SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

LEVERT
"Just Coolin' " (Atlantic)

The Ohio trio who has topped the charts with such hits as "Casanova" and "Addicted To You" are back with a cool new LP.

LeVert consists of Marc Gordon (24) and brothers Gerald (22) and Sean Levert (20). Sean and Gerald's father, Eddie Levert, Sr. is a member of The O'Jays.

LeVert's first album, "Bloodline," was released in 1986. The first single from that LP, "(Pop, Pop, Pop, Pop) Goes My Mind," was a number one black chart single.

Their next album, "The Big Throwdown," went gold. In 1988, their "Addicted To You" single, which appeared in the movie "Coming To America," also hit number one.

"Just Coolin' " is LeVert's funkiest album to date. The opening cut, "Pull Over," and the title track, which features rapper Heavy D. (of Heavy D. And The Boyz), feature the same sort of slick, street-beat-oriented drum programming many groups are attempting. But on songs like side two's "Let's Get Romantic," they show they're more than just a funk group. Smooth.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
"Top Of The Stax — Twenty Greatest Hits" (Stax)

'Tis the season for compilation albums. If you're into various-artists compilations, here's one worth checking out.

In the 60's, Detroit's Motown was one of the dominant forces in black music; Memphis' Stax Records was one of the primary soul music alternatives during that period, and some of Stax's biggest hits are included in this two-record set.

This collection of twenty classic singles by such well-known artists as Sam And Dave, Carla Thomas, Booker T. And The MGs, Isaac Hayes, Mel And Tim, Otis Redding, The Staple Singers and many others, spans the entire history of the Stax label (1962-74). Many consider this material "Southern soul music at its best."

The sound quality of these old classics is pretty good overall, but I don't think anyone is ever going to be able to do anything about the muddy sound of Booker T. & The MGs' "Green Onions." That track has been re-issued time and time again with that horrible "re-channeling to simulate stereo" for years, and even the CD is only a slight improvement. Oh, well...

The version of "Starting All Over Again" by Mel And Tim included here is the shorter version, without the conversation at the beginning (the full-length version is available on another Stax compilation, "15 Original Big Hits, Volume 1," which came out in 1981).

This compilation includes a brief Stax history written by Lee Hildebrand and some nice (but rather small) black-and-white photos of the various artists.

Levert

Music Notes

There are quite a few compilations albums available now. A&M has "Human League Greatest Hits" (includes "Don't You Want Me?)) Into hard rock? Columbia has "Aerosmith Gems" (includes "Rats In The Cellar"). Is 50's rock and roll your thing? MCA has "Chuck Berry — The Chess Box," with 71 hits and rarities by Chuck.

Plenty of jazz, too. Blue Note is once again making available "Best Of" albums by Lee Morgan, Dexter Gordon, Jimmy Smith, Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock and Horace Silver. And on "Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker On Verve," a 10-CD set, Charlie Parker has never sounded better.

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Almost everything you ever wanted to know about the Beatles' studio sessions is in Mark Lewisohn's new book, "The Beatles Recording Sessions" (Harmony Books, 208 pp.) available now.

Gordon Hawkins in recital

By DuBois Quarles
Afro Columnist

In cooperation with the General Electric Foundation, the Washington Opera recently sponsored Gordon Hawkins, baritone, in a recital which was held in the Organization of American States building in Washington, DC.

Hawkins, a talented young black artist who is a member of the Affiliate Artist Inc., is an operatic success story which began in 1986 in Washington, DC.

In this same year, he was a draft choice of the Texas Rangers, but instead, he tried out for and won the Metropolitan Opera Auditions.

This success ultimately led to appearances with the Washington Opera, the Wolf Trap Opera Company, and the National Symphony Orchestra. He has also sung with other American opera companies, symphony orchestra, ad in Australia with the Spoleto Festival.

Hawkins, a native of Clenton, MD, earned his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the University ofr Maryland.

During his recital, Hawkins sang works which clearly provided him with an opportunity to explore a wide range of emotions, settleties and nuances with his enormous instrument which was perfectly controlled throughout the recital.

Gordon Hawkins, baritone

In the first half of the program, Hawkins chose Handel's "See The Raging Flames Arise," an energetic favorite of baritones which permitted him to display vocal technics and a style suited to the period.

Three French songs by Henri Duparc, allowed Hawkins to control his powerful voice and produce the superb tones required when singing in French.

