

DIZZY GILLESPIE: PROBLEMS OF LIFE ON A PEDESTAL

June 23, 1960 35¢

down beat

THE MUSIC MAGAZINE



down beat

Down Beat

June 9, 1960

Vol. 27, No. 12

Payolaters Arrested

Alan Freed settled comfortably into his new job at Los Angeles radio station KDAY, and the station returned to its Top 40 programming policy—a policy abandoned during the payola investigations. KDAY's music librarian (see *Payola Aftermath*, page 12) announced almost with pride that the station was again programming "music that's selling."

Then it happened: disc jockey Freed, fired some months ago by WABC-TV after he refused to sign an affidavit that he had never taken payola, was arrested, along with KDAY station manager Mel Leeds, in New York. The charge: commercial bribery.

Freed, who had firmly denied taking payola in public statements, was one of seven to be indicted under a New York state law that prohibits the taking of bribes to forward commercial gain. The offense is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the city penitentiary for a year and a \$500 fine on each count.

Indicted with Freed and Leeds were Peter Tripp, of station WMGM, Tommy Smalls, disc jockey for station WWRL; Harold B. Jackson, disc jockey for WLIB; Jack Walker, WOV disc jockey; and Joseph Saccone, recording librarian for WMGM up until last March.

The seven were indicted on a New York county grand jury information.

New York District Attorney Frank S. Hogan said Freed had played a record at least nine times during one program, for which he had received payola.

Hogan said further that payola had been received either in weekly payoffs or on a royalty basis.

Tripp, he said, had taken \$36,050 in payola in 1958 and 1959, \$4,850 of it in the form of royalties of 1/2 cent on every copy sold of two records he plugged, *Sixteen Candles* and *I Wonder Why*.

KDAY manager Leeds was charged with receiving \$9,675 in payola; Smalls, \$13,385; Jackson, \$9,850; Walker, \$7,420; and Saccone with taking monthly payoffs of \$2,000 from a record company.

The significance of the indictments lay in the fact that this was the first time legal moves had been made against payola-takers. The House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight, which probed payola in Washington, had power only to investigate and recommend legislative revisions and perhaps changes in the procedures of the Federal Communications Commission, the federal body having direct jurisdiction over radio. But it had no power to take punitive action.

District Attorney Hogan's office had worked in co-operation with the Washington probers from the start of the payola scandal, and his action was not entirely unexpected.

Scholarships in Jazz

Where are the jazz musicians of the future coming from?

With the old pragmatic training grounds considerably thinned by the comparative lack of big bands and the dim view that the American Federation of Musicians takes of jamming, the

jazz player is increasingly dependent upon academic training.

To further this cause, this magazine some time ago set up a program of scholarships for gifted young would-be professionals in jazz. The program has been expanded to permit the dispensation of a still greater number of scholarships. Here is the latest group of winners:

- Heinz Bigler, alto saxophonist from Vienna, Austria, first place winner in the 1960 *Down Beat* Hall of Fame competition for scholarships to Boston's Berklee School of Music. His prize, \$850, was awarded for outstanding conception and musicianship. He was picked from among several hundred applicants from all parts of the world. He enters Berklee in September.

- Richard Rodney Bennett, composer-arranger from London, England; and Conrad Gregoris, tenor saxophonist from Kowloon Hong Kong, in second place won \$400 scholarships.

- James Graham Collier, composer-arranger from Bedfordshire, England; Allan Paul Goodling, alto saxophonist now with the U. S. Armed Forces in the Pacific; Chuck Fowler, pianist from Christchurch, New Zealand, third place winners of \$200 scholarships.

In addition to these scholarships—for which the *Down Beat* and Berklee staffs jointly act as judges—an additional Editor's Scholarship has also been awarded, as it has for the past three years. This year's winner is Donna K. Jewel, a singer now studying at the University of Kentucky. This is the first time the scholarship has gone to a vocalist.



