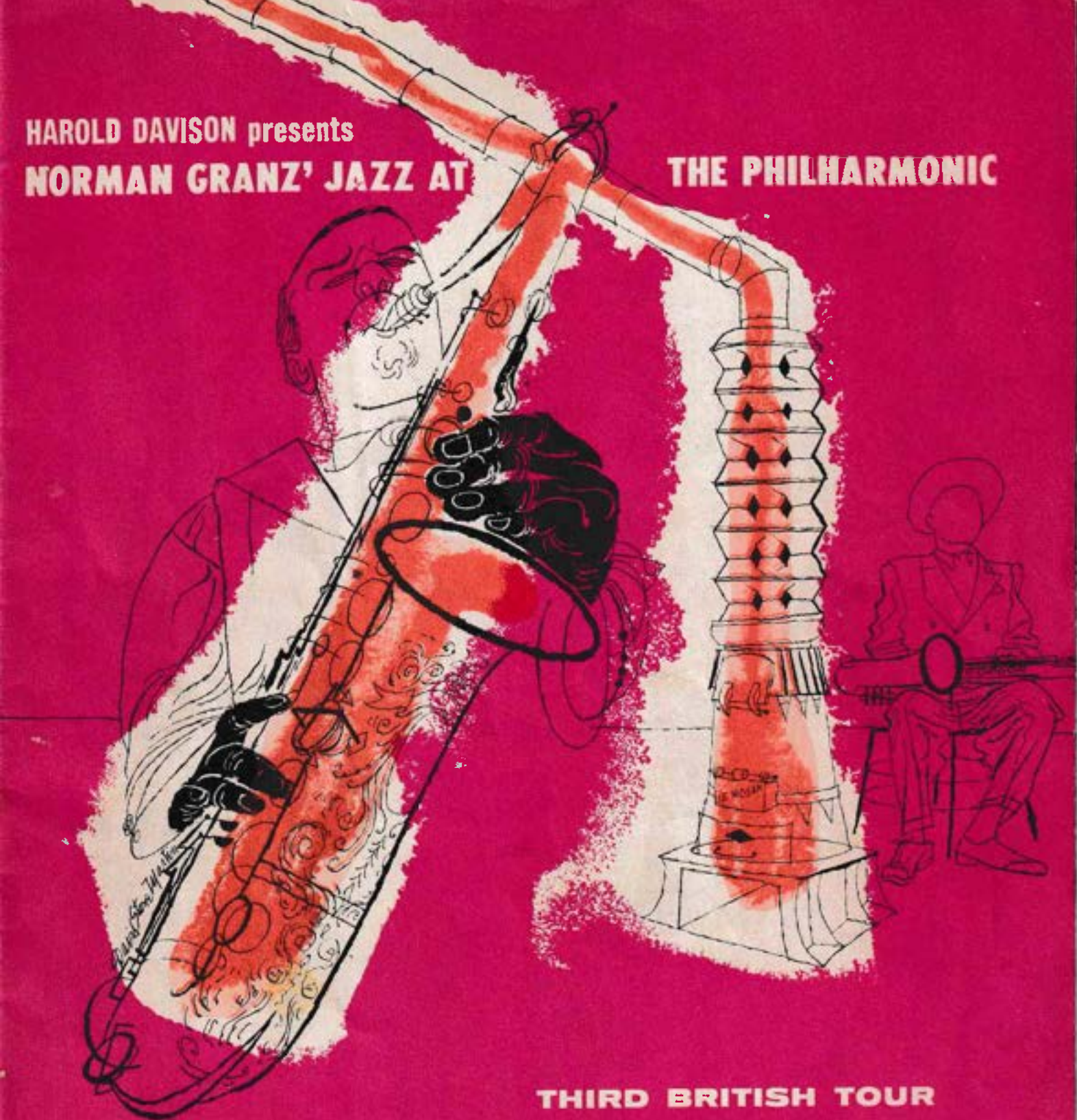
HAROLD DAVISON presents

NORMAN GRANZ' JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC



