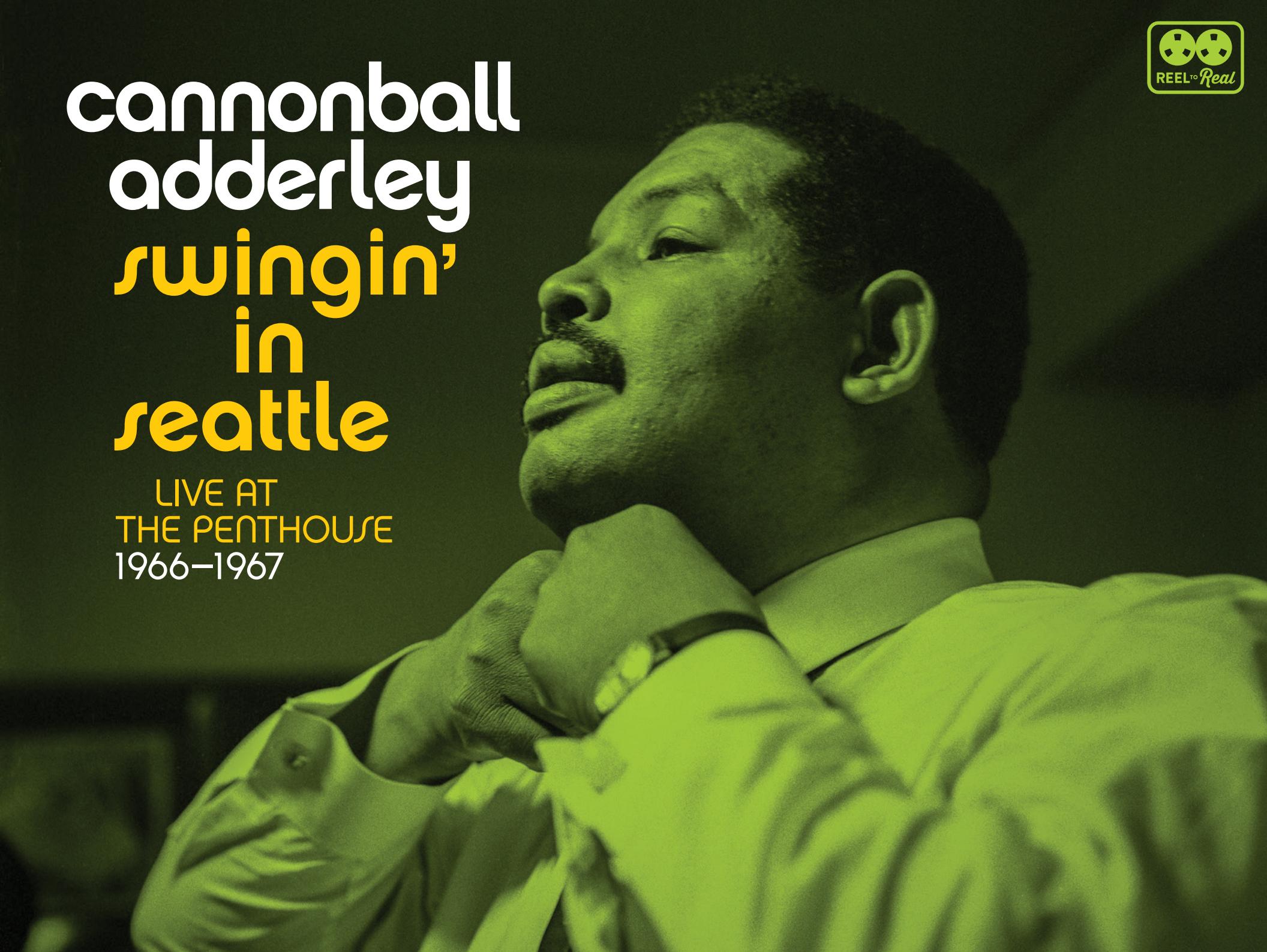


# cannonball adderley *swingin'* in seattle

LIVE AT  
THE PENTHOUSE  
1966–1967





JULIAN "CANNONBALL" ADDERLEY alto saxophone  
NAT ADDERLEY cornet JOE ZAWINUL piano  
VICTOR GASHIN bass ROY McCURDY drums

1. JIM WILKE INTRO (0:13)
2. BIG "P" (8:49)
3. SPOKEN OUTRO (0:24)
4. SPOKEN INTRO (0:14)
5. THE GIRL NEXT DOOR (11:10)
6. SPOKEN INTRO (0:48)
7. STICKS (4:33)
8. SPOKEN OUTRO (0:06)
9. SPOKEN INTRO (0:12)
10. THE MORNING OF THE CARNIVAL  
(MANHÃ DE CARNAVAL) (10:44)
11. SPOKEN OUTRO (0:12)
12. SPOKEN INTRO (0:34)
13. SOMEWHERE (5:04)
14. JIM WILKE INTRO (0:16)
15. 74 MILES AWAY (10:38)
16. SPOKEN OUTRO (0:31)
17. BACK HOME BLUES (6:46)
18. HIPPODELPHIA (10:44)
19. SET-CLOSING OUTRO (0:57)

Recorded from live radio broadcasts at the  
Penthouse Jazz Club in Seattle, WA on  
June 15 & 22, 1966 and October 6 & 13, 1967



