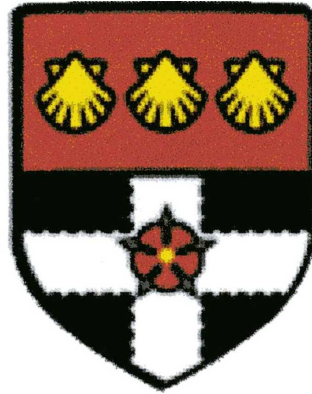


Varsity Jazz



Jazz at Reading University

1951 - 1984

By

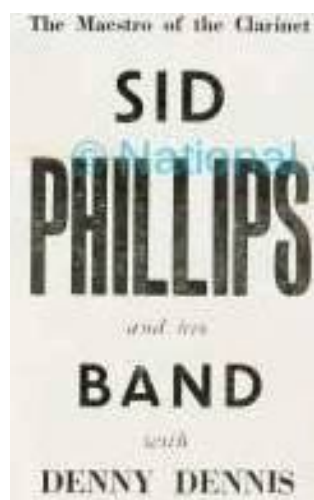
Trevor Bannister

VARSITY JAZZ

Jazz at Reading University

1951 represented an important year for Reading University and for Reading's local jazz scene. The appearance of Humphrey Lyttelton's Band at the University Rag Ball, held at the Town Hall on 28th February, marked the first time a true product of the Revivalist jazz movement had played in the town. That it should be the Lyttelton band, Britain's pre-eminent group of the time, led by the ex-Etonian and Grenadier Guardsman, Humphrey Lyttelton, made the event doubly important.

Barely three days later, on 3rd March, the University Rag Committee presented a second event at the Town Hall. The Jazz Jamboree featured the Magnolia Jazz Band led by another trumpeter fast making a name for himself, the colourful Mick Mulligan. It would be the first of his many visits to Reading. Denny Dyson provided the vocals and the Yew Tree Jazz Band were on hand for interval support.



There is no further mention of jazz activity at the university in the pages of the *Reading Standard* until 1956, when the clarinettist Sid Phillips led his acclaimed touring and broadcasting band on stage at the Town Hall for the Rag Ball on 25th February, supported by Len Lacy and His Sweet Band.

Considering the intense animosity between the respective followers of traditional and modern jazz, which sometimes reached venomous extremes, the Rag Committee took a brave decision in 1958 to book exponents of the opposing schools. The Rag Ball at the Olympia Ballroom on 20th February, saw Ken Colyer's Jazz Band, which followed the zealous path of its leader in keeping rigidly to the disciplines of New Orleans jazz, sharing the stage with the much cooler and sophisticated sounds of a quartet led by Tommy Whittle, a tenor saxophonist noted for his work with the Ted Heath Orchestra.

The experiment clearly proved successful (and peaceful) enough to be repeated the following year. On 21st February 1959 The Graham Stewart Seven represented the 'traditional' camp at the Oxford Ballrooms in Eaton Place off the Oxford Road. Mind you, the venue boasted three bars and *two* ballrooms, so perhaps this arrangement worked to keep both sets of supporters happy.

The Jazz Couriers raised the flag for the modernists. With Tubby Hayes and Ronnie Scott in the two-tenor front-line, Hayes doubling on vibes, and powered by the drumming of the legendary Phil Seaman, the Couriers were arguably the *greatest* band of the time or indeed ever to emerge in Britain. Terry Shannon on piano and bassist Jeff Clyne completed the formidable line-up.



Rivalry between the respective jazz camps found a new form of expression on 17th February 1960, when the regional heat of the Inter-University Jazz Contest was held at the Town Hall. Bands from London, Cambridge and Reading universities competed under the watchful eye two distinguished judges; the jazz writer and critic Alun Morgan, and Benny Green, a fair-to-middling saxophonist, whose distinctive voice and writing style was becoming well known in broadcasting and through numerous articles.

The other semi-finals were held in Liverpool, Newcastle and Bristol, which gives some idea of the extent of the entry field. Sadly, there is no record of whether the University of Reading was represented at the competition, but Alun Morgan writes of the Reading contest:

The University of London Jazz Band benefited enormously from the presence of Shake Keane whose flugelhorn playing was memorable, while the Dave Gelly Quartet (from Cambridge) demonstrated that an alto saxophone, plus a good rhythm section, can produce deeply satisfying jazz when in the right hands.

The University of London Jazz Band went on to win the final held at Battersea, where Morgan and Green were joined at the judges table by Paddy McKeirnan, Derek Moore and clarinettist Sandy Brown. Morgan further noted that, 'Shake Keane ... clearly gave the (London) band a massive advantage.'

The *Reading Standard* responded to the fast-growing interest in jazz by organising its own jazz contest on Friday 11th November 1960, with the university well represented amongst the five competing bands by the Don Richards Swingtet and the Adrian Read Trio. Peter Johns captured the mounting excitement in a lengthy report in *Jazz Notes*:

BOOK NOW AND DON'T BE
DISAPPOINTED
for the

**Reading Standard
JAZZ BAND
CONTEST**

*Just Jazz Quintet
Alvin Wescot Seven
Kid Forsyth Jazzmen
Don Richards Swingtet
Adrian Read Trio*

Olympia Ballroom
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11

NON-STOP DANCING
Don Turk and his band will provide continuity

JIVING CONTEST
(prizes to be won)

TICKETS 3/6 (4/- at the door)
from Reading Standard, Valpy Street; Olympia Ballroom,
London Street; Blagrove Arms Hotel, Blagrove Street;
Barnes & Avis, Friar Street.

READ JAZZ WITH JOCK COLUMN FOR ALL DETAILS

Will you be there to see this, the first-ever contest between five of the town's best jazz bands.

All the bands are taking their rehearsing very seriously, hoping they will be the first to win the contest.

Publicly on the stage of the Central Cinema next Wednesday, at 9.5pm, Miss Gloria Lovegrove, finalist in the Miss Cinema Beauty Queen competition at the Lyceum, The Strand on Monday, will make the draw to decide the order of appearance of the competing bands.

Representatives of the five bands: The Just Jazz Quintet, Alvin Westcot Seven, Kid Forsyth Jazzmen, Don Richards Swingtet and the Adrian Reed (sic) Trio, will be there to witness the draw.

Two top names in the jazz world, Mr Benny Green, jazz critic of *The Observer*, and Mr Ian McLean, associate editor of *Jazz News*, have already promised to be judges. We are waiting confirmation from a third person, well known to jazz fans.

Judges have also been selected for the jiving competition – something extra for the 'fans' to enjoy. Record vouchers will be the prizes.

Remember, the *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest* takes place at the Olympia Ballroom next Friday, November 11, from 8pm to midnight. If you want to be sure of being there, get your tickets NOW. They are on sale at the Reading Standard office, Valpy Street; Barnes and Avis Ltd, Friar Street; Olympia Ballroom, London Street and the Blagrove Arms Hotel, Blagrove Street. 3s 6d each. Tickets will be on sale on the night for 4s.

There will be non-stop dancing with Don Turk and His Band, the resident band at Olympia, taking up the beat from a separate stage between the competitors' performance.

These are The Prizes: Some wonderful prizes are lined up for the winning bands and the jivers at the *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest* at Olympia on November 11.

The band in the number one spot at the end of the evening will win a date at one of London's top jazz clubs, The Marquee, Oxford Street.

The same band also gets a Reading Standard trophy (more details later) and there will be a plaque for each member of the group; these are being presented by the Joe 'King' Oliver Jazz Appreciation Society.

The second prizewinning group takes a trip to Bedfordshire to play at Mr James Lovell's New Luton Jazz Club.

And the third prizewinning band is assured of a date at Mr Lovell's all-night jazz carnival to be held at the Olympia Ballroom.

The talent of the individual musicians won't be overlooked either.

And finally, there will be a jiving competition.

If you want to be certain of getting in, book your tickets **NOW**.



Smallest Group: The smallest group to enter our contest is the Adrian Reed Trio, another combination from Reading University. Two of its members are also playing in the Don Richards Swingtet. They are Rudolph Ferrier (bass) and John Marshall (drums). Adrian Reed(sic) (piano) comes from Macclesfield and is doing a post-graduate course at Reading University before taking up teaching.

A year ago, John Marshall joined the Bernard Simmons band, a 17-piece combination of mostly students, and he was with them when they won a competition organised by an Essex newspaper.

Adrian described the group as 'strictly modern'.

After a closely fought contest before a packed audience at the Olympia Ballroom, the coveted 'Golden Trumpet' trophy, donated by the world-famous instrument makers Boosey & Hawkes, was awarded to the highly versatile Just Jazz Quintet, led by the popular local drummer Terry Renn as the winners the first *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest*.

Second place went to the Adrian Read Trio, while the Don Richards Swingtet took third place – not a bad performance from the two student bands!

In addition to prizes for the individual musicians, the most valuable aspect of this success was the chance for the bands to perform in new situations, and to new audiences beyond the familiar territory of Reading.

For the winners, the Just Jazz Quintet, it was the opportunity to play opposite the Humphrey Lyttelton Band at London's Marquee Club. The Adrian Read Trio took their brand of modern jazz to the New Luton Jazz Club, an enterprise promoted by Mr. James A. Lovell, who also ran the New Reading Jazz Club. Read told the *Reading Standard* after the gig that 'the club's views on modern were obviously a bit doubtful at the start, but at the end of 45 minutes we had a full house stamping its feet for more. We convinced them.'

The Don Richard's Swingtet, meanwhile, were given a place on the bill of Reading's first '*Jazz All-Nighter*', held at the Olympia Ballroom on 20th January 1961. They lined-up as part of an impressive bill that included Mickey Ashman & His Ragtime Band, Ken Colyer & His Jazz Band, the Clyde Valley Stompers,

the Just Jazz Quintet and the Alvin Westcot Jazztet. Music commenced at 8pm and continued until the early hours of the next morning, when breakfast was served to those who had lasted the night.

Jazz Flashes – A Jazz band with a Latin title!



The Lower Ship, Duke
Street c.2016

On 20th January 1961, the *Reading Standard* reported on the progress of another university band, the Ad Hoc Jazz Band, and for the first time mentions the University Jazz Club and its Monday evening meetings at the Lower Ship, Duke Street:

The Ad Hoc Jazz Band was founded last year in the summer term and after a few weeks practice was to be heard in the Lower Ship Hotel on Monday nights at the University Jazz Club.

Personnel have changed a bit, but there seems to be considerable strength in reserve. The present members include; Bob Hollingworth (trumpet), co-leader of the group, studying third year agricultural chemistry. He comes from Leeds. Adrian Bull (clarinet) is the other co-leader, studying agricultural economics. Lives in Reading and plays accordion for a Morris dance team.

Hubert Haloun (trombone) joined the band last term and is studying modern languages. He came down from a Cambridge trad band (perhaps that's where the Latin came from) and is alleged to be growing a beard.

Pete Morris (banjo) is in his second year, studying physics and mathematics. Colin Cockshaw (piano) comes from Liverpool. When he goes home, Steve Mardell takes over. Steve is a classicist (Latin again?) and used to play guitar with the Brass Monkeys.

Ray Pope (bass or electric guitar) is a second-year science student. He is a rock and roll singer and reached the band via square dancing. Gordon Tams (bass) and Nick Georgiades (drums) complete the line-up.

Adrian Read and Don Richards were back in competitive action with their bands on 22nd February, competing in the semi-final of the Inter-University Jazz Band Contest before a 600 strong crowd at Southampton University. 'Ten groups were competing for the honours,' reported Peter Johns in his regular *Reading Standard* jazz column *Jazz Notes* on 2nd March 1961, 'which were won by the Southampton University band.'



He reserved his full praise for Adrian Read: 'Adrian Reed(sic) was voted the outstanding musician of the evening at the Inter-University Jazz Band Contest held at Southampton last week. His band, the Adrian Reed(sic) Trio, which includes Rudolph Ferrier (bass), John Marshall (drums) and Adrian on piano, was placed second in the competition and qualifies for the final in three weeks time.'

Adrian Read, 'outstanding musician of the evening' with Rudolph Ferrier and John Marshall.

The Oxford University Jazz Band came third, while Reading University's other unit, the Don Richards Swingtet were unplaced.

'The judges, Dil(sic) Jones and Benny Green,' Johns added, 'commented that the Adrian Reed (sic) trio had a good rhythm section and that there was a great future for the band.'



