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Author

Parham, Douglas Scott

Publication Date

1994

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara

Recognizing a Master in the Field;
Documenting the Life of Vernon Martin

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Music

by

Douglas Scott Parham

Committee in charge:

Professor Lester P. Monts, Chairman

Professor Dolores Hsu

Professor Earl Stewart

December 1993

Abstract

RECOGNIZING A MASTER IN THE FIELD;
DOCUMENTING THE CAREER OF VERNON MARTIN

Douglas Parham

The values and musical output of jazz bassist and composer Vernon Martin are scrutinized in detail in a search for links between musical expression and social behavior. The methods developed in the discipline of ethnomusicology, usually applied to the study of non-western and traditional musics are here used to reveal patterns in the improvised music of a living representative of modern urban U.S. culture.

Martin, who is best known for his recorded and live performances with multi-instrumentalist Roland Kirk, is seen in the light of commentaries drawn from such disparate sources as Down Beat magazine, the subject's own recollections, a sample of student concert reviews and the writer's personal interviews with the bassist and many of his associates.

An hypothesis is formulated, searching for similarities in Martin's stated values drawn from his

personal comments and the texts of his many songs, and his actual behavior as observed in the historical record as well as through the writer's documented personal observations.

Evidence is found to support the assumptions in the hypothesis; there is a high degree of integrity between Martin's stated values and his observable behavior.

Included in the report are analyses of Martin's compositions and improvised passages. Detailed transcriptions are offered as the main form of data and are subjected to exhaustive tests in a search for patterns that exemplify Martin's musical personality.

The findings are viewed from varied perspectives, from Mehegan to Nketia to Abrahamson to include frames of reference from the jazz, Africanist and folklorist matrices.

The findings show that Martin, an unknown and underemployed musician in urban U.S., is in reality an extremely prolific, highly original artist whose art is integrated into his life-style. That this man receives little notice from the society at large is a chilling sign of the times.

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Introduction

The literature of Ethnomusicology has heretofore concerned itself primarily with the study of the folk and traditional musics of the non-western world, leaving the balance to conventional musicologists who have focused mainly on the classical music of the western world. Jazz music, a phenomenon of the twentieth century falling in neither category, has generally evaded the interest of the research scholar and because of this, little is known of this interesting and complex music. Though many popular works have dealt with the history of jazz, and some have depicted certain colorful individuals within the jazz field, there is a paucity of scholarly material written about this music culture and it is to this scarcity that the present project will be addressed.

Bruno Nettl, in his Theory And Method In Ethnomusicology has suggested:

Recording the musical biography of an ordinary individual in western culture would seem to be one way in which ethnomusicological methods could be applied to western civilization to find information which conventional musicology has not made available.
(Nettl 1964:67)

Vernon Martin, a Black jazz musician, was born in Toledo, Ohio in January, 1932. He arrived in New York in 1947 where he won an amateur vocal competition. After a few years of observing the New York jazz scene in its heyday, he decided to learn the bass fiddle and by 1960 was skilled enough to become a regular member of multi-instrumentalist Roland Kirk's quartet, with whom he travelled and recorded until 1970. At that time he returned to Toledo where he became active as a community leader, music teacher and the director of an original jazz ensemble featuring the youth of Toledo. In 1980 he moved to Los Angeles where he has unsuccessfully tried to gain admittance to the "clique" of musicians and promoters who control the music industry there.

A white student of jazz piano, the writer met Martin in 1983 when the bassist was living in Oxnard, California. In the ensuing years, he had the opportunity to work with Martin and to witness first-hand some of the impressive musical skills in which he is proficient. Martin possesses an extraordinary bass technique, an unfaltering sense of time, a prodigious repertoire, a fine singing voice, a social conscience, fair gifts as a composer and strong opinions as to the nature and

identity of the African-American musical expression known as jazz.

This project seeks to develop new knowledge concerning the phenomenon of jazz as it examines the relationship between the music and the personal values of Vernon Martin. Though trusting in the good will of the relationship with the bassist, the writer was nonetheless encouraged by the following rationale given by ethnomusicologist Joseph Blum concerning potential cultural barriers:

Although we ourselves may not be members of that subculture, and perhaps not even speak the same language, we are both affected by certain common factors and symbols of the society-at-large. There is no reason to assume that our frames of reference are so different, that the questions of the scholar have no relevance to the sensibilities of the subject. It is also unrealistic to assume that the answers of the subject are so foreign that they don't mean what they seem to mean. The communication gap which exists in these cases is most often based on class differences or value differences which obscure the commonality between ourselves and our subjects. (Blum 1978:138)

The writer's formal and informal studies of jazz technique on piano acquainted him with much of the lore of the jazz community, or subculture, so much so that he was confident of his abilities to elicit and comprehend the testimony that would describe Martin's feelings and

values. He was further encouraged by Mantle Hood's dictum in The Ethnomusicologist:

...the ethnomusicologist who demonstrates sincerity of interest through studies in performance has a great advantage in his search for this vital type of information, on which a true understanding of music in its social context must depend. (Hood 1982:232)

The decision was made to prepare an ethnomusicological inquiry into jazz based on the experiences of an individual in that culture, bassist Vernon Martin. The following objectives were established as means to obtain the data necessary to complete the study:

1. To identify, through collection, transcription and analysis, the fundamental elements of Martin's music.
2. To analyze the texts of Martin's songs with respect to:
 - a. text/music relationship.
 - b. topicality.
 - c. formal schemata.
 - d. transmission of historical data.
3. To determine the nature and extent of Martin's musical training.
4. To identify the motivations that impel Martin to

perform music.

5. To determine Martin's status as a professional.

Methodology

The following is an enumeration of the specific procedures implemented in order to realize the objectives and their concomitant underpinning of the entire project:

1. The writer collected available records and tape recordings of Martin's music, making additional recordings and videotapes of his performances in as many musical situations as possible. He recorded many of Martin's original compositions plus additional pieces deemed significant. This provided a source of musical data for transcription and analysis.

2. The writer sought published references to Martin's work such as concert reviews, record jackets and newspaper articles. In addition, some sixty "concert reviews" written by UCSB undergrads who attended a series of concerts given by Martin were collected. This created a source of data from which to determine the bassist's degree of critical acclaim and to establish the extent of his professionalism as an achieved status.

3. Interviews were conducted with Martin and with various of his associates. This provided a body of

narrative material to be analyzed. The intention was to "capture the musical biography of an individual through his reminiscences as well as recording his musical content." (Nettl 1964:67)

4. Transcriptions were made of a cross-section of Martin's output. This provided a source of musical data for analysis.

5. The writer spent countless hours with Martin during the years 1983-1990, including a three-month period in 1989 when he was sheltered in the bassist's home. Of course, many formal and informal events transpired during that time which the writer was privy to and these provide a deep source of experiences which is drawn upon to flesh out the meanings of the analytical findings of this project.

Martin was selected as the subject of this investigation for the following reasons:

1. He appeared to be a practitioner of the art of jazz improvisation.
2. He was available and willing to participate.
3. He was familiar to the researcher.
4. A rapport was established between the researcher and the subject.

The subject, Martin, was continually enthusiastic and apparently brutally honest about himself in his desire to fulfill his part of the inquiry to reveal the life of a jazz artist. His cooperation was lent because, among other things, this project will focus attention on his music and on jazz in general--two outcomes which he views as congruent with his life's aims.

The writer's goal of becoming a jazz artist himself led him to study jazz not only by means of private musical instruction on his instrument--piano, but also by much study of popular and technical works on jazz; many hours of study and contemplation of both recorded and live performances of jazz; conversations and informal interviews with musicians and jazz *aficionados* and short-term formal studies at the Grove School of Music in Los Angeles, as well as instruction leading to a bachelor's degree in music from UCSB. The writer felt especially qualified to conduct this investigation because of his training and interest in jazz. Hood corroborates this feeling by stating that:

Practical studies in musical performance provide a unique advantage not only in discovering the technique and stylistic idiom of an individual instrument, but also in "hearing" through actual participation, the precise

requirements of certain norms of musical style
that otherwise can be most elusive.
(Hood 1982:242)

Organization of the Report

This report consists of four chapters following this introduction, plus extensive appendices of primary source material. The first of these chapters is rendered as an objective assessment of Martin's work. It is a compilation of published criticism ferreted from out of the paucity of jazz literature, together with some naive observations made by university undergraduate students who witnessed Martin's musicality in a series of concerts in 1987-88. This is followed by a chapter that deals with values in general and within that rubric, a threefold examination of Martin's philosophy. A section on ChyReal Love. one of the bassist's female companions with whom he shared a symbiotic relationship, casts light on his means of survival, the reality behind his professionalism and its ethical ramifications. This is followed by an historical interlude that traces the development of Martin's values through his association with Roland Kirk and then his period as the director of a youth orchestra in his native Toledo. The chapter is closed by a section that reveals the presence of

Martin's deep-seated values in the texts of a series of songs which he composed over a ten-year period.

A third chapter deals with the transcription of Martin's works, subjecting them to detailed analysis *vis-a-vis* formal structure, harmonic framework, melodic development, thematic references, textual considerations, dynamics, special techniques, etc. A cross-section of his musical output was selected to insure adequate representation of his many styles of expression.

Following the final chapter wherein the threads of the various hypotheses are tied up and some conclusions are offered, a supernumerary section is appended that contains three valuable subsections:

1. An in-depth biographical interview that the writer conducted privately with Martin in which he recounts his early background in music, his subsequent training as a bassist and some of his early forays as a professional.

2. A rambling interview conducted by the writer with Martin in front of an audience of university students at an Ethnomusicology Forum in which Martin was the guest. This interview casts much light on the bassist's life-style, how he perceives his

professionalism as a means of support and to what ends he chooses to dedicate his energies.

3. A collection of Martin's original pieces not reproduced in other sections of this work.

Because of many social, political and economic factors throughout the writer's acquaintance with Martin, he has been underemployed and consequently existing at a low economic level--much of the time with no car; for the last year his instrument has been "in the shop" for lack of money to get it repaired. This notwithstanding, the bassist impressed the writer with his apparent talents as a jazz artist and composer--gifts which cannot be bought for any price, but which must be developed through years of care and dedication. The writer hypothesized that Martin was a true master in the field, remembering the words of Mantle Hood: "the field is wherever you find the subject in its natural environment." (Hood 1982:206)

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CHAPTER I

Assessment

A Glimpse at Vernon Martin
Through the Eyes
of the Public

Martin's career extends from the early 1960s to the present day. Most of his professional playing took place during the years 1961-1970 when he was, most notably, the bassist in Rahsaan Roland Kirk's group. At his own behest he left Kirk in 1970 to direct the Toledo-based youth orchestra, the Creative Spirits, which was a public-funded enterprise that endured until 1978.

The Writer's Perspective

When the writer became acquainted with Martin, he didn't know how to evaluate him--whether to consider him a "has-been", or a true unheralded jazz genius. Martin's playing seemed erratic, his intonation frequently sharp or flat. His reading was poor and his ability to hear complex lines in oral tradition ("by ear") was limited. At the same time, he was an amazing performer with a vitality and inventiveness that was extraordinary.

The writer had the opportunity to witness Martin's playing in a variety of casual and professional situations from 1984 to 1991. In one instance, in a "society" band situation (Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller-type "big band" music with all the parts written out) he played quite well--essentially because he knew most of the tunes, though he seemed to frequently miss the ending--indicating that he wasn't reading, but playing by intuition and memory. In another instance, when the writer was working with Martin on a "jazz fusion" piece--"Birdland" by Joe Zawinal--it was necessary to drill him repeatedly on a passage that was difficult to hear, but only moderately difficult to read, consisting basically of syncopated eighth notes. All this to say that, in the writer's mind, there was some question as to the professional caliber of Martin's playing and his intonation on bass. Martin will also frequently sing out of tune, although the extent to which this is done on purpose, whether consciously or not, as a color in the jazz palette remains a topic for another work.

Published Commentary

Of the many albums recorded by Martin, six have been verified. These are: "Domino", "Left and Right", "Volunteered Slavery", "Live in Paris Vols. I and II" and "Rahsaan, Rahsaan"; all recorded under the leadership of Kirk. Of these six albums, criticism has been located for "Rahsaan, Rahsaan" in Down Beat magazine where it was reviewed by journalist/jazz bassist Larry Ridley. He rated the album at three and one-half stars out of a possible five stars and commented, "...it has some very nice musical moments by the Vibration Society. Most notable are pianist Ron Burton...bassist Vernon Martin and trombonist Dick Griffin." (Ridley 1971:26)

In another Down Beat review, writer Chris Albertson rates "Volunteered Slavery" at the maximum five stars and comments, "Volunteered Slavery is an album which no serious jazz collector should be without." (Albertson 1970:21)

Other reviews describe two of Martin's performances with Kirk. Down Beat reviewer Brian Priestly wrote of Kirk's presentation at the Ronnie Scott Club in London, which included Martin, "It's a pity, by the way that he

(Kirk) doesn't find more challenging accomplices. Of the present trio, only drummer Hopps does anything that isn't very predictable and very earthbound." (Priestly 1969:21)

Alan Heinemann, a Down Beat writer reviewing the Boston Globe Jazz Festival, had this to say of Martin's performance with Kirk: "Backed by pianist Ron Burton, bassist Vernon Martin and drummer Jimmy Hopps...[Kirk] launched into a shape-shifting song that began with a boppish tenor and tenor-stritch excursion, then (after some atonal arco bass by Martin) became a raunchy New Orleans blues..." (parentheses in original). Heinemann adds, "The rhythm section was fine, too." (Heinemann 1969:37)

Kirk himself, in the original liner notes to "The Inflated Tear", released in 1968 on Atlantic Records, makes the comment, "There are many beautiful people who are part of my life and part of my music. Jimmy Hopps, Ron Burton, Vernon Martin, Sidney Bechet, Duke Ellington..." (Kirk 1968) This, in view of the fact that Martin did not appear on this album constitutes a notable tribute to his talents.

The "Volunteered Slavery" album not only features a portrait of the group including Martin on the cover, but also contains comments by Ed Williams of radio station WLIB-FM in New York who wrote the liner notes:

The men who make this music are very important to Roland; an acknowledged fact by him. One morning before the release of this date, Roland and I had a long telephone conversation about these men and what they mean to him...Vernon Martin was with the Toledo Symphony, but now he plays for fun. His association with Roland stretches over a ten year span. You can see the joy Vernon gets from his playing. Everybody in the group has a ball, it's just that Vernon is the only one who jumps up and down, (If that's that way you feel about it man, jump up and down!) (parentheses in original.) (Williams 1969)

All told, the published criticism is lukewarm regarding Martin, though overwhelmingly favorable to Kirk. These reviews, in Martin's words, "compare him to other artists" and don't evaluate his work on its own merits, which may be a little more outside the norm for jazz bass playing than the reviewers might have been expecting.

The next section presents a sample of opinions written by music students at the University of California at Santa Barbara during 1987. These students witnessed performances by Martin and his group The Brotherhood and

wrote short reviews for a class in contemporary music cultures. For many of them, this was their first experience hearing jazz.

UCSB Student Commentaries

In a series of afternoon concerts at the University Student Center's "Pub", students had a variety of comments about Martin's bass playing:

Martin performed many different styles of bass playing. Of course he used the walking bass style as an accompaniment to the melody. Other times he stepped out front to play solos in the pizzicato style, or horn-like melodies. He also used a bow to coax out beautiful sounds from his bass. Martin was at ease playing fast and furious or slow and thoughtful. (Wilson 1987)

His hands fly across the bass so fast and the combination of notes that he is able to create is incredible. (Price 1987)

Martin went crazy with his bass by practically mangling it to death with the bow. (Moskal 1987)

Martin constantly played his bass in a very dissonant manner. The notes jumped from one end of the scale to the other and were slightly difficult to listen to. (Smith 1987)

...his sudden bursts of "jamming" on the bass, as he worked the full spectrum of the strings--on occasion, he would bow his bass, work the full length of the neck and beat on the bass like an idiophone. (Sloan 1987)

...he didn't just strum the chords, but also pounded up and down the length of the instrument creating strong, strange noises. (McKeown 1987)

His left hand, instead of pressing out notes on the neck, was at the bottom right next to the bow. He played some really low notes with the bow while the other strings were being hit so hard they slapped the neck. This went on for about two minutes. (McLaren 1987)

Often, Martin would bring out his bow to give the bass an entirely different feel, transforming it from a rhythm and harmony instrument into a low-register melodic device. (Anonymous #1 1987)

He took control by plucking and strumming a driving slow beat from his bass while the rest of the band followed his lead. Then out of nowhere he began sweeping spasmodically over the strings of the bass with his bow. I was quickly lost as my untrained ear could not pick up what Vernon was doing. Maybe Vernon didn't exactly know what he was doing either?...

...it ended as Vernon once again took to his bow flailing wildly to achieve the desired sound. I can't figure him out.

...Oscar (Carmona) was just finishing up a great sax solo when Vernon began playing his bass with a bow again, only this time he was using much slower, smoother strokes. If I wasn't watching I would have thought it was still Oscar playing, it sounded just like a saxophone. (Daley 1987)

Further into the night the group performed pieces that showed the versatility of the amazing bassist, Vernon Martin, who used several techniques in his playing that demonstrated the various sounds of the bass. For instance, he used vibrato to bring more feeling to a certain note, he used many bowing

styles such as staccato, col legno, (using the back of the bow) and spiccato, (the bouncing of the bow) to produce different tones. In addition, he used harmonics (lightly fingering the strings while bowing) to create somewhat of a wind instrument effect. But of course, Vernon Martin's most prominent technique was pizzicato (the plucking of the strings) which is traditionally characteristic of jazz. (Inouye 1987)

Vernon bounced into a solo in the electric bass using his bow. His hand movements were very fast, and he seemed to get into his music with both body and mind (so much so that he fell off of the stage while dancing around). (Polse 1987)

These casual opinions rendered by young people for the most part unacquainted with jazz curiously validate many of the writer's impressions. Martin's bass playing is theatrical, it demands attention. It might, in Martin's words, "scare you"; but, just when one thinks that it's all sham and show, one is caught by some of the subtlety of the design, the art beneath the flailing and squawking. It makes sense from a sort of oblique perspective, much as modern painting, or the music of twentieth century "serious" composers does. It is a challenge to comprehend the music, an experience to witness it.

The students were also deeply affected by Martin's compositions:

Vernon and the Brotherhood took on an improvisational style during the appropriately titled piece called "Chasing My Shadow". The intro displayed experimentalist-like overtones in its erratic texture. This style continued throughout the tune interjecting smoother form on the refrain. It was fun to watch as Vernon would play something, then pause for a couple of seconds, then play again while the rest of the band tried to keep in step with him. It was kind of an improvisational challenge. (Daley 1987)

One of my favorite pieces of the night was an original Vernon Martin tune, which I didn't catch the name of. Imagine dead silence. Then, in perfect unison, sax, piano, drums and bass blast the audience with an atonal arpeggio for about four counts, and then dead silence again. The tension builds. After a perfectly timed rest of eight counts, the finely-tuned acoustic weapon is unleashed again, this time ending with a tenor sax honk, and then dead silence. I guess what impressed me (knowing how hard it is to stay in perfect time with three other musicians in the absence of some metronomic pulse) was the sheer precision of these brief pseudo-musical passages. Wow! (Anonymous #1 1987)

The program began with one of Martin's originals entitled "Chasing My Shadow." It was what I'd call modern jazz and sounded like art music. I didn't particularly care for this piece because of its odd disjunct sound. The piece didn't flow, instead it sounded like the players improvised their solos and when they finished, the other instruments would jump in in an abrupt manner...I especially noticed Martin becoming heavily involved in his solo. It seemed to not only fill him up with pleasure but also to take over his mind and soul. I enjoyed the parts when there were solos a lot better than when the whole band played together because of the strange music they played. (Delshad 1988)

The concert opened with what sounded like a very progressive jazz piece written by Vernon Martin. The piece was somewhat dissonant and seemed mainly meant to conjure in the listener's mind the image evoked by the title, "Chasing My Shadow"...the virtuosity displayed by Martin on the bass was awesome in the true sense of the word. (Livesey 1988)

Unfortunately, I did not enjoy the modern jazz by Vernon Martin. His music made me feel uneasy and sounded a bit disjunct. (Patten 1987)

The final song played was the very interesting "Chasing My Shadow". This tune was written by Vernon and featured the piano player and Vernon on bass. Within the composition there was a short sax solo. The interesting part of the song was the style. In my view, it was sort of call and response. The keyboard player would play something followed by the bass player. They would never play simultaneously. I believe this song could be likened to Charles Ives's "The Unanswered Question". (Roles 1987)

The foregoing comments all concern Martin's "Chasing My Shadow" which is in the *avant-garde* jazz style. Martin's compositional palette however, is quite broad and embraces everything from the Blues to ballads, up-tempo bop tunes, Latin numbers, waltzes and his ethno/*avant-garde* piece, "The Plea of the Bushman." Many of his compositions are poetry set to music--from his inspirational "Happiness" to his Rap song (composed in

1973) "The Afro Comb". Here are some student responses to his songs:

"Yesterday's Greens" was kind of a funny "down home" blues tune with a steady beat...he sang about turnip, mustard, spinach and collard greens...at the end of the song he said the moral of the song was, "keep greens in sight, don't be black and white, and don't be uptight!" We all looked at each other and laughed... (Daley 1987)

Martin...opened with a song...called "Greens" which is a blues tune, (a deliberate play with words I'm sure) with words about eating spinach, mustard and collard greens and the after-effects of eating too many of them. (Anonymous #1 1987)

...the celloist (sic) had a really deep voice which was similar to Louis Armstrong by involving the audience in their tunes. He also sang the first lyric song called "The Greens" while playing the bass. This tune was original because it talked about vegetables and how important they are to one's nutritional diet. (Cortina 1987)

The first song was called "Yesterday's Greens Came Knockin' at my Door" which was a slower tune that Martin sang with his tremendous voice not unlike that of actor Redd Foxx. The song was about eating vegetables, "opening yourself up and lettin' it happen", just enjoying food that is healthy. (Weaver 1987)

The ensemble started with...a piece entitled "Greens Came Knocking at my Door"...the piece was sung with husky jazz oriented vocals and at times seemed slightly humorous. After the song was over Vernon Martin explained the purpose of the song. The message was for the listener to become open to a broader range of music and to

enjoy the diverse style of music available to us. (Braxton 1987)

The concert started out with a blues song called "Yesterday's Greens" in which Vernon sings humorously about the adverse effects of eating beans.

The texts of his songs are about life and beauty, about how much more living we can do. Some of the lines that I caught were: "Have yourself a very good day", "There's a new dawn tomorrow", "It's so cold on the bottom, so keep reaching up---keep striving, and you'll reach your goals", and, "Keep pushing 'til you make your dreams come true." Obviously Vernon Martin is an optimist. (Price 1987)

The next song commemorated a stage play and was titled "Ode to a Bit Player". The song was sung by Cherelle and Vernon. The theme of the song was about goals and not focusing on past grievances. (Polse 1987)

The music and lyrics were very relaxed and the words were often difficult to understand, yet the feeling was always of happiness and satisfaction. For instance, the second tune heard was with the bass strummed by hand to a slow, rhythmic beat. Chyreal sang while Vernon repeated many lines, "Make your dream come true, play your tune and make your dream come true." Another uplifting tune was "Happiness" sung by Vernon, "We have to keep good things together. Every day and wherever we go we'll find happiness there...Can't you see the little children playing...We'll find happiness in a day..." (Harvey 1987)

The closing piece whose text talked about "looking on the bright side of life" and "loving those around you" again stated Martin's affection and love. It was a touching ending which almost crossed over into the realm of being corny--but not quite. (Anonymous #1 1987)

Finally the next Vernon original was called "Happiness". This was my favorite. It was a simple song, but it made us all smile. As the title says, it's a song about happiness. It kind of warms you up inside. It was very slow and smooth. Vernon and Doug sang a duet singing, "...and you'll find happiness..." Holy Cow, talk about your joy to the world, what a good feeling. (Daley 1987)

As a personage, Martin appears larger than life. His is an imposing physique matched by a strong will and a complex personality. The students' accounts describe his presence as well as his characteristic promotion of jazz as an art form:

The whole evening was enhanced by the experience of the bass player Vernon Martin...It can best be summed up in the words of Vernon Martin after the first song, "Jazz music is here to stay." (Glaser 1987)

...his charisma and excitement toward jazz shined through his music and out into the audience. (Leister 1987)

Vernon then talked about jazz and finished by saying that, "Jazz is here to stay." (Herbert 1988)

Vernon is a large black man, portly, slightly balding, with a rough, gravelly voice. His happiness in performing was readily apparent. (Hansen 1987)

At the beginning of the performance the group's leader, Vernon Martin, said he hoped to "brighten our lives" through the music. (Marquis 1987)

Before the next number, Martin pauses to explain to everyone that his music is not about depression, but about happiness and how life is worth living. (Lopez 1982)

Before leaving the stage, Martin...urged the crowd to open their minds to music and to listen to as many styles as they can. He said he didn't like the commercialization of jazz and that he was glad we were there to listen to his jazz. (Printz 1987)

The introduction Vernon gave at the Pub was in effect telling us to open our minds, forget about rock and tell our hard rock friends about what we heard that evening. (McLaren 1987)

Martin's spirit and energy is truly something to talk about. He was a large black man, probably in his late forties or early fifties. His big toothless smile mirrored the genuine quality of his demeanor. His stage presence was wonderfully vigorous as well as his plucking and strumming bass style. He was working hard, one could tell, as he broke out in a sweat minutes after playing the first tunes. His huge wooden upright bass boomed with vitality as he did when his large, meaty hands stroked the powerful strings. (Weaver 1987)

The leader, "Vern" Martin, a hefty black man in his fifties, played the electric bass. His dress attire consisted of a pair of light blue polyester striped pants, a matching vest over a bright yellow terrycloth shirt. Upon his head he wore a black hat which appeared too small for his rather large head. Resting on his nose was a pair of thick black-rimmed glasses. He smiled a lot which was when I noticed a couple of his front teeth were missing. (Polse 1987)

It is just about impossible to get Vernon Martin to speak objectively about jazz. In talking with Vernon afterwards, I found out why. Vernon Martin eats, drinks, sleeps as

well as plays and sings jazz music. It is fully integrated into his very existence.

...Vernon is an exceptionally warm and affectionate human being. The first thing that he did when he came out was to exchange greetings and handshakes with the Pub crowd. When he spotted me at my front-row table (apparently remembering me from the Music 17 performance, at which I was an extremely enthusiastic listener) he came over to hug me. Vernon seems always to greet you with his jazz plug, "Now don't go getting hung up over no hard rock or classical music. Jazz is music from the heart...from the soul. When you listen to jazz, you're a beautiful human being." At least three or four times during the performance and then again after it, he came back to verbally give variations on this theme. (Anonymous #1 1987)

Mr. Martin is a very big man, he stands about six foot three and must weigh close to three hundred pounds. He looks as if he's in his 'golden years', he sports a scruffy grey goatee, his hairline has dropped back a bit, a few teeth are missing, and his movements seemed less than agile.

...he invited us to open our minds and listen not only to the sounds of the music but also what he was saying through it. "This is music about love and happiness" he said, "and you can find goodness in all things if you try." (Daley 1987)

The observations and quotes of Martin made by the students describe a man who has, in his own words, "paid his dues." A whole life dedicated to music that incorporates Black History, Blues, European classical music, Twentieth century art music, the entire range of

jazz from 1900 pre-ragtime to the farthest reachings of the present day *avant-garde*--from African one-string fiddle music to Karlheinz Stockhausen. Interestingly, his comments about commercialism in music and his obvious love of his audience are echoed in an interview with pianist Mary Lou Williams. She states:

Everything now is either technical or electronic, nothing deep and sincere that will touch the hearts of people and make them feel better.

...you can create a mood with a single note. When I was playing at a cafe and feeling very nervous Willie the Lion (Smith) said to me, "The first note you play creates the mood. Don't be shy. Play that note, get the mood going, hold it, and you've got the audience." It's your touch, your feeling and the love you're feeding the audience. You can almost feel it yourself...there's love in the jazz feeling...commercial and *avant-garde* is frigid...a new music hasn't been created today because today's music is destroying creativity in jazz. (Lyons 1977:11)

Williams added these thoughts regarding the teaching of jazz:

While the student is doing exercises I massage their shoulders and tell them, "Relax, I love you baby." I have to teach them love. The technique alone doesn't mean a thing. We've got to save the jazz heritage. The best way to listen to music is with your eyes closed. See what you feel in your heart. Then you'll know what's happening. (Lyons 1977:11)

When one adds Williams's and Smith's words to the actions and speeches made by Martin and described and quoted here, two things become apparent:

1. A major characteristic of jazz is that it reaches out and touches people in a warm, personal way.
2. Martin is deadly serious about his music and his career.

It is obvious that, as Art Blakey among others has pointed out, the popularity and economic success of almost all music in the U.S. and certainly jazz, is relative to its exposure to and acceptance by the "white youth" market. Roland Kirk achieved AM radio play when he quoted the Beatles' "Hey Jude" on "Volunteered Slavery". Right or wrong, Kirk's casual association with Eric Clapton, Frank Zappa and the Mothers, Eric Burdon and Jimi Hendrix helped him win notoriety and a portion of the "white youth" market.