creativeBC



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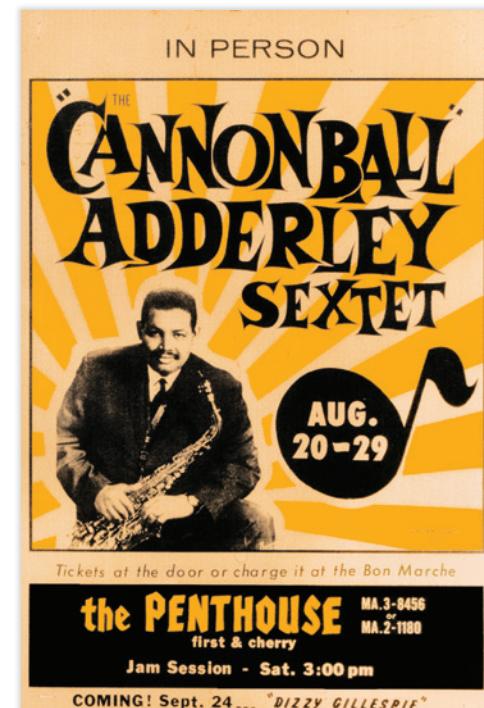
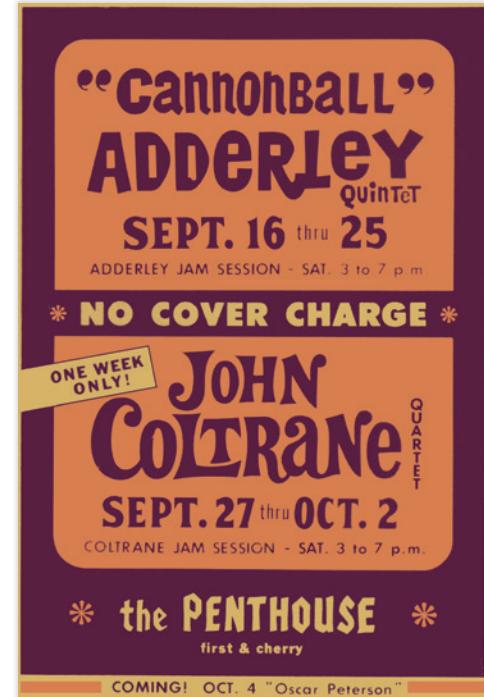
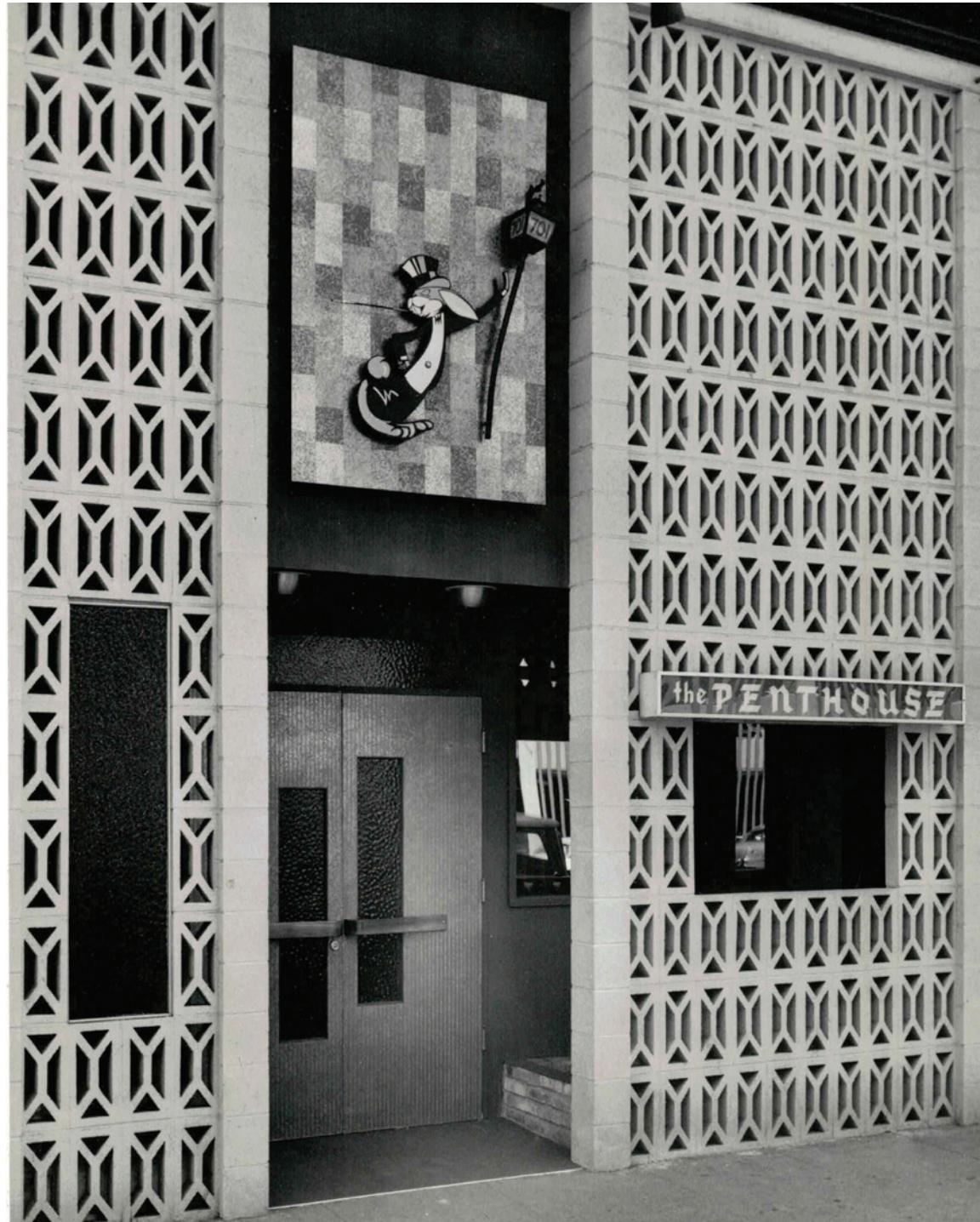
**DEDICATED TO THE MEMORIES OF** Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, Nat Adderley, Joe Zawinul and Victor Gaskin

Produced for release by ZEV FELDMAN and CORY WEEDS  
Executive Producer: CORY WEEDS  
Associate Producers: LAURIE GOLDSTEIN, JIM WILKE  
and CHARLIE PUZZO JR.  
Sound restoration and mastering by DAVID SIKULA  
Original Recordings by JIM WILKE

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Art direction & design: BURTON YOUNT  
Album Package Editor: JOHN KOENIG  
Production Manager: ZAK SHELBY-SZYSZKO  
Photo research: ZEV FELDMAN  
and ZAK SHELBY-SZYSZKO  
Legal Counsel: PATRICK ALDOUS —  
Chandler Fogden Aldous Law Corporation,  
Vancouver, BC

Cannonball and Nat Adderley. Photo by ©TOM COPI





## cannonball adderley's lost seattle tapes come to light on a new label

### THE TAPE FINDS A HOME

I first learned about legendary Seattle Jazz DJ Jim Wilke and the collection of recorded broadcasts he made from his weekly radio program on KING-FM, *Jazz from the Penthouse*, in 2010. At the Resonance label, George Klabin had been in touch with Jim and explored releasing some of his rare tapes, so we got a glimpse into his extraordinary archive, a compendium of performances by a veritable *Who's Who* of the greatest of jazz artists in the world who happened to come to Seattle to play one of the Pacific Northwest's finest jazz clubs. To verify this, all you need to do is the look at the list of the artists who played there. It's pretty impressive. During the years of 1962 to 1968 Cannonball Adderley performed at the club eight times. You can tell Cannon liked playing at the Penthouse; just listen to the warmth he exudes when he speaks of the club and owner, Charlie Puzzo.