The Reading trio met a formidable band from Cambridge University in the final, compered by George Melly, held in the Great Hall of Queen Mary College, London. It boasted a front-line of Art Themen (then a medical student) and Dave Gelly respectively on tenor and alto saxophones, Dave Barrett on piano, Jon Hart on bass and George Walden (later to become a minister in Margaret Thatcher's government) on drums. Dave Gelly later remarked, 'That was a pretty good band by the standards of the day'.

Alun Morgan, one of four judges, including Benny Green, Steve Race and Johnny Dankworth, later commented:

Pride of place went to the Cambridge University Jazz Band. Cambridge had an inordinate amount of talent at the time ... If I reel off the tune titles played that day it will give some idea of the direction in which Cambridge jazz was heading for all of the numbers were staples in the band book, several of them being played at the university jazz contests; 'On Green Dolphin Street', 'Milestones', 'Straight No Chaser', 'Whisper Not', 'Night In Tunisia', 'I Remember Clifford' and a Lionel Grigson original inspired by Benny Golson's writing 'but with an original chord sequence!' Lionel told me, 'Shoutin'.

Don Richards was soon back in the thick of the local jazz scene. On Tuesday 21st February he led the Swingtet at the New Reading Jazz Club at the Olympia Ballroom, providing interval support for Mr. Acker Bilk and His Paramount Jazz Band. He persuaded some of his friends in Wolverhampton to bring down a group to play at the University Jazz Club on Monday 13th March. 'Modern again!' commented Peter Johns, rather dismissively. And on the following evening, the Swingtet filled the interval slot again at the New Reading Jazz Club, opposite the Ken Sims Jazz Band.

The cycle of academic life at Reading University and the arrival of the examination season had an inevitable effect on jazz activity which tailed off during the summer term. Sessions at the University Jazz Club were limited to 'the first and last three Mondays of the term', with music from Don Richards' Swingtet, the Ad Hoc Jazz Band, the Geoff Staines Guitar Group and a group led jointly by George Richardson and Dave Watkins.

Don Richards was also set for more interval slots at the New Reading Jazz Club, with Monty Sunshine and His Jazz Band on 20th June, and for what proved to be a particularly memorable gig on 6th June. Peter Johns described the event in *Jazz Notes* on 9th June:

Although Kenny Ball was the main attraction at Olympia on Tuesday of last week (a capacity crowd turned up to hear him play), a large share of the honours must go to the Don Richard's Swingtet.

Taking into consideration the fact that the band has been unable to rehearse regularly this term, they were at the top of their form, and I was very surprised when bass player 'Rudi' Ferrier told me that he thought things had not gone well.

The really outstanding member of the group on Tuesday was drummer John Marshall. He had some excellent ideas and carried them out with a skill and confidence which caused people to praise this polished performance.

One fan thought the group by far the best in Reading and even went so far as to suggest that they should get together when they leave university and turn professional.

Incidentally, John is due to play at the Festival Hall next Thursday, probably sitting in with the Mike Garrick Quartet. He has already played with this group three times this year, including a London date and the Bushy Club.

Also, on the Festival Hall bill will be the Ronnie Scott Quartet and Jack Powell.

University to Try a Marching Line-Up, reported Peter Johns as thoughts amongst the university jazz fraternity began to look beyond examinations and towards end of term entertainments and the possibilities of the new academic year:

Reading University jazz enthusiasts are to experiment with a big band, in the style of the New Orleans marching bands. The group will be formed to play at the Whiteknights Park House garden party on June 24.

The line-up is expected to be three trumpets, three trombones, two clarinets, alto, flute, banjo, tenor horn and snare drum and bass drum.

Because of examinations and other distractions, the next session at the Lower Ship will not be until June 19.



He also announced the '**Good news** for all the supporters of local jazz bands in this area. The *Reading Standard* is again planning another contest similar to that of last year, at which the Just Jazz Quintet earned a date at the Marquee Club on which I reported last week. Book the date now: it's Friday November 3.'

He added that:

Next Monday's session of the University Jazz Club will be the last of this term and last Monday when I visited plans were being laid for next term's activities and line-ups. I think one of the biggest losses will be Don Richards (trumpet) who has led his Swingtet with considerable success.

The Ad Hoc group is expected to remain much the same as this year with the addition of Mary Tinkler (vocalist), who is reading modern languages and in her first year. She will start with the Ad Hoc next term. If she puts as much time into singing as she does with jiving, things are going to swing.

The Dave Watkins trio should come more into its own and will not lack experience. It is anticipated that Dave Watkins (piano), John Marshall (drums) and Rudolph Ferrier (bass) will be together. John hopes to spend the vacation across the Atlantic and I hope we will be hearing some first-hand news from that scene.

With examinations still occupying some of the 'regulars' last Monday saw several first appearances. Patricia Entwistle played piano for the Ad Hoc with Don Richards 'going trad.' Colin Cockshaw provided the club with the first barrel-house piano for five years.

A disappointment of the session was the non-arrival of a Swedish students' quartet who were members of an athletic team. I was told that some complained of stiffness after afternoon exercise, which followed a hectic cultural tour of Reading in the morning.

The Don Richards Swingtet played its final gig at the University Jazz Club and broke up at the end of term with the graduation not just of Don himself, but the entire front-line.

As Peter John's reported, John Marshall did indeed spend his summer vacation 'across the Atlantic' as John vividly recalled in an interview with the author in November 2018:

I flew to America that summer with a friend from Bristol University on a trip organised by what was known as the Canada Club; the Club chartered a flight, dumped you in Canada at the beginning of the summer and then flew you home six or seven weeks later, leaving you to make your own arrangements in between. We made a bee-line to

New York and Manny's famous music store in West 48th Street where I bought a beautiful set of Ludwig drums, otherwise unobtainable at home.



My friend's uncle worked on one of the Cunard Queen liners, so we put the drums into a taxi and drove to the docks for him to ship home. The customs duty would have been insane, but he somehow got away with only paying £10.00. It cost me a crate of whisky when we got home - a lot of money in those days - but still cheap at the price. I was aware of only one other person at home with a Ludwig kit. I've still got it!

You Can't Keep a Musician Quiet commented Peter Johns on 11th August when he reported on the summer activities of Adrian Bull, leader of the Ad Hoc Jazz Band:

Give him a holiday, send his band away; but whatever you do you cannot keep a keen musician quiet. Finding that most of the Ad Hoc Band from the University have dispersed to various corners of the island, and some even farther, Adrian Bull set about forming a small group for the vacation.

Under the title Group Two, the band has already played one or two dates in Reading. 'Most of the band are working,' Adrian told me last week, 'so we're not trying to get bookings every night of the week.'

Besides Adrian on clarinet, Bob Stuckey plays piano, Brian Hawkins bass, Michael Speke drums and Dickie Coles guitar.

Sessions at the University Jazz Club resumed in the new term in their regular Monday evening slot at the Lower Ship. Peter John's reported that:

The Kid Forsythe Jazzmen will be at first the meeting which seems to be developing into an excellent club where amateurs can take the stage. I am told that there are some accomplished musicians who have joined this term.

Meanwhile the *Reading Standard* confirmed that its second *Jazz Band Contest* would be held at the Olympia Ballroom on 3rd November, holding out the exciting prospect that *two* university bands might take part; the Ad Hoc Jazz Band and the Dave Watkins Trio with Rudolph Ferrier on bass and John Marshall, with his new Ludwig drum kit, on drums.



The Dave Watkins Trio
The Great Hall, University of Reading c. 1961

Contest Entries Flowing In: More Trad This Year: announced the *Standard* as it pulled out all the stops to publicise the event:

Two out of the first three groups to approach me with entries for the *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest*, which is drawing near, were trad bands. Can it be that the moderns are not so well organised?

The Ad Hoc Band, which hails from the University and has been playing at the Monday sessions in the Lower Ship for about a year, is the first of these bands to be spotlighted in a weekly feature. The co-leaders are Adrian Bull (clarinet) and Bob Hollingworth (trumpet) studying agricultural economy and agricultural chemistry respectively. Both are the senior members of the band, being in their fourth year.

In their third year, Pete Morris (banjo) and Colin Cockshaw (piano) are reading maths and chemistry, and maths and geography. Hubert Haloun (trombone and political economy), Malcolm Bradfield (bass and German) and George Gammer (drums and geology) complete the line-up, but there may be one addition.

Adrian Bull tells me that Mary Tinkler may well fill the role of vocalist with the group. With a name like that, I might suggest that Mary is one of the belles, and having heard her sing, perhaps she's one of the blues belles.

Marquee Date for Winners: Really good news for the best amateur or semi-professional jazz band in Reading. In January or February next year, the winners of the *Reading Standard Jazz Contest* will again have the chance to play a really appreciative audience at London's Marquee Club.

This is in addition to holding the Golden Trumpet trophy for a year. Among the prizes there may be more surprises. As soon as they are known, I will announce the details in the column.

Dave Watkins Trio the only University entry – Ad Hoc withdraw declared *Jazz Notes* banner headline on 20th October:

Unless there are any late entries this week, the Dave Watkins' Trio (above) will be the only group carrying the modern tag at the *Reading Standard* contest on November 3 at Olympia. The group are one of the strongest contenders for the Golden Trumpet.

All three appeared together at last year's contest, under the leadership of Don Richards, who has now left the University. Rudi Ferrier (bass) and John Marshall (drums) were also in the Adrian Reed(sic) Trio. You may remember that Adrian Reed(sic) was placed second last time, and Don Richards third, so this is definitely a band to watch.

Dave leads the trio on the piano, and this is his third year studying fine art. Rudi Ferrier is in his second year of agricultural chemistry and John Marshall is studying psychology. There has been an influx of front-line musicians this term, and Dave hopes to expand his group later. He is very doubtful if this can be done before the contest however.

The group played the University Club on Monday in the Lower Ship, where the Kid Forsyth Jazzmen were also on stage. From the crowd it seems that the University is keener on jazz than ever.

Late Withdrawal: The Ad Hoc band from the University will not compete in the contest after all. This week, Bob Hollingworth and Adrian Bull told me that they think it would be an insult to put the band on stage before a large crowd at present. They think it is still too weak in some departments.

While sympathising with them in some ways, the group's attitude still strikes me as somewhat defeatist. One of the things that the contest did last year, and I think, that any contest must do, is to improve the standard of the participants because of the hard practice that goes before the night itself. This late withdrawal means that there are now three trad groups, one mainstream and one modern.

Prizes Galore for Bands and Musicians: Another list of prizes has been collected and donated for Messrs. Terry Henebery, Ken Sykora and Matthew Turner to award on the contest night, November 3, and it won't need Guy Fawkes' bonfire to make the music hot that night.

For the winners, there is the Golden Trumpet, the challenge trophy specially designed and inscribed, presented by the sponsors, the *READING STANDARD*, in association with Boosey and Hawkes, the world's largest instrument makers of London.

As well as the trophy, there will be plaques for the members of the winning group, made by Austin Balson and presented by the organisers, the 79th Reading branch of the B.P. Guild

A date has been arranged at the Marquee Club, London, in January, for a modern group, or in February, if a trad group take the honours. Mr Terry Henebery has also said that he may arrange a BBC audition.

For the runner-up, there will be a date for a split session at the Carfax Jazz Club, Oxford in February, and for the band placed third, an interval booking at the Town Hall, Reading on January 20. The last two dates have been arranged with the co-operation of John Smith, who, I may say, has an impressive programme planned for Reading at Christmas and the New Year.

Other prizes on November 3 are: Long Life beer presented by Ind Coope Ltd; ties from Langston and Sons Ltd; a one-guinea record voucher from Barnes and Avis; and Bristol cigarettes presented by W.D. & H.O. Wills.

Tomorrow Is Your Last Chance: The entry list for the *Reading Standard Contest* will close at noon tomorrow (Saturday). Tickets are on sale at Standard House, Barnes and Avis and Olympia, price 3s 6d. At the door it will be 4s.

Tension mounted as the date of the competition drew near. *Jazz Notes* reported:

Three Judges Will Choose from Six Bands – Week To Go – Last-Second Surprise Entry: Having seen and heard all the bands now, I feel fairly certain that the contest will be quite a close-fought affair. Rehearsals are now being held in every spare moment as the chance of winning the Golden Trumpet draws near, along with the Marquee date and other prizes.

Eric Delaney to Make The Draw: The draw for the playing order of the six bands will be decided on Sunday night at the Majestic Ballroom, Reading. Eric Delaney, who last week started a new series of Sunday Club meetings, has agreed to pick the names out of a hat.

