



Jim Hall – Concierto
CTI Records

I was in the mood to hear something soothing while I was reading after dinner not too long ago, so I went to the library and chose guitarist Jim Hall's 1975 album, *Concierto* (CTI Records CTI 6060). After listening to both sides, I decided it would be a perfect choice to begin the discussion for the month of October. The distinguished guitarist is joined by five jazz masters; Chet Baker on trumpet; Paul Desmond on alto sax; Roland Hanna on piano; Ron Carter on bass and Steve Gadd on drums. My copy used in this report is the second US pressing (CTI 6060 S1), also released in 1975. The album opens with the 1943 jazz and pop standard, *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To* by Cole Porter. This popular tune made its first appearance in the musical film, *Something To Shout About* and was nominated that year for an Academy Award. Joe and the trio open the song briskly and the guitarist solos first, swinging effortlessly to the resilient supplement by the rhythm section. Paul steps into the spotlight next, flourishing strongly with an equally enjoyable reading. Chet illustrates that he was playing better than ever on the third wailing performance. Roland's fingers soar vigorously over the keys on the next interpretation and Ron sustains the energy, dispensing melodic lines on the final solo ahead of a brief reprise by both horns and a few final comments from the leader into the close.

Two's Blues is an original by Hall that slows the speed to midtempo featuring Baker, Carter, and Gadd. The bassist and drummer set up an easy rocking background for a spirited opening statement by Baker and a bopping closing solo by Hall making every note he plays sound so easy. The beat moves back upward for the first side finale, *The Answer Is Yes*, an original by Jim's Wife, Jane Hall and brings Roland Hanna back to the group. Hall opens the song deceptively with an unaccompanied introduction suggesting this tune will

be a slow-tempo ballad. However, it evolves into a luxurious mid-tempo theme statement led by the soft sounds of Baker's trumpet. Jim gives two enchanting solos, both endowed with improvised lines that are gracefully spellbinding. Roland puts an impressive imprint on the next reading with a fascinating performance strongly moved by love and affection. The final interpretation by Chet is a tasteful display that's simply stunning and affirms his capability as a ballad soloist.

Side Two opens with the nineteen-minute composition, *Concierto de Aranjuez* by Spanish composer Joaquin Rodrigo. This Modal masterpiece written in 1939 is his best-known original, and it received a regal treatment by Miles Davis and Gil Evans on the 1960 album, *Sketches of Spain* (Columbia CL 1480/CS 8271). The version heard here is the second movement and was arranged by Don Sebesky. Jim and both horns open the song with a short introduction that expands into the ensemble's luscious theme. Hall takes the first of two solo spotlights with an exquisite opening statement that's absolutely beautiful, followed by an intensely personal reading by Paul. Chet comes next, delivering a lovely performance of melodic grace, then Roland makes his interpretation a rewarding experience with wistful, delicacy. Jim returns for a few more sultry remarks preceding the song's and album's elegant ending.

The recording by Rudy Van Gelder is one of his best ever with an excellent, very realistic soundstage that's spacious and superb. Jim Hall was one of the premier guitarists in jazz; his career lasted nearly six decades, and he performed from New York to Europe. He recorded for many labels as a leader and sideman including Artists House, Atlantic, Blue Note, Concord Jazz, EMI, Mainstream, Milestone, MPS Records, Music, Overseas Records, Pacific Jazz, Paddle Wheel, RCA Victor, Verve Records and Vogue Records among others. *Concierto* was not only Jim Hall's best-selling album but the biggest seller for CTI Records during the seventies. He passed away in his sleep six days after he turned eighty-three on December 10, 2013. If you're a fan of Jim Hall or sensational guitar playing, I happily submit for your next record hunt *Concierto*! He and his colleagues make beautiful music together on a thoroughly satisfying album that adds weight to any jazz library!