THIRD BRITISH TOUR

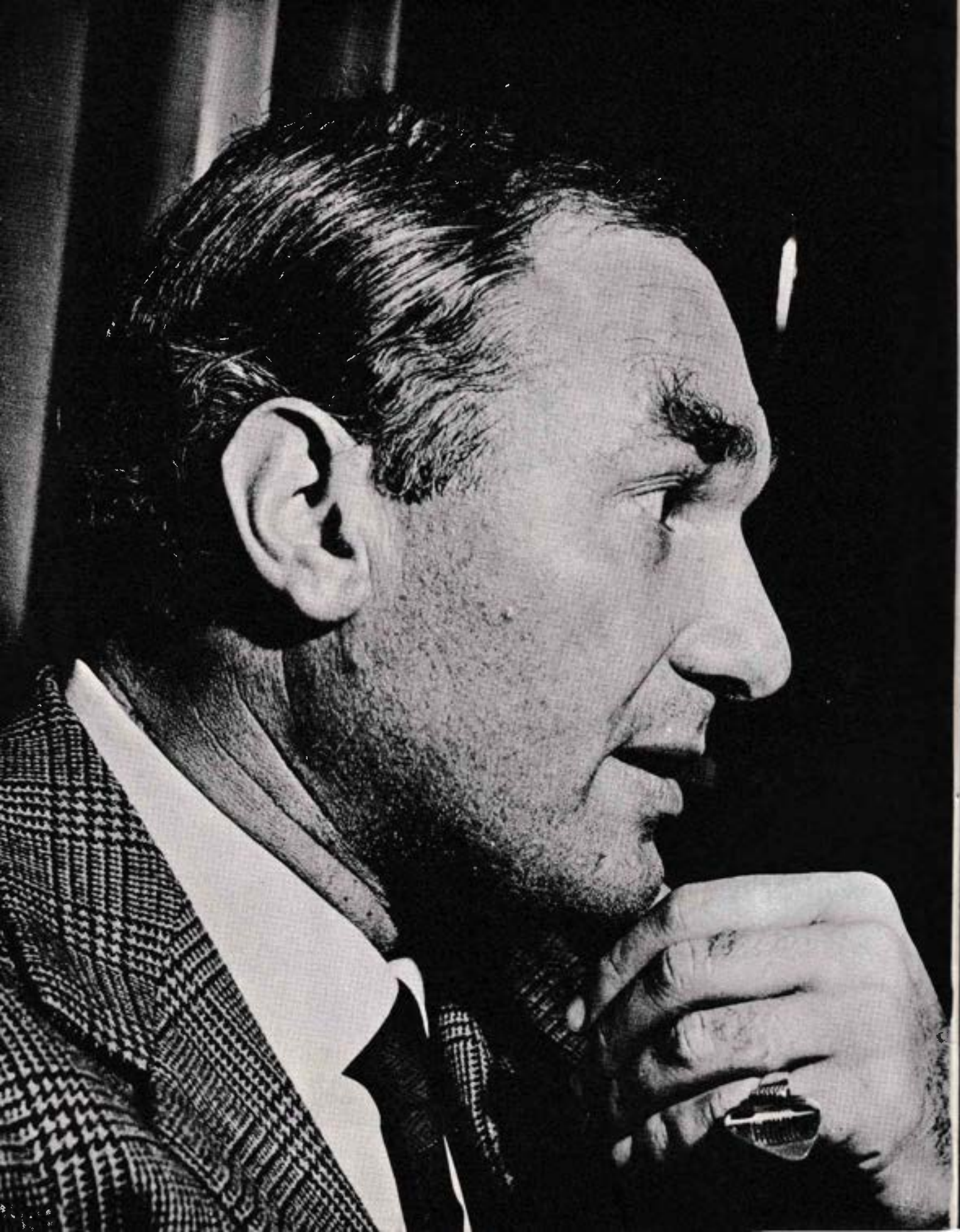
MARCH 1960

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME : TWO SHILLINGS

J.A.T.P.