Martin was with Kirk every step of the way and witnessed many of the canny moves which Kirk used to expose his awesome talent to a wider audience. Martin also possesses an awesome talent, though his is much more of an uphill struggle to gain notoriety--the bass is an accompaniment instrument, not one that traditionally

plays melodies. Further, Martin is limited by his lack of musical literacy--he can't call some players together and put charts in front of them and get them to play as so many successful modern band leaders do. Martin both chooses to and is forced to live his life in the manner he does, "cooperating with the inevitable" one might say. Jazz music, he will contend, does not depend on written music but on oral tradition and anyway, "you can't hear someone read music" Martin has quoted Erroll Garner. (Martin 1987) He has surrounded himself with a core group of young musical apprentices who study with him privately either for money or for favors (rides, loans, etc.) and perform with him on occasion--usually leaving Martin to decide how the evening's wages will be dispersed. Martin plays to young white audiences as often as he can as he realizes that is where notoriety and success lie. When he plays for these audiences he gives a good product--stage presence, virtuosity, warmth, relaxed race relations (he has been called an "Uncle Tom" by some of his black contemporaries). Black audiences don't react with as much interest in Martin's music, though the respect for his credentials as a historical figure certainly exists. It could be that younger blacks

totally ignore jazz, as they have their own generation's culture to celebrate, from Prince to M.C. Hammer; while older black listeners have mellowed into a kind of musical conservatism--they know what they like--and are not receptive to Martin's oblique perspective. Martin is not a hypocrite. He believes in the history of jazz and the main heroes of jazz--Ellington, Parker, Tatum, Coltrane. He sees the former as a series of events that can be extrapolated into the present and the latter as heroic characters whose artistic values he has internalized. He practices the philosophy of spontaneity--he will be himself at all times. Martin combines this spontaneity with his own personal vision of how music should sound, from inspirational ballads to avant-garde musical installations. He mixes in the random elements of whoever his fellow musicians happen to be for a given performance and the result is a loosely controlled, sometimes unsuccessful, often sublime expression of collective humanity sharing their art--musicians and listeners united in the effort to bring off a magical moment that involves all of them.

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Graphic Representation of Student
Opinions of USCB "Pub"
Concerts

Of twenty-six student papers written about Martin's performance at the "Pub" on November 18, 1987, fifteen descriptive areas were identified and tallied to get a graphic representation of what the audience noticed and commented most about concerning the performance. Most often cited was a statement of satisfaction with having attended the performance at 77%. This was followed in numerical preponderance by comments about Martin's piece "The Greens" and its humorous text at 65%. Next-most-often cited were references to Martin's talking about values with the audience, urging them to expand their musical listening experiences and encouraging them to look on the brighter side of life, at 46%. This was followed at 42% by mention of Martin's prodigious technique on bass. Also at 42% were citations of Martin's stage presence, showmanship and interaction with the audience.

Opinion was evenly divided at 27% positive and 27% negative responses to the talents of vocalist ChyReal Love. Descriptions of Martin's composition "Chasing My Shadow" were next in greatness at 31% followed by 23% who

commented on the inspirational quality of the texts of Martin's songs. The degree of interaction between the musicians on stage was also noted at 23%. 15% of writers called attention to the fact that Martin is a Black man; the same number felt that he was playing in a group of performers far below his own level. 12% felt moved to comment on Martin's exhorting the crowd to clap their hands along with the music, while 8% were impressed by his manner of leading the ensemble with gestures and verbal asides. 8% is also the number of those who registered a statement of dissatisfaction with the musical presentation as a whole.

What Students Commented About Martin's Performance--A Graphic Representation

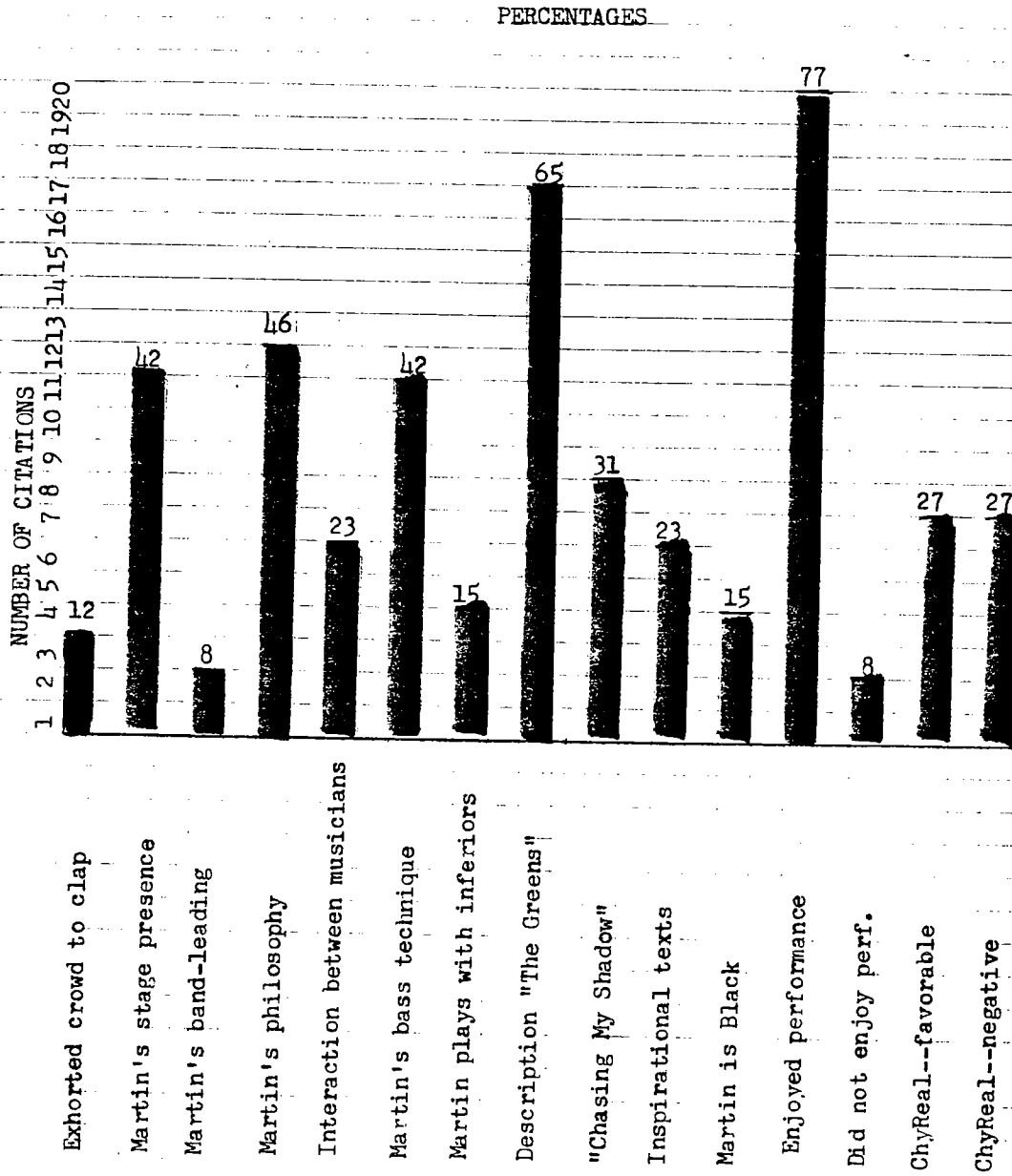


TABLE I
What Students Commented About Martin's
Performance--A Graphic
Representation

Topic	No. of Citations	%
Martin exhorted crowd to clap	3	12
Martin's stage presence, warmth	11	42
Martin's band-leading techniques	2	8
Martin's Philosophy	12	46
Interaction between musicians	6	23
Martin's bass technique	11	42
Martin assoc. with inferior musicians	4	15
Description of "The Greens"	17	65
Description of "Chasing My Shadow"	8	31
Inspirational quality of texts	6	23
Martin is a Black man	4	15
Enjoyed performance	20	77
Did not enjoy performance	2	8
Commented favorably on ChyReal Love	7	27
Commented unfavorably on ChyReal Love	7	27

CHAPTER II

Values

Vernon Martin and ChyReal Love

When the writer first met Martin in 1983, the bassist was living in Oxnard, California with a woman named Dottie and her two sons. In late 1985 their relationship came to an end and Martin moved to Los Angeles where he shared an apartment with friends. By spring of 1986 he had met Cheryl Pounds nee Bryson, sister of saxophonist Rinie Bryson, and began sharing her apartment and her life with her. Pounds, a woman in her middle thirties, was recovering from a stroke she had suffered that left her disabled. She became a music student of Martin's and changed her name to ChyReal Love. Living with them in the one-bedroom apartment were Love's teen-age daughter Carla, sister Connie and her small daughter Tiffany. It was at this time that Martin also met saxophonist Tracy Wannomae, accepted him as a music student and through him, became involved with the music program at Los Angeles City College.

The writer was privileged to perform as pianist in some of Martin's groups during this time, which tended to a high level of musicianship. Experienced players on

drums and wind instruments would be part of the group. It was during this period that Martin began to feature ChyReal as a member of the band. At first, he would call her up from the audience to sing one or two songs during the night. He always did this with an apologetic posture to the musicians and privately explained to them that, because he was staying with her (and in effect, being supported by her) he needed to invite her to sing from time to time. This later became an issue for the rest of the band because ChyReal exhibited a very amateurish, untrained style of singing and stage presence and, they felt, brought down the level of professionalism. Martin, however was adamant, but instead of insisting out of a reasonable authority which he had as head of the group, he always approached the band members when ChyReal was not around and begged them to let her sing, explaining that, if she didn't, things were going to be tough for Martin at home.

As their relationship developed, Martin worked with her on her stage presence, taught her about the lives of the famous jazz singers such as Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, and encouraged her to compose songs. He taught

her to play the harmonica and showed her how to obtain some impressive musical effects by using two harmonicas.

In November 1987, when the concerts at UCSB were performed, ChyReal was a full-fledged member of the group and participated on stage throughout the entire performance. Following are some observations made by student writers commenting on those performances:

(Serrell?) Love was the supposed lead vocalist, harmonica player and acoustical percussionist. I say supposed, because I found her singing to distract and detract from the others' fine efforts...In performing "Changes", a song which she composed the words and music for, she proved to be more of a neo punk/new wave vocalist than a jazz one. Her tonal intervals were hardly melodic, and she seemed to enjoy assaulting the audience with the word "changes" in a shrill, off-key shout.
(Anonymous #1 1987)

"Sonnet"...was sung by...Cherelle Love..her voice was deep scratching and irritating.
(Polse 1987)

Last and deservingly least was Sherrel Love, Martin's wife. She was one of the most seemingly untalented women ever to be put on a stage next to someone as truly professional as Vernon Martin ...when she kicked in with solo and backup singing, the crowd writhed in their seats looking obviously pained and trying not to be too blatant about it. The only reason I could tell was because it was hurting me just as badly.

Sherrell...was so off tune that I thought maybe her voice incorporated some genuine singing style that I had never heard

of...Probably the main reason she was in the band (not meaning to be rude) was because she is married to Martin.

...As I left, I looked at the expressions on peoples' faces just to see if they were as confused as I was. I couldn't understand how a wonderfully exciting performer such as Martin would let such an amateur like Love take away from his music. (Weaver 1987)

The next two songs featured Shirell Love, who sounds a lot like Grace Jones, on vocals. (Printz 1987)

Chy'Real used the "shout" style of singing to emphasize her main important points. Her intense deep voice along with the "shout" and word choice made it seem as though every word she sang was for God, and it seemed as though He was there listening to her. There was definitely a spiritual presence or sensation that filled the room when she was singing....One of my favorites of their selection was a song sang by Chy'Real called "Changes". She composed this tune as well. the text was about freedom. She sang, "I am free now...can fly now..."...once again she implemented the "shout" style of singing. She yelled, "Changes Ch...Ch...Ch...Ch...Changes". Chy'Real played bongo drums as well as the harmonica in this song. (McKeown 1987)

When Sherell started singing, I was really let down. Her voice was so deep and flat, and I could understand almost none of the words. Soon afterwards, she played a harmonica solo. What a change! She went from exhibiting virtually no talent as a singer to playing the best harmonica I have ever heard. In fact, I enjoyed the solo so much I nearly forgot her awful voice. (Hansen 1987)

The next song was "Changes", one of Charrel's originals. There was lots of emotion in her voice, and her body's movements didn't seem choreographed, but seem to come from deep

inside, from feeling her own words which I could not understand. (Lopez 1987)

During an intermission, Martin spoke privately to a group of interested students about his life and work.

the following are excerpts from those interviews:

...ChyReal Love had a stroke in the spring of 1985. Shortly after, Vernon started teaching her to sing. Now the featured vocalist in The Brotherhood, ChyReal in two-years' time has captured the essence of Billie Holiday, Mahalia Jackson, Ella Fitzgerald, Bessie Smith and many others. He believes that ChyReal is the true epitome of present-day musicality because of the slick, low-grade commerciality that she has suppressed. She has composed about twenty tunes herself. She personifies what Vernon calls "musical therapy". (Harvey 1987)

...When I spoke with ChyReal regarding her therapy, she spoke of Vernon as if he were a messenger from God. (Price 1987)

...She is going through what she referred to as "music therapy" with Vernon. From her interview, I discovered that she feels that her only purpose left on this earth is to spread the word of God through her musical exhibitions ...Shirell, throughout the concert, sung from the heart, as did Vernon Martin. (Moskal 1987)

When her relationship with Martin ended in 1990, ChyReal became associated with the International Baptist Temple of Christ and the University of Los Angeles and Southern California and Malachi Burns Bible College, Baptist Schools of Higher Learning. She is listed as the

Executive Director of Music on a flyer circulated in the South Los Angeles area.

It is possible to conclude that Martin, following the patterns established by Charles Mingus and Ferdinand (Jelly-Roll) Morton, finds that being kept by a woman is the economic foundation upon which his art can build. Nevertheless demanding of himself that he give a good product for his part of the bargain, he then works with this woman and shares with her his life of jazz. The writer is once again wont to point out that, in her bittersweet, oblique way, ChyReal Love became an integral part of the unique performance art of Vernon Martin. The audience is left wondering--"Is this for real, or is it a put-on?" much as they might for a work by Jackson Pollock, Cecil Taylor or John Cage.

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Roland Kirk--The Man with whom
Martin Collaborated
in the 1960s

Roland Kirk, the blind saxophonist who played three horns at once, was a jazz artist of international renown and acclaim. He consistently won top honors in the jazz polls in such categories as tenor sax, baritone sax, clarinet, flute and miscellaneous instrument. He was a regular participant in nearly all of the international jazz festivals from Newport to Copenhagen throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s. His recordings were universally praised in the jazz press for their exceptional musicality. Kirk was a visionary performer, who possessed an incredible energy and a thoroughly unique approach to music. Many critics at first accused him of gimmicks such as the three-horns-at-once act or his technique of circular breathing which enabled him to play without stopping for breath, as entities in themselves. Later, they realized his genuine artistic merit and repented their earlier criticisms. That Martin had such an extraordinary musical experience as a large part of his background cannot have failed to affect him in a profound way, possibly providing the sources of his

present intensity, fervor and unique musical conceptions. Following are some excerpts of criticism regarding Kirk:

Roland Kirk is quite unique and wholly admirable. That he is a very "traditional" jazzman is shown not only by his organic use of showmanship but also by his inherent feeling for contrast and his readiness to accept all kinds of sounds into his framework...Like Charles Mingus, Kirk has the ability to demonstrate the continuing validity of traditional forms and the traditional links between them. Paradoxically, he does this by constant experimentation and by complete reliance on spontaneity. (he takes more chances this way than anyone else except maybe Sonny Rollins). (Priestly 1969:31)

Here is further evidence that Kirk is one of the people really taking care of business in the jazz world..The many instruments that Kirk plays helps him to achieve this variety, of course, but the choice of material and the astute pacing of the set are other important reasons. (Kirk's tunes) cover love, humour, sadness and a host of other feelings...this is an album to enjoy, for Kirk's affirmation of life comes strongly across. (Gitler 1968:22)

Few contemporary jazz musicians can match Roland Kirk when it comes to generating excitement. He is like a human horn of plenty, bursting at the seams with sounds that intrinsically fuse the most disparate jazz styles and embody the idiom's finest elements. He is the Herman Herd stampeding, Jelly Roll stomping or Coltrane signifying--he is JAZZ. (Albertson 1970:21)

This variegated set...is a particularly effective testimonial to Kirk's power to mesmerize listeners with his all-embracing preoccupation with sound texture. The music is alternately zany, sprightly, warmly lyrical,

somber and visceral--but through it all courses the fascinating, ever-musical personality of Kirk, that sonic sorcerer, master of many instruments. (Welding 1967:29)

Kirk...won first place in both the flute and miscellaneous instrument divisions of the 1965 Annual Critics Poll conducted by the British musical weekly, Melody Maker. It was the eleventh such honor awarded to Kirk since 1962...He has maintained his reputation through sheer artistry.

...He has been credited with a greater variety of accomplishments than any other artist in jazz. More remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that he has achieved his success without being pigeon-holed musically. Some may consider him an avant-gardist, but in fact Roland is, as Duke Ellington might put it, "beyond category". (Feather 1965)

Kirk has gone quite beyond the old time vaudeville stunt work of "the man who plays three clarinets simultaneously", or whatever, for with his two-and-three-horns-at-once, Kirk is playing integrated ensembles with legitimate musical function and effect. (Williams 1961)

Kirk recorded prolifically during the 1960s and 1970s. He was associated with and given due respect by such acknowledged jazz giants as Charles Mingus and John Coltrane, with both of whom he collaborated. In fact, it is this writer's opinion that Kirk greatly influenced Coltrane in the following instances: First, Kirk's use of the manzello, an obsolete reed instrument related to the saxophone family, gave him a very piquant sound in the upper register. His use of the instrument and the

oboe-like sound he got on it pre-date Coltrane's use of the soprano saxophone. Likewise, Kirk's performance on "We Free Kings", an adaptation of the traditional Christmas song "We Three Kings" foreshadows in rhythm and sound Coltrane's lyrical treatment of "My Favorite Things". They both use upper-register horns, both are in triple meter and additionally, the piano style of heavy bass octaves anchoring the rhythmic articulation of the piano chording utilized by Hank Jones on "We Free Kings" can be seen as reflected in McCoy Tyner's later style that characteristically included this same approach.

In addition to his acclaim by the trade press and the jazz *cognoscenti*, Kirk obtained renown by collaborating musically with many of the Rock world's stars, as the next section illustrates:

Kirk made himself many new friends during his latest trip to England by jamming (on separate occasions) with Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton and Stevie Wonder. (Priestly 1969:31)

Roland Kirk not long ago played Boston with The Who. After Kirk's set, Peter Townsend paid him lavish tribute. Called him a genius (yes, indeed) and said other nice things, the topper of which was that Kirk had proven that he deserved the mantle of Rock and Roll player as well as Jazz player. (Heineman 1969:12)

The next forty-five minutes are quit literally indescribable. The Mothers of

Invention [who] can play anything from early Basie to late 50s schlock-rock to concepts out of a Varese-Stockhausen panorama...settled into a jazz framework... then pandemonium broke loose as Kirk wandered out and jammed with them for the rest of the night. All stops were out; Kirk wailed, the Mothers dug it and responded with uncanny support...Kirk weaving in and out of the flow of sound patterns into which Frank Zappa directed his crew,...Zappa instantly picking up Kirk's concepts and playing telepathic guitar counterpoint...the audience was close to berserk...Kirk and Zappa are crazy if they don't make a record together. The Mothers are capable of so many other things--so is Kirk--but this was too much, and nobody with half an ear who heard it could ever again say that jazz and rock can't combine without damaging one of the idioms. An incredible, exhilarating, exhausting, exciting set. (Heineman 1969:31)

Kirk clearly had his own reasons for his dogged penetration into so many different areas of musical culture and they lie outside the scope of this work, whose main intention here is to reveal the musical world that Martin shared with Kirk and that unquestionably helped form part of the bassist's own outlook.

Another perspective of Kirk's philosophy can be gained by reading his own words as he responded to questions put to him in an interview in 1967. Regarding his spontaneity on stage, Kirk had this to say to interviewer Bill McLarney in the Down Beat article:

I think it's wrong not to try to reach out to your audience...I feel that when people

spend their money to come out, we owe them at least this much. A musician who puts this down is wrong.

McLarney: You've been compared, both by your fans and your detractors, to Dizzy Gillespie, in that you dance and tell jokes and try to entertain your audience. Why do you do this?

Kirk: I'm just being myself. I don't tell my musicians they've got to entertain. They don't have to smile if they don't want to, although I think it's going to reflect on them in the long run. But I don't think they should feel a draft if I'm laughing and talking. I have had people with me who think I shouldn't do this. But I'm going to be myself, and I'm not going to have no musician with me who feels a draft about what I do as long as it doesn't affect his playing.

McLarney: What do you want the audience to get out of your music?

Kirk: I would hope you'd get some kind of laugh out of my music, some kind of joy. I think that music should bring happiness--and sadness too. Anybody who thinks that it should be strictly an intellectual thing--I guess that's the way he was brought up. But when you're working in a club, those people don't come out to be no intellectual, unless they're told that's what it is in front. But I don't think you should tell a customer that, that he's got to come in the club and be cool. That ruins the whole thing. The customer should come in to feel how he wants to feel. If he gets too loud, I think the band leader should be strong enough to make him laugh his way out of it or to make him feel so bad he won't talk anymore.

Further on in the interview, Kirk had this to say about the public image of jazz:

...people don't want to give jazz any credit. Look at Las Vegas. They say they don't like jazz out there, yet they have hard-core jazz there--Basie, Woody Herman, Buddy Rich. but they don't call it jazz. Then when some jazz group doesn't draw, they say, 'Jazz doesn't draw.' Let anything bad happen and they say 'Jazz'. People in other kinds of music are coming in late, smoking pot, and falling off the bandstand, but when it's a jazz musician they want to make it an example."

To close the interview Kirk answered the question, "What are your plans?"

...I just want to play. I'd like to think I could work opposite Sinatra, B. B. King, The Beatles or a polka band and people would dig it. (McLarney 1967:16)

The reader will recognize many similarities in the opinions and rhetoric quoted in Kirk's interview as they appear articulated by Martin in his own testimony later in the present work. Whether Martin influenced Kirk or vice versa is not the issue here. What is interesting to point out are the similarities between the two artists regarding their attitudes toward audiences. The spontaneity, the use of the "power of the podium", the desire to share creations of genuine beauty are values enumerated here by Kirk that live on in the performances and life of Vernon Martin.

Martin accompanied Kirk from his beginnings in the early 1960s, through the period when Kirk began gathering

jazz accolades, to the time when he became a primary force in the cross-fertilization of jazz and rock. both Kirk and Martin were young men throughout this turbulent era--in their twenties and thirties (Martin b. 1932; Kirk b. 1936)--and conceivably as a reflection of this youth it is possible to see a change in political outlook over time. for example, in 1965 Kirk made the comment reprinted on the liner notes to his record album "Slightly Latin":

"Raouf" was named...for a woman who had an American name, but she got on the bandwagon with this new African thing, letting her hair grow out natural and changing her name, which used to be Ruth... (Feather 1965)

Of course, Kirk himself got on the bandwagon as reported in Down Beat in December 1969:

Roland Kirk is now Rahsaan Roland Kirk... (Morganstern 1969:13)

Another thing also changed over time, or perhaps coalesced is a better term to describe Kirk's developing socio-political attitudes *vis-a-vis* the media conglomerates ABC, CBS, and NBC. The multi-instrumentalist was frustrated by the lack of mass media exposure given to his art, which he began calling "Black Classical Music." With so much notoriety and proper

recognition of his personal talent already in place and with the further successes "crossing over" into rock audiences, Kirk became determined to leave no stone unturned in his quest to achieve recognition for his art form as a whole, a recognition that really involved an educational process--to make people aware of jazz, its history and the concomitant acknowledgement of the cultural validity of its creators, Black Americans. Combining his art, his life style, his maturing politics and his business ventures all into one frontal attack, he released "Rahsaan, Rahsaan", a record album which included Vernon Martin on bass. Reviewed in Down Beat by Larry Ridley, it received three and one-half stars:

The album is given the above rating not so much in a major musical innovative sense, but because of its sociological foresight and the leader's deep musical commitment.

A live performance by the ensemble with Reverend Professor Kirk presiding, recorded Christmas night 1969 at the Village Vanguard, the entire text of the commentary shows itself to be a prelude to Kirk's role in helping to instigate the Jazz and People's Movement and its recent attack upon the mass media's failure to grant ample audio-visual exposure to jazz--and especially its Black components.

Some may regard Kirk's using this album for such means as ludicrous and irrelevant, but I say he is to be commended for taking a stand on an issue that is becoming an increasingly serious concern. (Ridley 1971:21)

Kirk's group, the JPM, did indeed follow up on the rhetoric recorded on the album. The following news story appeared in Down Beat on October 15, 1970:

GRASS ROOTS JAZZ PROTEST HITS TV

When Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Lee Morgan led a group of some 60 musicians and friends of jazz in a demonstration which interrupted the Aug. 27 taping of the Merv Griffin Show at the CBS studios in New York, they initiated a movement for more jazz and black music on television that shows a promise of gathering effective momentum.

The decision to invade a nationally known talk-show and peacefully demonstrate on behalf of jazz was not made on the spur of the moment. For some time Kirk and other jazzmen have attempted to obtain guest shots on shows of this nature through conventional channels, but these attempts invariably resulted in a "not interested" response. So they decided to use an unorthodox approach.

On Aug. 27, the people who had assembled at 6th Ave. and 47th St. were greeted by Kirk with a wooden flute and instructed to blow hard on it when given the signal. Each person was also given several petitions to hand out to the audience. The demonstrators then moved on to queue up for the Griffin show. Tickets had been passed out but up to then nobody knew exactly what show was to be struck. Everyone filed in in an orderly fashion and proceeded to observe the taping.

About a half hour after the taping had begun, Kirk rose, aided by Joe Texidor, and made his way to the stage, playing his horns. The demonstrators accompanied him from their seats with flutes and police whistles and started to pass out the petitions.

Several younger musicians and students displayed signs with slogans such as "This protest is just the beginning", "Stop the

whitewash now, hire more black artists on TV", etc. Meanwhile, the house band played "Lover", louder and louder. But even a whole studio band couldn't cope with the demonstrators-- above it all, Kirk cut through loud and clear. The band finally gave up.

Now, Lee Morgan joined Kirk on stage, followed by Ron Jefferson. Some people in the studio audience made comments like "In Russia, they would have put you in jail five minutes ago", and "How can they do this to poor Merv!"

The object of their affections, meanwhile, was making such comments as "We're stopping the taping. Everyone please go home...we've got Dick Gregory and an ambassador from Africa on the show tonight..."

In the interim, various demonstrating musicians had taken to the stage and were talking to the audience and to wire service and television reporters who had arrived quickly. Billy Harper led a discussion on stage while Kirk and Morgan were talking privately with Griffin staffers backstage. Harper politely explained the aims of the demonstration.

Morgan and Kirk returned to the stage reporting that they had been reassured that their representatives would be contacted for further discussion by network spokesmen.

The net result two weeks later had been a series of discussions with Griffin staffers and other CBS personnel. At presstime, the negotiations had yielded a promise of more jazz on the Griffin show which is moving its operational base to Los Angeles.

However, the Griffin show is not the prime target of the Jazz and Peoples Movement, as the thus far loosely-structured organization headed by Kirk calls itself. At a meeting held Sept. 8 at the Village Vanguard (the fourth such at the club, which has donated its premises for the purpose), Kirk said that Griffin was merely a "symbol of TV", and that the movement's aim was to obtain across-the board recognition for jazz and black music on television and radio.

Among the stated demands of the JPM are the appointment of a board of jazz musicians to

coordinate production of at least three to four jazz specials per season, designed to educate the public to jazz, r&b, gospel, etc., to expose deserving talent (not always established names), and present music in its historical context; using hosts or presenters knowledgeable about the music and qualified to discuss it rather than "personalities"; more highlighting of black musicians on regular TV programs (i.e. talk shows, game shows, serials, etc.); more visibility and credit for jazz musicians on network staff bands such as Clark Terry on the Tonight Show, etc.; options for musicians appearing in guest spots to also participate in discussion panels or be interviewed by the host; adequate promotion including advertising in black media, and the hiring of black producers, directors, talent coordinators, etc. by television networks. (Morganstern 1970:12)

The demonstration at the Griffin show was followed shortly by a similar one at the Dick Cavett show. Down Beat again reported:

JAZZ PROTESTERS DO CAVETT SHOW, PUSH ON

Following up its task-force assaults on the Merv Griffin (CBS) and Johnny Carson (NBC) TV Shows, the Jazz and Peoples Movement came down on ABC's Dick Cavett, interrupting the show's Oct. 13 taping session for one hour.

Discussions held with Cavett Show and network executives during the demonstration resulted in an invitation to representatives of the movement to appear on Cavett's Oct. 22 show, and promises of further negotiations concerning wider use of jazz and black music on ABC programs.