You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To – Source: JazzStandards.com



Concierto de Aranjuez, Jim Hall – Source: Wikipedia.org



The Stan Getz Quartet – Pure Getz
Concord Jazz

A few nights ago after dinner I was looking for something to play when I came across one of my albums by Stan Getz. His emotionally expressive, warm tone on the tenor sax became a favorite of mine after hearing *The Girl From Ipanema* and *Corcovado* from his 1964 Verve Records album, *Getz/Gilberto* (V-8545/V6-8545). Both songs were sung by Astrud Gilberto with Getz, João Gilberto, and Antonio Carlos Jobim. Their music sent the country into a frenzy over the Bossa Nova and Brazilian style of jazz, making stars of all four participants. The second album submitted for your consideration this month is *Pure Getz* (Concord Jazz CJ-188) featuring his quartet at the time consisting of Jim McNeely on piano; Marc Johnson on bass; Billy Hart (tracks: A3, B1, B2) and Victor Lewis (tracks: A1, A2, A4, B3) on drums. The record gets underway with an uptempo original by pianist McNeely that generates excitement from the opening notes of the melody, *On The Up and Up*. Getz moves right into a lively, invigorating solo that gives a glimpse of his impressive artistry. Jim swings with a bouncy effervescence and spirited lyricism on the next reading then comes Johnson who responds with a very passionate presentation and Lewis accentuates the soulful phrasing of the song with a rock-solid beat that expresses his emotions tastefully.

Blood Count by Billy Strayhorn was originally written as a three-part work for Duke Ellington titled *Blue Cloud* in 1967. It was his final composition for Duke before passing away from cancer on May 31, 1967, and Ellington himself only performed the tune twice after Billy's death. First, at a Carnegie Hall concert, later that year in August that was featured on the 1975 four-record set, *The Greatest Jazz Concert In The World*

(Pablo 2625 704) and on his touching tribute album in memory of Strayhorn, *And His Mother Called Him Bill* (RCA Victor LSP-3906). Duke's tribute album won the Grammy Award for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album in 1969 and is now a contemporary jazz standard that's been performed numerous times. The trio is evocatively subtle behind Stan who opens with a vividly expressive melody and passionately delicate and poetic on the song's only solo. Jim, Marc, and Victor provide the emotionally expressive foundation behind him culminating into a sincere finale. *Very Early* by Bill Evans is a pretty tune which was written early in the pianist's career and featured on his 1962 album for Riverside Records, *Moon Beams* (RLP 428/RLP 9428). It was the first LP he recorded after the death of bassist Scott LaFaro, a year earlier. The quartet's edition of this Evans original is taken at an easy, relaxed tempo with Hart at the drums. Johnson leads off with a tenderly expressive statement which is poignant, but not solemn. McNeely gets his say next with a tasty treat of improvisation that has a beautiful tone and firm groove. Getz delivers a luminous performance on the closing solo with a quality intonation and delivery which is sustained skillfully into a return to the theme.

Sipping at Bell's, the first side finale is one of Miles Davis' little-known compositions. It opens with a three-instrument chat between Getz, Johnson, and Lewis. McNeely joins the discussion during the informally presented melody and into the first solo by Johnson who contributes a concise reading of melodic substance and harmonic originality. Getz blows with authority on the next interpretation, emphasizing a fiery bop sound and a sharp, crisp attack. McNeely is effectively swift on the third performance, permitting his fingers full sway in one of the liveliest interpretations of the session. Lewis takes care of business on the final reading with a steadiness that illustrates he's not only a drummer to be reckoned with, but one worthy of close consideration. *I Wish I Knew*, written in 1945 by Harry Warren and Mack Gordon opens the second side, it has been played and sung many times by a great number of musicians and vocalists since its introduction. Normally presented at a slow or ballad tempo, the quartet's rendition stands up extraordinarily well. Beautiful playing and execution, plus a fine sense of timing are the hallmarks of this jazz and pop standard with the solo order, Getz, McNeely, and Johnson with Hart behind the drums. Stan opens with long flowing, graceful lines on a lightly swinging lead solo that sticks close to the melody. Jim delightfully stretches out on the next reading with a pleasant



presentation. Johnson brings the solos to a close with a short turn which leads smoothly back to the closing theme.

