# SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

**KOOL AND THE GANG**
**"Everything's Kool And The Gang: Greatest Hits And More" (Mercury)**

One of the most popular groups of the 1980's returns with a funky new set of tunes that's sure to go platinum, like last year's "Forever" album.

Last year, lead singer James "J. T." Taylor left the group for a solo career. But the Gang has recruited three new vocalists to take his place.

And so, the current Kool And The Gang lineup is: original members Robert "Kool" Bell, Khalis Bayyan (formerly Ronald Bell), Dennis "D.T." Thomas, Charles Smith, and George Brown; Curtis Williams and Clifford Adams, who appeared on such albums as "As One" and "In The Heart"; and new members Larry Gittens, Gary Brown, Odeen Mays and Skip Martin.

The group started out in the mid-60's as The Jazziacs, a jazz group. In 1969, they released their first hit single, "Kool And The Gang," a funky instrumental which is still available on CD (it appears on the "Kool And The Gang Spin Their Top Hits" CD). Follow-up singles, which only the most avid Kool And The Gang fans will probably remember, included "Let The Music Take Your Mind," "Funky Man," "Who's Gonna Take The Weight" and "Music Is The Message."

Their 1973 album release, "Wild And Peaceful," included their first big top-40 pop singles: "Funky Stuff," "Jungle Boogie," and "Hollywood Swinging" (all of these are available on the aforementioned CD).

James "J.T." Taylor first appeared on the group's "Ladies Night," album. J.T. sang lead on such big hits as "Too Hot," "Celebration," "Big Fun," "Get Down On It," "Joanna," "Misled" and "Stone Love."

Kool And The Gang's most recent albums have been marred by play-it-safe formula-pop songwriting and arrangements that have failed to make the best use of the individual band members' talents. The impression one might get from listening to the new songs on their latest album is that the group seems content with following established trends rather than striving to inject a little innovation in their studio performances.

The first three tracks on the new album are new recordings featuring the new members. The first cut is the current single, "Rags To Riches," and here the playing is sharp and quite danceable, but it sounds like a track from a Bar-Kays album.

I predict the ballad "Strong," sung by Gary Brown, will be the biggest single from the album, as it's got that familiar pop sound of the group's days with J.T., and since it's done in a style not unlike that of Gregory Abbott, I'm sure it will sell. Curtis Williams's "Money And Power" is lame uptempo filler, and for my money is the album's weakest track.

Now for those fans who didn't acquire the group's "Celebrate!," "In The Heart," "Emergency" and "Forever" LPs, here's your chance to get such well-known singles as "Stone Love," "Joanna," "Too Hot," "Cherish" and "Celebration," all in their original full-length versions, although the version of "Cherish" included on this new set is different from the original album version, as this new version includes drums and saxophone during the first verse, which does not appear on the original. Also, the version included in the new package is actually **shorter** than the original, since the original was 4:45 and the version on the new package runs for only 4:21.

Arguably the most interesting tracks on this new set are the six "club remixes" of the group's classic hits. For the majority of the them, the term "remix" is misleading, as these tracks feature newly recorded percussion, bass and so on; only the vocal tracks and some sound effects remain from the originals.

So, in essence, these are brand new recordings, and you may find that, outside the dance club environment, these remakes are somewhat less than satisfying. But they are must-haves for die-hard fans.

The remake of "Hollywood Swinging" had me puzzled as to why remixer Dave "O" chose to incorporate the bass line from Queen's "Another One Bites The Dust" into the mix. Now come on! No one buys a Kool And The Gang album to hear "Another One Bites The Dust"! What is this?

The remake of "Funky Stuff" is probably the most interesting of all the remakes here. There's scratching and sampling galore, a spiffy new "bridge," and some rapping by Kurtis Blow, who also records for Mercury. It's possible that the engineers may have overdone things a bit, as this new recording is not representative of Kool And The Gang's current style at all, but what the heck, it was originally intended to be a fun tune, so some folks apparently just wanted to play with it.