Programme

- JIMMY GIUFFRE TRIO
- ROY ELDRIDGE
- SHELLY MANNE & HIS MEN
- PAUL SMITH QUARTET
- ELLA FITZGERALD



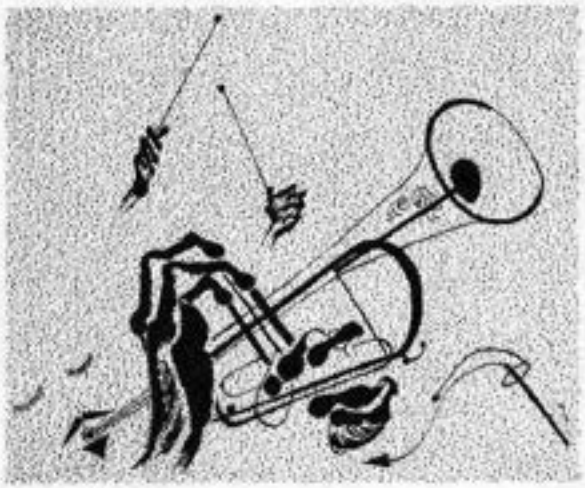
HAROLD DAVISON
PRESENTS

NORMAN GRANZ

"JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC"

THIRD BRITISH TOUR
MARCH 1960

HAROLD DAVISON LIMITED
EROS HOUSE · 29-31 REGENT ST.
LONDON S·W·1



JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

A SHORT while ago a most remarkable thing happened in the world of jazz. A man was elected to the super-exclusive jazz Hall of Fame who has never blown a musical instrument in public in his life.

Until it actually happened I would have thought such a thing utterly impossible. The Hall of Fame is the most exclusive aristocracy in jazz. Only those few giants who have changed the course of the music, the handful of men with the rare gift of originality, have ever had the slightest chance of being included. And the membership is depressingly small, for only one man is added to the membership each year. How on earth, then, did a non-musician ever get into the pantheon?

The man in question was Norman Granz, a name which by now has become a synonym for the initials JATP, which in turn stand for an institution known as Jazz at the Philharmonic. What could Norman Granz possibly have done for jazz to rank with Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and the rest of the source figures, when he does not even participate as an artist at all? The answer is, very briefly, that Norman Granz has literally done the impossible. He has taken a commodity with a mass sales appeal of roughly nil, packaged it attractively and managed to maintain artistic standards at the same time, persevered with his system and finally obliged the entire world this side of the Iron Curtain to acknowledge its existence, patronise it, subsidise it, learn to appreciate it, come to understand it, and, by so doing, made it possible for many great jazz musicians to earn the kind of wages which their talent demand but which have been painfully slow in materialising.

It may appear sordid for me to mention money in the same breath as art, but the truth of the matter is that even artists have to eat, and that there is nobody more posthumous than an artist who expires from malnutrition. Granz over the last ten years has commercialised something without compromising its artistic standards. That is why I described his achievement as impossible, and no doubt also why people have seen fit to place him among the immortal figures in the history of jazz.

Within the framework of this jazz circus theory that he has perfected, Granz has done two other things more intimately involved with the actual problems of style in jazz, two things which are sometimes overlooked because they are so completely obvious. To understand the nature of these two campaigns he has carried out, it is necessary to take a short look at the stylistic schisms of jazz.