From the moment we heard them, George Klabin and I were always very high on the Cannonball Adderley performances. They were some of the very first recordings we seriously considered for Resonance's release of archival material. They captured the band in its prime. Then in 2012, we noticed a newly-issued Cannonball live recording from another company and we decided we didn't want to release more live Cannonball material at the same time. Cannonball's project was relegated to the back burner. We always thought the recordings were great and worthy of release, but the tapes sat there. Then I met a friend who wouldn't stop asking me about them

...  
In the spring of 2016 in Vancouver, I met up with Cory Weeds, a musician who was fascinated by the idea of unearthing previously unheard archival recordings by great jazz artists. Cory wanted to start his own historical jazz label, so we did. Together, Cory asked me about any unreleased tapes that I may know about. I mentioned in passing that George had these great recordings of Cannonball Adderley, and that we had done nothing with them. Something must have really stuck with Cory about this because he kept asking me over and over if we wanted them. Next thing I knew, these would become one of our first new releases on Cory's new label, Reel to Real Recordings.

For this, one of Reel to Real's inaugural releases, I was driven to build one of the greatest packages for Cannonball Adderley in his entire discography, and I was lucky to have at my disposal my design, production and editing team of Burton Yount, Zak Shelby-Szyszko and John Koenig, who have worked with me on numerous, highly acclaimed historical projects for Resonance and other labels. First we worked with Jim Wilke and Charlie Puzzo, Jr. who provided high-resolution transfers of the original tapes. Then Cory and I selected the material. We personally felt it was important to focus on material from the same band and we reviewed recordings

made in 1966 and '67 which had the same lineup: Cannonball and Nat Adderley, Joe Zawinul, Victor Gaskin and Roy McCurdy. Next, we contacted Olga Adderley Chandler, Cannonball's widow and the head of the Julian Adderley Estate. We want to express our gratitude to Mrs. Adderley Chandler for making this project possible. We were able to work with the other musician's families and then embarked on gathering the voices for this release. Author and Cannonball enthusiast Bill Kopp leads with the main essay putting these recordings into context. Next up, Seattle musician and journalist Steve Griggs discusses these recordings and the club and everything in between with the guy who recorded these performances, KING-FM's Jim Wilke. I then chat with Olga Adderley Chandler to get her thoughts on her late husband, and Cory speaks with the drummer on the recordings, the great Roy McCurdy. Then included we have the next generation voice of an alto player who's clearly been influenced by Cannonball, and actually played in Nat's band, the great Vincent Herring. Lastly, Charlie Puzzo, Jr. shares his thoughts about the club his father ran.

These recordings constitute some of the very best unreleased Cannonball material out there. They speak to Cannonball's genius; they're an everlasting reminder of his greatness. A big part of my job is to find homes for important recordings such as these. Not everyone is up to the task of going through all the steps it takes, but I'm thankful to have found a passionate partner in Cory Weeds who shares my dedication and vision to do this important work the right way. I want to thank everyone who participated in this project.

#### ZEV FELDMAN

Los Angeles, July 2018

I am so thrilled at the opportunity to work on what I think is an important archival release with Zev Feldman and his team. Cannonball Adderley's music has had a great impact on me as musician, not only as a saxophonist but as a frontman communicating with the audience. *Swingin' in Seattle* gives the listener a good idea of what it was like to be in the presence of this great musician at one of his shows. I'm particularly happy we've preserved much of Cannonball's between-tune banter. It makes it feel like you're sitting right there at the Penthouse in the front row. Cannonball's music embodies so many things, not the least of which are fun, joy, passion and swing — all the things I love. It has been an extreme pleasure to work on this release with Zev's team.



Vancouver, August 2018



Photo by A.W. Reynolds,  
Courtesy of the R.J. Reynolds Collection

## why cannonball adderley matters

BY BILL HOPP

Like many of my generation, children of the 1960s, I grew up on rock 'n roll. In mid-life, Julian "Cannonball" Adderley was my "gateway drug" into jazz. His impeccable qualities of virtuosity, taste and — most of all for me — accessibility drew me into the mysterious, alien world where beat is often implied, root melody is merely a guide for exploration and pursuit of adventure reigns supreme.

Cannonball Adderley's musical career took him through a number of phases. Riches were to be found on most every Cannonball session. But the most *fun* — and that's a word that meant a great deal to the man — recordings and performances in Adderley's deep catalog came during what was also his commercial peak.

### The Capitol Era

After an acclaimed series of albums for jazz label Riverside, in 1964 Adderley moved to the more pop-leaning Capitol Records. There he cut some of his biggest successes. Those achievements came in no small part thanks to the staggering quality and musical camaraderie of his band of that era: though the lineup would change now and again, Cannonball's quintet always featured his cornetist brother Nat and often included upright bassist Victor Gaskin, drummer Roy McCurdy and keyboardist Joe Zawinul.

It was that lineup that cut the juggernaut *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy! Live at "The Club,"* an album actually recorded mid-day in October 1966 in the basement studio at Capitol Records in Hollywood. Zawinul's deeply soulful (yet pop-oriented) "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy" was a highlight of the date. Hitting the sweet spot right in the center of three musical points — jazz, gospel and pop — *Mercy* brought the Cannonball Adderley Quintet to an audience much wider than the relatively small core coterie of jazz aficionados.

