

PRESTIGE

A gold-colored saxophone is positioned diagonally across the word 'PRESTIGE'. The body of the saxophone is integrated into the letter 'I', and the neck and keys extend upwards and to the right, crossing over the letters 'S', 'T', and 'I'.

THE
PRESTIGE RECORDS
STORY

BOB WEINSTOCK would like to dedicate
The Prestige Records Story to **SELIG WEINSTOCK (1898-1964)**

This compilation produced by **RALPH KAFFEL, BOB PORTER,** and **BOB WEINSTOCK**

Original sessions produced by **Bob Weinstock, Bob Porter, Ira Gitler, Esmond Edwards, Ozzie Cadena, Don Schlitten, Lew Futterman, Cal Lampley, Teacho Wiltshire**

Production coordination—**Terri Hinte, Tara Lochen, Peggy Van Steenhuysen**

Art direction and box design—**Jamie Putnam**

Book design—**Linda Kalin**

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Interviews conducted by **Lee Hildebrand**

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LEADERS

MOSE ALLISON • GENE AMMONS • GEORGE BENSON • RUSTY BRYANT • ARNETT COBB
AL COHN • JOHN COLTRANE • SONNY CRISS • KING CURTIS • TADD DAMERON
EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS • MILES DAVIS • ERIC DOLPHY • CHARLES EARLAND • GIL EVANS
JIMMY FORREST • RED GARLAND • STAN GETZ • DEXTER GORDON • WARDELL GRAY
COLEMAN HAWKINS • RICHARD "GROOVE" HOLMES • MILT JACKSON • WILLIS JACKSON
ILLINOIS JACQUET • BOOGALOO JOE JONES • ETTA JONES • ROLAND KIRK • LEE KONITZ
JACK McDUFF • THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET • THELONIOUS MONK • JAMES MOODY
OLIVER NELSON • HOUSTON PERSON • KING PLEASURE • JIMMY RANEY • SONNY ROLLINS
ANNIE ROSS • SHIRLEY SCOTT • ZOOT SIMS • SONNY STITT • BUDDY TATE • LENNIE TRISTANO

... & SOME FEATURED SIDEMEN

RAY BARRETTO • WALTER BISHOP • CLIFFORD BROWN • ART BLAKEY • KENNY BURRELL
BILLY BUTLER • JAKI BYARD • BLOSSOM DEARIE • JOE DUKES • GEORGE DUVIVIER
ALLEN EAGER • TOMMY FLANAGAN • AL HAIG • BARRY HARRIS • ROY HAYNES
ALBERT "TOOTIE" HEATH • PERCY HEATH • RED HOLLOWAY • FREDDIE HUBBARD
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IDRIS MUHAMMAD • JOE NEWMAN • CHARLIE PARKER • SONNY PHILLIPS
BUD POWELL • RICHIE POWELL • BERNARD PURDIE • JEROME RICHARDSON • MAX ROACH
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STANLEY TURRENTINE • GROVER WASHINGTON, JR. • DOUG WATKINS • FRANK WESS

- 
- 1 LEE KONITZ/LENNIE TRISTANO**
Subconscious-Lee
(Lee Konitz) Konitz Music-BMI 2:48
 - 2 STAN GETZ, ZOOT SIMS, AL COHN,
ALLEN EAGER, BREW MOORE**
Four and One Moore
(Gerry Mulligan) Beechwood Music-BMI 3:45
 - 3 WARDELL GRAY**
Twisted
(Wardell Gray) Second Floor Music-BMI 3:02
 - 4 SONNY STITT**
All God's Chillun Got Rhythm
(Kaper-Jurmann-Kahn) EMI Robbins Cat.-ASCAP 2:57
 - 5 GENE AMMONS**
Blues Up and Down (take 3)
(Ammons-Stitt) Richcar Music/Second Floor-BMI 2:36
 - 6 JAMES MOODY**
I'm in the Mood for Love
(aka *Moody's Mood for Love*)
(Fields-McHugh) EMI Robbins-ASCAP 2:43
 - 7 KING PLEASURE**
Moody's Mood for Love
(aka *I'm in the Mood for Love*)
(Fields-McHugh) EMI Robbins-ASCAP 2:58
 - 8 ANNIE ROSS**
Twisted
(Gray-Ross) Second Floor/Raybird Music-BMI 2:37
 - 9 MILES DAVIS**
Dig
(Miles Davis) Second Floor/Jazz Horn Music-BMI 7:33

10 JIMMY RANEY and STAN GETZ

'Round Midnight

(Monk-Williams-Hanighen) Warner Bros. Music-ASCAP/
Thelonious Music-BMI 5:15

11 MILES DAVIS

The Serpent's Tooth (take 1)

(Davis) Second Floor Music/Miles Davis Properties-BMI 6:57

12 THELONIOUS MONK

Blue Monk

(Thelonious Monk) Thelonious-BMI 7:35

13 MILES DAVIS

Bags' Groove (take 2)

(Milt Jackson) Recie Music-BMI 9:21

14 MILT JACKSON

My Funny Valentine

(Rodgers-Hart) Chappell & Co.-ASCAP 4:37

15 MILES DAVIS

Doxy

(Sonny Rollins) Prestige Music-BMI 4:50

16 THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET

Django

(John Lewis) MJQ Music-BMI 7:03



MJQ—MILT JACKSON, KENNY CLARKE, JOHN LEWIS, PERCY HEATH

1 JAMES MOODY

Disappointed

(Eddie Jefferson) Prestige-BMI 6:19

2 MILES DAVIS SEXTET

Walkin'

(Richard Carpenter) Richcar-BMI 13:26

3 SONNY ROLLINS

St. Thomas

(Rollins) Prestige-BMI 6:45

4 SONNY ROLLINS

Pent-Up House

(Rollins) Prestige-BMI 8:51

5 MILES DAVIS QUINTET

Well, You Needn't

(Thelonious Monk) Regent Music-BMI 6:18

6 TADD DAMERON

On a Misty Night

(Tadd Dameron) Carbaby Music-ASCAP 6:15

7 RED GARLAND

If I Were a Bell

(Frank Loesser) Frank Music-ASCAP 6:39

8 GIL EVANS

Nobody's Heart

(Rodgers-Hart) Chappell & Co.-ASCAP 4:22

9 JOHN COLTRANE

Russian Lullaby

(Irving Berlin) Irving Berlin Music-ASCAP 5:35

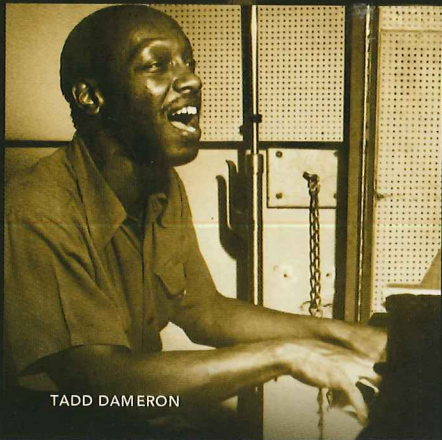
10 EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS

In the Kitchen

(Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis) Richcar-BMI 12:53



GIL EVANS



TADD DAMERON

1 GENE AMMONS

Canadian Sunset

(Heywood-Gimbel) EMI Mogull-ASCAP/Nelton Corp.-BMI 5:22

2 COLEMAN HAWKINS

Trouble Is a Man

(Alec Wilder) Ludlow Music-BMI 5:25

**3 EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS,
COLEMAN HAWKINS,
ARNETT COBB, BUDDY TATE**

Very Saxy

(Davis-Duvivier) Richcar-BMI 8:16

4 MOSE ALLISON

The Seventh Son

(Willie Dixon) Hoochie Coochie Music-BMI 2:37

5 ERIC DOLPHY

G.W.

(Eric Dolphy) Prestige-BMI 7:54

6 ROLAND KIRK

Kirk's Work

(Roland Kirk) Prestige-BMI 3:54

**7 OLIVER NELSON,
KING CURTIS, JIMMY FORREST**

Soul Street

(Jimmy Forrest) Pork Pie Music-BMI 9:07

8 ETTA JONES

Don't Go to Strangers

(Kent-Mann-Evans) Music Sales Corp.-ASCAP 3:49

9 SHIRLEY SCOTT

Hip Soul

(Stanley Turrentine) Prestige-BMI 6:25

10 WILLIS JACKSON

This'll Get to Ya

(Willis Jackson) Prestige-BMI 10:10

11 JACK McDUFF

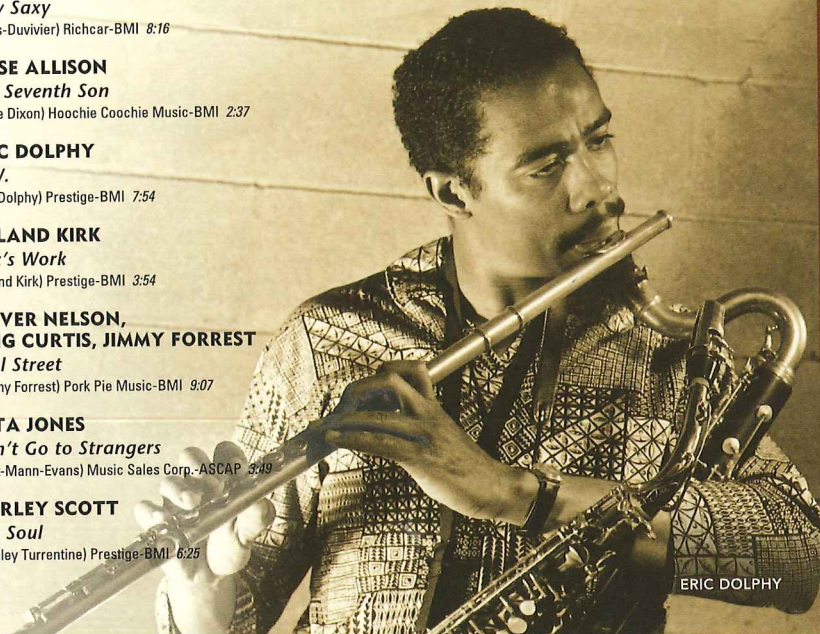
Rock Candy

(Jack McDuff) Pamelarosa Music-ASCAP 6:05

12 WILLIS JACKSON

Troubled Times

(Jackson-Marcus-Stevenson) Stone Agate Music-BMI 4:55



ERIC DOLPHY

1 GENE AMMONS

Ca'Purange (Jungle Soul)

(Mussapere) Pru Music-BMI 9:35

2 GEORGE BENSON

Sweet Alice Blues

(George Benson) Growl Music-BMI 4:36

3 RICHARD "GROOVE" HOLMES

Misty

(Erroll Garner) Octave Music-ASCAP 6:00



GEORGE BENSON

4 ILLINOIS JACQUET

*I Wish I Knew How
It Would Feel to Be Free*

(Billy Taylor) Duane Music-ASCAP 6:34

5 SONNY CRISS

Smile

(Charlie Chaplin) Bourne Co.-ASCAP 4:40

6 DEXTER GORDON

Fried Bananas

(Dexter Gordon) Dex Music-BMI 6:05

7 HOUSTON PERSON

Jamilah

(Sonny Phillips) Prestige-BMI 5:30

8 GENE AMMONS

Jungle Strut

(Gene Ammons) Prestige-BMI 5:10

9 CHARLES EARLAND

More Today Than Yesterday

(Patrick Upton) Regent-BMI 3:40

10 RUSTY BRYANT

Soul Liberation

(Charles Earland) Pecle Publ.-BMI 11:35

11 BOOGALOO JOE JONES

No Way

(Ivan "Boogaloo Joe" Jones) Prestige-BMI 7:13

12 GENE AMMONS

You Talk That Talk

(Leon Spencer, Jr.) Mian Music/Tru-Sound
Music-ASCAP 6:01



DEXTER GORDON



SOUL BATTLE
oliver nelson
king curtis
jimmy forrest

AFRO/AMERICAN SKETCHES
OLIVER NELSON SKETCHES
THE MUSIC OF OLIVER NELSON

YUSEF LATIFEE
INTO SOMETHING

It's Party Time
KING CURTIS

STEREO
AFRO/AMERICAN SKETCHES
OLIVER NELSON SKETCHES
THE MUSIC OF OLIVER NELSON

BOB WEINSTOCK (LEFT) AND OLIVER NELSON

THE WEINSTOCK ERA

by Scott Yanow

When it comes to government, the most efficient and just form is a democracy where many people have an opportunity to influence the future of their country. When it comes to jazz record labels, however, dictatorships always seem to leave the most significant legacies.

Most of the greatest record labels have been guided by the vision of one or two men, including Commodore (Milt Gabler), Keynote (Harry Lim), Blue Note (Alfred Lion and Francis Wolff), Clef/Norgran/Verve (Norman Granz, who later on ran Pablo), Contemporary (Lester Koenig), Riverside and—a decade later—Milestone (Orrin Keepnews), Impulse (after its beginnings, Bob Thiele), CTI (Creed Taylor), Concord (Carl Jefferson), Xanadu (Don Schlitten), Muse (Joe Fields), and Black Saint/Soul Note (Giovanni Bonandrini), among others. Each of those labels developed its own personality from the start, was run by a fan of the music, and had as its main purpose the documenting of the music most loved by the owner(s) while hopefully selling enough records to continue staying in business.

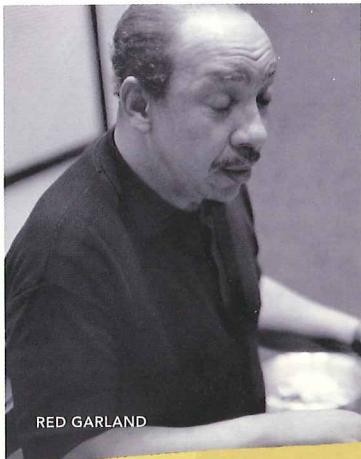
Bob Weinstock, who founded New Jazz (soon renamed Prestige) in 1949, was only 20 when he became the head of his own label. When one considers the consistent quality of the Prestige releases that came out during the 22 years that it operated as an independent label (1949-71), it is obvious that Weinstock had a great ear for his type of jazz from the very beginning. Because this boxed set is in effect a tribute to the Bob Weinstock era, it focuses on the music produced during that time.

Most of the music that Weinstock recorded fell into three overlapping categories: distinctive bop and hard bop greats, jam sessions featuring top young players, and, in the 1960s, soul-jazz organists. In each case, Weinstock preferred spontaneity (which accounts for the relatively few

existing alternate takes from many of the dates), honest playing (self-expression was much more important than being overly concerned with potential commercial sales), and swinging. Falling into the category of distinctive players were recordings by Lee Konitz, Stan Getz, Thelonious Monk (during his brief stay with the label), Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt, the Modern Jazz Quartet (their initial sessions before switching to Atlantic), Miles Davis (including his 1955-56 Quintet), John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins (who made some of the finest recordings of his career for Prestige), Red Garland, Phil Woods, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Tadd Dameron, Gil Evans, and Yusef Lateef. The legendary jam sessions of the mid- to late 1950s often featured writing by pianist Mal Waldron, were sometimes led by Ammons, and gave a variety of Young Lions an opportunity to stretch out, including Donald Byrd, Bill Hardman, Art Farmer, Jackie McLean, Phil Woods, John Coltrane, Red Garland, Waldron, and quite a few others. After the success of Jimmy Smith, who emerged in the jazz major leagues during 1956-57 as the main voice on organ, many former pianists switched instruments. Prestige quickly became the major soul-jazz label of the 1960s with such organists as Jack McDuff, Groove Holmes, Shirley Scott, and Charles Earland recording regularly and being assisted by the soulful tenormen Houston Person, Red Holloway, and Willis Jackson, along with guitarists George Benson and Pat Martino.

Vocalists were a rarity in Prestige's catalog but in this area Weinstock was fortunate, having the original versions of three of the best-known vocalese hits (Annie Ross's "Twisted" and King Pleasure's "Moody's Mood for Love" and "Parker's Mood") plus Etta Jones's "Don't Go to Strangers" and the first recordings of Mose Allison's career (when he was known as a pianist who occasionally sang).

Prestige, however, also had musical boundaries that it rarely crossed. Although Bob Weinstock had grown up loving trad jazz and Dixieland, the closest he came to recording that music was for his early Sixties subsidiary Swingville, and those records were mostly more mainstream swing than actual Dixie. The 1960s found the avant-garde and free jazz developing and



RED GARLAND

January 13, 1954

The Search For Talent—V

Weinstock Judges Stars By Emotion, Musicianship

New York—No survey of the search for recording talent would be complete without a representative from the independent jazz companies who have done so much to increase interest in jazz, and who in turn have benefited from continually growing sales of jazz records.

One such company is Prestige, headed by young Bob Weinstock. Prestige has been chiefly responsible for introducing Swedish jazz to America, has helped create

the Modern Jazz Quartet, and is the moving factor behind the New Directions series of Teddy Charles and Hall Overton.

This same label has also given the vocal world the work of Annie Ross and King Pleasure and has put on as much new talent as Gerry Mulligan, Zoot Sims, Texas Gibbs, Lee Konitz, Art Farmer, Sam Most, Jimmy Raney, Sonny Rollins, Charlie Mariano and Al

Surveying this large amount of

DOWN BEAT

activity in only four years, Weinstock points out that he decides on whom to record under two general categories. "The first is whether a man has that emotional factor. Some men I record because they hit me emotionally, not because I feel like studying their music. Wardell Gray was one, as were Sonny Stitt, Gene Ammons, and Joe Holiday.

"The second category is composed of those who are trying to advance jazz. Serious musicians like Teddy Charles, Hall Overton, George Wallington, Jimmy Raney, Lee Konitz, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and, in terms of pop, Sonny Rollins.

"Take the Modern Jazz Quartet. Milt Jackson has always been my favorite vibes player, and when I heard John Lewis was setting up a serious project to keep the group together, I signed them both. Everybody respects John. New Directions was an outgrowth of my

becoming quite controversial. Prestige recorded many Eric Dolphy records during 1960 and '61, and John Coltrane was a fixture on the label during 1956-58 (when he played his sheets-of-sound interpretations of advanced hard bop), but free jazz was largely ignored. It was up to other labels to document the Ornette Colemans and Cecil Taylors. And when fusion began in the late 1960s, the closest that Prestige came before Weinstock sold the label to Fantasy in 1971 were its many soul-jazz organ records.

The result was that one could purchase a Prestige album and, even without knowing much about the specific artist, the music could be counted on to

swing, to feature top straight-ahead artists, and to reflect its founder's tastes in music. Bob Weinstock's legacy can be heard throughout this definitive survey. Thus are the joys and advantages to having a musical dictatorship!

Scott Yanow is editor of the *All Music Guide to Jazz*.

jazz label: prestige

PRESTIGE RECORDS was born, in an oblique way, on January 11, 1949, when Weinstock cut four sides, featuring Lennie Tristano and Lee Konitz. I say *oblique*, because the original label was New Jazz and not Prestige and the date was originally scheduled as Lee's and not Lennie's. (The Tristano name seemed better known and so it was used on the label instead.)

Bob Weinstock is a young, aggressive man who had operated a record store on 47th Street off Sixth Avenue for some time before this. Although the store sold mostly dixie and swing records, Bob spent much of his non-working hours in the various modern jazz clubs, listening and, finally, planning.

As he noticed, everyone was recording bop, but no one was recording Miles or Lennie. Ergo, New Jazz, which became Prestige when Stan Getz made the label so popular.

Originally, Bob says, the records were made mostly for kicks, with a very limited distribution planned. But he got so many calls for the first four sides that they pressed additional copies and cut the price. For two years Bob built his distribution set-up

by riding Grayhound buses through sixteen cities, stopping at each one to talk to distributors and disc jockeys.

Smart planning, big distribution and some luck turned the label into a money-maker right from the start. Bob seemed to get artists just as they were beginning to hit and, of course, he was able to capitalize on their booming popularity. Stan Getz is the outstanding example of this and King Pleasure, whose records sell in huge figures, is certainly following closely on the heels of those who followed Stan—musicians like Wardell Gray, Joe Holiday, Zoot Sims and the Swedish All Stars.