Come Rain or Come Shine by Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer was written in 1946 for the Broadway musical, St. Louis Woman. It's a jazz and pop favorite that's been recorded by many musicians and vocalists over the past seven decades. This ageless gem opens with a gentle introduction by the trio evolving into a tender theme treatment. Getz's sound is perfectly suited to this beautiful ballad as he demonstrates on the first solo through a gorgeous reading that's graciously delivered with an endearing depth of feeling. McNeely provides a sensitive statement which is sumptuously played, then Johnson gets a chance to show off his skill as a ballad soloist with gentle groundwork supplied by Billy Hart. Tempus Fugit, which is also known as Tempus Fugue-it was written in 1949 by pianist Bud Powell and is a play on words meaning "time flies". This high-energy finale swings from the outset and the communication between the quartet on the melody is absolutely marvelous. Jim kicks off the solos with a scintillating statement that swings at a ferocious pace with each note making an astonishing impact. Stan continues the speedy ride by exemplifying his limitless energy on the second reading, holding its own alongside his bandmates. Getz continues the speedy ride by exemplifying his inexhaustible energy on the second reading which holds its own alongside his bandmates. Johnson follows in exceptionally good form taking the listener on a rollercoaster ride with a flawlessly inspired performance. Lewis sums up the session with authority affirming his improvisational skills and his agility on the drums is an inspiring experience.

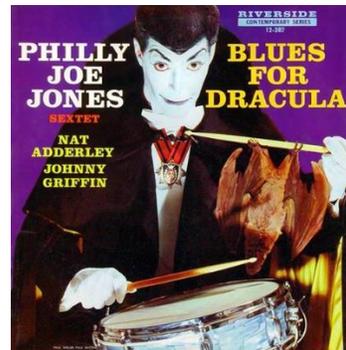
Pure Getz was released in 1982 and my copy used in this report is the original U.S. Stereo LP. The CD-album (CCD-4188) also hit the stores the same year. The record was recorded by two of the best in the business, Ed Trabanco and Phil Edwards. The more I listened to each selection, the more I became impressed with the album's sound quality, the instruments have outstanding detail and the music is absolutely fabulous. If you're a fan of jazz like me, it's always a pleasure to talk about an LP where each song is played to the point and meaningful. This is an album by one of the masters of the tenor sax, Stan Getz whose career spanned nearly five decades from the forties to 1990. It's also a record that I hope you'll have an opportunity to audition at your earliest convenience. Pure Getz is a highly enjoyable, tasteful collection of

Bebop and Cool Jazz that's a good starting point to introduce you to the music of Stan Getz and worth grabbing on your next vinyl hunt!

This LP is the companion to Blue Skies (Concord Jazz CCD-4676); which was recorded at the same session, but not released until 1995 as a CD-album, which is a shame in my opinion, because it's another highlight in Stan Getz's discography that stands tall on its own merits!

Come Rain or Come Shine – Source: JazzStandards.com

Blood Count, Tempus Fugit – Source: Wikipedia.org



Philly Joe Jones Sextet – Blues For Dracula
Riverside Original Jazz Classics

It's late on Halloween night, all the trick and treaters have come and gone; you've enjoyed some candy yourselves; you're still in a festive mood and ready to hear some jazz. You need look no further to end your evening than this third album from the library by The Philly Joe Jones Sextet. Blues For Dracula (Riverside Contemporary Series RLP 12-282) was the debut as a leader for the drummer and joining him on this date are Nat Adderley on cornet; Julian Priestler on trombone; Johnny Griffin on tenor sax; Tommy Flanagan on piano and Jimmy Garrison on bass. My copy used in this report is the 1986 Original Jazz Classics Mono reissue (OJC-230 – RLP-282). The album opens with Blues For Dracula, the title tune is a slow-tempo blues written by Johnny Griffin. It starts with the howl of a wolf and the ensemble stating the melody collectively behind Philly's comical narration as Bela Lugosi playing the Bebop Vampire, Count Dracula. Julian is up first and begins the opening statement playing some exquisite notes in a relaxed manner. Johnny takes the next turn with a tuneful interpretation of sweet lyricism that's



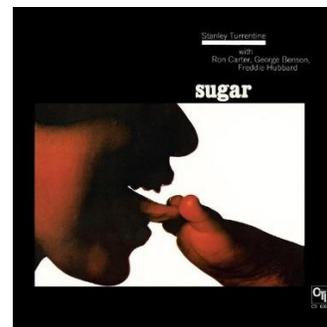
paved smoothly by the rhythm section's solid support. Nat takes over, communicating his points with imposing authority on a very efficient performance next. Tommy turns in a captivating presentation that puts an exclamation point on this enjoyable blues tune ahead of the ending theme and the Count's final comment.