Mrs. Roland Kirk, Cecil Taylor, Freddie Hubbard, Billy Harper and Andrew Cyrille appeared with Cavett. Mrs. Kirk read an endorsement of the JPM's cause by Operation Breadbasket.

The half-hour discussion ranged widely, but the central point made was that commercial TV ignores jazz unless it has entertainment value. The JPM is currently negotiating with the three major networks and the Ed Sullivan Show, with a promise of more to come. (Morganstern 1970:8)

The JPM did indeed present their point of view on the Dick Cavett show Oct. 23, 1970. Renowned jazz drummer Andrew Cyrille who participated, had this to report:

As artists, to be aware of the things that control our lives externally, like politics, economics and culture, is essential to our very being as artists. To voice our opinions as we did on the Cavett show was intended to focus attention on the exclusion of deserving black creative musicians by the mass communications media...We feel that racism is at the core of the reason why more black jazz musicians are not seen on television, heard on radio, or are commercially successful. If the program was submerged in the contemporary political atmosphere of today, it is only because we as black artists cannot separate ourselves, willingly or unwillingly, from the reasons for the controlling influences that affect the lives of all black people here in the United States...The very reason we appeared was because of musicians and people demonstrating publicly, not through artistic merit.

...Black musicians have been the main thrust and spearhead for jazz since its inception. So we and our supporters from the JPM thought it was all right for us to talk about our problems our own way. Most of the people we've spoken to since the show said that the message was positive and came across well. Even Cavett expressed that it went over well and said he wished we could have had more time.

...What we were attempting to do was to get the audience at large to comprehend the

seriousness and significance of the black creative musician such as Monk, Mingus, Roach, Ammons, Morgan, Haynes, Sanders, Blakey, Lateef, Bryant, Dickerson, Turrentine, Murray, Graves and a host of others. To get the audience to understand that these people should be heard and seen consistently on network television.

We all know that there are many excellent white jazz musicians, but these recent JPM protest demonstrations and the opinions voiced by the jazz musicians on the 10/22/70 Dick Cavett show were specifically designed to protest the suppression of black culture and subsequently black creative music a la Rollins, Harley, Jones, Carter, McLean, Silver, Cherry, Hutcherson, Sun Ra, Shorter, Lee, Smith, Eldridge and the many, many others deserving of more recognition and support.

Once jazz musicians are accepted and recognized as culturally important, worthwhile, responsible human beings and given their due justice socially and economically by this society for their real worth, those who will appear on more Cavett-like programs etc., will perhaps be more congenial... (Cyrille 1971:13)

This, then is the socio-political-cultural background in which Vernon Martin lived, thought and performed. That those were times of social upheaval is an accepted fact. That those same obstacles existed fifteen years later at the time of Martin's Ethnomusicology Forum interview (herein appended) is attested to by his continued references to commercialization, racism and suppression of jazz.

Some conclusions to be drawn from the foregoing section are:

1. Kirk was an acknowledged musical genius.
2. Kirk was outspoken in his advocacy of jazz and black music in general.
3. Kirk lived his values--musical, social and political.
4. Kirk shared the richness of his culture with other artists and paved the way towards intercultural understanding through musical cooperation.
5. Though Kirk was outspoken in his advocacy of Black jazz, he was not a "reverse racist", a Black chauvinist--Kirk both personally and through the JPM acknowledged the positive contributions of white artists in jazz.
6. Kirk saw musical performances as communication in the broadest sense of the term. From his comments about the emotional reactions of audiences, to his socio-political exhortations in "Rahsaan, Rahsaan, he used the forum provided by his gifted artistry to advance the cause of humanitarianism.

These aforementioned characteristics of Kirk can be seen to be present in greater or lesser degrees in the philosophy and values of Vernon Martin:

1. Martin impresses audiences with his musical genius. Though not corroborated by published or prize-awarding authorities, the candid opinions of a clear majority of his audience at the UCSB concerts certainly validates this contention.

2. Martin's advocacy of jazz is well documented by the UCSB student writers and is present in his Ethnomusicology Forum interview. That he dedicates his life to training musicians in the jazz art, and continues to compose and perform in the entire spectrum of jazz styles is additional evidence of his advocacy.

3. Martin's open sharing of his expertise in jazz with students of all ages and cultures echoes Kirk's intercultural communication with rock musicians.

4. Nor is Martin a Black chauvinist. Though proud of his heritage, he acknowledges artists like Stan Kenton, Art Pepper and Red Rodney, outstanding white jazz artists, and further, encourages cultural pluralism in all his efforts.

5. Martin shares with Kirk the conception of music performance as a multi-faceted form of communication. His interaction with the audience on a verbal level--entertaining, exhorting, teaching, is reinforced by the

texts of the songs he sings to them which contain joyously humorous or inspirationally humanitarian messages. The communication goes further than that--body language such as dancing on stage, hugging and handshaking, frowning intensely, sweating and smiling, arrests the attention of his listeners and he then focuses it in such a way as to leave a profound impression on them. The message is one of love and respect for one another and for the earth. In the words of anthropologist Ashley Montagu: "The word 'love' is used here to mean behavior which confers upon others survival benefits in such a manner that their potentialities for being human are afforded an opportunity for optimum development." (Montagu 1962:101)

Martin, a product of his environment as all of us are, has been shown here to have been exposed to a tremendous variety of people and ideas; powerful teachings, explosive social actions, and the passage of time--the social history of the 1970s and the 1980s with its gradual retreat from the idealism of the 1960s, to the hawkish materialism of the 1990s; from the intercultural brotherhood of Kirk being saluted by The Who, to the negation of the Civil Rights Act by the U. S.

Supreme Court. "Through it all", as a popular gospel song states it, Martin has lived his music. He has not become embittered with the evaporation of the hopes that the JPM negotiated from the networks, though he might have. He has maintained his humanitarian and artistic integrity throughout, and that is a fitting enough testament to the powerful forces that shaped his values.

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The Role of the Sideman in Jazz

The study of Vernon Martin presents an opportunity to articulate some questions about the role of the "sideman" in jazz. A "sideman" is a member of a jazz performance organization, be it a large band or a small combo, who is an accompanist to the main star or "headliner" of the group. Webster's says: "A member of a band or orchestra and esp. of a jazz or swing orchestra."

Martin's main professional performance experiences were as a sideman to Roland Kirk. Though there are bassists and drummers who are bandleaders in their own right, such as bassist Charles Mingus or Drummers Art Blakey and Buddy Rich, most headliners have traditionally been players of middle-to-upper register melodic instruments. Trumpeter Louis Armstrong, saxophonist Lester Young, pianist Oscar Peterson and guitarist George Benson are examples of this. The reasons for this preference are not documented, but possibly have to do with acoustic principles on one hand--it being easier to project sound in the middle and upper register; and the temperament of audiences on the other--accustomed to equating the lead instrument with the human voice. Given

that for every "star" or headliner in jazz, there will be at least three other sidemen in the performance ensemble (usually piano, bass and drums), the scholar can pose the question: what is the role of the sideman in jazz?

Most often, by the time an artist has surfaced as a star, he has himself served an apprenticeship as a sideman and has some years of experience in the industry. In order to maximize his earnings while travelling from concert to concert, he customarily hires promising talented younger artists as accompanists, usually unencumbered with families and not possessing a reputation that would allow them to demand a high salary, so that the headlining artist can profit from a larger percentage of the performance fee. Because of this difference in age and experience, the travelling jazz group becomes the *milieu* for inter-generational training in many aspects of the jazz art. In fact, an hypothesis can be articulated that the working jazz ensemble is the chief organ of the maintenance of the oral tradition in jazz.

By performing on stage night after night with the "star", the sideman is exposed to a professional level of expertise in a variety of inter-related disciplines. By

far the most noteworthy of these is the art of the jazz solo itself. The sideman witnesses the way that the artist moves his audience by means of sound. The organization of the solo--the manipulation of thematic material in a way that communicates with listeners, the use of certain melodic patterns, or "licks", the use of double-time passages and the use of dynamics to create an integrated solo--is a phenomenon that is observed and internalized by the sidemen in this "school" that meets every night. Small wonder then, that several groups have called themselves "jazz workshops". (Hentoff 1975)

Not only does the sideman observe the nuts and bolts of the creative process in the solo itself, but he is also privy to such ancillary arts as stage presence--how to deal with an audience--and through his experiences on many stages in many cities, he will observe the same situations repeating themselves with indifferent audiences, or drunk ones or audiences that are ignorant of jazz, and he observes how the headliner deals with these situations. Roland Kirk states:

If a customer gets too loud, I think the bandleader should be strong enough to make him laugh his way out of it or make him feel so bad he won't talk anymore. (McLarney 1967:16)

The sideman is exposed to the art of pacing a program-- what tunes are "openers", which are "closers" and what to put in between. The headliner's ability to express himself verbally is generally well-developed and the organization of thoughts behind those expressions will, in time, become a part of the experience of the sideman.

The oral tradition in jazz has its roots in the oral traditions of Negro history. From the *griots*--musical historians of West Africa--to the manhood training schools found all over the continent where culture is transmitted along generational lines and within ethnic groups--it moved to the covert lives of slaves in America, who couched their messages of revolt or information about the overseer's movements within the melodies of field hollers, and they mocked the actions of their white captors in elaborate "cakewalks". As members of a despised class of "free" men, the integrity of African pride was kept alive by means of oral tradition-- the telling of stories, the singing of ballads, the recording of historical events in the texts of unpublished but widely disseminated songs. This oral tradition continues within the framework of the jazz

ensemble. The maintenance of secret languages to keep out snooping "squares", (Daniels 1985:321) the telling of anecdotes regarding the lives of famous jazz men, even the dissemination of political ideas all occur within the *milieu* of the travelling jazz group. Possibly foremost of the jazz traditions maintained orally is the "jazz feeling", which Mary Lou Williams, among others, refers to as "love". (Lyons 1977:11)

The role of the sideman, as stated earlier, is many times an apprenticeship by means of which succeeding generations of "headliners" is prepared. The inter-relations of the outstanding jazz performers of this century are very complex, but to give a simplified example, one might begin with "King" Oliver. The famous New Orleans trumpeter who travelled up the Mississippi River to Chicago was later joined by his renowned sideman Louis Armstrong. Armstrong later formed his own group which included pianist Earl "Fatha" Hines, who became nationally popular in the 1930s. Hines's band of the 1940s included both John "Dizzy" Gillespie and Charlie Parker, who later collaborated before each went his own way with other sidemen. Parker and Gillespie recorded with Charles Mingus in the 1950s. Mingus, one of the

era's most influential bassists, later formed his own group which for awhile included Roland Kirk on reeds. Kirk, on his own as a bandleader, hired Martin and hence, we see how Martin is directly related through oral tradition all the way back to the beginnings of jazz, and through extrapolation, all the way back to Africa--to the kora players of the Mandinka, the one-string fiddle players of Eastern and Central Africa, to the musical bow of the Bushman, to the precursors of the violin brought west from China by Moslems in the first millennium and into Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana. (Nketia 1974:104)

This apprenticeship and succeeding metamorphosis of sideman into bandleader can be seen as a veritable "family tree" of jazz--documenting the relationships of only the most famous names of that family tree would be an impressive undertaking for future scholars. This "family tree" connects not only chronological generations but stylistic ones as well, as New Orleans begat Chicago jazz which, in turn influenced New York jazz, which spread to the midwest and eventually the west coast. Blues begat Swing which was succeeded by Bop, followed by "the New Thing" which has crumbled into "Fusion".

TABLE II

Jazz Styles as a Function of Time Period and Region

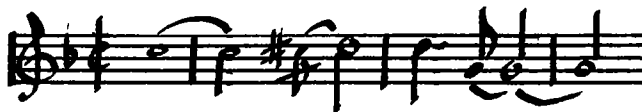
<u>Jazz Style</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Region</u>
Instrumental Blues	1900-20	New Orleans
Chicago Swing	1920s	Chicago
Kansas City/Big Band	1930s	Midwest/N.Y.
Bop	1940s	N.Y./Midwest
Cool	1950s	West Coast/NY
"New Thing"	1960s	New York
Fusion	1970-80s	Universal, urban recording centers

The evaluation of individual performers has always been a problem for critics in jazz, though not so much for audiences or the performers themselves. Typically, critics have tended to be college-educated journalists with a background in western classical music, who have used the techniques of European composition as a standpoint to criticize jazz. While this is effective in terms of evaluating such concrete variables as thematic manipulation and form, the jazz intangibles such as "feeling", "soul", and "love", (not to mention "swing") cannot be discerned from such a prosaic view. for this,

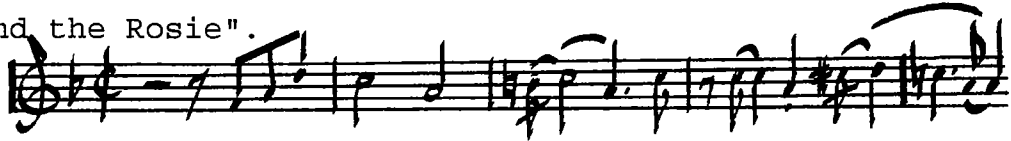
an "insider" consciousness is required. A case in point is illustrated by the following article in Down Beat magazine. Bill Dobbins, head of the jazz lab program at Kent State University and writer of the article, makes a quite technical analysis of a Clark Terry solo in which he observes, in addition to the chord structure of the tune:

Note the use of the long Cs in the first eight bars of the first chorus and the first 20 bars of the second chorus. This is a good illustration of how a simple idea can sound very effective. Also note the use of melodic connection, as in bar 18 of the first chorus (G to F to E on Gm7 to C7) and bar 18 of the first chorus (Bb to A on Cm7 to F7). Observe the instances where the chords are actually outlined as well as where their related scales are used. Finally, note the development of the motive in the bridge of the second chorus. The entire bridge is based on a continuous melodic variation of the first six eighth notes, with respect to the chord changes. (Dobbins 1971:31)

What Dobbins misses in two spots in the solo are "quotes" from other material. The opening idea (the long Cs) is the melody to "Sweet and Lovely", a standard tune out of the 1930s.



The "long Cs" at the beginning of the second chorus are nothing less than the age-old children's song "Ring Around the Rosie".



The wit and humor go unnoticed as well as Terry's commentary that his solo will be "sweet and lovely". This is just an example of how some of the richness of jazz has been overlooked by those whose access to the media has given them a prominent voice in terms of the dissemination of information about the art form. (Undoubtedly the present work suffers equally from cultural myopia, in spite of the best of intentions.) The lack of "insider" status, or at least of a benign insight into the jazz aesthetic has hampered our knowledge and appreciation of the music and its practitioners. The pithy humor, the Africanisms, the subtle references that use the obliqueness of Negro speech patterns as a point of departure have been perhaps beyond the ken of many critics, not to mention night club owners, recording company executives and indeed, audiences. The skepticism with which Thelonius Monk's playing was received for so many years, the attitudes of

those who continually fail to appreciate artists like Sun Ra or who chide Roland Kirk for not consorting with "more challenging accomplices" (Priestly 1969:31) seem to influence radio stations' policies and shape public tastes to the extent that real authentic jazz has been driven almost completely underground.

What, then, would constitute "success" for a jazz artist? No one can argue that Duke Ellington was successful, though that success wasn't measured in terms of the society as a whole, such as that of a Leonard Bernstein or an Elvis Presley.

Would Nat "King" Cole be a more satisfactory example of success for a jazz artist? As a vocalist he became one of the best-known performers in America, but was he ever accorded more than a passing glance as a thinking, articulate human being, an innovator in an art form every bit as demanding to the creator and rewarding to the listener as any "legitimate" music? Cole might be taken as an example of an artist whose talents were "co-opted"-taken over by the huge monopolies that control public opinion by means of the cultural expressions allowed on the airways. "Nat King Cole Sings for Two in Love", "Love Is the Thing", "Ballads of the Day" are some of his

album titles. He is so successful, one album's notes declare, because he has "respect for songs". (Anonymous #2 no date) Undoubtedly, Cole made a comfortable living as a singer, though it can be said because of his Blackness he was never a media "personality".

Martin, along with Kirk and other jazz artists from the "Bop" era to the late 1960s, recognized the fact that they were viewed as an extension of vaudeville--entertainment, not art, and began to do something about it. One of the demands that Kirk's Jazz and People's Movement made was that Black artists invited to perform on television "talk" shows be given the opportunity to sit in on panel discussions and to be interviewed by the host--to be given an opportunity to reveal the seriousness of their endeavors, to clear up misunderstandings caused by years of being "handled" and analyzed by outsiders. If Nat Cole's career could be seen as "co-opted", that is, of having his artistic direction and packaging dictated to him by his corporate "owners"; one might call his condition analogous to slavery. Kirk, while realizing the necessity of working within the commercial structure of recording companies' technical and distributional matrices, at the same time

was adamant as to the content of his musical releases; hence, "Volunteered Slavery" (one of Kirk's albums with Martin) translates as "cooperating with the media conglomerates for the artist's own ends."

It is this writer's contention that, because of the realities of jazz scholarship in the past, many worthy artists have been passed over, have failed to realize the prime directive of an artist--to communicate with an audience; because, for lack of insightful appreciation, the audience simply didn't exist.

When Martin's apprenticeship as a sideman in Kirk's quartet came to an end in 1970 it was because, as the bassist explained it, he needed to "find (his) own voice". (Martin 1986) The audiences for that voice have been sparse. Martin has fulfilled his role as a link in the chain of jazz tradition primarily by being a teacher--a living example of all that he has learned and experienced in his long life as a student, then sideman and finally composer and band leader in his own right. That there are other unsung sidemen of jazz eking a hand-to-mouth existence in modern U. S. society goes without saying. It is the conclusion of this writer that there is a wide span of richness and insight into the truly

indigenous American art--jazz--to be gained through the recognition and study of such unsung masters as Vernon Martin. As a link in that chain, Martin has connected the ancient beginnings of jazz in Africa, through the stylistic transformations of this century, to the next generation of genuine jazz artists. He has done this by patronizing young beginners in the jazz art, by exposing them to his legacy of jazz techniques and performance practices--extending the oral tradition past his own lifetime and ensuring to the degree possible, the survival of that kernel of life, the cultural identity of a people.

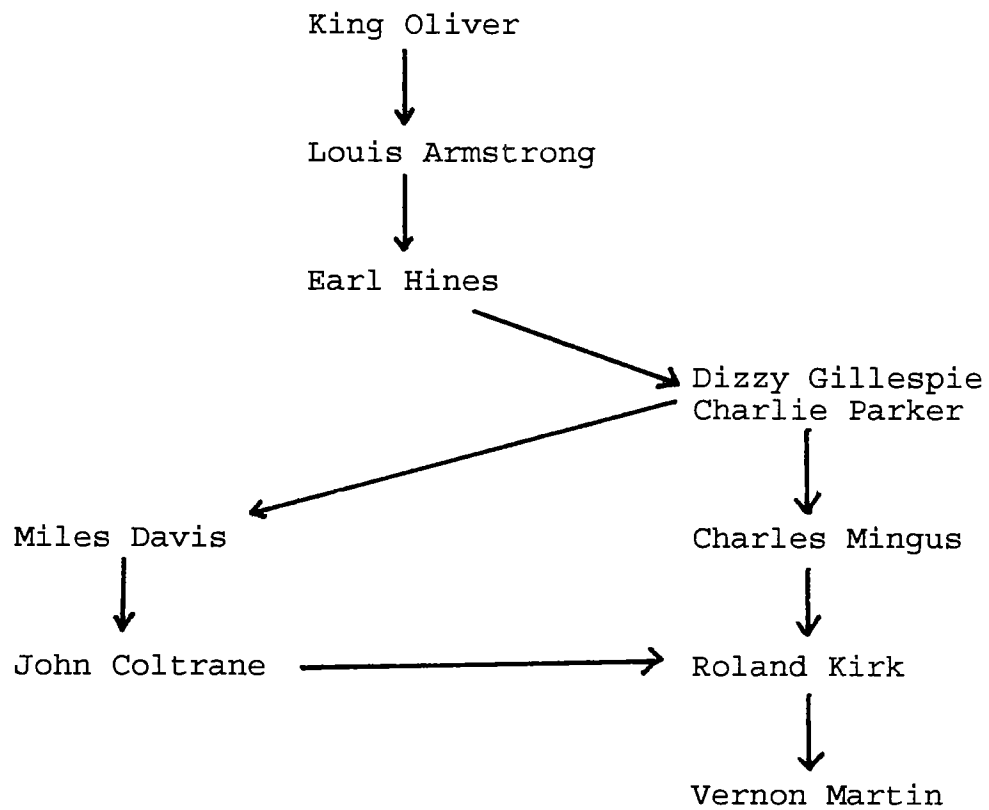
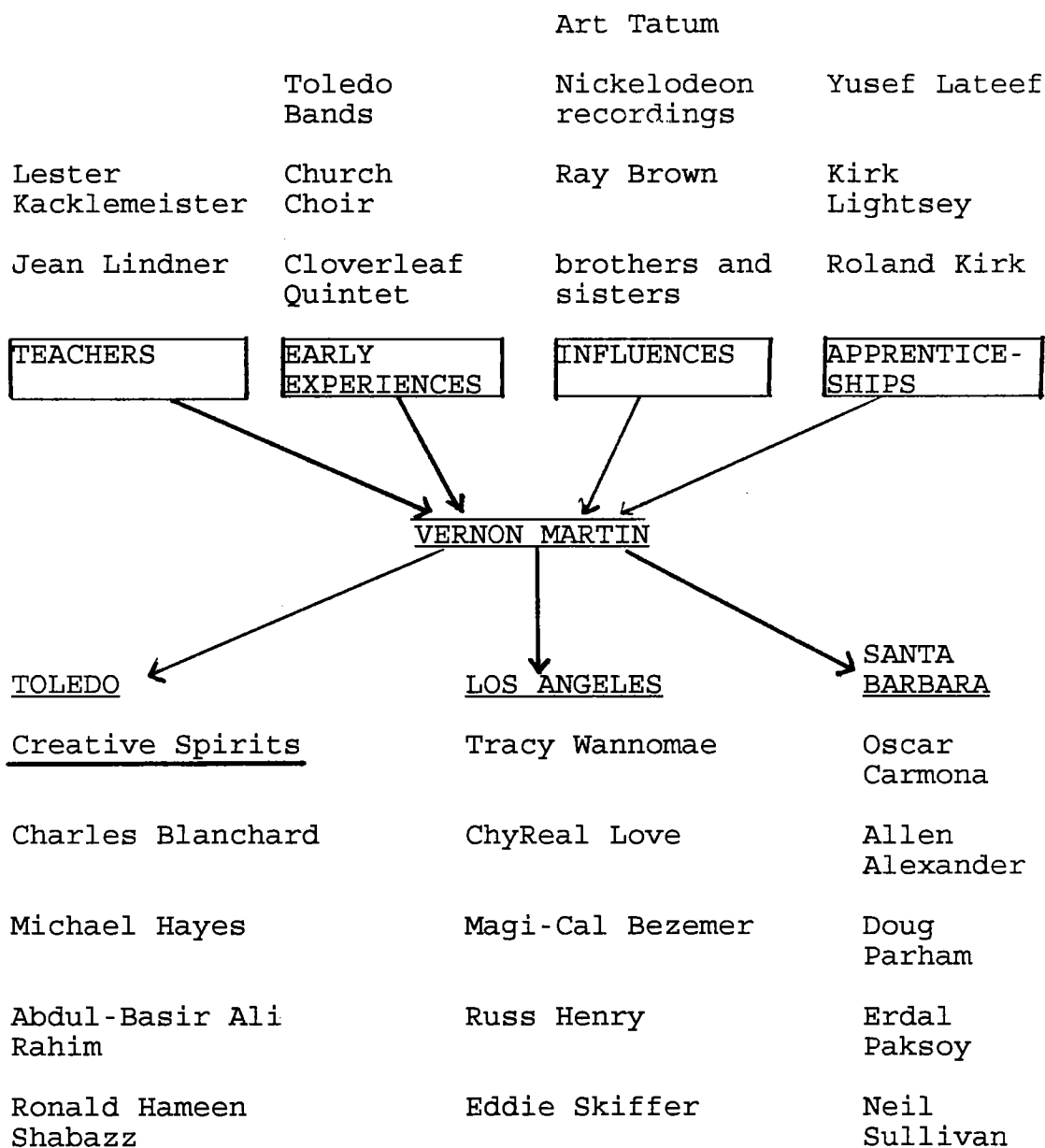
TABLE IIISome Links in the Chain of Jazz Oral Tradition

TABLE IV

Detail of Vernon Martin's Branch
of the Family Tree
of Jazz



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Vernon Martin and the Creative Spirits

By 1970 Martin had apprenticed as a sideman with Rahsaan Roland Kirk and other headliners for over ten years of professional playing. He had seen such artists as Yusef Lateef, Kirk and others go from playing small-town night clubs to major jazz venues in New York to the international jazz festival circuit. The bassist had been on the scene throughout the development of the Jazz and People's Movement, its declaration of purpose and its subsequent confrontations at major television studios. Martin undoubtedly helped to articulate some of the rhetoric quoted by the JPM in its demands for an end to media discrimination against Black artists and jazz.

Martin has offered some reasons as to why he left Kirk and went on his own in 1970. First of all, Kirk had suffered a stroke that left half of his body paralyzed, though after a short period of recovery he returned to the concert and recording circuit, not only blind, but unable to hold his instruments unaided. Martin has stated that he just couldn't bear to see Kirk in that condition--it saddened him too much. (Martin 1986) Secondly, Martin was aware of his own evolution as an artist--he could feel his own creativity flowering:

I could see the bass becoming an orchestra. I could see a bass player having the same imagination as a pianist or a horn player or anybody else and that's one of the things I've still to be...I'd rather look at myself as a composer and as an artist and as a person that has the ability to hear a melody and hear a whole orchestra and everything, 'cause when I first started hearing a whole orchestra and everything, it scared me. Until I got around Rahsaan Roland Kirk and I found out how he functioned and that partly clarified how my mind had been working all the time...

...I had my own individuality which was coming through and my own original music, and I was piecing that together piece by piece..."
(Martin 1986)

Thirdly, Martin was not able to use his position as Kirk's accompanist to project his own compositions.

...The perception of being into what I was trying to do with my own personal creativity--as broad a range as Rahsaan Roland Kirk came out of--it was still a suppressive thing, because it was certain things I was trying to do that just couldn't find its way into his repertoire, see, 'cause he was too busy evolving around his three horns and all the different things he was doing and making Rahsaan Roland Kirk reign, you know, high and everything into jazz. (Martin 1986)

Finally, when he was offered the opportunity to return to Toledo as the director of his own musical group, Martin decided that the proper moment had come to strike out on his own.

...at the time I got to the highest levels of the financial thing with him, I was aware of the fact that I wasn't getting where I wanted to get with myself--and I had to make a choice

as to whether I wanted to be an integral part of the Rahsaan Roland Kirk Vibration Society, or whether I wanted to try to see what I had to offer myself and see what was going to happen, so I had to make a choice. And I think that choice was brought about in 1970 when I returned to Toledo to the Creative Workshop..as the musical director. Not only because it was the natural thing to do but it would afford me new areas to venture out into and to see how I could handle my total creativity. (Martin 1986)

That the new position included a steady economic reward and also permitted Martin to stay in his home town were important considerations.

...it was a paycheck--I had just had another child. I wanted to have that family focus and because that was my home town I could participate in that level. (Martin 1986)

In 1969 Toledo disc jockey and community organizer Russell Charles Taylor successfully petitioned the Office of Economic Opportunity to establish the Soul and Arts Creative Workshop in the Black community of Toledo. Located in a refurbished factory building in the industrial section of town, the site nevertheless was closely supervised by Taylor and his associates, and it became a popular gathering place and neighborhood center for the surrounding community. The workshops existed to address the needs for "a more comprehensive cultural and

artistic program for young people and adults in the African-American community." (Anonymous #3 No date)

Martin's involvement with the Soul and Arts Creative Workshops covered the years 1970-1980 and gave birth to the Creative Spirits 360 Degrees (Vocal and Instrumental) Ensemble which still exists in Toledo as of this writing. According to Abdul-Basir Ali Rahim, who became involved with the workshops in 1971, Martin began giving instrumental music instruction on a variety of instruments plus vocal instruction, in addition to sharing the intricacies of group improvisation and jazz composition. Most of the participants in Martin's ensembles were beginners on their instruments; young people, for the most part right out of high school who made up for their lack of experience with a high degree of enthusiasm and dedication. (Rahim 1992) That they achieved a high level of success is attested to by the acclaim bestowed upon them by audiences at their numerous public appearances.

The Creative Spirits 360 Degrees (Vocal and Instrumental) Ensemble have over the years performed throughout the Greater Toledo area from small clubs, the University of Toledo, to concerts in the City's parks, to a 1975 concert in the peristyle of the Toledo Museum of Art, at churches and at the first "Toledo Festival"

in 1980. In addition, the Ensemble was broadcast in a live performance over WGTS-FM from "Toledo Fest" on "Black Focus" in 1979, and from the University of Toledo's Center for the Performing Arts in 1980. (Anonymous #3 No date)

Martin's approach to leading his group of young poets, dancers, singers and musicians included teaching by example--modelling sober and spirited involvement in the creative process. Additionally, as means of realizing the objective of maintaining the oral tradition in jazz, Martin provided no written scores for the group.