For the future, Bob plans to devote most of the company's effort to LP's and EP's, which he feels are more timeless, and certainly better sellers, than standard 78rpm record. Several big projects are in the works. The New Direction Series, which started off so well with two Teddy Charles LP's is going to remain pretty much concentrated in the hands of Teddy (who is the label's West Coast recording director), Jimmy Raney and Hall Overton. John Lewis, composer and pianist, will also be featured in this series.



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| <input type="checkbox"/> 127 Gene Ammons Favorites vol. one | <input type="checkbox"/> 131 Joe Holiday—New Sounds from Newark |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> 132 Teddy Charles Trio—Vibe Solos | <input type="checkbox"/> 136 George Wallington Trio |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> 134 New Sounds From Sweden vol. 4—Domnerus—Clarinet solos | <input type="checkbox"/> 138 Zoot Sims & Al Cohn |
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METRONOME

RECORD MAN

by Bob Porter

If you drive north on Tenth Avenue in Manhattan between 42nd Street and 57th Street, you'll notice that the rampant development of midtown property hasn't yet moved this far west. There are still little storefronts, virtual holes-in-the-wall that contain small businesses. At one time, the businesses were all somehow related to the record industry. The late 1940s and early '50s found independent record labels huddled together around Tenth Avenue like some immigrant refugee community. There was no parking on Tenth but the police didn't hassle someone who wanted to drop things off or pick something up. Rents were cheap.

There are still a couple of Latin music one-stops on Tenth, but clearly the area isn't what it used to be—and hasn't been for a long time. (The same could be said about the independent record business.) Yet at one time, the action was remarkable: Bob Shad's Sittin' In With label; Hy and Sam Weiss with their one-stop; Cosnat Distributors, also the home of Jubilee Records; Beta Distributors; Bethlehem; Signal; Larry Newton's Derby and Rainbow labels. At 625 Tenth Avenue was Royal Roost Records, run by Teddy Reig and Jack Hooke. At 754 Tenth was Prestige, which was run by the youngest of them all, Bobby Weinstock. Everybody called him the kid. He was just a teenager when he started in the business, as a retailer. He started his New Jazz label when he was 20.

The story of Prestige Records is largely the story of Bob Weinstock. The label was his idea and he ran the company until May of 1971, when it was sold to Fantasy, Inc. Weinstock was a record collector who first entered the business in 1945 with a mail order operation and then a retail store. Record labels started by owners with a retail background (such as Commodore, HRS, Savoy,

CENTURY IV
From Robert S. Weinstock, 324. West 83rd Street, New York 24, N.Y., U.S.A., comes a letter to the Corner which begins: "I don't know if you've heard of me or not..." As if there could be a collector in England not familiar with America's king of traders! As we hear it, Robert is carrying on trades with some hundred collectors in this part of the world; he claims to have lately shipped his 3,000th disc overseas, and he is offering to take on new contacts in England, or, for that matter, in any foreign country.

Dial, and Vee-Jay) tended to be operated differently, at least in the early stages, than those such as Blue Note, Atlantic, Contemporary, and Riverside, whose owners had different backgrounds.

Working first from his family's apartment, Weinstock then opened the Jazz Record Corner in 1948 on Manhattan's West 47th Street. From there it was a store across from Madison Square Garden at 782 Eighth Avenue, then 754

Tenth, and a final New York address at 446 West 50th Street. In 1958, Prestige moved to Bergenfield, New Jersey and remained there until the time of its sale to Fantasy.

Weinstock had a knack of finding and signing important jazz talent. He also had the ability to hire knowledgeable people as employees and to get the very best out of them. The Prestige story will be told here in the words of Bob Weinstock (*BW*) and many of his former employees and associates.

Ira Gitler (*IG*). Born New York, 1928. A jazz fan from pre-teen years, first wrote about jazz in high school newspaper. Studied journalism at University of Missouri. Started work for Prestige in 1950. Wrote first Prestige liner notes in 1951. Soon began proofreading and cover design for 10-inch LPs as well as DJ contact and relations with jazz writers. Produced sessions 1951-1954. Began free-lance writing career in 1955 yet continues to contribute liner notes to the present. Author: *Jazz Masters of the 40s and Swing to Bop*.

Esmond Edwards (*EE*). Born Nassau, Bahamas, 1927. Raised in Harlem from the age of five. Grew up in same neighborhood as Arthur Taylor, Jackie McLean, and Sonny Rollins. Met Weinstock through Taylor and began taking photos at sessions. First cover: *Lights Out* by Jackie McLean. Began part-time employment in 1957; he was producing sessions the following year. A&R director from 1958 until 1962. Other label affiliations include Argo, Verve, Cadet, and Impulse.

Don Schlitten (*DS*). Born New York City, 1932. Met Weinstock first as mail order customer in 1946. Began designing covers for EPs and 10-inch LPs on a free-lance basis. Began taking photos in 1957. Was hired in 1960 after his photos, published in *Down Beat*, were seen by Weinstock. Initially hired as art director for subsidiary labels, he soon became art director for the entire company. He began producing spoken word and ethnic records and produced his first jazz album for the label in 1962. Gradually increased the amount of recording and signing of artists. A&R director 1968-69. Other label affiliations: Signal, RCA, Cobblestone, Muse/Onyx, and Xanadu.

Ozzie Cadena (*OC*). Born Oklahoma City, 1924. Raised in Newark, New Jersey from age two. Produced jazz radio show, *SS Cool*, on radio station WNJR in the early 1950s. Began producing records for Savoy in 1954 and, on an occasional basis, for Prestige in 1957. With the expansion of Prestige recording in 1959, increased his involvement. Recorded much of the blues and gospel on Prestige subsidiaries. A&R director 1962-64. Returned to head A&R in 1971 under Fantasy's ownership. Other label affiliations: Savoy, Choice.

Bob Porter (*BP*). Born Wellesley, MA, 1940. Jazz fan from early teens. Met Weinstock in 1961 after correspondence when a college student. Began writing liner notes on a free-lance basis 1962. Hired as soul-jazz producer and director of promotion, 1968. A&R director 1969-1971. Considerable free-lance producing activity. Other label affiliations: Westbound, Savoy, and Atlantic.

Apart from those producers mentioned above, Cal Lampley, Lew Futterman, Teddy Charles, Teacho Wiltshire, Jack Andrews, Richard Carpenter, and Elliot Mazer also contributed to the jazz recording catalog. Others were involved on individual projects while the folk, blues, and ethnic recordings were handled by a different pool of producers, including Chris Albertson, Len Kunstadt, Sam Charters, Ken Goldstein, Paul Rothchild, Mack McCormick, Chris Strachwitz, and Pete Welding.

In addition to the producers, there were key people in sales, publicity, promotion, and marketing, each of whom contributed to the success of the label.

Ron Eyre (*RE*). Born in England, came to the U.S. in 1952. Joined Prestige in 1958 as director of sales. Extensive travel to distributors, retail accounts, etc. Left Prestige 1964 and joined United Artists. Worked at UA and UA/MGM for more than 25 years as the coordinator of motion picture soundtracks.

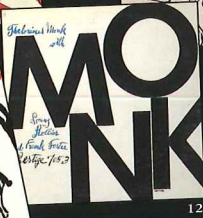
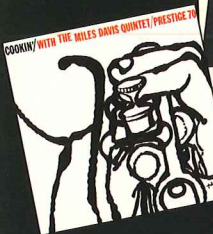
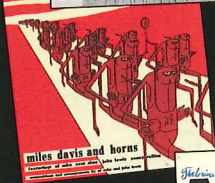
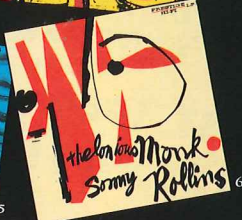
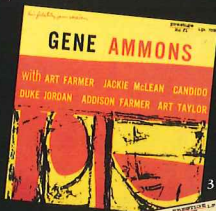
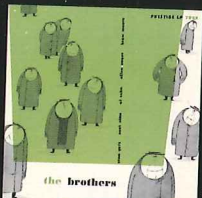
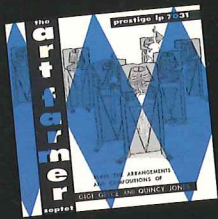
Jack Maher (*JM*). Born in Brooklyn, 1929 (*not* related to the Chicago *Down Beat* publishing family). Studied music with Lennie Tristano. First music industry gig with *Metronome* magazine 1956-58 as associate editor. Came to Prestige as director of publicity; also involved with liner notes, promotion, etc. Left Prestige to join *Billboard* 1959. Other label involvement: MGM/Verve and RCA 1969-1988 as marketing director.

Joe Goldberg (*JG*). Born Brooklyn, 1932. Worked for Sam Goody retail chain in New York and edited the in-house circular, *Jazz and Pop*. Joined Prestige 1959 as director of publicity and in-house liner note writer. Left in 1961. Author: *Jazz Masters of the 50s*. Considerable free-lance writing. Contributor to *Billboard*.

Joe Fields (*JF*). Born Jersey City, NJ, 1929. Joined Prestige 1964 in sales and promotion. Extensive travel to distributors, radio stations, retail accounts, etc. Left Prestige in 1968. Other label affiliations: Sue, Verve, and Buddah. Founded Muse label. Currently active with High Note Records.

Ralph Kaffel (*RK*). Born Harbin, Manchuria, 1932. Joined California Record Distributors in Los Angeles in 1954 after military service. Acquired Prestige for Los Angeles area distribution in 1958 and continued until CRD was sold in 1969. President of Fantasy Records 1971 to date. Bought Prestige from Bob Weinstock, 1971.

Other employees in sales, marketing, publicity, and promotion who made considerable contributions to Prestige included Bob Altschuler, Vic Cirumbulo, Jerry Field, and Herb Holland. The Bergenfield office was run by Virginia Curley; Al Johnson was a driver, provided maintenance and security, and also shot occasional cover photos.



THE PRESTIGE LOOK: In the heyday of independent jazz labels, each company had an identifiable look. A Contemporary cover could be easily distinguished from a Blue Note or a Riverside. Some of the designers who contributed to Prestige's early look were Don Martin (#1, 2, 4, 5, and 7), Tom Hannan (3 and 6), Andy Warhol (8), Reid Miles (9, 10, and 14), and Gil Mellé (11, 12, and 13).

NEW JAZZ

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(featuring Terry Gibbs, vibraphone)
Part 2

"NEW JAZZ" ARTISTS

STAN GETZ, featured tenor sax soloist with Woody Herman's band, featured on many of Woody's records . . . JAY JAY JOHNSON, trombone soloist with Dizzy Gillespie, formerly with Illinois Jacquet. Originator and king of modern bop trombonists . . . TERRY GIBBS, Herman Herd in person and on wax . . . LENNIE TRISTANO, founder of a new school of music which progresses further than bebop . . . LEE KONITZ, is creating a new style and sound on alto sax . . . WARNE MARSH, LEE KONITZ, BILLY BAUER, DENZIL BEST and ARNOLD FISCHER are all members of Lennie Tristano's group; they express Lennie's new music on their respective instruments. EARL SWOPE and . . .

***BW:** When my father was a young man, he used to go to Harlem to the Cotton Club to hear Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, and all the black bands. He went to Reisenweber's to hear the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. He never collected records but he was like a lot of people who like to hear live jazz. There are millions of people in this world who don't buy records but go to clubs and concerts. He loved jazz.*

He was into the entertainment, the show, the dancers, and the whole thing. He would tell me about Roseland and the Savoy Ballroom. He'd talk about a battle of the bands with Chick Webb and Benny Goodman. I was like a little kid listening to stories about Flash Gordon or Jack Armstrong, the All-American boy.

One day when I was eight years old, my father and I were walking up Broadway between 84th and 85th Streets and we passed the Delson radio store. It had a sign in the window: Records, 9 cents. He said that we had to go in there. There were piles and piles of records on the counter. He asked the man why the records were so cheap—they were selling for 35 or 50 cents during those days—and the man explained that they were returns from jukeboxes. My father thought they might be worn out but the man told him that only the sides with singing would be worn and he was right.

The instrumentals were almost brand-new. He started pulling out stuff: Ellington, Henderson, the first Basies, Woody Herman on Decca, early Dorseys—all kinds of good things. He had about a hundred of them. We didn't even have a phonograph at the time! He didn't have any money with him so I had to run home and get my allowance money. He'd borrow record players and play these records and he'd talk about Duke Ellington, Fletcher, this and that. He was giving me a whole discourse on what he loved. His enthusiasm got me interested and I started listening to the music.

I listened to the radio. I heard Martin Block and the Make Believe Ballroom, but it was [critic] Leonard Feather who got me interested in small-group swing and the great soloists like Hawkins, Benny Carter, Tatum, Lester Young, Cootie Williams. I used to listen to him all the time. This was the early Forties.

But after that first day with my father I started collecting records. I'd check the pawnshops and used bookstores. I'd find things for 29 cents, 19 cents—great records by Jelly Roll Morton, Benny Goodman, Billie Holiday, and so forth. One day in a candy store I met Harry Waxman, who was a big collector. He worked in the store and while he worked, he played jazz records. We became friends and he showed me the Record Changer magazine. He explained the difference between set sale and auctions. My first ad in the Record Changer was in February 1945.

Right after the end of World War II, they weren't making many jazz records. Because of the shellac rationing, the companies had to limit production but after the end of the war they started catching up with their pop records. I found a store at 42nd and Broadway that had tons of Bluebird reissues—Muggsy Spanier, Betchet, Ladnier, the whole Panassie series—for 35 cents. I talked to the manager and found out that RCA forced him to take 50 [or] a hundred of each. He wanted pop stuff but he had to take the jazz. My friend Harry thought I could sell them in the Record Changer. I made a deal with the manager and started selling them for 90 cents each from an ad in the Record Changer. Then Columbia started reissues with Lunceford, Ellington, and Billie Holiday. Little by little jazz kept coming through.



Cover courtesy of Orrin Keepnews

I was going to college at night then but one day I decided that records would be my life—no more college. By this time I was into buying collections and stocks from junk stores so I started accumulating a lot of stuff. I started putting out auction lists and I'd always ask people to send for a catalog. I began to accumulate a mailing list.

Jazz fans started coming from all over the world. They were so starved for good jazz at this time that some would buy 50 records at a time. I don't think I could have done it without my father. I was good at business and figuring out what to do but I had a tendency to drop everything and go to a ballgame. My father was the backbone of my business and was until the day he died. I'd get the mail orders but he'd pack them up and the next day, we'd take them to the post office. It became a booming business.

I started importing reissues from Europe: Parlophone, English Columbia, French Swing. Others came from Australia and Argentina. I was bringing in so many that I started wholesaling to stores around the city. I used to sell Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith to Liberty Music Shop and they'd buy ten or fifteen at a time. All this was being run out of our apartment. I was 16, 17, 18 years old.

As a result of his business's expansion, Weinstock needed to rent retail space. The first space was rented from Indian Joe at the Jazz Record Center in mid-1948 and called the Jazz Record Corner. Within a short period of time, the store was moved to 48th Street and Eighth Avenue opposite the old Madison Square Garden.

The Jazz Record Corner carried all styles of jazz records: reissues of early New Orleans jazz, swing bands and combos, right up to the latest in bebop. Weinstock would track down the most obscure issues and make sure there would be stock at the Jazz Record Corner.

Most of the original business was New Orleans jazz and Dixieland. Woody Allen was one of his customers. With the exception of major artists such as Parker and Gillespie, bebop was, initially, not a factor. Weinstock's passion for New Orleans jazz led him to many of the revivalist

bands being recorded around the world. Among them was Graeme Bell and his Australian Jazzband. Bell's band recorded in London for the English Esquire label on May 26, 1948. Within a short period of time, Weinstock was moving so many Graeme Bell records that he decided to license the rights and issue them himself. Jazz Corner 1 coupled "South" with "Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble" while the second Jazz Corner release had "Yama Yama Blues" backed with "Big Chief Battle Axe." When Weinstock licensed his next record, it was too big for him.

BW: It was called "Buzzy," the old Bird tune, by Carlo Krahmer and the English All-Stars with guys like Ronnie Scott and Johnny Dankworth. It was released as "Jazz at Town Hall." It was a live record, a takeoff on Jazz At The Philharmonic. I leased my rights to Jerry Blaine of Cosnat Distributors. He had been my distributor for the Graeme Bell records. He put it on his Jubilee label and it became a smash hit. It went beyond jazz and just reached the public. Blaine was a very good distributor and he had other distributors for Jubilee all across the country. It was the right move. I made a lot of money and in turn sent a good amount of money to Carlo in England. Esquire, Carlo's label, represented Prestige in England for many years. It really whetted my appetite when I saw how many that sold.

IG: I met Bob through a mutual friend, Stanley Sands. He had a mail order thing out of his house. I started buying records from him. He'd also send me records through his mail order company while I was in college. When he was renting space at the Jazz Record Center, I clerked for him one summer; it was just for a couple of weeks. It must have been 1948.

DS: I was a Don Byas fanatic and, since Byas had been living in Europe, the only way to get his records was to import them. Somehow Weinstock had gotten a mailing list. He sent out this list of things he was importing. He was selling from his house where he lived with his parents. One of the things he listed was the early French records by Don Byas. I contacted him and bought my two 78s and we became friendly. We went to 52nd Street together as we got older. I used to hang out at his store. I've known him since 1946.

Weinstock was working daily not far from the Royal Roost, the hot new nightclub for modern jazz. The fact that bebop was the talk of New York was not lost on the owner of the Jazz Record Corner. There were two men who turned Weinstock on to modern jazz: Ross Russell and Kenny Clarke.

BW: Kenny Clarke used to pass my store on the way to work at the Roost. One day he came in and complimented me on the music he was hearing on the loudspeakers I hung outside the store. I played him some of the Sidney Bechet records he was on when he was just starting out. He'd come by almost every night and we became great friends.

One night he invited me to be his guest at the club. He introduced me to Tadd Dameron, Fats Navarro, Dexter, Wardell—all those players that were there at the time. I became such a regular at the Roost, they gave me a special pass. Kenny Clarke would introduce me to each new group that played the club. He'd talk about me being one of the greatest jazz fans ever. The musicians really liked me. They'd tell me that if I ever started a record label, they'd work with me. I didn't give it much thought at the time.

I sold so many Bird records it was ridiculous. I became very friendly with Dial owner Ross Russell. He invited me to one of Bird's sessions, the one where they cut "Don't Blame Me" and "Embraceable You." That was where I first met Miles. I asked Miles if I could buy him a drink and he said he'd rather have ice cream. So we went and had ice cream after the Bird session.

By this time, Ross was finishing up with Dial. Even though he knew that Bird was the greatest, he'd had enough. Bird was driving him crazy. I wondered what was beyond Bird and Dizzy? There was a recording ban on and I was talking with Ross about my starting a company. I couldn't get Bird and Dizzy tied up with RCA. But Miles and Lee Konitz, they could be the Bird and Dizzy of the future. I went one step further and added Stan Getz. I told Ross that if I started a label that was the direction I was going to go.



Konitz used to come in the store all the time. He came to my house for dinner with his wife many times. I sounded him out and he agreed to record. We were all ready to go and at the last minute, he decides that Lennie Tristano, who was going to play on the date, should be the leader. Now I had sold a lot of Lennie's records on Keynote and he was well known among modern jazz fans. Lennie said he would be willing to be the leader to help me get the company started. And that's how it came to be Tristano. It should have been Konitz.

That first session gave me a rude awakening into what recording was. Lennie was a perfectionist and he wanted to make take after take. I had a great ear for what was good and what was bad. I was ready to blow my top but didn't. I went to Shelly Manne and asked him what was going on. He told me not to worry and said they're going to get tired. He was right and they didn't take much longer.