That album climbed to the #1 spot on *Billboard's* R&B Albums chart, and the 45 rpm "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy" single reached #11 on the pop charts in late February '67, spending a total of 8 weeks there; this, at a time when the #1 spot was held by the Buckinghams' "Kind of a Drag" and the Rolling Stones' "Ruby Tuesday." Cannonball Adderley scored pop hits without compromising his jazz aesthetic.

And it would be that same Adderley/Adderley/Gaskin/Zawinul/McCurdy lineup recorded live by KING-FM radio in Seattle, Washington on at least four dates between early October 1966 and late June of '67. It is from those professionally recorded dates that this new collection is drawn.

### Cannon's Raps

Owing to the time limitations of vinyl records, most of Cannonball's between-song monologues were typically cut (or severely edited) when assembling live albums. Those who witnessed the Quintet performing live (or were lucky enough to hear radio broadcasts and/or bootleg

recordings) understood well and true that Cannon's "raps" were a key component of the listening experience. Adderley's deep love of the music — and equally deep love, appreciation and respect for the audience — were made manifest in those raps.

Julian "Cannonball" Adderley got his professional start in music as the band director at Dillard High School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; his seemingly effortless ability to educate and entertain simultaneously seems to have developed early. His good-natured, slyly humorous monologues provided a connection to the music, making the instrumental works even more enjoyable. Even if one didn't always understand everything that was happening onstage, Adderley's raps — and his overall demeanor — made it likely that one would still "get" the music.

This collection preserves those monologues, providing listeners with an audio experience as close as possible to being seated at a table in the Penthouse, Charlie Puzzo's jazz club in Seattle's Pioneer Square. Predictably, on these Seattle dates the music itself is superb. As expected, the songs provide ample opportunity for each member of the quintet to take his turn at instrumental exploration and musical dialogue.

### The Tunes

Adderley's first recording of "Big 'P'" was on a 1960 session for the Jimmy Heath Orchestra's *Really Big!* LP. Less than four months after that studio date, Adderley cut his own live version with his quintet at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach, California. A month later, while touring Europe, another performance of "Big 'P'" was captured. But the reading of the tune on this collection runs more than three minutes longer than any previous Adderley recording of it.

"The Girl Next Door" was a popular number in the quintet's repertoire around this time; in fact, it also was recorded live in the studio at Capitol in 1967, during the sessions for *Why Am I Treated So Bad!* Not included on the original LP, the song was appended to an expanded CD reissue in 2006.

Adderley playfully refers to Penthouse owner Charlie Puzzo in his spoken introduction to a requested number he describes as a new tune. But Cannonball's "Sticks" would have been familiar to the Penthouse crowd hearing it on June 15, 1967; the quintet had cut live versions of the tune for 1966's *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy!* album (and the Asia-only release *Cannonball in Japan*). It was also part of the quintet's set at the Monterey Jazz Festival in September 1966. Once again, the Penthouse recording runs longer than other documented performances.

The pop/bossa nova hybrid "Morning of the Carnival" first appeared on an Adderley record in 1966. Not among Adderley's shining moments, *Great Love Themes* appended a syrupy, "easy listening" string section



to the quintet. Happily, the live version here is absent such needless filigree; to date, this performance from October 1966 is the only officially released quintet version of the song.

After Cannon's brief yet inspiring introduction, Zawinul leads the quintet into "Somewhere." *Great Love Themes* also featured a saccharine reading of "Somewhere" from Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. The Seattle performance features the quintet playing an understated arrangement — similar to the one found on 1968's *In Person* — focusing on Cannonball's saxophone.

Joe Zawinul brought his insistent yet hypnotic "74 Miles Away" to the Quintet in 1967. Adderley's second Capitol album of that year took its name from the extended piece and Cannon would revisit Zawinul's composition on *Phenix*, recorded during some of his last sessions in 1975.

Charlie Parker first cut his original composition "Back Home Blues" in August 1951. That recording opens with the alto saxophonist playing

**Joe Zawinul and Nat Adderley.** Photo by Lee Tanner



in unison with trumpeter Red Rodney before the group breaks into solo turns. For the quintet's spirited reading, Cannonball takes charge; his solo begins outright, and brother Nat doesn't play at all. The arrangement triples the length of Parker's studio version. This October 13, 1966 performance marks the first official release of "Back Home Blues" by any Adderley-led lineup.

An October 6, 1966 recording of the crowd-pleasing "Hippodelphia" wraps up this collection. The Zawinul composition was featured on *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy* in a severely truncated version; here, the quintet can be heard taking full advantage of the possibilities within the piece.

#### **Music of the People**

It's one of the myriad joys of jazz that by its very definition, every performance of a song, even one that's been performed countless times, can be a completely new experience. And so it is that while Adderley fans will have heard some of these songs before, if you haven't heard these

recordings, they'll be new. And each will reveal something that no other recording has.

Adderley passed away prematurely in 1975; today only Roy McCurdy remains from the '66-'67 quintet lineup. The Penthouse closed a year after the last date Adderley played there. The building was demolished soon thereafter and today a parking deck stands in its place.

Julian "Cannonball" Adderley firmly believed that jazz is the music of the people, not some rarefied highbrow music designed only for sophisticated audiences. And that's the beauty of this music: if you let it, it will speak to you and display its charms in new and different ways.

*Bill Kopp is an author and music journalist. He has written liner notes for dozens of albums including first-ever CD reissues of four Cannonball Adderley LPs. He writes for magazines, papers and websites in the US and UK, and his musoscribe.com blog features new content every business day since 2009.*

## **the penthouse & the ebullience of cannonball**

#### **STEVE GRIGGS: How did the Penthouse broadcasts originate?**

JIM WILKE: The station came up with the idea. KING-FM saw itself as a showcase for the lively arts. We played all genres: folk, jazz, classical, plus plays and interviews with authors and painters. Our Penthouse show was really old-school radio — live broadcasts on location. People heard great music played right as they listened in their cars and they'd come to the club to catch the second set.

#### **What was the Penthouse like in the 1960s?**

Pioneer Square was undergoing a renaissance. Little places were opening up. There were some boutiques, cafes . . .

#### **And the World's Fair.**

Yes. That generated considerable activity. In 1962, Seattle really got a taste for international-level arts: the London Symphony, great ballet and two major theater companies. When the Penthouse appeared in the midst of all this, the station wanted to do something with them. We talked to the people at the Penthouse. They liked the idea. It became a regular thing. We did over 200 Penthouse shows.