In alphabetical order, the list now reads: the Alvin Westcot Jazztet, modern, from Reading; the Blue Jays Jazz Band, trad, from Bracknell; the Dave Price Quartet, modern, from Reading; the Dave Watkins Trio, modern, from Reading University; the Kid Forsythe Jazz Band, trad, from Reading; the Olympians, normally playing a wide variety of music, but trad for November 3.

Make Sure of Your Ticket: Once again, I would remind you that tickets are on sale at the Olympia Ballroom, Barnes and Avis and Standard House. The price is 3s 6d or 4s at the door on the night of November 3. Don't leave it too late.

In Reply: My comments on the withdrawal of the Ad Hoc Band last week have drawn a reply from Adrian Bull, that it was due to an attitude of perfectionism and not defeatism.

University Modern Trio Win Golden Trumpet – and BBC Audition



Dave came, Dave saw and Dave conquered. The managing director, Mr. R. Rowell, presents the Golden Trumpet challenge trophy.

As Dave Watkins, leader and pianist of the Dave Watkin's trio, stepped forward on the stage of Olympia on Friday 3rd November to receive the Golden Trumpet Challenge trophy from the *Reading Standard* Managing Director, Mr. R.S. Rowell, the 650-strong audience raised the roof with applause. Dave, with the smallest group of the evening, had won the *Reading Standards'* *Second Jazz Band Contest*.

This was not the only success for this university band, for Dave gained the award for runner-up in the individual competition, and his drummer, John Marshall, was voted top musician of the evening

(Nearly sixty years later John recalled, 'I was voted 'Top Musician of The Evening and awarded a separate trophy and a record voucher from Barnes & Avis, a local music and record store. It's the only trophy I've ever received apart from winning the Melody Maker jazz poll in 1973 and 1974, when Soft Machine was also voted top small group.')

The three judges, Terry Henebery, Ken Sykora and Matthew Turner had a very difficult task before them when they retired to decide the awards.

Runners-up to the Dave Watkins group were the Alvin Westcot Jazztet, with the Blue Jays Jazz Band third.

Trumpeters took both awards in the trad field. Terry Costigan, who provided a strong lead for the Blue Jays was top trad musician, and Dick Hamilton, with the Olympians, was a close second.

There were only four individual awards to be allocated, but as the judges found it so difficult to choose between Dave Price and Dave Watkins for runner-up, it was decided to give Dave Price an extra award for his swinging piano style.

Prize for the best musician was a record voucher presented by Barnes & Avis. The best trad and runners-up received ties given by Langston & Sons, and the extra prize was Bristol cigarettes.

Audition for Winners: Described by Ken Sykora as a 'very promising group', the Dave Watkins trio are a regular attraction at Reading University's Jazz Club with Dave on piano, Rudi Ferrier (bass) and John Marshall (drums).

Now they are destined for higher things, for, in addition to their top prize of a London date at the Marquee Jazz Club, Oxford Street in January, Terry Henebery promised them a BBC audition in January.

Other awards consisted of individual plaques presented by the 79th Reading Branch of the BP Guild, three half bottles of Cossack vodka, donated by Sir Robert Burnett and Co Ltd and Bristol cigarettes donated by W.D. & H.O. Wills.

In addition, on Sunday night, Les Mason, owner of the Robinson Crusoe Club, told me would like the group to play with Ronnie Scott on Ronnie's next visit to the club. But it was the announcement from Terry Henebery, producer of BBC Jazz Club programme that completed the excitement of the evening.

(Author's Note: John Marshall has no recollection of taking part in a BBC audition nor are there any documents in the BBC Written Archives Centre in Emmer Green, Reading to confirm whether the promise of an audition was fulfilled.)

Singers were notable by their absence at the *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest*. However, on 1st December *Jazz Notes* was able to report that Dave Watkins hoped to set that situation to rights:



This is Chris in everyday dress. In the festival she dressed in full Elizabethan regalia, complete with ruff.

From French Study to Jazz Singing – Chris is the Tops: The shortage of modern jazz singers in Reading is pretty grim at the moment, but the university have no problems. The Dave Watkins Trio, the university's top group and winners of the *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest*, have found one right on their doorstep. She is attractive, 21-year-old Chris Worth, from Penzance, Cornwall.

Chris, who is in the third and last year of her French course, was chosen by the band to sing three Cleo Laine numbers in the *Jantaculum* show, which is being held this week.

The songs are taken from an EP record entitled 'Cleo Sings Elizabethan', which is hardly surprising when you consider that

the show covers this period. Dave Watkins has arranged the Dankworth score for his trio.

Apart from being an accomplished sportswoman, Chris is also domesticated, for amongst her hobbies she includes canoeing, swimming and dressmaking,

At a rehearsal of the show on Sunday, her relaxed, easy style gave me the impression that she had more ability to swing and improvise than she yet shows.

With a little more experience, she should develop into a fine vocalist. Good luck Chris!

John Marshall recalls that Dave Watkins' innovative use of jazz at the Jantaculum, an annual pre-Christmas gala of music and drama held in the rarefied atmosphere of the Great Hall, caused quite a stir at the time and was considered very daring. 'You have to remember,' John added, 'that in those days none of us who were active in jazz were from the Music Department; jazz was a definite 'no-no' and they wouldn't have anything to do with it. We came from all sorts of subject backgrounds: Post-Graduate Education, Agriculture, Chemistry, Geography, Classics, Psychology in my case and in Dave Watkins', Fine Arts.



A rehearsal in progress for the 'Jantaculum' at the University Great Hall, December 1961

On Monday 4th December, the University Jazz Club staged a unique event, one of those magical evenings when the elements combine to create something truly special. John Marshall recalls that the event was almost certainly organised by Johnny Taylor:

Johnny Taylor, a Geography student and fine bass player, was a pivotal guy in the Jazz Club. He was an energetic and very sparky guy, with lots of connections, who always seemed to be organising things and inviting guests like Dick Heckstall-Smith, Michael Garrick and Shake Keane down to the Lower Ship. He also set up the 'Jazz and Voices' concert at the Recital Room of the Royal Festival Hall in June 1961, in which I played with the Mike Garrick's Quartet. That was very special and a key event

for Mike that set him up to launch his career as musical director for 'Poetry & Jazz in Concert'.

Great Shake(s)! Top Man Plays at University Club at Lower Ship: Every Monday evening, the University Jazz Club meets above the Lower Ship. When I went there on Monday of last week, I had quite a surprise. Taking the stand and blowing music that was honey to the ears of any modern fan, was Shake Keane, one of the country's top musicians.



(photo by courtesy of JAZZ.ORG.UK)
SHAKE KEANE, outstanding instrumentalist of 1960s

Two years ago, Shake was voted best musician in the Inter-University Jazz Contest, when he was studying in London. Now he plays trumpet and flugel horn with the Joe Harriott Quintet.

But wait for it! Shake was not the only top man in the group. They were, in fact, all well-known musicians. Dick Heckstall-Smith (tenor saxophone) is with Bert Courtney(sic) group, and Michael Garrick who leads his own quartet in London, was there with his bass player Johnny Taylor. Last, but by no means last, was Reading University drummer, John Marshall.

To all intents and purposes, this was a scratch group, but to hear them, you'd have thought they had been together all their lives.

I am not qualified to pass comment on the technical skill of musicians such as these, but I can say it was some of the best music I have heard in this town for a long time. I hope it will not be their last visit.

And if that wasn't enough, a week later ...

More Jazz and Poetry: It seems that the University Jazz Club are going all out to provide their members with some of the best jazz available. They featured Shake Keane at the Lower Ship, and then more recently Johnnie(sic) Scott took the stand at Mansfield Hall, backed by the Michael Garrick Trio.

The relaxed and informal atmosphere of these university sessions is the ideal jazz environment and brings out the best in all groups. This was no exception. The trio played some very good music, and Johnnie's work on flute added a purity of tone that must have soothed away all those pre-examination troubles.

Although this was the last evening of jazz this term, the organisers hope to book some of the top trad bands next year, and, providing they can get a supply of poems will continue the jazz and poetry sessions which have been so popular.



The site of the Palomino
Coffee Bar/Latin Quarter
Night Club, Duke Street.
c. 2016

Dave Watkins' star continued to ascend after his success at the *Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest* and with the arrival of 1962 he played with his trio to a packed audience at the Latin Quarter in Duke Street:

Jazz – Saturday night, Sunday lunchtime and again in the evening: For the first time since the Silver Bell Jazz Club closed down some years ago, Reading has a jazz club with a true club atmosphere in the shape of the Latin Quarter in Duke Street. Mr Terry Gillan, decided that Reading wanted jazz, and he is featuring this not only Saturday and Sunday evening, but also a Sunday lunchtime with the Dave Watkins Trio.

Last week I reported that the New Downbeats drew over 100 new members when they played their first date. The Kid Forsythe Jazzmen got a similar reception on Saturday.

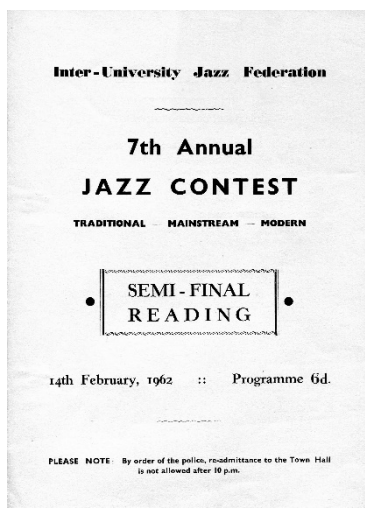
On Saturday of last week, Dave Watkins took his university trio to the club and did even better, drawing a crowd of over 150. 'I thought I would be lucky to get 50 people in,' said Terry. 'As it was, I was rushed off my feet.'

Terry's comment on the trio? 'They're fabulous,' he said. 'One person who was passing the club asked me if I was playing MJQ records.' That's what I call praise.

The lunchtime session, which started on Sunday and ran from 1pm-3pm proved a big success. The university group were playing but this will not be a regular stand for them, because Terry hopes to book the Just Jazz Quintet for several dates.

An informal and relaxed atmosphere is the accent of these sessions and Terry wants musicians who would like to sit in. 'I hope to attract some of the top men down from London,' he said, 'but local boys will be welcome. In fact, it's a case of the more the merrier.

For the future, he hopes to run a folk-evening, possibly on Thursdays. 'Although I realise that folk music does not have a very large following,' he said, 'several people have asked me about it, so I consider it well worth trying

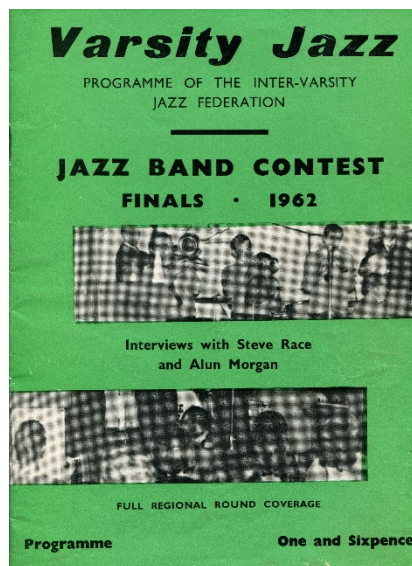


Two bands from the university were in action at Reading Town Hall on Saturday 14th February for the semi-final of the 7th Annual Inter-University Jazz Contest. Dave Watkins' Trio lined up alongside the Geoff Staines Quartet, comprising Staines on guitar, R. Thomas on piano, bassist George Richardson and drummer Nick Georgiades, to compete against seven other bands, two from Queen Mary College, London, three from Cambridge and two from Oxford. The 'Kid' Forsythe Jazz Band provided interval support.

Unlike the semi-final held in Bristol, deemed to be a 'poor show' by the judge Alun Morgan, Reading rated as a 'musical success'. Jeremy Porter, who reported on the event for the Inter-University Jazz Federation, noted that Geoff Staines was a 'a steady, intelligent player' but that his quartet 'fell down badly on balance, the drummer being the worst culprit'. The Dave Watkins Trio on the other hand brought forth his fulsome praise:

The Dave Watkins Trio produced the first outstanding drummer of the evening (John Marshall) and were also the first group to show an understanding of balance and dynamic contrast. The quality I admired most in their performance was the ability to create tension within restraint – a hallmark of a good group. Dave himself is a pianist with a highly developed sense of form and structure.

Dave led his trio to the final in third place behind the Oxford University Big Band, which counted within its ranks Bill Ashton, the future founder of NYJO and Miles Kington, later a broadcaster and humorous writer with Punch magazine, and the previous year's all-conquering Cambridge University Jazz Band, with its star-studded front-line of Art Themen and Dave Gelly. John Marshall gained the distinction of being selected for 'individual mention'. He remembers the Cambridge group as a 'heavy-duty band of professional standard', while the Oxford Big Band 'thought of themselves as a class apart. They'd be standing round the bar in a very urbane manner discussing what they were going to play in the next round as if the result was a forgone conclusion'.