It came from me teaching tenor saxophonists, alto saxophone, flutes and all the rest of the instruments to play what I was playing and to center their music around...the upright bass.
(Martin 1986)

The fact that a large group of musicians plays without written music was astonishing to the writer-- after all, isn't it the written expression of sound that organizes large ensembles? Most (if not all) of today's larger jazz bands read their parts which have been copied from the arranger's score. It came as quite a shock to read in an interview with drummer Louis Bellson that Duke Ellington's band played with no written parts:

...Music students...ask me...whether I had a book to read from when I was in Duke's band. When I tell them I didn't, they want to know exactly how I figured out what to play. I tell

them I had to listen and memorize everything.
(Willard 1976:13)

Further defining the power of oral tradition in jazz are the following comments from pianist Mary Lou

Williams:

This music we're trying to save by getting it back into the ears of the public cannot be taught. I'm glad I didn't have any formal training. It's the type of music where you need only a few lessons to help you learn the instrument so you can execute your ideas. The music comes from the mind, the heart, and the fingertips. It comes faster than lightening. The exercises in classical music they give you in school destroy the natural feelings, When you study too much of the classics, you have a tendency to put runs and fancy things into jazz. But that's wrong. The music is spiritual. It came from spirituals, ragtime, Kansas City swing and bop, which is when we lost our creative artists. After bop, they began going to school. This destroyed that healthy feeling in jazz. (Lyons 1977:10)

Clearly the means of imparting knowledge in jazz defines the ends, as far as Ellington, Williams and Martin are concerned. But just what are those ends? In Ellington's and Williams's cases they are music which has won recognition and acclaim from a wide audience. In Martin's case, it was the process of realizing his own creativity and inspiring creativity in his community's youth that was foremost. The music, by and large, has been out of reach of the aesthetics of audiences in

general. In an era when most young Toledo musicians were playing "covers" (detailed copies) of Rhythm and Blues hits of the times, the Creative Spirits were performing 100% original material in a style that has been called *avant-garde*. That their reception by the public in the conservative town of Toledo was less than enthusiastic can be all too well understood. (Rahim 1992)

Just what did Martin accomplish though his directorship of the Creative Spirits? First of all, the bassist did get the chance to realize his own creativity:

I got a chance to totally exploit all of my music creativity. In other words, I could compose a composition in my brain and come up with an oral perception of it and have it performed by anywhere from ten to fifteen guys by the end of a day. And at one time I was going in every day creating some new musics...I really got to exercise my own personal creativity. (Martin 1986)

Secondly, he prepared audiences for his own and other non-commercial musics. In an alternative manner to the confrontational style of the JPM, Martin reached out to youth and showed them how to listen to themselves, how to combine what they heard with one another, and to feel confident that whatever came out would be a beautiful and sincere expression of creativity.

In summation then, The following is Martin's rationale for leaving Kirk in 1970:

1. Internal pressure of Martin's own creativity demanded an outlet which Kirk's group did not afford him.

2. Sharing the outlook of the JPM, Martin came to feel that jazz needed to reach a wider audience in order to survive.

3. The Soul and Arts Creative Workshops offered Martin the following opportunities:

a. To realize his own creative potential as a composer.

b. To train a new generation of jazz artists.

c. To expose audiences to the sounds of non-commercial jazz.

d. To remain in Toledo, near family and friends.

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Martin's Values and Philosophy
as Revealed in his Poetry

The writer asked Martin to prepare a tape recording of a rhythmic poem that the bassist had extemporaneously performed one night--"The Afro-Comb". In response, Martin prepared a tape which is transcribed almost in its entirety herewith. The recording provides the opportunity to realize the following study goals:

1. To discern and articulate Martin's philosophy and values.
2. To observe possible correlation between his stated abstract values and the concrete actions taken during his life.

The Afro-Comb

With his Afro-comb in his pocket
Is he trying to find the locket
Or is he out of it, or is he out of it?

Is he searching for the answer
Or is he just another prancer
"Black Power" he'll cry, as he looks you in the
eye

But the guy feels so bad, he really feels sad
He even gets the blues, because he knows that
he paid his dues

But with his Afro-comb in his pocket
Is he trying to escape the socket

That will draw him there, and he'll just be a
square

Get back brothers, Get back
Get facts brothers, get facts

You've got to look beyond the label
And that's the only way you'll be able
To penetrate the fables
That have made us all unable
To cop that mink and sable, get back
Get back brothers, get back

But with the Afro-pick in her purse
Is she trying to be a nurse
Or is she afraid of the hearse, is she afraid
of the hearse?

Well is she straddled with the reason
She got to make it through the season
"Green Power" she'll cry, as she looks you in
the eye

But the girl feels so bad, she really feels sad
She even gets the blues, because she knows
there's not enough food

But with the Afro-pick in her purse
Well is she trying to be a nurse
Or is she afraid of the hearse, or is she
afraid of the hearse?

Get back sisters, get back
Get facts sisters, get facts
You've got to look beyond the label
And that's the only way you'll be able
To penetrate the fables
That have made us all unable
To cop that mink and sable, get back
Get back sisters, get back

(Martin continues): "Afro-comb"--something like a
blues, with a blues beat--and this can also be used for
the very currently popular "rap" style of music that's

dominating this part of the world--"The Afro-comb". This was composed back in the seventies. It was a part of a group of tunes I composed directed towards total Blackness which was taking place throughout America, and I had an opportunity to do the music for a play from Bowling Green University. Dr. John Scott, who was over in the English Department there, got together and this is one of the pieces that appeared in that play along with several other pieces which I won't do right now.

Love Wins in the End

I don't covet my children any more than you, and
 you, and you
 I find love and affection and good and good in every
 child anew
 Jesus loves the little children, all the children of
 the world
 If this be so, then we all should know that Loves
 Wins in the End.

I don't cherish my brother or my sister any more
 than you, and you, and you
 I find love, even though at times it's hard to do
 People have their troubles, all the people of the
 world
 If this be so, then we all should know that Love
 Wins in the End.

Malcolm X made the journey from the ghetto to the
 Mecca
 This should show non-believers that he was no faker
 His messages put many a person uptight, all across
 the land
 If this be so, then we all should know that Love
 Wins in the End.

A Rahsaan Roland Kirk has been sent to keep us all
 a-seeking
 Martin Luther, the King, is here so we won't weaken
 The Kennedy brothers carried the message (gunshots
 here, in the music) all across the land
 If this be so, then we all should know that Love
 Wins in the End.

Throughout trials and tribulations and bad vibration
 we must grow
 Black or white is not the question, but how to meet
 the foe
 People have their troubles, all the people of the
 world
 If this be so, then we all should know that Love
 Wins in the End.

(Martin continues): "Love Wins in the End" was
 composed in the midst of all the many executions that
 were taking place with Martin Luther King and Malcolm X,
 the Kennedy brothers and what have you.

The next tune is a tune I composed while I was
 living at a motel here in Los Angel-lie back in the early
 eighties, and I happened to observe quite a few events on
 the scene, and one of the events was the motel hustler.

The Motel Hustler

I'm just a motel hustler trying to find my way
 I'm just a motel hustler trying to find my way
 A room full of girls, all frills and pearls
 I've seen those girls do all kinds of twirls
 I wouldn't touch one of those girls with a ten
 foot pole
 'cause the motel hustler knows...who's got the
 Herpes

I'm just a motel hustler trying to find my way
 A desk full of pills, all kinds of thrills

I can make you feel all kinds of chills
 Some say I'm sad, some say I'm glad
 But I'll give you the best feeling that you
 ever had

I'm just a motel hustler, trying to find my way
 I'm just a motel hustler, I hustle every day

Some think I'm bad, stay out of my way
 But late at night, they get uptight that way
 They'll come knocking at my door and they
 know I'm right in the pocket
 'cause I got whatever it takes to make them
 drop it in the socket

I'm just a motel hustler trying to find my way,
 oh yeah
 I'm just a motel hustler, I hustle every day
 A room full of girls, all frills and pearls
 I've seen those girls do all kinds of twirls
 I wouldn't touch one of those girls with a ten
 foot pole
 'cause the motel hustler knows--who's got the
 Herpes

I'm just a motel hustler trying to find my way
 I'm just a motel hustler, hustling every day
 What do you say, what do you say?

(Martin continues): Yeah, that was written when I was living at a motel here in Los Angeles, called the Sentinel Motel over there on Washington Boulevard, and they had all kind of tramp bums and hustlers and slick people and people on the pipe, people off the pipe, so though the words might seem kind of over-dramatic to you, they was just expressing an experience I was compelled to live with at that particular time in my life...Thank God right now I've got my pad here with ChyReal and...

These are different experiences that artistic people go through, and in going through the experience they try to come out..they're seeking for answers and they're getting information but yet there's, they're putting it right back over there into the people and letting the people know, you know, what's down...

There's another segment of "The Motel Hustler" that I left out which kind of explains the attitude that we're all hustlers of some sort, even if we're going into big business, even if we're PhD's, even if we're school teachers, even if we're great big senators, whatever we're doing, we're hustling...you know there's a part of hustling in everything that's going on in this country 'cause that's what seems to make this country go around...and so, you know, when you get realistic about the interpretation of what's going on around you, then you come to the conclusion that everybody's hustling everybody else and that's just the way it is here in America, but I ain't going to get no more into that, I'm-a go on to my next piece--thank you!

Ain't No Kick-back in L.A.

Ain't no kick-back in L.A.
You got to get a job, find a place to stay
I didn't think it would be this way

You can't believe what people say

Ain't no kick-back in L.A.
 You got to get a job and get a place to stay
 You know you can't think it would be this way
 You can't believe what people say

Folks drive around in real fine cars
 But do they know who they are?
 Orange trees and lemons all around
 I've never seen so much food on the ground
 No kick-back, kick-back, kick-back, kick-back
 in L.A.

Everyone's related to someone famous
 Cousins, aunts and uncles and just anything
 As long as they made it--made what?

That kick-back in L.A.
 Got to get a job find a place to stay
 He didn't know it would be this way
 Kick-back, kick-back, kick-back L.A. ay-yay-
 yay-ay

(Martin continues): You know, L.A. is often referred to as the city of Lost Angels...me, I call it Los Angel-lie. I mean, in other words when I put the "lie" on the end--it's like a L-A-I-E type of a lie...and the "L" on that lie is not a long straight "L", it's not a round "L" that's going into the socket, it's not a curly "L"...it's a great big semi-square "L", I mean a sho-nuff "L", OK.

Champions Come and Go

Champions come and go
 Rising through the most unusual levels
 of opposition to succeed, yet to fail

For champions are always capulated into
 oblivion by fresher, newer talents
 The short-lived existence that many times can
 do nothing but die...

Records are made to break
 Sometimes you feel helpless, confined to
 failure
 Unless you rise and are gifted with
 perseverance and good fortune, because
 life in L.A.
 Is not about champions

Champions come and go
 Rising through the most unusual levels
 of opposition to succeed, yet to fail
 For champions are always capulated into
 oblivion by fresher, newer talents
 A short-lived existence that many times can do
 nothing but die...

Records are made to break
 Sometimes you feel helplessly confined to
 failure in a yellow van*
 But there is an apartment and you have it
 There in the promised land

* a reference to a friend who was living in his van on
 the street.

What Can We Do to Get the People Out of the Rain

What can we do to get the people out of the rain?
 Sleeping in cardboard boxes, eating out of garbage
 cans
 I know you see them, you see them every day
 Can't seem to help them, not in any way

We hurry to condominiums, apartments and beautiful
 homes
 When it rains we pull the shades and turn our TV's
 on
 But those people never get out of the rain

We spend billion dollars--rocket ships Uranus Venus
 and Mars

But folks are still starving in what's called the
Promised Land

We all claim Christianity saying we believe in God
But can we help those lonely souls who's always
around?

We've got statistics that say they really want to be
there

The rain wets our garments, in the cleaners they
must go
But what about those starving people who can't come
out of the rain?
Tons of milk down the drain every day
Fields of crops a-wasting, God put them here for us
to be tasting

The plight of the poor is so unfair, when will we
help our own?
Especially people starving in America--our home

(Martin continues): Right now I'm going to do the
words and music for a tune that I composed in New York
City in the late seventies. It concerns the New York
women there. I'm sure you'll get the message on it--it
tells about the bag women and it tell about prostitution,
but it speaks about it in a unique way in that we don't
have enough understanding on the subject, so this is
called "New York Woman".

New York Woman

Where is she going, what are her plans?
Where will her pretty feet land?
What is she thinking, what's on her mind?
Maybe she'll find happiness somewhere along the
line

She's out there on the strip, hustling for
 those tips
 Don't you think she's hip? New York woman,
 there she goes

Her profession is not that new, aside from the
 Golden Rule
 She does what she has to do, New York woman
 There she goes, there she goes

Maybe the city has blown her mind
 She couldn't reach her destiny on time
 We should be forgiving and show concern
 There's so much we could learn

She sees a bag lady on the scene
 The dark side of every woman's dream
 Could her life end up this way, if she keeps on
 hustling every day?
 There still should be a chance.

Inspiration

I see your inspiration, I see your winning
 smile
 I dig the clothes you're wearing, I peep your
 whole life-style
 Why can't we be together and share our love
 anew?
 I know that we'd be happy in anything we do

Hey, love is a beautiful thing
 Hey, love is like summer-comes-rain
 It will fill you up, right up to the top
 You won't know where to stop

I'll take your inspiration, I'll take that
 winning smile
 Come one, let's be together, I'm sure we'll
 groove awhile
 And after all the rapping and all that's said
 and done
 I know we'll be together and we'll be having
 fun

That's when revolution takes hold
Don't get strung off nobody's tricks
Don't try to eat those sticks
Open up your mind and you'll agree, you're free
You're free, you're free...to be

(Martin continues): By the year 1975 I had 100 songs with lyrics with the Creative Spirits, which is a group that I won some beautiful contests at Malcolm X College and several other places in the Midwest. This was a very outstanding group in that all the music they contained was oral projected--it came from me teaching tenor saxophonists, alto saxophone, flutes and all the rest of the instruments to play what I was playing and to center their music around the bass violin--the contrabass, the upright bass. And this was a very beautiful experience for me because at the time, I had left Rahsaan Roland Kirk to further pursue my own musical interests--and this is something that I systematically have did with most of the musical involvements I've been in including my symphonic experiences and everything like that because I've always seen a need to try to fulfill what I was striving for in my own self, where the stories I had to tell...so like a lot of times, when people want to know why I haven't played with this or that person or blah-blah this or blah-blah that, it's mainly and

primarily because I've been self-directed and I knew that I had a music that, through people that are my allies, people that have been consistent in helping me do what I want to do music-wise--to get the music out that's in me...So that's one of the reasons that, when people ask me about why I didn't play with Miles Davis and Monk and a lot of the different people like that--the reason I didn't play with them is because I've always had my own inner messages coming from me since a very early age, having went to the Apollo theater singing vocals in the early forties and having been exposed to many musics in my family--my whole family being musical and what have you. So that's a part of some of the reasons that I've been able to remain steadfast in what I strive for musically and I've also been able to keep my mind mentally clear and know what my direction was, so far as what I have to do, which is get my own musical voice. And it's not really what you would look at as a commercial encounter, where I'm looking to gain anything except the satisfaction of knowing that, with every breath I take, I'm striving to bring this music that Allah and the gods have given me , to humanity. I'm striving to export to any ears and any bodies that are

around me, what God has given me to give, and in doing so, that perpetuates my life-style, that perpetuates the reason that I live like I live--the reason I'm dedicated to the music. (Martin 1986)

Analysis of Poetry

"The Afro-comb" begins with a query--is the young man seeking to find a sense of his identity (the locket) with the afro-comb, or is he just mindlessly following the crowd, trying to conform (is he out of it?). The second stanza repeats this idea with alternate imagery. The third stanza talks about the sadness that the reality of Negro life foists upon most of its young men. The fourth stanza asks: is he trying to escape the pressures of society (the socket) that want to socialize him into becoming a predictable cog in its machinery (a square)? The refrain, with its compelling rhythm and rhyme scheme, exhorts the young men to inform themselves about what the Afro-comb really symbolizes. Is Black pride just another fashion fad, or is it the key to self-enlightenment--the way out of the economic blockade the white world has placed around them. The second verse applies the message to young Black women. The first stanza asks--is the

young woman trying to achieve upward mobility (a job as a nurse), or is she simply trying to survive at any level possible--trying to stay alive? (Is she afraid of the hearse.) The second stanza further queries the young woman--is she sure that the quest for economic power is going to be the panacea that it's represented to be? Is "Green Power"--the power of the dollar--going to help her and her people? The third stanza again reflects the sadness of the stark realities of poverty in Negro life. The fourth stanza reprises the first and then the refrain is repeated verbatim, emphasizing the need to look beyond the surface of the explanations of why Blacks have been historically impeded in the U.S. (look beyond the label).

The use of Black vernacular--"socket", "square", "prancer", and the references to symbols of meanings--"he gets the blues", "he's paid his dues"--are a customary way of communicating for the Black jazzman which Martin characteristically employs here. (Daniels 1988:168)

That this song was "directed toward total Blackness" as Martin has stated, implies the concept that Blackness is not chauvinism, but an attempt to critically analyze all the variables to truly see the root of the problem. To paraphrase the poem (an attempt the writer makes in the

interests of study): is Black consciousness something constructive that can combat 400 years of mental conditioning as second-class citizens, or is it just another way to sell something--to merchandise Afro-combs and other "Black consciousness" products that will have little lasting social effect, but will allow some entrepreneur to realize a short-term profit?

"Love Wins in the End" is Martin's plea for people to realize that we're basically all the same. We all love our children and cherish our brethren. He eulogizes fallen leaders Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and John and Robert Kennedy, along with his compatriot Kirk in his appeal to the hopeful spirit in all of us. In spite of all the violence, these men were motivated by love and, (he claims) love, in the end, will triumph. "Black and white is not the question, but how to meet the foe"; he asks for unity among all the peoples of the world.

"The Motel Hustler" reflects some of the realities that Martin's economic situation has forced him to endure. That he is philosophical about his own suffering is evident in his comments that "we're all hustlers of some sort".

"Ain't No Kick-back in L. A.", "Champions Come and Go", and "What Can We Do to Get the People Out of the Rain?" further describe in verse the reaction Martin experienced upon arriving in Los Angeles--the "Promised Land".

"Kick-back in L.A." describes Martin's lack of luck in finding people open to him and his messages. People are more interested in driving fine cars, impressing others with whom they are related to, than in opening their minds to creative, constructive analysis of social problems. People are not responsible for their brothers in L.A.--they let them drop and rot on the sidewalk like so many surplus oranges and lemons that fall from urban trees.

"Champions Come and Go" is obviously a very personal account of Martin's own heroic life--a rise to international musical prominence that proved to be a "short-lived existence", eclipsed by "fresher newer talents". But he encourages himself to remember the virtues of perseverance, the possibilities of good fortune and the realization that "life in L.A. is not about champions". The writer feels that the term "capulates" is a variant of the verb "capitulates";

hence, "champions are capulated into oblivion" can be interpreted as " heroes are forced into the ranks of the forgotten."

"What Can We Do to Keep the People Out of the Rain?" is a stark indictment of the hypocrisy of America as seen from the perspective of an inner-city dweller of the mid-1980s. Contrast is the unifying motive in this song-- "people eating out of garbage cans" juxtaposed with "we run to our beautiful homes". Contrast points up hypocrisy in "we all claim Christianity" but, "can we help those lonely souls?" and the especially cutting, "we've got statistics that say they really want to be there" which echoes a pronouncement from the Reagan white house. "Tons of milk down the drain everyday" is a reference to a scam, then recently uncovered, by a milk company to keep federal price supports in place, which actually resulted in the disposal of huge quantities of consumable milk. The song contrasts the billions of dollars spent on the space program with the ending query: "When will we help our own, especially people starving in America, our home."

Martin's life as a Black musician exposed him to the seamier side of life not only in Los Angeles, but also in

New York, which supplied the setting and inspiration for his "New York Woman". He paints a picture with words of a young beautiful woman whose profession is "not that new", who is confronted with a "bag lady" and sees it as a premonition of her own future. Martin encourages the listener to "be forgiving and show concern...there's so much we could learn." So much to learn about how to combat the causes of social ills that claim so many lives. He ends on a characteristically positive note: "there still should be a chance."

The poem "Inspirations" could be either a simple love song with its naive imagery (summer-comes-rain) or a tongue-in-cheek mocking of middle class jargon that makes up the language of the piece. "Life styles", "winning smiles", "dig the clothes you're wearing" are all examples of "Yuppie" (Young, Upwardly-mobile Professionals) speech patterns. The basis of the relationship described in the poem is shallow (we'll be having fun talking about life styles). These qualities stand in sharp contrast to the virtuous, humanitarian values expressed by Martin in his other poems and lead the writer to believe this song is a "put-on", a jibe at middle class contemporary values, revealing them to be

empty and purely superficial. Even the title "Inspirations" is derisive in its supposition that something as superficial as a life-style could inspire anything more than a pale mockery of a love song.

Martin doesn't mock just the middle class, he opens Black revolutionary doctrines to scrutiny as well, as seen in "Rufus". This is the story of Rufus, "the cat who does his thing"; "revolution is his theme", "all white concepts are the same"--are mottoes which might fairly describe some of the principles of the Black Power movements of the late sixties and early seventies. Martin quotes Chas. Mingus, "better get the message in your soul", but then cautions not to get "caught with the Black stick, strung out on the white man's tricks"--a warning not to become involved in violence that is fomented by white attitudes and policies, but then repudiated and punished by white riot police, kangaroo justice and jail terms. Instead, he appeals to Rufus to "open up your mind", and, he continues, "you'll agree, you're free...to be." The underlying idea here, as in "New York Woman" and "The Afro-comb" is: open up your mind, get facts--learn. Don't blame others out of hatred and frustration, but look within yourself in a truly open

way and you'll see we're all alike. "Black or white is not the question" he insists. For Martin, the message is "Love wins in the end" and this idea can be seen as an unifying factor throughout his rhetoric and his actions.

Martin's Philosophy and Values

As a result of careful scrutiny and analysis of the foregoing poems, songs and comments, the following statements of Martin's philosophy and values have been identified:

1. Open your mind.
 - a. Don't be limited by slogans and popular opinion, but strive to see the larger picture, try to see the truth of whatever situation you're in.
 - b. Don't neglect introspection, don't be afraid to criticize yourself as perhaps one of the faults of the matter.
2. Get facts--learn. Read, study, discuss, dispassionately search for data upon which to base your opinions.
3. Be forgiving--show concern. Don't condemn others, but recognize that we're all strong, beautiful, yet fallible human beings.

4. Black or white is not the answer. The question of racial and cultural differences is not the root cause, but just a symptom of the ills that plague our world. Diversity should not be based on nationality or ethnicity. "There's a part of hustling in everything that's going on in this country", "Tons of milk down the drain every day"--the real problems are the economic institutions of the capitalistic world. Intergroup differences are exploited as a means to make a profit--even relics of cultural pride such as an Afro-comb are not safe from commercial exploitation.

5. Love wins in the end. Martin's prescription is to stay positive, be forgiving, show concern--have faith that gentleness and understanding will enable humanity to overcome its multiple problems so that we all can "come in out of the rain."

The following is a comparison of Martin's stated values with some of the deeds he has accomplished in his life.

1. Martin has opened his mind to many cultural and intellectual stimuli. While remaining true to his own Black heritage, (by acknowledging it, by promulgating it) he has at the same time studied European classical music

and its literature. The action of composing and performing the verses he has written is testament to the openness of his own mind and his lack of fear in examining his own foibles for what truths or illusions might be found there.

2. Get facts--Martin is a voracious reader and questioner. As an illustration, he enrolled at Los Angeles City College in 1989 and studied Japanese culture and history as well as elementary Japanese language, including the study of pictographs which he would practice for hours as his homework for the class.

3. Martin continues to seek the company of people of all races and cultures. His friends, co-workers and students encompass the entire spectrum of ethnicity.

4. Martin has consistently involved himself in the work of neighborhood centers. From the Soul and Arts Creative Workshop in Toledo, to the Nigritian Animist Society in Los Angeles, to the World Food Bank in Santa Barbara, Martin has donated his time and talents not only as a musician and performer but also as a community organizer and teacher of young people.

5. "Love wins in the end"--As has been pointed out in the foregoing testimony of the UCSB students, Martin

is a gregarious, effusive person who greets people with smiles, handshakes, hugs and sincere warmth.

The conclusions which can be drawn are that:

1. Martin's values and goals can be deduced from his poetry and from his comments.
2. The concrete actions that realize the rhetoric of Martin's philosophy can be observed in the history of his deeds as recorded in a variety of independently verifiable situations.
3. There is a high degree of integrity between Martin's stated values and his actual behavior.

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CHAPTER III

Analysis of Compositions

"Mega Music"

In order to identify the fundamental elements of Martin's music a number of his compositions have been transcribed and subjected to analysis. The first of these is "Mega Music".

The transcription was made from a live tape recording of an instrumental ensemble consisting of piano, bass, drums and alto saxophone. The performers learned the music "by ear"--that is, through oral tradition from the composer, Martin, who showed each player his part, playing it on the bass enough times so that each player learned it.

The transcriptions reflect the following:

1. The ensemble's collective version of the music--approved by Martin, though incorporating changes necessitated not only by the peculiarities of each instrument but also by performance variations suggested by individual players.

2. The further editing of the music by the transcriber to reflect the intent of the performer rather than the actual variation presented in this performance.

The reason for the editing of the music was twofold:

- a. To facilitate conventional analysis.
- b. To represent the music in a standard format making additional performances practical.

"Mega Music" is here presented in a "lead sheet" format with the melody written in music notation and the harmony indicated with chord symbols. Measure numbers have been added on the attached copy in the center of each measure.

Harmonic Analysis

The piece embraces twenty-five measures in four-four time plus one measure in two-four for a total of twenty-six. The general harmonic scheme is that of twelve pairs of chords characterized by a ii - V7 relationship. These pairs of chords ascend by half step in succession so that the final pair leads by the same interval to the first pair. The piece begins with a D7 chord in the first measure followed by Eb7 in the third measure, Emi7 in the fifth, Fmi7 in the seventh, F#mi7 in the ninth, Gmi7 in the eleventh, Ab in the thirteenth, Ami in the fifteenth and Bb7 in the seventeenth which is the two-four measure. At this point the melody in this key area is extended for

two extra measures. Bmi7 follows in measure twenty-one succeeded by Cmi7 in measure twenty-three. The final two measures bear no chord designation as they contain a melodic statement simultaneously performed by all instruments in the ensemble, though the harmonic implications of this fragment would put it in E major or C# minor, thus completing the harmonic ladder and resolving by half step back to the beginning D7. In other words, Martin has simply used the ascending chromatic scale as his harmonic framework. During improvisation this leads to a continuous building, a rising action of the solos each time culminating with the structural marker (the simultaneous melodic statement) thus giving the listener a solid place to anchor his attention before the next foray into the changes.

Rhythmic Analysis

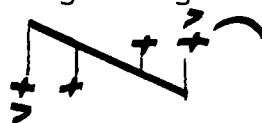
The rhythmic activity is likewise highly organized incorporating a wide range of note values and rhythmic figures in its short length.

Description

Activity opens with an antecedent/consequent pair of rhythmic ideas in typical jazz "swing" eighth-note


rhythm. Each fragment begins on the up-beat of "one" and builds to a strong accent on a weak beat. (D in meas. #2, Eb in meas. #4.) Measure five opens with an eighth-note triplet on beat "two" of the measure, repeats twice and resolves to eighth notes and a strong accent on a weak beat. (B in meas. #6) Measure seven similarly opens with an eighth note triplet on beat "two" and ends with eighth notes accenting a weak beat. (D in meas. #8) Measures nine and ten reverse this pattern with the eighth notes and weak beat accent occurring first, then the triplet figure which presages an accented downbeat. (meas. #10) Measures eleven and twelve double the previous quarter rest/eighth note triplet pattern--we hear a half rest followed by a quarter note triplet, once again leading to an accented weak beat. (E in meas. #12)

Measures thirteen and fourteen contrast by using straight quarter notes on strong beats, still ending on an accented weak beat; further contrast is that this is now a I (major) chord instead of a ii or V7 chord. The momentary "at rest" situation is immediately broken up with a flurry of activity beginning with the attention-getting octave figure:

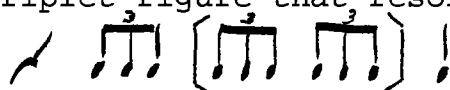


(meas. #15) which is heard as eighth notes in a group of three; the fourth note being tied to an eighth note triplet leading to a series of sixteenth notes grouped in three momentarily climaxing on the downbeats of the two-four measure #17. These downbeats are accented octaves, echoing the octaves in measure fifteen and serving as a pivot into the next phrase which is a double-time bop line in swung sixteenth notes--three repetitions of a fragment (a,a',a) ending abruptly on the downbeat of beat "four" in measure #20. A mature, developed fragment of the original eighth rest/ eighth notes idea is effected by the half rest/ half note combination and creates a *denouement* leading the listener to the "punch line" or structural marker on which the piece cadences.