Unless otherwise indicated, all selections were originally supervised by BOB WEINSTOCK, and recorded by RUDY VAN GELDER at Van Gelder Studio in Hackensack, NJ (sessions prior to August 1959) or Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

The relative size of the album covers depicted on the following pages reflect, where possible, the *original* release format (7-inch EP, 10-inch LP, 12-inch LP).

SUBCONSCIOUS-LEE (DISC 1, #1)

Lee Konitz—alto saxophone; Lennie Tristano—piano;
Billy Bauer—guitar; Arnold Fishkin—bass; Shelly Manne—drums.

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; January 11, 1949.

Recording engineer—Harry Smith.

From *Subconscious-Lee* (Prestige 7004/OJCCD-186-2). [Original release: 7-inch EP 1308.]



BW: I decided on New Jazz as the name of the label because it was new jazz. We put out "Subconscious-Lee"/"Judy" as the first release and it got rave reviews in Down Beat and Metronome. Jazz stores from all over the country were writing in to buy the record. I got a big distributor in Chicago, they were ordering by the thousands because Lennie came from Chicago. The company was on its way.

Prophetically, the last line from the rave review in *Down Beat* stated: "This is a new label and it's gonna be all right."

The second date was by Terry Gibbs and featured a small group from the Woody Herman band. This in turn set up the next session with Stan Getz's Five Brothers.

BW: I used to go to 52nd Street when I was underage. Guys like Coleman Hawkins and Don Byas would cover for me so I wouldn't get thrown out. I got to be good friends with Max Roach and he introduced me to Getz. At the time, it was clear that of all the Lester disciples, Getz was the best. His solos were very advanced on the Savoy sides and with Goodman on "Rattle and Roll." My friend Stanley Sands and I would follow the Herman band around. When they would play an armory in Connecticut or one of the piers down on the Jersey shore, we'd drive out. I hung out with the musicians and got to know everybody. It was my idea to put the five tenors together. The Five Brothers date started after Woody finished at night. It started about 4 a.m.

FOUR AND ONE MOORE (1, 2)

Stan Getz and His Four Brothers: Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Allen Eager, Brew Moore—*tenor saxophones*; *Walter Bishop—piano*; *Gene Ramey—bass*; *Charlie Perry—drums*. Solos: Moore, Sims, Cohn, Getz, Eager. Arranged by Gerry Mulligan

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; April 8, 1949.

Recording engineer—Harry Smith.

From *The Brothers* (Prestige 7022/OJCCD-008-2). [10-inch LP 102.]



Other sessions the first year included a J.J. Johnson sextet; the first Getz quartet (with another strong seller, “Long Island Sound”); a Kai Winding group with Mulligan and Brew Moore; the Don Lanphere session featuring Fats Navarro; a J.J. Johnson quintet with Sonny Stitt; and more Konitz.

In November 1949, Weinstock recorded Wardell Gray. The initial 78 release of “Twisted” was issued by the Al Haig Quartet featuring Wardell Gray. This was because Dial had Gray under contract even though no recordings were ever made. All subsequent issues have been by Gray. Gray, one of the great unsung jazz soloists, created a classic solo in this performance. Prestige would deal with “Twisted” again, in a different context.



BW: Al Haig was very important to these early sessions. He was a student of jazz. He hung out at my store, playing records. He was also reliable. We used him with Wardell, Getz, Lanphere, and Leo Parker. I also cut a trio date with him.

TWISTED (1, 3)

Wardell Gray—tenor saxophone; **Al Haig**—piano;
Tommy Potter—bass; **Roy Haynes**—drums.

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; November 11, 1949.

Recording engineer—Harry Smith.

From *Wardell Gray Memorial, vol. 1* (Prestige 7008/O)CCD-050-2). [10-inch LP 115.]



The early New Jazz sessions were recorded at Apex Studios with engineer Harry Smith at the controls. The studio space is still in operation (as Nola Studios) and was also the locale of several classic Charlie Parker Savoy dates. The sessions at Apex would continue for several more years but the engineer for future dates would be Tom Dowd, the legendary engineer/producer who went on to great celebrity at Atlantic Records. The final session of 1949 featured Sonny Stitt on tenor in a quartet with Bud Powell.

BW: When J.J. told me he wanted to use Stitt for his session, I was up for it. I was expecting him to play alto but he came in with the tenor sax. I had never heard it before. He was tremendous. I signed him right away. It was my idea to get Bud. In those years Bud's behavior was erratic and he wasn't very reliable. But he and Stitt were very close and Stitt could control Bud.



SONNY STITT

ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT RHYTHM (1, 4)

Sonny Stitt—*tenor saxophone*; Bud Powell—*piano*;
Curly Russell—*bass*; Max Roach—*drums*.

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; December 11, 1949.

Recording engineer—Tom Dowd.

From *Sonny Stitt/Bud Powell/J. J. Johnson* (Prestige 7024/OJCCD-009-2). [10-inch LP 103.]



By this time, Weinstock had studied the sales results of his first few months in business and he saw an unusually large market for tenor sax players. It seemed to cut across stylistic lines and this meant that perhaps a separate series, even a separate label, might be required in order to present the concept properly. The new label was Prestige.

Nineteen-fifty found Bob Weinstock involved in two other new ventures. The first was Mercer Records, Duke Ellington's label, which Weinstock would manufacture and distribute. The second was Birdland Records, co-owned with Morris Levy, owner of Birdland. There were three sessions recorded for Birdland: one with Stan Getz, one with Lockjaw Davis, and the first recording of the Gene Ammons/Sonny Stitt band.

BW: I jumped at the chance to get Gene. He was really the only player who was mixing funk with modern jazz. The first two tunes of the date were features for Gene, Sonny was playing baritone. Then we had the other horns lay out and Gene and Sonny on tenor for "Blues Up and Down." I had never heard anything like this. It was so loud it was terrifying. I knew we had a hit right away.

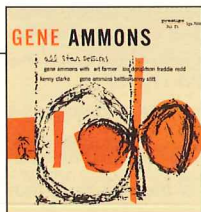
BLUES UP AND DOWN (take 3) (1, 5)

Gene Ammons—tenor saxophone; **Sonny Stitt**—tenor saxophone;
Duke Jordan—piano; Tommy Potter—bass; Jo Jones—drums.

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; March 5, 1950.

Recording engineer—Tom Dowd.

From *All-Star Sessions with Sonny Stitt* (Prestige 7050/OJCCD-014-2).



BW: Birdland lasted about a year. Morris got into a financial jam and I bailed him out. In turn he gave me rights to the label and so I got the exclusive agreement with Gene Ammons and he stayed with Prestige until the day he died.

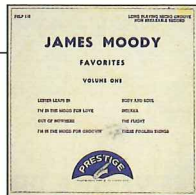
While the initial issue of “Blues Up and Down” was on Birdland, by the summer of 1950 it had been reissued on Prestige. By that time, the Prestige 700—or Tenor Sax—series was well underway. Yet the first significant hit on Prestige was performed by a musician Weinstock had yet to meet. It had been recorded in Sweden by that musician on a borrowed alto saxophone. This was James Moody and “I’m in the Mood for Love.” The Metronome label, which recorded Moody, would be a valuable international partner for Prestige for many years to come. Moody would spend 1949, 1950, and most of 1951 in Europe. He was an obscure sideman when he left for Europe. When he returned home in the fall of 1951, he was a star.

I’M IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE (aka MOODY’S MOOD FOR LOVE) (1, 6)

James Moody—*alto saxophone*; **Leppe Sundewall**—*trumpet*;
Thore Swanerud—*piano*; **Yngve Akerberg**—*bass*;
Anders Burman—*drums*

Recorded in Stockholm, Sweden; October 12, 1949.
Producer and engineer unknown.

From *James Moody Quintet* (Prestige 7431). (Courtesy of Metronome Records.)
[10-inch LP 110.]



BW: When I first heard it, I thought immediately of Hawkins’s “Body and Soul.” Moody doesn’t play any of the melody. In those years, Symphony Sid was very powerful and you could hear him all across the South and Midwest, even in Chicago. I took the record to Sid and he wouldn’t play it! I don’t know why he didn’t like it but I got some strong reaction in Chicago and L.A., where they also had some good jockeys. I went back to Sid and told him the record was selling. He finally went on it and then it exploded.

Much of 1950 for Weinstock and Prestige was about Sonny Stitt. For sessions with Ammons or with his own groups, Stitt was in the studio no fewer than nine times during the year. The remainder of the activity included sessions by Al Haig, Chubby Jackson's big band, Konitz, and Getz for New Jazz. The material by Wardell Gray, Leo Parker, Zoot Sims, and Dizzy Gillespie joined the Ammons, Stitt, and Moody sides on Prestige. Prestige also issued four records from two different sessions by Dixieland giant Jimmy McPartland. In the summer, Weinstock relocated to 754 Tenth Avenue.

IG: In 1950, Bob moved to a storefront on Tenth Avenue. I worked for him that fall, doing most anything...sweeping floors, putting records in boxes. His mail order was still going. In that area, there were other distributors and I would go with a tin box and pick up things from the different wholesalers—the Savoy, the Dials, Mercurys, whatever. All the places were in that one area. My involvement was on again, off again. In 1951, I went back and that's when he started the 10-inch LPs. His early 10-inch albums had blank liners. By the time he got to 117, he decided he wanted notes on the back so he asked me to do them.



DS: The first thing I did for him was the design of a Lennie Tristano EP. I did a couple of other EPs and some 10-inch LP covers. I was designing the covers. There was sometimes an illustration, which I drew. Sometimes there would be little snapshots that Bob had taken. I did the one with Miles, Monk, and Bags. He gave me little pictures and I pasted them up.

By the end of 1950, Weinstock had been diagnosed as a manic-depressive and was off the scene for a while. But 1951 was a year of two major signings: Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins.

BW: Miles had been dropped by Capitol. The Birth of the Cool sides had not been accepted by the public. He had vanished and nobody knew where he was. I used some Chicago connections to help find him. I found him in East St. Louis. We agreed to do a contract and I sent him the money to get to New York.

Our basic idea was to make records with different people, to use the best people around. That's what we did until the end when he got the Quintet together. I was dealing with my manic-depression when the first date went down.

There was more Ammons, more Stitt, more Sims, and more Konitz during 1951. Country blues with Ralph Willis and Brownie McGhee made its first appearance at Prestige. There were one-shot sessions with Gerry Mulligan and Red Rodney. There were also the first sessions by Teddy Charles, Bennie Green, Charlie Mariano, and, on December 17, Sonny Rollins. Teacho Wiltshire became a part of the cast during 1951 as R&B (some on the short-lived Par label) and gospel were recorded for the first time.

Clarence Beeks took advantage of the laissez-faire attitude towards parking on Tenth Avenue to stop by one day in early 1952. Weinstock knew exactly what this was. It would be the first vocalese record.

BW: King Pleasure drove up in an old car and he was carrying a tape recorder. He played me this tape and I flipped. He had put words to Moody's solo! I played it for Teacho and he went in and cut it. I first met Teacho when he was working with a vocal group, the Cabineers. Teacho was West Indian and very protective of me. He'd let me know if someone was hanging around with the drug people.



MOODY'S MOOD FOR LOVE
(aka I'M IN THE MOOD
FOR LOVE) (1, 7)

King Pleasure—*vocal*
Merrill Stepter—*trumpet*
Lem Davis—*alto saxophone*
Ray Abrams—*tenor saxophone*
Cecil Payne—*baritone saxophone*
Teacho Wiltshire—*piano*
Leonard Gaskin—*bass*
Teddy Lee—*drums*
Blossom Dearie—*vocal*

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios,
New York City; February 19, 1952.

Produced by Teacho Wiltshire.

Recording engineer—Tom Dowd.

From *Original Moody's Mood* (Prestige 7586,
currently available as part of OJCCD-217-2).



IG: I got Blossom Dearie to do the girl part on "Moody's Mood for Love." It got airplay. It was on jukeboxes. It just took off because it was something very compelling. I think it won the R&B Record of the Year in Down Beat. There's a fine line between jazz and R&B there; I think of it as a jazz record. Then came the whole thing with the publishers of "I'm in the Mood for Love" and they had to withdraw the record. But that didn't happen right away. There was enough breathing room for it to become a big hit. It really saved the company. It provided capital to do other things.



ANNIE ROSS

BW: Cash Box magazine was very important at the time. They had different regional sections. So if something was on their Hot in Harlem chart, people in L.A. would see that and soon it would be Hot on Central Avenue and so forth. All the jockeys would pick up on the hot records. In my experience the only way to have hits was through airplay. Airplay. Airplay. Airplay. And then jukeboxes.

The record hit the R&B charts in May of 1952 and lasted four months, rising as far as #2. It was far and away the biggest record that Weinstock had ever had. It had to be because Weinstock got married and took off on a two-month honeymoon. While he was gone the company almost went bankrupt. Pop Weinstock actually issued the record. Bob didn't find out until well into his

trip that Prestige had a hit and the company had been saved! The withdrawal of “Moody’s Mood for Love” meant that the first King Pleasure LP would be almost three years away. But in big-city jazz stores, there were white label 45s of “Moody’s Mood for Love” sold under the counter for years.

Late in the year, another vocalese classic was taped. “Twisted” was the Wardell Gray solo set to words by Annie Ross. She had been hanging out with musicians for years and had recorded an EP for Dee Gee earlier in the year. Weinstock recalls her having a great musical mind. He gave her “Twisted” and “Farmer’s Market,” a new Gray recording, and she came up with the lyrics. Teacho produced it. Her EP *Annie Ross Sings* was the first issued on Prestige.

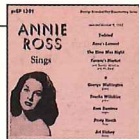
TWISTED (1, 8)

Annie Ross—vocal; Teacho Wiltshire—piano;
Ram Ramirez—organ; Percy Heath—bass; Art Blakey—drums.

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; October 9, 1952.

Produced by Teacho Wiltshire. Recording engineer—Tom Dowd.

From *King Pleasure Sings/Annie Ross Sings* (Prestige 7128/OJCCD-217-2). [7-inch EP 1301.]



During 1951 when Weinstock was recording Zoot Sims, Gerry Mulligan, and Miles Davis sessions, he got the artists’ permission to “do some long records.” The LP, in both 10-inch and 12-inch form, had been around for a while and Weinstock saw potential in lengthier performances. The October 5, 1951 date with the Davis sextet was the first Prestige session to be recorded entirely for LP. The highlight was a line credited to Davis, based on “Sweet Georgia Brown,” that has long been thought to have been written by Jackie McLean (who called it “Donna”). This was “Dig.” It was the first recording session for the 19-year-old McLean and it would be the one to convince Weinstock that it was time to record Sonny Rollins.

- All God's Chillun Got Rhythm Disc 1, #4
Bags' Groove (take 2) 1, 13
Blue Monk 1, 12
Blues Up and Down (take 3) 1, 5
Canadian Sunset 3, 1
Ca'Purange (Jungle Soul) 4, 1
Dig 1, 9
Disappointed 2, 1
Django 1, 16
Don't Go to Strangers 3, 8
Doxy 1, 15
Four and One Moore 1, 2
Fried Bananas 4, 6
G.W. 3, 5
Hip Soul 3, 9
If I Were a Bell 2, 7
I'm in the Mood for Love
(aka Moody's Mood for Love) 1, 6
In the Kitchen 2, 10
I Wish I Knew How
It Would Feel to Be Free 4, 4
Jamilah 4, 7
Jungle Strut 4, 8
Kirk's Work 3, 6
Misty 4, 3
Moody's Mood for Love
(aka I'm in the Mood for Love) 1, 7
More Today Than Yesterday 4, 9
My Funny Valentine 1, 14
Nobody's Heart 2, 8
No Way 4, 11
On a Misty Night 2, 6
Pent-Up House 2, 4
Rock Candy 3, 11
'Round Midnight 1, 10
Russian Lullaby 2, 9
The Serpent's Tooth (take 1) 1, 11
The Seventh Son 3, 4
Smile 4, 5
Soul Liberation 4, 10
Soul Street 3, 7
St. Thomas 2, 3
Subconscious-Lee 1, 1
Sweet Alice Blues 4, 2
This'll Get to Ya 3, 10
Trouble Is a Man 3, 2
Troubled Times 3, 12
Twisted
 Wardell Gray 1, 3
 Annie Ross 1, 8
You Talk That Talk 4, 12
Very Saxy 3, 3
Walkin' 2, 2
Well, You Needn't 2, 5

**SOME OF THE ARTISTS WHO RECORDED FOR
PRESTIGE BUT ARE NOT REPRESENTED IN THIS COMPILATION**

CHET BAKER • BARNEY BIGARD • BOB BROOKMEYER
RAY BRYANT • DONALD BYRD • BENNY CARTER • RON CARTER
TEDDY CHARLES • BUCK CLAYTON • EARL COLEMAN • WALT DICKERSON
KENNY DORHAM • JON EARDLEY • DON ELLIS • BOOKER ERVIN
TAL FARLOW • ART FARMER • FRANK FOSTER • BUD FREEMAN
CURTIS FULLER • DIZZY GILLESPIE • BENNY GOLSON • BENNIE GREEN
JOHNNY GRIFFIN • TINY GRIMES • GIGI GRyce • JIMMY HAMILTON
HAMPTON HAWES • JOE HOLIDAY • ELMO HOPE • CLAUDE HOPKINS
CHUBBY JACKSON • CLIFFORD JORDAN • TAFT JORDAN • ERIC KLOSS
YUSEF LATEEF • BARBARA LEA • HAROLD MABERN • TEO MACERO
HERBIE MANN • CHARLIE MARIANO • RONNIE MATHEWS • FREDDIE McCOY
KEN McINTYRE • CHARLES McPHERSON • GIL MELLÉ • HANK MOBLEY
MOONDOG • GERRY MULLIGAN • FATS NAVARRO • DON PATTERSON
TRUDY PITTS • PUCHO • PAUL QUINICHETTE • FREDDIE ROACH • BETTY ROCHE
RED RODNEY • PEE WEE RUSSELL • AL SEARS • JOHNNY "HAMMOND" SMITH
REX STEWART • BILLY TAYLOR • CLARK TERRY • BOBBY TIMMONS
MAL WALDRON • GEORGE WALLINGTON • CEDAR WALTON • BEN WEBSTER
LEM WINCHESTER • KAI WINDING • JIMMY WITHERSPOON • PHIL WOODS

DIG (1, 9)

Miles Davis—trumpet; Sonny Rollins—tenor saxophone;
Jackie McLean—alto saxophone; Walter Bishop—piano;
Tommy Potter—bass; Art Blakey—drums.

Recorded at Apex Recording Studios, New York City; October 5, 1951.

Recording engineer—Tom Dowd.

From *Dig* (Prestige 7012/O)CCD-005-2). [10-inch LP 124.]



BW: All the musicians loved Sonny Rollins in his early years because he was a bebopper and he knew everybody—he played with everybody in the neighborhood group up in Harlem. His ideas were so great! They all knew, just like I knew—because I signed him to a contract—that he'd be a force someday. And sure enough, he was. The ability was there and it emerged little by little. He made himself a great player.

IG: I did Sonny's first date at Apex Studios on 57th Street. A lot of early Prestige sessions were done there. It was my first session for Bob. He wanted a mambo because mambos were hot at the time. We had Sabu Martinez, the conga player, booked for the date but there was a sleet storm that night and he never got out of the Bronx.

Gitler's involvement grew greater in 1952. Apart from an occasional session supervised by Teddy Charles and the R&B sessions, Gitler would supervise the Prestige sessions beginning in late 1952 and all of 1953.

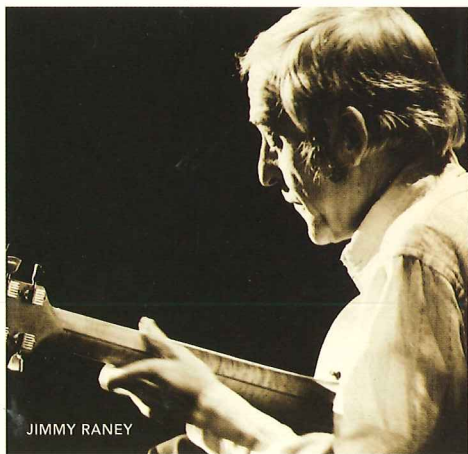
IG: I think Bob went through a period where he was getting a little burned out. He had me start doing sessions regularly in late 1952. I did the first Prestige dates by Billy Taylor and the MJQ that year. I wasn't picking the guys. He was doing that and I was overseeing the date.