And in works by Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, and Hugo Wolf, he was in complete agreement with the intent of each composer.

It is a little wonder that he won the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, because in the aria "Nemico della patria" ("Enemy of his country") from "Andrea Chenier," by Umberto Giordano, Hawkins demonstrated a dramatic ability which proved beyond a doubt that he has a flare for the opera stage.

A touching moment of the evening came when he sang, unaccompanied, two spirituals . . ." I Believe I'll Go Home," and "Steal Away." We wanted to hear more from our heritage, but none was forthcoming. Instead, Hawkins concluded his recital with three selections by Maurice Ravel which were well received.

Even though he was tired, and was appreciative of the ovation given him by the capacity crowd, he relented and sang the popular "Some Enchanted Evening," from Rodgers and Hammerstein's "South Pacific," as his only encore, which he delivered in fine style.

Hawkins was accompanied on the piano by Kim Witman who is well known in the Washington area.

She received a Masters of Music in Piano Performance form Catholic University, and a Bachelor of Science in Music Therapy from Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania. She coaches singers performing with The Washington and Wolf Trap Opera Companies.

—All That Jazz

(Continued from Page 3)

ly were whaling away. In the group was **Ron Holloway**, tenor; (replacing **Sam Rivers**, **John Lee**, electric bass; **Ignacio Berroa**, drums, and **Ed Cherry**, guitar. The group was cooking on some unusual things, such as "The Land of Milk and Honey" which Dizzy sang.

HOUSTON PERSON AND ETTA JONES

Another tune performed — which Diz also sang was "Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You." And he reminded us that the song was written by **Don Redman** with lyrics by **Andy Razaf.**

That's a good question next time you need a bit of trivia for those jazz discussions. What was Don Redman's theme song, and what piano player did Razaf write many hit tunes for? (Answer next week, in case you need it.)

* * *

Jazz Expressways is scheduled to host its holiday cabaret Saturday, December 10 at the Milbrook Community Center, 6806 Milbrook Park Dr.

This time, they are featuring live music with the **Abdu Raschid Yahya Trio**, with **Arnold Sterling** and **Sheila Green**, vocals. It all begins at 9 p.m., and is a BYOB.

According to Lenny Yorke, no tickets will be sold at the door. Further information (301)669-0963.

ON THE CLASSICAL MUSIC BEAT

LeQuatre performs concerts for percussion and orchestra

By DuBois Quarles

Ross Lee Finney's "Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra," will be performed by the D. C. Youth Orchestra on Sunday, December 4, 1988 at 6 p.m. in the Coolidge H.S. Auditorium, 5th and Sheridan Streets, NW.

Featured soloists in this work will be members of Le Quatre, Washington's Premiere Percussion Quartet, consisting of native Washingtonians who are professional performers.

They are **Alfonso Pollard**, Music Director of Le Quatre, and well known solo percussionist who is also Associate Professor of Music at Howard University; **Andre Whatley**, well known in the area as freelance percussionist; **Donald Carrington**, performer with the Baltimore and Annapolis Symphony Orchestras; **Darryl Singleton**, faculty member at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, the University of the District of Columbia, and a freelance performer.

And Korean-born pianist, **Sukey Goh** who is a faculty member at Duke Ellington School.

Pollard, Whatley and Singleton are all former members of the D. C. Youth Orchestra.

The concerto was commissioned by Carleton College as a part of its centennial celebrations and was first performed by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducting, on November 17, 1966.

Le Quatre, formed in 1976, has performed extensively in the Washington Metropolitan area and has received critical acclaim.

For more information, contact J. M. Williams (202) 723-1812.

French Embassy to host champagne chamber concert

Connoisseurs of chamber music will have an opportunity to hear members of the American Chamber Orchestra in the popular Champagne Chamber Series at the elegant French Embassy Auditorium (La Maison Francaise) on Monday, December 5, 1988 at 8 p.m.

The concert will include works by Beethoven, Poulenc and Debussy.

Featured artists will be William Haroutounian, concertmaster of the orchestra; Joanne Haroutounian, pianist; Deborah Milan, cello; Dorothy Darlington, oboe; and Truman Harris, bassoon.

The final concert in this series will be held on February 17, 1989 and it will feature works by Beethoven and Debussy.

In March and May of 1989, the American Chamber Orchestra will present full length concerts in the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theatre. Call Carl Yaffee, (301) 589-3407, or William Yarborough, (202) 244-0756, for ticket information.

THE AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

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