Analysis

The piece is rhythmically organized around the development and extension of one main idea--the silence of an eighth rest on beat one broken by three eighth notes that resolve on a strong beat. 7 

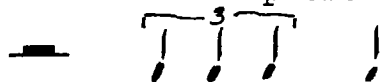
(meas. #1,3) The first variation is heard in measure five, now modified to become a quarter rest followed by a repeated triplet figure that resolves on a strong beat.



(meas. #5) The idea is immediately reprised in measure #7



and then heard in retrograde in measures nine and ten where the triplet figure occurs at the end of the phrase. Measure number eleven presents the idea in elongation



with the three notes of the triplet bearing the same pitch. This, then, is what becomes the "mature" version of the motive heard in measures #21 and 23, though now the triplet is condensed to a half note



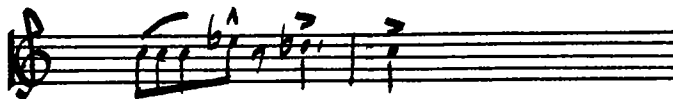
and likewise resolves on beat one of the next measure. Between measures thirteen and twenty lies an area of rhythmic contrast. From the three-on-four feeling of the descending figure in meas. #16 to the flurry of the double-timed bop line that abruptly stops in measure #20, the listener is affected by the onslaught of activity and is prepared for the reintroduction of the thematic motive

in mature form as a cessation of activity, coming to rest. This is suddenly broken again with the articulation of the "punch line" or structural marker that concludes the piece. (meas. # 25-26)

Melodic Analysis

The foregoing rhythmic analysis notwithstanding, it is the melodic aspect which has been woven into the highly organized rhythm scheme that demands the thoughtful listener's approbation. The piece is obviously constructed of fragments of great jazz themes of the past fifty years. Following the call-and-response relationship of the first two phrases (meas. #1-4) with its use of melodic truncation, (the second phrase is one whole beat shorter than the first) one hears the opening motive to saxophonist James Moody's classic interpretation of "I'm In the Mood For Love" (meas. #5-6) followed by the main theme of Lester Young's "Jumpin' with Symphony Sid" which finds its consequent and rhythmic retrograde in Ellington's "I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart". (meas. #9-10) Measures eleven and twelve present "April in Paris", while thirteen and fourteen are "There Will Never Be Another You". Measures fifteen and

sixteen use a motive unknown to this writer, but incorporate the bold idea of two juxtaposed octaves thrown out of phase by uneven rhythmic emphasis. This is followed by a scale rudiment of groups of three descending notes. The interplay between the accents of the rudiment and the natural accents of the underlying *cantus firmus* of four-four time causes the listener to temporarily lose the beat. This is immediately rectified by the profound accent given the octave figure in measure seventeen which propels the action into three typical bop phrases on the quadruple-timed changes of "Just You, Just Me"--a Lester Young favorite, though this style is more reminiscent of Charlie Parker than Young. Longer values are used to effect the *denouement* of the piece (meas. #21-24) followed by the playful fragment that is used as a structural marker during improvisation and also concludes the piece during the final reprise of the melody. This last motive has its antecedents in the tag to Roland Kirk's "Serenade to a Cuckoo"



which Martin quoted in his own "You'd Better Believe". Also it is reminiscent of the child's song "Ring Around the Rosey".



One might get the feeling that Martin threw in everything including the kitchen sink to get the melody to these chords, but as we have seen, there is an intense logic and rationale that provides unity and structure to this seemingly overly complicated piece.

MEGA MUSIC

PLATE I

122

by Vernon Martin

$\text{♩} = 138$
Swing

Handwritten musical score for guitar in treble clef, 4/4 time, swing feel. The score consists of seven staves of music with various chords and melodic lines. Chords are labeled with numbers 1 through 26. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Staff 1: D_7 1, G_7 2, E_7^b 3, A_7^b 4

Staff 2: E_{mi7} 5, A_7 6, F_{mi7} 7, B_7^b 8

Staff 3: $F\#_{mi7}$ 9, B_7 10, G_{mi7} 11, C_7 12, A^b 13

Staff 4: A_{mi} 15, $G_{mi7/D}$ 16

Staff 5: B_7^b 17, E^b 18, C_7 19, F_{mi7} 20, B_7^b 21, F_{mi7} 22, B_7^b 23, E^b 24

Staff 6: E^b 25, C_7 26

Staff 7: F_7 27, 28, 29, 30

"The Sonnet"

One of Martin's later compositions is the song "The Sonnet". This one was written during his residence on South Normandie Avenue in Los Angeles while he was living with stroke survivor ChyReal Love, who sang the song on this recording.

The transcription was made from a high quality recording done at the UCSB studios in 1988. The ensemble consisted of piano, bass, drums, alto saxophone and vocalist. Martin taught this tune to each of the players using the technique of oral transmission. He repeated the melody on the bass until the melodic instruments learned their parts. He played the bass line repeatedly until the pianist was able to sketch out a lead sheet and then, aided by the melody, realize the harmony part.

The melodic transcription was made from the vocal version and, like "Mega Music", strays from fidelity to the recording only in the transcriber's desire to be:

1. Simple and understandable.
2. Faithful to the intent of the composer.

"The Sonnet" is here presented in expanded "lead sheet" format--melody, chord symbols, and bass line as performed by Martin.

Harmonic Analysis

"The Sonnet" is in three-four time and is in standard 32 measure ABAC form. The first four measures contain the basic sound of the piece--a blues figure over the chords Bb - Eb, one measure each. The second four measures introduces a modulation to G minor. Bars nine through twelve provide contrast to the opening chords, now with a minor key feeling on chords G minor - Eb7, one measure each, two repetitions. Measures thirteen through sixteen modulate to the V7 chord (F7) and bring the listener back "home" to the tonic sound of Bb - Eb in measures seventeen through twenty. Measures twenty-one and twenty-two prepare and then modulate to Eb in meas. #23, rising by half-step back to the one six-four chord (Bb/F) and continuing to rise by half-step to the minor vi chord (G minor) and its extension, II7 (C7). This is followed by C minor 7 in meas. #29, which is the ii chord in the home key, and then cadences via the V7 chord in meas. #30 to land on Bb in meas. #31.

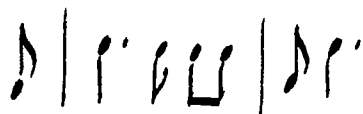
TABLE V"The Sonnet" Chord Function Diagram

Bb: I IV7 I IV7 I I viio III7
 vi-mi7 IV7 vi-mi7 IV7
 vimi7 II7 ii-mi7 V7
 I IV7 I IV7 I I7 IV #IVo7
 I(6-4) III/3 vi-mi7 II7 ii-mi7 V7 I IV7

This appears to be an original chord progression, though it uses all of the standard devices and sounds so "familiar" to the listener, it's easy to think that this is the chord progression to one of the great songs of Tin Pan Alley.

Rhythmic AnalysisDescription

"The Sonnet" opens with the motive in meas. #1-2



which is repeated with rhythmic variation in meas. #3-4.

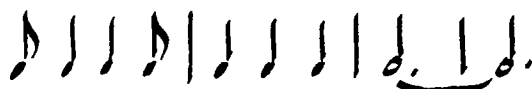
The second measure of this motive, which uses the figure



provides the material for meas. #5-6 which repeat that idea twice, resolving to a long note held for four counts. (D in meas. #7-8). The original idea of meas. #1-2 is transposed and repeated in meas. #8-11. The last three notes of this motive are extended by means of repetition. This activity resolves once again to a long note in meas. #15-16. Meas. #17-20 closely duplicate meas. #1-2 as meas. #20-21 similarly recall meas. #5-6, resolving to a long note in meas. #23-24. Measures 25-26 reduce the opening motive to



and extend the last three notes by means of repetition in meas. #27-28. This leads to the climax of the piece:



in meas. #29-30, which is rhythmically new material.

Melodic Analysis

Description

The opening motive, "M" can be divided into its components and labelled:



Measures #1 and 2 contain "M" and meas. #3-4, a very slight variation of "M". Meas. #5-6. introduce the idea labelled "A", which uses the pitch material of "x" and rhythmic placement of "y", and leads to idea "B"--a sustained note of four beats:



Measures #9-12 use "M" two more times and then extend the melody using idea "z" in retrograde (now ascending) two times in meas. #13-14, resolving to idea "B" in meas. #15-16. Measures #17-18 use the "M" motive two more times. Idea "A" is heard in meas. #21. Motive "M" is then heard in truncated form in meas. #22-23 (the last note is omitted) leading to idea "B" in meas. #23-24. Measures #25-26 use a simplified variation of the "M" motive. Meas. #27-28 use the "A" motive with variations on the melodic contour, which leads into the material in meas. #29-30 and concludes with idea "B" in meas. #31-32.

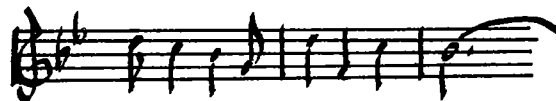
Analysis of Rhythm and Melody

The melodic and rhythmic structure of "The Sonnet" is highly unified and symmetrical. The entire piece can be seen to have been constructed out of the melodic elements of one main idea, the opening motive



which is repeated with slight variations eight times during the 32 measures. This motive, labelled "M" can be divided into sub-motives "x", "y", and "z". Idea "A" uses the intervals in submotive "x" and the rhythmic placement in submotive "y" and is repeated with variations seven times. Motive "M" uses the notes of the Bb triad on strong beats 3, 1 and 3. This triadic submotive is what yields the pitch material of motive "A".

The basic melodic materials are developed by means of truncation, transposition and extension. Though the first beat of each measure is clearly defined, there is much use of syncopation throughout the piece that resolves ingeniously in measures #29-30,



using rhythmic ideas not heard earlier in the piece: measure #29 uses quarter notes off the beat, measure #30 uses quarter notes on the beat, resolving to the held note in meas. #31-32. This penultimate figure is, of course, the African six-eight *clave* or time-line. In

other words, using a minimum of thematic materials, and reinforcing the "one" of each measure, the piece bounces along with syncopated variations , finally culminating in the famous six-eight *clave* as the climax of the whole piece, before resolving to the tonic note held out the last two measures.

"M"

Examples and comparison of motives used in "The Sonnet"

Bass Line Analysis

Description

"The Sonnet" opens with the bass's principal motive stated and then repeated beneath the alternating chords of Bb-Eb7 (meas. #a-b). This motive clearly gives the feeling of three-four time and outlines the chords by placing the roots on the first beat of each measure and arpeggiating the harmonic elements within each measure. (Major third D in meas. #a; fifth and minor seventh Bb and Db in meas. #b.)

Though the opening "vamp" (chord pairs) continues for eight more measures, the bass figure is completely changed in measure #e, though still clearly outlining the harmony (meas. #e - meas. #4) and exhibiting variations at every repetition. Measure #6 illustrates one of Martin's techniques for impelling the rhythm: after securing the down beat of beat one with the root of the chord (Bb), he passes to the fifth of the chord on beat two (F) by means of an accented non-chord tone (G) somewhere in the latter part of the second half of beat one. (Transcriber heard this figure as a sixteenth note before beat two



This "in-between-note" accent is characteristic of Martin's rhythmic ornamentation and he repeats this same rhythmic idea in meas. #9 and #16. Measures #7 and #8 use straight repeated quarter notes beneath the sustained D of the melody. Measure #10 repeats a fragment of the opening motive (the two sixteenth notes on the last half of beat two



Measure #11 uses a double stop on beat one. Notice how the repeated chord pairs Gmi7-Eb7 heard in meas. #9-10 and #11-12 are anchored by a bass line that does not repeat. This contrasts not only with the chords but also with the melody which similarly has a repeating phrase in these measures. The double-stop idea is heard again in meas. #14 as well as the off-beat accent (G in beat 3) leading to the root of the dominant chord in meas. #15-16, which in turn leads to the reprise of the opening motive in meas. # 17-18. Measures #e-f are repeated in meas. #19-20. Meas. #21 begins a chromatic descending line and approaches the E on beat one of meas. #22 by half-step from below. This E glisses up to its tritone chord alternate Bb, though this tone is swallowed--it is a "ghost" note, implied and felt rhythmically but not

heard clearly. The Eb on beat one of meas. #23 is likewise approached chromatically from below and then this action is repeated, leading by double chromatic lower neighbor to the E natural on beat one of meas. #24. Chromatic action continues to the F in meas. #25 and then the double chromatic lower neighbor idea once again is employed taking the listener to F# on beat one of meas. #26 which is filled out with chord tones D and A on beats two and three. A leap of a minor seventh arrives at the G on beat one of meas. #27 whose syncopated rhythm fills in the "holes" of the melody in this measure, leading by falling fifth to C on beat one of meas. #28. This measure uses the double sixteenth note fragment of the opening motive,



repeats the C an octave higher, then an octave lower as it doubles the rhythm of the melody in meas. #29. It then touches the dominant F on beat one of meas. #30 and glisses up to Bb for a reprise of the opening motive in meas. #31-32.

other elements of the composition are static--such as repetition of melody and chord progression in meas. #9-10, #11-12, the bass line pointedly changes--effecting a contrast in the composition. When chordal activity is dynamic as in meas. #7-8 (Ami7 b5 - D7), the bass line simply repeats notes on the beat, again contrasting. When the melody reaches its climax in meas. #27-28, the bass line subtly underscores the off-beat rhythm with repeated notes (meas. #29) and then a held note (meas. #30), supporting the melody but not distracting the listener's attention.

The harmonic function of each chord is clearly defined by Martin's bass pattern; chord roots are consistently heard on beat one of each measure. A glance at Table VI will reveal that during the forty measures of the song, chord roots were played 55 times, or 47% of the time followed by 22% for fifths of the chords. This is followed by major thirds - 8%, and minor sevenths - 6%.

The smooth flowing of the harmonic progression is heard and reflected in the large percentage of rising fourth and falling fifth approaches to beat one of each measure. Out of forty measures transcribed, fully twenty-three are approached by this interval, with six

more using the interval of a rising minor second. (Table VII).

An analysis of the melodic intervals used within the piece, that is, from note to note, reveals the largest proportion being that interval of a minor second (25%) followed by a perfect fourth (17%) and perfect fifth (12%). The incidence of occurrence of these intervals is closely followed by those of a major second (12%) and major third (9%). This data, exhibited in Table VIII indicates the adherence to traditional bass playing used by Martin; a preponderance of fourth and fifth intervals with the half-step used as melodic ornamentation. Particular emphasis should be given to the overall diversity of intervals used--from a minor second to a minor ninth.

Martin's bass line also functions as the impeller of rhythmic forward motion in this piece. Throughout forty measures, nine different rhythmic figures can be heard in various combinations (Table IX) from as long as a half note to as short as an isolated sixteenth note. The majority (45%) of these values is the quarter note, followed in quantity by the paired figure of dotted-eighth/sixteenth note



at 14%. Next in number of examples heard are the half note and dotted quarter note, each at 10%.

Martin makes particularly noticeable use of the accented off-beat which is heard eight times in the piece (meas. #a, #c, #6, #9, #14, #16, #28, and #31) and is one of the standard devices to effect "swing" in a jazz performance. (Mehegan 1962:9)

Having firmly anchored both the time and the harmony onto beat one of each measure, the rhythm is then "tumbled" or impelled forward by accents scattered within the measure and throughout the piece. Martin judiciously places six of these accents in moments when the melody is either static (a held note) or resting. This last attribute which the writer calls "contrapuntal consciousness" is evident with respect to most of the bass line's activity; when the melody or harmony is active, the bass line is static, when the melody is at rest or sustains a note, the bass executes rhythmic activity, as in meas. #31-32 (melody static, bass active) or meas. #7-8 (harmony dynamic, bass harmonically static).

Throughout the piece the bass line exhibits an awareness of symmetry:

1. Use of specific motive to underline structure.
2. Interplay of activity and stasis.
3. Rhythm and harmony clearly outlined.

Through the use of a wide variety of effects, note values and intervals, the bass line serves the functions of:

1. Contrapuntal line--contrasting melody.
2. Outlining the harmony.
3. Defining the rhythm.
4. Impelling the rhythmic motion.

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TABLE VI

Scale degrees employed in bass line of
 "The Sonnet". Scales drawn from respective
 chord symbols in each measure.

Scale degree	No. of occurrences	% of occurrences
Root	55	47%
Major second	2	2%
Minor third	1	1%
Major third	9	8%
Perfect fourth	5	4%
Augmented fourth	2	2%
Perfect fifth	26	22%
Major sixth	4	3%
Minor seventh	7	6%
Major seventh	6	5%
Totals	<u>117</u>	<u>100%</u>

TABLE VII
Interval of approach to beat one.

Rising intervals	No. of occurrences	% of occurrences
Minor second	6	15%
Major second	2	5%
Minor third	2	5%
Perfect fourth	13	33%
Minor seventh	1	3%
<u>Falling intervals</u>		
Major second	2	5%
Major third	2	5%
Perfect fifth	10	25%
Perfect octave	1	3%
Minor ninth	1	3%
Totals	<u>40</u>	<u>102%</u> (rounding off)










TABLE VIII

Melodic intervals used from note to note
in "The Sonnet"

Interval	No. of Occurrences	Percent
Unison	11	8%
Minor second	35	25%
Major second	17	12%
Minor third	10	7%
Major third	13	9%
Perfect fourth	23	17%
Augmented fourth	2	1%
Perfect fifth	16	12%
Minor sixth	2	1%
Perfect octave	4	3%
Minor ninth	1	1%
Totals	<hr/> 138	<hr/> 99%

TABLE IX

Rhythmic figures used in bass line to "The Sonnet".

Value	No. of Occurrences	Percent
	2	2%
	5	5%
	4	4%
	7	7%
	10	9%
	14	13%
	7	7%
	45	43%
	10	9%
Totals	<u>104</u>	<u>99%</u>

♩ = 112

The Sonnet

by Vernon Martin

Bass sounds 8va lower than written

Musical notation for measures 1-4. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: B^b , E^b_7 , B^b , E^b_7 . Measure numbers a, b, c, d are written above the staff.

Musical notation for measures 5-9. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: B^b , E^b_7 , B^b , E^b_7 , B^b . Measure numbers e, f, g, h, i are written above the staff.

Musical notation for measures 10-14. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: E^b_7 , B^b , E^b_7 , B^b , B^b . Measure numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 are written above the staff.

Musical notation for measures 15-19. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: A^b , $D_7(b9)$, $G\text{mi}7$, E^b_7 , $G\text{mi}7$. Measure numbers 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 are written above the staff.

Musical notation for measures 20-24. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: E^b_7 , $G\text{mi}7$, C_7 , $F\text{sus}$, F_7 . Measure numbers 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 are written above the staff.

Musical notation for measures 25-29. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: B^b , E^b_7 , B^b , E^b_7 . Measure numbers 17, 18, 19, 20 are written above the staff.

143a

Musical notation for measures 21-25. Treble clef, key signature of two flats. Chords: B^b, B^b7/E, E^b, E^bo7, B^b/F. Measure 22 includes a triplet of eighth notes.

Musical notation for measures 26-29. Treble clef, key signature of two flats. Chords: D/F[#], Gmi7, C7, Cmi7. Measure 27 includes a triplet of eighth notes.

Musical notation for measures 30-32. Treble clef, key signature of two flats. Chords: F7, B^b, E^b7. Measure 31 includes a triplet of eighth notes.

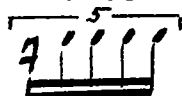
Five sets of empty musical staves, each consisting of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff.

"Happiness"

"Happiness" is an example of Martin's unification of sounds and text to present a serious message. Before analysis could proceed, it was necessary to transcribe one of several recorded versions of the piece. During the course of selection and transcription, what became clear is that there was not a formal, fixed melody to the song, but that Martin interpreted it quite differently with each performance. The version ultimately selected for transcription was recorded at the UCSB recording studios in October, 1987 and featured Martin on vocals and bass, the writer on piano, Tracy Wannomae on alto saxophone and "Stosh" Glowacki on drums. The transcription was facilitated by the presence of a strict eight-note time matrix effected by the drums, but the bass is almost inaudible during the vocal section and the piano accompaniment has a very loose, almost untrained rhythmic feel. Hence, it was quite a challenge to attempt a definitive transcription of "Happiness". Martin's rhythm particularly was frustrating to pinpoint, as he took liberties with the time as any jazz singer would. However, he periodically lands on an obvious downbeat, giving some manner of pinning the song to the

time matrix. The extensive rhythmic variations were treated as either syncopated or superimposed figures, with no consideration of *accelerandi* or *ritardandi*.

The next problem faced was how to match the rhythmic conceptions in Martin's mind. Three factors were taken into account. First, the generally accepted idea of a triple subdivision superimposed on a duple framework in jazz and African-derived music. (Mehegan 1962:18) Second, Martin's exposure to western classical literature would have trained him in subdivisions of five, seven and ten. Third, Martin's actual level of rhythmic literacy argues with point number two. Would a figure such as the



in measure #31 be a rhythm that Martin would conceive?

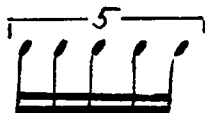
Or would



be conceptually more accurate? Or is



really the figure, just articulated "late" (behind the beat)? Or, finally, is



an accepted figure in jazz oral tradition? Many transcriptions of jazz solos imply that it is.

A systematic attempt was made to arrive at the most straightforward, simple and legible rendering of Martin's vocal delivery, both to facilitate future performances, as well as to document this performance for purposes of analysis. For reasons of clarity it is presented in cut time.

Structural Analysis

The formal structure of "Happiness" consists of four 16-measure verses employing the same harmonic framework and basically the same melody--a strophic form. This is followed by a 16-measure contrasting section, or bridge which utilizes a different harmonic pattern and melody, returning then to a recapitulation of the original 16-measure phrase and an eight-measure "tag" or extension, for a total of 104 measures of cut time with a formal scheme of AAABA.

Harmonic Analysis

Harmonically as well as melodically, the song resembles James Van Heusen's "All My Tomorrows", a standard from the jazz repertoire. Both begin on the II chord and progress to the bVII7 substitute for the V7(b9)

resolving to I in the fifth measure (third measure in 4/4). Both return to the II chord and begin the second half of the progression, although from here Martin cadences on the I, while Van Heusen maintains the II chord. "Happiness" differs from "All My Tomorrows" in that it uses the II7 or secondary dominant form of the chord, while the latter exhibits a ii minor 7 chord in the same places. Both songs are in the key of G major and the opening melodic motive to both is based on the descending minor sixth interval from B to Eb. Further, both are ballads and evoke a certain wistfulness by means of the interplay between major and minor modalities. The resemblance ends at the bridge, of course. Here, Martin introduces his own version of what jazz scholar Jerry Coker calls "Type ii deviation e" of "Two Common Types of 'B' Sections With Their Deviations Often Found in Tunes Having an A-A-B-A Structure". (Coker 1964:86)

Compare Coker:

I7 / I7 / IV Maj7 / IV Maj 7 / II7 / II7 / V7 / V7

with Martin:

Imaj 7 / I7 / IV maj7 Vmi7 / IV maj7 (3rd in bass) /
II7 / II7 / V7 / VI7

The only differences are the presence of the Vmi7 chord used as a temporary iimi7 chord in the IV tonality (Dmi7 in C) functioning as a "passing" or connecting chord between IVmaj7 and IVmaj7 with the third in the bass, and the last chord on which Martin "pivots" on a VI7 chord to lead back to the opening II7 chord by rising fourth root movement.


Melodic Analysis

Melodically, the "A" section can be described as follows: Measures #1-3 contain the principal motive which can be subdivided into two parts. The three pick-up notes and the B in measure #1 begin an orderly scalar descent, leading from the fifth of the scale and sounding a full four counts on B, the third of the scale. This is contrasted by the second part of the motive which is composed of rapid and wide melodic leaps and chromatic steps coming to rest on a non-chord tone--Eb, for more than three counts. The effect is one of pulling the ear from its upper anchor--the first note of the piece, D--down to a comfortable median tone, the B, and then by sequential leaps down to land one-half step short of completing the octave--the Eb. The interest of the

listener is helplessly engaged, the appetite whetted for the final resolution to D ten measures later.

Fiendishly, this very D for which the ear hungers is articulated oh-so-briefly in measure #4 before it is catapulted back up to the original D--a leap of an octave--and then touches a median note--the A, a descending scalar consequent of the long B heard in the principal motive. This last action is repeated in measures #4-5, this time including the B before the A--effecting melodic extension, i.e. adding more notes. This inverse of this idea is then heard in measures #6-7 as the A is approached by scale from below. This is repeated, though rhythmically displaced, the A now expanded to Bb, and the first note of the sequence, F#, repeated at the end, extending the fragment, measures #7-8. A classic sequence follows in measures #8-9, the melody transposed down a whole step, landing on the E for three counts. (E only one step away from that D the ear wants so badly.) The last two notes of this fragment are then reversed, ascending once again to the B so clearly established in the principal motive, and then descending oh-so-orderly and gradually by scale degree down to the F# for four and one-half counts, a pause, and then,

ahhh!, the D we longed for is delivered in measures #13-14 and 15--ten counts of resolution.

The second version of section A stays very close to the original, though varies some in its span, (meas. #22-23), dipping below the octave D to B and then returning to the median A (meas. #23) and completing the sequence to rest once again on low D (meas. #29-30). The third and fourth repetitions of the A section vary the rhythm and tone color. Martin makes extensive use of *sprechstimme*, a note actually spoken instead of sung, with an approximate pitch indicated by the symbol . These subsequent A sections otherwise follow the pattern of melodic manipulation seen in the first two repetitions.

The B section offers contrast to the A section by means of its utter simplicity and lack of complex figures, though melodic interest is subtly compelled. The main idea of the entire sixteen measure is the resolution of the third scale degree to the second, setting up the recapitulation of the A section which follows. Measure #65 exhibits the opening gambit of the thematic manipulation--three notes, actually recalling the three notes of the principal motive of section A,

that descend to the third of the scale, B. This idea is repeated with rhythmic variation in measure #67 and then followed by repeated notes on G, the tonic note, effecting a temporary resolution. The falling action that opened the section is then reversed in measures #70-71 as the melody ascends to the sub-dominant note, C, where it rests for three counts. The repeated note idea heard on the G in meas. #68-69 is heard again, though on the B this time in measure #73. The B is extended through three more measures by means of polar alternation with its own sub-dominant note, E, in a two-note conversation that then reaches up to touch the chromatic upper neighbor, C, before passing once again to the B and resolving in measures #77-78 to the A for seven counts.

In a dramatic reintroduction of the A section, one hears the dominant note, D, with heavy agogic accents repeated at the upper octave before resting for the last time on the opening B note of the last sixteen measures. This last A section is a textual reprise of the first A section, so it is almost note-for-note the same, with some rhythmic variation. The last scalar descent from the high D is repeated and drawn out with long notes

through the tag ending, coming to rest on the tonic note
G in measures #101-102 for eight counts.

PRINCIPAL MOTIVE

PLATE IV

153

Musical staff showing the first two measures of the principal motive. The first measure is labeled "FIRST HALF" and the second measure is labeled "SECOND HALF". The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with various rests. A large bracket spans both measures, and smaller brackets group notes within each measure. Some notes have a small 'x' above them.

Musical staff showing measures 3 through 7. Measure 3 is annotated as "retrograde of preceding leap". Measure 4 is annotated as "consequent of 'B' in meas. #1". Measure 5 is annotated as "melodic extension of preceding fragment". Measure 6 is annotated as "in version of preceding melodic contour - 'A' approached from below". Measure 7 is annotated as "in version of preceding melodic contour - 'A' approached from below". The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes, some with triplets.

Musical staff showing measures 7 through 10. Measure 7 is annotated as "melodic extension of previous fragment". Measure 8 is annotated as "melodic sequence". Measure 9 is annotated as "melodic sequence". Measure 10 is annotated as "retrograde of previous 2 notes". The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes, some with triplets.

Musical staff showing measures 11 through 15. Measure 11 is annotated as "reference to opening 'B'". Measure 12 is annotated as "reference to opening 'B'". Measure 13 is annotated as "resolution of opening descent from high 'B' to 'E'". Measure 14 is annotated as "resolution of opening descent from high 'B' to 'E'". Measure 15 is annotated as "resolution of opening descent from high 'B' to 'E'". The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes.

Melodic Development in "HAPPINESS" - "A" SECTION

opening gambit - refers to meas. #1

extension of opening gambit

repetition - agogic accent on "B"

tonic note repeated idea

inverse of descent in meas. # 65, 67

repeated note idea refers to meas. #68

2-note conversation

resolution

resolution of 3rd to 2nd - main idea

V-I relationship

dominant note of scale opens reprise of "A" section

Melodic Development in HAPPINESS - "B" SECTION

Rhythmic Analysis

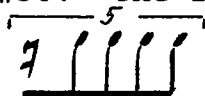
One of the remarkable features of "Happiness" is the way that the rhythm is manipulated. The accents of speech are played against the metrical accents of the music in an astounding display of what Mehegan calls "compound syncopation". (Mehegan 1962:50) An example of this is seen in measures #2-3. The figure



would normally receive the accent on the downbeats of "four" and "one", with the first eighth note being an unaccented pick-up note. In Martin's interpretation, this figure supports the text, "putting things together" with a very strong percussive accent on the first syllable "put", thereby upsetting the normally expected metrical accent on beat "four" and contributing to the "swing" of the melody. This phenomenon is described succinctly by J.K. Nketia in his chapter on speech and melody from his book The Music of Africa.