The Inter-University Jazz Band Contest Final took place in the Great Hall of Queen Mary College, London on Saturday 3rd March. Unsurprisingly, the Cambridge band, their line-up unchanged from 1961, except for Jonathan Lynn on drums (who was set to find future fame as co-writer of 'Yes Minister') emerged as deserving victors from a strong field representing Leeds, Birmingham, Southampton, Liverpool, Leicester, Nottingham, Queen's University, Belfast and of course, Reading.

Mike Goldsmith, treasurer of Reading University Jazz Club from 1957 to 1962, remembers Art Themen and Dave Gelly as being the outstanding members of the Cambridge Band. More importantly he recalled that the Dave Watkins Trio more than held their own in the contest:

Their competition number was 'Blue Monk', which despite frequent practice, was criticised by Benny Green for misinterpreting the middle eight!

Writing nearly sixty years later, Don Locke, a member of the Oxford band, also remembers a 'piano player from Reading'.

John Marshall remembers the remarkable strength of the university jazz scene in the early 1960s and the names that 'spring out from those competitions':

- Art Themen, Dave Gelly, Dave Barrett, Jon Hart, George Walden, Jonathan Lyn (Cambridge); Bryant Marriott (Oxford) and Roger Eames (Nottingham) became jazz producers for the BBC; Tony Faulkner (Sheffield), an excellent drummer and arranger became an educator at Leeds College of Music; Dudley Hyams (Southampton) had a great band; Miles Kington and Bill Ashton (Oxford), respectively a distinguished writer and broadcaster and the founder of NYJO. Bill later became known as the 'gig king' for weddings, bar mitzvah's etc and I did a lot of work with him.

All these guys from university. Can you imagine that now?

Wine, Women and Watkins ... on 18th May Peter Johns reported that:

The Reading University Literary Society are holding an exclusive wine party in June to launch the Reading University Festival of Arts, Music and Drama. Alas, the occasion is not open to the general public. The Dave Watkins Quartet will be providing the backing. Bacchante revels? Perhaps, but the University have gone one better on the Greek gods. Gods of Bacchus never had the pleasure of inviting Dave Watkins to their shindigs. The festival will include an appearance by the Don Rendell Quartet.

Ironically, just as the university was waking up to the fact that jazz could play a part in its cultural activities, popular interest in the music began to wane. It wasn't that jazz suffered a sudden and fatal decline, more a matter of gradually being swept aside into the backwaters of popular interest by an unrelenting flood tide of beat music. The Beatles had arrived, and the world of popular music was never quite the same again.

John Marshall recalls how things were beginning to change:

A guy would turn up at Jazz Club every now and then and ask if he could 'sit-in' and sing some blues. We didn't give much thought to it and would usually oblige. I think that he also used to 'sit-in' with some local 'trad' bands (he sometimes 'sat-in' with Dave Morgan's Jazz Band at the Bricklayer's Arms in Hosier Street, the meeting place for local members of the Musicians' Union). Fast forward a few years and I got a call to do some tracks on an album – 'The Crazy World of Arthur Brown'. Our blues singer was none-other than Arthur Brown himself! I remember Kit Lambert, a big name in those days and manager of The Who, being at the recording session. No personnel details were ever given on the original album, but I'm listed on the re-issue – along with about *four* other drummers. I play on three tracks. We did a version of 'Fire!', but the one they used on the hit single, and by far the best, was actually the demo with Draken Theaker on drums. He played perfectly on that track. Ours was nowhere near as good. You have to own up sometimes!



Arthur talked to me about joining the band, but our ideas were worlds apart. He was into simple, straightforward stuff, whereas my idea was to play as complicated as possible but make it sound *simple*. I didn't hear from him again after that.

When I came down from Reading and 'learning my professional trade' with jazz gigs on the London scene I also worked with a group called the Trebletones backing the singer, Helen Shapiro. Then found myself doing a lot of Jamaican 'Bluebeat' things with Tony Washington, a piano player; 'Bluebeat' had a particular rhythmic feel. One day we got a call from the fantastic guitarist Ernest Ranglin who was producing a session at the Olympic Studios, then near Baker Street, for the singer Millie Small. I

was totally overawed by all these heavy-weight session guys. We did about six different titles that day and one of them was 'My Boy Lollipop'. It came out soon after and reached #2 in the UK charts. I remember hearing it on the radio and telling my girlfriend of that time, 'That's me!'

The Times They Were a-Changin', but there were still some wonderful jazz moments to savour in the second half of the 1960s, not least the appearance at Reading University of five veritable giants of the music, Tubby Hayes, Sonny Rollins, Max Roach, Ben Webster and Coleman Hawkins



Tubby Hayes, arguably *the* greatest jazz musician to emerge from these shores, who, as we have already seen played at the 1959 Rag Ball as co-leader with Ronnie Scott of the ground-breaking Jazz Couriers, visited St Patrick's Hall on a dank winter's night in February 1966. Here is a personal recollection of that evening:

Word of Tubby's appearance got around via other jazz enthusiast friends at school, because I can't think of any other way, I might have found out about it. I arrived early and on the promise of free entry helped to arrange the seating, which took the form of incredibly uncomfortable PE benches. The audience faced in one direction to watch a film about the Blues in the first half, and then spun round at the interval to watch Tubby on a stage, in the second. A very odd arrangement, explained by the University's refusal to allow a full evening of jazz, insisting that it had to be 'diluted' with some other form of 'cultural' offering, hence the film.

Tubby blew a storm – tenor, flute and vibes - with the support of Terry Shannon on piano. Two local guys played bass and drums, just about managing to hold the breakneck tempos that Hayes was noted for. Then came a moment of madness.

Tubby also brought along singer Joy Marshall. Part way through a song, he stepped forward with his tenor in full shout and cut her dead. There was a moment of 'daggers drawn' tension before Joy swept off the stage and disappeared. Tubby, meanwhile, continued playing, seemingly oblivious to the scene he'd just provoked.

I was in awe of his playing, but even to my naïve eighteen-year-old self, something was wrong. I had read accounts of the raw, tempestuous face of the jazz life, usually fuelled by either drugs or alcohol, but this was the first and *only* time I'd seen it played out for real.

The next day at school, word passed round that in addition to the scene on-stage a *fracas* with a University porter had developed after the gig. According to which version of events you listened to: Tubby and company had been either chased off the premises by the police or had hurried away before the police arrived.

Thanks to Simon Spillett, a fine tenor saxophonist himself and biographer of Tubby Hayes, I can provide a postscript to this account, reproduced here with his kind permission:

I think I can add a little something to your memory of seeing Tubby and Joy Marshall. I've spoken to a couple of people who were at Tubby's Reading Uni gig with Joy ... It was, in fact, so memorable (as it transpired for all the wrong reasons) that Tubby later wrote about it in some personal notes, which I am revealing for the first time anywhere.

This was in the middle of a truly horrific time for Tubby, details of which have only recently been uncovered, and which will form part of the updated and expanded paperback edition of *'Tubby Hayes: The Long Shadow of the Little Giant'*.

'Joy and I went together for a few days. Until we had a gig at Reading University. We all got drunk. Someone insulted Joy and I hit him. The police were called and we left in a hurry. Then Joy fell down the stairs in a transport café and the police were called again. When we got home Terry (Shannon) was unconscious. I had drunk a whole bottle of wine. Next day Joy threw me out.'

Tubby then goes on to describe a horrific few days in which he got into a fist fight with Ronnie Scott and attempted suicide.

BBC 2 'Jazz Goes to College': Sonny Rollins & Max Roach

Crescendo magazine heralded the second major event of 1966 with this mouth-watering announcement in its edition for November:



Roach plus Rollins at Reading

It seems a great pity to us – and at a great loss to British jazz-lovers that the Max Roach/Sonny Rollins package now touring the Continent is not doing any concerts here. The Quintet led by Roach replaces that of John Coltrane, which was to have come, and lines up Freddie Hubbard (trumpet), Jimmy Spaulding (alto, flute), Ron Matthews (piano), Jymie Merritt (bass) and Max on drums. The Rollins tenor has been added as a guest attraction.

They'll be at Reading University on Sunday, November 6th, recording a TV show for Terry Henebery's BBC-2 series *Jazz Goes to College*.

Trumpeter, broadcaster and writer Humphrey Lyttelton compered the show and some years later recalled the occasion on *Jazz Score*. This BBC Radio 2 programme, which ran for thirteen series from 1981, invited guest jazz

musicians to relate jazz anecdotes, one-liners and reminiscences. These were scored according to their humorous merit by Chairman Benny Green. Lyttelton's account of Sonny Rollins's performance at Reading would have taken some beating:

I remember compering a BBC TV outside broadcast from Reading University which featured Sonny Rollins. Terry Henebery, the producer, had set everything up and told me I could start announcing the rhythm section while he quickly retired to the control wagon outside. However, no sooner had I started announcing the rhythm section than Sonny Rollins broke into his composition 'St Thomas' from the depths of the bandroom and emerged playing the tune as he made his way to the bandstand.

In fact, Terry hadn't even reached his controls when Rollins had started. The floor manager appealed to me to stop the music as he was getting panic messages down his headphones, but I decided it would be better to let Rollins finish the tune and Terry could start recording from the next number.

It was a thirty-minute programme and Sonny played 'St Thomas' for forty-five minutes! Meanwhile Terry Henebery had decided he could use what he'd got as long as he could get the first two or three minutes repeated to use behind the opening titles. I asked Sonny Rollins for the opening two minutes again. He just nodded and played the same tune for another forty-five minutes.

In the event, Henebery was able to salvage three-and-half minutes worth of material to use at the beginning and end of the twenty-five-minute-long programme. With one exception, 'Chocolate Shake' one of Duke Ellington's more obscure tunes, written for 'Jump for Joy', his first stage musical and recorded with a vocal by Ivie Anderson in 1941, all the numbers played during the recording were composed by band members. Trumpeter Freddie Hubbard contributed the seven-minute 'DP'. 'Nommo' (incorrectly listed in the BBC Written Archives, as 'No More') was written by bassist Jymie Merritt, while 'Five for London', a title which bears all the hallmarks of a hastily ad-libbed blues, came from leader Max Roach.

The concert was broadcast on three occasions in 1967: 6th February 20th March and finally on 12th September. It was billed in the *Radio Times* as being part of a series:

presenting the best in international jazz recorded in concert from Britain's foremost colleges and universities – this week – THE UNIVERSITY OF READING - Sonny Rollins (tenor sax) and Max Roach (drums) two of the biggest names in modern jazz join forces for a unique jazz session.

Thereafter, in keeping with BBC policy of the time, the tapes were wiped to be re-used for other recordings. A policy which clarinettist Sandy Brown described as 'an act of vandalism unsurpassed in recent history'. Thankfully some tapes of the various jazz programmes produced by Terry Henebery for BBC-2 have emerged over the years from other sources. Some are available on commercial DVD and many can be found on Utube. Sadly, the Rollins/Roach concert is not one of them. Though who knows, early classics from 'Doctor Who', thought lost forever have recently reappeared, so perhaps we shouldn't give up hope on Sonny and Max.

Ben Webster & Coleman Hawkins

Bassist Dave Green, one of the most versatile members of a new generation of British jazz players, was no stranger to supporting visiting American guests. As a member of Stan Tracey's resident trio at Ronnie Scott's Club it was more a case of 'who hadn't he played with' than 'who had he played with'. 'It was an incredible time for me,' he recalls. 'I'll never forget those wonderful years playing with such giants of the music as Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Roland Kirk and Sonny Rollins – an unbelievable experience for me at such an early stage of my career.'

Sonny's idiosyncrasies and the marathon excursion at the Reading concert wouldn't have surprised Dave in the least, as he had discovered from working night -after-night at Ronnie's:

'We had been playing long versions of 'Night and Day' and 'Three Little Words' every night at Ronnie's - sometimes each tune would last the whole set – 'Three Little Words' the first set and 'Night and Day' the second. Anyway, after a couple of weeks, just before we were about to go on for the first set, Sonny suddenly turned to me in the band room and said, 'What do you want to play, Dave?'

I was a bit taken aback, so I said the first tune that came into my head, 'Will You Still Be Mine'. Sonny said, 'Yeah! Good choice Dave. Do you know that tune Stan?' 'Yeah,' Stan assured him. On the way to the bandstand Sonny turned to me again and said, 'Yeah, 'Will You Still Be Mine', very good choice Dave.'