Very loosely speaking, jazz has been trisected by conventional criticism into three sections, each more equal than the other. They are Traditional, Mainstream and Modern. This is very confusing, because really in art there is no such thing as a modern way of playing, or painting, or writing. Modernism is not any particular style, but an attitude. The so-called Mainstreamers were merely the modernists of their generation. Men like Roy Eldridge, Lester Young, Buck

ELLA FITZGERALD

Clayton, Benny Goodman, Teddy Wilson and the rest, were adventurous musicians in their prime, in every sense of the word. They helped broaden the harmonic horizons of jazz by their approach to the challenge of improvisation. They broke new ground and made vast contributions to the jazz art as we know it today. And then, in the early 1940s, a tremendous thing happened. The rarest quality of all suddenly manifested itself on the jazz scene, the quality of genius. Charlie Parker introduced an entirely new conception of approaching the harmonic sequence of a jazz theme. Instead of keeping fairly good faith with the harmonies as written, Parker and a few kindred spirits like Dizzy Gillespie, Fats Navarro, Thelonius Monk, began to introduce into those harmonies complexities which, although quite common in formal composition, had never been integrated into jazz improvisation before.

The effect was overwhelming. An old dixieland favourite like *Whispering* underwent the treatment and emerged almost unrecognisable to the uneducated ear as *Groovin' High*. *I Got Rhythm* became *Anthropology*, and *How High the Moon* was recast as *Ornithology*. An old jazzer like *Indiana* got the Charlie Parker treatment and found itself known as *Donna Lee*, a theme so ingenious and so original that even to play it in the first unison chorus remains to this day a technical feat of no mean proportions.

This was the new modernism of the post-war jazz world. It is still more or less the modernism we mean when we talk about modern jazz today. There are fringe developments and aberrations, but, broadly speaking, the jazz world has hardly progressed harmonically beyond the apocolyptic flourishes of Parker and Gillespie as long as eighteen years ago.

The appreciation of jazz, which had hitherto been a reasonably straightforward affair, suddenly became a tortuous and bitter issue. Either you were for us or agin us. You were a bopper or you were a mouldy fig. You paid your money and you took your choice, but whatever you did, it wasn't considered reasonable of you to like everything.

And as the inevitable happened, and the new stars slowly made their influence felt on their art form, there was a side-development which was most unfortunate. The older modernists, the outmoded modernists, the modernists of the previous generation, became completely eclipsed. They were like non-combatants in a civil war. Nobody bothered with them. They were neglected in an unspeakable manner. Some of the greatest original musicians jazz music ever produced were pronounced passé and cast aside. A whole heritage of jazz was wasted in this way while everybody got on with the business of slanging the boppers or insulting the figgers.

Men like Eldridge, Hawkins, Clayton, even Hodges, were no longer seriously considered. The younger listeners growing up knew little or nothing about most of them. To have pointed out to them that Eldridge was the logical link in development between Armstrong and Gillespie would have been to court a punch on the nose. For several years this situation persisted, and not until quite recently, when all the smoke had finally cleared after the advent of the Parker-Gillespie revolution, did people come to accept these older musicians as worthy artists once more.

And here we come to the first and, I think, the most praiseworthy of Norman Granz's achievements. Almost single-handed, Granz came to the profound conclusion that if a musician was a good jazz player people would pay money to hear him, no matter what the date was on his birth certificate, or which pen he had been herded into by the critical theorists.

A player like Ben Webster, shamefully neglected for many years in the late 'forties and early 'fifties, gradually began to appear on new record albums, Granz's albums, and everybody was astonished to discover that Webster, so far from being a has-been, was perhaps even a shade better now than he ever was. Last year in this country Webster's album, in which he partnered the late Art Tatum, another Granz experiment, was voted the best issue of the year. The result is that today men who were still unborn when Webster was playing *Cottontail* and *What Am I Here For* with the vintage Duke Ellington band, know Ben Webster as one of the most gifted romantic artists in jazz today, no matter what his age.


SHELLY MANNE
AND HIS MEN

What happened to Webster has happened to several other musicians, Roy Eldridge among them, this being Roy's third appearance in Europe in three years with JATP. Granz has, in other words, finally done justice to a whole generation of jazz greats who must have been resigned to the fact that nobody would ever bother with them much again. Granz has in this instance been the instrument of poetic justice.