BW: *Sometimes the manic-depression would take over. I'd get too mentally exhausted to go to a session. Ira was a backup. I'd call him up and ask him to go do the Billy Taylor session, or whatever, that day. He'd do the mechanical work of producing the session. He was around. He was working for me. It took me a while to get everything sorted out but once I got straight, I didn't use Ira anymore.*

Billy Taylor, George Wallington, and the Modern Jazz Quartet were new arrivals at Prestige during 1952. So was Thelonious Monk, who was recorded twice late in the year. There were also new sessions in '52 from Zoot Sims, Sonny Stitt, Wardell Gray, Bennie Green, and Teddy Charles. By the end of the year, the R&B and gospel recording that had been a part of the mix early in the year was history. But clearly, at Prestige, 1952 was the year of vocalese. In December, King Pleasure recorded again and another hit came forth in "Red Top," a #3 R&B hit during the spring of 1953.

That year would be devoted almost exclusively to modern jazz recording and among the music recorded in '53 two sessions stand out. The Jimmy Raney Quintet date from April featured the final Prestige appearance of Stan Getz.

IG: *Stan was very cooperative. He was there for Jimmy because Jimmy was his man. I remember that Red Norvo came by the date to listen a little bit and offer encouragement. Jimmy had replaced Tal Farlow in the Norvo trio and Red Mitchell played bass in that group. The new trio made their first records that week. It was a very good date. There weren't any snags. Everyone was very much into it.*



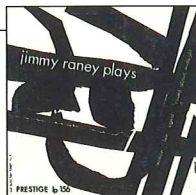
'ROUND MIDNIGHT (1, 10)

Jimmy Raney—guitar; **Stan Getz**—tenor saxophone;
Hall Overton—piano; Red Mitchell—bass; Frank Isola—drums.

Recorded at WOR Studios, New York City; April 23, 1953.

Produced by Ira Gitler. Recording engineer—Doug Hawkins.

From *Early Stan* (Prestige 7255/OJCCD-654-2). [10-inch LP 156.]



BW: Stan Getz and Gene Ammons were the melody giants. But they did it in different ways. Gene was very soulful and he really reached the black audience. Getz did it in a white way: light and pretty. Symphony Sid really made Getz as a recording artist. He played the early Getz records to death.



STAN GETZ

If Ira Gitler had an easy time of it with the Jimmy Raney date, a Miles Davis session at the end of January was a decidedly different story.

IG: Bob had always wanted Pres and Bird on the label. He never got Pres but he got Bird, even though we had to use a pseudonym. We used Charlie Chan, which was used on the Massey Hall material.

It was a very chaotic day. We rarely had rehearsals for Prestige dates but we called one and Miles never showed up. I got a King tenor for Bird and he showed up. We gave him an advance on the date but we didn't have a rehearsal. Miles was late for the date and that

was just one of the problems. I bought some vodka for the band and Bird chug-a-lugged it! So Bird was falling asleep but if Miles had been on time none of that would have happened. Our regular engineer wasn't there and we had to be out of the studio by a certain time.

THE SERPENT'S TOOTH (take 1) (1, 11)

Miles Davis—trumpet;

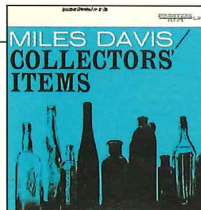
Sonny Rollins, Charlie Parker—tenor saxophones;

Walter Bishop—piano; Percy Heath—bass; Philly Joe Jones—drums.

Recorded at WOR Studios, New York City; January 30, 1953.

Supervision by Ira Gitler. Recording engineer—Bob Lee.

From *Collectors' Items* (Prestige 7044/OJCCD-071-2).



BW: *At this time, the only session I really wanted to do that I couldn't do was the Miles date with Rollins and Bird. Bird and Louis Armstrong were my musical idols. Getting to record him was a big thing for me. It was such a big deal that I couldn't sleep for days. I was mentally exhausted.*

Tadd Dameron and Art Farmer were the new Prestige artists of 1953. Teddy Charles produced three sessions during the year in California with Los Angeles-based musicians. Latinized sessions were recorded with Joe Holiday and Billy Taylor. Sonny Rollins cut his first new session as a leader in almost two years. Regulars such as Zoot Sims, George Wallington, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Billy Taylor, Thelonious Monk, and King Pleasure were recorded again. Early in the year Prestige moved to its final New York address at 446 West 50th Street. It was also the last year of the Jazz Record Corner. Mail order would continue with Pop Weinstock and, later, Bob's sister Marcia in charge. Bob Weinstock was poised for a comeback and needed to focus all his energy on his label.

BW: *Monk was the artist who first got me interested in modern jazz. I used to sell a lot of Blue Note records. I bought them direct from Alfred Lion. One day he brought me his first Monk 78.*

I trusted Alfred's judgment. If he said there was something to it, I believed him. I was fascinated. I signed Monk as soon as I knew he was available.

Monk would come by my office looking for money. He had lost his cabaret card and couldn't work clubs in New York. Now Monk was a good man and I helped him as much as I could but he never sold records. When Riverside wanted him, I let him go. I gave him back the publishing on his songs. That was worth a lot of money to him.

Monk's Prestige career was odd in that he seemed to be passed around. Teacho Wiltshire had produced his first Prestige date and Gitler the next two. Weinstock took over in 1954 and a quintet was recorded in May and his final trio session in September. The latter produced his enduring classic "Blue Monk."

BLUE MONK (1, 12)

Thelonious Monk—*piano*;
Percy Heath—*bass*; Art Blakey—*drums*.

Recorded September 22, 1954.

From *Thelonious Monk* (Prestige 7027/OJCCD-010-2). [10-inch LP 189.]



***BW:** It was toward the end of the date and I asked Monk why he never played the blues. He sat down and knocked it right out. Monk may not have written everything down but it was all in his head. He was fond of recording tunes again and again until he got it right. This "Blue Monk" is different than some of the later versions.*

Once after a session, I had taken some photos and I asked Monk to come back to the office. I wanted to get some quotes from him for the liner notes. We had an old upright piano and he sat down and started playing. I said, "Monk, would you tell me something about the session." He doesn't say a word, just keeps on playing. I tried again. "Monk, I want some liner notes for this



THELONIOUS MONK

little 10-inch album." Finally he finished what he was playing with a "bong"—a chord—and he says, "You don't have to talk about music; you listen to it," and he walked out. People shouldn't talk about the music. They should listen to it, like Monk said.

If Thelonious Monk had made his last date as a leader for Prestige, it wasn't his final appearance on the label. Recording activity always seemed to pick up in December when musicians needed money for Christmas. Thus it was Christmas Eve when Weinstock assembled Miles Davis, Milt Jackson, Thelonious Monk, Percy Heath, and Kenny Clarke.

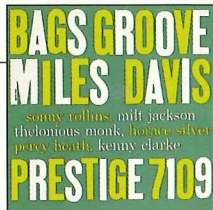
BW: People say there was an argument about Miles not wanting Monk to comp behind him. That's bullshit. Miles didn't want him to comp on one tune. There was no hostility, no fighting. I've heard that story many times but those guys had total respect for each other.

BAGS' GROOVE (take 2) (1, 13)

Miles Davis—trumpet; **Milt Jackson**—vibes;
Thelonious Monk—piano; **Percy Heath**—bass;
Kenny Clarke—drums.

Recorded December 24, 1954.

From *Bags' Groove* (Prestige 7109/OJCCD-245-2).



If Miles Davis's impact was being felt during 1954, so was that of Milt Jackson. His solos were not only the most important component of the Modern Jazz Quartet, but his own session as a leader was recorded during the year. The rhythm section on "My Funny Valentine" was Horace Silver, Percy Heath, and Connie Kay. Silver, Heath, and original MJQ drummer Kenny Clarke had been virtually the house rhythm section during 1954 and appeared seven times during the year backing Miles Davis and Art Farmer. The theory here was to combine heavy piano with light drums. In the classic Miles Davis Quintet that emerged in 1955, the order would be reversed.

MY FUNNY VALENTINE (1, 14)

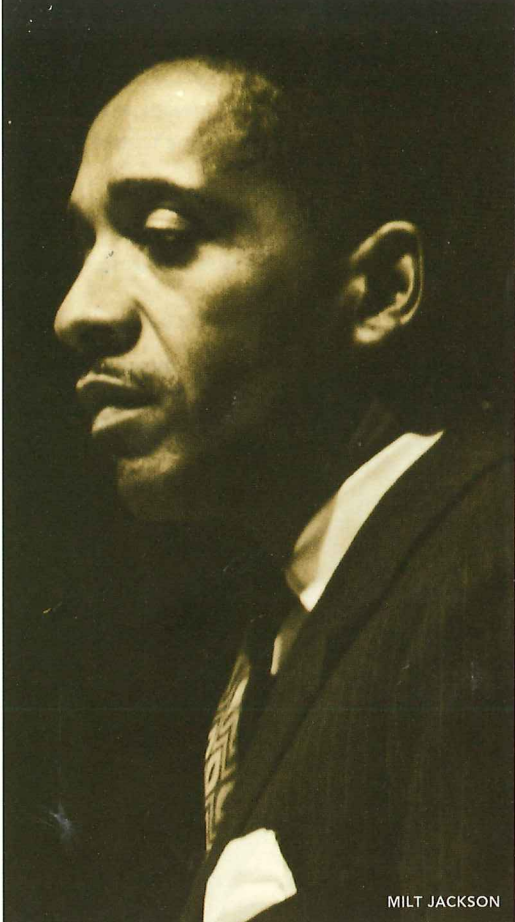
Milt Jackson—*vibes*; Horace Silver—*piano*;
Percy Heath—*bass*; Connie Kay—*drums*.

Recorded May 20, 1955.

From *Milt Jackson* (Prestige 7003/OJCCD-001-2).



BW: *Milt Jackson is a consummate musician. He makes everything sound so easy and so soulful. I had Milt under contract when Monte Kay suggested that I concentrate more on the MJQ. Monte handled Billy Taylor as well as the MJQ. He was a sincere guy and he wouldn't make a suggestion like that unless he thought it was valid. For all the sophistication of the MJQ, the music was very simple, very basic. Monte and I thought we'd be able to crack the white market that George Shearing and Brubeck had. And we did get some of that.*



MILT JACKSON

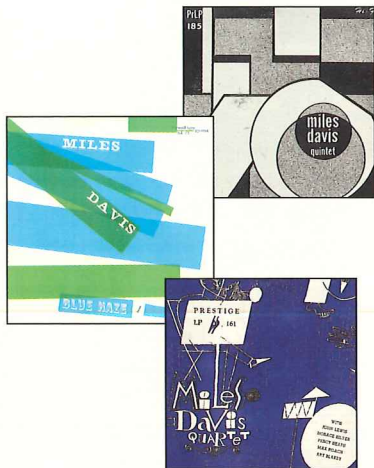
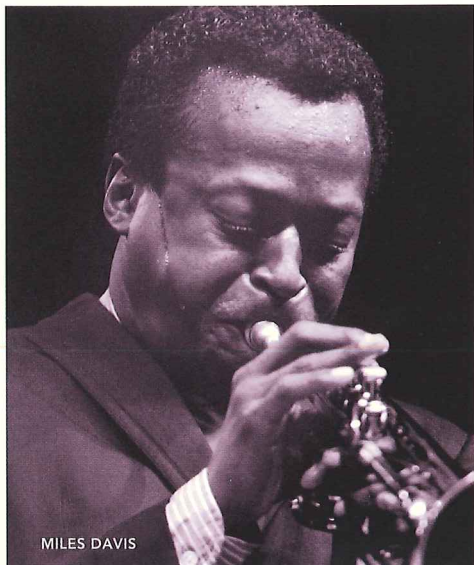
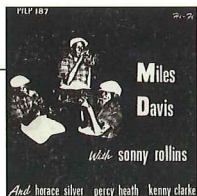
In 1954, in addition to "Bags' Groove," Miles Davis produced such classics as "Blue Haze," "Solar," and "Walkin'." On June 29, a Davis quintet with Sonny Rollins recorded "Airegin," "Oleo," and "Doxy" at the same session!

DOXY (1, 15)

Miles Davis—trumpet; Sonny Rollins—tenor saxophone;
Horace Silver—piano; Percy Heath—bass; Kenny Clarke—drums.

Recorded June 29, 1954.

From *Bags' Groove* (Prestige 7109/OJCCD-245-2). [10-inch LP 187.]



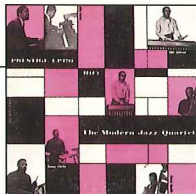
The day prior to Miles's *Bags' Groove* date (December 23, 1954), the Modern Jazz Quartet recorded one of their signature themes, "Django." The group always had strong critical support and exceptional airplay and was clearly coming into its own.

DJANGO (1, 16)

The Modern Jazz Quartet: Milt Jackson—*vibes*;
John Lewis—*piano*; Percy Heath—*bass*;
Kenny Clarke—*drums*.

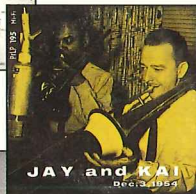
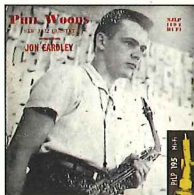
Recorded December 23, 1954.

From *Django* (Prestige 7057/O)CCD-057-2). [10-inch LP 170.]



Nineteen-fifty-four was a year of transition for Prestige. James Moody, Milt Jackson, and Phil Woods were signed. The New Jazz label, which had been ignored since 1951, was revived for a short-lived series of 10-inch LPs. There was a splendid one-shot session with Kai Winding and J.J. Johnson and more King Pleasure, Zoot Sims, Billy Taylor, and Jimmy Raney. After a three-year absence, Gene Ammons returned.

An important development that year concerned not the music played but who recorded it. In early '54, Weinstock contacted a Hackensack, New Jersey optometrist, Dr. Rudy Van Gelder, who would soon be handling all Prestige recording, with few exceptions, until



the label was sold. As a result, Prestige had the best possible audio.

***BW:** Rudy was very much an asset. His rates were fair and he didn't waste time. When you arrived at his studio he was prepared. His equipment was always ahead of its time and he was a genius when it came to recording.*

Blue Note had been recording at Van Gelder's on and off since 1953 but they also began a full-time relationship during 1954. Van Gelder has always characterized the differences between the labels as one of temperament. Blue Note's Alfred Lion was precise and specific in what he wanted while Weinstock was looser and very low-key.

***BW:** John Hammond was my first hero in terms of producers. I loved Alfred Lion because of what he did with Sidney Bechet and then with Monk. I liked Norman Granz; the live JATP things were very innovative. I also think Teddy Reig is important because of his wide taste. Teddy got into funk and R&B before any of the jazz people.*

Among the new arrivals of 1954 was the James Moody band. This was a working band that spent a lot of time on the road. There were good charts by people like Quincy Jones and Benny Golson. Moody was equally adept at alto or tenor sax. Eddie Jefferson was the band's singer. He had done a one-shot session for Prestige the previous year and was known, though not yet to the general public, as the father of vocalese. The 1954 recordings by Moody were done for singles. For the second session of 1955, Weinstock got the band to stretch out a bit. "Disappointed" features solos from the band and to cap the performance, Jefferson puts words to a Charlie Parker solo. Several years after the music was recorded, Prestige issued a single on "Disappointed" based on continued long-term airplay.

DISAPPOINTED (DISC 2, #1)

James Moody—*tenor saxophone*

Dave Burns—*trumpet*

William Shepherd—*trombone*

Numa "Pee Wee" Moore—

baritone saxophone

Jimmy Boyd—*piano*

John Lathan—*bass*

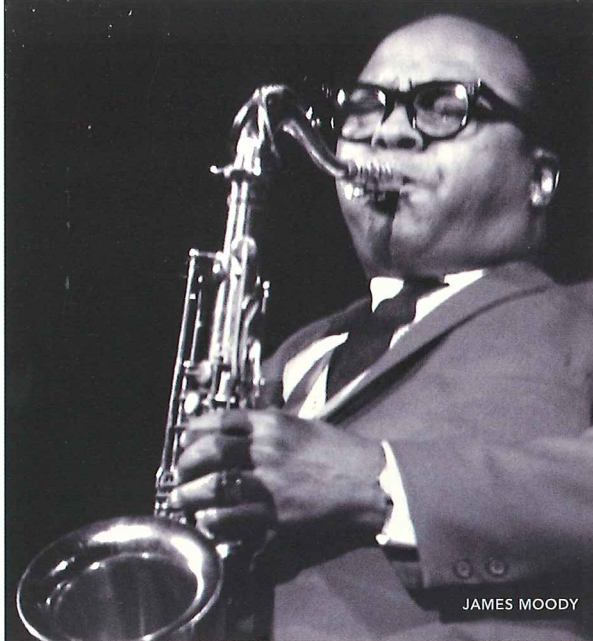
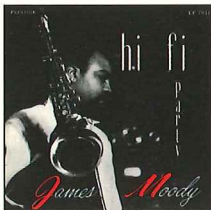
Clarence Johnston—*drums*

Eddie Jefferson—*vocal*

Recorded August 23, 1955.

From *Hi Fi Party*

(Prestige 7011/OJCCD-1780-2).



BW: *I didn't know Moody when I licensed "Moody's Mood for Love" and the other Metronome sides. I got to know him when we were recording and he is a wonderful man, just a very great person. It was his idea to have the talking in the background. If you remember the early Jazz At The Philharmonic sides, you could hear the musicians talking.*

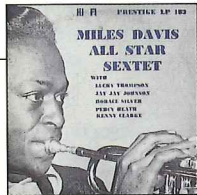
"Walkin'," by Miles Davis from 1954, is Weinstock's personal favorite of all the records he produced. The tune was written by Jimmy Mundy (though credited to Richard Carpenter) and was first recorded for Prestige by Gene Ammons in 1950 under the title "Gravy." The same rhythm section that had backed Davis on "Solar" and "Blue Haze" was present but this time the band would be larger. J.J. Johnson had recorded with Davis on Blue Note and Capitol but Lucky Thompson was a real ringer.

WALKIN' (2, 2)

Miles Davis Sextet: Miles Davis—trumpet; J.J. Johnson—trombone; Lucky Thompson—tenor saxophone; Horace Silver—piano; Percy Heath—bass; Kenny Clarke—drums.

Recorded April 29, 1954.

From *Walkin'* (Prestige 7076/OJCCD-213-2). [10-inch LP 182.]



BW: We had the rhythm section with Horace Silver, Percy Heath, and Klook. I said to Miles that we hadn't used J.J. yet so we agreed on that. When Lucky's name came up there was immediate agreement. I had known Lucky because he used to come into my store with Archie Moore, the light-heavyweight champion. Archie was one of my best customers and he kept a band with Lucky that could play for him when he was in training. When we were making the tune, I showed Lucky the stopwatch. He played way past the time but I didn't stop the take so we got one of the greatest tenor solos in history. This tune, the whole performance, is my favorite of all the things I made.

Prestige ad from May 1, 1958 issue of Down Beat

modern jazz begins on
PRESTIGE

MILES DAVIS
ALL STARS

WALKIN'

WALKIN' - THE MILES DAVIS ALL STARS
Miles Davis with Jay Jay Johnson, Lucky Thompson, Davey Schildknecht, Horace Silver, Percy Heath, and Kenny Clarke.
The fabulous Miles Davis—top trumpeter in Down Beat and Metronome (jazz polls)—is presented with a group of great instrumentalists in an album that moves! "...some of the best and most sustained modern jazz inspiration set down in the past decade..."
Whitney Balliett: The New Yorker.

