

STAN GETZ

and

The OSCAR PETERSON Trio

One of the most concisely accurate appraisals of Stan Getz was written by Don Gold in *Down Beat* about a previous Getz album, *Stan Getz in Stockholm* (Verve 8213): Gold spoke of “his infinite taste, richly flowing conception, and warm feeling. He can create moving ballad forms or exciting up-tempo patterns, characterized in both cases by long, lovely phrases.”

There is also an increasing strength and fullness of tone in Getz’s work in the past few years. The sound that, as one British critic once wrote, took on occasionally the quality of a whisper, has become more assertive without any loss of the lyricism that has been Getz’s key quality. Lyricism and logic. Getz is able to really build an integrated improvisation that in retrospect is heard as a whole with all its parts clearly and almost inevitably inter-related. He doesn’t just run changes on a song, but instead *interprets* the song while making it a personal message. He never lets technique take over for its own hollow sake.

Getz also has incontestable time. Like Oscar Peterson, Ray Brown and Herb Ellis, he swings. He swings with seeming lack of self-consciousness as to whether he does or not. It comes out that way. He’s probably had that accurate and flowing a feeling for time almost since he started. It’s hardest

of all to learn that quality unless the beginnings of it are already in you.

As for the Peterson trio, when they were part of a recent JATP tour of England, pianist-critic Steve Race of the *Melody Maker* wrote of Peterson: “There is no more swinging jazz-man on earth. . . . Ray Brown’s monumental bass playing is a sheer joy, each round true note preceded by that percussive impact which is the hallmark of the really great jazz bassist.” And as for Ellis, there’s not only his time and ability to be fully *part* of a collectively improvising unit, there’s also his infectious delight in playing. Few musicians get so much joy out of their vocations as Ellis evidently does. He treats the guitar as if it were an extension of himself, and of course, it is.

The tunes are all standards except for Getz’s *Tour’s End* — in which you can hear him for a time on one of his specialties, stop-chorus blowing wherein everyone lays out while he takes vault-swinging breaks — and his *Bronx Blues*. Also note the long ballad medley which proves again how lovingly inventive and assured all four are on ballads, a skill that occasionally seems to be a near-disappearing art in some modern jazz circles. It’s a well-balanced set, and one with an unusual degree of rapport among the players. They’re all, after all, post-graduate professionals, and this might be termed a private seminar in advanced but direct improvisation.

— Nat Hentoff

Personnel:

STAN GETZ, *tenor*; OSCAR PETERSON, *piano*; RAY BROWN, *bass*; HERB ELLIS, *guitar*.

The tunes are:

I WANT TO BE HAPPY

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN

BALLAD MEDLEY:

BEWITCHED, BOTHERED AND BEWILDERED

I DON’T KNOW WHY I JUST DO

HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON

I CAN’T GET STARTED

POLKA DOTS AND MOONBEAMS

I’M GLAD THERE’S YOU

TOUR’S END

I WAS DOING ALL RIGHT

BRONX BLUES