

'60s INSTRUMENTALS: TAKE TWO



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

The Dave Brubeck Quartet



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In 1961, jazz guitarist Charlie Byrd found himself on a State Department tour of Latin America; he was fascinated with the different styles of music he encountered, especially the native guitar music he heard in Brazil. "It was 'guitaristic,'" he recalled. "All the innovators both played and composed for the guitar." A key part of this new music was called "bossa nova," a term which translated to "new distance"; it was a mixture of the samba of northeast Brazil with the laid-back cool jazz of the U.S.—a swaying, complex rhythm juxtaposed against a sinuous melody line. Before he returned to the States, Byrd stuffed his bags with local records featuring the new beat, and started spreading the word.

In early 1962 Byrd decided to adapt one of the records for his own *Jazz Samba* album; this was **Desafinado**, originally sung by Brazil's Joao Gilberto. (The title meant "slightly out of tune," possibly a reference to the somewhat dissonant melody line.) Byrd was no singer, though, and had to find some way to re-create the vocal. He hit upon the warm tenor sax of longtime friend Stan Getz. "We looked for some kind of voice to be a little like the use of the human voice in these songs and still have a jazz feeling," Byrd explained. "Stan was perfect." He was more than perfect; he won himself a Grammy and helped break the bossa nova sound into pop music. Getz and Byrd steered the decade in a musical direction that accounted for some of the hit parade's most inspired instrumentals.

The lessons of Byrd and Getz were not lost on other jazzmen. Pianist Dave Brubeck, who had been experimenting with rhythms since his 1960 LP *Time Out Featur-*

ing "Take Five," was an early convert to the new sound. **Bossa Nova U.S.A.** (1963) showcased the legendary Brubeck quartet, which included alto sax man Paul Desmond, bassist Eugene Wright and drummer Joe Morello. "I probably heard the bossa nova first from Getz or Charlie Byrd, or from Antonio Carlos Jobim," Brubeck remembered. "I felt close to what they were doing, harmonically. I just wanted to bring it all back home."

Lalo Schifrin, a pianist and composer from Argentina who had worked with trumpet great Dizzy Gillespie, had a hit LP called *Bossa Nova—New Brazilian Jazz '62* before he turned his talents to writing for television and film. His Grammy-winning album of music from the TV hit **Mission: Impossible** yielded a 1968 hit single based on the driving Brazilian beat. Two contemporaries of Jobim and Gilberto, Marcos and Paulo Valle, found a U.S. audience with their lovely **Summer Samba** (1966), thanks to Sao Paulo organist Walter Wanderley, who launched his own career in the States with his hit recording of this lilting piece.

Instrumentals of the '60s developed a distinctive sound that was often quite different from the big '40s dance bands or the huge studio orchestras of the '50s. It was a lean, pared-down sound, the sound of the combo, the live performance, the jazz club. A quintessential example—as well as one of the highest-ranking instrumentals of the decade—was Ramsey Lewis' **The "In" Crowd** from 1965.

Lewis was a young classically trained Chicago pianist who formed a trio in 1956 and began playing the jazz club circuit. In 1965 he heard soul singer Dobie Grey's record-

ing of *The "In" Crowd* on a jukebox and decided to do his own version of the song. He insisted on cutting the track live at a nightclub (the now-defunct Bohemian Caverns in Washington, D.C.), where the crowd noise, handclapping and shouts of encouragement added to the ambience. The results established Lewis as one of the most popular acts in jazz, and set off a string of 30 charting LPs.

A jazzman from a slightly different background was Bent Fabric, whose raggy blues *Alley Cat* clawed its way up the charts in the fall of 1962. Fabric was in fact a 38-year-old Copenhagen native named Bent Fabricius-Bjerre, who had made some of Denmark's first jazz records, hosted a popular Danish TV show and wrote tunes under the name "Frank Bjorn." One of them was *Alley Cat*, the first of several hit singles for the pianist, and one that inexplicably won a Grammy in 1962 for "Best Rock and Roll Record."

Another keyboard master of the era was Jimmy Smith, whose numerous albums for Blue Note and Verve helped define the role of the electric organ in jazz. At first Smith's records were done with small combos, but after he signed with Verve in 1962, he started working within a big-band setting, often provided by Oliver Nelson. *Walk on the Wild Side*, Nelson's arrangement of the theme music from one of Jane Fonda's first films, became Smith's first major hit. Future *Tonight Show* band-leader-trumpeter Doc Severinsen takes the aggressor's role as part of the screaming brass section.

Another Byrd—and another guitar player—helped popularize the early-'60s fad for Polyneesian and Hawaiian music and dress. Jerry Byrd, a tow-headed young man from landlocked Lima, Ohio, initially won fame for his pioneering work on the electric steel guitar in country music. With his single-neck Rickenbacker guitar, Byrd soon found he was adept at Hawaiian music, and as early as 1953 was cutting albums with bands from the islands.

