

AY - A POSITIVE VIEW

not cheating by referring to recorded rather than live music - I am thinking of the many live albums which can be easily bought by mail order or from specialist jazz shops, and in particular of compilations such as Spotlite's complete Charlie Parker recordings for Dial, or the complete Atlantic sessions by John Coltrane. Given the immense importance of the "live" feel for jazz, the ability to hear 3 or 4 consecutive takes on the same song, recorded within the space of an hour or so, is a fantastic advantage to the listener who appreciates the creative range of an extraordinarily fertile improviser like Parker. These compilations exist and are commercially viable - convincing proof that there is a healthy market for good recorded jazz in Britain today.

Fourthly, take a look at any listing sheet - Time Out, The Guide, etc. - and look up Jazz. It's a substantial category, with lots of jazz events listed every night in the likes of Jazz Cafe, the 606 Club, the Bulls Head, Pizza Express, and many others. (I've just counted 17 entries for tonight, March 1st, in The Guide!) these are commercial enterprises - they wouldn't be presenting jazz if there weren't a healthy demand for it.

Fifthly, a substantial number of British jazz musicians have built national or international reputations through sustained excellent musicianship over the years. Any list must be incomplete, but let me just mention Peter King, Art Themen, Julian Joseph, Don Weller, Jim Mullen, Pat Crumly, Dave O'Higgins, Guy Barker, Courtney Pine, Gerard Presencer, Elaine Delmar, Tony Coe, Joe Temperley and of course Cleo Laine and John

Dankworth. Not all are household names, but they are all well known far beyond the inner circle of jazz cognoscenti. This couldn't be true if jazz in Britain were a dying art with a shrinking following, as Peter's article implies.

Of course there is another side to the coin. Most of my jazz-playing friends scrape a living from gig to mouth - there is never enough good paying work unless you are a megastar. I suspect the same is true for musicians in other fields, always has been, and is just as true for actors, painters, sculptors, writers and poets. Nobody choosing to work in an artistic field is guaranteed a living, and only a small percentage will do better than survive while following their muse. But an objective witness examining the state of jazz in Britain today would have to admit the existence of more jazz clubs, the sale of more jazz recordings, more live jazz gigs, plus 2 radio stations based entirely around jazz. It may not be ideal, but it's better than ever before, and still improving.

I am personally delighted that our Company is playing its part in this expansion with the Jazz Silver Medal, and I know that the recipients of the award so far really appreciate the fact that our ancient livery has chosen to include jazz in the music which it supports. Fellow Liverymen, join me in enjoying the wonderful jazz being played in Britain today, and celebrate the many superb British musicians who have taken British jazz to such an artistic pinnacle!

YOR'S APPEAL

activities, a special event will be held, exceptionally, at Guildhall on 13th May. It will feature a fashion show with celebrity models, musical entertainment and a champagne reception followed by a dinner. The Musicians' Company is making a donation for the provision of the music. Liveryman Anthony Peagam is acting as the Company's liaison.

Tickets are available; either for the reception and fashion show at £50 or, to include the dinner, at £125 per head.

The leading light is Diana Morgan who gained fame as the 'Green Goddess' when she popularised keep-fit sessions on television. Tickets and information are available directly from Kyla Harrison-Gillett, phone 0171 626 2500.



Liveryman Jan Lowy

THE CITY MUSIC SOCIETY

Following their memorable performance in the Maisie Lewis Company Concerts at the Wigmore Hall, the City Music Society provided a platform for Jamie Walton, cello, and Daniel Grimwood, piano, at the Bishopsgate Hall in January. The Musicians' Company were kindly invited to attend.

We have close connections with the Society as the current Chairman is Liveryman Alan Paul and Vice-Chairman, Liveryman Leslie East.

The recital was followed by a buffet lunch, where once again, we had a chance of meeting both artists. They took the opportunity to raise certain questions about their careers. Consequently, it is pleasing that certain qualified members of the Company offered to provide impartial professional advice.

Assistance to those in their 'wilderness years' is the principal objective of our Quincentennial Celebrations.

SPECIAL AWARDS COMMITTEE

At the January meeting the following recommendations were made:

Walter Willson Cobbett Medal, in recognition of services to Chamber Music: Yfrah Neaman.

Professor Neaman is a Liveryman. Charles Santley Memorial Gift, to two distinguished vocalists:

Robert Lloyd and Ann Murray

Percival-Hart Fund, for the encouragement of singing:

Manchester Mid-Day Concerts
Clonter Opera
National Opera Studio
and Live Music Now

Priaux Rainier Prize was given to James Wilding of the South African College of Music, University of Capetown, for his Wind Quintet. This award alternates annually with the RAM.

ADMINISTRATOR

For those members familiar with her legendary organisation of the annual Royal Concerts, it can surely come as no surprise that following Liveryman Jan Lowy's retirement from the Musicians Benevolent Fund, she has both effortlessly and unobtrusively slid into the role of administering the Musicians Maisie Lewis Concerts. In her spare time, she is both a Member and Secretary of the Goldsmiths Choral Union.

With such a high standard of auditions for the 1997 concerts, please note that there is now to be an additional concert on Tuesday, 8th July.