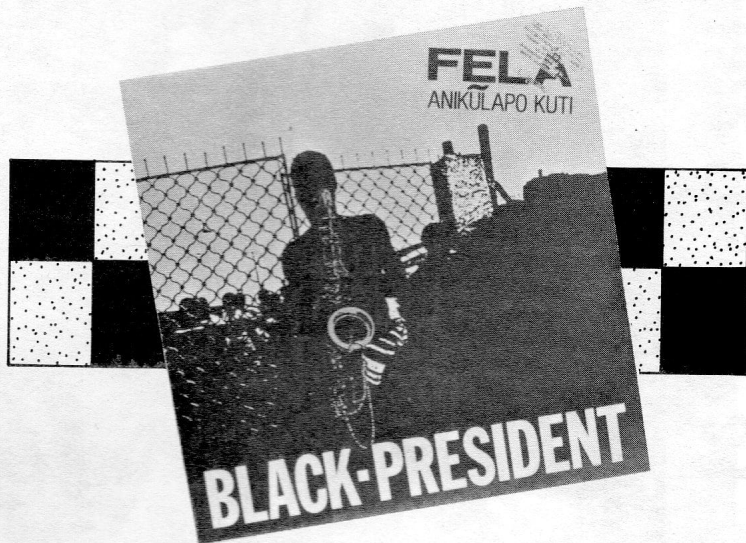
The title cut is where Julian Lennon is the spittin' audio image of his famous dad. This is what is causing the moderate bruhaha surrounding this album. He has the same nasal tone and possesses the characteristic Lennon trademark voice-trailing-up-at-end-of-phrase habit. And for me, the first few notes of VALOTTE bring to mind "Across the Universe." It's still a compelling song but, I must add, sports a weak guitar solo that ends up flopping all over the backup track.

"It's OK for You" is the most deliberate rocker on the album. It's performed with intricate trumpeting by Jon Faddis and Joe Shepley. Pretty solid stuff. "Lonely" brings across the kind of frustration that makes you wanna pound your fist against the wall. Its high point is a gut-wrenching sax solo. "Jesse," the only song not written all or in part by Julian, is a funky dish with a dash of techno-pop. "Let Me Be" is a grand drunken piano waltz done with just the right amount of schmaltz. "Space" is a beautiful surrealistic dream.

Julian Lennon has a gentle quality to his music that his father did not have. He also sounds so much like John Lennon it's downright eerie. Partly because of this, Julian's efforts face a musical future of being propped up next to his father's and gaped at. Was this album produced especially to do that? If so, it's a shame. Julian is going to have a hard enough time making it on his own merits as it is.

I've heard people whining indignantly about VALOTTE as an album sounding a lot like DOUBLE FANTASY. Well, uh, it does. (Play "It's OK for You" and "Cleanup Time" back to back some time.) But VALOTTE is also a slick little debut album underneath all the accusations leveled at it, and Julian Lennon has displayed an honest talent here that I suspect is only the tip of the iceberg.

ERIN BATES



Fela Kuti-Black President

EMI

"Sorrow, tears and blood/them-a regular trademahk!"

Those expecting another Sunny Ade may not be prepared for the dark, heady sound of Fela. Yet back in Nigeria they are virtually arch-rivals, competing for the top of the charts and the sentiments of the people. Ade's juju music is soothing and pacifist, often pro-Christian in lyrical content, with recordings remixed for Western ears. Fela's Yoruba music is volatile, moody, inciteful, his words unforgiving diatribes against the forces of oppression both foreign and domestic; this recording retains the same funky aura it did when released in Africa a few years back. Funny, that while Ade retains the more traditional talking drum and percussion, Fela's music seems the more rootsy; that while Ade has become an African ambassador of sorts, Fela is actively restrained from leaving Nigeria for fear of his message's impact on the rest of the world. As poet Jessica Hagedorn would say, this is dangerous music.

A spare ensemble sound frames "Sorrow, Tears and Blood," charged by Fela's recounting of aggression in the streets and his wives' relentless chant in the background. "Colonial Mentality" is led by Fela's stalwart tenor Lekan Animashun, massive horns that include one "Lester Bowie" (on sax?), finally yielding to Fela's own voice and hearty sax riffing. Both tracks cook like crazy, but are generally overshadowed by the side-long "I.T.T." Okelwe Ojean offers a tangy tenor guitar figure, then a guitar solo by Mardo Martino over the horn and percussion vamp. "International!" Fela cries, "Thief Thief," his wives answer, and you can almost hear all of Lagos rising to his message. These powerful, intoxicating jams remind us that African music is more than cute exotica; Fela has his hand on the pulse of Africa's darker side and he continues to fan the flames of rebellion. If you like grooves that bite hard, his Afro-beat is for you.