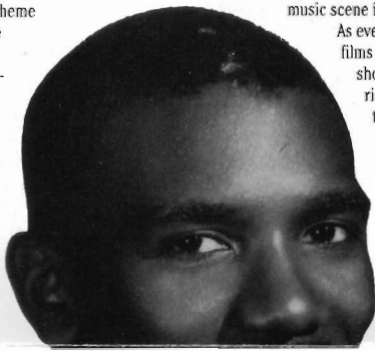
By the 1970s, he had abandoned Music City and moved his operations to Hawaii. Before he had

arranged Broadway musicals such as *West Side Story*, wrote a jingle called *Come Alive* to celebrate Pepsi-Cola in 1966. Pepsi asked him to devise a catchy follow-up to accompany a new Diet Pepsi campaign; the result was *Music to Watch Girls By* (1967). Bob Crewe, whose production work had helped put the 4 Seasons on the charts, saw potential in the jingle and assembled a studio band to record it.

One '60s star who fits into no neat category is author, composer and guitarist Mason Williams. At Oklahoma City University, where he studied math and music, Williams got interested in folk music, and eventually went to Los Angeles. He met Glenn Yarbrough, a singer with the Limelitters, who introduced the young Texan to Tommy Smothers. Soon Williams was working in the Smothers Brothers band, writing songs for them, and even scripting some of their comedy routines.

When Tommy and Dick got their CBS TV show, Mason followed. He eventually won an Emmy for his script-writing and a trio of Grammys for his unique **Classical Gas** (1968). The composer once described it as "half flamenco, half Flatt and Scroggs, and half classical"—a mixture somehow typical of the California music scene in the '60s.

As ever, television, films and Broadway shows provided a rich source for the instrumen-

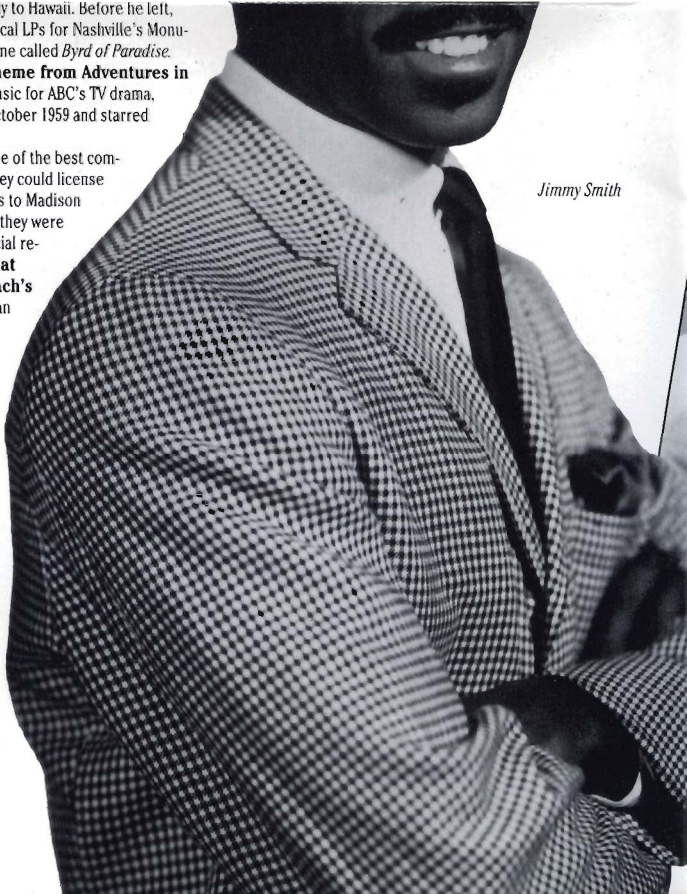


and moved permanently to Hawaii. Before he left, he did a series of tropical LPs for Nashville's Monument label, including one called *Byrd of Paradise*. From that set came **Theme from Adventures in Paradise**, the title music for ABC's TV drama, which premiered in October 1959 and starred Gardner McKay.

By the mid-'60s, some of the best composers realized that they could license their catchier melodies to Madison Avenue—even before they were recorded for commercial release. **No Matter What Shape (Your Stomach's In)** (1966), which began life as a radio and TV commercial for Alka-Seltzer, was written by Sascha Burland—one half of a novelty group called the Nutty Squirrels. The T-Bones were best known for their drag-racing albums, but after unsuccessful attempts to cover other ad jingles, they changed their name to Hamilton, Joe Frank and Reynolds, and breezed into the 1970s.

In the meantime, Sid Ramin, a former student of Leonard Bernstein's who had

Jimmy Smith



tal hits of the era. Some, in fact, became pop music standards: Clint Eastwood and spaghetti westerns became forever associated with the keening whistle in **The Good, the Bad and the Ugly** (1968), while the high camp of the *Batman* TV series went hand in hand with the socko **Batman Theme** (1966) by big band leader Neal Hefti.