12" High Fidelity Album **PLRP 7076**
\$4.98 at your record dealer or purchased from

PRESTIGE RECORDS INC.
147 WEST 50th STREET, NEW YORK 19

The 12-inch LP became the accepted album format in 1955. Bob Brookmeyer's session of June 30 was the last recorded for 10-inch LP while the Billy Taylor session of April 10 resulted in the first album in the 7000 series of 12-inch LPs. The first in a lengthy series of Gene Ammons Jam Session albums was recorded on June 16. Elmo Hope joined the cast and Bennie Green returned. The MJQ recorded *Concorde* with Connie Kay replacing Kenny Clarke on drums. Sonny Rollins recorded his *Worktime* album in December, presaging great things to come. Miles Davis made three landmark albums during the year: *The Musings of Miles*, which introduced Red Garland to Prestige; *Miles Davis & Milt Jackson*, which introduced Ray Bryant to Prestige; and *Miles*, which presented the classic quintet with Garland, Paul Chambers, Philly Joe Jones, and John Coltrane for the first time.

BW: When we made the first quintet album, Miles told me that he was bringing a surprise. The surprise was John Coltrane. I had heard Red Garland on the Musings of Miles album. I signed both of them. Red came first but we got Coltrane into the mix on a lot of different sessions. Trane wanted to be recorded the way Miles had been, with lots of different people. Trane was probably on more albums than any other artist was. I did just what he wanted.

Nineteen-fifty-five was also the year that Ira Gitler stopped working in the Prestige office, though he continued to write the vast majority of liner notes. After some time had passed, Weinstock was approached by a man from Lawrence, Massachusetts who was working in the textile business. He was anxious to get into the record business in some capacity, and was put on part-time to write notes and do publicity. This was Bob Altschuler, who would go on to Riverside, Atlantic, and Columbia, where he served for many years as the Senior Vice-President of Publicity and as a general *éminence grise* to a series of Columbia presidents.

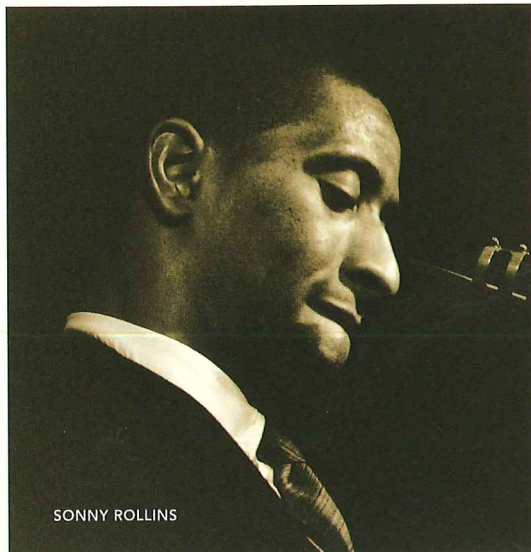
The following year was a watershed year at Prestige. It began on an incredible high note and ended with the departure of several key artists. It was a great year for Sonny Rollins. Weinstein's confidence in his ability began to pay dividends with *Sonny Rollins Plus Four*, *Tenor Madness*, *Saxophone Colossus*, *Sonny Rollins Plays for Bird*, and *Tour de Force*, all recorded in 1956.

ST. THOMAS (2, 3)

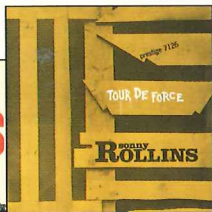
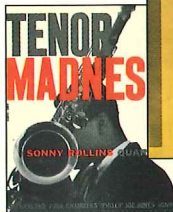
Sonny Rollins—tenor saxophone; Tommy Flanagan—piano;
Doug Watkins—bass; Max Roach—drums.

Recorded June 22, 1956.

From *Saxophone Colossus* (Prestige 7079/OJCCD-291-2).



SONNY ROLLINS



Rollins quintet with
kenny gorman and max roach

prestige 7095

ROLLINS PLAYS FOR BIRD



PENT-UP HOUSE (2, 4)

Sonny Rollins—tenor saxophone; Clifford Brown—trumpet;
Richie Powell—piano; George Morrow—bass; Max Roach—drums.

Recorded March 22, 1956.

From *Sonny Rollins Plus Four* (Prestige 7038/OJCCD-243-2).



BW: Max had been away from Prestige for a while. He went to California and then he formed this group with Brownie so he was working all the time. Sonny came into the band with Brownie and Max and the association really helped him. Sonny worked hard. He's very serious and practiced all the time. Sonny is at his best on Saxophone Colossus, a great record. When we did Sonny Rollins Plus Four, it was like a big reunion. I spent a lot of time with Brownie that day, he was a charming guy. I still think about him. Sonny and Brownie together was the closest thing I heard to the way Bird and Miles worked together.

Columbia Records had discovered the solid sales that Miles Davis was achieving because their plant was pressing the records. They signed Miles to a deal even though Prestige was still owed some albums. The Davis Prestige obligation was dispatched in two lengthy sessions: one in May and the other in October 1956. These sessions produced the famous *Cookin'*, *Relaxin'*, *Workin'*, and *Steamin'* albums.

JG: Bob issued these records slowly. They came out one a year. I remember that Ralph J. Gleason was lobbying to write the notes to the last one, *Steamin'*. But I did those notes.

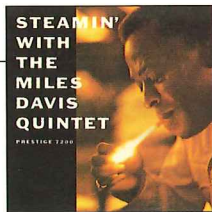
We sent a test pressing off to Symphony Sid and he played it. Miles called up the next day cursing a blue streak but a few days later, he called again and everything was cool.

WELL, YOU NEEDN'T (2, 5)

Miles Davis—trumpet; John Coltrane—tenor saxophone;
Red Garland—piano; Paul Chambers—bass; Philly Joe Jones—drums.

Recorded October 26, 1956.

From *Steamin' with the Miles Davis Quintet* (Prestige 7200/OJCCD-391-2).



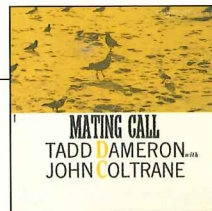
There were a lot of loose jam sessions during 1956 as Prestige took full advantage of the 12-inch LP medium. Among the most successful were Gene Ammons's *The Happy Blues* and two tenor sax jams: *Informal Jazz* by Elmo Hope and *Tenor Conclave*. Al Cohn and Zoot Sims were on the latter while Hank Mobley and John Coltrane were on both. Mobley, Jackie McLean, and Mal Waldron were recorded for the first time during 1956. Tadd Dameron did one session (*Fontainebleau*) with an eight-piece band and later in the year made a quartet album titled *Mating Call* which featured John Coltrane.

ON A MISTY NIGHT (2, 6)

Tadd Dameron—piano; John Coltrane—tenor saxophone;
John Simmons—bass; Philly Joe Jones—drums.

Recorded November 30, 1956.

From *Mating Call* (Prestige 7070/OJCCD-212-2).



EE: My ambition was to be a photographer. I lived in the neighborhood with Arthur Taylor, Jackie McLean, and Sonny Rollins. One day I asked Arthur Taylor if I could go to a session with him. He needed transportation and I had a jalopy so I took him over to Rudy's. I took some pictures and Bob bought one for use on Jackie's Lights Out cover. One day Bob offered me a job as a part-time office clerk. I started going to sessions with Bob, shooting pictures, etc. It grew into a full-time job once we moved to Jersey.

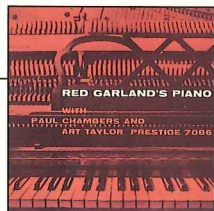
BW: *Esmond was recommended. Part of the problem was getting the musicians out to Rudy's. Arthur Taylor said he knew a guy who could help. His friend was a photographer who worked for the New York Times part-time. He knows all the musicians and he had a car. He turned out to be a very nice person and also very responsible. So I hired him.*

IF I WERE A BELL (2,7)

Red Garland—piano; **Paul Chambers**—bass; **Arthur Taylor**—drums.

Recorded December 14, 1956.

From *Red Garland's Piano* (Prestige 7086/OJCCD-073-2).



BW: *Red was a hard swinger but also very melodic. There were two pianists who were similar in many ways but from different times. Al Haig got Getz into the pretty tunes in the same way that Red Garland did with Miles. Red was like a library, he knew every song ever written. And whatever Red played, it swung. He was very good for Miles. Miles started to sell when he recorded the pretty songs with the mute. I'd make sure he played muted, pretty songs in each album. Miles wasn't into that. Red gave him that.*

EE: *Red Garland was a very easy guy to produce—once he showed up. You had to tell him the date was at 1 p.m. if you wanted to start by 3 p.m. He was so self-effacing and such a nice guy that it was impossible to get angry with him. He'd come two hours late and then finish the session in two or three hours. It was usually trio stuff—not that difficult—with A.T. and P.C. He was just a consummate musician.*

Shortly after all the great music of 1956 had been recorded there was a general exodus of much of the major talent at Prestige. James Moody had already gone to Argo and Miles Davis to Columbia. The Modern Jazz Quartet signed with Atlantic. Hank Mobley and Bennie Green went

to Blue Note. Milt Jackson did some sides for Savoy before moving to Atlantic. Sonny Rollins decided to free-lance, recording sessions for Blue Note, Riverside, Contemporary, Period, and MetroJazz during 1957 and '58 before his first major departure from the scene.

JG: When I was writing Jazz Masters of the 50s I got to know Sonny. I was working on the book during the time I worked for Bob. Sonny reminded me that there were two unreleased sides: "Sonny Boy" and "The House I Live In." He wanted to make sure Bob knew about them. It was as if he was looking out for Bob.

Bob Weinstock was not one to look back. He took the view of the baseball general manager whose stars had been lost to free agency. He would rebuild the farm system and nurture the next group of stars. Prestige recording activity would increase in scope and roughly 60 LPs were recorded during 1957. Art Taylor played 20 recording dates for Prestige that year. Mal Waldron played piano on 22.

John Coltrane and Mose Allison were signed. Coltrane was especially active, recording three LPs of his own and being involved with ten other projects during the year. The jam sessions continued with 3 *Trumpets*, 4 *Altos*, 2 *Guitars*, and lots of one-shots by new stars such as Curtis Fuller, Bobby Jaspar, Webster Young, Ray Draper, Kenny Burrell, Ray Bryant, and Yusef Lateef. Some of Count Basie's players, including Paul Quinichette and Frank Wess, came into the Prestige orbit during 1957. In many ways the business got simpler since there were no more 78s, no more 10-inch LPs, and no more 45 EPs to manufacture. On the horizon was stereo recording, and while Prestige's first stereo session was recorded in September 1957, it was never issued, indeed never edited, for stereo release, but is forthcoming.

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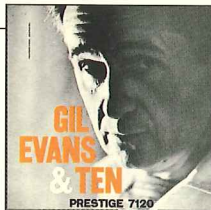
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NOBODY'S HEART (2, 8)

Gil Evans—piano; Jimmy Cleveland—trombone;
Bart Varsalona—bass trombone; Louis Mucci—first trumpet;
Jake Koven—second trumpet; Willie Ruff—French horn;
Lee Konitz—alto saxophone; Steve Lacy—soprano saxophone;
Dave Kurtzer—bassoon; Paul Chambers—bass;
Nick Stabulas—drums.

Recorded September 27, 1957. Arranged and conducted by Gil Evans.

From *Gil Evans & Ten* (Prestige 7120/OJCCD-346-2).



BW: *Miles was always telling me about Gil Evans. I knew his work with Thornhill. That's where I first heard Lee Konitz. I knew Gil's ability and I wanted something different. He was one of the greatest arrangers in modern jazz history. He didn't do enough, really. He should have done more. At this time, Prestige was making lots of money. I had a choice in that I could pay taxes or I could invest in more recordings. I chose to invest in the musicians.*

The continued expansion of Prestige recording meant that Weinstock needed some help in making records. Teddy Charles, who had produced for Weinstock on an occasional basis for several years, was more active during 1957, doing six separate projects. Ozzie Cadena was working for Savoy but he wasn't above making some extra bucks on the side.

OC: *I would get \$100 from Bob to do a session. I had a thing with Herbie Mann who was always hustling record dates so I called Bob and we did some things with Bobby Jaspar. I was recording Yusef Lateef for Savoy and the band was coming from Detroit so they were always looking for some extra dates. I did Curtis Fuller's New Trombone album.*

Cadena was also hired to do much of the editing and tape sequencing. His involvement with Prestige would increase with the expansion of the label.

Much of the material recorded during 1957 was held back for release, sometimes for several years. When the New Jazz label was revived there was plenty of material for release. There were fewer defections: Phil Woods went to Epic and Jackie McLean signed with Blue Note.

John Coltrane blossomed during 1958. He'd returned to Miles Davis after a period with Thelonious Monk and his popularity was building. Coltrane recorded eight LPs for Prestige during 1958! Ira Gitler described one aspect of his style as "sheets of sound."



RUSSIAN LULLABY (2, 9)

John Coltrane—tenor saxophone; **Red Garland**—piano;
Paul Chambers—bass; **Arthur Taylor**—drums.

Recorded February 7, 1958.

From *Soultrane* (Prestige 7142/OJCCD-021-2).

EE: I went to the Apollo Theater one day when they had one of their great jazz shows. Lock and Shirley were on the bill and I heard them. I told Bob I thought they were a fantastic group and that he should do something with them.

Bob was not a purist. He had his commercial side and he liked soulful music. There was no reluctance at all. That Shirley was female added a little cachet. He had a lot of respect for Lock because of his association with Basie. Bob started the Cookbook series.

BW: I remember "Paradise Squat" with Basie. It was a masterpiece, a big hit record. I recorded Lockjaw for Birdland so I knew how good he was. He had a sense of humor, he had fire and he had soul. To me, he was one of the most complete tenor players of the modern era. When he came up



JOHN COLTRANE



EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS
AND SHIRLEY SCOTT

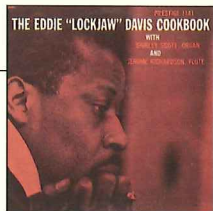
with the organ group, it was a good move. I knew that was going to be big. We signed Shirley about the same time. In fact I recorded Shirley before I did Lockjaw.

IN THE KITCHEN (2, 10)

Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis—tenor saxophone;
Jerome Richardson—flute; Shirley Scott—organ;
George Duvivier—bass; Arthur Edgehill—drums.

Recorded June 20, 1958.

From *The Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis Cookbook, vol. 1* (Prestige 7141/OJCCD-652-2).



By late August 1958, Esmond Edwards had assumed the chores of A&R director. Within a few weeks, Prestige was settled in Bergenfield, New Jersey. The New Jazz label was revived, and while the amount of recording dipped slightly to adjust for the logistics of the move, the quality continued at a very high level. Shirley Scott and Lockjaw Davis were signed. The *Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis Cookbook* was the last album with the New York label. Tiny Grimes and Coleman Hawkins made their first appearances on Prestige. Gene Ammons began a jail sentence for drugs in the middle of the year and John Coltrane cut his last session the day after Christmas before departing for Atlantic. Weinstock had done well to load up on Coltrane sessions. He had enough albums to be issuing new material on Coltrane into 1964.

With the move to New Jersey came an expansion of staff. Jack Maher came aboard to write liner notes and to do promotion and publicity. Ron Eyre, who also wrote liner notes, was hired to do sales.

RE: Before I joined the label, sales were handled by Bob and Pop. I guess I was the first outside guy hired to do sales. Bob initially hired me to do promotion but pretty soon I was on the road constantly. He had a pretty good lineup of distributors in those days. Our best markets were New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Detroit. The South was a tough sell.

There were two elements to the Prestige catalog. You had the soul-funk area with the organ groups and the honking tenors. And then the young Turks he was doing on New Jazz. I was always anxious to push the New Jazz artists because some of those guys were getting good reviews. Bob taught me a lesson. He said, "Gene Ammons has never gotten more than two or three stars in Down Beat nor has Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis. I don't need Down Beat to sell Gene Ammons or Shirley Scott." It was a point well taken.

During 1959, the artist roster was dramatically restructured. Arnett Cobb, Willis Jackson, Bill Jennings, Lem Winchester, Johnny "Hammond" Smith, Oliver Nelson, and Buddy Tate came to the label. Benny Golson cut three New Jazz albums with Curtis Fuller during the year (Fuller cut three with Golson for Savoy).

Rudy Van Gelder opened his state-of-the-art facility in Englewood Cliffs. The first Prestige session at the new location was by Coleman Hawkins; it was also the first album in the Swingville series. Swingville, Bluesville, and Moodsville would soon be part of the Prestige group of labels. Moodsville was an attempt to get different repertoire from artists signed to Prestige. Coleman Hawkins would spend his time divided between Swingville and Moodville.

BW: *The musicians liked Esmond and he dug the music. It was a natural thing for me to turn the recording over to him. There was continuity in that I had recorded Lockjaw before he did, the same with Red Garland*



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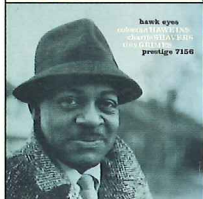
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2001



COLEMAN HAWKINS
WITH THE
RED GARLAND TRIO

and so forth. Once we decided on the musicians and the type of album we were going to make, it was in his hands.

EE: Prestige had a set way of doing things and I learned from Bob. You did a couple of ballads and some kind of funky tune. Generally you saved the blues until the end to fill in the time. He didn't tell me how to do things; my education was more observational than tutorial. The business was expanding and—as much as he loved the music—I think he felt the need to tend to the business aspects. One day, he just said to me, "You go do the session tomorrow." I don't think he set foot in the studio after that. I ran everything by him. I never arbitrarily set up any sessions. Sometimes he would say, "Let's do so and so with so and so," and we'd do that. I had a good knowledge of the standard repertoire.

When Gene Ammons emerged from prison in 1960, Prestige brought him in do sessions on consecutive days. The first album was titled *Boss Tenor* and was one of the finest of Ammons's lengthy career. The album became a hit powered by the key track, "Canadian Sunset."

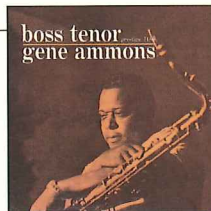
EE: I believe I gave him "Canadian Sunset." That particular tune caught on. The album was the first in a long line that I did with him. My philosophy was to try to make the music more acceptable to a wider audience. Recording can be a very tense situation but any session with Gene was relaxed. I wasn't a jazz academician and I wasn't trying to make history. The critics wouldn't call many Prestige records from the early Sixties landmark albums. They were just people music. That's what you got from Gene.

CANADIAN SUNSET (DISC 3, #1)

Gene Ammons—tenor saxophone; Tommy Flanagan—piano;
Doug Watkins—bass; Arthur Taylor—drums;
Ray Barretto—conga.

Recorded June 16, 1960. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Boss Tenor* (Prestige 7180/OJCCD-297-2).



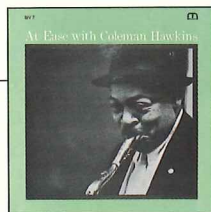
EE: Coleman Hawkins was one of those guys who would never come prepared. You could give him six months' notice and he'd still be unprepared. I learned early on to bring a briefcase full of sheet music. Surprisingly, there were a lot of tunes that I considered standards that he was not familiar with. "Trouble Is a Man" is a tune he was not familiar with. But you let him run the tune down one time and you'd think he had written it. His learning was so rapid and he absorbed the nuances of the tune so rapidly. He was just masterful.

TROUBLE IS A MAN (3, 2)

Coleman Hawkins—tenor saxophone; Tommy Flanagan—piano;
Wendell Marshall—bass; Osie Johnson—drums.

Recorded January 29, 1960. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *At Ease with Coleman Hawkins* (Moodsville 7/OJCCD-181-2).



RE: Swingville, Moodsville, and Bluesville, that was a very heavy launch. We had to get that product out there. There was a lot of recording going on. Bob had a tremendous amount of faith in what he wanted to do.

