

it without a renewed, if not a new, respect for Gillespie's extraordinary musicality, his shrewd understanding of the art of performance, and his stature within the jazz community.

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Fire Music: A Bibliography of the New Jazz, 1959–1990. Compiled by John Gray. (Music Reference Collection, 31.) New York: Greenwood Press, 1991. [xviii, 515 p. ISBN 0-313-27892-X. \$75.00.]

John Gray's bibliography of the "New Jazz" is a praiseworthy addition to the bibliographic tools available to jazz researchers and connoisseurs. It is meticulously researched, thoughtfully organized, extensively cross-referenced, and for the most part thorough in its documentation of the innovations in jazz, which have been called variously: "the jazz avant-garde," "free jazz," "the New Thing," "outside playing," and "anti-jazz."

In 1959, after Ornette Coleman's New York debut and the release of his first Atlantic recording (*The Shape of Jazz to Come*, Atlantic 1317), an enormous controversy developed within the jazz community over what came to be called "the New Thing." The musical innovations associated with this trend include dissonant or atonal melody, the absence of a fixed sequence of harmonies over which to improvise, harsher more expressive instrumental timbres, and greater reliance on ostinatos and open-ended rhythmic frameworks to organize improvisational process. These techniques had an impact far beyond the avant-garde movement itself, for many elements of the freer playing style found their way into mainstream bebop jazz contexts, particularly as musicians such as Billy Higgins, John Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, Richard Davis, Cecil McBee, and many others moved easily between multiple styles of playing. In other words, many of these innovations eventually were incorporated into the more interactive and harmonically adventurous bebop mainstream that continues to the present day. It is to his credit that Gray has included musicians who were

involved in "the New Thing" for only part of their careers as well as those whose primary aesthetic identity was "free."

Let it be understood that *Fire Music* is a bibliography and thus does not function as a discography of the music it addresses. It is organized into six sections: a new jazz chronology, African-American cultural history and the arts, the new jazz 1959–1990, jazz collectives, the New York loft and club scene, and biographical and critical studies (the most extensive section). A crucial context for understanding the aesthetic of free jazz is the civil rights movement and the growing assertion of African-American identity by musicians in the early 1960s. It is fitting that Gray has chosen to begin the bibliography with a chronology of "New Jazz" that includes key events in the civil rights movement as well as in the musical community. The second section of the bibliography is devoted to African-American cultural history and includes some of the most significant work in history and the arts. Specialists will not find it exhaustive, but it does include a good cross-section of points of view current in African-American cultural studies.

Each section organizes citations by familiar bibliographic genres: books, books with sections on the topic, dissertations and theses, journals, articles, discographies, and biographical dictionaries. Gray has also included citations to more ephemeral literature, thus enhancing the book's utility to jazz researchers—interviews, concert reviews, record reviews, media materials (primarily video and film), and obituaries/memorials. The entry on John Coltrane, for example, cites thirty-three record reviews and twenty concert reviews, and twenty-three obituaries/memorials. By organizing citations this way Gray has created a bibliographic tool that is extremely convenient to use. Indeed the bibliographies for the artists who are included in general prove more comprehensive and conveniently organized than their counterparts in the *New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* (London: Macmillan, 1988). Gray's coverage of women musicians, incidentally, is also more extensive than that in the *New Grove* volumes.

Neither Gray's definition of "the New Thing" nor his criteria for including some musicians and not others are wholly clar-

ified, and as a result some jazz specialists will surely be puzzled by the omission of Charles Mingus and many members of his bands. While "the New Thing" became a named category sometime after Ornette Coleman's emergence into public light in 1959, the importance of Charles Mingus's Jazz Workshop in the development of the emerging musical aesthetic cannot be overlooked. While Mingus publicly criticized Ornette Coleman in a 1960 *Down Beat* article, drawing attention to Coleman's technical limitations ("Another View of Coleman," *Down Beat* [May 26, 1960]: 21) and so was not ideologically a full-fledged advocate for "the New Thing," Mingus's musical explorations from 1959–65, including work with Eric Dolphy on the "Original Faubus Fables" and "What Love" (*Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus*, Candid 9005 [1960]), certainly merit inclusion, as do the contributions of several band members, including Jaki Byard and Dannie Richmond. While it is a compiler's prerogative to limit the scope of a bibliography, it seems reasonable to expect an explanation for the decision to omit Mingus, as well as, say, the more experimental points of Miles Davis's career.

Nevertheless, such omissions are more than counterbalanced by the strength of coverage in several areas: both the international and regional performing circuits; jazz collectives and lofts; and important young musicians who emerged in the 1980s. Gray includes United States citations by state and foreign works by country. Researchers who know the frustration of locating materials too recent to have been indexed in the ongoing composite indexes will welcome the quality of recent coverage. In addition to the more well-known and long-standing jazz collectives such as the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), the Black Artists Group (St. Louis), and the Creative Music Studio (Woodstock, New York), for instance, this work includes entries on such recent additions as M-BASE (Macro-Basic Array of Structured Extemporizations [Brooklyn, N.Y.]), and M.O.B.I. (Musicians of Brooklyn Initiative). Important young musicians such as Greg Osby, Geri Allen, and Steve Coleman are also included.

The appendixes and indexes are organized thoughtfully as well—this sort of

thorough cross-referencing can save researchers weeks and even months of time. Appendix 1 records the reference works from which *Fire Music* was compiled and so provides a bibliographic checklist that by itself will prove handy to jazz researchers. Similarly useful, appendix 2 provides a list of jazz archives and research centers, many of which include telephone numbers as well as addresses. Appendix 3 lists performers and ensembles by country, while appendix 4 arranges performers according to instrument. Artist, subject, and author indexes follow.

There are very few bibliographies in jazz studies as well organized as *Fire Music*. Musicians, researchers, jazz fans, and libraries will find it an important addition to their collections.

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Unforgettable: The Life and Mystique of Nat King Cole. By Leslie Gourse. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991. [xxi, 309 p. ISBN 0-312-05982-5. \$22.95.]

Leslie Gourse has written an excellent biography of one of America's greatest musicians, Nat King Cole. It is as a singer that most people have come to know and love Cole, and he has left an impressive body of recordings that showcase his distinctive, silky-smooth voice backed by large orchestras conducted by Nelson Riddle, Gordon Jenkins, Billy May, and others. "The Christmas Song," "Nature Boy," "Mona Lisa," "Unforgettable," "Ramblin' Rose," and "Roll Out Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer" are just a few of the hit recordings that made Nat King Cole a household name in the United States and elevated him to the status of international star. Unfortunately, the popular music world's gain was the jazz world's loss, because Cole began his career as a fleet-fingered, swinging, harmonically inventive jazz pianist, who impressed discriminating jazz fans, fellow musicians, and critics alike. Art Tatum (arguably the greatest pianist in the history of jazz) was one of the many pianists who formed a trio emulating Nat King Cole's hot little piano, guitar, and bass combo. Thankfully, Gourse does not gloss