The normal speech rhythm would be followed even where this results in the placement of stressed syllables athwart the basic beats of the melody. Hence, irregular stress placement in songs may be a speech phenomenon, rather than something arising out of purely musical considerations. (Nketia 1974:183)

This idea occurs in several other instances in the song as in measure #38: the figure



bears the text, "This comes to ya", a jagged rhythm that abruptly ends before the underlying metrical accent of beat "one". A similar figure is seen in measure #73:

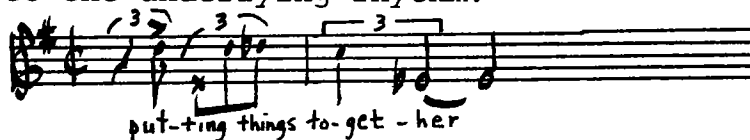
The figure



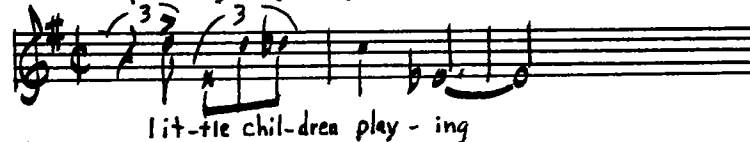
supporting the percussively delivered words, "open up", ending just before beat "three".

Another factor of interest is the way that repetitions of the melody are varied. Comparing measures #2-3 with meas. #18-19, #34-35, #50-51 and #82-83, we see how the same melodic intervals are placed differently with respect to the underlying rhythm.

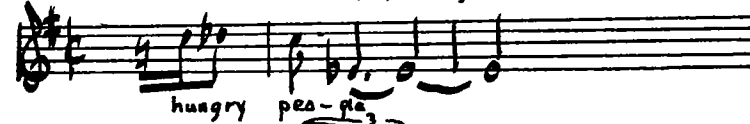
Meas. #2-3



Meas. #18-19



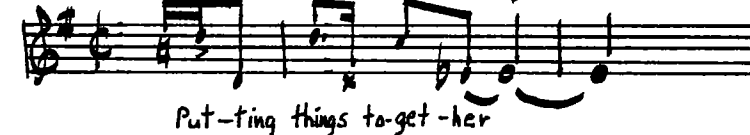
Meas. #34-35



Meas. #50-51



Meas. #82-83



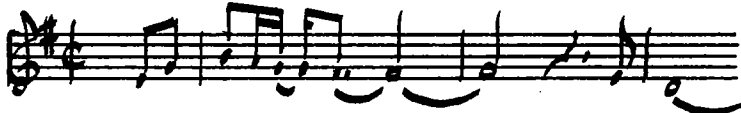
Of course the variation is due in part to the fact that a different text must be accommodated by the same melodic contour and pitches. We see, however, that in measures #18-19 the text, "little children playing" has the same number of syllables and the same stress pattern as measures #2-3, "putting things together". Perhaps this is the reason that the rhythmic articulations are so similar. "Hungry people" in measures #34-35 is still basically the same figure with the rhythm quickened at the end. But in measures #50-51, the text, "fields of crops a-wasting" has also the same number of syllables and similar stress patterns to measures #2-3 and #18-19, but is markedly different, stretching later into beat "two" of the second measure than any of the preceding examples and exhibiting a jagged, complex rhythm with pronounced silences between the syllables. In measures #82-83, even though this is an exact textual repetition of measures #2-3, the rhythm is totally different, extending further into beat "two" of the second measure and starting later in the first measure.

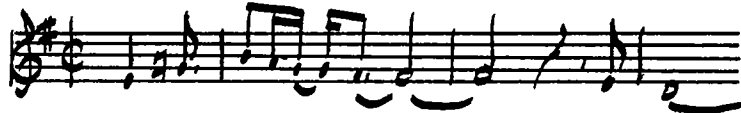
This variation in rhythm might be seen as a progression that serves the purpose of the music. The figure in measures #2-3, the second half of the principal

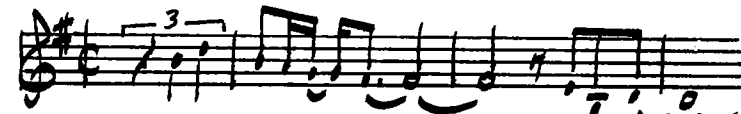
motive of the song and the attention-getting device, is repeated almost exactly at its second occurrence in measures # 18-19, thereby reinforcing it in the mind of the listener. Both of these instances bear text that has a positive aspect--"putting things together" and "little children playing". The enunciation is measured and not rushed, the notes are drawn out, almost languid. The figure is next heard in a truncated (shortened) articulation in measures #34-35, partly because of fewer syllables to work with and partly because of its text, "hungry people". The delivery is quicker, as if these were unpleasant words that were best spit out in a hurry. This example is the first actual variation of the figure. When it is heard again in measures #50-51 bearing the text, "fields of crops a-wasting", it is clipped, rhythmically off-balance, delivered later in the measure and extending into a third measure--clearly a major variation of the figure meant to draw attention to the text in almost an angry manner. The final, "mature" articulation of the motive, a repetition of the plea for humanity to keep "putting things together", occurs even later in the measure than the previous example but this time the rhythm is simpler, more straightforward, a

return to the languor of the first two examples. Martin has varied the rhythm to maintain interest and to dramatically highlight the text creating a progression of the figure--from interest to tension to release--while simultaneously being pushed back later and later with respect to its articulation over the two measures, finally extending into a third measure.

A similar progression of variations can be seen by comparing measures #10-11-12-13, meas. #26-27-28-29, meas. #42-43-44-45, meas. #90-91-92-93 and meas. #99-100-101.

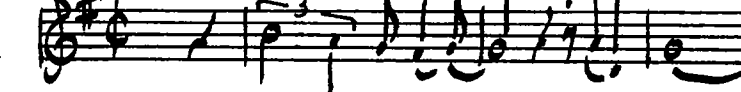
meas. #10-13  Musical notation for measures 10-13, showing a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.

meas. #26-29  Musical notation for measures 26-29, showing a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.

meas. #42-45  Musical notation for measures 42-45, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

meas. #58-61  Musical notation for measures 58-61, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

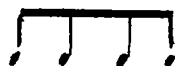
meas. #90-93  Musical notation for measures 90-93, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

meas. #98-101  Musical notation for measures 98-101, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

This is the phrase which is the "punch line" of the song. It bears a text which includes the title, "We'll find happiness in a day", and is repeated epistrophically as the conclusion of each verse. With respect to the melody, it is the release and cadence point for the verse. The noteworthy point here, aside from the considerable craftsmanship of the subtle variations in the first and third measures of each example, is the progression of the rhythm in the second measure. In the first three examples, the words, "happiness in..." are articulated quickly and hence, the figure is syncopated--



but in the final verse just before the B section, as a culminating and concluding flourish, straight eighth notes are heard--



effecting a relaxing release to the tension created by the preceding syncopations. After the B section, the original syncopated version is heard in meas. #90-93. This idea is then extended into the "tag" and the final "mature" phrase is heard in measures #99-101 with even longer, more relaxed note values, resolving to the final tonic note in measure #101.

The progressions of rhythmic variation with the passing of the verses are evident throughout the piece and serve to give a vitality to the song--it is continually changing in an unpredictable way, but with a definite method and a definite end in mind--to describe the text with musical gestures and to equate tension and release with the corresponding negative and positive aspects of Martin's values.

Another interesting feature is Martin's habit of entering "behind the beat". Just when the ear is expecting to hear the melody, a pause is inserted and the note comes later. This is seen in measure #7, where the entrance on beat "three" is delayed by a sixteenth rest; in measure #21, where beat "one" is delayed by an eighth rest; measure #75, beat "one" delayed by holding the previous melody note an extra eighth note of duration; and measure #82, where beat "four" is delayed by a sixteenth rest. There does not seem to be a structural pattern to these occurrences, nor do they appear to emphasize the text in any way. Possibly this is a stylistic device to avoid the otherwise monotonous predictability of acknowledging the downbeats as primary points of rhythmic emphasis; perhaps an extension of the

idea of communication among Blacks being a secret code, where "bad" means "good", where subtlety and inference take precedence over predictability. Possibly what we are seeing here is what the ethnomusicologist seeks-- evidence of social behavior in music. Martin's performance of "Happiness", while exhibiting artistic integrity, is by no means a performance that can be picked up and, after a few hearings sung along with, repeated, made into a popular anthem. The twists and turns, jerky rhythms, false starts and late entrances all smack of a song that, if not meant to confuse, certainly is meant to avoid being thought of as an overly-saccharine, polyannaish, boring children's song. With its idealistic text supported by simple consonant harmonies, "Happiness" runs the risk of being categorized just so.

Martin employs some unusual rhythmic combinations that bear closer examination. The figure heard in measures #49-50-51-52, a variation of the principal motive, exhibits a peculiar symmetry.



Reduced to its basic melodic and rhythmic framework, the figure might sound something like this:



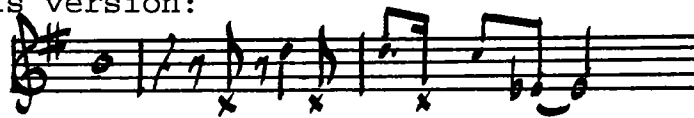
With the addition of extra syllables of text, the figure becomes enriched with pick-up notes:



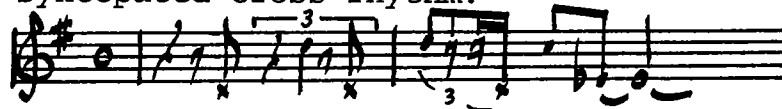
Adjusting the rhythm to reflect stresses of speech introduces a syncopation in the third measure:



Adding a pause where the listener expects the downbeat produces this version:



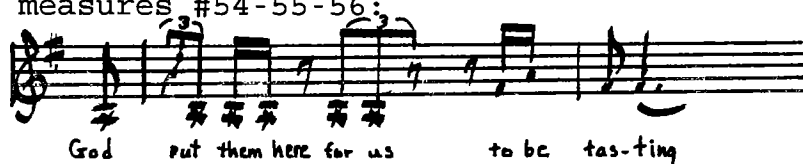
Martin superimposes a triple feeling over the duple pattern of basic beats producing, in the final version, a retarded, syncopated cross-rhythm:



Much craftsmanship and restraint is evident in the fact that Martin maintains rhythmic contact at the most crucial points--the downbeats of "one" of the first and third measures, and "two" of the third measure--so the slipping rhythms of the second measure are heard fully in context--they are obviously intentional, the singer is

not lost and though the listener experiences the tension of the displaced rhythm, it is heard within the framework of the downbeats which enclose it like parentheses.

Additional examples of this rhythmic displacement are heard in measures #54-55-56:



and measures #65-66-67:



Song Text Analysis

A textual analysis is in order. The song is composed of four verses and a refrain.

Happiness

We have to keep putting things together
 Everyday in some small way
 Something good we do, something we say
 And when we do we'll find happiness in a day.

See those little children playing
 A place to eat and sleep
 In good health and on their feet
 And when we do we'll find happiness in a day.

There should be no hungry people
 anywhere on this universe--
 This comes to you unadulterated, unrehearsed--
 And when there's not we'll find happiness in a day.

See those fields of crops a-wasting
 And we know within our hearts

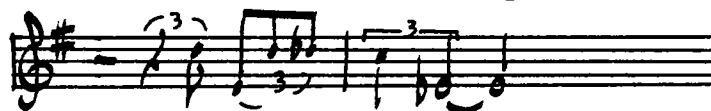
God put them here for us to be tasting
 And when we are we'll find happiness in a day.

Refrain:

Some folks look for happiness
 It's all around it can be found
 Open up your heart
 And let your love come down.

The technical aspects of the composition warrant scrutiny. The main problem of the metrical construction would have centered upon finding phrases of appropriate length and stress composition to fit the rhythmic and melodic contour of the second half of the song's

principal motive:



The words to the first verse may, in fact, have been the model upon which the melody was based. They are:

"putting things together", a series of three trocheic feet. This metrical combination is matched in the second verse by the words, "little children playing"--again, three trocheic feet. In the third verse Martin has written, "no hungry people"--two trochees preceded by a short syllable. In the fourth verse we hear, "fields of crops a-wasting", once again, the three trochees. The composing of these main metrical combinations was, of course, further complicated by the obvious and primary

necessity of making them relevant to the topicality of the poem. once having been selected, however, these combinations become the sub-theme for each verse, both musically and textually. the first verse, in describing Martin's concept of "putting things together", uses much internal rhyme:

Everyday in some small way
 Something good we do, something we say

and finishes with the first utterance of the epistrophe, "we'll find happiness in a day". In the second verse, he rhymes "playing" with the last line, "happiness in a day". The interior two lines--

A place to eat and sleep
 In good health and on their feet

do not follow the metric pattern of the first verse, but Martin uses the internal accents of the lines, "eat", "sleep", "health", and "feet" to anchor the melody between the two outer lines. Note the use of assonance in these internal lines. The third verse couples "people" with "day" in the outer lines--certainly not a rhyme, but the interior phrases playfully match "universe" with "unrehearsed". The fourth verse changes the rhyme scheme and couples the first line with the third-- "a-wasting" with "tasting". The refrain matches

second and fourth lines with rhymes "around" and "found"-
-internal to line two, with "down" in line four.

The construction of the poem, then, is not rigid. There is a formal structure to the piece which is then varied to fit the textual material. A considerable number of literary devices is used in a natural, flowing way. The effect on the listener is one of totally balanced, integrated poetry. The dramatic repetition of the epistrophe, "we'll find happiness in a day", focuses attention and ties up any loose metrical or rhyming inconsistencies.

The topic of the poem is the heart of the entire song. This is Martin's message to the world. From the observations of a modern Black poet comes this prescription: the way to solve the world's problems begins with the individual--"everyday in some small way, something good we do, something we say". This underlines Martin's own moral integrity--a just end must be achieved by just means. The four verses illustrate the problems of the inner cities--little children with no place to eat or sleep, hungry people with no public services to help them. Martin sings of the injustice of Federal price supports to large farming corporations who are paid not

to grow; because market pressures are uncontrolled, the harvest is allowed to rot in the field. The answer? The composer's prescription is for the individual to "open up your heart and let your love come down".

By all the considerable means at his disposal, Martin has set the poem to music that supports the sentiment of his message. By use of the various techniques analyzed above, he has created a work of balanced symmetry, one that, in the writer's opinion, possesses all the qualities of fine art.

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1974 The Music of Africa. New York: Norton and Co.

ALL MY TOMORROWS

-CAHN/VAN HEUSEN

Handwritten musical score for "All My Tomorrows" by Cahn/Van Heusen. The score is written on ten staves in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music includes various chord voicings and articulation marks.

Chord voicings and annotations above the staves include:

- Staff 1: A-7, F7, Gmaj7/B, Bb07
- Staff 2: A-7, B-7, E7b9, 1. A-7, D7b9, B-7b5, E7b9
- Staff 3: 2. A-7, D7b9, G7sus4, G7, Cmaj7, F7sus4
- Staff 4: Gmaj7, C#-7b5, C-, G/B, A-7
- Staff 5: B7alt., E7susE7, A-7, B-7b5, E7b9, A-7, F7
- Staff 6: Gmaj7/B, Bb07, A-7, B-7, E7b9
- Staff 7: A-7, D7b9, B-7b5, E7b9, A-7, B-7, Cmaj7, A-7, D7b9
- Staff 8: GG

The score concludes with a double bar line and the word "FINE" written below the final staff.

J=84

PLATE VII

HAPPINESS

by Vernon Martin 170

sounds 8va lower than written

A7 1 2 3 Cm7 3 F7 3

We have to keep put-ting things to-gether ev-ry

G 5 3 C Bm7 7 E7 3

day in some small way some-thing good we do some-thing we say and

A7 10 Am7 12 D7 13 G 14 E7 15

when we do we'll find hap-pi-ness in a day

16 A7 17 Cm7 19 F7 20 G 21

See those lit-tle children play-ing a place to eat and

C 22 Bm7 23 E7 24 A7 25 26

sleep in good health and on their feet and when we do we'll find

Am7 27 D7 28 G 29 E7 31 32 A7 33 34

hap-pi-ness in a day There should be no hungry

Cm7 35 F7 36 G 37 C 38 Bm7 39

peo-ple an-y where on this un-i-verse this comes to ya un-a-dul-ter-

E7 40 A7 41 42 Am7 43

a-ter un-re-hearsed and when there's not we'll find hap-pi-ness in

D7 44 G 45 46 E7 47 48 A7 49 50

a day See those fields of

Cm7 51 F7 52 G 53 C 54 Bm7 55

stars a-was-ting and we know with-in our hearts God put them here

HAPPINESS P. 2 170 a

for us to be tas-ting and when we are we'll find happiness in a

day Some folks look for hap-pi-ness

it's all a-round it can be found open up

Your heart and let your love come down

We have to keep put-ting things to gether ev-ry day in some

small way something good we do something we say and when we do we'll find

happiness in a day in a day and

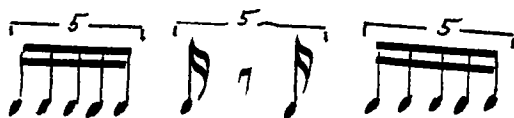
when we do happi-ness in a day

"Sweet Lorraine"

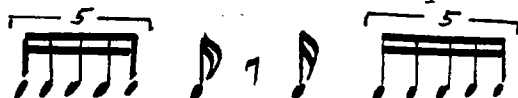
"Sweet Lorraine" is an example of Martin's vocal improvisational skills. Recorded in October, 1987, the interpretation is a masterful expression of the jazzman's art. The transcription, however, is at best a compromise between:

- a. The actual sounds.
- b. The artist's intent as perceived by the transcriber.
- c. The desire to produce a simple, legible "lead sheet" of the performance.

The transcription was hindered primarily by the extreme variations and liberties Martin took with the rhythms of the song. Also, a number of special effects are employed by the vocalist which were problematic to put down on paper. His alternation of falsetto and natural voice timbres, his use of multiphonics or simultaneously-sounded notes--harmonies if you will--, employment of vocables or "scat syllables", and a trilling effect all contributed to the difficulty of the undertaking. One particular point which will serve to illustrate the problems of the transcriber is seen in measure #42. This figure might have been written



implying that Martin was superimposing a quintuplet rhythm over three beats of the measure. The transcriber however, has heard the first figure as a quintuplet approached by a pick-up-note of short duration freely located somewhere in the last quarter of beat three--



The point is, in the absence of a clearly articulated quintuplet on beat three, there was no reason to imply that Martin heard these notes as anything more than a terminus of one figure and the starting point of the next--hence, in the interest of simplicity those points were treated as sixteenth notes.

The song itself, "Sweet Lorraine", is a popular American song which has become part of the jazz standard repertoire. It appears in lead sheet format in the compendium known as Volume I of Over 1000 Songs, therein attributed to C. Burwell. the date of publication is unknown to the writer, but probably comes from the decade of the 1930s. Martin always joked about this tune being his homage to Nat "King" Cole. The writer has been unable to locate Cole's recording of this particular

song, but Martin sings it with a playful, tongue-in-cheek interpretation using a falsetto voice at the beginning and over-emphasizing the vowels in the manner of a burlesque of Cole's singing style.

Structural Analysis

The song consists of two strophic 8-measure phrases followed by a contrasting 8-measure phrase and concluding with a repetition of the first phrase-- a classic AABA structure. This performance includes Martin's rather free interpretation of the 32 measures of the song proper, followed by 16 measures of vocal improvisation. The song is resumed at the B section, then the final A section is sung, the ending retarded and a short vocal cadenza appended. The structure would be represented by AABACDBA+cadenza where C and D have the same harmonic underpinning or *cantus firmus* as A and each letter represents a section of eight measures.

Though the lead sheet version indicates a moderate tempo, Martin takes it *andante*, about 84 quarter notes per minute, more of a "swinging ballad" conception with the primary melodic unit being the eighth note. Martin then "double times" his first eight measures using evenly

articulated sixteenth notes in a bop style and then quadruples the original feel with bursts of thirty-second notes in the second eight measure section of improvisation. After examining each of the separate elements of the piece --rhythmic treatment, timbre, melodic development and use of vocables, a conclusion will be offered incorporating these elements as well as the foregoing element of structure into an analysis of the overall organization of sounds and text as an integrated artistic expression.

Rhythmic Analysis

The rhythmic approach is characterized by:

1. Extreme variation of units.
2. Interplay between duple and triple subdivisions.
3. Use of "off-beat" accents.
4. Rhythm displacement.
5. Syncopation.

Martin begins the song with the use of a quarter-note triplet in measure #1 followed by a series of eighth-note triplets ending on a pair of sixteenth notes and an eighth note in measure #3. He clearly locates

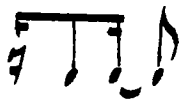
beat "one" in measures #1 and #3 and beat "three" in meas. #2. Measure #4 starts off as a rhythmic repetition of meas. #2, but introduces the interesting figure



on beat "four" to contrast with the



in meas. #2, ending on two eighth notes and a quarter note in meas. #5, varying the pattern in meas. #3. A third variation of this idea is heard in meas. #6-7 which combines elements of the rhythms in meas. #2-3 and meas. #4-5. The second A section opens with an eighth-note triplet, meas.#9, contrasting with Martin's quarter-note triplet in meas. #1. The idea in meas. #2-3 is repeated in meas. #10-11 and then a further variation is heard in meas. #12-13 which leaves the rhythm hanging on the syncopated figure



in meas. 13. Measure #12's pattern is repeated in meas. #14, ending the phrase.

The formula heard in meas. #2-3 is used as the principal motive of the B section, heard in meas. #17-18 and is varied through three occurrences of the idea in meas. #19-20, #21-22, and #23-24. The recapitulation of


the A section in meas. #25 once again opens with the quarter-note triplet and is followed by three new variants of the idea in meas. #2-3. In meas. #32, Martin sings an introduction to the improvised section which begins in meas. #33-34 with a standard bop cliché on the I- VI-II-V chord pattern. This is followed by a series of sixteenth notes that momentarily climaxes on beat three of meas. #36. The rhythm slows in meas. #37 with a held note, then two eighth notes and a quarter note providing contrast, succeeded by another burst of sixteenth notes in meas. #38, climaxing on the "who parked the car" bop rhythmic cliché in meas. #39. Another long note in meas. #41 sets off the interesting juxtaposition of quintuplets in measure #42. This figure is one of the high points of the solo: A six-note expression is heard twice. The first time, it opens as a quintuplet on beat "two" that resolves to the down beat of beat "three". The second time, it is heard with a pick-up note from the last part of beat "three" with the quintuplet on beat "four" ending up in the air-- unresolved, followed by silence on the down beat of beat "one" of the succeeding measure. The effect is of

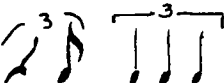
rhythmic displacement--a simple six-note turn around the A note is heard from two distinct perspectives.

From this point, the solo moves into high gear, doubling the already-double-time sixteenth notes into a string of thirty-second notes articulated by a trilling effect Martin achieves by rapidly vibrating the tip of the tongue against the inside of the upper lip. Intonation is remarkably precise as is the control of the rhythm with its definite ending on the last sixteenth note before beat "four" of meas. #43. The idea is repeated with a different contour in meas. #45, slowing to sixteenth notes in meas. #46 and culminating in a figure that has the feeling of a quarter-note triplet, but is syncopated inside that rhythm. Measure #49 returns to the words and melody of the song in the B section, the opening motive now extremely varied rhythmically from its counterpart in meas. #17-18. Measures #51-52 repeat measures #19-20, while the remaining two expressions of the motive are subtle variations of their precedents.

The "mature" form of the opening motive which Martin has sung previously as



in meas. #1, 

in meas. #9 and 

in meas. #25 is heard as a new variant:



Measures #58-59 are still another variation of the motive in meas. #2-3. Meas. #60 features the use of the



figure juxtaposed with even eighth notes and a syncopated figure in meas. #61. Measures #62-65 are a drawn-out, temporally retarded figure which effects a classic *denouement*, followed by a whimsical cadenza, almost an afterthought, which closes the piece, just as it opened, with a

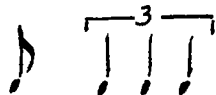
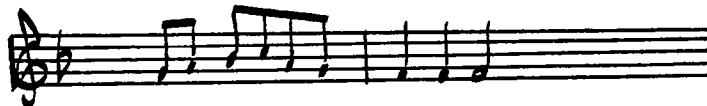


figure.

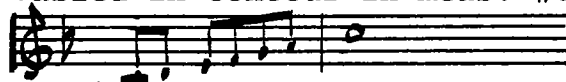
The symmetry in the manner that the rhythms are varied from one motive to the next--in succession--or from one location in one section to its repetition in the next--what we'll call progression--can be observed in Table X. Within each A section, here identified as A1, A2, A3, and A3', the thematic material can be subdivided into four phrases labelled w, x, y and z. By comparing

on a vertical plane, from top to bottom, one can observe the variations in the rhythms in the sequence in which Martin sang them, noting for example the differences in the second half of the rhythm in meas. #2-3 with that of meas. #4-5, here labelled A1(x) and A1(y). By comparing the examples on a horizontal plane, from left to right, one can observe how Martin treats the same melodic fragment from strophe to strophe, noting, for example the exact duplication of meas. #2-3 in meas. #10-11, here labelled A1(x) and A2(x). The B section also contains four phrases, labelled p, q, r, and s, respectively and can be compared either sequentially, from B(p) to B(q) (meas. #17-18 to meas. #19-20) or progressively from B(p) to B'(p) (meas. #17-18 to meas. #49-50.)

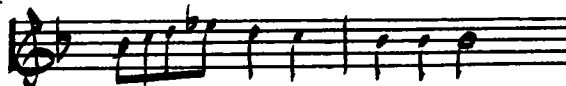
Interestingly enough, the speech rhythms heard in examples x, y, p and r all have nine syllables, while those in z, q, and s have seven. This accounts for rhythmic variation within each strophe, though the writer's contention is that it is all basically the same rhythm as well as the same melodic contour that is being varied from example to example. This is borne out in the melody taken from the lead sheet example G-4, where the contour



accommodating nine syllables is repeated in meas. #2-3
and #4-5, varied in contour in meas. #6-7



and in rhythm in meas. #17-18



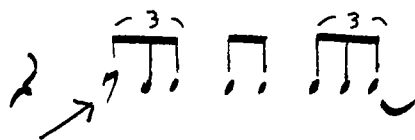
and almost slavishly repeated in meas. #19-20, #21-22 and #23-24. Note that all of these examples accommodate nine syllables, the point being that the variations are due more to Martin's desire to achieve artistic contrast than to accommodate a different number of syllables. The motive w, compared in the text above is shown separately as a progression among its various A forms, inasmuch as it incorporates a totally different rhythmic entity of only four syllables.

The conclusions to be drawn from studying Table X include the following:

1. Martin never repeats a pattern in sequence.
2. Martin uses only five rhythmic patterns in all of the x, y, z, p, q, r, and s fragments--



3. Eighteen of the twenty examples begin just after a silence on beat "two" of the measure, i.e.



4. The two exceptions to the above occur on the same fragment--p. In meas. #17-18, Martin sings on the beat



while in meas. #49-50, we hear the most distorted variation of all the examples:



analogous to the phenomenon of light and shadow-- providing the two opposite extremes of the degrees of variation within the song.

5. Where the complex figure



is heard, it is always followed by a simple figure on a clear down beat as in examples A1(y), A3(z) and A3'(y).

6. Very little use of exact repetition is heard-- only two instances: A1(x) is repeated at A2(x) and B(q) is repeated at B'(q). These are progressions, not successive repetitions.

7. Near repetitions are heard only two times: A2(y) with A2(z) and B(q) with B(r). Both of these are

heard in succession and reflect variations in syllabication.

8. (a) Because of the great use of variation, the forward motion of the song is impelled, attracting the listener's interest.

(b) Because of the limited number of rhythmic factors in the variations, the listener is not overcome with too much information to grasp.

(c) By judicious placement of repetitions and variations, a feeling of balanced symmetry is achieved.