The Voice of America recorded the Berklee School's International Jazz Septet. Seen in the photo at left are Turkish student Arif Mardin, a composer-arranger, VOA engineer Bob Batchelder, and Tahir Sur, a VOA representative, listening to playbacks. Back to the recording studio, in



photo at right, go Peter Spassov, of Yugoslavia, drums; Andres Ingolfsson, of Iceland, alto; Mike Gibbs, of Southern Rhodesia, trombone; Gabor Szabo, of Hungary, guitar; Pearson Beckwith, from Canada, bass; Ted Casher, U.S.A., tenor; Dizzy Sal, of India, piano; and Arif Mardin.

PAYOLA AFTERMATH

BETTER RADIO MUSIC GROWS . . .

Across the length and breadth of radio-land, the impact of the payola probes is being felt in the upgraded quality of programmed music and the consequent diminishing of rock and roll on the air.

Not only have a great many AM outlets drastically reduced the playing of r&r records, some have banned the rock entirely. For the disc jockeys who virtually made careers for themselves spinning trash for teenagers, the situation is confusing, to say the least. The post-script to the affair of Alan Freed is a case in point, if not a particularly encouraging one.

Fired from his powerful perch as top r&r jockey on New York's WABC because of payola investigators' findings, Freed has found himself a new berth at the other end of the country on Hollywood's KDAY (see Page 11).

In the past, this section has done more than its share of propagating rock and roll. Freed, of course, was one of the grand viziers of the rock and had ridden on its back into lucrative areas of concert promotion and motion pictures. KDAY and Freed would appear to be a logical combination. The station recently turned its back on quality album programming and returned to its pre-investigation Top 40 format.

Bruce Wendell, music librarian at KDAY, whose station manager has just been arrested, picks the records for Freed's programs. "We play Top 40 pop music," Wendell flatly told *Down Beat*,

. . . SOME ROLL WITH THE PUNCH

When the payola investigation first hit the record business, most industry observers saw the independent record companies as targets hardest hit. Again, when Section 317 of the federal communications act was invoked upon radio stations, it was the independent labels whose protestations were loudest. From events of the last six months, it would appear, then, that these smaller companies, which produce the bulk of the music listened to and bought by teenagers, have been hurt badly by both the congressional investigating subcommittee and the federal commissions for communications and trade.

A typical example of a made-by-teens record company is Philadelphia's Chancellor label, a three-year-old hustler that grossed "\$1 million plus" during the 1958-59 fiscal year, according to Bob Marcucci, co-president.

With partner Pete DeAngelis and associate Pete Gierardi, Marcucci, 30,

"music that's selling. This includes Elvis Presley records and Bobby Darin's, too. And Darin's have a big band behind him. I don't know whether you'd call them rock and roll, but they fit our programming policy."

At station WNTA in Newark, N. J., however, the story is different. There the rock is definitely barred. But the station's policies reach farther than that. According to manager Irv Lichtenstein, the ban applies also to what he termed "inconsequential schmaltz that sometimes passes for music. (Rock and roll) isn't listenable while the latter is merely a musical sleeping pill."

Lichtenstein believes he's found the answer to better programming with a new format dubbed *Metronome, the Golden Sound of Music to Live By*. Programmed in medley manner, *Metronome* consists of a pattern of intermixed vocals and instrumentals.

The rock has been eschewed also at newcomers KQAQ, Austin, Minn., and KVIL, Dallas, Texas. On the former, daily fare consists in the main of show music and classical records; KVIL features 15 minutes of uninterrupted music, made up of album selections and softer-hued pop singles.

Inevitably, with improved standards of radio programming, jazz is getting more and more airplay on stations previously leery of it. But much wariness persists and the jazz now heard on commercial radio consists in the main of the softer, gentler brands. Albums by

not only runs the label but also manages the gilt-edged careers of teenagers' idols Fabian and Frankie Avalon.

Marcucci is quick to concede that Chancellor's success story can be told in both these youngsters' names and in their phenomenal appeal to the nation's youth.

But the same situation holds true for other independents now riding the glory road on the backs of similar young singers. Frankie and Fabian have little to complain about. Both made a quarter of a million dollars apiece last year, according to Marcucci, and each is starring in a motion picture, Fabian with Bing Crosby in *High Time* and Avalon with John Wayne, et al in *The Alamo*.