The CD version of "Everything's Kool And The Gang" includes a bonus track, "Peacemaker (European Club Remix '87)." What was originally an gospel-oriented, preachy mishmash of ideas now sounds like an early-70's style disco-era classic.

With over 60 minutes of music, some of which is cleverly executed, this album represents a better deal than the group's 1987 "Forever" LP. Guitarist Charles Smith has said that the group's new sound is in the early stages of its development, and it will be interesting to see what develops when their next LP, which they'll start on next month, is finally released.

Yvette Money

**YVETTE MONEY**
**"I'm Gonna Get Mine" (4th And Broadway)**

19-year-old Yvette Money, a rapper from Philadelphia, has a new 12-inch out on 4th And Broadway. Monica Walters took the name Yvette Money after L.L. Cool J released a rap titled "Dear Yvette." Yvette Money had a hit with "Yvette's Revenge," an answer record of sorts.

On her latest, Yvette cuts into a dope groove reminiscent of recent performances by M.C. Lyte and J.J. Fad, and is a perfect companion to your Eric B. And Rakim and L.L. Cool J platters, you homeboys out there.

## —Tartuffe

(Continued from Page 4)

The plays run now through August 13 at the McManus Theater, Loyola College located at 4501 N. Charles Street.

For tickets call (301) 532-5024 and for further information call (301) 547-2424.


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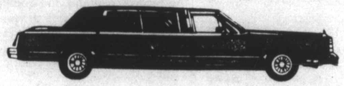

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# ALL THAT JAZZ

By Bob Matthews

Remember the Maryland Jazz Festival at Oregon Ridge which had to be canceled because of the storm which knocked out the power, and drenched the sound system?

Well, the makeup date is now official. Talked with Elzie Street this week who confirmed that the makeup concert has been scheduled for Labor Day, September 5.

It will happen at the same site, Oregon Ridge Park beginning at 2 p.m. Artists scheduled are **Herbie Mann and his group, McCoy Tyner, with Freddie Hubbard and Benny Golson**, the **Mel Lewis big band**.

Every effort was made to bring back **Roberta Flack**, and she was eager to appear, but it couldn't happen. She is scheduled to appear in Baltimore at the Lyric Theater Sept. 25 in a benefit for HERO.

In the her contract with the

Roberta Flack

bookers is the standard clause which forbids appearances in the area for 45 days prior to the scheduled performance—ergo, she is forbidden from appearing in the area on Labor Day.

So, a big name vocalist was needed to round out the bill. Lots of names were suggested, and the final choice — for a variety of reasons — was **Carmen McRae**.

Attempts were made to try to lineup Carmen with **Betty Carter**, who are hot these days with a really great album called "Duets." Betty was not available—but Carmen was.

So this completes the lineup, which really sounds like a great afternoon of jazz. In fact, as those who have attended concerts at Oregon Ridge know, its a great picnicking spot.

Naturally, tickets from the previously canceled concert will be honored at this one. And, of course, you will be able to purchase tickets for the set. The price remains the same as before, $21 in advance, $25 at the door — or gate.

Carmen McRae and Betty Carter

Kinda slid swiftly by the announcement that the Mel Lewis band will be on the bill. This is the same group which has been playing Monday nights at the Village Vanguard in NY for many years.

Back in the days when it was the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis band, they were playing this Monday nights gig. If you are a lover of that big band sound—this is a chance to see one of the remaining institutions.

As Milt Jackson is want to say: "ain't many of us left."

* * *

Put in your futures file: The Jazz Heritage Society which had such a successful venture at Ethel's Place with Max Roach, will present another episode of their Jazz Legends series Saturday, October 1 at UMBC.

Heading up the list of legends to appear are: **Jimmy Heath**, tenor sax; **Jackie McLean**, alto sax; **Rufus Reid**, bass; **Art Taylor**, drums; **Slide Hampton**, trombone, and **Hank Jones**, piano.

Naturally, we'll have more on this one as the time approached — whew! what a lineup.

