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*Clark Terry Quartet and the Duke Jordan Trio Live in
Copenhagen 1985 (review)*

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movies and directing episodes of such television series as *Xena: Warrior Princess*. The no-frills treatment, beyond tilted camera angles, of "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" is by the more accomplished Dominic Sena, auteur of the sublime guilty pleasure *Gone in Sixty Seconds* (2000).

The best of the videos is Peter Care's "Smoking Gun," Cray's most widely known, song because it captures the vitality of Cray's stage performances while having him sing and play in several locations. Unfortunately, most of Cray's comments between the videos are along the lines of "If you're into it, do it" and "Young folks don't hear much blues." Why is that,

Robert, and what can be done about it? He mentions his bandmates only briefly and says nothing about the musicians who influenced him. No direct connection is made between his comments about gospel and rhythm and blues and what is heard in the videos.

This forty-one-minute compilation will serve, nevertheless, as an adequate introduction to Cray's music, though it focuses on only a portion of his career. The videos may also be of interest to students of the stylistic development of the genre.

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Clark Terry Quartet and the Duke Jordan Trio Live in Copenhagen 1985. DVD. [Vista, CA]: Storyville Films, 2009, 1985. 26028. \$14.99.

While Paris is well known as a refuge for many expatriate American jazz musicians (most notably Bud Powell, Kenny Clarke, Johnny Griffin, and Dexter Gordon), Copenhagen also bolstered a healthy population of veteran American jazzmen from the 1960s up until the 2000s. Among the first were Kenny Drew and Ben Webster, who in the early '60s left their careers in America to settle in the Danish capital, a path on which many American jazz musicians would embark in later years, including Thad Jones and Ed Thigpen. This Storyville Films 2009 DVD release documents a 1985 concert featuring Duke Jordan (piano) and Jimmy Woode (bass), who in the 1980s were among the most notable American jazz musician expats residing in Copenhagen. The concert took place at Club Montmartre in Copenhagen on Easter Sunday, 7April, which also coincided with the birthday of the late Duke Ellington band alum Webster (Webster also served as the leader of the Montmartre house band after moving to Denmark in 1964). Woode and Jordan were joined by trumpet legend and former Ellington sideman Clark Terry.

The DVD features two of the three Montmartre sets performed on that day, the first of which spotlights a quartet comprising Terry, Jordan, Woode (another former Ellington sideman), and Svend E. Nørregaard on drums. Terry and friends honored the occasion by performing a set

of four Ellington classics ("In A Mellotone," "Mood Indigo," "Just Squeeze Me," and "Satin Doll"), and a pair of standards associated with Billie Holiday ("God Bless the Child"), and Ella Fitzgerald ("Oh, Lady be Good"). The second half of the DVD features Jordan's trio set with Jesper Lundgaard on bass and Åge Tanggaard on drums. The trio also paid tribute to Webster with arrangements of Billy Strayhorn's "Lush Life," Ellington's "Solitude," supplemented by two Jordan originals ("Dances a Ball" and "Jordu"), and the 1937 Allie Wrubel standard "Gone with the Wind." Missing from the DVD is what Terry announces during his set as the highlight of the evening, a showcase of seven tunes featuring Terry's longtime friend and Copenhagen resident Ernie Wilkins (Terry and Wilkins had been close friends since their childhood days in 1930s Kansas City). Storyville Records released the Wilkins portion of the concert on CD in 2003.

Sixty-five-year-old Terry is the unequivocal star of the show, alternating effortlessly between trumpet and flugelhorn (often during the same tune) while entertaining the crowd with his signature "mumbles" scat style and eloquent spoken introductions to the Ellington/Strayhorn standards. The trumpeter's seasoned professionalism most notably shines through at a point in the set ("Just Squeeze Me") where Woode's equipment failure throws the bassist into a confused panic. Terry, in classic form,

promptly leads the band to an early finish before providing the crowd with some comic relief while the technical issue is resolved.

In contrast to the exuberance and humor of Terry's group, Jordan's trio proceeds quietly and casually, whisking through their set while appearing, at times, unrehearsed. Despite the set's aloof tempo, the veteran pianist (also in his mid 60s at the time of the taping) offers some inspired moments of intimate and lyrical playing, especially during the Ellington ballad medley ("Lush Life"/"Solitude"). The trio is most impressive in Jordan's hard bop anthem "Jordu," featuring a funky piano introduction that reminds audiences about Jordan's formidable role in shaping the sound of jazz piano during the 1950s.

Audiophiles and video enthusiasts will not be overly impressed with this digital transfer of the original VHS recording. Although the sound editors have noticeably reconciled the overall balance, EQ, and compression problems of the original live

audio (there is also a 5.1 Dolby Digital option), the DVD unfortunately preserves some of the lines, skips, and jumps of the original VHS video. The bulky VHS video cameras of the 1980s used here—noticeably present throughout the concert—also contribute to create awkward camera angles and a few inconsistent shot series (although there are several revealing close-ups of Terry). While the DVD's production quality is less than stellar, the value of this footage lies in its quasi-documentary aesthetic. Consequently, and as the Naxos-distributed Storyville Films has done with earlier releases (*Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis Live in Copenhagen and Lennie Tristano: The Copenhagen Concert, 1965*), the DVD provides an illuminating snapshot of the Copenhagen's historicizing jazz scene while documenting the late careers of two jazz legends.

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'Tis Autumn: The Search for Jackie Paris. DVD. Directed by Raymond DeFelitta. Los Angeles, CA: Outsider Pictures, 2008. 897873002015. \$19.99.

In the documentary film *'Tis Autumn*, writer and director Raymond DeFelitta examines the life of crooner Jackie Paris. Early in his career, Paris was the singer of choice for Charles Mingus, he toured with Charlie Parker, and *Down Beat* voted him best male vocalist in 1953. Yet, Paris never achieved widespread fame, an apparent mystery that DeFelitta sets out to explore, ultimately concluding that, among other factors, Paris hit his creative peak just as what he had to offer was going out of style.

DeFelitta's archival digging has resulted in a film laden with period photographs, stock footage of 1950s New York, a wonderful soundtrack filled with classic Paris numbers, and a variety of interviews with musicians, industry luminaries, and jazz historians including Billy Taylor, James Moody, Ira Gitler, Phil Schaap, and others. The film is also packed with "what ifs," as interviewees speculate on what Paris might have achieved if he had been given the chance. Guided by skillful editing, Paris' talent is unfortunately framed as irrefutable truth, obscuring other important elements

of the singer's life that are glossed at best. In particular Paris' relationship with his son and the singer's role as a music educator are briefly touched upon but largely overlooked in favor of the more easily told story of a singer trying to make it in the music business, a story that DeFelitta pursues perhaps a bit too eagerly.

Though commendable for its transparency, DeFelitta's reflexive approach is somewhat distracting as he narrates throughout the film and makes regular appearances in front of the camera. As a result, Paris often comes across as a passive subject who is analyzed and explained by DeFelitta rather than allowed to really speak for himself. Other shooting and editing techniques are also somewhat puzzling. At various points, for example, actors engage in dramatic readings of period newspaper and magazine articles meant to literally bring to life the scant print coverage of Paris' career. Yet, these scenes contrast sharply with the character of the film and actually disrupt the story's intimacy. More constructive, however, is the filmmaker's