Marcucci described the hullabaloo in the record industry as "just a shake-up which is hurting music right now. It's being felt in the sales of albums and singles. Perhaps adult public taste has been influenced by the shake-up but teenage taste hasn't been altered

George Shearing, Ahmad Jamal, Erroll Garner and the like, are being fitted more and more into the programs of pop jockeys Bill Randle, WERE, Cleveland, Ohio, Bill Williams, WNEW, New York, Geoff Edwards, KFMB (AM and FM) San Diego, Calif., Dick Whittinghill, KMPC, Los Angeles, and others in similar spots around the country. As Hollywood jockey Johnny Magnus (KGFJ) happily remarked, "More of the guys are getting onto jazz now."

New York radio is liveliest of all, so far as jazz is concerned. Veteran jazz-nik Symphony Sid Torin helms an all-night program on WADO. On Sid's old station, WEVD, Mort Fega spins jazz discs nightly from 11:30 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. On the FM band, Gene Feehan holds forth daily with a jazz program on WFUV, and WNCN currently is carrying 35 hours of jazz per week, seven days a week from 10 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. FM station WNCN is the jazz niche for *Down Beat's* George Crater, who spices his music programming with interviews and commentary reflective of his unique brand of humor.

Thus it goes across the nation. Good music is returning to radio—and even a little jazz. Realists acknowledge that Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Dizzy Gillespie will probably never make significant inroads into commercial radio but, as they say, half a loaf is better than none.

And in light of the musical dark age behind us, that's a plenty.

in the slightest. It won't affect *them* in any way, shape, or form."

The new situation in the record business will not force a change in Chancellor's program, Marcucci said. However, he added, the label will go "with what the public wants."

"We're giving Frankie and Fabe more and prettier ballads," he said, "and we're putting strings behind them. Of course, Frankie has been going the ballad route and doing some 'swing easy' stuff; now Fabian will be doing that, too."

"After all, artists have got to develop, and there's got to be a starting point for 'em. You have to let your artists grow with the public, and as the teenagers grow up, so do the artists."

Through Marcucci conceded that Top 40 radio programming did no good to the record business ("why go out and buy a record when you can hear it 10 times a day on radio for free?"), he admitted that the practice helped his label build its two stars. "And without help from payola," he declared. "We never touched

that business."

The basic fault in Top 40 programming, in the executive's view, is that it deprived disc jockeys of the opportunity to develop personalities. "Top 40 lacked excitement," he continued, "and this is vital to the kids who buy your records. They crave excitement; they've got to have it, and they weren't getting it on radio."

While Marcucci agreed that radio programming should be subject to law, he insisted that "nobody should tell 'em what to play or whether they should procure certain records by buying


them. This makes it very tough on new talent looking for a break."

Chancellor has done well by giving new talent a break in the past. For the future, Marcucci and DeAngelis are grooming singers Carol Lawrence (from the show *West Side Story*), Linda Lawson, (described by Marcucci as "a semi-jazz singer from California") and Joe Damiano ("he's got a bigger voice, something along the lines of Mario Lanza").

The label is now entering the prestige-album stakes, and for its initial offering in this line it is pushing an expen-

sively produced, illustrated package of sacred choral music recorded in Rome's Sistine chapel.

Marcucci is convinced that the key to growth for an independent record company still lies in appealing to young people. He would like to have some big names in the adult market under contract, however, and is eager for material and arrangements acceptable to both teenagers and adults.

But Marcucci refuses to be rushed into grabbing big names. "Remember," he said, "Capitol didn't have the big prestige names when it started out." 

At the Drop of a Surplice

Two jolly Englishmen have been amusing Broadway audiences for eight months in a two-man revue called *At the Drop of a Hat*. Their show, a sort of mixed-up medley of comedy songs and patter, is not only performed by the two Britishers, but was written by them as well. The music is by Donald Swann with lyrics by Michael Flanders.

Composer Swann plays piano, wears glasses, and sings in a tenor voice. Together, or in solo offerings, the two comedians spoof hi-fi, modern interior decoration, the joys and miseries of hot baths, and the fate of a young woman who takes a drink of madeira.

Recently, Swann, who styles himself a "light, middle-brow composer," got himself involved in the growing field of experimentation with jazz in church services.