We got onto the bandstand and I picked up the bass ready to play and Sonny went straight into 'Three Little Words'. We never did play 'Will You Still Be Mine'.



With drummer Tony Crombie completing the Stan Tracey Trio, Dave arrived at Reading University on Wednesday 17th January 1968 to support two other giants of the tenor saxophone: Coleman Hawkins, the founding father of jazz tenor saxophone - the man who first realised the magisterial beauty of the instrument, and Ben Webster, his principal disciple.

By this time, both men were well into the autumn of their careers and not in the best of health. However, by all contemporary accounts they could still fill an auditorium with the glorious sound of their instruments.

**Ben Webster and Dave
Green, at Ronnie
Scott's c.1968**

Dave Green takes up the story:

My memories of the Reading concert are vivid. It was certainly a memorable night, and an historic one too, because it was the last time that Ben and Hawk were to be together. I drove Ben to Reading in my Ford Anglia. He had begun a month's residency at Ronnie's on the 1st January with Stan Tracey, myself on bass and Tony Crombie on drums, so the Reading gig on Wednesday the 17th was in the middle of Ben's third week at Ronnie's. I had been playing with Hawk since the middle of November 1967 with Mike Carr on piano and Tony Crombie – first on some out of town gigs before we started a month at the club from 27th November – 23rd December. An extra week was added after Christmas so Hawk's residency at Ronnie's finally ended on Saturday the 30th.

Ben and Hawk didn't play together at Reading. They both did separate sets. Sadly, Hawk's health had been deteriorating badly for the last couple of weeks at Ronnie's. He wasn't eating and he was drinking a bottle of Remy Martin Cognac a day - although it might have been more!

At the club, Ronnie had been desperately trying to get him to eat but he would only take a few spoonful's of soup every night. After the gig with Hawk finished at the club on the 30th December, we just did two more gigs with him - the Bull's Head, Barnes on 2nd January, and at the Nottingham Playhouse on Sunday the 14th. By the time of the Reading concert, Hawk was in really bad shape. He was developing pneumonia, very short of breath and having great trouble breathing. I was very concerned, and I didn't think that he would be able to play.

Ben did the first set and I was thinking we'd have to do another set because Hawk wouldn't be able to play. Somehow, he did manage to get up on the stand after the interval and do the set - I think it was the Remy Martin that got him through it! When I hear the recording made that evening, though it was never issued, it brings back in vivid detail all the mixed emotions of that night in Reading. The joy for me of playing with two of the greatest Giants of Jazz, seeing how they both loved each other, the audience reaction and the worry and ultimate relief when Hawk played. It was the last time I saw him. He flew back to the States and did make a recovery, but sadly died in May the following year.

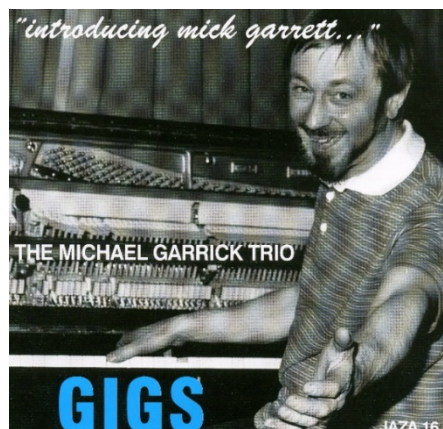
Maybe if Hawk had been in better shape, he might have played an encore with Ben at the end. It would have been wonderful if they had, but it was not to be.

Michael Garrick Fly-Bi-Nite Sextet & Trio

We now fast-forward almost twenty years. In July 1983 Roger Durston, then Director of Music for Berkshire Education Authority, organised a residential summer school for young musicians at the University's London Road campus. He invited Michael Garrick, the eminent jazz pianist, composer, bandleader and educator, to present two concerts for the students in the Great Hall. Durston had recently worked with Garrick as conductor of 250-strong children's choir, when five primary schools from Earley came together in a festival to present Garrick's choral work 'All God's Children'.

The first concert featured Garrick's Fly-Bi-Nite Sextet, with a line-up of Guy Barker trumpet, Phil Todd alto saxophone, Michael Garrick piano, John

Etheridge guitar, Alec Dankworth bass and Quinnie Lawrence drums. He returned a week later with his trio, Dave Green on bass and Trevor Tomkins on drums.



This was recorded, and four titles were issued in 2009 on *'Gigs: Introducing Mick Garrett ... the Michael Garrick Trio'* (Jazz Academy JAZA 16): Peri's Scope. Prayer, Turn Out the Stars and Fairies of Oneriros.

'At live gigs Peter Nicholls, self-employed recording buff, used to bring all his gear in rucksacks aboard a 250cc motorcycle,' Garrick commented in his sleeve notes. 'The acoustic in Reading fed him the raw material for one of the finest bass sounds ever recorded by Dave Green not to mention the piano and drums.'

Given the opportunity Michael Garrick would love to have played the magnificent Willis organ in the Great Hall. His credentials would have been impeccable, as he had played the organ in cathedrals across the country, including St Paul's, during his concert tours with 'Jazz Praises'. Not so Reading University; the duty Porter kept the organ firmly locked, with muttered comments to the effect that, 'It would be more than my job's worth.'

Though far from complete, this brings my survey of jazz at Reading University to a close, at least for the time being. There must be many more stories languishing in the University archives, the dusty recesses of the Students' Union, or firmly implanted in the personal memories of very many students; all waiting to be told.

Does the university have an oral history project I wonder? Perhaps one day it will be possible to bring them to light, including of course, the formative career of a certain **Mr Jamie Cullum**.

Meanwhile, whatever happened to ...?

Steve Mardell kindly offered the following memories of Reading in response to reading 'You Didn't Look Like a Drummer', a three-part interview with John Marshall posted on 'The Jazzmann' website:

I played with John once or twice at the Lower Ship, Reading when we were undergraduates. He was an amazing drummer then, and Dave Watkins a really outstanding piano player and leader. I was an indifferent guitar player

but did what I could. When I started with the band in 1959, it was known as the Brass Monkeys, a title inherited from the previous trad years and regarded by Dave and Don Richards as not entirely reflecting our faltering trend towards bop. Dave led us into more progressive directions, with careful arrangements, and for me, rather difficult harmonies! But he was always gracious enough to write them out for me. John was way ahead of the game. At the age of seventy-nine I still play a Gretsch 6120.

John Marshall arrived at Reading in 1960 to study Psychology, following a year working for the Civil Service as a Trainee Executive Officer in the Trustees Office. He spent his first year in digs with the 'lovely' Mrs Entwistle, in a neat semi-detached house in the London Road. He enjoyed the Psychology course, but admits that he spent far too much playing. The formidable head of department, Professor Magdalen D. Vernon, who didn't suffer fools gladly, once remarked to him, 'Mr. Marshall, I understand that you play the drums. It would be nice of you if you could show up in the department occasionally.'



He graduated in 1963 to pursue a career in jazz and jazz/rock, establishing himself as one of the foremost drummers of his generation. He was voted top drummer in the 1974 and 1973 *Melody Maker* reader's poll and has recorded over 100 albums including twenty-five with Soft Machine and nine with Nucleus. His career has taken him all-over the world and he has played with an eclectic range of musicians from Acker Bilk to Nigel Kennedy and Anthony Braxton.

A contemporary remembers having 'the privilege of using John's drum kit at jazz club ... 'it was the first metal-shelled Ludwig kit in UK. Such memories!'

The full interview with John Marshall is attached to this booklet as an appendix.

Adrian Read continued to play and lead groups after he completed a post-graduate course at Reading in 1960. 1963 finds him leading a trio and representing Macclesfield as a finalist in the first *National Amateur Jazz Band Contest*, held at Richmond on 11 August, as part of the third National Jazz Festival.

A thirty-minute film, sponsored by Carrera's Tobacco Company, makers of Guards cigarettes, was made of the event. It recently emerged from obscurity and thanks to the detective work of jazz archivist Graham Langley, each of the members of the fifteen competing bands have been identified. The film has been transferred to DVD and is now held by the National Jazz Archive, at Loughton Central Library, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD.

Graham Langley presented this remarkable film for the first time in over fifty years at the 2017 Conference of the International Association of Jazz Record Collectors (UK) held in Reading.

Bob Stuckey Bob Stuckey was not a student at Reading University, but he was part of the local jazz scene in the 1960s and as he is mentioned in the text, warrants a place in this section of the article.

Bob grew up in Burghfield and attended Reading School. He is remembered by one contemporary not only for his interest in jazz but as the artist responsible for a celebrated mural which adorned a school wall.

While he was still at school, he sometimes used to play the piano at the Latin Quarter Club in Duke Street. After school, he spent one year at art college in London before joining a blues band which included the future hit singer/songwriter Labi Siffre on guitar. Bob's focus moved away from the piano to the Hammond organ and he found one in the Covent Garden club, Annie's Room, run by vocalist Annie Ross who had found fame in the 1950s as a member of the ground-breaking vocal group Lambert, Hendricks and Ross.

Bob, Labi and drummer Woody Martin formed a trio to play in the intervals between sets by visiting American stars of the jazz world. At various times the club hosted Joe Williams, Nina Simone, Erroll Garner, Stuff Smith, Blossom Dearie, Anita O'Day and Jon Hendricks amongst many others

When the club folded Bob purchased his own Hammond and formed a group with South African alto saxophonist Dudu Pukwana, Phil Lee on guitar and Reading University graduate John Marshall on drums. The band played many 'all-nighters' at Ronnie Scott's Old Place in Gerrard Street and some Sunday sessions at the new club in Frith Street. They made three radio recordings for BBC 'Jazz Club', during the course of 1967 and 1968, which were broadcast alongside such bands as the Ray Warleigh Quintet, the New Jazz Orchestra, John Steven's Spontaneous Jazz Ensemble, the Tommy Whittle/Harry Klein Quintet and a band from the University of Strathclyde, the Ian McHaffie Quartet. Tracks from two of the sessions were later issued by the late John Jack on his Cadillac record label as 'Night Time is the Right Time- Sound of the 60s'



In 1968, Bob, described by writer/musician Dave Gelly as ‘the boy wonder of the Hamond organ’ quit the jazz scene and followed a varied path which embraced the study of classical music in Glasgow, further studies in the sitar and phonetics in Amsterdam and piano improvisations for both the Rambert Ballet and the National Ballet School in London. He returned to jazz in the 1990s to become a specialist in vocal accompaniment and to sing himself, as he had done in Annie’s Room.

More recently he has hosted a monthly gig at the Café Yukari, near Kew Bridge, a tiny venue of only 30 seats which boasts a magnificent Steinway piano. Its ‘Grape Vine’ e-newsletter bears the hallmark of Bob’s distinctive artistic style. His guests have included another native of Reading, the film director Peter Strickland, a specialist in the art of vocalese.

Johnny Taylor, a graduate in Geography, was a member of Michael Garrick’s quartet and trio, as bass player, from 1960 until 1964. He took part in Garrick’s early broadcasts for the BBC and recordings. Under the leadership of poet Jeremy Robson and musical direction of Garrick, he toured with ‘Poetry & Jazz in Concert’, in the company of poets Adrian Mitchell, Danny Abse and Laurie Lee, and with Shake Keane (trumpet and flugelhorn) and Joe Harriott (alto saxophone) added to the instrumental line-up. Away from Garrick, he deputised on occasion for Pete McGurk, to play with the Dudley Moore Trio at the Establishment Club opened by Peter Cook in Greek Street, London in 1961. Taylor left England in 1964 to settle in Norway where he established a career as a translator and proof reader.



The picture above shows Johnny Taylor as a member of the Michael Garrick Quartet, with Garrick piano, Dave Jones vibes and Terry Cox drums, BBC *Jazz Club* recording, Paris Theatre, Lower Regent Street, London 21st June 1960.

Dave Watkins who led what Alan Vincent (French 1964, Dip.Ed 1965) described as ‘the best University jazz band of the 1960s’, graduated from Reading with a degree in Fine Arts. Considered to be one of the most eminent figures in of British design, he designed the medals for the London Olympic Games of 2012. John Marshall remembers Dave as a ‘hugely talented individual who could turn his hand to anything; he wrote a hit song for Andy Williams – ‘It’s So Easy’ which reached #13 in the UK charts in 1970’.

