

"New Music," Tired Licks and Militant Vibes:

A Sampling of this season's jazz

By John Motavalli

Ole

Noah Howard
(Chiaroscuro 2016)



Many of the "angry" musicians of the 1960s have considerably altered their sound from the uncompromising, all-out music they once performed. Noah Howard is no exception, although his metamorphosis has not been quite as drastic as, say, Chick Corea's.

Noah Howard's alto saxophone, frequently heard in "new music" circles in the middle and late '60s, in groups led by Archie Shepp, Albert Ayler, Sun Ra, and many more. He had a raw, impassioned tone and a brilliant compositional talent that made many of his early LPs (most of

affairs. One French magazine called his music "dissonant, frenzied, violent, and revolutionary."

Howard's new record, *Ole*, is something of a departure. True, he plays with as much commitment as ever, but he has chosen here to work in a more controlled, conventional manner that will make his music more acceptable to those who shrink in horror at the first "outside" honk of a saxophone. The music on *Ole* is hardly commercial by today's standards, however, and Howard has managed to survive the decade without compromising his considerable gifts.

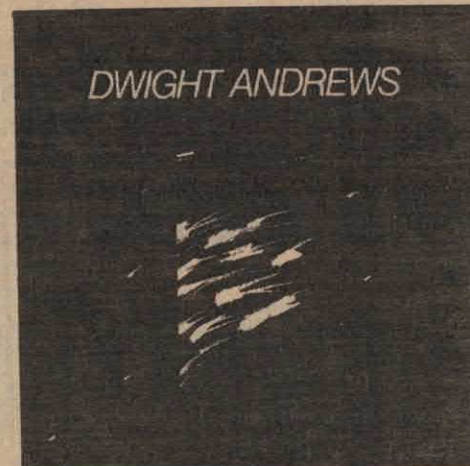
The standout on the record is the title track, a reworking of the John Coltrane original. The arrangement sticks close to Trane's version, but Howard's playing is not that of a Coltrane clone; he's a musician who knows how to pay respect to a tradition while adding his own voice to it.

"Kanpai" and "Creole girl" are both straight-ahead originals that reveal the strength of Howard's compositional skills, as well as giving the saxophonist an opportunity to get in a good deal of solo time. The album is more than just a blowing session, and it's hoped that after all the scuffling, Howard has done he might finally get a little recognition.

Mmotia-The Little People
Dwight Andrews
(Otic 1007)

The reedman who made this record should be familiar to many in the Southern Connecticut area. As a member of the

(CMIF), Dwight Andrews has frequently performed in New Haven and Hartford with vibist Bobby Naughton and trumpeter Leo Smith. In these all too infrequent demonstrations of his abilities, Andrews has shown that he can fit well into a number of



diverse musical settings.

On this his first record, Andrews has chosen to concentrate on a spare, understated style that reveals a profound affinity for African folk music. Working with pianist Nat Adderly Jr. (son of the famed trumpeter) and Brazilian percussionist Nana Vasconcelos, Andrews has created a music that, because of an inventive use of various percussion instruments and effective use of a number of different reed instruments, is richly varied and creative.

Andrews makes effective use of the bass clarinet on "Vamos para casa," in a piece that is a riff from Eric Dolphy's ground-

breaking work on this instrument. Also well done is a track entitled "The Flower that Follows the Sun," a number that moves through a number of tempo changes and gives us a healthy dose of Adderly's piano work.

Bobby Naughton's OTIC records are put out on a shoestring budget and, at last report Naughton was having trouble paying for a second pressing of this LP. Just be patient, however, if you have to wait a bit for *The Little People* to make it to your neighborhood record store. It'll be worth the wait.

B.C.

Billy Cobham
(Columbia JC35993)

I wouldn't have thought Cobham could sink much lower than his previous release but it appears I've underestimated him. Any resemblance to any form of creative music here is a matter of the purest coincidence. "Bring up the House Lights" is so monumentally silly that it's hard to believe he could seriously release it. George Duke and Cobham trade "hip" spoken inanities for four minutes and 28 seconds over a vapid, "funk" beat. This track typifies the absolute throwaway nature of *B.C.* File this either under "P" for product or "J" for junk.

La Placita
Marion Brown Quartet
(Timeless Muse 314)

It's been quite some time since the last

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