

TOM SCOTT/BLINDFOLD TEST by Leonard Feather



It was in 1948 that the world's first major jazz festival took place in Nice, Eddie Condon launched the first jazz TV series, Dizzy Gillespie's big band made its first overseas tour, and the New York center of jazz was the Royal Roost. During that year, on May 19, Tom Scott was born.

He made up very fast for joining us so late. Son of Nathan Scott, a composer who presently writes the music for the *Lassie* show, he started on clarinet. "I thought I'd be a symphony player; then my dad bought me a Benny Goodman album."

More or less self-taught—"my father just let me do my own thing"—Scott took up saxophone in junior high school. "I started on baritone, then took up alto. I didn't play tenor until I was asked to sub one night with Oliver Nelson's band at Marty's. I ended up taking over the gig, because Oliver wanted a strong soloist. I was 19."

Now pushing 22, Scott is active in studio work, playing all saxes and flute; he has recorded with numerous pop and jazz groups, played with Don Ellis' band and the Howard Roberts and Roger Kellaway combos. He is the leader on two Impulse and two Flying Dutchman LPs. Following in paternal footsteps, he recently wrote his first TV score, an episode of *The Bold Ones*.

This was his first *Blindfold Test* (I began writing the feature two years before his birth).

1. OLIVER NELSON. *Stolen Moments* (from *The Blues and the Abstract Truth*, Impulse). Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Eric Dolphy, alto saxophone, flute; Nelson, composer, arranger, alto and tenor saxophone; George Barrow, baritone saxophone; Bill Evans, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Roy Haynes, drums.

Well, you started with a five-star album! That's one of my very favorites; always has been. I know almost everybody on there . . . Roy Haynes, and I believe Paul Chambers on bass, Pepper Adams, Eric Dolphy, Freddie Hubbard, Bill Evans, and Oliver Nelson the leader. There are some spectacular soloists. It's a groovy, straight-ahead, classic jazz melody. It's from the *Blues and the Abstract Truth* album, and I've loved that ever since the first moment I heard it.

I played that same tune with Oliver myself many times. I love the voicings and the changes . . . those are the kind of sounds that Oliver really brought into focus.

The tenor solo on that is particularly interesting, because of the very simple motif that Oliver uses, and he just sticks to it; never tries to get complicated. It's a very musical solo.

2. KLAUS DOLDINGER. *Face in the Night* (from *Blues Happening*, Pacific Jazz). Doldinger, soprano saxophone, composer; Ingfried Hoffman, piano.

That's either an older record made by an American or it's a European, or possibly an Asian musician, because I don't recognize it. Unless it's . . . maybe it's an old Roland Kirk record! But I don't recognize that sound at all. It's a beautiful sound. He transcends the problems of the honkiness that this instrument has, and I enjoyed his playing very much. The piano player was a bit heavy-handed, but of course that could be the recording; it's hard to tell.

Just for the soprano player, for his sound and his feeling, I'd give that between three and four stars.

3. ATTILA ZOLLER. *Another Kind of Love* (from *Gypsy Cry*, Embryo). Lew Tabackin, taragato; Zoller, guitar, composer.

I wasn't nuts about that. Obviously it

was an attempt to play with a contemporary feeling with a contemporary group . . . which is alright—the premise is alright—but it just didn't move me. The solos were kind of bland, and I didn't feel that the musicians were really involved deeply in it. I couldn't identify any of the players. It just all sounded like what a commercial instrumental pop-jazz record is supposed to be, and I didn't get any real strong involvement from the players.

The horn was a soprano saxophone, wasn't it? And the guitar playing just didn't knock me out. All the playing was just adequate; I didn't feel they really cared that much. I can only give that one star.

4. CANNONBALL ADDERLEY. *Gunjah* (from *Accent on Africa*, Capital). Adderley, soprano saxophone; David Axelrod, composer; H.B. Barnum, arranger.

That's the Cannonball Adderley album called *Accent on Africa*. Cannonball has always been one of my very favorite players of all time. I don't think I'm saying anything very revolutionary; he just represents one of the greatest jazzmen of all time. I love the idea of him doing an African album, because the instruments have such a great sound, and all that percussion and everything. But . . . H.B. Barnum is the wrong cat for this album, to me, as the arranger. He doesn't have the harmonic sense that comes anywhere near Cannonball. The writing is like . . . it's almost like a Broadway show, instead of being hip and up to the kind of thing that Cannonball should have behind him. If Oliver Nelson or Quincy or one of those people had written it, I think it would have been a lot better match for Cannonball.

To Cannonball I'd always give five stars, but to the arrangement I'd only give one.

5. COUNT BASIE. *St. Louis Blues* (from *Basie's Beat*, Verve). Al Grey, trombone; Lockjaw Davis, tenor saxophone; Basie, piano; head arrangement.

Well, it's Basie. Probably the greatest big band of all time. It's funny, there's supposed to be a big band revival going on now. You put a rock 'n' roll rhythm

section with a horn section, paraphrase some contemporary themes . . . and that's a big band! But nothing's ever said it any better than this or far as big bands . . . it's the best there is.

That was probably Al Grey on gutbucket trombone. Either Frank Foster or Frank Wess on tenor, or one of those cats. They're just too much! What a time feel. That band is just . . . whew! . . . scary. It's great to hear that album. There's nothing like that feeling that Basie gets.

The arrangement was beautiful. I loved the thing with the four muted trumpets, the block thing. Was that Quincy? It's a five-star record, what can I tell you. It just knocks me out.

6. CHARLIE PARKER. *My Little Suede Shoes* (from *Fiesta*, Verve). Parker, alto saxophone.

I guess that was Sonny Stitt, and it was *My Little Suede Shoes*, an old Charlie Parker tune. It wasn't strong enough to be Bird, and yet all the notes and the solo was strictly in the style of Bird, so I would guess that it's Sonny Stitt.

For excitement, it didn't knock me out. I have a record of Bird playing on that, and it's just a knockout. But it was good; competent playing, and the guy knows what he's doing, obviously.

But, because in my mind I'm forced to compare it to the master, I can only give it three stars.

7. JOE HENDERSON. *Black Narcissus* (from *Power to the People*, Milestone). Henderson, tenor saxophone, composer.

That's a very intriguing melody. I think that's Joe Henderson, and it's probably one of his newest albums, because the electric piano's on there, and it's so in vogue.

I thought that tune was the most interesting thing about it . . . and the tenor solo, but it seemed to get a little nebulous somewhere in the blowing part. Music to me is most interesting when there is some identifying motif of some kind; doesn't have to be a melody exactly, but a rhythm or a feeling, something I'm looking for. For my taste, this track is a little spacey; I find my mind wandering. And for that reason I'd have to rate it around three stars.