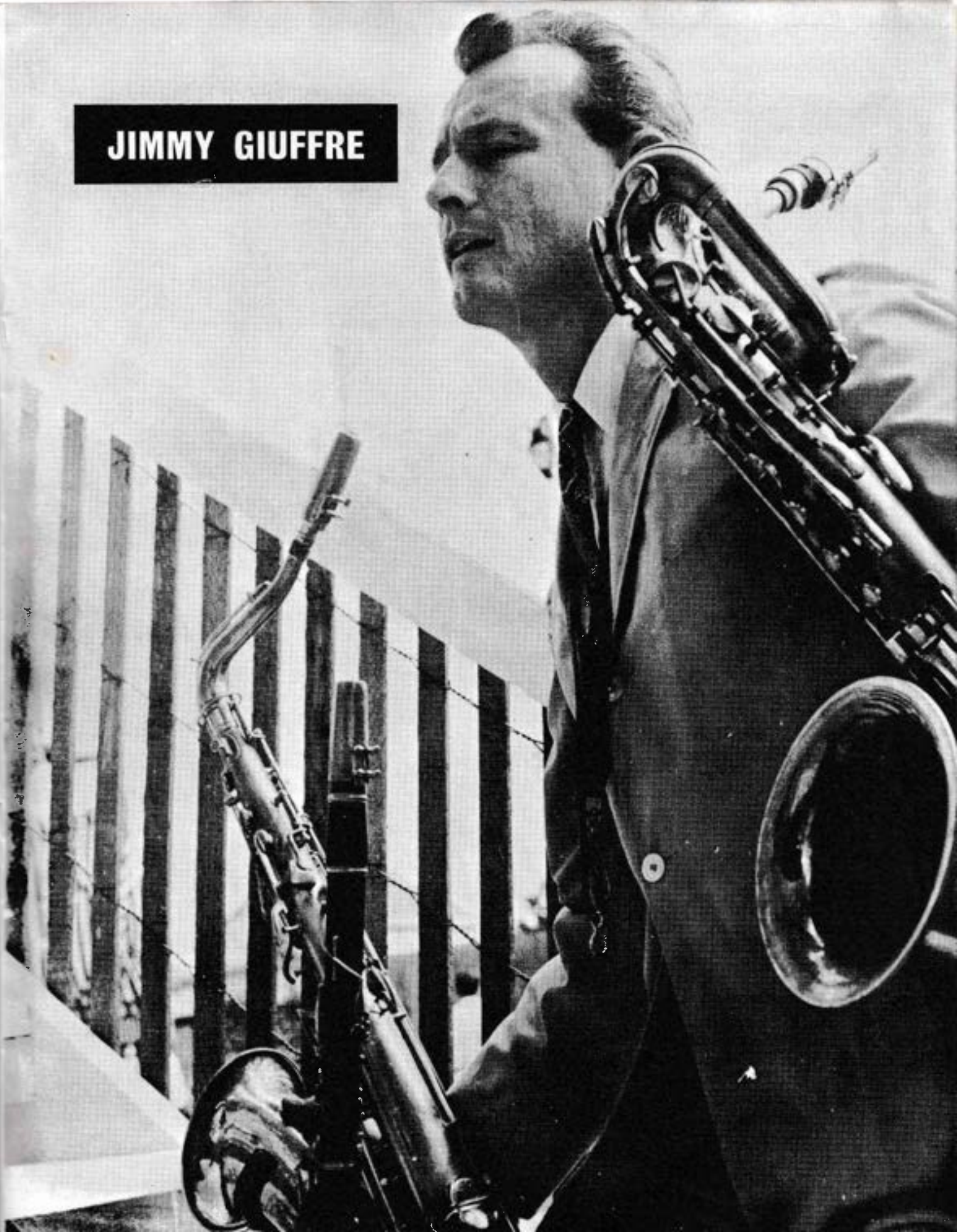
The second of Granz's æsthetic blows is intimately connected with the first. When Granz revived interest in a fading generation of jazzmen, it must have been something of a temptation for him to throw them on-stage together, as an artistic entity. But he didn't do this. He had everybody playing together on the same bill, on the same numbers. And where were the trisectors? Where were the brains who cooked up the three castes of jazz? In the same place as everybody else, in the stalls, enjoying themselves immensely. Some of Granz's albums feature pairings which appear startling at first, but once heard are acceptable in the normal fashion. The Webster-Tatum album was one example of this, and a more recent one is the Louis Armstrong-Oscar Peterson recording. Granz has evidently grasped the fact that divisions of style are not nearly so water-tight as we have been led to believe, and that now that the bebop upheaval is over and post-war modernism is beginning to merge into the main body of jazz, the segregation of styles is a foolish thing.