#### **What night of the week was it?**

Acts opened on Thursday. They had two weekends — Thursday, Friday, Saturday. We had blue laws; no booze on Sundays, so the club was closed on Sunday. Engagements ran Monday through Saturday the following week. Most acts played ten days, so we got two broadcasts from them: opening night and a week later.

#### **I heard people lined up outside to get in.**

It depended. Oscar Peterson or George Shearing would have people down the block. For artists who were just emerging, the crowd was thin. Charles Lloyd, for instance. He hadn't hit it big the first time he played, so there were just a few people. After his records hit, the place was filled to the rafters.

#### **Was there drinking there?**

Beer and wine. Washington distinguished between taverns and establishments that sold distilled spirits. You couldn't sell alcohol at all on Sunday, not even a six-pack at the market. Sunday officially began around 11:45 Saturday night. That was unfortunate. Saturday should be the biggest night of the week.

#### **People were there to listen to the music.**

Yes.

#### **The tables were small.**

Yeah. About 18 inches across; just enough to set your drink and ashtray. Beer and wine places like the Penthouse had to have a window to the street where people could see inside. If you sold hard liquor you couldn't have a window open to the street. It had to be behind. Strange, arcane rules.

#### **There were brick walls.**

Typical brick construction at the time: long narrow room, the stage half-way down on the left side of the room. Most of the audience sat to the side of the stage, not directly in front of it. There were 20 or 30 chairs in front; most of the audience was on the side. The wall behind the stage was brick. There were mirrors over the stage. You could look up and see the band reflected from above.

#### **It was called the Penthouse, but it was on the ground floor. What was the waitstaff like?**

The owner was playing off the popularity of Playboy Clubs, but it wasn't part of that franchise. His waitstaff were all attractive young women in leotards but without the bunny tail or the ears.

#### **What was your recording setup?**

KING was an NBC station. NBC and RCA were associated, so we used a standard RCA remote kit, the same as NBC would use: a four-channel mixer with four mics in and broadcast signal out.

#### **What kind of mics?**

Mainly RCA-77-DXs. They look like big Contac cold capsules.

#### **Where did you set up?**

Beside the stage, usually by the piano and away from the drums.

#### **Where did you set up your mics?**

It depended. I only had four microphones and four inputs, so I had to make choices. The Modern Jazz Quartet and George Shearing were easy. You'd put up one microphone and get it all because they weren't loud; they balanced themselves. With loud groups I just had to put mics where they'd do the most good. I put one on the bass and one on the lead instrument. Cannon and Nat shared a mic. They played on either side of it. And one on the piano. I rarely miked the drums.

#### **Your broadcast mix was also the house mix?**

Yes. When I made the introduction to the radio broadcast it was also heard in the club.

#### **The first set was at 9:30?**

9:30. That was my cue. I had a portable radio. When the KING-FM announcer said, "It's 9:30," I knew I was live.

#### **Cannonball played lots of shows there.**

Yes. Ten-day engagements. That doesn't exist anymore.

#### **How was a Cannonball engagement different from some of the other acts?**

Cannonball was such an ebullient guy. I can see how he was a great teacher. He was a communicator; he had an engaging way of talking to the audience and involving them.

#### **In his intro to "Somewhere," Cannonball mentions he went to a juvenile facility and played for children. He had this outreach into the community and wanted to get his music to all kinds of people.**

He really was great with kids.

#### **Listening live to Cannonball's sound, what hit you about it?**

The edge on his sound surprised me. When people think of the alto, they think of guys like Paul Desmond who had a lighter, floatier sound more inspired by Lester Young than Charlie Parker. But Cannon was pure Bird. He had that edge. But he could play very sweetly, too.

#### **Did it sound edgy in the room? A P.A. can alter the sound of an instrument from how it sounds unamplified.**

Amplification has changed things, but it was much lighter back then. In that room, you heard mostly the natural sound of the instruments; only a little came from the speakers. The club had bookshelf speakers high on the walls facing the stage stretching from one end of the room to the other. There were no hot spots; the sound was even everywhere no matter where you sat.

#### **Did you hang out with Cannonball at all?**

We went to breakfast a couple of times after gigs. Back then, there were three places one could go at two a.m.: Clark's Around the Clock, the 13 Coins and the Hunt Breakfast at El Gaucho. We went there sometimes.

#### **He had a nickname.**

It was Cannibal first, but that morphed to Cannonball. He could really put it away, though. He was enthusiastic about eating.

#### **Is there anything else you remember about Cannonball?**

Cannon was so full of life; such a gregarious person. When I heard he passed, it cut me to the heart. I couldn't believe someone so vital was suddenly gone. I've seen it more times since, of course, but that was the first time it was someone I knew who I just couldn't believe was gone.

*JIM WILKE worked at KING-FM from 1961 to 1977, and was creator and host of Jazz After Hours on Public Radio International from 1984-2014. He runs an audio production company, Hatchcover Productions, [www.hatchcover.co](http://www.hatchcover.co)*

*STEVE GRIGGS is a saxophonist/composer based in Seattle, and is a contributing writer for Earshot Jazz and other publications.*



**eclectic, witty and sweet**

**OLGA ADDERLEY REFLECTS ON HER HUSBAND, JULIAN "CANNONBALL" ADDERLEY**

#### **ZEV FELDMAN: How did you meet Cannonball Adderley?**

**OLGA ADDERLEY:** I was the ingénue in Sammy Davis Jr.'s first Broadway show, *Mr. Wonderful*. Frances Davis was a dancer in the show. She brought Miles to meet me and then after that, she set up a date for me with Cannonball.

#### **What was he like?**

He was shy. He didn't say much. He came to my house and still was very shy. We finally went on a date. I remember he looked very elegant. He had a beautiful German raincoat and beautiful shoes. Right after that, I went to Australia for a few months to sing. They wanted to send me to Japan and I said "No. I'm going home." I came home in December and we spent the New Year's together. Then a little after that, a friend wanted to take me to Birdland to see Julian. I didn't want to go, but I did; she insisted. And Julian sat down at the table and said he was going to marry me!

