

# Clear overview

## Book illuminates jazz

By JIM WINDELL

There are hundreds of books about jazz, but few match the remarkable simplicity and completeness of "Jazz Styles."

A new book, released this year by Prentice-Hall, it was written by former Birmingham resident Mark C. Gridley, and is designed for use in jazz appreciation and jazz history courses. Dr. Gridley holds a Ph.D. in research psychology from Case Western Reserve University and now lives in Cleveland, where he is both a practicing psychologist and a jazz musician. In addition, he has taught a jazz appreciation course at Case Western Reserve University. His class notes, developed during the eight years he has taught the course and entitled "History and Styles of Jazz," became the book "Jazz Styles."

WRITTEN in a clear, readable fashion, "Jazz Styles" is a refreshing change of pace from the usual book about jazz. There are no lurid accounts of heroin addiction or tales of the tragedy of the early toxic demise of some promising horn men. Nor does it treat jazz improvisation in a complex, mystical manner, confusing to the non-musician.

"Biographical details are kept to a minimum," he wrote, "because I believe a man's music transcends his personal life." He also believes that jazz can be discussed and written about in a cool, logical and coherent style.

Because Gridley succeeds so well in communicating, "Jazz Styles" should prove to be a boon to teachers of jazz courses. No longer will they have to steal a chapter from this or that jazz volume or borrow other instructors' class notes. This book is a complete overview of styles, as well as an adequate reference that includes in-depth studies of the improvisational techniques of innovative jazz figures.

The book will undoubtedly assist students in understanding how jazz musicians create spontaneous performances, but non-musicians, experienced jazz listeners, and advanced music scholars will also discover much of value. Besides chapters on appreciating jazz improvisation through a better understanding of chord changes, and on recent modern jazz artists and

## Review

their musical contributions, there are numerous charts, diagrams and guides, appendices to enlighten the neophyte in the hazy areas of record buying and other reference materials.

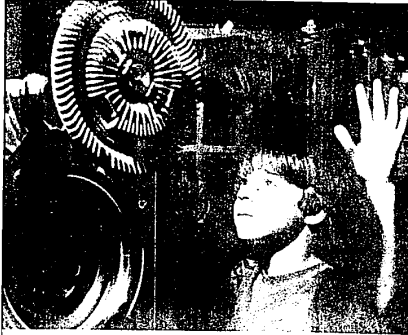
GRIDLEY POSSESSES a sparse, technical, but essentially friendly style of writing that is devilishly lucid. Long, authoritative chapters are devoted to outstanding key musicians in jazz history, such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman. In each case, the richness of their musical legacy is mined with loving and knowledgeable care.

His personal impressions of musicians and their sounds are shared with a commendable amount of objectivity. Gridley seems to want to stimulate an interest in a music he obviously loves. However, he does not pretend that his words are an adequate substitution for either the music—available on record—or the listener's own impression of that music.

I FOUND HIS descriptions of the music and new ways to listening to it irresistible and several times I was forced to put the book down, dig through my record collection for an album or tune he was using as an example, and listen with fresh awareness. My favorite chapters were the detailed expositions of Charlie Parker and Miles Davis, which I believe to be superior to any such attempts in previous books.

Some experienced jazz cognoscenti may quibble with a few of Gridley's assertions or the relative importance accorded specific jazz musicians. It is difficult to be objective about those artists who have the greatest influence on contemporary jazz in the last 10 or 20 years. Some readers may claim that Dave Brubeck and Erroll Garner, for instance, rate more highly than the author estimates.

"Jazz Styles" seems destined to be widely read and used in jazz courses in high schools and colleges. For even the casual jazz listener, this book can be referred to over and over again with new pleasure and insight each time.



## Motors to medicine

When were catalytic converters introduced on U.S. cars? Is there an electric car in your future? What's the average fuel economy for 1978 cars?

The answers to these and other questions can be found at the General Motors exhibit, "Motors to Medicine," at the new Detroit Science Center at John R and Warren. Visitors can test their knowledge of automobiles in a motor vehicles facts quiz.

Here, Mark Botvinick of West Bloomfield examines a V-8 diesel engine.

The exhibit displays General Motors' achievements in the transportation field and contributions to medical science. It features vehicle power plant research, barrier impact testing and emissions research.

Visitors can experience the handling of power steering and manual steering and see a mechanical heart. A slide presentation depicts a 30-mile-per-hour barrier impact test as conducted at the GM proving ground in Milford.

## Whistles gathered for Tashmoo toot

Giant steam whistles from Great Lakes freighters, trains, factories and even fire houses are expected for the second annual Grand Ole Tashmoo Whistle Blow on Labor Day, Sept. 4.

The tooting will begin at noon and continue until 5 p.m. at the River Crab restaurant on the St. Clair River, two miles north of St. Clair, Mich.

The event was dreamed up by the restaurant's owner, Chuck Muer, and St. Clair marine artist Jim Clary, who owns the Tashmoo Whistle. Clary operates Cap'n Jim's Gallery in the plaza arcade in St. Clair.

sent to him by the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation when Muer opened his Grand Concourse restaurant there last April.

Muer will also blow his double-bellied, tri-toned giant whistle from the kitchen (later named Mercury), the first tanker to play the Great Lakes. It can be heard for miles.

A NEW ENTRY this year will be the whistle from the South American, the last excursion ship to sail the Great Lakes. It should bring back fond memories for thousands of sweethearts and housemothers who rendezvoused on the South American.

"We'll let any of them blow the whistle, if they stop by," said Muer.

Whistles from the Greater Detroit and Greater Buffalo boats are expected at the event, as well as several unique whistles brought by a collector from Ripley, N.Y. Members of Steam Tours of Pittsburgh are planning to bring boat, factory and train whistles from their collection.

All whistles are welcomed at the event, and ribbons will be awarded for sound, beauty and uniqueness. There are no entry fees.

Further information may be obtained by writing to Chuck Muer, Two Washington Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226, or phoning Jim Clary, (313) 329-7744.

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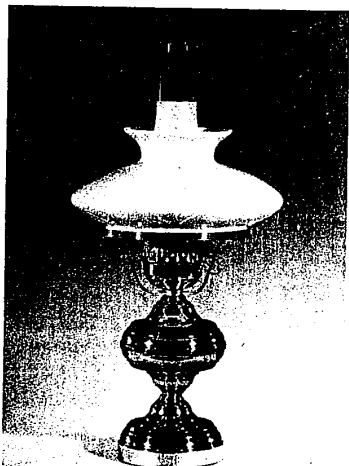
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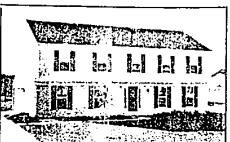
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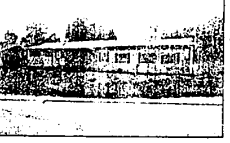
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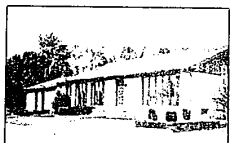
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