TABLE X
Rhythmic Variation in "Sweet Lorraine"

A1		A2		A3		A4	
meas. #	phrase	meas. #	phrase	meas. #	phrase	meas. #	phrase
2-3	x	10-11	x	26-27	x	58-59	x
4-5	y	12-13	y	28-29	y	60-61	y
6-7	z	14-15	z	30-31	z		

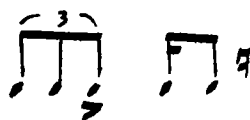
B		B'	
meas. #	phrase	meas. #	phrase
17-18	p	49-50	p
19-20	q	51-52	q
21-22	r	53-54	r
23-24	s	55-56	s

Section	meas. #	phrase
A1	1	w
A2	9	w
A3	25	w
A3'	57	w

The odd placement of accents due to the clashing of speech accents with the underlying accents of the musical pattern, a phenomenon described in the previous chapter, is heard in "Sweet Lorraine" in meas. #21 where the text, "I'm the lucky one" is articulated in this rhythm:



Martin emphasizes the syllable "luck", producing the off-beat accent:



The same phenomenon is heard in meas. #28:



meas. #42:



meas. #49:



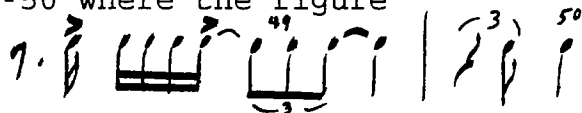
and meas. #53:



The stylistic device of retarding the entrances on down beats, described fully in the section on "Happiness", is heard here also, producing an interesting figure:



heard first in meas. #4 and again in meas. #30 and meas. #60. Additionally, the device is heard dramatically in meas. #49-50 where the figure



is articulated. The silences are inserted on the downbeats of beat "three" in meas. #49 and beat "one" in meas. #50, giving a sort of limping quality to the rhythm.

Much use of syncopation is heard as in meas. #3:



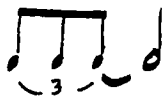
meas. #11:



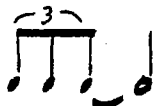
meas. #13:



and subtly in meas. #14:



meas. #19:



and meas. #23:



These examples all illustrate the figures at the ends of phrases, a quickening of the expected

articulation, cutting short the expected resolution to the succeeding down beat.

Analysis of Vocal Techniques

Martin's manipulation of vocal timbre is particularly interesting in "Sweet Lorraine". There is much alternation between falsetto and natural voices, seemingly irrespective of actual pitch, but used solely as another variable in Martin's expressive palette. This also seems to be part of the homage to Nat Cole, as he was also wont to alternate between falsetto and natural voices, though more as a result of pitch accommodation than purely stylistic reasons, it appears to the writer.

Martin's use of the two contrasting vocal colors is a study in the artistic vacillation that hypnotizes audiences. the opening two phrases of the piece are sung in falsetto with the two consequent or answering phrases rendered in natural voice. The second verse is sung entirely in natural voice, while the B section is split evenly in two--the first half falsetto, the second half again answering in natural voice. The last verse is sung completely in natural voice. The improvised section opens with three falsetto notes in meas. #32-33, clearly

heard with strong agogic accent, followed immediately by a consequent fragment in natural voice in meas. #34, leading to a string of double-timed notes in meas. #35-36, still in natural voice. This is followed by a multiphonic falsetto shriek on the down beat of beat "one" in meas. #37, which immediately segues to the second half of this motivic fragment sung in a natural voice. A return to another succession of double-timed notes, all in natural voice culminates in a multiphonic vibrated sound still in natural voice. At this point the second eight measures of the improvisation are introduced with another agogically-accented high falsetto figure, followed by the two quintuplet figures described earlier, still falsetto.

In meas. #43 Martin introduces another coloristic device, a rhythmic ululation producing crisp thirty-second notes in falsetto, cleanly ending on a naturally-voiced note. Pick-ups in natural voice skip up the register to a repetition of the falsetto ululation and its rhythmic resolution in meas. #46, all in falsetto. Measure #49 reintroduces the B section, opening the phrase in falsetto, ending on a naturally-voiced note, then extending the phrase again in falsetto, meas. #50.

This pattern is repeated in meas. #51-52, a falsetto phrase ending on a naturally-voiced note. The last two phrases of the B section are sung in a natural voice. The final return to the A section begins in a natural voice and continues through three phrases, meas. #57-61. As the ending to the song draws near, a phrase is split in two--the first two notes falsetto, the last two notes natural, Meas. #62. *Ritardando* and drawing out the final notes of the song, Martin sings in a natural voice, meas. #63-65. The vocal cadenza is similarly split into two timbres, the first half falsetto, ending in a naturally voiced figure, the last note of which is held out long.

The relationship of the two vocal colors to one another and to the various structural foci of the performance is a cannily manipulated polarity. The falsetto voice is used as the foil to the more common vocal color, the natural voice. It always signifies tension which is released with the entrance of the lower voice. The interplay between these two voices becomes a sub-plot to the interest generated by the manipulation of the melody itself. The falsetto is used sparingly, though in prominent places throughout the first chorus of the song and into the first eight measures of the solo.

The second eight measures are sung almost entirely in falsetto. Then what follows is the playful and rapid alternation of the two colors within phrases of melody, a *denouement* section almost completely in natural voice and the final artistic vacillation of the two colors in the cadenza, resolving to natural voice.

The interplay of the two vocal colors is given yet another dimension with Martin's judicious interjection of the technique of multiphonic singing. Just enough edge, or force is given the air as it courses through the vocal chords so that more than one pitch is produced, not unlike the effect one gets from a good stretch and a sighing yawn upon rising in the morning. Martin clearly has control over the pitches in these harmonic structures, as they are not random or even abstract, but clearly define the harmonies at the points where they are introduced--meas. #37, #39, and #46. The interval of a fourth down from the melody note replicates the sounding of the overblown fifth associated with woodwind instruments--too much air pressure distorts the fundamental tone and produces harmonics in accordance with natural laws of acoustics, though how Martin creates the intervals in meas. #37 that delineate a D minor ninth

chord with a major seventh--a color chord stylistically appropriate to this jazz performance--is beyond this writer's abilities to comprehend, much less explain, though they are clearly present on the recording. The occurrences of these multiphonics in both falsetto and natural voices provides Martin with additional parameters to manipulate and with the addition of a Louis Armstrong-like vibrato clearly heard in meas. #39, the combinations appear limitless, the effect, stunning.

The use of nonsense syllables or vocables in a jazz "scatting" solo has its historical roots in Louis Armstrong's seminal recording of "Jeepers Creepers" in the 1920s. Many vocalists have subsequently contributed their own variation of this technique, among them Ella Fitzgerald, Babs Gonzales and Mel Torme. The idea seems to be the completion of a circle that began with songs sung by the human voice which were then imitated by such vocal instruments in the jazz ensemble as trumpet, clarinet, trombone and later saxophone. The instruments were capable of greater pitch and rhythmic precision as a result of these parameters being controlled by mechanical means. As a consequence, vocalists came full circle and

imitated the instruments imitating the voices, though now with the precision idiomatic to jazz instruments.

Martin's scat solo on "Sweet Lorraine" unites his rhythmic and melodic variations with colorful vocables that define the articulation of each note. In addition, the constant variation of these syllables, the absence of tiresome repetitions of "doo bee doo bee doo" so often heard from lesser artists, contributes to the overall interest. A particularly arresting example occurs in the previously-discussed rhythmic pattern heard in meas. #42. The first note of the six-note sequence is accented as is the highest and penultimate note, the Bb, even though the entire phrase is displaced the second time. These accented notes are supported by strong syllables "sha" and "do". The remarkable thing is the fact that the variation receives a different sequence of vocables. First we hear "sha-ba-do-ya-do-bo", followed by "sha-ba-do-ba-do-yo". Not only is the rhythm displaced but so is the syllable "yo". The listener is left wondering where his hat is.

Martin seems to have a pattern of using the "sh" consonant cluster to begin phrases as in meas. #32, #35, #38, #42, #44 and #46. He alternates this with a simple

sibilant in meas. #36 and #38--"sah" and "su", respectively. The endings of the syllables are also significant. Held notes of course do not close at the end--"daw", "dee", "dah", and "day"--interestingly all featuring the "d" sound as final notes in a series--yet another pattern. Short notes end with a final consonant: "dwat", "gwait" (rhymes with "Dwight"). Fast notes in a sequence need only sound the initial consonant, as the succeeding note closes it off. Martin employs a number of consonant clusters, among them "dwee", "clu", "dlu", "gwait", "whee", "br", and "thr". On two occasions he begins a syllable with a vowel--"ah" in meas. #44 and "it" in meas. #45. The following is a graph indicating the number of occurrences found for each initial sound. (see Graph II)

Perusal of the graph reveals that a richness of phonetic resources is displayed. Most prominent of these are those beginning with "d" and "b", followed closely by "sh" and "y". The sounds can also be classified into four types and ranked by frequency of occurrence in the song:

Hard Consonants	60%
Soft Consonants	17%

Consonant Clusters 21%

Vowels 2%

Another conclusion that can be drawn is that though a large number of different syllables is used, seven are used only once, and another eight are used four or less times out of the ninety-four occurrences, accounting for 30% of the sounds. The remaining four sounds--a consonant cluster, "sh", at 9%; a soft consonant, "y", at 9%; a hard consonant, "b", at 19% and a hard consonant, "d", at 33% provide the bulk of the initial sonorities--70%--thus effecting unity of sound contrasted by colorful alternates. ^POf course, placement and duration account for the attention given by the listener to the sounds. "Whee" in meas. #32--a quarter note--and again in meas. #37--a quarter note tied to an eighth-note triplet--are prominently heard and remembered though they account for only 4% of the initial sonorities in the improvisation.

Melodic Analysis

The pitch material of "Sweet Lorraine" is the least interesting of the melodic parameters, rhythm and articulation having displaced it with their complexities. This is not to say that its function as an organic part

of the music is not important or well conceived. During the performance of the song itself, the pitches are necessary to the identity of the piece--the rhythm is varied so much that additional melodic variation would make the song unrecognizable. Where pitch material becomes a factor for analysis is within the remarkable 16-measure vocal solo. Throughout the first eight measures, harmonic functions are underscored by the pitches. In measure #32 Martin outlines notes from the C7 chord--C, Bb, and G--resolving to the F in meas. #33. Meas. #34 is a classic bop formula popularized by Charlie Parker, based on the Fats Waller composition "Honeysuckle Rose" and outlining the upper extensions of the iimi7 - V7 chords, here, Gmi7 to C7. Measures #35-36 use material from the relative d minor scale, outlining those chord tones on beats "one" and "two", here heard with complete inner harmonies as a result of his use of multiphonics. The Gs on beats "three" and "four" are the subdominant note of the d minor and the root of the G7 chord actually performed in the accompaniment at this point. The notes in meas. #38 are derived from the C7(b9) chord--a form of the V7 in minor key. (Grove 1972:282) The notes on down beats "two", "three" and

"four" spell an E diminished chord and resolve to chord tones of the F scale on strong beats of meas. #39. The second eight measures of the solo, while staying within the confines of functional harmony, do not define chord movement so much as the previous eight. Measure #41 emphasizes a C note--the fifth of the F chord--and then passes to the A in meas. #42 by means of a Bb in meas. #41, certainly not a chord tone in F, but a color tone--the raised fifth degree in the D7 implied as a passing chord here. The turn around the A note in meas. #42 fits the harmonies of Gmi7 to C7 as the melody begins its climb to the upper register. The phenomenon of the trilling effect Martin achieves in meas. #43. #44 and #45 is loosely hung on the high C note which is the dominant note of the harmony and used here as the climactic melody note--the highest in terms of range of the whole solo and of the entire piece. Martin skips up to the high C in three emphatic bursts before resolving to F and A--chord tones of the tonic chord--in meas. #46, which are followed by a pronounced silence in meas. #47-48, closing the solo and preparing the listener for the reprise of the song proper.

Comparative Analysis

It is by comparing the analysis of rhythm with that of pitch material that a clear look at the solo is obtained. A look at Graph III which is a representation of the temporal durations of various rhythmic densities of the solo reveals that:

1. The thickest density occurs at a point 15/17 or 88% of the way through the solo.
2. The figure occupying most duration is the rest--silence.
3. Second most often occurring figure is the sixteenth note.
4. The solo can be broken into two parts divided by a long rest.
5. The second part reaches an initial climax followed by a long silence, then a second climax of the same level and similar duration, another silence and then a further and denser climax of such short duration that it is almost beneath notice, which leads back down to slower note values and ends on a pronounced silence--the longest duration of any single event in the solo.

Another visual aid, Graph IV, plots pitch frequency against the time matrix. We see a number of spikes very similar to those in Graph III. Of course, the rests in meas. #39-40 divide the solo into two parts as in Graph III. The first half rapidly establishes a high note--G--and then vacillates among notes all along the register, rising at the midpoint of the solo to a high F. After a long silence, the second half of the solo opens on the climactic note--high C--and maintains it throughout most of the measure. Activity vacillates between lower notes of the upper register and then, after another long silence, rises twice more to the climactic high C, a brief drop to the F and then the solo ends in silence. By comparing the two graphs (II and III) the following observations can be made:

1. The solo is bipartite.
2. The second half of the solo contains the climax.
3. Climactic figures are repeated.
4. There is a union of high pitch and high rhythmic density during the climactic peaks in meas. #44-46.
5. The climax is followed by a brief falling action before its *denouement* in silence.

6. The two elements, pitch and rhythmic density, are manipulated separately, the interplay between these two elements draws the listener's interest and the union of the climaxes of the two elements is a powerful musical gesture.

7. The element of silence is used judiciously--to separate compositional sub-sections and to provide contrast to the sonic activity.

Conclusions

As a total performance, "Sweet Lorraine" can be seen to consist of three distinct sections. The first section is made up of the first chorus of the 32-measure song. The second section contains the 16-measure improvised solo and the third section features a repeat of the last sixteen measures of the song. The text of the song itself, with its *kitsch* reference to a "choo choo toy", is made light of by Martin, though he conveys the sentimentality of a lover as an overall feeling. A winsome quality is evoked as Martin sings of clouds of rain--indeed his vocal solo is the thunderstorm personified which gives way to the tender romantic qualities of the vocal cadenza.

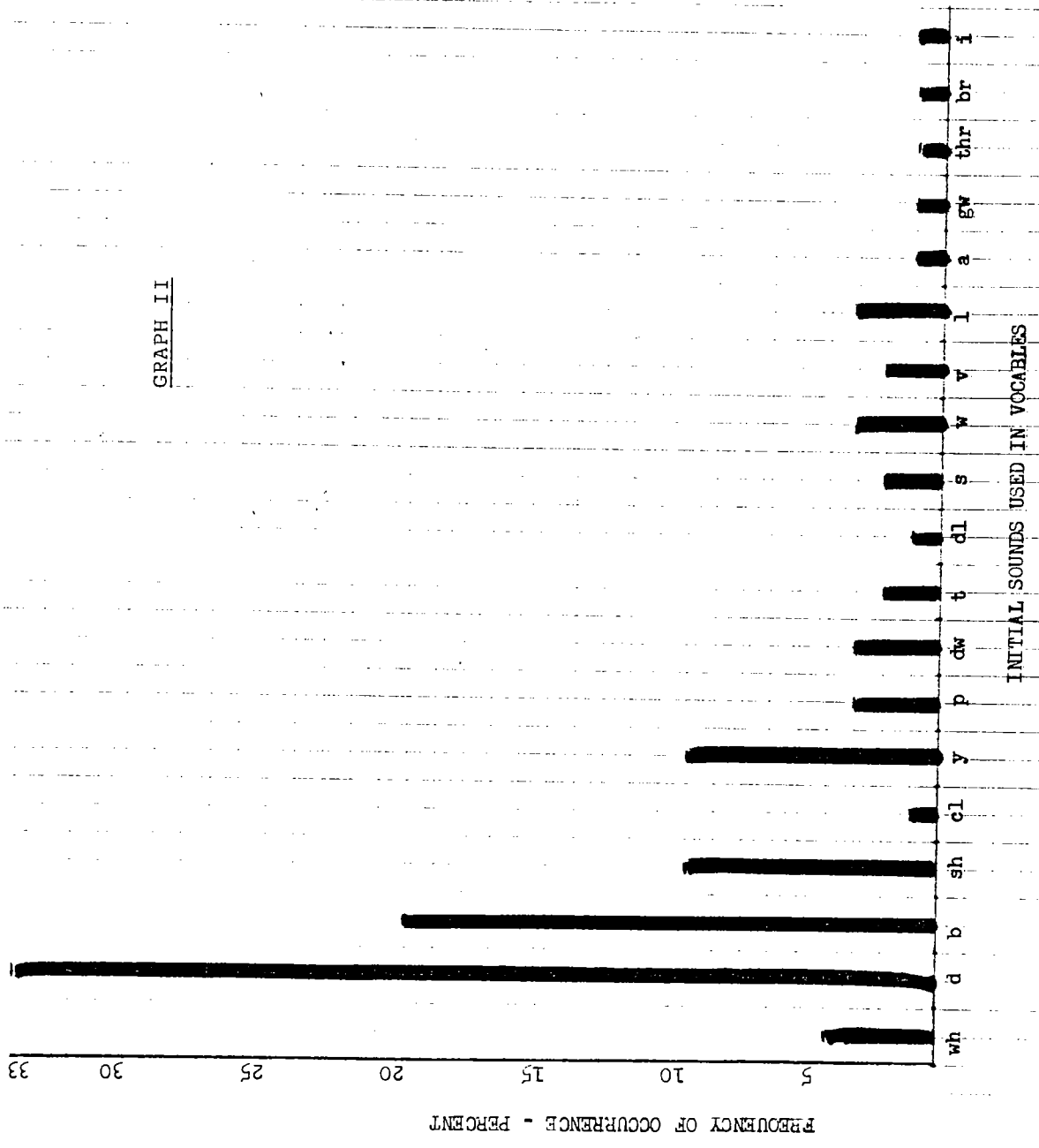
Martin's manipulation of pitch, rhythm density, rhythmic variation, tone color and articulation (not to mention dynamics which have been omitted in this study) produces a performance of artistic unity. The use of silence, the canny positioning of the disparate elements of the variations all work to realize the prime directive of the composer--to move the listener. From the opening notes, Martin measures the amounts of information that the listener can absorb, challenging him with variation after variation, returning to repetitions or silences often enough to give respite to the listener's ability to comprehend. The first chorus of the song completed, Martin enters in imitation of an instrumental soloist and blasts off for the stratosphere, introducing more special effects, blending them with legitimate melodic and harmonic invention and pulling the listener to the multi-dimensional climax in meas. #45. Silences punctuate the bursts of sonic activity and then presage the return to the last sixteen measures of the song. This section, though a *denouement*, still continues to challenge the listener with oblique rhythmic variations and manipulations of timbre, but easing down the pitch register and gently slowing the rhythmic density, using

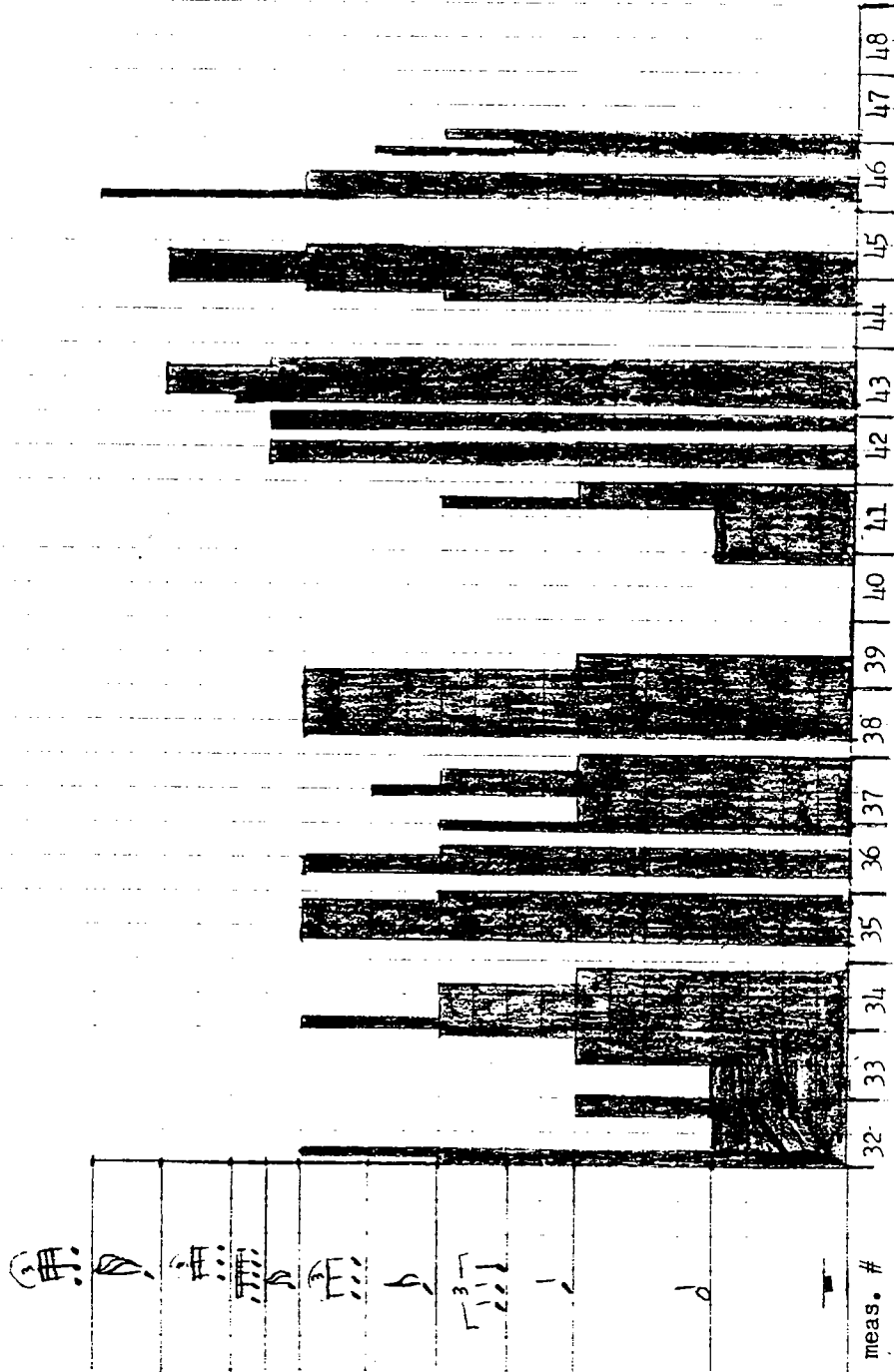
more on-beat figures, comes to a satisfying rest at the end of the piece. Then like a bird warbling after a storm, the vocal cadenza adds one last flourish to a remarkable work of art. The fact that this is an improvised performance--one that crystalized in Martin's conception as it was being performed--further underscores the audacity, the virtuosity of the jazz composer's skills.

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GRAPH II

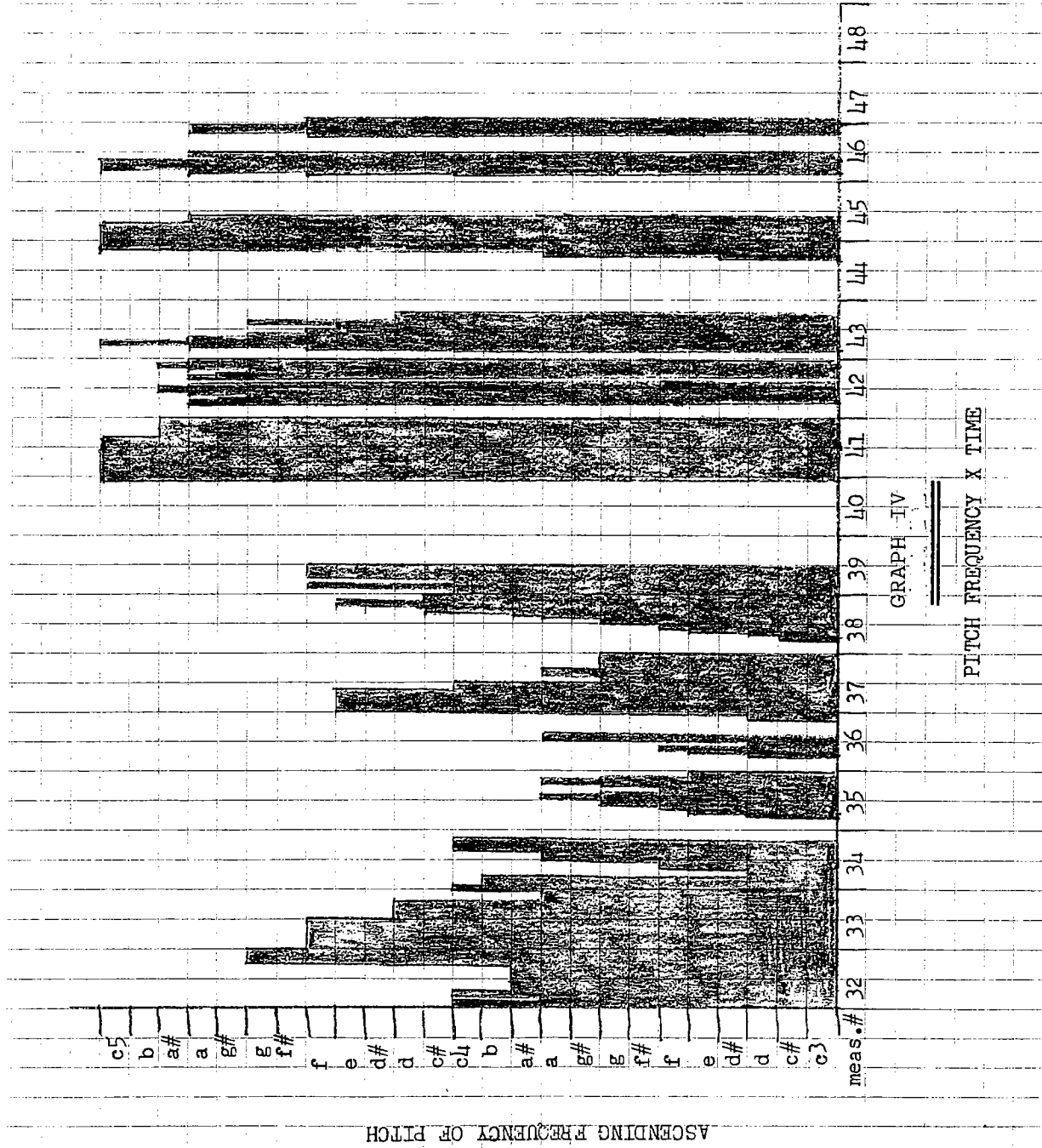




Figures of Rhythmic Density

GRAPH III

RHYTHMIC DENSITY X TIME



(G. Burwell)

SWEET LORRAINE

Moderato

I've just found joy, I'm as happy as a bee by boy. With another brand new pair of eyes, That are bluer than the summer skies. When you see them you will see me smile. When I'm with my sweet Lorraine, raine, raine, raine. Why I love my sweet Lorraine, raine, raine, raine. When it's raining I don't miss the sun. For it's in my sweet-lo's smile. Each time I see her smile, I know she's just the luck-y one who will lead her down the aisle. Each night I pray, That no-body steals her heart a-way, Just can't wait un-til that happy day. When I marry sweet Lorraine, raine, raine, raine.

PIANO-ORGAN
No. 1047

SWING

G-4

Musical score for "Sweet Lorraine" in G major, 4/4 time, Swing style. The score consists of four staves of piano-organ accompaniment. The first staff begins with the title "SWEET LORRAINE" and a treble clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo/style is marked "SWING". The score includes various chords and melodic lines with fingerings and articulations. The chords are: C7⁴, F, D7, G7, C7₂, Dm₃Bb7, A1, D7₅G7, C7, 1. F₇, Gm₇C7⁺, 2. F₁₅, F7₁₆, Bb₁₇, D7, Gm₁₈Bb7, Eb, 19 D7, Gm₂₀Bb7, Eb₂₁, D7, G7₅C7₂₂, Eb₂₃, D7, G7₂₄C7₄, 3. F₃₁, 32.

An Improvised Bass Solo

Martin's principal instrument and the one that brought him personal acclaim is the bass viol. According to his own testimony offered elsewhere in this work, he struggled for many years with the effort of becoming fluent on the bass in the jazz idiom. He not only studied "legitimate" bass technique and etudes in the "classical" literature with particularly effective teachers, but he also developed the approach of the jazz bassist by listening to and playing along with recordings of outstanding bassists in that school such as Ray Brown, Jimmy Blanton and Paul Chambers.

The writer had many opportunities to witness Martin's playing, including the performances of many improvised solos during the years 1983-1990 and was able to record a number of these. The solo eventually selected for transcription and analysis comes from a 1986 recording session made at UCSB studios in which Martin is accompanied on drums by jazz veteran Gary Frommer, the writer on piano and alto saxophonist Martin Matthews. Though Martin has a myriad of styles and approaches to his instrument including a very unique bowing method, sufficiently clear examples of these types of playing

were not available to be transcribed, hence, the more traditional plucked solo is herein presented.

The piece which provides the framework for this solo is Sonny Rollins's "Doxy", a jazz standard from the bebop era of the 1940s which utilizes the sixteen-measure AABA format in 4/4 time. Martin's solo follows those of alto sax and piano, respectively, and precedes the reprise of the melody by the ensemble. Martin's instrument was equipped with a highly effective contact microphone placed near the bridge of the bass and connected to the engineer's board where it was mixed with a high degree of presence, permitting a clear transcription to be made.