Dave was married to Wendy Ramshaw, who studied for a teaching diploma at Reading. She also became a hugely influential figure in design. Her signature ringsets are part of permanent collections in the V & A and other museums across the world. She designed the new Edinburgh Gates at Hyde Park in 2015 and the Millennium Medal presented to Queen Elizabeth II on 31st December 1998. She was honoured with a CBE in 2003. Wendy sadly passed away in December 2018.

Cast of Characters

Alumni of the University of Reading Jazz Club 1957-1963

Subjects have been listed where known

Malcolm Bradfield	German
Adrian Bull	Agricultural Economics
Colin Cockshaw	Mathematics and Geography
Dickie Coles	
Patricia Entwistle	
Rudolph Ferrier	Agricultural Chemistry
George Gammer	Geology
Nick Georgiades	
Mike Goldsmith	
Brian Hawkins	
Bob Hollingworth	Agricultural Chemistry.
Hubert Haloun	Political Economy
Steve Mardell	Classics (1961)
John Marshall	Psychology
Pete Morris	Mathematics and Chemistry.
Ray Pope	Science
George Richardson	
Don Richards	
Adrian Read	Post-graduate Education
Geoff Staines	
Bob Stuckey	
Gordon Tams	
Johnny Taylor	Geography
Mary Tinkler	Modern Languages
Dave Watkins	Fine Arts
Chris Worth	French

Illustrations and Picture Credits

1. Poster for Sid Phillips & His Band (National Jazz Archive)
2. The Jazz Couriers: Ronnie Scott and Tubby Hayes
3. Poster announcing the 1st Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest, 11th November 1961 (Reading Standard Archive)
4. The Adrian Read Trio: Adrian Read piano, Rudolph Ferrier bass, John Marshall drums (John Marshall)
5. The Lower Ship, Duke Street, Reading (c.2016) once the venue for the University of Reading Jazz Club (Trevor Bannister)
6. The Adrian Read Trio (Reading Standard Archive)
6. Programme cover for The Inter-University Jazz Federation Jazz Contest Final, Queen Mary College London, 1961 (John Marshall)
8. Poster announcing the 2nd Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest 3rd November 1962 (Reading Standard Archive)
9. John Marshall at the Ludwig drum kit purchased in New York in the summer of 1961 (John Marshall)
10. The Dave Watkins Trio in rehearsal for the 'Jantaculum' Gala Concert, Great Hall, University of Reading, December 1961 (Alan Vincent)
12. Dave Watkins receiving his prize as leader of the winning group at the 2nd Reading Standard Jazz Band Contest (Reading Standard Archive)
13. Chris Worth, singer with the Dave Watkins Trio (Reading Standard Archive)
14. Chris Worth with the Dave Watkins Trio in rehearsal for the 'Jantaculum' Gala Concert, Great Hall, University of Reading, December 1961 (John Marshall)
15. Ellsworth McGranaham '*Shake*' Keane
16. The former site of the 'Palomino Coffee Bar' and 'The Latin Quarter' night club, 16, Duke Street, on the corner of Thorne Street, Reading (c.2016) (Trevor Bannister)
17. Programme cover for the Inter-University Jazz Band Contest Semi-Final, Reading Town Hall, 14th February 1962 (John Marshall)
18. Programme Cover for the Inter-University Jazz Band Contest Final, Queen Mary College, London, 1962 (John Marshall)
19. Arthur Brown - 'The God of Hell-Fire'
20. Tubby Hayes
21. Sonny Rollins and Max Roach

23. Giant of the tenor saxophone Ben Webster with bassist Dave Green, Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club (c.1968) (Dave Green Archive)
25. CD cover for 'Gigs: Presenting ... Mick Garrett: The Michael Garrick Trio (Michael Garrick Estate)
26. John Marshall (John Marshall)
28. The Bob Stuckey Quartet: Dudu Pukwana, John Marshall, Bob Stuckey, Phil Lee (Val Wilmer)
29. Johnny Taylor, bass, a member of the Michael Garrick Quartet, with Garrick piano, Dave Jones vibes and Terry Cox drums, BBC *Jazz Club* recording, Paris Theatre, Lower Regent Street, London 21st June 1960.

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Appendix:

You Didn't Look Like a Drummer
John Marshall reflects on his life in jazz



John Marshall fondly remembers an occasion early in his career when he depped with Acker Bilk and His Paramount Jazz Band, one of the most popular and successful 'trad' bands of the day. 'I got a last-minute call to do one gig with Acker. The band bus picked me up in Charing Cross Road and we drove to an American air base in great comfort, with aircraft-style seats that you could swing round to form a circle – very handy for passing the whisky bottle round after the gig. Acker had a good band, all went very well, and I really enjoyed myself, mainly thanks to the pianist Stan Greig, a fine drummer himself, who led me through the arrangements. On the way back to London, Acker looked at me and said, "Sorry I didn't speak to you on the way up, but you didn't look like a drummer to me."

Appearances apart, it's not a mistake anyone could make once John is settled behind his drum kit. Then and now, he brings a palpable sense of energy and excitement to the stage, and the remarkable skills and unique feeling for time

that make him one of the greatest drummers of his, or any, generation. At an age when many would be content to settle for the 'pipe and slippers' of retirement, he has just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of Soft Machine, and his own forty-six-year membership of the band, with a gruelling tour to touch base with fans in Japan, Canada, the east and west coasts of the States, and the Netherlands. In between hitting the road for dates in the UK and looking ahead to his appearance at the 2019 Cheltenham Jazz Festival with John Surman, John Warren & The Brass Project, John kindly found time to reflect on his musical career.

I was born John Stanley Marshall in Isleworth, Middlesex on the 28th August 1941 and grew up in neighbouring Hounslow. I had a fascination for drums from an early age and used to love watching the pit drummers at the variety theatres in Chiswick and Kingston that we visited as a family. And then one year I followed the Borough Road Teacher Training College Rag Parade back to the college where a jazz band set themselves up to play in the grounds. The drummer just played 'ting-a-ling-a-ling, ting-a-ling-a-ling' on the ride cymbal. I thought to myself, 'I quite fancy doing this', and got into playing. I used to play along to Buck Clayton records at a friend's house while he strummed a guitar and later on, we formed a little band at school. I took lessons on Saturday mornings with Jimmy Marshall (of Marshall amps fame!) and joined the Bernie Simmons Swinging Students Big Band.

Americans weren't allowed to play here when I was younger, so I grew up listening to English big band drummers. Phil Seaman was a force of nature who either played like a dream or was absolutely dreadful. I didn't mind! Who's counting? In later years I got to know him and would give him a lift home after a gig. Allan Ganley was an immaculate drummer and a very generous guy who took me for some lessons. Getting information out of people was often quite tricky; they'd spent years getting their 'thing' together, so you could understand why they were reluctant to pass anything on to a young 'whipper-snapper' who could put it altogether in a matter of seconds. Allan wasn't at all like that. Great guy! Bobby Orr, a lovely guy and very original player, was another hero of mine.

We were brought up to think that we lacked the magic ingredient that made American drummers like Philly Joe Jones, Max Roach, Art Blakey Kenny Clarke, Roy Haynes and Dannie Richmond so special and that we would never get near to them. It fostered a sort of inferiority complex. They were certainly very exotic, but gradually we began to realise that there was an 'American' way of playing and a 'European' way, and even an 'English' subset of playing.

I didn't realise that until years later when I toured in the States for the first time. People turned up at gigs with tapes they'd taken off the radio and stuff we'd done. 'These are Americans?' I thought, 'They're fans and they think we're great!' Then the 'penny-dropped'. We were *different*. The stuff that *we* thought to be exotic was run-of-the-mill to them – our music had a different quality and that's what they liked. As for me, having worked with so many electric bands, I played much louder than the norm. My 'home' volume is more; I'm a loud drummer and that's it!

The other two things that separated us from the Americans, and again I didn't appreciate this until much later, were how they were trained and how they held the sticks. They came up through the school of rudiments and used the 'orthodox grip' - with the right-hand above the stick and the left-hand below it, whereas the 'rudiments' were less a part of my training and I was taught to use the 'matched grip' - you held the sticks in exactly the same way in each hand. I've always assumed that Phil Seaman was responsible for us using 'matched grip'. It was pretty controversial at the time and when I took some lessons with Philly Joe he shouted, 'You can't play drums like that!' Anyway, when the Americans saw Ringo Starr using 'matched grip' they started to think that if he was so successful, that must be the way to play and copied him. It's not an issue anymore, but do you think the Americans will own-up to the technique coming from this side of the Atlantic? They're very resistant to that idea.

Having said that, there's a certain 'openness' about some American drummers which is very attractive. I loved Dannie Richmond's playing with Charlie Mingus. Roy Haynes is very special, which I think is not unconnected to his working with great singers like Sarah Vaughan for much of his career. He's still playing. He spent a lot of time talking when I saw him a couple of years ago, but who could blame him at age 93! You also come across total eccentrics

like Bobby Moses, who played with Gary Burton. He used to do these amazing solos without ever hitting the drums. He went through the whole thing, with everybody yelling at him. Crazy, but a very nice guy.

Philly Joe Jones was a fantastic character and a very funny man. I took some lessons with him when he was living in London in the late-1960s and sharing a flat with the bassist John Hart. He was doubtless here for some dodgy reason and didn't have a work permit which meant that officially he couldn't play, but he could teach. I've already mentioned that he shouted at me for using 'matched grip'. He was very conservative, but he introduced me to a whole area of military-style playing which I'd completely ignored and written-off as being irrelevant to jazz, the rudimental system.

I'd always dismissed the rudiments as being nothing more than exercises, rather like performing PE at school. Philly Joe, I soon discovered, didn't make a move without using a rudiment. He showed me how to use them creatively to make phrases. It was the *way* he used them that gave his playing its special quality. And of course, he was probably the world's best brush player. 'When you're playing with a singer,' he would say, "You play like this (John imitates the grace and elegance of Philly Joe's brush strokes) and everybody watches you. **No** one's watching the b....' Incredible! He claimed that he was the first black tram driver in Chicago and used to stop off to play and take a drink at various bars *en route*. How much was true I don't know, but they were great stories. Some pupils had a hard time with Philly Joe because he was so often 'out-of-it' but I got on well and he was a great teacher.

There were three Marshalls in my class at Isleworth Grammar School - J.A., R.S. and me, J.S. There were also a lot around on the scene in later years. I would sometimes get panic phone calls asking, 'How quickly can you get to the studios?' They'd booked the wrong John Marshall, thinking that I was John Marshall the trombone player. That problem was solved when he eventually joined Kurt Edelhagen in Berlin. There was the singer John Marshall in Germany and Johnny Marshall the baritone player who played with Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames.

I wasn't considered 'university material' by the staff at school and I joined the Civil Service as an Executive Officer in the Public Trustees Office after A Levels. The father of my then girlfriend, a university teacher, however, encouraged me to apply the following year. He explained that I would qualify for a grant so that everything would be paid for; talk about the 'good old days'! I chose to study Psychology because it was something new and completely different to the arts subjects, I'd studied at sixth form. My choice of Reading was made for me because it was the only university that offered the subject as a BA rather than a BSc which would have needed a background in science. I eventually made a late application in the summer of 1960 and was just about to set off with a friend on hitch-hiking trip to the Continent when a letter arrived offering me a place. The Trustee's Office wasn't too pleased, but my mother was delighted. She thought it would get drums out of my system – little did she know!

Reading was a very small university in those days with about 1,500 students, mostly based in the Edwardian red-brick campus near the town centre. Whiteknights Park was very new and apart from the Physics Block and the Faculty of Letters everything else was still being built. I spent my first year in digs with the lovely Mrs Entwistle. I enjoyed the Psychology course but spent far too much playing. The formidable head of department, Professor Magdalen D. Vernon, who didn't suffer fools gladly, once remarked to me, 'Mr. Marshall, I understand that you play the drums. It would be nice of you if you could show up in the department occasionally.'

There was a lively university jazz scene in those days, with at least four bands playing in various styles and a Jazz Club that met every Monday night during term-time at the Lower Ship pub just off Reading town centre. Adrian Bull led the Ad Hoc 'trad' band, which included the pianist Bob Stuckey, who's still very active and with whom I later worked in a quartet with Dudu Pukwana. Guitarist Geoff Staines had his quartet, with Nick Georgiades on drums. I joined a trio led by the pianist Adrian Read, a post-grad Education student who styled himself on Oscar Peterson, along with Rudolph Ferrier on bass. We also formed the rhythm section of the Swingtet led by the trumpeter Don Richards.