When Granz first conceived the idea of a touring jazz concert party he had to think of somebody who could be built up into a mass-appeal artist, somebody who was steeped in jazz, talented enough to hold the feature spot in the show, and with a wide enough potential to reach the kind of audiences which had never before bothered to cross the street to listen to any kind of jazz. These demands suggested a singer, preferably a girl singer, and that meant Ella Fitzgerald.

Ella had been a solo act since 1940, after the break-up of the old Chick Webb band, but it was not until Granz made her the figurehead of JATP that Ella became internationally renowned, and something of a symbol of jazz to the outside world of fringe audiences who knew, and perhaps still know, little or nothing of Bessie Smith or Billie Holiday. It would be interesting to know how many thousands of people first became acquainted with jazz because of a chance encounter with Ella, either on record or at a concert. She has the most speedily appealing voice and manner of any girl singer in jazz history. A few bars and the spell is cast, whether the song is a current pop or an old ballad.

Her association with Norman Granz has had one result which particularly gratifies me, and that is the remarkable series of recordings which Granz arranged in which Ella sang the selected work of the handful of outstanding songwriters of the past forty years. It is a truism in the musical profession that much of the writing of Rodgers and Hart, Porter, the Gershwins, and Irving Berlin was lost to the public because, fine as it was, nobody ever used it. Ella's "Songbook" series has remedied this once and for all, leaving the world of popular music with a legacy of the finest songs of the era stretching from the end of the first world war to the end of the second. Had it not been for Ella Fitzgerald and Norman Granz, who would ever have heard of *Mountain Greenery* again, Hart's tour de force from the early 1920s. Or the same writer's outstanding work with Rodgers on *Ship Without a Sail*? Would anybody have revived Porter's *I Am in Love*? Would people surfeited with *God Bless America* ever dream that Irving Berlin could conceivably write such intelligent material as *You're Laughing at Me* and *Now It Can Be Told*?

In a few weeks' time the first of the "Ella Sings the Gershwin Songbook" series will be issued in this country. This is the biggest of the Songbook projects (the album consists of five LPs) and probably the last, and there is no doubt that those who possess complete sets of the Ella Songbook series possess a comprehensive survey of all that was the finest in popular song-writing and popular singing.


JIMMY GIUFFRE

A few weeks ago I was talking to Mitzi Gaynor about songs good and bad. She had just recorded an album of Ira Gershwin lyrics and I asked her whether she intended any follow-up, Hart perhaps, or Porter. She smiled and said she didn't really see the point of doing anything like that. "Ella's done them all," she said, "and nobody's going to top Ella. They're the definitive editions." Indeed they are, the reason being that when the occasion demands it, as in the Songbooks, Ella can submerge herself completely in the spirit of the material and become the perfect interpretative instrument. Her readings of the best songs written in this century are as tactful and subtle as her more boisterous efforts are exhilarating. Sometimes I have doubts about who is the best singer working today. But recently the issue was put to the acid test. "Suppose," somebody asked me facetiously, "you wrote a song yourself. Who of all the singers alive today would you most desire to sing it?" And the answer came out like a reflex action, "Ella Fitzgerald".

