

By Lee Jeske



All hands on deck.

CRUISE CONTROL: "Happy Birthday" (along with its variant, "Happy Anniversary") may as well be the theme song for cruise ships. Every night at dinner, the tuxedoed maitre'd and a phalanx of waiters and busboys go from table to table celebrating somebody's something with a badly sung song and

a fiery cake.

On October 21, somewhere off the coast of St. Maarten, "Happy Birthday" was sung on the MV Zenith for the hundredth time that week. There were some crucial differences: Leading the singing was the ship's captain, the cake was the size of a lifeboat, doing the singing were, among others, Jackie McLean, Clifford Jordan, Paquito D'Rivera, Antonio Hart, Red Rodney, Doc Cheatham, Roy Hargrove, Snooky Young, Claudio Roditi, Steve Turre, Robin Eubanks, Curtis Fuller, Milt Jackson, Bobby Hutcherson, Jon Hendricks, Patato Valdez, Kenny Burrell, Ben Riley, Charli Persip, Billy Hart, Gregory Hutchinson, Mickey Roker, Ray Brown, Milt Hinton, Peter Washington, John Lee, Al McKibbon, Hank Jones, Mike Longo, Randy Weston, Monty Alexander and Tommy Flanagan, and the recipient of the song

was a couple of thousand miles away.
"To Diz with Love: the Dizzy Gillespie Diamond Jubilee Birthday Cruise" was planned a year ago as the culmination of a year-long celebration of the 75th birthday of John Birks Gillespie of Cheraw, South Carolina. Dizzy Gillespie—co-creator of bebop, progenitor of Latin jazz, one of the finest trumpeters in jazz history, and one of the most beloved American musicians of the century—was going to be on hand, playing his horn, leading his bands, basking in the genuine admiration of several generations of jazz players. But earlier this year—after a grueling month-long birthday celebration at the Blue Note featuring most of the above musicians—Gillespie became ill, requiring abdominal surgery. He's okay—he recently made some non-playing appearances in California—but his doctors kept him from the Caribbean at the

last minute.

Still, the party went on. As the Zenith—a spanking new addition to the Celebrity Cruise line—bobbed through the Caribbean, every night three performance spaces were filled with the sounds of Gillespie. To the credit of everybody on board (and to the credit of Gillespie's manager Charlie Fishman, who masterminded the trip), Gillespie's music was front and center each night: "Tanga,"
"Birks Works," "Ow," "Woody 'n' You," "A Night in Tunisia,"
"Blue 'n' Boogie," "Tour de Force," "Manteca," "Con Alma,"
"Groovin' High," etc.

Red Rodney led an ad hoc big band, dubbed the Jazzmasters, through Slide Hampton's arrangements of Gillespie classics, Paquito D'Rivera steered the current United Nation Orchestra through those bubbling Afro-Cuban charts, and a host of small groups turned on the bebop gas. Scattered highlights included a two-vibes stampede by Bobby Hutcherson and Milt Jackson, an all-percussionists-on-deck set of Randy Weston's Africanized jazz pieces, Roy Hargrove and Antonio Hart's neo-Gillepie/Charlie Parker whirl through "Hot House," and various encounters between Hargrove, Hart and their elders (Hargrove and Doc Cheatham, who are 65 years apart in age, became a popular deuce, and Hart didn't wither when going bell-to-bell