When Adrian and Don graduated the following year, Rudi and I joined Dave Watkins, a brilliant pianist and original composer. None of us, it should be said, were from the Music Department; jazz was a definite 'no-no' in those days, and they wouldn't have anything to do with it. We came from all sorts of subject backgrounds: Post-Graduate Education, Agriculture, Chemistry, Geography, Classics, Psychology in my case and in Dave Watkins', Fine Arts. Dave Watkins was married to Wendy Ramshaw, who was studying for a teacher-training diploma. They were fantastic people and hugely talented. Dave could turn his hand to anything; he wrote a hit song for Andy Williams – 'It's So Easy' which reached #13 in the UK charts in 1970 and became an eminent figure in British design. He designed the medals for the 2012 London Olympic Games. Wendy's signature ringsets are part of permanent collections in the V & A and other museums across the world. She designed the new Edinburgh Gates at Hyde Park in 2015, the Millennium Medal presented to Queen Elizabeth II on 31st December 1998 and was honoured with a CBE in 2003. Her death in December 2018 was a great loss.

Dave was a great innovator and shook the place up a little when he took three numbers from the Johnny Dankworth/Cleo Laine album 'Shakespeare and All That Jazz' and arranged them for the trio. Chris Worth, a French language student delivered the vocals suitably attired in Tudor costume. We performed at the 'Jantaculum', an annual pre-Christmas gala of music and poetry, in the rarefied atmosphere of the University Great Hall in December 1961. It was considered very daring at the time!

I played with Adrian's Trio and Don's Swingtet at the first 'Reading Standard' Jazz Band Contest on 11th November 1960 in front of a packed crowd of about 1,000 at the Olympia Ballroom. Three local bands, the Just Jazz Quintet, the Alvin Westcot Seven and the Kid Forsyth Jazzmen completed the line-up. The resident Don Turk Orchestra, which had an excellent drummer in Byron Davis, provided the 'continuity' music from the ballroom's second stage to keep the dancers happy. I remember that Benny Green was one of the judges. Adrian's trio took second place to the Just Jazz Quintet and that earned us an interval spot at the New Luton Jazz Club early in 1961. Don's third place was rewarded with a booking for Reading's first 'All-Niter' on 20th January 1961. The bill included 'trad' stars Mickey Ashman, Ken Colyer and the Clyde

Valley Stompers, as well as the Just Jazz Quintet and Alvin Westcot's Jazztet. A free breakfast was promised to those who lasted the full course of the event. As the 'Standard's' jazz correspondent noted at the time – 'not a bad performance from the two student bands!'

I was back the next year with Dave Watkins. The 'Standard' hyped-up the event in the week's leading up to the second contest on 3rd November. The BBC producer Terry Henebery, guitarist and broadcaster Ken Sykora and Matthew Turner, well-known locally as the leader of the Silver Bell Jazz Band, were enlisted as judges. The star bandleader and drummer Eric Delaney drew the running-order at a gig he was playing at the local Majestic Ballroom a few days before the contest. The line-up included four 'trad' bands, Alvin Westcot Jazztet, the Blue Jays Jazz Band, the Olympians and the 'Kid' Forsythe Jazz Band, and two modern, the Dave Price Quartet and us. The Ad Hoc Band had been scheduled to compete but withdrew at the last moment.

We won and Dave stepped up to receive the Golden Trumpet Challenge Trophy. I was voted 'Top Musician of The Evening' and awarded a separate trophy and a record voucher from Barnes & Avis, a local music and record store. It's the only trophy I've ever received apart from winning the *Melody Maker* jazz poll in 1973 and 1974, when Soft Machine was also voted top small group.

In addition, we were promised an interval gig at the Marquee, then in Oxford Street, and a BBC audition. Ken Sykora is reported to have said that, 'we were a very promising group destined for higher things', while Les Mason, who ran the Robinson Crusoe Club at California Country Club, Wokingham said that he, 'would like the group to play with Ronnie Scott on Ronnie's next visit to the club'.

The 'Reading Standard' covered jazz pretty extensively at that time, not just the popular 'trad' bands that appeared at the Town Hall and Olympia Ballroom, but our university Jazz Club as well. I got several mentions in the summer of 1961:

Although Kenny Ball was the main attraction at Olympia (Ballroom) on Tuesday of last week (a capacity crowd turned out to hear him play), a large share of the honours must go to the Don Richards' Swingtet (who played the interval spot) ... The really outstanding member of the group was drummer John Marshall. He had some excellent ideas and carried them out with a skill and confidence which caused people to praise this polished performance. One fan thought the group by far the best in Reading and even went so far as to suggest that they should get together when they leave university and turn professional.

... Incidentally, John is due to play at the Festival Hall next Thursday (6th June), probably sitting in with the Mike Garrick Quartet ('Jazz and Voices' concert). He has already played with this group three times this year, including a London date and the Bushy Club.

The paper even reported on my plans for the summer vacation:

John hopes to spend the vacation across the Atlantic and I hope we will be hearing some first-hand news from that scene.

I flew to America that summer with a friend from Bristol University on a trip organised by what was known as the Canada Club; the Club chartered a flight, dumped you in Canada at the beginning of the summer and then flew you home six or seven weeks later, leaving you to make your own arrangements in between. We made a beeline to New York and Manny's famous music store in West 48th Street where I bought a beautiful set of Ludwig drums, otherwise unobtainable at home.

My friend's uncle worked on one of the Cunard Queen liners, so we put the drums into a taxi and drove to the docks for him to ship home. The customs duty would have been insane, but he somehow got away with only paying £10.00. It cost me a crate of whisky when we got home - a lot of money in those days - but still cheap at the price. I was aware of only one other person at home with a Ludwig kit. I've still got it!

The Inter-University Jazz Federation Jazz Band Competition was an important part of the calendar in those days. Fifty or sixty bands of all jazz styles would compete each year and the top dozen or so would progress from regional heats to the Finals held just before Easter.

Don Richards Swingtet was eliminated in the semi-finals at Southampton on 22nd February 1961, but I made it through to the Finals at Queen Mary College, London with Adrian Read a few weeks later. We were competing against bands from Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, Newcastle, Exeter, Southampton and Cambridge, and two from Oxford. Benny Green Alun Morgan, Steve Race and Johnny Dankworth formed the team of judges and the whole show was compered by George Melly.

The following year, playing with Dave Watkins, we took second place in the semi-final held at Reading Town Hall and earned this comment in the programme for the finals which took place once again at Queen Mary College: The Dave Watkins Trio produced the first outstanding drummer of the evening (John Marshall) and were also the first group to show an understanding of balance and dynamic contrast. The quality I admired most in their performance was the ability to create tension – a hallmark of a good group. Dave himself is a pianist with a highly developed sense of form and melody. I was selected as a ‘musician deserving special mention’, which was great, but we found ourselves competing against tough opposition in the final with bands from Leeds, Birmingham, Southampton, Liverpool, Leicester, Nottingham, Queen’s Belfast, Oxford and Cambridge. Just as they had a year earlier, Cambridge wiped the board. They had a heavy-duty band of professional standard comprising Art Themen, Dave Gelly, Lionel Grigson, and John Hart, a very good bass player, who I mentioned earlier in connection with Philly Joe Jones, and who tragically died in a car accident in France. The drum chair was occupied in 1961 by George Walden, later to become a minister in the Thatcher government, and by Jonathan Lynn in 1962. He, of course wrote ‘Yes Minister’ with Anthony Jay.

There are several other names that spring out from those competitions: Bryant Marriott (Oxford) and Roger Eames (Nottingham) who both became jazz producers for the BBC; Tony Faulkner (Sheffield), an excellent drummer who became an educator at Leeds College of Music; Dudley Hyams (Southampton)

who had a great band; Miles Kington and Bill Ashton (Oxford), respectively a distinguished writer and broadcaster and the founder of NYJO. Bill later became known as the 'gig king' for weddings, bar mitzvah's etc and I did a lot of work with him. I remember the Oxford guys as regarding themselves a 'class apart'. They'd be standing round the bar before the competition in a very urbane manner, discussing what they were going to play in the next round as if the result was a foregone conclusion. All these guys from university. Can you imagine that now?

Johnny Taylor, a Geography student and fine bass player was a pivotal guy in the Jazz Club. He was an energetic and very sparky guy, with lots of connections, who always seemed to be organising things and inviting guests like Dick Heckstall-Smith, Michael Garrick and Shake Keane down to the Lower Ship. He also set up the 'Jazz and Voices' concert at the Recital Room of the Royal Festival Hall in June 1961, in which I played with the Mike's Garrick Quartet. That was very special and a key event for Mike that set him up to launch his career as musical director for 'Poetry & Jazz in Concert'. Another guest, pivotal to my career, was the vibes player Dave Morse. You might say that Dave belonged to the 'second tier' of London jazz players; excellent players who played one-off gigs on a regular basis, but not part of the studio 'elite'. Dave had his own quartet and after a gig at Jazz Club he said, 'Give me a call when you come down after finals because I'm looking for a drummer'. And that proved to be my introduction to the London jazz scene. There is one other guy from those Reading days who I should mention. He would turn up at Jazz Club every now and then and ask if he could 'sit-in' and sing some blues. We didn't give much thought to it and would usually oblige. Fast forward a few years and I got a call to do some tracks on an album – 'The Crazy World of Arthur Brown'. Our blues singer was none-other than Arthur Brown himself! I remember Kit Lambert, a big name in those days and manager of The Who, being at the recording session. No personnel details were ever given on the original album, but I'm listed on the re-issue – along with about *four* other drummers. I play on three tracks. We did a version of 'Fire!', but the one they used on the hit single, and by far the best, was actually the demo with Drachen Theaker on drums. He played perfectly on that track. Ours was nowhere near as good. You have to own up sometimes!

Arthur talked to me about joining the band, but our ideas were worlds apart. He was into simple, straightforward stuff, whereas my idea was to play as complicated as possible but make it sound *simple*. I didn't hear from him again after that.

Despite Professor Vernon's misgivings, I put the work in and came away from Reading with a respectable degree in Psychology. I only ever returned to the university once after that and that was to play a gig with Nucleus.



Our generation was a very lucky. It was the zeitgeist in the arts and there was so much exciting cross-fertilization of ideas. It was a case of, 'do your own thing', but 'get it together'. The other great thing was the opportunity to play which is so lacking now. I was very adaptable, liked different things and got to play with just about everybody which was fantastic. I could be depping in Acker Bilk's trad band one night, playing with John Surman at Ronnie's 'Old Place' the next and accompanying a singer at the new club in Frith Street the night after. I even played with Indo-Jazz Fusions to a crowd of 250,000 at the 1970 Isle of Wight Festival on the same bill as Bob Dylan. The truth is that I get on with so many people and I'm good at juggling.

Dave Morse helped me tremendously to get to grips with what was happening in London and to learn 'my trade' with gigs. You soon realise that it's case of 'Wheels within wheels'; being in the right place and at the right time to meet the right people. I worked with a group called the Trebletones backing the singer, Helen Shapiro and then found myself doing a lot of Jamaican 'Bluebeat' things with Tony Washington, a piano player; 'Bluebeat' had a particular rhythmic feel. One day we got a call from the fantastic guitarist Ernest Ranglin who was producing a session at the Olympic Studios, then near Baker Street, for the singer Millie Small. I was totally overawed by all these heavy-weight session guys. We did about six different titles that day and one of them was 'My Boy Lollipop'. It came out soon after and reached #2 in the UK charts. I remember hearing it on the radio and telling my girlfriend of that time, 'That's me!'

'Fat' John Cox had a fantastic band at the Café des Artistes in Fulham Road; a heavy-weight band with Tony Roberts and Ray Warleigh on saxes, Chris Pyne on trombone, Peter Lemer on piano and Danny Thompson on bass. They played a lot of Mingus numbers which I absolutely loved as he was a great favourite of mine. All these guys doubled as members of Alexis Korner's band and it was through them that I joined Alexis to fill-in while his regular drummer went to the States for a few months. Herbie Goines, a very good singer was on vocals and apart from the blues we did some interesting instrumental things.