In other cases, the music far outlasted the show for which it was written; few today remember a TV program called *The Philadelphia Story*, but Spencer Ross's **Tracy's Theme** (1960), spotlighting Jimmy Abato's sax, remains a haunting and wistful mood piece. Movie buffs, however, will always associate Greek actress Melina Mercouri with the theme from **Never on Sunday** (1960), and Yul Brynner and Steve McQueen with the music of **The Magnificent Seven** (1961). For many fans, the instrumental hits of the 1960s summed up a generation.

—Charles K. Wolfe

DISCOGRAPHY

1. The Magnificent Seven Al Caiola and His Orchestra • *Music by Elmer Bernstein. United Artists 261 (1961). Courtesy EMI Records U.S.A., a Division of ERG, under license from CEMA Special Markets.*

2. Bossa Nova U.S.A. The Dave Brubeck Quartet • *Music by Dave Brubeck. Columbia 42651 (1963). Under license from Sony Music Special Products, a Division of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.*

3. Cotton Candy Al Hirt • *Music by Russ Damon. RCA Victor 8346 (1964). Courtesy of BMG Music/The RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc.*

4. Baby Elephant Walk Lawrence Welk and His Orchestra • *Music by Henry Mancini. Dot 16364 (1962). Courtesy of Ranwood Records, a Welk Music Group Co.*

5. Alley Cat Bent Fabric and His Piano • *Music by Bent Fabricus-Bjerre. Atco 6226 (1962). By courtesy of Metronome Records.*

6. Tracy's Theme Spencer Ross • *Music by Robert Ascher. Columbia 41532 (1960). Under license from Sony Music Special Products, a Division of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.*

7. Walk on the Wild Side Jimmy Smith and the Big Band • *Music by Elmer Bernstein. Verve 10255 (1962). Under license from PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc.*

8. Desafinado Stan Getz/Charlie Byrd • *Music by Antonio Carlos Jobim. Verve 10260 (1962). Under license from PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc.*

9. Love for Sale The Arthur Lyman Group • *Music by Cole Porter. Hi Fi 5066 (1963). Courtesy of Everest Record Group.*

10. The "In" Crowd Ramsey Lewis Trio • *Music by Billy Page. Argo 5506 (1965).*

11. Mr. Lucky Henry Mancini • *Music by Henry Mancini. RCA Victor 7705 (1960). Courtesy of BMG Music/The RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc.*

12. Theme from Adventures in Paradise Jerry Byrd • *Music by Lionel Newman. Monument 419 (1960). Under license from Sony Music Special Products, a Division of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.*

13. Mission: Impossible Lalo Schifrin • *Music by Lalo Schifrin. Dot 17059 (1968).*

14. The Good, the Bad and the Ugly Hugo Montenegro, His Orchestra and Chorus • *Music by Ennio Morricone. RCA Victor 9423 (1968). Courtesy of BMG Music/The RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc.*

15. Never on Sunday Don Costa and His Orchestra and Chorus • *Music by Manos Hadjidakis. United Artists 234 (1960). Courtesy EMI Records U.S.A., a Division of ERG, under license from CEMA Special Markets.*

16. A Taste of Honey Martin Denny and His Orchestra • *Music by Bobby Scott. Liberty 55470 (1962). Courtesy EMI Records U.S.A., a Division of ERG, under license from CEMA*



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17. Summer Samba Walter Wanderley • Music by Marcos Valle and Paulo Sergio Valle. Verve 10421 (1966). Under license from PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc.

18. Look for a Star Billy Vaughn and His Orchestra • Music by Tony Hatch. Dot 16106 (1960).

19. Tonight Ferrante and Teicher • Music by Leonard Bernstein. United Artists 373 (1961). Courtesy EMI Records U.S.A., a Division of ERG, under license from CEMA Special Markets.

20. Batman Theme Neal Hefti • Music by Neal Hefti. RCA Victor 8755 (1966). Courtesy of BMG Music/The RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc.

21. Music to Watch Girls By The Bob Crewe Generation • Music by Sidney Ramin. DynoVoice 229 (1967). Courtesy of Bob Crewe.

22. No Matter What Shape (Your Stomach's In) The T-Bones • Music by Granville Burland. Liberty 55836 (1966). Courtesy EMI Records U.S.A., a Division of ERG, under license from CEMA Special Markets.

23. Theme for Young Lovers Percy Faith and His Orchestra • Music by Percy Faith. Columbia 41655 (1960). Under license from Sony Music Special Products, a Division of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

24. Classical Gas Mason Williams • Music by Mason Williams. Warner Bros.-Seven Arts 7190 (1968). Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc.

Laurence Welk

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Al Caiola and His Orchestra
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