Trick Street by arranger, composer, and multi-instrumentalist Owen Marshall moves the tempo up to a medium beat beginning with the sextet settling into a stately theme led by Adderley. Flanagan and Griffin share the spotlight as the featured soloists with the lead presentation by Tommy effectively illustrating his melodic creativity on a radiant solo that shines brightly. Johnny contributes a satisfying interpretation that swings contentedly until the theme's reprise and coda. Fiesta, the final track on Side One is the creation of trumpet player, Cal Massey. The horns introduce this cheerful tune together, laying down a midtempo groove for the ensemble's spry and merry melody with Nat in front of the sextet again. Griffin opens with a passionately playful solo that's executed flawlessly. Adderley emphasizes the muscularity of his sound on the next reading exuberantly. Priester steps into the third presentation with a gorgeous, open tone that's absolutely clear and transparent. Flanagan responds with a tasty treat on the piano which tells a straightforward story into a fulfilling ending. Jones delivers a splendid closing statement with plenty of emotion, steady time and absolute control preceding the out-chorus and climax.

Miles Davis' Tune-Up opens the second side with the sextet preparing to play the song before moving through the melody with great speed and blazing energy. Nat's cornet is mesmerizing from the opening notes of a fire-breathing showcase that ignites each note with plenty of heat. Griffin slices into the next reading with a robust attack of excessive speed that's relentless. Julian is up next with a hard-driving solo that extends upward towards the stratosphere with a steady progression into a swift summation. Philly's closing solo is worth the wait beginning with a heated exchange between himself and the front line individually, then delivering a scintillating interpretation of fiery brushwork that wraps up with the ensemble's closing chorus. Our final stop on the album is a 1947 original from the heyday of Bebop by Dizzy Gillespie, Ow! The sextet brings the tune to life with excellent ensemble work during the melody and everyone gets a chance to give a lengthy presentation except Garrison. Julian takes the lead solo with an irresistible toe-

tapping beat that sets the scene for the musical goodies to come. Johnny comes next, soaring confidently through the second reading with verses that are wickedly well-constructed. Tommy begins the third interpretation conveying profound chemistry at work between him, Jimmy and Philly with a reading that soothes as it swings, resulting in an amusing listening experience. Nat steps up next offering a feeling of contentment and well-being on the next interpretation and Philly sums up the song and album nicely with a cheerfully rocking solo performance into the closing chorus.

Jack Higgins, the excellent engineer who worked at Reeves Sound Studios is the man behind the dials of the original recording and Fantasy used his superb work for the mastering of this Mono reissue. The album has a tremendous soundstage with all six instruments in ideal focus for maximum enjoyment to your sweet spot possessing a crystal-clear sound throughout the treble, midrange and bass. Though out of print for many years, if you're a fan of Philly Joe Jones, Hard-Bop, or any of the members of his sextet, Blues For Dracula should be considered for a spot in your library. It's a jazz album with a sense of humor in the title track and four straight-ahead tunes where the playing is lively, the music stirring, the musicians are having some fun and enjoying themselves in every sense!



Stanley Turrentine – Sugar
Pure Pleasure Records

The landscape of jazz was changing as it entered the 1970's. Miles Davis had begun pushing the envelope from Hard-Bop and Post-Bop to Jazz Fusion in 1969 with the album, In A Silent Way (Columbia CS 9875) and his 1970 LP, Bitches Brew (Columbia GP 26) would move it further in that direction. It would be the first jazz album to sell 500,000 copies in its initial first run, unheard of for a jazz LP because most albums previously sold between 5,000, 10,000 or 15,000



copies total. Due to Miles' commercial success with *Bitches Brew*, many jazz musicians also made the move from Hard-Bop, Post-Bop, and Modal styles into Avant-Garde and Free Jazz. Still, others would begin a journey playing to achieve fame towards a genre of music that would eventually be labeled Smooth Jazz. Stanley Turrentine, a veteran tenor saxophonist of the Soul-Jazz style since the fifties had just ended a decade long association with Blue Note that began in 1960 with his debut for the label, *Look Out* (BLP 4039/BST 84039) and was looking to build his audience. He signed with CTI Records in 1970, the newly independent label owned by producer Creed Taylor, that originally began as a subsidiary of A&M Records in 1967.