If Granz and JATP had done no more than put Ella on the concert stages of the world, then the project would have been worth it. In an entertainment world crammed with prancing singers, mike-wavers and dispensers of unctuous compliments to audiences, the performances of Ella with JATP are a memorable experience. There is no attempt at any kind of salesmanship because it is quite unnecessary. Ella simply stands there and sings, actually looking shy when the applause thunders through. I always had the suspicion that the nebulous entity known as stage technique was usually a camouflage for a lack of the musical graces. The case of Ella Fitzgerald finally convinces me. It is her voice against the world, and her voice has been winning hands down for the past fifteen years.

About the time when Ella was a teenager making a name with Chick Webb at the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, the greatest jazz trumpeter of the day was probably Roy Eldridge. He owed part of his conception to Louis Armstrong, just as Dizzy Gillespie was later to owe part of his conception to Eldridge, but Eldridge, like Dizzy, had an originality of his own which had a great deal to do with the emerging maturity of jazz. The trumpet is fundamentally an instrument of power, and no trumpeter ever made the instrument a more thrilling one to listen to than Eldridge in full power.

Last time he played in this country he said two sentences to me which may offer some insight into the man's enthusiasm for jazz after all these years and his sincere desire to send the audiences away satisfied. We were talking about the unkind press he had received on the first of his three visits here. "I wasn't well," he said, "but I am now." He thought for a moment about the great reception he had received that night, and then remarked eagerly, "I was enjoying myself so much tonight that I split my pants." And sure enough, in the seam of the left leg of his dress suit was a small rent.

Shelly Manne belongs to a generation after Eldridge's and is probably the most widely known drummer since Gene Krupa. Manne it was who began the trend of reorientating show music into the jazz mould. His *My Fair Lady* has been the biggest seller of any jazz record so far issued. He is also the most prolific recorder around today. It has been said that there are only three important drummers on the West Coast today, that Manne is two of them, and that nobody can ever remember the name of the third.

In his quartet he features Richie Kamuca, a young tenor saxophonist who first became known to British followers with the Woody Herman band of a few years back, and who is evidently steeped in the work of another great jazz musician who was featured for a while with JATP, the late Lester Young. The other frontline musician with Manne is trumpeter Joe Gordon, whose first connection with music is officially described in the record books as seller of newspapers in Boston jazzclubs. His experience covers work with Charlie Parker, Charlie Mariano, with whom he made his debut on record, Lionel Hampton, Don Redman and Art Blakey, names which span most of the recent history of jazz. This tour should be an especially happy event for him, for he has gone on record as naming Eldridge as one of his two favourites. (There is no prize for guessing that the other one is Dizzy Gillespie.)

ROY ELDRIDGE

On piano with Manne is Russ Freeman, who started with a classical training, made a jazz start with Howard McGhee and Dexter Gordon in 1947, and has since become more widely admired for his work with Art Pepper, Wardell Gray, the Lighthouse All-Stars, Shorty Rogers and Chet Baker. His three favourite pianists read like an extract from a jazz stud book—Tatum, Powell and Silver. Playing the bass with Freeman will be Monty Budwig, who has been prominent around Los Angeles and San Francisco ever since he worked for Vido Musso in 1951. Later groups included Barney Kessell, Zoot Sims and Red Norvo. In 1956 he was at Los Vegas with the Woody Herman band which included British migrant Victor Feldman.

Accompanying Ella Fitzgerald besides playing their own spot will be the Paul Smith Quartet. Smith, a native of San Diego, first left home as the ward of bandleader Johnny Richards, for whom he worked, in 1941. In the United States Army he played with Ziggy Elman and found himself for a while an MP in Germany, an engagement which may have been connected in some way with his size. Later he worked with the electronically-planned trio of guitarist Les Paul, accompanied the Andrews Sisters, and did sessions with the bands of Vic Schoen, Paul Weston and Billy May. His greatest influences have been Shearing and Peterson.