TOP **40** JAZZ ALBUMS

CASH BOX • NOVEMBER 14, 1992
COOL (Warner Bros. 26939) BOB JAMES/EARL KLUGH 2 9
2 I HEARD YOU TWICE THE FIRST TIME (Columbia 46083)
3 SECRET STORY (Geffen 24468) PAT MEHTENY 4 11
4 HAUNTED HEART (Verve 513 078) CHARLIE HADEN QUARTET WEST 3 11
5 WEEKEND IN MONACO (GRP 9681) THE RIPPINGTONS 7 9
6 PERFECTLY FRANK (Columbia 52965) TONY BENNETT 12 5
7 IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MELODY (Verve 513 870) BEITY CARTER 14 5
8 DOO BOP (Warner Bros. 26938) MILES DAVIS 6 15
9 KID GLOVES (GRP 9683) LARRY CARLTON 16 5
10 ALL THE WAY (Sire/Warner 26955) JIMMY SCOTT 8 15
SNAPSHOT (Warner Bros. 45026) GEORGE DUKE 28 3
12 BLACK HOPE (Warner Bros. 45017) KENNY GARRETT 18 5
13 PROVIDENCE (Epic 46232)
14 HERE'S TO LIFE (Verve 511879)
15 U.F.O. TOFU (Warner Bros. 45016) BELA FLECK AND THE FLECKTONES 11 5
16 NEW YORK STORIES (Blue Note/Capitol 98959) VARIOUS ARTISTS 17 5
17 JUST AN ILLUSION (EM199400/ERG) NAJEE 19 11
18 GOIN' BACK TO NEW ORLEANS (Warner Bros. 26940) DR. JOHN 5 15
19 PORTRAITS BY ELLINGTON (Columbia 53145)
THE LINCOLN CENTER JAZZ ORCHESTRA 38 3
20 GRP ALL-STAR BIG BAND (GRP 9672) GRP ALL-STAR BIG BAND 9 15
THE RETURN OF THE BRECKER BROTHERS (GRP 9684) THE BRECKER BROTHERS 37 3
THE BRECKER BROTHERS 37 3 THE BRECKER BROTHERS 37 3 THE YOU MUST BELIEVE IN SPRING (Antilles 512 570) . FRANK MORGAN 32 3
100 Med 1 Babby Bar of Idital (Mining of Editor)
20 Indiana in the interest of
24 UPFRONT (Elektra 61272)
26 LAST CALL AT THE BLUE NOTE (Telarc 83314)
OSCAR PETERSON TRIO DEBUT
JUST BETWEEN US (MoJazz/Motown 7000) NORMAN BROWN 39 3
28 EVERETTE HARP (Manhattan/Capitol 96242) EVERETTE HARP 29 9
NEXT EXIT (Columbia 48530) GROVER WASHINGTON Jr. 35 23
30 HEART OF THE BASS (GRP 1101) JOHN PATITUCCI 40 3
31 BLUE INTERLUDE (Columbia 48729) WYNTON MARSALIS SEPTET 26 21
32 GLENGARY GLEN ROSS (Elektra 61384) SOUNDTRACK DEBUT
33 TESTIFYIN'! (Blue Note/Capitol 98171) THE BENNY GREEN TRIO 21 15
34 THE TURNING POINT (Verve 513 573) McCOY TYNER BIG BAND 24 5
35 NO BORDERS (GRP 9676)
36 THE BRASIL PROJECT (Private 82101) TOOTS THIELEMANS 25 11
37 THE VIBE (Novus/RCA 63132) ROY HARGROVE 22 26
38 HEADS UP (GRP 9673) DAVE WECKL 33 15
39 IVORY PYRAMID (GRP 9688) RAMSEY LEWIS DEBUT
40 MIDNIGHT SUN (A&M 5391) HERB ALPERT 31 11

with the outstanding Jackie McLean).

Most of the musicians had wives or girlfriends and/or children on board, which kept everybody relaxed (and away from the casino and nine shipboard bars). Musicians play well when they're relaxed and happy—when they don't have to worry about catching a plane or getting paid before the night ends—and everybody seemed pretty relaxed and happy, laying out by the pool as the Caribbean floated by, telling lies over piles of food from the endless buffets. For the last two days of the cruise, Hurricane Frances floated by, inspiring lots of wisecracks about "rock and roll" from rather greenish players of all ages. But, except for the genuine disappointment about Gillespie's absence, I've rarely seen (and heard) a happier group of jazz musicians playing to a happier audience (several hundred paying jazz fans from around the world).

To Diz with Love" was a triumphant celebration of a triumphant career in American music. As Dizzy himself said on a tape

played on his birthday, "Owwwwwwww!!!!!!!!!!!"

PASSING ON: There is no jazz festival quite like the North Sea Jazz Festival, which squeezes more music into one weekend in Holland's the Hague every summer than some festivals pack into a week. The North Sea Festival was the creation of Dutch jazz promoter Paul Acket, a smart man with a big heart and a genuine love for jazz, who died last month.