(Fela Kuti was convicted on Nov. 8 on currency charges by Nigeria's Foreign Exchange and Sabotage Tribunal and sentenced to five years in prison. The conviction stems from Kuti's attempts to leave Nigeria with Nigerian currency without first declaring it. -Ed.)

CHRIS PLANAS

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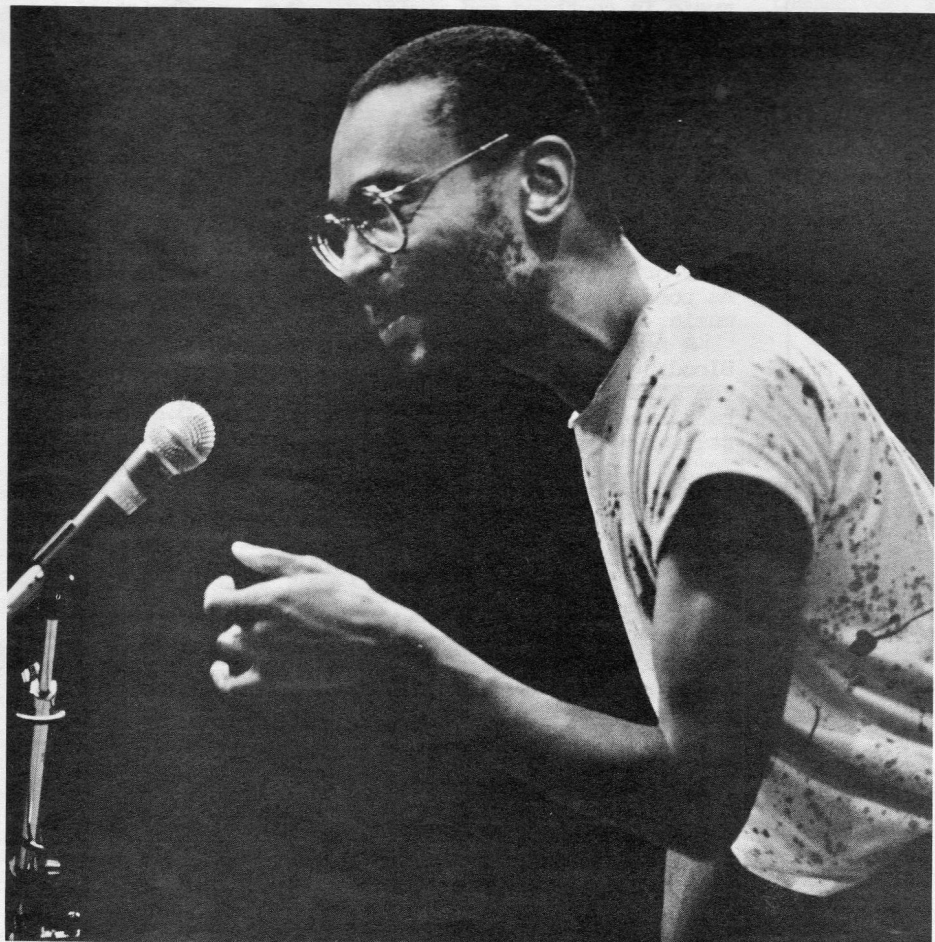


Figure 1: Diana Reeve's dynamic three octave range voice earned her a standing ovation on Friday night.
Figure 2: Bobby McFerrin, one of the festival's night openers.
Figure 3: Richie Cole and Alto Mason performing on Saturday evening.
Figure 4: In his father's footsteps, Bobby McFerrin, son of the late Willie McFerrin, trading fours with Tito Puente on Saturday night.
Figure 5: Jam Session Supreme - Friday evening. Piano - Herbie Hancock; bass - George Duvivier; drums - Shelly Long; trombones - Carl Fontana, Curtis Fuller; trumpets - Henry Threadgill, Hampton; saxophones - Benny Carter, Clark Terry, Bill Evans, Al Cohn, Eddie "Doc" Cook, Moody, Al Cohn, Eddie "Doc" Cook, Davis, Richie Cole