The English have a penchant for this sort of thing, as was indicated by the Rev. Geoffrey Beaumont's *Twentieth Century Folk Mass*, which was played in this country a year ago at Norwalk, Conn. Beaumont, the vicar of St. George's church in Camberwell, England, said at the time his mass was played in Camberwell, "I see no reason why we should not use the rhythms of the day to sing hymns."

Swann said he feels the same way and in conjunction with Rev. Hugh McCandless, rector of New York's Church of the Epiphany, did something about it last month.

One bright Sunday morning the title of the rector's sermon was *Is the Church Changing?* During his discourse, the minister announced the service would be followed by a coffee hour, after which they would return to their pews to hear two anthems in a contemporary idiom "we should never have associated with worship."

The choir opened with a *venite* (a psalm sung or said with response), *O Come Let Us Sing unto the Lord*, accompanied by Swann at a piano beside the altar. Everything proceeded uneventfully until the words "the sea is

His, and He made it," at which point the male choir members began whistling.

The resulting shrill sound was explained by Swann: "It is an obbligato accompaniment to the main theme. I suppose I could have had them sing 'la-la-la' instead."

Next came a jazz *Te Deum* (specified as not cool jazz on the announcements), on which Swann again played piano in duet with the organ. His playing of the final part was in barrelhouse rhythm while the choir sang, "Oh, Lord, save Thy People."

As has been the case on similar occasions, the reaction was varied: uncertain, favorable, and downright anti. One man remarked as he left the church, "That's schmaltz." An elderly woman, who has been a member of the congregation for many years said, "I was prepared to dislike it, but I didn't. It was harmonious and pleasant to listen to."

Another woman went up to Swann afterwards and remarked, "Isn't that piano part of the *Te Deum* just like your cannibal song?" Swann looked startled and sat down at the piano and began to run over *The Reluctant Cannibal*, one of the numbers he sings in the revue.

He began chanting "I don't eat people" to the same syncopated rhythm he had used in the church service.

Then he sang "Lord, save Thy people!" to the same rhythm.

Swann then looked up and said, "Jove, you're right!"

On the Beach

On a hot night in August, 1959, jazz music drew the largest crowd of the season to the Robert E. Lee amphitheater at Virginia Beach, Va. It was an overflow crowd that outnumbered any audience that had attended the regular nightly attraction at the amphitheater: the outdoor drama *The Confederacy*, the yearly all-summer feature.

The music on that night of Aug. 30 was played by Charlie Byrd, Don El-

liott, Sam Most, Billy Butterfield, and Ernie Caceres, all leading groups of their own.

Producer and originator of the jazz night was Tom Gwaltney, who formerly played with the bands of Bobby Hackett and Butterfield but for the last two years has been conducting his own Dixieland combo and big band in nearby Norfolk's Jolly Roger restaurant.

Gwaltney currently is busy setting up his second annual Virginia Beach Jazz festival, to be held July 8-9 at Convention center on the beach.

Here is the lineup of jazz musicians who will be at Virginia Beach:

July 8—Dave Brubeck Quartet, Salt City Six, Sam Most-Whitey Mitchell Quintet, vocalist Ann Rayburn, and Gwaltney's 14-piece band.

July 9—Maynard Ferguson band, Charlie Byrd Trio, Newt Thomas Trio, vocalist Bernadine Read, and Gwaltney's band.

Fred Jordan, emcee for last year's festival, will repeat this year.

An added feature at this year's event will be the appearance of a number of collegiate bands and jazz combos.

The band judged the best will receive \$250 and a week's engagement at the Tropicana in Virginia Beach. The runner-up will get \$100.

Best combo winners will receive the same monetary prize, but the combo coming in first will be booked for one week at the Jolly Roger in Norfolk.

A Shock for George

George Shearing was pleasantly surprised recently when, during an interview on San Diego's KFMB-TV, he was introduced by newscaster Harold Keen to fellow pianist Mark Seamons.

Seamons, born sightless as was Shearing, delighted the pianist by duplicating the Shearing style on the latter's compositions, *If* and *Get Off My Bach*. So tickled was Shearing that he leaned over the keyboard and played left hand accompaniment for Seamons while the television camera caught the action.