princeton university jazz ensemble

SIDE ONE

Dizzyland
Composed and Arranged by Don Menza

All In Love Is Fair
Composed by Stevie Wonder
Arranged by Steven S. Wexler

Samba De Haps
Composed and Arranged by Mark Taylor

Great American Scream Machine
Composed and Arranged by Allen Vizzutti

SIDE TWO

Little Pixie #8
Composed and Arranged by Thad Jones

Lush Life
Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Arranged by Alan Yankee

Groovin' Hard
Composed and Arranged by Don Menza

PERSONNEL:

Trumpets:
Bill Ash
Tony Branker
John Dolan, Lead
John Hill
Bill McHenry

Trombones:
Matt Geyman
Doug Greene
Ben Monderer
Barry Welch, Lead

Conductor: Jim Capolupo
Student Conductor: Steven S. Wexler
President: Bill McHenry
Business Manager: Larry Brown

Produced by Ben Monderer
Recorded at Woolworth Center, Princeton, New Jersey
April 16, 1979
Cover Design by Mindy Ryan

JAZZ AT PRINCETON IN PERSPECTIVE

The recent tragic death of Charles Mingus marks the passing of yet another of the true creative geniuses of jazz. Along with people like Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker and Clifford Brown, Mingus was a consummate artist, a man who cut jazz from the fabric of raw emotions and made it art. Jazz in the 20th century has been amazingly resilient because of men like Mingus: it has resisted the legions of imitators who have threatened to destroy its creativity through commercialism. Listening to the music of Mingus and the other legends confirms the impression that jazz is every bit as valid as Bach, Beethoven or Stravinsky.

Princeton, on the other hand, has been part of a white intellectual tradition which has, at best, ignored the validity of jazz, driving men like Mingus to near insanity. That is why the creation of the Princeton University Jazz Ensemble five years ago is particularly noteworthy. Over its brief history, it has grown to include two big bands (you hear the top band here) and has hired a professional conductor with largely self-raised funds. It promotes jazz by giving free concerts and making equipment available to members. The Jazz Ensemble is an antidote to the reclusive theoreticians and pompous academics who sometimes populate Princeton.

Unfortunately, the trend towards jazz education at colleges and high schools has been scarred by too many white musicians with little regard for the black tradition. If Stan Kenton's clinics and concerts have been positive in exposing students to jazz, they have closed the door to further experimentation by emphasizing one style and ignoring the importance of bebop and other jazz legacies.

Fortunately, the Jazz Ensemble has managed to avoid such a fate, precisely because we are student-run and have worked with people such as Benny Carter and Paul Jeffrey. Listen to the way the band swings on Groovin' Hard and you'll hear evocations of Count Basie. Listen to the trumpets play bebop on Dizzyland and to the trombones on a gorgeous arrangement of Duke Ellington's Lush Life.

A lot of the credit also goes to Mr. Jim Capolupo, our present conductor, who has avoided many of the mistakes of the so-called educators. Capolupo is beginning to build a jazz program at Princeton, but not in the mold of most high-pressure, music-oriented schools. The advantage of the Princeton program will remain its combination of high standards and playing for fun.

Mingus is a deity to those who know his music because, like the music of Parker and the others, it contains an undefinable spirit which links jazz to deep human needs and desires. Living up to the heritage of Mingus is not easy. We hope we have succeeded in transmitting at least some of his jazz spirit to you.

Bill McHenry '79

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