

DEAR JAZZUK

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IN WYNTON'S CORNER

Dear JazzUK,

Don G O'Vanney comes down on the side of the critics of Wynton Marsalis (*No 59*). I've seen the man over here, and many times at the Marciac Festival in France. Three-hour concerts which range from ragtime to vaudeville ('Open The Door, Richard' chorus the front line) to postbop. And timeless, electrifying swing with Wes Anderson, Eric Lewis, Herlin Riley and Carlos Henriquez.

If you had heard the Marciac college students (godfather: W.Marsalis) and the Marciac Big Band (director: W. Marsalis) this year, Don G, your criticism of a restricted, dated music might make you bite your tongue. Dress and formality?! Lighten up, Don G! Keith Brain, Swindon, Wilts.

JAZZ IN WALES

Dear JazzUK,

We were impressed with your Jazz Economy survey (*No 59*), but sorry to see no mention that Wales has its fair share of musicians, administrators and enthusiasts who maintain a vibrant scene on minimal financial support.

Brecon is a major international festival, Cardiff has two busy clubs, Swansea has the very successful Jazzland, the Welsh Jazz Society programmes 30 major concerts per annum in five of the best arts centres in Wales. Newport's Riverfront opens in October, the Millenium Arts Centre in Cardiff Bay will feature live jazz from November, and the Torfaen Jazz Society presents weekly jazz in Pontypool. Cafe Loco features live jazz in an attractive wine bar on Newtown Station, and there are eight regional jazz societies in Wales, despite minimal support from the Arts Council of Wales. Brian Hennessey, Welsh Jazz Society, Cardiff.

CIRCULATION WARS

Dear JazzUK,

Peter Vacher made a reasonable fist of summarizing the history of UK jazz magazines (*No 59*), but his knowledge of current magazines was less informed.

Aside from his subjective reporting, favouring jazz history over the vibrant contemporary scene, a number of circulation figures quoted were incorrect. He suggests that *The Wire* and *Straight No Chaser* both sell 30,000 copies each. *The Wire*, an avant-rock publication which ceased to be primarily jazz in the mid-1990s, states a current net sale of 17,655, while *Straight No Chaser* - a quarterly dance and style culture magazine with a whisper of jazz - states a net sale of 23,900. The figure for *Jazz Journal*, quoted as 8,000, also appears exaggerated when compared to

the latest figure received from the UK's biggest wholesaler WH Smith News that shows *Jazzwise* ahead.

And asking the editor of a competitor monthly to speculate on *Jazzwise's* net sale without bothering to check the figure with us is hardly fair and balanced reporting. *Jazzwise* has a current net sale of 6,000, (Source BRAD: Oct 04) not 4,000 as you stated. Small beer maybe, but all UK jazz magazines face an uphill struggle to survive.

For the record, while *Jazzwise* recognizes the importance of the past with hundreds of reissue reviews each year and lengthy retrospective features, keeping up with the present is more important. For jazz to survive it must attract new audiences - the music's future depends on it. Jon Newey, Editor and Publisher, *Jazzwise*
The Editor writes: *we'd like to apologise to Jazzwise for neglecting the courtesy of checking their circulation figure with them.*

POCKET BATTLESHIP

Dear JazzUK,

I was surprised and somewhat dismayed to find that in your feature on jazz publications (*No 59*) there is no mention of *Jazz In London*. I do realise that the feature was largely focussed on magazines, but it does include free publications like *Jazz Express*, *Jazz At Ronnie Scott's* and 'pocket publications'.

I have never been one for self-publicity, but I would have thought the fact that *Jazz In London* has been produced for the past 30 years, and is the most comprehensive and reliable source of information about jazz performance in London, would have made it worthy of a mention.

I have, for almost 30 years, done 'everything from typesetting to ad sales', plus driving around London distributing 10,000 copies, and all the mailing -without a penny of public funding. It has sometimes been difficult to maintain production, but it has a continuous record of printing and distributing on time every month, and it is still the cheapest way for musicians and small promoters to effectively advertise their gigs. It is now accessible online.

If this all sounds a bit too 'worthy', I would have thought that the uniqueness of the publication, and the fact that it relies solely on information rather than editorial, would have been of interest vis-a-vis its longevity. I have been told that people like it because of the absence of editorial, record reviews etc.

I'm sorry if this sounds a bit like sour grapes, but I do sometimes feel completely ignored by the jazz establishment. If *Jazz In London* is of less significance than *Boz* or *JARS*, then I must surely have wasted my working life!

Mary Greig, *Jazz In London*, Heworth, York.

3 IN THE BAR

by Don G O'Vanney

Next time you enter a record shop, beware - especially if you're attracted to a new CD by someone called 'Bird'.

Now to you and me, the name 'Bird' can refer to one person only (and I don't mean the retired cricket umpire Dickie Bird). Despite this, someone called Janie Price has decided to call herself 'Bird', as you'll see on the cover of her CD *The Insides*. This is outrageous - doesn't she know that the name is already taken by one of the greatest geniuses in the history of music? Janie Price seems a perfectly good name to me - after all, it's got her where she is today (big in Iceland). And there are plenty of other animal names she could have chosen - what's wrong with 'horse' or 'dog'? (*Let's quit on the animals while we're ahead.* Ed)

More trouble among the regulars in the Ferret & Flugelhorn. This time, they're moaning (as usual) about the quiz questions in this very magazine. Too easy, they say. So I decide to set some questions of my own, to make them think a bit, and here they are:

1) Who played piano on Miles Davis's famous *Kind of Blue* recording?

2) What was the name of the saxophonist on Miles' *The Man With the Horn*?

3) What was the original name of saxophonist Yusef Lateef?

There, I bet that's got you thinking.

No sooner had the last issue of *Jazz UK* appeared, than an angry message comes to the office. It's someone from the Guardian Media Group, no less, complaining that my item about the title change from *Jazz FM* to *Smooth FM* was 'inaccurate'.

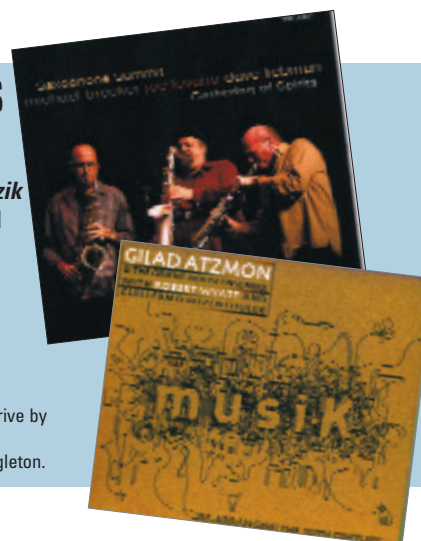
I have to say that I'm flattered - I really didn't think that the mighty GMG was hanging on my every word. Anyway, we've heard nothing more. But if the GMG really does have a problem, why don't they put it in writing, so that I can respond in the time-honoured fashion? Watch this space.

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- 1 What is the name Gilad Atzmon's world-music band?
- 2 Which country does he come from originally?
- 3 Which legendary veteran pianist did Joe Lovano perform with in Britain this year?

Send your answers on a postcard please, marked 'Saxists' to *JazzUK*, 26 The Balcony, Castle Arcade, Cardiff, CF10 1BY, to arrive by Monday November 29. Last issue's answers: Edward Kennedy Ellington, Jimmy Blanton and 'A' Train. The winners: Arline Easson of Dundee, Jay Allen of Hereford, Mr A Crothers of Aldershot, John Swift of Barnstaple, David Topping of Congleton.





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