If you compare Prestige with Blue Note, I think Bob spread his wings more than they did. The danger, from my point of view, was that the effort could be spread too thin. That was a lot of product to get out in such a short time. You had to admire the guy for taking these risks. In time, Swingville



COLEMAN HAWKINS

and Moodsville tended to become limited in exposure and sales. Bluesville, on the other hand, helped us to get into the college market.

EE: Arnett Cobb is someone I brought to the label. I was a big fan of his when I was a kid. He'd had a terrible automobile accident and was off the scene for a while. The Very Saxy thing was Bob's idea. It wasn't a problem putting this group together. You'd just call up the guys. This thing Bob did with the five tenors [see p. 26], you couldn't do that today. Everybody's got an exclusive label deal. Everybody wants leader's money. In those days, one guy got leader pay and everybody else got sideman money and that was it.

VERY SAXY (3, 3)

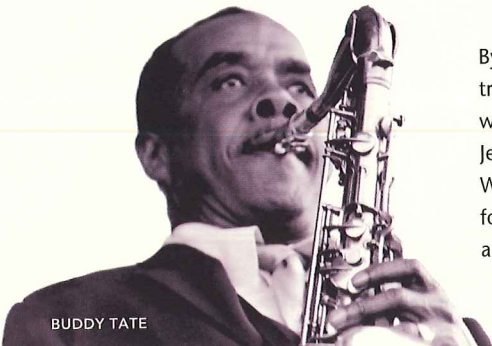
Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis—tenor saxophone; **Coleman Hawkins**—tenor saxophone; **Arnett Cobb**—tenor saxophone; **Buddy Tate**—tenor saxophone; Shirley Scott—organ; George Duvivier—bass; Arthur Edgehill—drums. Solos: Cobb, Tate, Scott, Hawkins, Davis.

Recorded April 29, 1959. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Very Saxy* (Prestige 7167/OJCCD-458-2).



By 1959, there was more of a concentration on the soul-jazz roster. One-shots were done for New Jazz with Art Taylor, Jerome Richardson, Kenny Dorham, Mal Waldron, and Yusef Lateef. The first sessions for the Swingville and Bluesville labels were also done that year.



Mose Allison had left Prestige in 1959 and gone to Columbia. His association with the label was a curious one. He'd been recommended to Weinstock by George Wallington and was known as a pianist who had recorded with Stan Getz and Zoot Sims. During his Prestige years, his singing was done reluctantly. Yet the vocals got the airplay. It was Don Schlitten who suggested putting all the vocals together. *Mose Allison Sings* became a perennial best-seller when the album was issued in 1963.

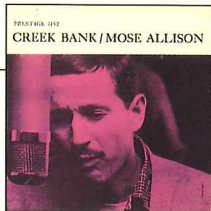
DS: I reunited with Bob in the early Sixties to be the art director for the folk, blues, and other small labels he had started. I started recording things for his spoken word label. I also did a flamenco album, an American Indian album, and stuff like that. My first jazz record was with Dave Pike in December 1962.

THE SEVENTH SON (3, 4)

Mose Allison—*piano, vocal*;
Addison Farmer—*bass*; **Ronnie Free**—*drums*.

Recorded August 15, 1958.

From *Creek Bank* (Prestige 7152, currently available as part of PRCD-24055-2).



BW: Mose was a smash once the singles came out. "Parchman Farm" was big and "The Seventh Son" was bigger. I knew he was unique so I just tried to make him comfortable. Whatever he did was what he wanted to do at the time.

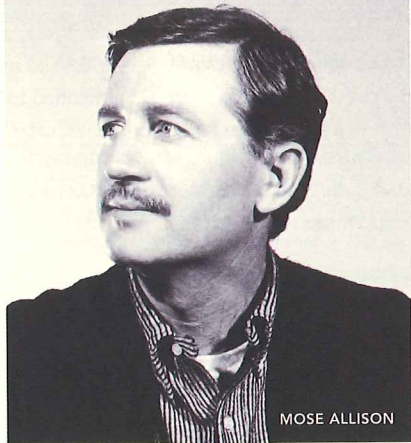
RK: In L.A. we did very well with Back Country Suite and Local Color. At that time people didn't know whether Mose Allison was black or white. When Young Man Mose came out, with his picture on the cover, sales dipped a little bit. But they came back.

JM: I remember going with Esmond to WINS, a big white station in New York, with "Parchman Farm." Jack Lacey was the music director and he had a reputation as somebody who'd listen to four bars of a record and take it off. This was probably the first single Prestige had ever brought to a station like that. He listened all the way through and finally said he couldn't play it. We came out of there feeling pretty good. It didn't get played but at least he listened.

BW: About 1958, we started with singles. We were very important to the jukebox guys who serviced the black community. So we made a lot of two-part singles. We did singles right up until the end and we even reissued singles. Blue Note had some good singles but not nearly as many as Prestige. We always kept a constant stream of singles going out.

By 1960, with Swingville, Moodsville, and Bluesville in full swing, the amount of recording mushroomed. One hundred one LPs were recorded during 1960! Stereo LPs were now issued regularly, some simultaneously with mono. Others were issued on a delayed basis while others still were not issued in stereo until late-Sixties reissues began to appear. Gigi Gryce did three albums during the year with the same group, a concept similar to what Benny Golson had done in 1959.

One of the key arrivals that year was Eric Dolphy. Ira Gitler had heard Dolphy at the Newport Jazz Festival, where he was playing with Chico Hamilton. He came to Prestige with the best possible recommendation. "G.W." was written in honor of one of Dolphy's mentors, Gerald Wilson.



G.W. (3, 5)

Eric Dolphy—alto saxophone; Freddie Hubbard—trumpet;
Jaki Byard—piano; George Tucker—bass; Roy Haynes—drums.

Recorded April 1, 1960. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Outward Bound* (New Jazz 8236/OJCCD-022-2).



EE: *Eric was a very intense person. His music was literally his life. He spent hours practicing every day. He didn't fool around in the studio. He took care of business. He would occasionally get into it with Rudy, they were both strong personalities.*

In terms of music, Eric was just fantastic. A lot of the stuff he was doing was new to me, but I just dug his talent. The music, new or not, was interesting. It wasn't a Gene Ammons or Coleman Hawkins thing. It was different but valid and interesting. I enjoyed it.

BP: *I have an intense dislike for most avant-garde jazz. I kind of lumped Dolphy into that bag but the first time I met Bob Weinstock he steered me straight. He was bemoaning the fact that the group on the Outward Bound album couldn't stay together and grow and develop. I still don't buy all of Dolphy but Outward Bound is a great record.*

JG: *Eric was the sweetest guy in the world. And, of course, he left us much too soon. I think the things he recorded at the Five Spot are probably his greatest.*

Dolphy only recorded at Prestige for about 18 months, yet he left over 20 appearances as a leader and sideman. It is his most important work. Once again, Bob Weinstock invested in a musician and although Dolphy's sales did not approach those achieved by some of the soul-jazz artists, in time the investment paid big dividends.

BW: *One day I said to Esmond, let's do something with Roland Kirk. We decided to do him with Jack McDuff since he'd never done anything funky.*

EE: *This was my first experience with Roland. He was a very ordered guy. He knew exactly what he wanted and played his instruments at the highest level.*

KIRK'S WORK (3, 6)

Roland Kirk—tenor saxophone, manzello, siren;
Jack McDuff—organ; **Joe Benjamin**—bass; **Arthur Taylor**—drums.

Recorded July 11, 1961. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Kirk's Work* (Prestige 7210/OJCCD-459-2).



BP: *Bob had a deal with his artists that they could buy Prestige albums at cost. I used to hear from Roland every month. He'd quiz me on the new releases but what he liked most was the Historical Series reissues. Once and a while he'd buy something from the catalog. I remember him calling up after he got Coltrane's *The Believer* album and raising all kinds of hell because the playing time was so short.*

EE: *I was in Atlantic City making a diplomatic call on Willis Jackson and Jack McDuff at the Club Harlem. This was when Atlantic City was really jumping. Across the street was Wild Bill Davis and I heard Oliver Nelson playing with him. He just knocked me out. During intermission I spoke to him and we made a deal to bring him to Prestige. He was a real find: a great arranger, a great musician.*

He was just getting started. I was impressed because he had a business card that said "Oliver Nelson, arranger, conductor, etc." In those days no musicians had business cards. I never realized how great a find he was until we got in the studio. He had perfect pitch. He could sit in a car in Rudy's parking lot and do an arrangement with no keyboard reference or anything.



ROLAND KIRK

Jimmy Forrest and King Curtis were two other guys I brought to the label. I just liked those ballsy saxophone players. The black artists just played the kind of music I liked and related to. I think Bud Freeman was the only white saxophone player I recorded for Bob. Jimmy had a huge record in "Night Train" while King Curtis, at that stage in his life, wanted to play jazz.

SOUL STREET (3, 7)

Oliver Nelson—tenor saxophone;

King Curtis—tenor saxophone; **Jimmy Forrest**—tenor saxophone;

Gene Casey—piano; George Duvivier—bass; Roy Haynes—drums.

Recorded September 9, 1960. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Soul Battle* (Prestige 7223/OJCCD-325-2).



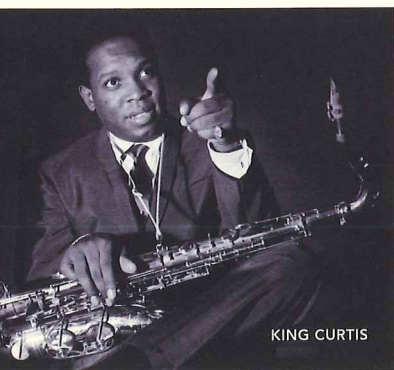
BP: The LPs Esmond was making with tenor players really got to me when I was in college. My favorite Cobb, Lockjaw, Jimmy Forrest, Willis Jackson, and especially Gene Ammons records were

made at this time. I had some hits with Jug but to me Esmond made the best Gene Ammons records. I use a Jimmy Forrest tune, "Bolo Blues," for my radio theme.

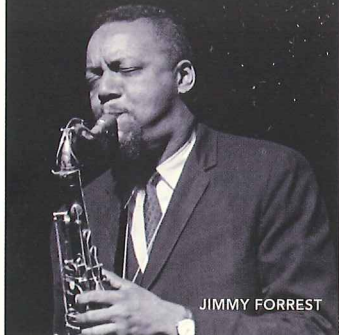
JG: King Curtis seemed a strange part of the Prestige mix. He always reminded me of a Nashville musician.

Prestige had always been home to great instrumentalists; vocalists had been a sometime thing. All that changed in 1960, when Prestige had one of its biggest sellers of all time.

EE: It was my policy to listen to everything and to



KING CURTIS



return every phone call. Most guys didn't do that at that time and nobody does today. I got a tape in the mail from some guy I'd never heard of—Warren Lanier, her manager. I listened to the tape, liked it, called him and signed her.

She picked the tune, I was unfamiliar with it. I thought of it as the B-side of the single but it was the side that got all the attention. I still think Etta is one of the finest jazz singers around, although she's never really gotten her due.



DON'T GO TO STRANGERS (3, 8)

Etta Jones—vocals; Frank Wess—flute; Richard Wyands—piano; Skeeter Best—guitar; George Duvivier—bass; Roy Haynes—drums.

Recorded June 21, 1960. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Don't Go to Strangers* (Prestige 7186/OJCCD-298-2).

RK: *Los Angeles was a very good town for jazz radio play. At this time, we had two all-jazz FM stations, KNOB and KBCA. There were other individual guys as well. California Record Distributors had most of the key jazz labels so we were tight with those stations. We got a lot of jazz play.*

We broke "Don't Go to Strangers" on KGfJ, an R&B station. KGfJ was a little different in those days. Although they had a program director, the individual DJs had much greater latitude in choosing music. We liked it a lot and played it for some of their DJs. Herman Griffith and Larry McCormick were two of them. Hunter Hancock also.

RE: *"Don't Go to Strangers" broke pretty fast nationally. It started off with R&B and went quickly into pop play. It was tough to convince the distributors because they didn't really believe Prestige*

could have a pop hit. If you didn't push like hell, they would keep it confined to jazz, maybe R&B.

BP: *L.A. had to have been the biggest market for "Don't Go to Strangers." It was on the jazz stations and the big R&B station plus Etta was in town when it broke. She was working a club called the Summit opposite Dave Pell. They held her over for eight weeks. That was unheard of in those years.*

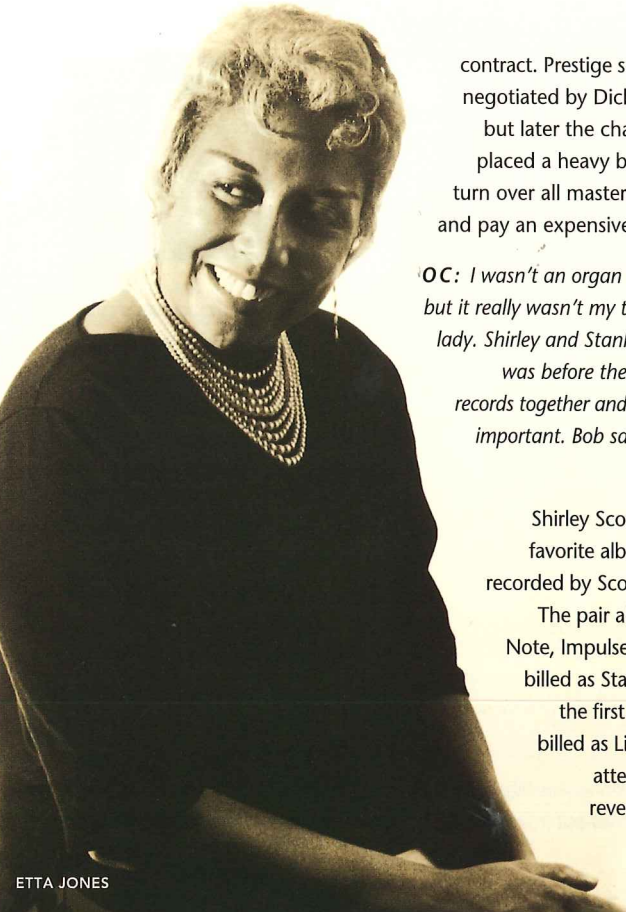
"Don't Go to Strangers" stayed on the R&B charts for eleven weeks, reaching as high as number 5. It got to number 36 on the pop chart.

The amount of recording at Prestige hovered right around the 100-LP mark during 1961, and this included just the jazz and blues labels. There were others: Prestige Folklore, Lively Arts, Irish, Near East, and Prestige International.

The Tru-Sound label made its appearance and was focused on R&B. King Curtis was the dominant artist on this label in the same way that Eric Dolphy was to New Jazz and Coleman Hawkins on both Swingville and Moodsville. Outside producers were contributing much to Bluesville but Esmond Edwards was still producing the vast majority of the jazz. In many cases recordings were held up so the company could work the big sellers such as Gene Ammons or Etta Jones.

Arnett Cobb had made his last recordings in the fall of 1960. His physical condition was not getting any better so he returned to his hometown of Houston. It would be another decade before he reemerged on the national scene. Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis had left Prestige in 1961 also but his situation was different. He and Shirley Scott had parted company and Lockjaw let her go thinking that Johnny "Hammond" Smith would be her replacement. When this didn't happen, Davis put the organ group behind him and formed a quintet with Johnny Griffin. Weinstock didn't see the sales potential in this band so he let him go to Jazzland after one studio album and a live session at Minton's that yielded four LPs.

Gene Ammons made a number of runaway dates during the year as his drug habit took hold of his professional career. Chess Records began telling people that they had Ammons under



contract. Prestige sued. The resulting settlement, negotiated by Dick Asher (the Prestige attorney but later the chairman of Polygram Records), placed a heavy burden on Chess. They had to turn over all masters including those unreleased, and pay an expensive royalty on each record sold.

OC: I wasn't an organ man. I did my share of records but it really wasn't my thing. Shirley Scott was a great lady. Shirley and Stanley Turrentine were a pair. This was before they got married. They made nice records together and whether I liked it or not wasn't important. Bob said "Record Shirley Scott" and I recorded Shirley Scott.

Shirley Scott has long called *Hip Soul* her favorite album. It was the first of five LPs recorded by Scott and Turrentine for Prestige.

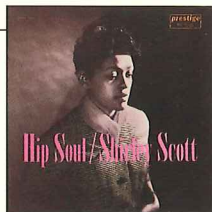
The pair also recorded together for Blue Note, Impulse, and Atlantic. Turrentine was billed as Stan Turner on *Hip Soul* while on the first Blue Note album, Shirley was billed as Little Miss Cott. After these first attempts at subterfuge, the labels reverted to billing the participants by their real names.

HIP SOUL (3, 9)

Shirley Scott—organ; Stanley Turrentine—tenor saxophone;
Herb Lewis—bass; Roy Brooks—drums.

Recorded June 2, 1961. Produced by Ozzie Cadena.

From *Hip Soul* (Prestige 7205, currently available as part of PRCD-24200-2).



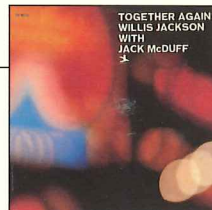
Jack McDuff and Willis Jackson were together for the last time in 1961. McDuff became increasingly involved with other Prestige artists and Jackson made several albums with piano accompaniment over the next year. Bill Jennings, a key member of the group, left the following year but returned in 1967.

THIS'LL GET TO YA (3, 10)

Willis Jackson—tenor saxophone; Jack McDuff—organ;
Bill Jennings—guitar; Milt Hinton—bass; Alvin Johnson—drums;
Buck Clarke—congas.

Recorded February 26, 1960. Produced by Esmond Edwards.

From *Together Again! Willis Jackson with Jack McDuff* (Prestige 7364).



EE: I don't remember the title so Ozzie must have titled it. We recorded so much of the band with McDuff and Bill Jennings that it all didn't come out right away. Willis played a lot of the clubs in Harlem, Small's Paradise for example, and he fit right into the soul thing that Bob liked and was pushing at the time. Willis was another of those ballsy tenor players.

JF: When I got there the soul thing was happening. The real jazz was eclipsed. He was still selling Bluesville, Moodsville, and all that but it was being phased out. Prestige was a known factor. We

sold a lot of records and had a huge catalog so we were respected in that way. At the same time, Blue Note had nobody in the street. There was no radio promotion at all.

"This'll Get to Ya" was a wonderful record but not an obvious record because it's ten minutes long. The late-night radio guys got behind it and it really built. When Joel Dorn was on the air in Philly, he was really on it. Then all of a sudden it gathered momentum and it actually hit the Billboard chart!

"This'll Get to Ya" was recorded in 1960 and had lain in the can for almost five years before it was released. The album billed McDuff as well as Jackson since McDuff was very hot at the time. It was titled *Together Again* even though they hadn't been together in three years! Because of the success of the album, the last album of Jackson leftovers was titled *Together Again, Again*.

Walt Dickerson, Ron Carter, and Jaki Byard made their initial appearances during 1961. Yusef Lateef recorded his final album at the end of December.

Sonny Stitt's first appearance on Prestige in more than a decade came in 1962. He did an album with McDuff on organ and reunited with Ammons for *Soul Summit* which also included McDuff. Lightnin' Hopkins was recorded frequently during the year and became the dominant artist on Bluesville. "Got to Move Your Baby," a single from his *Last Night Blues* album, had picked some R&B airplay in California and sold very nicely. Cadena began recording gospel for

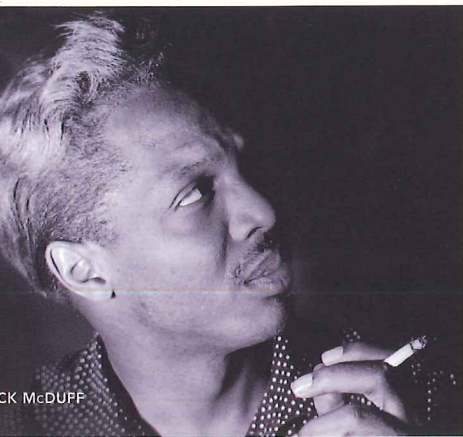


WILLIS JACKSON

Tru-Sound. Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis returned to the fold, cut three albums, and then "retired" to work in a booking agency. King Curtis cut his final Tru-Sound album in February and immediately cut "Soul Twist," a number one R&B single, for Enjoy. He never went back to playing jazz. Gene Ammons was the big story, recording six LPs during the year. Shortly thereafter, Ammons was convicted on a drug charge and began a long jail sentence. In September, Esmond Edwards left to join the Chess organization. Ozzie Cadena took over as head of A&R.