Two of the members of his quartet, Gus Johnson and Wilford Middlebrooks, were with the second JATP party which toured Britain last year, but guitarist Jim Hall is making his first European trip. Hall, a jazz musician who generates a tremendous rhythmic impulse in his playing, took a Bachelor's Degree in music at Cleveland Institute of Music, but did not become known over here till he moved to California and started recording. He was in the Dave Pell Octet and then joined the Chico Hamilton group in 1955. His versatility was a great asset to Hamilton. Hall, who enjoys the work of contemporaries Tal Farlow and Jimmy Raney, is in his more inspired moments as reminiscent of the late great Charlie Christian as any guitarist active in jazz today. His conception is clear and his approach bold. Ever since the excellent albums he had issued in this country with Bob Brookmeyer and Jimmy Raney, British audiences have been hoping for an opportunity to hear him in the flesh.

Hall and Middlebrooks will serve a dual purpose on this tour, for besides playing with Paul Smith's Quartet they will accompany Jimmie Giuffre, who is the third groupleader on the JATP bill. Giuffre has had at least two careers in jazz, the first as a fine tenor player and skilful writer of jazz compositions, the second as a clarinet player of complete originality who, despite the apparent simplicity of his conception, is proving to be a most moving player to listen to.

Giuffre will probably be remembered most for the fact that he wrote for Woody Herman the famous theme *The Four Brothers*, a recording which has since come to symbolise a whole era and approach, and which was a turning point in the careers of men like Stan Getz and Zoot Sims. Over the past few years Giuffre has been concentrating on the clarinet, the instrument on which he first started back in 1930, when he was nine years old. Before he switched back to his first love, Giuffre had taken a Bachelor's Degree in Music at Texas State Teachers' College, played the tenor saxophone with Dallas Symphony Orchestra on *Porgy and Bess*, worked with Boyd Raeburn, Jimmy Dorsey, Buddy Rich, Woody Herman, the Lighthouse All-Stars and Shorty Rogers.

In 1957 I met Giuffre in New York at the dinner table of a mutual friend, and he explained how he was tackling the technical problem of returning to the clarinet after so many years as a tenor and baritone player. He said the main problem was to get used to thinking in terms of four octaves of a clarinet rather than the two and a half of the saxophone. His system was simplicity itself. Every three months, he told me, he intended incorporating into his normal improvising range one more semitone, so that gradually he would acclimatise himself to the upper register of the clarinet. I do not know how far he has progressed along his way since then, but according to my calculations, this conversation took place three years and twelve semitones ago, so I doubt very much whether Giuffre any longer has any problem about thinking in terms of the clarinet rather than the saxophone.

From him to Manne to Paul Smith to Gus Johnson to Ella and back to the man who brought them all together, Norman Granz, one gets a complete coverage of the American jazz scene today. That is why these visits to this country, which promise to become an annual event, are so good for the state of our own jazz, both from the point of view of the working musician and the listening audience. They stimulate interest, keep us up to the minute, and no doubt recruit many new converts to the jazz fold who might otherwise have gone on thinking that jazz was something that went out with speakeasies.

BENNY GREEN,
Feature Writer for
"THE OBSERVER"
and Jazz Critic for
"RECORD MIRROR"

In accordance with the requirements of the London County Council and the Watch Committees of the various towns and cities of the tour, the following conditions must be observed:—

1. The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exit and entrance doors and such doors must at that time be open.
2. All gangways, corridors, staircases and external passageways intended for exit shall be kept entirely free from obstruction whether permanent or temporary.
3. Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any of the other gangways or any unseated space in the Auditorium, unless standing in such space has been specially allowed by the L.C.C. or the Watch Committee, as applicable. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and the rear of the seating it shall be limited to the numbers indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.
4. The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before the commencement of each performance, so as to ensure it being in proper working order.

The Management reserve the right to change the programme without notice

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WILFORD MIDDLEBROOKS

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