Though no one knew it at the time, his debut on the new label, *Sugar* (CTI 6005) would become the biggest selling album of his career, making him successful beyond the label's expectations and allowing him to continue recording more Soul-Jazz records over the next two decades. The record's success would also change the direction of future albums on the label. CTI would begin recording more Jazz-Funk and Funk-Soul LP's, earning Turrentine the nickname he would be called the rest of his life, "The Sugar Man". In 1975, the label released *The Sugar Man* (CTI 6052 S1) featuring unreleased material and one track, *Vera Cruz* which originally appeared on the 1971 album by Brazilian Samba and Bossa Nova singer, Astrud Gilberto, Gilberto with Turrentine (CTI 6008). The copy that's used in this report is the 2009 Stereo audiophile reissue from Pure Pleasure Records (PPAN 6005-CTI 6005). Turrentine chose label mate and trumpeter Freddie Hubbard who launched the label with his 1970 debut, *Red Clay* (CTI 6001). Also featured are Lonnie Liston Smith (not to be confused with organist Dr. Lonnie Smith) on electric piano; Butch Cornell on organ; George Benson on guitar; Ron Carter on bass; Billy Kaye on drums and Richard "Pablo" Landrum on conga drums.

The title tune opens the first side with a midtempo introduction by the rhythm section that hooks you from the opening notes. Both horns come in with a swaying beat on the opening melody that carries the listener right along with it. Stanley opens the musical conversation first with a danceable treatment that wails at a medium beat. Freddie drives the next presentation with a funky feeling and sweeping lines that are mesmerizing. George takes his first opportunity to solo with a rich, firm tone that tells its story convincingly. Hubbard and Turrentine assist Benson with a rhythmic

supplement for one chorus closely during his final verse. The ensemble returns for the closing coda fading slowly into nothingness.

Sunshine Alley by organist Butch Cornell climaxes the first side, bringing its creator and Landrum into the spotlight with Butch leading the rhythm section during the bluesy introduction fueled by Kaye's hypnotic drums and Landrum's soulful conga. Both horns take it from there stating the down-home theme with a lush sound. Cornell, who I was unfamiliar with before his appearance here is an excellent musician and as he demonstrates on the first solo, is quite capable of constructing choruses that are exciting and emotionally gratifying. Benson is up next, giving a splendid performance that hits a moderate musical beat with the rhythm section slipping neatly alongside. Hubbard, who was one of the most revered soloists in jazz, also gets into a good groove with a performance of immense lyricism that gives him plenty of space to shine. Turrentine delivers the final statement with a juicy performance that effectively shows he was completely comfortable and well in command preceding the ensemble's return for the out-chorus.

Stanley and company pay an upbeat tribute to tenor saxophonist John Coltrane with a vigorous uptempo rendition of *Impressions* that occupies the entire second side, giving the leader, Butch, Freddie, and George a chance to stretch out with four lengthy interpretations in that order. Butch opens the contemporary classic with a concise introduction, then Stanley and Freddie provide the spark on the main theme to "get this party started" as my wife likes to say. Stanley takes off first at a hard-swinging gallop that sets the tone of this blowing session with a rousing start. Butch comes in next with an enthusiastically cheerful interpretation that's vividly bright and fresh as a polished apple with both horns humming behind him revealing how happy a session this obviously was. Hubbard fills each verse of the third solo with extreme intensity. Benson steps into the spotlight last for a high-voltage performance of Soul-Jazz that's perfectly constructed. The closing chorus is punctuated by Stanley dispensing great energy and liveliness into a vigorous fadeout.

The impeccable rhythm section of Ron Carter and Billy Kaye plus Richard "Pablo" Landrum on *Sunshine Alley* and *Impressions* provide the exceptional reinforcement throughout each selection and their dynamic interplay together is a revelation. There's something for everyone on *Sugar* by Stanley Turrentine, the album



has an irresistible groove that should make it a favorite in many jazz libraries because each musician communicates a wonderful sense of delight, and sheer pleasure that makes the music totally involving. The remastering is superb, and the LP is a sonic treat, the sound is spacious, natural and well-balanced. It's also a pleasure to hear these great improvisers in a resolute form on an excellent album from Stanley Turrentine, a master musician that's a high note in anyone's language and should be considered for your jazz library. If you're in the mood for some grooving soulful jazz, Sugar is all treats and no tricks. See you next month and Happy Listening Gang!