#### **What you were doing professionally at that time?**

I was a singer. I graduated from Juilliard and worked on Broadway and in London — the theater — and I sang in clubs. They always sent me to these faraway places all by myself. I finally got sick of it; I got lonely and said, "I have to go home." It was around the holidays; that's when you really start missing people. I didn't see Julian for a while, but we met up again in Los Angeles. He was backing Nancy Wilson; they were a double bill. I saw Julian backstage and he said, "Hi-hi," and he walked onstage, he looked very suave and very elegant. But then I went back to Australia.

L-R: Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, Nat Adderley, Victor Gaskin at unknown club.  
Courtesy of Devra Hall Levy



When I came back, we hooked up again and we started dating. By summer, I we were serious, but I was also doing summer stock — Tuptim in *The King and I* — and Julian was about to go on a tour. We decided we'd be going in all different directions, so we should get married. We got married June 28th, 1962.

**You were both living in New York City at that time?**

Yes.

**Where in New York?**

He was living in Queens; not a condo, but one of those enormous buildings out 30 minutes from the airport. I was living in Newark with my parents. After we got married, we lived in Queens in the apartment he owned.

**Cannonball seemed like he had so much personality on stage; he was so debonair. When he talks to the audience, he's incredibly inspiring.**

You felt his warmth and he had a kind of benign presence.

**What kind of person was he?**

Very intelligent. He had eclectic taste. And he was very articulate and very witty. And very sweet to be with.

**What was his brother Nat like?**

Nat was feisty. One of their producers said they had a ritual fight on every album. But he was a funny little dude.

**Was there a close connection between the brothers?**

Oh, yes. They were very close. The whole family was. They were close with their dad. As a matter of fact, that's one of the reasons I married him. I admired the men in the family, this whole family of responsible black men.

**They were from Tallahassee?**

Tallahassee.

**What was it like when you went to Florida to meet them?**

It was funny. We got married by the justice of the peace, but Julian and his brothers were altar boys and his mother was very religious. So his mother and father met us at the train and took us directly to the priest. And it was as if we had to have another whole wedding ceremony — longer than the one in New York — before she let me come to her house and sleep in her bed.

**Can you talk about Joe Zawinul?**

I loved Joe's playing, but I didn't encounter the guys in the band that much. First, they really didn't want wives on tour; it was a pain for them and they had to behave differently when the wives were along. But I really liked Joe a lot.

**How about Roy McCurdy?**

I was married to Julian when Roy joined the band. He came over and here was this skinny teenage-looking kid. When Julian used to do the Lighthouse out at Hermosa Beach, we'd stay the local motel right on the beach. One day my sister-in-law and I were there and Roy came running in; all these teenage girls were chasing him; he looked so young. He had to come in so we could protect him!

**You were with Julian when he played at the Penthouse. What do you remember about the Club?**

The owner and his wife were very nice. He was involved in horse-racing and they invited us to the owners' box a couple of times. I have very, very happy memories about that time.

**Julian played there many times —**

— Many times. The audience was wonderful. It was a wonderful town for jazz.

**There's a story about Cannonball jumping into the Puzzos' swimming pool.**

Julian was sitting by the pool and the Puzzos' youngest kid fell in. Julian reached in and grabbed him. Nobody else noticed. He got the kid out. Julian was a very good swimmer; he was lifeguard-trained.

**That child was Charlie Puzo Jr., who lives here in Los Angeles now.**

Really? It was a long time ago. He was about six months old. I don't think he was even a toddler yet.

**Did it bring back memories for you, all these years later, when you had a chance to listen to this music?**

I couldn't listen to the radio for several years because when I heard the music I'd cry. But now I'm delighted when I'm driving along and I hear the music. It's clear that he's still relevant and that the music is still good.

**What do you hope Cannonball's legacy will be?**

I've been thinking about that. I'm happy his music is still played and people still enjoy it; that it still means something to people all over the world. I was teaching at Cal State Northridge and a new faculty member came

in and went crazy when he heard I'd been married to Cannonball. He'd just come from Japan and he said that there were jazz clubs just for him in Japan. Also, I just spent a little time in the hospital and one of the fellow patients found out I'd been married to Cannonball. He would stop at my door every day hoping to talk to me about it. We did, finally. It's still meaningful to people now.

#### **Cory Weeds: Did you call him Julian or Cannonball?**

I called him Julian.

#### **Any final thoughts?**

He was sweet to live with. That's really important when you're living with someone. He was a good person; that was a good time in my life.

*Olga Adderley-Chandler (maiden name Olga James) was an actress known for The Vampire Lovers (1970), Carmen Jones (1954) and The Bill Cosby Show (1969). She was married to Julian "Cannonball" Adderley from 1962 until his death in 1975.*

**"The greatest thing in the world"**

**ROY McCURDY ON PLAYING  
WITH CANNONBALL ADDERLEY**

**CORY WEEDS:** The vibe at the Penthouse seemed super-relaxed on these recordings. Cannonball seemed to dig playing there and he seemed to dig the Puzzos. What was it like for you?

ROY McCURDY: Very relaxed. Charlie Puzzo was a sweetheart. He loved the guys in the band and he loved the music. It was comfortable; a lot of fun. The band just relaxed and played.

**Cannonball was a friendly, congenial guy when he spoke to the audience. Was he like that off the bandstand?**

Same person. He was very smart. Not just about music but lots of different things. He had a big personality. His stage banter came from being an educator. He wanted the audience to be informed. He wanted to involve them.

**These Penthouse performances are from after Cannonball's Sam Jones-Louis Hayes period. This band formed in '64. Cannonball didn't go straight over to the all-funky side right then; he was doing funky stuff, but he was still doing straight-ahead stuff, too.**

We hadn't really gotten into the funk yet.

**Was it obvious that funk was the direction it was gonna go?**

No. When I first joined the band, we were playing all straight-ahead things. At one rehearsal, Joe Zawinul brought "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy." We started playing it. Then changes started happening: Joe started playing Wurlitzer piano.



**The evolution seemed so natural.**

Yeah. We got a chance to play all different kinds of music, not just straight-ahead, but funk, too. We all loved doing that. It came out of Cannon. He loved it too.