OC: I was in the building. I'd been doing the album assembly for several years. Esmond was quitting and I was right outside the office. Bob said, "I'll hire Ozzie to take your place." And that's what happened.

Cadena may not have been an organ man, but that's what was happening at Prestige when he took over. Johnny "Hammond" Smith had departed but Shirley Scott, Larry Young, and Rhoda Scott were still a part of the roster. And Jack McDuff was getting huge. Cadena made three McDuff albums in four months. The next project was scheduled to be recorded Live at the Front Room in Newark. Cadena recorded but the tapes were bad. McDuff's management insisted that Lew Futterman be given the job of producing McDuff. The first album was titled *Brother Jack McDuff Live!*. An announcer was recorded at the session and the liner alluded to the Front Room being the locale. In reality it was done in a studio before invited guests, a new concept at the time.



BW: *Futterman didn't work for the company. He was an outside producer who was involved with McDuff's management. In order to keep McDuff, I had to agree to let them produce. I said, "Okay. Go ahead." So I was able to keep McDuff. I got George Benson on the label that way and a couple of Red Holloway albums as well.*

BP: *I ran into Lew Futterman seven or eight years ago. I recognized the name from the McDuff albums. He was running an Italian restaurant on Broadway, just north of Lincoln Center. WBGO had a function there to celebrate the tenth anniversary of my radio show. He had been out of the music business for quite a while. The food at the restaurant was excellent but the place didn't last long.*

ROCK CANDY (3, 11)

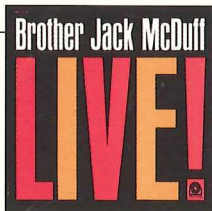
Jack McDuff—*organ*; Red Holloway—*tenor saxophone*;
George Benson—*guitar*; Joe Dukes—*drums*.

Recorded in New York City; June 5, 1963.

Produced by Lew Futterman and Peter Paul.

Recording engineer—unknown.

From *Brother Jack McDuff/Live!* (Prestige 7274,
currently available as part of PRCD-24147-2).



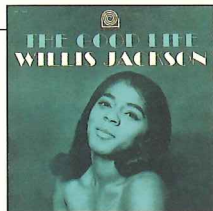
Major changes were in the works at Prestige during 1963. The last Swingville, Moodsville, and Tru-Sound albums were done. Recording decreased substantially with only 37 new albums being taped during the year. Jimmy Witherspoon arrived at Prestige; his albums were issued on Prestige, not Bluesville. Roy Haynes did two albums during 1963, as did Pony Poindexter. Don Schlitten became more active in recording, bringing Booker Ervin and Lucky Thompson to the label. Willis Jackson went back to the organ sound with a new quintet but this time his co-star was a slender young guitarist from Philadelphia, Pat Martino. There were four albums recorded by Jackson during 1963. Three featured Martino, who early on was billed as Pat Azzara.

TROUBLED TIMES (3, 12)

Willis Jackson—tenor saxophone; Frank Robinson—trumpet;
Carl Wilson—organ; Pat Martino—guitar; Leonard Gaskin—bass;
Yusef Ali—drums.

Recorded May 24, 1963. Produced by Ozzie Cadena.

From *The Good Life* (Prestige 7296).



By 1963, many of the artists brought to the label by Esmond Edwards had left. Ozzie Cadena was working with a large backlog of albums recorded in the previous years so there wasn't the pressure to sign new artists. After all, the company was still releasing new Coltrane albums! The biggest recording of 1963 was the first one done by Cadena as the new A&R director.

BW: *I said to Ozzie, "I've got Gene Ammons coming in. Bossa nova was big so let's do a bossa nova album, but let's call it Bad Bossa Nova." He said, "I know just what I want to do." And that was it.*

OC: *Gene was working at the Blue Coronet in Brooklyn. I'm singing tunes to him while he's nodding on the bandstand. The bongo player was no good but he was a friend of Gene's so I couldn't get rid of him. I couldn't find a bass player so I ended up using Norman Edge who worked with Morris Nanton out in Jersey. But I also had Kenny Burrell, Hank Jones, Bucky Pizzarelli, and Oliver Jackson. Gene said he knew the tunes.*

Next day at the studio, he doesn't know the tunes. "Moito Mato Grosso" was made up in the studio. That's the one I like the best but everyone picked "Ca'Purange." The album we made was Latinized but it wasn't bossa nova.

GENE AMMONS



CA'PURANGE (JUNGLE SOUL) (DISC 4, #1)

Gene Ammons—*tenor saxophone*;
Bucky Pizzarelli—*Spanish guitar*;
Kenny Burrell—*rhythm guitar*;
Hank Jones—*piano*; **Norman Edge**—*bass*;
Oliver Jackson—*drums*; **Al Hayes**—*bongo*.

Recorded September 9, 1962. Produced by Ozzie Cadena.

From *Bad! Bossa Nova* (Prestige 7257/OJCCD-351-2).



It may not have been bossa nova but it was bad! The album sold from the moment it was issued. In time, the cover was changed and the tune "Ca'Purange" became known as "Jungle Soul."

JF: The soul-jazz preceded the Motown setup. This was music that was really played and listened to in the black community. That is where you sold most of your product. Radio was different in those days. You had some great clear-channel stations such as WCSL in Chicago, where Sid McCoy was, or WHAM in Rochester with Bill Ardis. There was a guy at WNOP, outside of Cincinnati, who played great stuff. There was a guy in New Orleans who did "Jazz On The Air." American Airlines sponsored that and it just boomed up the prairie. Those stations played the real thing and people were very interested in that music. I sold it in tonnage. I couldn't keep Gene Ammons's album with "Ca'Purange" in stock in Chicago. For some reason or other, it just rolled.

BP: This is a very influential album that few people recognize as such. Listen to the grooves on "Ca'Purange" and "Moito Mato Grosso" and tell me that this isn't funk. James Brown is considered the father of funk. At the time this album was made, James Brown was doing things like "Prisoner of Love." When we did the My Way album with Gene in 1971, arranger Bill Fischer used the "Ca'Purange" bass line on "Chicago Breakdown."

Don Patterson and Bobby Timmons were the last artists signed by Ozzie Cadena, who left in the middle of 1964. Cadena was replaced by Cal Lampley, who had previously worked for Columbia and Colpix. Futterman took on the task of producing Jimmy Witherspoon, while Schlitten brought Charles McPherson to the label. Lightnin' Hopkins recorded the final Bluesville album in 1964 and while blues recording would continue, later albums were issued on Prestige. New Jazz was discontinued and the numerical series continued on the Status label, which would become a short-lived budget label. But the big story of 1964 continued to be Brother Jack McDuff. McDuff scored another monster with *Live! At the Jazz Workshop*. He and his band were in the studio nine times

during the year. Among those sessions were albums by the sidemen in the group: saxophonist Red Holloway, drummer Joe Dukes, and guitarist George Benson.

SWEET ALICE BLUES (4, 2)

George Benson—guitar; Red Holloway—tenor saxophone;
Ronnie Boykins—bass; Joe Dukes—drums; Montego Joe—conga.

Recorded in New York City; May 1, 1964. Produced by Lew Futterman.
Recording engineer—unknown.

From *The New Boss Guitar of George Benson* (Prestige 7310/OJCCD-461-2).



BW: *I needed someone inside, full-time, to deal with the artists. Ozzie had opened a record store in Newark and was spending more time there. Ozzie knew how to get good feeling on records, lots of emotional feeling. He understood blues and R&B and I think my style of letting the musicians stretch out and cook may have influenced him.*

OC: *I couldn't make all the clubs. I'd make the important ones. I had a gold pass at Birdland. I felt I could learn more behind the counter. Guys would come in talking about who they had seen. You'd get a good feel for what was happening. I liked the idea but I guess Bob didn't.*

For my money, for jazz producers, Weinstock was number one. Number two would be Norman Granz because he recorded so many things.

Selig "Pop" Weinstock died in 1964. He had been his son's right hand since the business started, and his ability to see things through and take care of small details was a very important part of Prestige.

IG: *He was a warm guy with a gruff exterior. He loved his son very much and helped him a lot. He was very good with organizing the company. He took care of covers and labels, shipping and receiving,*

things like that. He could get under your skin. He could be annoying but he certainly had a lot to do with the early success of the label.

RE: *Pop Weinstock was a 100% character for his time. He was slight; his face was weatherworn, lined. As I remember he was white-haired or certainly gray-haired. He had a very raspy voice, just a tough old man.*

When I got there he was less involved with distributors; he was more involved in production. His experience was out in the street. You had to respect the man for the way he came up with Bob and built up each territory. He watched the distributors and he'd say to me, "You gotta be careful out there, you can't trust these bastards." When I left Pop was working out of his home and spending less time at the office.

RK: *I never met him although I talked to him on the phone. When the second Mose Allison record was breaking I ordered a thousand albums. Pop screwed up the order and sent me a thousand of something else. I called him up and said, "Pop, you sent me the wrong album." He said, "What did I send you?" I said, "You sent me Thelonious Monk." He said, "Oh, he's good too. You should keep the records."*

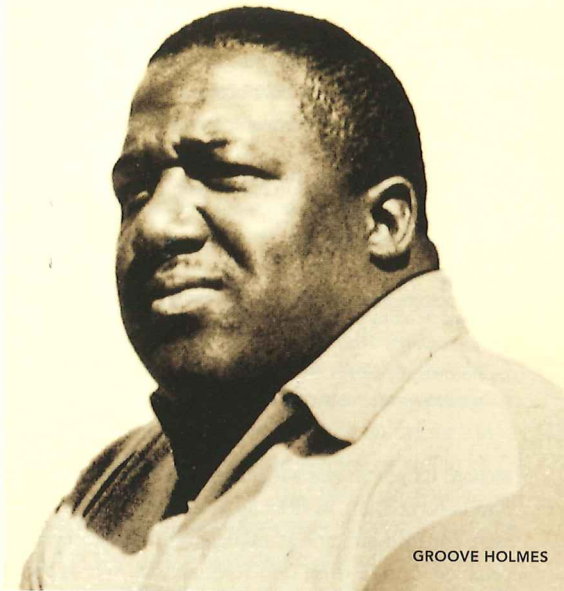
Cal Lampley inherited an artist roster substantially smaller than the one Ozzie Cadena had been dealing with when he became director of A&R in 1962. He attempted to take the label in more of a pop direction. He worked initially with artists such as Andy and the Bey Sisters, Pat Bowie, Morris Nanton, and Eddie Bonnemere.

BW: *Cal was a professional A&R man. He had worked for Columbia and he fit in very well.*

JF: *Cal Lampley was trying, with the encouragement of Bob, to come up with hits. In many cases, he sacrificed good players by doing stupid things with bad tunes. When he left the business, he went*

to teach at that music school that is now attached to Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. I hear that he's been ill for some years now.

Cal Lampley brought Freddie McCoy, Eric Kloss, and Frank Foster to the label in 1965 but on August 3 of that year, Lampley recorded the first Prestige album by Richard "Groove" Holmes and as a part of that date, a dead-solid-perfect six-minute version of "Misty." The arrangement of "Misty," using the Charleston beat, came out of the Lloyd Price big band and had been around for a while. Jimmy McGriff was playing it before Holmes recorded it.



GROOVE HOLMES

BW: *Billy Taylor was on the radio at that time, WLIB in Harlem. He called me and said, "This is going to be a smash hit. Put out a single." Next thing I know, William B. Williams from WNEW, a big white station, says, "If you can cut it down to 2:40, we'll play it to death." So we did and the thing's running up the charts and bigger stations all over the country are playing it. William B. calls back again and says, "If you can cut this down to 1:20, I'm going to play it after every 15-minute set." We cut it down and he's playing it to death. Every time we cut it, we sent out new DJs. There are three different versions of the single but we never changed the commercial copies.*

JF: I had taken "Misty" over to Gertie Katzman, the music director at WNEW. They played it on that station a bit but she said, "We could play it more if it was edited down." Jerry Field was doing promotion for Bob and he would later manage Groove. He got involved because I was going on the road. He brought the edited version to Gertie and they wailed the shit out of it in New York. William B. Williams was on the station but he didn't have the freedom he had later. He had his input but it all went through Gertie.

MISTY (4, 3)

Richard "Groove" Holmes—organ;
Gene Edwards—guitar; Jimmie Smith—drums.
Recorded August 3, 1965. Produced by Cal Lampley.
From *Soul Message* (Prestige 7435/OJCCD-329-2).



Richard Carpenter was a manager and publisher with a Prestige connection since the Ammons-Stitt band of 1950. In 1965 he produced five Chet Baker albums that he leased to Prestige. They were parceled out, one at a time, over the next several years. Johnny "Hammond" Smith returned in 1965 while Don Schlitten took over as producer for Jaki Byard. Schlitten, who had become art director for the entire label, went to Germany in October and came back with a Booker Ervin album and a second LP featuring Ervin and Dexter Gordon.

DS: I learned a lot from Bob. It was much easier in the old days to put five guys in a room and let them play. What I learned from him was that if you got the right five guys, you let them blow. You didn't get in their way. Everybody has criticized Prestige for not having rehearsals but in truth, they couldn't possibly have made the records if there were rehearsals. You couldn't get those guys together.

You're lucky you got 'em together the day of the recording session. That was the beauty of it, and that's what the true essence of what this music is all about. Weinstock had it and that's why the records he produced, as far as I'm concerned, are much better than the records of Blue Note.

The last Jack McDuff recording was made in 1966. In true Prestige fashion, new McDuff LPs were issued on a regular basis into 1970. Groove Holmes was recorded on several occasions during the year, and while his albums sold well, none came up to the level of *Soul Message*, which included "Misty." Cal Lampley brought Pucho and the Latin Soul Brothers and Houston Person to Prestige in 1966 while Don Schlitten signed Sonny Criss and Teddy Edwards. Recording activity lagged behind previous years with only 31 new albums taped during the year.

Things picked up considerably during 1967. Lampley signed Pat Martino and Joe Jones but was off the scene for a time due to illness. Johnny "Hammond" Smith had two strong-selling albums during the year. Schlitten became more active during the year, picking up the slack in Lampley's absence. He signed Barry Harris and Cedar Walton, and took over the recording of Eric Kloss and Pat Martino. He also did sessions with Houston Person, Don Patterson, and Pucho.

'Sixty-seven was the final year of monaural LPs. Sales turned substantially downward with the discontinuation of mono since a good portion of the Prestige sales base had yet to make the switch to stereo. It took some time for sales to get back to the level when both mono and stereo were sold. Sales of straight-ahead jazz never recovered.

The biggest news of 1968 was the arrival of a major star when Schlitten signed Illinois Jacquet. Jacquet's first Prestige album, *Bottoms Up*, had been released to unanimous critical raves. It consisted largely of new treatments of some of his hits. The second album, *The King*, featured more new material. Among the new tunes was one written by Billy Taylor, "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free."

I WISH I KNEW HOW IT WOULD FEEL TO BE FREE (4, 4)

Illinois Jacquet—tenor saxophone; Joe Newman—trumpet; Milt Buckner—piano; Billy Butler—guitar; Al Lucas—bass; Jo Jones—drums; Montego Joe—conga.

Recorded by Richard Alderson in New York City; August 20, 1968.

Produced by Don Schlitten.

From *The King!* (Prestige 7597/OJCCD-849-2).



DS: Illinois is a very, very beautiful man. When this was done it was the late Sixties, when all the guys from his era were totally neglected, totally rejected. Guys like Illinois were anxious to get back into the studio but they really had a lot to say that no one had let them say before. The band was chosen because we wanted to redo The King. On one of the other albums, Bottoms Up, we wanted a different kind of rhythm section so we brought in Barry Harris.

Sonny Criss had gotten the best exposure of his career since coming to Prestige. Schlitten, who had known about him, sought him out after reading a piece in *Down Beat*. His LPs had been getting excellent airplay and reviews. He played the Newport Jazz Festival in 1968.

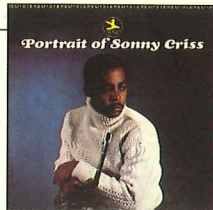


SMILE (4, 5)

Sonny Criss—alto saxophone; Walter Davis—piano;
Paul Chambers—bass; Alan Dawson—drums.

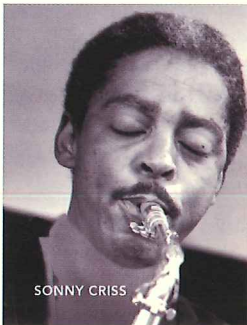
Recorded March 23, 1967. Produced by Don Schlitten.

From *Portrait of Sonny Criss* (Prestige 7526/OJCCD-655-2).



DS: "Smile" is a Charlie Chaplin song. It's a beautiful song. Sonny Criss had a certain kind of magic that, had he been straight in the head, he could have been a Stan Getz. He had a magic that not only made somebody interested in music listen to him but he had a sweetness and soulful quality that would make the guy in the street stop and listen. The idea with him was to find songs that would lend themselves to what it was that he could do.

Cal Lampley, Joe Fields, and Jerry Field left in mid-1968. Schlitten was now director of A&R and he continued to be art director for the label. Pianist Harold Mabern and vocalist Eddie Jefferson came aboard in 1968. Schlitten had also started the Prestige Historical Series. It was used to call attention to classic Prestige sessions as well as to license material from other labels. Numerically it was integrated into the 7000 series and lasted into 1971. Bob Porter was hired to do promotion and to revive the soul-jazz roster that had slipped badly since the days of Esmond Edwards and Ozzie Cadena.



BP: I was hired by Schlitten. He had his hands full with the art director's gig and recording his own artists. He had been producing certain artists for the label that were not people he brought aboard simply because there wasn't anyone else to do them. So I inherited a pretty good-size roster.

James Moody and Tal Farlow did one-shots with Schlitten during 1969 but in the spring, he landed Dexter Gordon. Gordon had been living in Europe since 1962. He was first headquartered in Paris and later in Copenhagen. Apart from a couple of live recordings, he hadn't been recorded since 1965.

FRIED BANANAS (4, 6)

Dexter Gordon—tenor saxophone; **Barry Harris**—piano;
Buster Williams—bass; **Albert "Tootie" Heath**—drums.

Recorded by George Klabin in New York City; April 4, 1969.
Produced by Don Schlitten.

From *More Power!* (Prestige 7680/OJCCD-815-2).



DS: All of these guys were very good friends. Dexter would come to my studio and after we'd shoot photos, we'd hang out. He was living in Paris but he visited a lot. A couple of days before the session, Dex came by and I had a big pile of sheet music and I asked him if there were anything he might like to do. I remember he pulled out "Some Other Spring" even though we didn't do it. He just wanted to take it home. He said, "I have a new song that I wrote called 'Fried Bananas.'" He played it for me. I said "Do it," and we did it.

Sales of straight-ahead jazz just continued to fall during 1969. The last sessions with Sonny Criss, Jaki Byard, Don Patterson, Charles McPherson, and Barry Harris were done during the year. Cedar Walton and Illinois Jacquet completed their contracts as well. On the other hand, reissues were becoming very important. With the discontinuation of mono, Prestige had been hit with enormous returns. The monaural catalog had been deleted and key numbers had to be reissued. The use of electronic stereo was commonplace during this period. Nobody liked the idea but retailers insisted that stereo had to appear on the cover before the item could be stocked. The plus side of

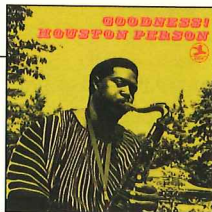
the situation was that many classic Prestige albums became available in true stereo for the first time. Prestige needed a hit and it came at just the right time from a rather unlikely source.