When that finished, Chris Pyne, put a word in for me when Eric Galloway, the resident big band leader at Butlin's Filey, needed to change drummers mid-way through the summer season. That was a brilliant move. It was a very good band and it had an enormous pad; I remember that Eric pulled out things on the last night that we'd never seen before. You can either treat those gigs as a bit of a holiday or you can do some work. I chose the latter and used the time to polish-up my reading, a decision which truly paid off when I got back to London. Following a call from guitarist Phil Lee I played a gig with Graham Collier's band, which worked out really well as I could read and take care of everything. Graham's original material had a Mingus feel and used lots of different time-signatures, which was unusual at that time and which I liked very much. The line-up was pretty fluid as Graham was always looking for

good new players, but at various times it included Phil Lee on guitar, Harry Beckett or sometimes Ian Carr on trumpet and flugelhorn, John Mumford, Mike Gibbs or Nick Evans on trombone, Elton Dean or Stan Sulzmann on saxes and Frank Ricotti on vibes. Karl Jenkins was a major addition to the band – a phenomenal talent! He played piano, baritone and soprano saxes and oboe. I can't think of anyone else, and there aren't many, who can play the oboe with such energy and expression, and yet he's very self-deprecating about his oboe playing. I listen to some of the things he played then and think, 'Crikey, he's fantastic!'

I've already mentioned the peculiar 'wheels-within-wheels' that operate within the jazz scene – here's another classic example. I first played with Jack Bruce in the Mike Gibbs Orchestra on its first gig at Lancaster University –that was one hell of a band! Amazing! *Everybody* was in it! *Everybody*!

Around that time Karl and I had an occasional group. Ian Carr, who often deppeped for Harry Beckett in Graham's band and who we also knew from Mike's Orchestra, liked Karl's compositions and what we were doing. Having decided to leave the Rendell/Carr Quintet he asked us to join him to form Nucleus, which, as you might say, worked out pretty well.

Jack would sometimes dep with Ian, so as well as the Gibbs' connection, we also got to know each other through Nucleus. When Jack was setting up his first solo album, 'Songs for a Tailor', he called me, along with guitarist Chris Spedding, another alumnus from Nucleus and the Gibbs' band, to do a couple of tracks. From there he formed his quartet with the incredible Graham Bond alto and organ. He could play them separately, or *at the same time*! We had a fantastic time, but it was a stormy set-up. Jack was notably unpredictable, and Graham became so impossible that in the end Jack had to get rid of him. Everything was going along nicely with the three of us when Corky Laing and Leslie West from Mountain arrived from the States to record in London. Jack phoned one Monday afternoon to say that he was folding the band and joining them. That was it!

He wouldn't have realised at the time, but he actually did me a favour, as it meant that I was free to join Soft Machine. That evening Soft's manager, Sean

Murphy, approached me at Ronnie's, where I'd ended up after calling into a Gerrard Street pub where Carl Palmer was doing a Drum Clinic for Paiste Cymbals. 'Would you like to join Soft Machine?' he asked. 'OK, let's see what happens,' I thought to myself. That was in 1972; forty-six years later I'm still finding out!

In truth, I didn't know much about Soft Machine and when I asked around about the band, the answer always came back that it was 'on its last legs'. Their most recent tour of Maison de la Culture had ended on a sour note when the audiences regularly walked out in protest at Elton Dean and Phil Howard playing free. There was a sort of funereal atmosphere when I met Elton, Hugh Hooper and Mike Ratledge for our first rehearsal, but things picked up after that. We finished recording the 5th album, played a Sunday lunchtime concert at Chelsea Arts College and then hit the road with three weeks in Italy before moving on to France.

A personal disaster struck in southern Italy. My wife Maxi and I had decided to take-in the sights around Naples before the second leg of the tour and stopped at a little restaurant for a seafood meal – she contracted typhoid and I got hepatitis. I didn't feel at all well, but somehow got through the tour. Maxi came back to London via Munich, in order to organise moving home to Southfields from Highgate. How she did while being so ill I don't know – the after the move she was admitted to St George's Hospital in Tooting.

Elton left and Karl Jenkins came in. His focus was moving more and more towards composition and so we saw the need for a new soloist to cover the gap left by Elton. That's when Allan Holdsworth joined Soft Machine.

We first met at a Musicians' Union Workshop shortly after he came down to London from Bradford – he'd just recorded a great album, "Igginbottom's Wrench" with his band Igginbottom – and I asked him to play with us. Karl re-wrote the entire book with new pieces of his own, plus some nice pieces by Mike Ratledge like 'The Man Who Waved at Trains', which is on our new album 'Hidden Details'.

We set off on our first tour of the States in 1975 with a new sense of focus and direction. Sadly, our record label, Columbia, decided to choose a moment midway through the tour to cull bands rated at less than 'mega-status' and pulled the funding. We covered the east coast and made some great fans who turned up in droves with their vintage albums to be signed when we went back for the Fiftieth Anniversary Tour of 2018, but never got to the west. Meanwhile, our gear was stuck in the States and ended up being impounded by Customs so you can imagine the shenanigans in trying to get it back. There was a lesson in all this; if you want to be 'gigantic', you've got to have a singer, unless of course, you're Weather Report or John McLaughlin. Soft Machine didn't carry that sort of weight.

The tour however, served to raise Allan's profile and he became such hot property that Tony Williams wanted to sign him for Lifetime. To everyone's relief he announced that he would stay with Soft Machine, only to change his mind a few days ahead of our next tour. Sean Murphy found a note on his office desk – 'Gone to the States. Allan'.

'Allan, we're supposed to be starting a tour at the end of the week!' I explained when I called him in the States.

'Gazeuse!' came the reply in his broad Yorkshire accent ('Gazeuse' was Allan's favourite epithet. He'd found on a Perrier bottle, liked the sound of it and used at every opportunity.) 'Gazeuse. What's happening? I'm here.'

We had to cancel the tour. But the upshot was that Allan recommended John Etheridge and 'the rest', as you might say, 'is history'.

Soft Machine lay dormant until 2001. Leonardo Pavkovic, an incredibly knowledgeable New York based impresario of Croatian origin, who speaks at least five languages, was a great mate of Elton Dean's and a massive fan of the band. He came up with the idea of putting a new band together. It would comprise of Elton, Allan, Hugh and myself, and would be billed as Soft Works. I didn't show any interest at first when Elton first broached the idea. I was the only one who'd played with everybody and it didn't sound like a compatible quartet to me. But sometimes what's incompatible on paper, works well in real life, so after a bit more time it seemed like worth having a go and I thought, 'Let's do it'.

All went well, with Leonardo as the driving force. We visited Japan and recorded an album and then history repeated itself. John Etheridge came in Allan took his leave. We wanted a title to distinguish ourselves from the original band because Karl wasn't involved and we came up with the title, Soft Machine Legacy. Theo Travis, who had a strong prog-rock background and had often depped with the band, came in on flute, saxes and keyboards, when Elton passed away in 2006. When Hugh died in 2009, Roy Babbington, whose association with the band dated back to 1973, took his place on bass. Some people imagined that Soft Machine Legacy was merely a tribute band, but the 'new' line-up was actually a continuation of the original Soft Machine, so we decided to revert to the proper title. It's as Soft Machine and with the



continued support of Leonardo, putting his health at risk in the process, that we've toured to celebrate the band's fiftieth year, with concerts in the States, Canada, Japan and the Netherlands, plus numerous dates in the UK, and recorded 'Hidden Details'.

Lots of people have commented on the brilliant sound quality on 'Hidden Details'. That was thanks to Jon Hiseman's production. What an engineer! He was another one of those people, like Dave Watkins, who could do anything he put his mind to and do it fantastically well. He was a fantastic drummer,

an absolute master using two bass drums, and an amazing character with such a positive attitude. Working with a fellow drummer as the engineer can make you feel a bit 'under the cosh', but never with Jon. He'd take time to work out how to get the best sound from everything that I was doing. His recent death was a huge loss to music and an even greater loss to his wife Barbara (Thompson) as he was her principal carer.

I suppose that you could describe my career as 'multi-faceted'. I've been able to weave my career together from all manner of fascinating musical threads. Salena Jones provided my 'in' to Ronnie's, where I practically lived for a while working with some wonderful singers. It went so well with Salena that our three-week booking was extended to six. Working with singers can be limiting for drummers, but I love it. I played a lot with Annie Ross and did a lovely TV 'special' with the great Sarah Vaughan. She wasn't in the greatest shape as her husband had only recently died, but it was beautiful.

I especially liked playing with Esther Morrow, who had worked with Ellington on his Sacred Music concerts. Joy Marshall had a reputation for 'being difficult' and someone warned me to "watch out!" when I took the booking to play with her, but she was alright. You just have to get on and play. Singers are often under a lot of pressure and it doesn't help to be confrontational. The last thing anyone needs is aggravation. Life's too short. Elaine Delmar, on the other hand, was the complete opposite, an absolute sweetheart, while Norma Winstone is great in any context, and incredibly creative, whether in a small group or a big band like Kenny Wheeler's.

Harry South was a very nice guy and an excellent 'straight-ahead' jazz arranger. He used Roy Babbington and I almost exclusively for a while with his studio orchestra. Harry wrote the themes and incidental music for TV shows like the 'Chinese Detective' 'Give Us A Break' and 'Big Deal'. Do you remember those? He was a great character, loved by everyone, even if he had an aversion to the recording technology of the day. He liked to do things 'his way'. Mike Gibbs provided the music for the 'The Goodies' comedy series and we did all of those. Great fun!

In the early 1980s I worked extensively in Germany, juggling gigs with Soft Machine alongside work with the NDR Big Band in Hamburg. I met Eberhard Weber in the second half of the 1970s and played with him on a record date led by the German guitarist Volker Kriegel (Missing Link). Eberhard subsequently asked me to join his quartet 'Colours'. I loved working with him; a fantastic bass player and is a fantastic man. We recorded with Manfred Eicher for his ECM label and the Goethe Institute subsidised two tours of the States and a six-week tour of Australia and New Zealand. A great band. Loved it!

I met another wonderful bassist, Arild Anderson, through the EBU (European Broadcasting Union). Each year, the radio stations of member countries put a big band together for a concert, broadcast and recorded by the host station. When the BBC hosted the event at Golder's Green Hippodrome, John Taylor, Chris Laurence and I formed the rhythm section. Although Arild was with a Norwegian band, he asked if he could play with us, so that we would have two basses, with Arild playing over-the-top of Chris. Since then we've been involved in a lot of projects together and keep in regular touch.

Jeff Clyne was lovely to play with, a very special bloke. He was four years older than me and came up in that special Tubby Hayes – Jazz Couriers' generation of players. And wow, what a band that was! But Jeff moved on. He had a wonderful love/hate relationship with John Stevens. They loved playing together but drove each other mad in the process. I miss him dreadfully.

The bass player/drummer relationship is very, very special. It's to do with how you hear the time. Some bass players and some drummers push on the beat, others lay-back. It's very important finding people that you feel completely comfortable with and adjusting those two things. As you get older you become more flexible; at least I hope so. I've been incredibly lucky to play with such great players as Jeff, Chris, Dave (Holland) Eberhard, Arild, and of course Lucas Lindholm.

John Surman has a special place in my career. We've had a long association that goes right back to Ronnie's 'Old Place'. He's an absolute giant and one of the first of our generation to make an international mark. We had a fantastic

quartet with John, John Taylor, a genius, on piano and Chris Laurence, another genius, on bass. Music is people and if you get the chemistry together as we did, it just communicates, no matter what style of music you play. We shall be playing together again in May of this year (2019) at the Cheltenham Jazz Festival to celebrate John's 75th birthday with a rare live performance of The Brass Project.

Music is a strange and incredible process. It's what we do, and yet in a sense we don't even think about it; we just 'do it'. When someone puts a band together, they pick people who will bring their own way of playing and musical personality to the music. Nobody needs to tell you what to do; it's improvised music so you don't want any constraints. If there's ever a doubt in my mind, I might ask, 'How do you want this?' and inevitably the answer comes back, 'Yes, well, it could be a little bit like this or maybe a little bit like that ... Whatever *you* think, really?'

It comes back to you. That's what the world of jazz is all about. It's a personal voice. That was the whole thing with Ellington; he chose people for their musical qualities. He didn't have to tell them how to play; the music was written around them and that's how it should be. I've been incredibly lucky to have been playing this long and to have come up with a generation of amazingly talented people of like mind. 'It's been a blast,' as they say. And long may it continue!

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Michael Gibbs	Michael Gibbs	Deram (1969)
Elastic Rock	Nucleus	Vertigo (1970)
Harmony Row	Jack Bruce	Polydor (1971)
Bundles	Soft Machine	Harvest 1974/Esoteric (2010)
Softs	Soft Machine	(Harvest 1976/Esoteric (2010)
Morning Glory	John Surman	Island 1973/Fledg'ling (2017)
Stranger Than Fiction	John Surman	ECM (1994)
Silent Feet	Eberhard Weber's Colours	ECM (1977)
Achirana	Andersen/Tsabropolous/Marshall	ECM (2000)
Hidden Details	Soft Machine	Dyad (2018)