**When you and I played in Vancouver, I really wanted to play "Sticks." When we drove to the rehearsal, you said, "I'm cool with everything, Cory, but I don't think we can do 'Sticks.'" I was crushed, but I thought, "Hey, you're Roy McCurdy. We can do whatever you want." At the rehearsal, you were like, "OK, let's try it, but slow." When we got to the gig, we did it at tempo. You said the beat was demanding physically and it'd been a long time since you'd played. What makes that beat so hard?**

It's an in-between shuffle, but there's a fast thing in it where you have to maneuver from one drum to the other. When I was young, it wasn't hard. But when I got older I said, "Damn, that's pretty difficult." I'm OK with it

now because I've revisited it several times over the years.

#### **Was "Sticks" a common request?**

Yes. "Sticks," "Fun" and "Games."

**People know Joe Zawinul from Weather Report and the funky stuff with Cannonball. People forget he could play bebop.**

Yeah. I first met Joe when I was playing with Sonny Rollins at the Five Spot. I'd see him every night standing outside the window looking in. One day I went out and talked to him. He spoke broken English. He said, "Oh yeah, man, you guys sound so good. I love Sonny." Finally he came in to listen. I first heard him later with Joe Williams. Man, he played his butt off. He came from Austria to Berklee and then he quit school to join Maynard Ferguson's band. Then Cannon was looking for a piano player and he went with Cannon. He was an incredible bebop player. You can hear it on the records.

#### **How about Victor Gaskin?**

He was very quiet; he didn't hang out that much. He would be in his room practicing, just going through exercises in classical books. He was quiet, except one time we went to Mexico and he dressed up like an Arab, which was really out of character.

**Nat sometimes gets overshadowed next to Cannonball, but it seemed like they were good foils for one another.**

They were.

#### **What was Nat like?**

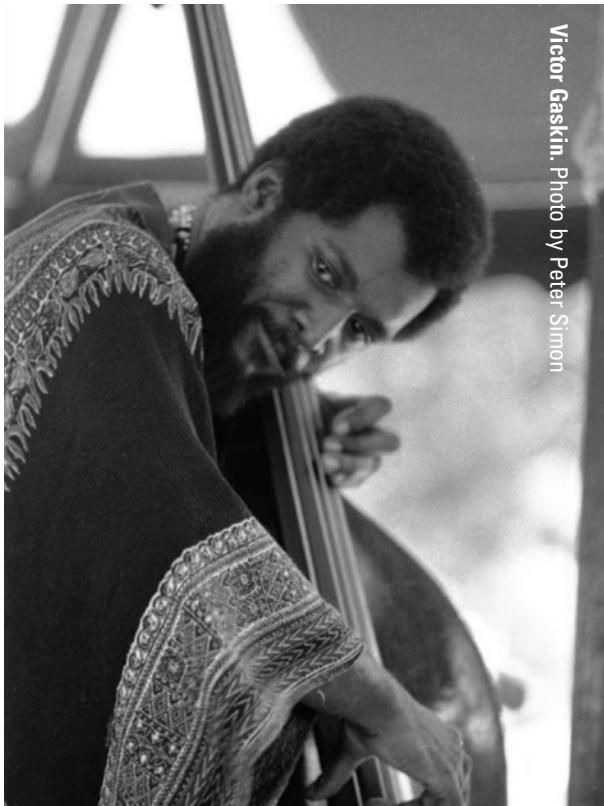
He had a fiery personality. He was outgoing. He did all the business for the band and he paid everybody. Cannon just sat back and played. Nat was a little fiery guy who liked to give orders. On the bandstand you could hear his personality come out in his playing.

**How was it to be onstage playing with Cannonball? That fire in his horn; that sound and that sense of swing?**

It was the greatest thing in the world. All you had to do was sit there and lay down the rhythm. They'd ride right on top of it. Playing behind Cannon, Nat and the rest of the guys, it was almost like an out-of-body experience. It'd be as if you were looking at yourself playing. It was an amazing thing.

**When you listen back to those recordings after all this time, what do you think?**

It reminds me of all the fun we had. The different tunes remind me of the things we were doing then: being on the road with those guys — traveling, hanging out certain places, the recording sessions we did for Capitol. We just went in and played the music. It's funny. You go in the studio and play and it feels really good, but you don't know if it really is. Then you get the record and wonder, "Uh oh, what's this gonna sound like?" But it always turned out great. So I loved it. I still love it. I'll be in the car and things will come on. I say, "Oh, yeah, that's nice."



**Victor Gaskin.** Photo by Peter Simon

### **Would you say your time with Cannon was a career highlight?**

Definitely. Cannon and Sonny Rollins. Nancy Wilson, too. That was a different kind of thing and I was with her a long time. 31 years! I was with Cannon for 11.

**I've played these recordings for people. I've played "Hippodelphia" the most. The first thing they say is, "Man, listen to those drums!" There's something about the fire you brought to the band that was just so great.**

I was working on a sound, this really crisp sound. One of my idols was Roy Haynes. Roy had that crisp sound. So I tried to bring that to my drumming. Also, I came from a big old rudimental background; all that came into my sound.

### **Anything you want to add?**

When Cannon called me, I was home in Rochester cooling out, working at Kodak as a film tester. I'd stopped playing for about a year when he called. I was sitting in the room with my boys and Cannon says, "McCurdy, this is Cannonball." He said, "Fool, I want you to join my

band." I was telling the guys. They'd seen me refuse a lot of other people because I was trying to save my marriage. They said, "Listen, you better take this one or we're gonna kick your butt." So I did. I told Cannon, "I'd love to come and join the band." It was a great time ever since. We went on and he let me play myself in for my first few weeks; get myself into shape because I hadn't played in a while. From then on, it was gone. I loved every minute of it.

*In a career spanning six decades, drummer Roy McCurdy has performed/recorded with countless jazz icons including Sonny Rollins, Ella Fitzgerald and Oscar Peterson. He is an Adjunct Professor in the Jazz Studies Department of the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.*

Without a doubt, the phrasing. The phrasing is most natural for me. I teach at the university level and in trying to help kids with phrasing, I find that when you try to teach them rhythmically dotted eighth notes with a sixteenth note, or to slur and tongue, they're very mechanical. As a kid, I learned my phrasing from Cannonball Adderley. People would say I sounded like Cannonball and Nat said, "No. He has the same kind of feeling and sound and approach, but he doesn't play Cannonball notes. He plays his own notes."