JAMILAH (4, 7)

Houston Person—tenor saxophone;
Sonny Phillips—organ; Billy Butler—guitar;
Bob Bushnell—Fender bass; Frankie Jones—drums.

Recorded August 25, 1969. Produced by Bob Porter.

From *Goodness!* (Prestige 7678/OJCCD-332-2).



BP: It seems astonishing today but Prestige stayed with Houston Person for six albums before he hit. Cal had signed him and done the first record. Schlitten had done three and I had done one. We signed him to a new contract before any album had sold more than a thousand copies! But everybody liked him, he was always available to do sideman dates or help the label in general. He also worked a lot. He was always on the road. I think Weinstock just believed in him, maybe in the same way he believed in Sonny Rollins in the early Fifties.

Sonny Phillips wrote "Jamilah." Sonny was an organist who was living in Brooklyn. I remembered hearing him in a Boston club a few years earlier. I needed an organist who could back guys who would come in without a band. Sonny also wrote very good originals. My contribution to this performance was to have the conga player lay out. Billy Butler and Bob Bushnell were regulars at that time and each was a



real asset here. We named the album *Goodness* which was a kind of inside joke. Houston never cursed and the strongest thing he'd ever say was "Goodness." The album was on the Billboard soul LP chart for several months. It broke simultaneously in Detroit and Philadelphia. It was a gold record in South Africa.

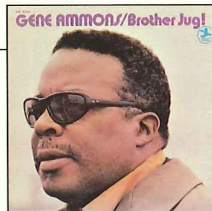
Toward the end of 1969, Prestige hired Herb Holland to do promotion. Porter succeeded Schlitten as A&R director in the fall and recorded Gene Ammons on successive days after he got out of jail.

JUNGLE STRUT (4, 8)

Gene Ammons—tenor saxophone; Sonny Phillips—organ;
Billy Butler—guitar; Bob Bushnell—Fender bass;
Bernard Purdie—drums.

Recorded November 11, 1969. Produced by Bob Porter.

From *Brother Jug!* (Prestige 7792, currently available as part of PRCO-24129-2).



BP: Gene had his horn with him while he was away. He wrote a lot of tunes in prison and his first few sessions featured several of them. Weinstock took the lead when we recorded Jug and was very specific about what he wanted. The first date was mostly people Gene knew while the second date was mostly my guys. The band just hits a perfect groove here. Billy Butler was overdubbed. I had written to Gene regularly while he was in and kept him up to date with what was happening with his records. He knew that "Ca'Purange" had been retitled "Jungle Soul." So he titled it "Jungle Strut."

Ammons's *The Boss Is Back* and *Brother Jug* were huge best-sellers, each reaching the *Billboard* charts. Ammons put together a band and immediately went out on the road. Person had also gotten increased work and each was out on the soul-jazz circuit most of the time. As strong as the Ammons and Person albums were, the biggest was yet to come.

BP: WLIB was having a benefit concert of some sort and Schlitten and I went. We heard Charles Earland with Lou Donaldson's quintet. Schlitten liked him better than I did initially. Houston lived in Newark and we often went out to Newark clubs when he was home. We heard Charles in Lou's band at the Key Club and he damn near blew my head off! We came to terms that night.

We used Sparks and Idris because they were the regular rhythm section on Lou's albums. Virgil Jones and Houston had played together years earlier with Johnny "Hammond" Smith so Charles was in the comfort zone in the studio. "More Today Than Yesterday" was done in one take and my contribution was to call for no horn solos. If there had been horn solos with this groove, the tune would have been 20 minutes long. The album, Black Talk, was a smash. It broke in Philadelphia, Sonny Hobson from WHAT really got on it. But then it broke wide open in Chicago. Detroit and L.A. came in and then the whole country. We made a single which sold very well and was on all the boxes.

MORE TODAY THAN YESTERDAY (4, 9)

Charles Earland—organ; Virgil Jones—trumpet;
Houston Person—tenor saxophone; Melvin Sparks—guitar;
Idris Muhammad—drums; Buddy Caldwell—congas.

Recorded December 15, 1969. Produced by Bob Porter.

This is the 45-RPM single version (Prestige 732).

The LP version was released on *Black Talk!* (Prestige 7758/OJCCD-335-2).



During 1970, Weinstock faced the prospect of having a very hot label while his distribution network was crumbling. Marv Jacobs, his Detroit distributor, died suddenly. California Record Distributors had been sold. He had to change distributors in Chicago and the financial status of several others was precarious. As he surveyed the landscape, he didn't recognize a lot of the players. Verve, Blue Note, Pacific Jazz, Argo, and Atlantic had been sold. Contemporary and



CHARLES EARLAND

Savoy had stopped recording jazz. Riverside and Vee-Jay had gone into bankruptcy. Weinstock was the last of the independent jazz labels still standing.

BP: I think he felt enormous frustration toward the end. Schlitten was making the best jazz records of that time. But the public didn't care. People forget that at the time, Rollins was off the scene, Ammons was in jail. Bud Powell, Coltrane, and Wes Montgomery had just died. Ben Webster, Dexter, Johnny Griffin, and Phil Woods were in Europe. Stitt and Lou Donaldson were electric. There was very little positive leadership in jazz in the late Sixties.

The label continued to be strong. Joe Jones, now known as Boogaloo Joe, had a chart album with *Right On Brother*. Charles Kynard showed signs of breaking out. Both Person and Earland had strong follow-ups. But in the summer, there was an auto-worker strike that brought certain markets to a complete stop. The industrial cities of the Midwest were powered by businesses related to the automotive industry.

Photo by Al Johnson

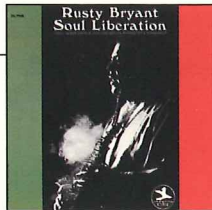
In June, the *Black Talk* band re-assembled with Rusty Bryant the leader this time, in place of Person. The result was *Soul Liberation*, Bryant's biggest album on Prestige and yet another chart item.

SOUL LIBERATION (4, 10)

Rusty Bryant—tenor saxophone;
Virgil Jones—trumpet; Charles Earland—organ;
Melvin Sparks—guitar; Idris Muhammad—drums.

Recorded June 15, 1970. Produced by Bob Porter.

From *Soul Liberation* (Prestige 7798,
currently available as part of PRCD-24168-2).



BP: I had known Rusty for a couple of years before I went to work for Prestige. I was a fan of his from the Dot singles of the Fifties. He was one of my first signings. Rusty was primarily a tenor player who doubled alto. We got him on the label by putting him on electric alto sax. We had used Rusty with Johnny "Hammond" Smith and Boogaloo Joe so he fit in with what we were doing. Gradually we got away from the electronics.

"Soul Liberation" is Charles Earland's tune and it features a long meter bass-line that is a trademark of Charlie's. You can hear the whole band catch fire in the middle of Rusty's solo. That album had done about 50,000 by the time I left Prestige and it was still selling.

In the fall of 1970, Prestige started its first new numerical series in some time. The Prestige 10000 series would be a higher-priced line and would have four-color covers. The series would be devoted to soul-jazz with straight-ahead recording and reissues continuing on the 7000 series.

BP: I brought the idea to Bob. The artists were complaining about the cover quality and Bob's budgets for covers had been very tight during the time I was there. Prestige had been at \$4.98 list



since the start of 12-inch LPs. By going to \$5.98, the extra bread could help to offset the additional costs of printing color covers. After he had made the decision, Weinstock said to me, "Porter, mark my words, in five years \$5.98 will be a budget price." And he was right.

Charles Earland was recorded live in Newark in September 1970. On the session he brought along a new tenor player, Grover Washington, Jr. Grover impressed everyone and was worked into the Prestige mix as a kind of house tenor saxophonist during the next year recording with Leon Spencer, Melvin Sparks, Johnny "Hammond" Smith, and Boogaloo Joe.

NO WAY (4, 11)

Boogaloo Joe Jones—guitar;

Grover Washington, Jr.—tenor saxophone; Sonny Phillips—organ;

Jimmy Lewis—Fender bass; Bernard Purdie—drums.

Recorded November 23, 1970. Produced by Bob Porter.

From *No Way!* (Prestige 10004, currently available as part of PRCD-24209-2).



BP: *Joe Jones was signed by Cal. He was a very personable guy and a very good blues player. He worked well with just about everybody and he lived in Vineland, New Jersey so he was able to do lots of sessions. He had a distinctive style.*

He and Grover worked well together. Joe would come in with funky originals but without titles. We hooked him up with catch phrases: "right on," "no way," "what it is," and so forth. I think it helped him in the marketplace. Joe worked with Willis Jackson for a long time. I think he went into the church. I haven't heard about him for some time.

In 1970, there was yet another upheaval in the artist roster. Pucho, Harold Mabern, Sonny Phillips, Billy Butler, Charles Kynard, and Pat Martino all made their final Prestige albums that year. Melvin Sparks, Leon Spencer, and Idris Muhammad had been making genuine contributions as session players and each was recorded as a leader in '70. Bernard Purdie was recorded in early 1971; he had first appeared on Prestige with Johnny "Hammond" Smith and had since worked with most of the roster.

BP: *When I first got to Prestige, I didn't have a feel for who the best rhythm players were. If it was Willis Jackson, he would want to use his own band and that was cool. On the other hand, many of these guys came in as singles and we'd have to build a band for them. Idris and Purdie were very different kinds of drummers, yet the microphone loved these guys. Their sound, the beat, recorded very well.*

Prestige made an unusual deal with Sonny Stitt to begin 1971. The contract would be a deal for two years, two albums per year but nonexclusive. Prestige would record Stitt with some of the younger soul-jazz players. If he wanted to make bebop records for somebody else, that was OK. Weinstock maintained that he lost money on new straight-ahead jazz records with the exception of Sonny Stitt.

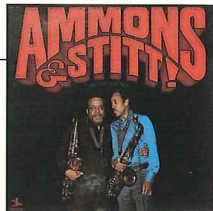
An Ammons-Stitt reunion was inevitable. This tenor tandem had first recorded in 1950 and here they were years later still doing it. Weinstock came by Van Gelder's studio that day to renew acquaintances with two of his stars of long standing.

YOU TALK THAT TALK (4, 12)

Gene Ammons—*tenor saxophone*;
Sonny Stitt—*tenor saxophone*; **Leon Spencer**—*organ*;
George Freeman—*guitar*; **Idris Muhammad**—*drums*.

Recorded February 8, 1971. Produced by Bob Porter.

From *You Talk That Talk!* (Prestige 10019, currently available as part of PRCD-24188-2).



BP: Sonny was still playing electric. Gene was using a Varitone amp on gigs but he wouldn't record with it. Gene talked Sonny into not using it on this track and one other. I think Sonny heard the difference. I don't know if he ever went back to it.

Toward the end of 1970, Weinstock decided to sell the label. The music had changed and so had the business. He had avoided the overtures of larger labels several times but now he felt compelled to do a deal.

BW: *At one time, I had 28 distributors. By the time I was ready to sell, I only had three or four that were paying bills on a regular basis. The business had come down to L.A., Detroit, Chicago, New York, and maybe one other market. The business was terrible. Every time a bill would come due, I'd get requests for returns. It started with the mono returns but it just kept up.*

Ralph Kaffel had been one of my best distributors. When I was ready to sell I called him and he had Saul Zaentz on the phone with me in about 30 minutes.

The deal took a while to consummate and Prestige passed out of Weinstock's hands on May 28, 1971.

BP: *After all the years that I've been in the business, I think Weinstock was a visionary. He was always very analytical and he spotted changes coming long before others. He picked the right time to sell. He missed the two Arab oil boycotts, the vinyl shortage, and the complete collapse of independent distribution.*

Weinstock sold his Bergenfield building and his house in Tenafly and moved to Florida. He was 42 years old. He has never looked back.

RK: *Bob Weinstock sold Prestige to us 22 years after he'd started the label—which means that we've actually owned Prestige longer than Weinstock did.*

For this box, though, we chose to limit contents to the Bob Weinstock era. When I look back on the body of work Bob created, I can't help but stand in awe at both the quantity and the quality of the classic albums in the catalog.

Bob Weinstock and Prestige made vitally important and lasting contributions to the history of jazz; they brought forth a lot of great, great music. That's what this package is all about.

MOSE ALLISON:

The Seventh Son Disc 3, #4

GENE AMMONS:

Blues Up and Down (take 3) 1, 5

Ca'Purange (Jungle Soul) 4, 1

Canadian Sunset 3, 1

Jungle Strut 4, 8

You Talk That Talk 4, 12

GEORGE BENSON:

Sweet Alice Blues 4, 2

RUSTY BRYANT:

Soul Liberation 4, 10

JOHN COLTRANE:

Russian Lullaby 2, 9

SONNY CRISS:

Smile 4, 5

TADD DAMERON:

On a Misty Night 2, 6

EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS:

In the Kitchen 2, 10

**EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS,
COLEMAN HAWKINS,
ARNETT COBB, BUDDY TATE:**

Very Saxy 3, 3

MILES DAVIS:

Bags' Groove (take 2) 1, 13

Dig 1, 9

Doxy 1, 15

The Serpent's Tooth (take 1) 1, 11

Walkin' 2, 2

Well, You Needn't 2, 5

ERIC DOLPHY:

G.W. 3, 5

CHARLES EARLAND:

More Today Than Yesterday 4, 9

GIL EVANS:

Nobody's Heart 2, 8

RED GARLAND:

If I Were a Bell 2, 7

**STAN GETZ, ZOOT SIMS,
AL COHN, ALLEN EAGER,
BREW MOORE:**

Four and One Moore 1, 2

DEXTER GORDON:

Fried Bananas 4, 6

WARDELL GRAY:

Twisted 1, 3

COLEMAN HAWKINS:

Trouble Is a Man 3, 2

RICHARD "GROOVE" HOLMES:

Misty 4, 3

MILT JACKSON:

My Funny Valentine 1, 14

WILLIS JACKSON:

This'll Get to Ya 3, 10

Troubled Times 3, 12

ILLINOIS JACQUET:

*I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel
to Be Free* 4, 4

BOOGALOO JOE JONES:

No Way 4, 11

ETTA JONES:

Don't Go to Strangers 3, 8

ROLAND KIRK:

Kirk's Work 3, 6

LEE KONITZ/LENNIE TRISTANO

Subconscious-Lee 1, 1

JACK McDUFF:

Rock Candy 3, 11

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET:

Django 1, 16

THELONIOUS MONK:

Blue Monk 1, 12

JAMES MOODY:

Disappointed 2, 1

I'm in the Mood for Love
(aka *Moody's Mood for Love*) 1, 6

**OLIVER NELSON, KING CURTIS,
JIMMY FORREST:**

Soul Street 3, 7

HOUSTON PERSON:

Jamilah 4, 7

KING PLEASURE:

Moody's Mood for Love
(aka *I'm in the Mood for Love*) 1, 7

JIMMY RANEY and STAN GETZ:

'Round Midnight 1, 10

SONNY ROLLINS:

Pent-Up House 2, 4
St. Thomas 2, 3

ANNIE ROSS:

Twisted 1, 8

SHIRLEY SCOTT:

Hip Soul 3, 9

SONNY STITT:

All God's Chillun Got Rhythm 1, 4



Prestige

4PRCD-4426-2

DISC ONE

- 1 **LEE KONITZ/LENNIE TRISTANO: SUBCONSCIOUS-LEE** 2:48
- 2 **STAN GETZ, ZOOT SIMS, AL COHN, ALLEN EAGER,
BREW MOORE: FOUR AND ONE MOORE** 3:45
- 3 **WARDELL GRAY: TWISTED** 3:02
- 4 **SONNY STITT: ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT RHYTHM** 2:57
- 5 **GENE AMMONS: BLUES UP AND DOWN (TAKE 3)** 2:36
- 6 **JAMES MOODY: I'M IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE
(aka MOODY'S MOOD FOR LOVE)** 2:43
- 7 **KING PLEASURE: MOODY'S MOOD FOR LOVE
(aka I'M IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE)** 2:58
- 8 **ANNIE ROSS: TWISTED** 2:37
- 9 **MILES DAVIS: DIG** 7:33
- 10 **JIMMY RANEY and STAN GETZ: 'ROUND MIDNIGHT** 5:15
- 11 **MILES DAVIS: THE SERPENT'S TOOTH (TAKE 1)** 6:57
- 12 **THELONIOUS MONK: BLUE MONK** 7:35
- 13 **MILES DAVIS: BAGS' GROOVE (TAKE 2)** 9:21
- 14 **MILT JACKSON: MY FUNNY VALENTINE** 4:37
- 15 **MILES DAVIS: DOXY** 4:50
- 16 **THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET: DJANGO** 7:03

AAD • TOTAL TIME 77:35

DISC TWO

- 1 **JAMES MOODY: DISAPPOINTED** 6:19
- 2 **MILES DAVIS SEXTET: WALKIN'** 13:26
- 3 **SONNY ROLLINS: ST. THOMAS** 6:45
- 4 **SONNY ROLLINS: PENT-UP HOUSE** 8:51
- 5 **MILES DAVIS QUINTET: WELL, YOU NEEDN'T** 6:18
- 6 **TADD DAMERON: ON A MISTY NIGHT** 6:15
- 7 **RED GARLAND: IF I WERE A BELL** 6:39
- 8 **GIL EVANS: NOBODY'S HEART** 4:22
- 9 **JOHN COLTRANE: RUSSIAN LULLABY** 5:35
- 10 **EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS: IN THE KITCHEN** 12:53

AAD • TOTAL TIME 77:51

DISC THREE

- 1 **GENE AMMONS: CANADIAN SUNSET** 5:22
- 2 **COLEMAN HAWKINS: TROUBLE IS A MAN** 5:25
- 3 **EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS, COLEMAN HAWKINS,
ARNETT COBB, BUDDY TATE: VERY SAXY** 8:16
- 4 **MOSE ALLISON: THE SEVENTH SON** 2:37
- 5 **ERIC DOLPHY: G.W.** 7:54
- 6 **ROLAND KIRK: KIRK'S WORK** 3:54
- 7 **OLIVER NELSON, KING CURTIS, JIMMY FORREST: SOUL STREET** 9:07
- 8 **ETTA JONES: DON'T GO TO STRANGERS** 3:49
- 9 **SHIRLEY SCOTT: HIP SOUL** 6:25
- 10 **WILLIS JACKSON: THIS'LL GET TO YA** 10:10
- 11 **JACK McDUFF: ROCK CANDY** 6:05
- 12 **WILLIS JACKSON: TROUBLED TIMES** 4:55

STEREO • AAD • TOTAL TIME 77:42

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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO


Prestige

DISC FOUR

- 1 **GENE AMMONS: CA'PURANGE (JUNGLE SOUL)** 9:35
- 2 **GEORGE BENSON: SWEET ALICE BLUES** 4:36
- 3 **RICHARD "GROOVE" HOLMES: MISTY** 6:00
- 4 **ILLINOIS JACQUET: I WISH I KNEW HOW IT WOULD FEEL TO BE FREE** 6:34
- 5 **SONNY CRISS: SMILE** 4:40
- 6 **DEXTER GORDON: FRIED BANANAS** 6:05
- 7 **HOUSTON PERSON: JAMILAH** 5:30
- 8 **GENE AMMONS: JUNGLE STRUT** 5:10
- 9 **CHARLES EARLAND: MORE TODAY THAN YESTERDAY** 3:40
- 10 **RUSTY BRYANT: SOUL LIBERATION** 11:35
- 11 **BOOGALOO JOE JONES: NO WAY** 7:13
- 12 **GENE AMMONS: YOU TALK THAT TALK** 6:01

STEREO • AAD • TOTAL TIME 77:23