* * *

While we talking futures, Wings Productions is putting on a Jazz Weekend in Lancaster, PA November 18-20. 'Twill be hosted by **Steve Allen**, and showcase a variety of artists, including:

The **Sweets Edison-Frank Wess Quintet**, **Al Grey Quartet**, the **Ray Anthony 16-piece band**, with a group of Basie alumni in the band; **Bud Shank Quartet, Jackie Cain & Roy Kral, Chris Conner**, vocalist, and many other groups.

Again, more details forthcoming as the date approaches.

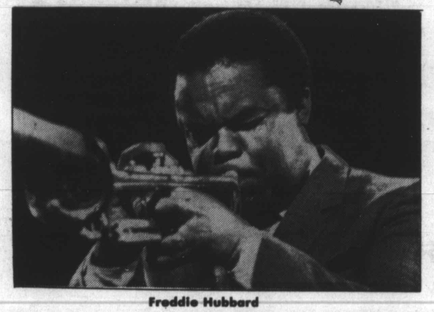
* * *

Hospitalized is Baltimore vocalist **Shirley Fields**, who is at University Hospital, but out of intensive care. As her brother (Mickey) told us, she is coming along nicely, and now is in a regular hospital room.

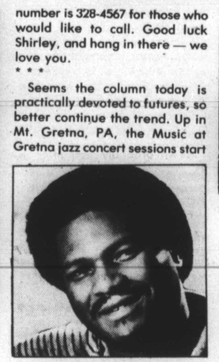
Mickey points out that she is now allowed tv and a phone. The number is 328-4567 for those who would like to call. Good luck Shirley, and hang in there — we love you.

* * *

Seems the column today is practically devoted to futures, so better continue the trend. Up in Mt. Gretna, PA, the Music at Gretna jazz concert sessions start up again August 19.



Freddie Hubbard



McCoy Tyner

Herbie Mann

On tap will be the **Larry Coryell Trio**, with Larry, guitar; **Stanley Cowell**, piano; **Buster Williams**, bass, and **Billy Hart**, drums.

Wednesday, Aug. 24, will have the **Glen Zottola Trio** with **Derek Smith**, piano ,**Bobby Rosengarden**, drums and **Steve LaSpina** replacing Milt Hinton on bass.

## —'Quiet Storm'

(Continued from Page 3)

Although, perhaps best known for his superb trumpet playing and quick-witted banter on "The Tonight Show," Severinsen is one of today's premiere instrumentalists with over twenty-five recordings ranging in style from big band to dixieland, traditional jazz, jazz fusion and country.

The Tonight Show Orchestra has just recently begun to tour as a group to let millions of "Tonight Show" fans across the country experience the live sound.

Whether accompanying the great guests of "The Tonight Show," or being featured with the dynamic arrangements of their leaders or members, the orchestra, consisting of top musicians in the entertainment field, has drawn rave reviews from the critics as well as the legends with whom they perform.

Whether singing alone or in the recording studio, the quality of Rosemary Clooney's present day performances reveals an artist who has mellowed, matured and is at the peak of her creative powers.

The distinctive, smooth sound which garnered her accolades, awards and gold records during the 1950s is today strengthened by her triumphant victory over past personal trauma and a return to her real joy in singing and making music.

Tickets for all Pier Six concerts are available at the Pier Six Box Office Monday through Friday, from noon to 6:00 p.m., and on performance days from noon through intermission.

Tickets are also available at all area Ticket Center outlets and the Baltimore Arena Box Office.

Concertgoers can charge tickets by phone by calling TeleCharge at (301) 625-1400. (Out-of-state residents may call 1-800-638-2444.) There is a service charge for tickets purchased through TeleCharge and at area ticket outlets.

The WJZ 13 Harborlights Music Festival is sponsored by WJZ-TV, The Pepsi-Cola Company of Baltimore, The 6 Gallant Men of Olds and Baltimore's Best, B-104, and is produced by The Baltimore Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

The concert pavilion is located at Pier Six and Pratt Street along Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

For additional information, call the Pier Six Box Office at (301) 727-5580.

Pieces of a Dream