### **Who do you think influenced Cannonball?**

Although Cannonball's overall body of work is influenced by Charlie Parker, I wouldn't say he's Cannonball's main influence. I think it was Benny Carter. Benny Carter may not be as looked at today as much as he was when was coming up, but to people like Cannonball Adderley, Benny Carter is significant. In addition to Benny Carter, Johnny Hodges and some other players that maybe are not as well-known today were important to Cannonball. People just say Charlie Parker because it's bebop. Consider this: Cannonball's musical goal in life, according to Nat, was to play lead alto with Duke Ellington's band. It's like, "Man, if I could do anything, that's what it was." Pretty amazing. There are a few places where you get a chance to hear him play some lead alto and beautiful sound and phrasing and section playing. Very, very tremendous.

### **What did you think when you heard the tracks on *Swingin' in Seattle*?**

I heard this recording years ago with Nat. We were both knocked out by it. This one had some selections that he hadn't previously recorded and there was a record that I did, *Vincent Herring Live At The Village Vanguard*, and I do "The Girl Next Door," "The Boy Next Door," and I got that idea from this record. That working band of Cannonball's was special. It was one of my favorites. I love this band and I think it was really a peak period for them. Everything was golden, really.

**For me, the interesting thing about this particular time in Cannonball's career is he went from the Zawinul-Sam Jones-Louis Hayes band to this new band with Roy McCurdy, Victor Gaskin and Joe again. It seems like a transitional period. It's not all straight-ahead swinging stuff like the previous band and it's not all the way funky, either. They're playing straight-ahead stuff and just ripping and then they're also laying down blues and playing funky. Do you remember being excited by that transition or were you disappointed that he was getting away from that swinging thing?**

I didn't think of it like that. I just saw it part of Cannonball. I'm sure they just evolved. I don't think it was like, "Let's be commercial." I think it was just a natural thing considering the times and the music developing all around them at the time. They just happened to be at the forefront of it. That band always had a party atmosphere and I think the way the music evolved is just an extension to it.

## **a joyful feeling**

### **VINCENT HERRING TALKS ABOUT THE INFLUENCE OF CANNONBALL ADDERLEY**

#### **CORY WEEDS: When did you start getting into Cannonball's music?**

**VINCENT HERRING:** I studied with Hal Stein, a well-known saxophone player. He used to try to get me into Charlie Parker more, but I was just in love with Cannonball from the first time I heard him. I'd ask people to tell me who the musicians to check out were. Two names that came up most often when it came to alto: Charlie Parker and Cannonball Adderley. Cannonball's records were always high-fidelity. My Charlie Parker records were poor-fidelity, so I just gravitated towards Cannonball's sound. I regret that I never had a chance to hear or see him.

#### **What was it about his style that made an impact on you?**

A joyful feeling, the way it made me feel. Cannonball could play something and it was so sophisticated for all of us jazz snobs, but at the same time, for the down-home folk, it felt just right.

#### **Early in your career you played for several years with Nat Adderley. How did that happen?**

I was playing on the street in New York City, and Walter Booker, a long-time bassist with Cannonball and Nat, heard me playing and he thought Nat would love me. I already knew all the music because I used to put on his records and play his solos. I'd play along with one of his records and pretend I was Cannonball. His music just made the most sense to me. It's been a source of inspiration even to this day.

#### **What part of Cannonball's style have you incorporated into your own playing?**

**Vincent Herring.**  
Photo by Cory Weeds



**Who are some of the other musicians you worked with over the years that shed light on Cannonball for you?**

Nat Adderley, who was one of the nicest guys you'd ever meet in your life, I felt like I knew Cannonball through Nat; through the detailed stories that I learned about him and the history. It's not a stretch to say he was very, very loved and very, very respected by the jazz community. There were some things that people didn't know. Like in Miles Davis's band, he was the straw boss. So of course, Philly Joe Jones didn't like him because according to Nat, he said he would advance Philly money as he asked and at the end of the week, he'd be like, "Oh, this is all you have coming." "What! School teacher!" You know, he called him funny names. He was a straight shooter and he's certainly someone I try to emulate not just musically, but kind of the way he lived his life. He was a special person.

**By moving into a more commercial arena, while it didn't hurt him financially or with the public, do you think in the fraternity of musicians it hurt his stature? Do you think he gets the respect he should get?**

Charlie Parker died young. We didn't hear him long enough to know what he would have become. We didn't hear him enough to hear him not play at his peak. We watched Freddie Hubbard go from being super-human to having issues musically. History downplays it. Had Freddie Hubbard died before he ever sounded like a mere mortal, how would he be revered? Same thing — Clifford Brown. We never had Clifford live long enough to hear him crack a note, so these things are different. Cannonball matured as an artist and he developed in different ways. I don't look at that music as lesser. It's an extension of who he was and I look at it as part of his body of work. Maybe some people view it as commercialization, but hey, man, I really dig it.

*Alto saxophonist Vincent Herring has performed/recorded with a who's who of jazz greats including Freddie Hubbard, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey and many others. He's currently on staff at William Paterson University and at Manhattan School of Music.*

I'm grateful to have had a role in sharing these wonderful Cannonball Adderley recordings with you. As a child, I often listened to live Penthouse tapes with my father; he filled my head with stories about the Penthouse and the artists who played there. That's how I became obsessed with the music, the era and the club. I hope the release of this album will allow you to experience the magic of Cannonball's performances at the Penthouse and also to feel the excitement of actually being in the audience. As a collector myself, I know how important it is that the packaging and design live up to the source material, and I believe this album does just that.

**CHARLIE PUZZO, JR.**  
Los Angeles, August 2018

**JULIAN "CANNONBALL" ADDERLEY**  
alto saxophone  
**NAT ADDERLEY** cornet  
**JOE ZAWINUL** piano  
**VICTOR GASHIN** bass  
**ROY McCURDY** drums

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Production Manager: ZAK SHELBY-SZYSZKO  
Photo research: ZEV FELDMAN  
and ZAK SHELBY-SZYSZKO  
Legal Counsel: PATRICK ALDOUS —  
Chandler Fogden Aldous Law Corporation,  
Vancouver, BC

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