Melodic Analysis

The bassist's solo opens with a statement of a motive drawn from the opening notes of "Doxy" itself and then extends the idea through the first eight measures by means of classic melodic development. Measure #1 features the principal motive, a figure which encloses the tonic note Bb in a turn of a major third above and a minor third below, coming to rest on Bb. Like Rollins, Martin also answers the opening interrogative in the second measure, but economically, with only the one note-

-a vibrated "blue" note somewhere between C# and D. Measure #3 repeats measure #1 but truncates the idea using only the first three notes. The shortened idea is heard again in measure #4, the third note extended temporally by means of a vibrated melisma and reaching a fourth, the C. Measure #5, as in the original, repeats the opening figure. This is followed in Measure #6 by a different truncation than in measure #2, here repeating exactly the opening notes of the figure and extending the third note by means of a melismatic vibrato somewhere between C# and D. This last idea is rhythmically altered in meas. #7, now heard with quarter notes on beats "one" and "two" rather than the syncopated eighth notes heard in meas. #6. The idea is then inverted in meas. #8, the D now approached from above (the Eb). Rollins's short B section, a rhythmically syncopated melodic descent and ascent, is modified by Martin, here beginning on the same note as in the original--G--but dipping further down--to the Eb in meas. #11--and rising further up--to the Eb in meas. #12. Measures #13-16 enclose a sudden and daring resolution to the first chorus. Reaching into the *altissimo* register and boosting dynamics, Martin clearly departs from the thematic development idea and instead

outlines an Eb triad with the odd quarter-note triplet figure, lapsing into the Eb-resolving-to-D idea heard previously in meas. #8 and finishing the chorus by echoing the last four notes of the opening motive, coming to rest on the Eb.

The second sixteen measures continue in the *altissimo* register with somewhat softened dynamics and simplified rhythm--straight quarter notes on the beat. Tension is here provided by the slurred attack given to each note--once again the "bluesy", bent-note feeling. Measures #17-20 depict a powerful musical effect. The descent from the upper register by even quarter notes quickens as the notes approach mid-range and then degenerates, falls apart in a thick texture Martin achieves by percussively plucking damped strings--no pitch is audible, just the upper harmonics of the sound of his fingers grappling with the mighty thews of the bass in a complex rhythmic figure ending in an ascending glissando, meas. #20. Abruptly passing to an apparently unrelated idea in meas. #21, the bassist rhythmically displaces the accent the second time the two-note figure is heard. The notes Bb and G are embellished with neighboring tones in the ensuing measures, coming to rest

on the low F--the dominant note--in meas. #24. The Bb seems to be the unifying idea of the entire last section, as the last five fragments depart from and return to it as a tonal anchor. Measure #25 establishes Bb and then leaps down to the E natural note--the tritone substitute for the Bb7 chord in the harmony--resolving to Eb in meas. #27 where Martin injects a curious double-time fill ending on the Bb. Measure #27 hears a repetition of the E note, here the defining note of the E diminished seventh chord indicated in the harmony, and passes to the concluding phrase on measures #29-31. This phrase sounds the Bb note as its upper anchor in meas. #29-30 and as the terminus of the solo in meas. #31. Meas. #32 is the signal to the rest of the ensemble that the solo is over and that the reprise of the melody is about to begin.

Structural Analysis

An analysis of the organization of the solo is problematic. The independent manipulation of the following parameters divides the thirty-two measures into an uneven format.

1. Melodic development
2. Rhythmic density

3. Dynamics
4. Tessitura
5. Texture (articulation)

To recapitulate and simplify, measures #1-12 engage the listener's attention by means of melodic variation of the compositional fragments. This is delivered in a *mezzo-forte* voice, becoming *forte* in the last measure of this section, measure #12. As a consequence of the twelve measures of noodling, Martin assaults the listener with the *fortissimo* and *altissimo* figure heard in measures #13-16 which resolves melodically in meas. #16. Softening somewhat to *forte*, the bassist then bisects the solo with a musical gesture which suggests twentieth century art music and is typical of Martin's "atonal" bass solo work. Dramatically illustrated in the graph of the musical contour, the figure begins in the *altissimo* range and drops at first by step, then by leap down to indefinite pitches in the lower register, measures #17-20, from whence it ascends in a rapid glissando. The effect is of an orderly, scalar descent down a ladder. Then a foot is caught in a rung and the body falls

crashing to the floor amid a turmoil of writhing limbs, a cry of surprise sent gasping aloft at the end.

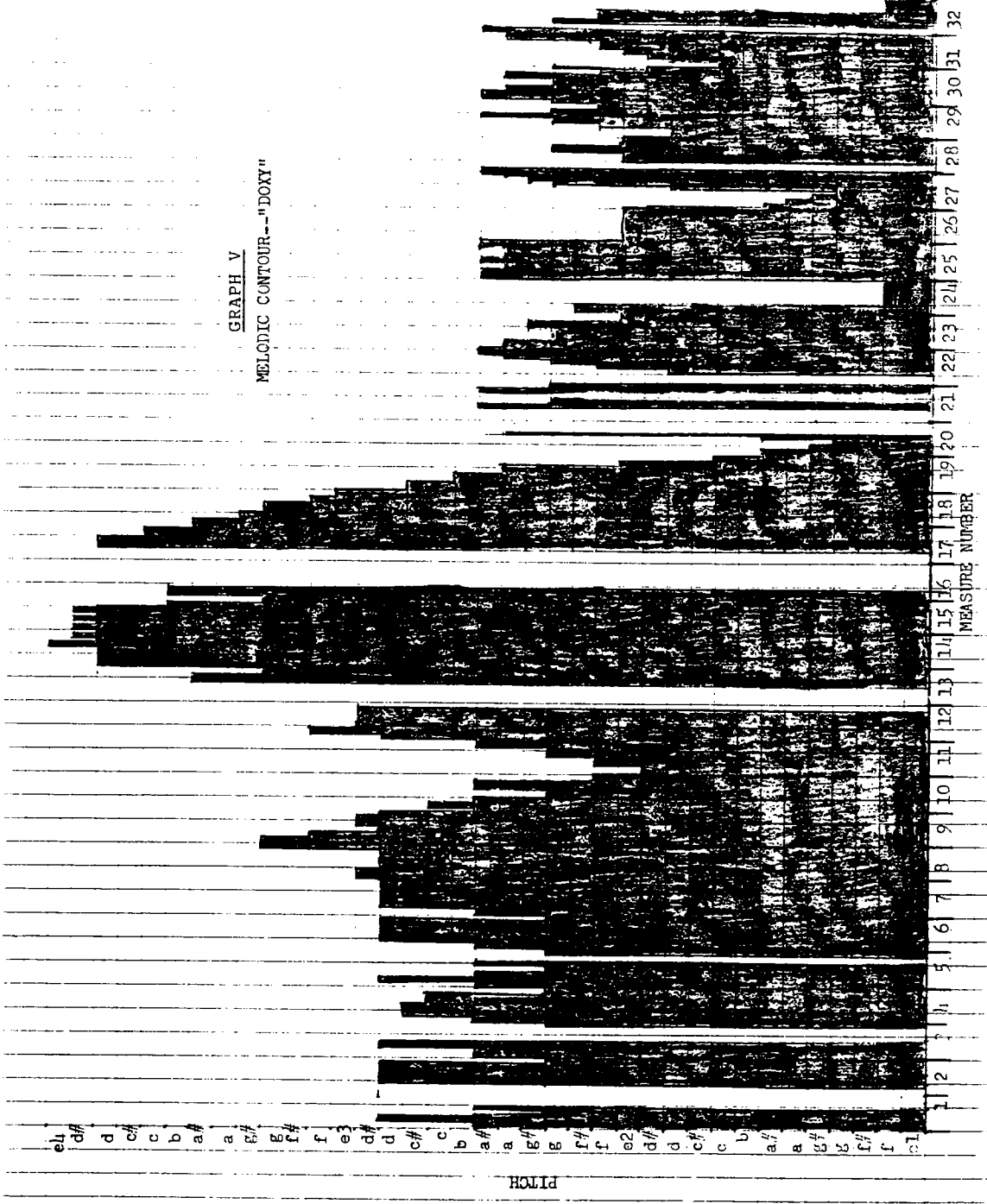
The texture of the sound is an important consideration for Martin and is realized here in the form of the various articulations he gives the notes--much use of glissandi, vibrato and percussive attacks is employed. The last third of the solo returns to a tonal concept and lowers the pitch and energy level, preparing the listener for the succeeding reprise of the melody proper.

Upon glancing at the graph of the melodic contour, one can observe that Martin's solo is organized as a triptych. The first third is composed of classic melodic development techniques; the second third made up of the dramatic *altissimo* figures followed by the powerful descent into atonality; and the third section--loosely derived from extensions of the tonic note Bb, lower in tessitura and simpler in rhythm than the first section--leads to a smooth, rather anticlimactic cadence and prepares the listener for the entrance of the other instruments and the tune's recapitulation.

In the context of a rather typical (and juvenile) recording session--made, it should be pointed out, as a demonstration tape for saxophonist Matthews,--Martin

asserts his artistic integrity. He plays colorfully and dramatically, but encloses his startling departure from the typical with sections of less demanding sounds--hence the triptych metaphor. The bassist leads the listener by the ear, tastefully bringing him to the brink of a musical abyss, pushes him over and then, just as tastefully, lifts him back to the firmer ground of typical tonal jazz. This, to the writer is further confirmation of superior artistry on the part of Martin.

GRAPH V
MELODIC CONTOUR--"DOXY"



PITCH

MEASURE NUMBER

DOXY

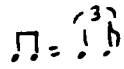
SONNY ROLLINS

Handwritten musical score for "DOXY" by Sonny Rollins. The score is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. It includes a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. Chord symbols are written above and below the notes. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Chord symbols present in the score:

- C7
- F7
- Bb7
- Ab7
- G7
- Bb
- F7+5
- Bb7
- Ab7
- G7
- F7
- Fmi7
- Bb7
- Eb7
- Eo
- Bb7
- Ab7
- G7
- C7
- F7
- Bb
- Cm7
- F7

♩ = 136



DOXY - Vern Martin SOLO

PLATE XII

217

Sounds 8va lower

w = vibrato

Bass - pizz.

CHAPTER IV

Summary and ConclusionSummary

Before offering a synthesis of the foregoing chapters, a brief summary of the information contained therein is in order. In the first section, which dealt with a variety of observations regarding Martin, one noticed that published criticism about the bassist was scarce and that which was located was only moderately complimentary to him. On the other hand, opinions rendered by UCSB students overwhelmingly praised his artistry and overall public presentation. Also, parallels were seen between some of Martin's stated values and those of jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams. The following inferences were deduced:

1. A major characteristic of jazz is that it reaches out and touches people in a warm, personal way.
2. Martin is quite serious about his music and career.
3. Martin's spontaneous style is evident in his music as well as in his personal behavior.
4. Martin reveres jazz history.

5. Martin believes in the oral transmission of jazz.

6. Martin considers showmanship and stage presence to be integral parts of his musical presentation.

7. Martin trains young musicians and gives them experience by allowing them to perform professionally with him.

8. Martin impresses audiences with his professionalism.

The section dealing with the bassist's companion ChyReal Love examined their relationship and revealed a symbiotic exchange which is seen as a microcosm of the following archetypical behavior:

1. A female companion can provide the economic foundation upon which the irregular life of a jazz musician can be supported.

2. The woman is integrated into all aspects of the artist's life--in Love's case, she was trained in the musical techniques and historical traditions of jazz which were incorporated into a "music therapy" approach to overcoming the debilitations of a stroke which she had recently suffered. Martin taught her to compose music and song texts, to perform on harmonica, percussion

instruments and voice, and featured her as co-star in his professional presentations.

A section focusing on Roland Kirk revealed the background for the formation of many of Martin's present values. An awesome performer, Kirk was motivated to carry his message of Black pride and reverence for jazz tradition to an ever-expanding public, even going so far as to militantly take over the television studios in order to gain access to the media of mainstream American culture. The following virtues ascribed to Martin were shown to be derived from his association with Kirk:

1. Martin impresses audiences with his musical prowess.
2. Martin wholeheartedly advocates jazz and has dedicated his life to training musicians and to composing new works in the medium.
3. Martin believes jazz is accessible to people of all ages and cultural backgrounds.
4. Martin is not a cultural chauvinist.
5. Martin believes that music is a multi-faceted form of communication that embraces showmanship and the use of musical performances as a forum for expressing ideas.

6. Martin's message is one of love and respect for one another and the earth--humanitarianism.

7. Martin has maintained the integrity of his lifestyle to his values even in the face of poverty and public indifference to his art.

A section dealing with the role of the sideman in jazz drew attention to the travelling jazz group as a *milieu* for the transmission of oral traditions in jazz. Martin was seen in the context of his pivotal role in jazz history--extending all the way back to the musical culture of Africa, passing through his period of assimilation in one of the world's most dynamic and critically acclaimed musical groups, to his decision to carry his personal vision to the people--to become a band leader and composer in his own right, working with youth qualified more by their outlook and personal motivations than by their experience in music.

The next section dealt with Martin's sojourn as the director of the Soul and Arts Creative Workshop in Toledo, Ohio, following his departure from Kirk. What was revealed was that Martin's own internal creative pressure demanded an outlet that Kirk's group did not afford him. For reasons surmised in the text, Kirk was

not disposed to use his own musical presentations as a forum for Martin's work. This creative pressure, coupled with Martin's belief that jazz needed to find wider dissemination in order to survive, led him to accept the leadership of the federal poverty program in Toledo. The Creative Workshop offered Martin the following opportunities:

1. To realize his potential as a composer and leader.
2. To train a new generation of jazz artists.
3. To expose audiences to non-commercial jazz.
4. To remain in Toledo near family and friends.

Martin left Toledo for Los Angeles in 1980, recording his experiences in verse and music. In a section seeking the elements of Martin's philosophy in the texts of his songs, a cross-section of his work was analyzed including poems drawn from over a ten-year period of time. As a result of careful analyses of these verses, the following inferences were made concerning Martin's philosophy:

1. Martin believes in open-mindedness. He advocates introspection and he deplors the use of slogans to control people's thoughts.

2. Martin believes in the necessity of an inquisitive mind. He is dedicated to ongoing education, catholic in scope and technique.

3. Martin advocates compassion towards his fellow men. He believes in forgiveness and consternation for their troubles and shortcomings.

4. He believes that racial and cultural differences are but symptomatic of the ills that plague the world. Martin feels that diversity should not be based on nationality or ethnicity.

5. There is a strong indictment of capitalist doctrine in his poetry; Martin sees commercial exploitation as necessarily militating against human spiritual development.

6. Martin is an optimist. He feels that positive thought and actions will overcome the plethora of injustices affecting the world today.

Actual examples of the bassist's social behavior were examined in the light of the tenets of his philosophy and a high degree of integrity was observed between his stated values and his actions.

A cross-section of Martin's musical expressions was then assiduously examined and analyzed. In "Mega Music".

the composer's ingenious juxtaposition of famous jazz themes pays homage to the pantheon of artists in the discipline. Also noted was an intense logic that provides unity and structure to the complex piece.

In "The Sonnet" the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic structure was seen to be highly unified and symmetrical. The bass line to the piece was analyzed and the following inferences made.

The bass line:

1. Provides a contrapuntal line, contrasting the melody.
2. Outlines the harmonies.
3. Defines the rhythmic character of the piece.
4. Impels forward motion.

Martin was seen to possess a fluid technique in the "mainstream" jazz style including mastery of a wide variety of special effects as well as an unfaltering sense of time.

As a result of the systematic analysis of the various parameters of the composer's song, "Happiness", the following observations were made:

1. The composition is derivative.

2. Martin makes use of standard compositional techniques such as melodic and rhythmic extension of a few basic ideas.

3. Rhythms are extremely varied with very few repeated ideas and include irregular stress placements of speech accents against the *tactus*.

4. Pauses are inserted on down beats.

5. The composer illuminates the text with musical gestures, equating tension and release with the negative and positive polarities of his values.

6. Structure of poetry is not rigid, but is altered to fit the requirements of the text.

7. Martin sets the text to music that supports the sentiment of his message.

In "Sweet Lorraine", an analysis was made of Martin's skills as a vocal improviser. Rhythmic activity was isolated and examined yielding the following inferences:

1. Because of the extensive use of rhythmic variation, forward motion of the music is impelled, attracting the listener's interest.

2. Because of the limited number of rhythmic factors in the variations, the listener is not overcome with too much information to grasp.

3. By judicious placement of repetitions and variations, a feeling of balanced symmetry is achieved.

Timbre, rhythmic density, pitch variation, the use of vocables to define articulation, and the relationship of pitch material to harmonic content were examined. The following are a few highlights of the findings:

1. Martin is a master of artistic vacillation.

2. The elements of pitch and rhythmic density are manipulated independently. The interplay between the two parameters draws the listener's attention and the union of the climaxes of the two elements constitutes a powerful musical gesture.

3. The element of silence is used judiciously to separate compositional sub-sections and to provide contrast to the sonic activity.

Finally, Martin's improvised bass solo on "Doxy" was examined in the context of its function as a subordinate solo on a young saxophonist's demonstration tape. The analysis included the parameters of thematic reference,

melodic development, harmonic definition, timbre, special effects, dynamics and formal structure. What became evident was the bassist's ability to segue from a traditional format to a progressive statement and back to the original feel setting up the re-entrance of the main instrument. He created a triptych structure, seamlessly passing from one musical language to another--playing strong, dramatic sounds within the parentheses of a mainstream, but nonetheless virtuosic tonal solo.

This concluded the bulk of the report and it is from these data that patterns were sought--patterns that would exemplify parallels in the mood, values and actions of Martin with his poetry, compositions and improvised passages.

Conclusions

The inferences drawn from the foregoing data depict characteristics of Vernon Martin, who appeared to be an "ordinary individual in western culture". However, the high level of his performance and compositional skills coupled with the depth of his determination and the integrity of his values has convinced the writer that this is no ordinary individual, but a truly unique and

outstanding human being--a man who doggedly continues to pursue his life's goals, seeking not wealth nor even comfort, but opportunities to serve people with his special gifts.

One theme which repeatedly came to light not only in Martin's songs and poetry, but also in his comments and philosophical exhortations, was the idea that a just end can come about only through just means.

"We have to keep putting things together
Everyday in some small way
Something good we do something we say
And when we do we'll find happiness in a day."
(Martin n.d.)

Extending and generalizing this idea, Martin's ideal world would first eliminate poverty and hunger for all people.

"The plight of the poor is so unfair,
when will we help our own?" (Martin n.d.)

"There should be no hungry people..." (Martin n.d.)

Intuitively, the bassist equates the forces that militate against individualism--monopolistic control of artistic media by profit-taking conglomerates--with the uncontrolled economic forces that result in the disposal of edible foodstuffs.

"See those fields of crops a-wasting" (Martin n.d.)

"Tons of milk down the drain everyday" (Martin n.d.)

Bearing out Martin, economist John Eaton describes a phase of the capitalist economic cycle:

After a period of expansion there always begins a period of slump, the onset of which is generally cataclysmic, since once the threat of glutted markets and falling prices is seen, every capitalist hastens to save what he can. Some quickly cut production and try to sell while they may the goods they have on hand; or they will try to maintain prices by destruction of stocks and means of production. (Eaton 1963:160)

Regarding the narrowing of artistic tastes to fit production expediencies, Eaton states:

The contradiction that leads the capitalists to crisis also drives them to try to escape crisis by winning new markets. Capitalist goods invade the territories of all older modes of production, destroying handicraft and peasant production. (Eaton 1963:156)

In practical terms, the jazz market is too small to be profitable, especially the market for the progressive, philosophic jazz which is Martin's. Because marketing of music falls under the rubric of capitalist marketing practices in general, the following tendency can be seen to occur:

Once the dominance of a few big firms is established in a particular branch of industry, they will be able to fix prices...and thereby reap extra profits. (Eaton 1963:186)

One can see the actual expressions of this tendency in the music industry in the form of payola:

Testimony appears to indicate that the selection of much of the music heard on the air may have been influenced by payments of money, gifts, etc. to programming personnel... (Shemel 1979:100)

In addition to being forced out of the market by being unique, another "non-commercial" aspect of Martin's music is its very Blackness, its roots in the jazz traditions. As Roger Abrahams points out in Positively Black:

This aggressive use of music and related expressive forms has been a part of Black life since slavery. It has become more virulent lately as Black musicians have realized...that white musicians have consistently taken over Black expressive styles because of their energetic, liberating qualities. The reaction on the part of some avant-garde Negro jazz players like Thelonius Monk and Miles Davis, has been to attempt to produce a more and more esoteric sound in order to leave the white audience behind...The problem with this approach is that, except by the very few musical geniuses who follow this course, there are few who can adhere to its demanding ways, and the audience, even in Negro communities, is very limited. (Abrahams 1970:145)

Where, then, does this leave Martin and his very personal style of jazz expression? The writer concludes

that the bassist, guided by his own teachings, came to the following realization and plan of action: The outcome which Martin seeks (a "just end") could be described as a moving, unique musical experience, involving and touching each member of the audience. How to achieve such an outcome? (What are the "just means"?) Interpreting the bassist's behavior would suggest that this ideal musical experience would come about by creating a tableau in which the following was possible:

1. Loving interplay among musicians.
2. Oral transmission of music.
3. Sincerity of expression--performing for its own sake and not for economic gain.
4. Use of showmanship, stage presence and musical texts to send a message of love to the audience.

Martin employs these means, using his friends and students as cohorts in the music and from time to time, depending on a number of other intangible variables, his ends are achieved--a loosely controlled, often sublime expression of collective humanity sharing their creativity; musicians and listeners united in the effort to bring off a magical moment that involves all of them.

A concomitant element of Martin's values is his profound reverence for jazz history. His idolization and identification with the pantheon of jazz greats is evident in many of his recorded comments:

Ray Brown and (Jimmy) Blanton and all the other tremendous great bass players. (Martin 1986)

Miles impacted on me..his music is forever expanding and he's on top of it. (Martin 1986)

Jon Hendricks (is) a master listener and profundo in the realm of being able to have a perception. (Martin 1986)

Roland Kirk is a very pervasive, vast musicale within itself. (Martin 1986)

Monk might make you think about something when you hear him. (Martin 1987)

Art Tatum...was a tremendous impact on my life. (Martin 1987)

This explicit reverence is reflected throughout the bassist's musical expressions. In his composition "Mega Music", for example, he has woven fragments of great jazz themes into a unified structure, quoting melodies from Ellington, Basie, James Moody, Charlie Parker and King Pleasure. The veneration with which he caresses the main theme of Sonny Rollins's "Doxy" in his improvised bass solo, and the tribute to Nat "King" Cole in "Sweet Lorraine" are further examples of the implicit presence

in the music of Martin's feelings about jazz history. This reverence is also underlined by the bassist's intense feelings about the identity and future of jazz:

When we get so we can't try fresh new things, different things we trying to move towards...then we're not playing jazz anymore...we're just playing institutionalized music. (Martin 1986)

This progressive orientation is quite evident in several of Martin's musical gestures. From the dramatic atonality of his solo on "Doxy". to his unique timbral effects of falsetto shrieks and multiphonics in "Sweet Lorraine", to the startling combination of thematic material in "Mega Music" and including the various *avant-garde* compositions like "Chasing My Shadow" about which audiences wrote:

...experimentalist-like overtones... (Daley 1987)

...sounded like art music... (Delshad 1987)

...his music made me feel uneasy...(Patten 1987)

Martin's reverence for jazz in all its forms is in a sense an indication of the identity of jazz. He doesn't limit himself, as Mary Lou Williams seems to by decrying the fact that "*avant-garde* is frigid." (Lyons 1977:11),

but embraces "free" and "new thing" sounds as a legitimate direction toward which the music can expand.

To be fair and maintain a degree of objectivity, some of the bassist's values can be seen in the context of Black popular culture, taking on new meanings. The writer has characterized Martin's relationship toward ChyReal Love as "symbiotic", but the bassist himself has claimed the general need to be supported by a woman:

...it is a compromising situation. I've lived with maybe fifteen or twenty women, you know. I wouldn't put myself on a really pimp level...but I would (rather) compromise on a personal level like that than compromise on a level where...I'm doing it just because I'm going to get a buck...I don't want to do this shit! (Martin 1987)

Also, Martin's relationship to his music students is one of benign control. It has been pointed out that his students pay the bassist not only with money, but also by chauffeuring him about, videotaping his performances, bringing gifts and other favors. They also leave Martin to decide how the wages from their joint musical performances will be divided. The role played here by the bassist strongly resembles that which folklorist Roger Abrahams calls the "cat" in Black urban society:

The prestigious way of having style provided is by being able to manipulate others, to

exploit them...through a use of wits...The "cat"...operates...in terms of verbal persuasions whenever possible. The "cat" exercises wit and indirection.

And further:

The cat seeks through a harmonious combination of charm, ingratiating speech, dress, music, the proper dedication to his "kick", and unrestrained generosity to make his day-to-day life a gracious work of art. (Abrahams 1970:87)

The cat and the monkey are descendants of tricksters like Br'er Rabbit and Slave John, for they live through wits and operate aggressively through indirection. In a city guise they offer a pattern of aggression and a life style which continues to be attractive to members of ghetto communities. (Abrahams 1970:90)

The monkey is often referred to as a "pimp-monkey"; in ghetto-Negro parlance, "pimp" is a laudatory term. The pimp is, in many ways the epitome of the cat because he is able not only to get clothes and money through use of his wits but by...exploiting women. (Abrahams 1970:92)

However applicable the "cat" identity is to Martin, it is at this fringe level of subsistence that he exists. Living in a shabby apartment with a dull-witted woman and her daughter and grandchild, the bassist nonetheless affects an air of authority and even elegance. Birds sing in cages, a matched pair of Lhasa apsos are taken for their evening stroll to the liquor store where en route, he banters lightly with his polyglot neighbors.

Instead of worrying about a job, Martin spends his days copying *hiraganas* and reading about Japanese culture, his home an orderly meeting place for his associates in the jazz *demimonde*. Students pass in and out. If no money is offered, Martin will privately growl, "Give me five dollars." From this aerie above the smog-filled streets of Los Angeles, the bassist divides his day and makes time for his physical workout as well as a time to work on his current musical projects. This description might fit any number of "ordinary individuals in western culture". The dramatic and tragic difference is that, as we have seen through this study, this individual is a truly gifted musical genius.

A further ramification of Martin's philosophy--just means beget a just end--is seen in his economic behavior. The bassist has declared a number of times his dissatisfaction with his economic level:

Living at...the Sentinal Motel...was...an experience I was compelled to live with at that particular time in my life...thank God right now I've got my pad with ChyReal. (Martin 1986)

Yet Martin consistently eschews non-musical employment as well as commercial musical undertakings, coherent with his philosophy. Though economic security

is important, it is subjugated to the greater importance of dedication to his musical and spiritual goals. If monetary success is forthcoming, it will be only as a result of his determination and penetration into his own art:

In the realm of commercialism there are certain things I might have been able to do, like "Happiness"--I'd like to see that become a commercial success in that it would bring me more checks in and I wouldn't have to be reverting to these different compromising things. I could be independent and throw people out of the house, rather than have somebody throw me out all the time. (Martin 1986)

In spite of his assumed low level of musical literacy, the writer is convinced that Martin's professionalism could easily earn him a handsome living if he so chose--at one recent point the bassist was paired with renowned pianist/vocalist Doug Carne in a commercial project aimed at the Las Vegas musical scene, but Martin withdrew from the enterprise over a disagreement about whose name would be headlined. In other words, the bassist is stubbornly dedicated to following his personal muse; he's convinced of the validity of the music culture of which he is a bearer. In his own words:

I've always seen a need to try to fulfill what I was striving for in my own self...I've been self-directed and I knew that I had a music...I've always had my own inner messages coming from me since a very early age. I've been able to remain steadfast in what I strive for musically...and I knew what my direction was. I'm looking to gain...the satisfaction of knowing that, with every breath I take I'm striving to bring this music that Allah and the gods have given me, to humanity. I'm striving to export to any ears and any bodies that are around me, what God has given me to give, and in doing so, that perpetuates my life-style, that perpetuates the reason I live like I live...the reason I'm dedicated to the music. (Martin 1986)

Closing this inquiry into the life of a mature, living jazz artist, the writer has resolved the following conclusive points:

1. Martin is a bona-fide artist of the highest level.
2. He views his low economic status as a temporary side-effect of his primary thrust.
3. His dedication to his musical expression is total--he could do other things if he wanted to, but he is committed to fulfilling his role as a bearer of the jazz tradition.
4. Though the bassist exhibits many musical performance practices that are typical of jazz style in general, it is Martin's personal identification with the

music--the performances of his own private artistic conceptions, that is the foundation of his professionalism and the most outstanding characteristic of the music culture known as jazz.

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Appendix I--Biographical Interview
September 26, 1986

The following is a transcription of an interview taped in Los Angeles, Calif. on September 26, 1986. The subject of the interview is Vernon Martin. The interviewer is Douglas Parham. The interview is transcribed verbatim from the tape. The sign of three periods (...) does not indicate the excision of narrative but rather a pause in the flow of speech.

Parham: Vern, will you describe something of your early life? Tell me about your parents and...

Martin: Well, my mother came from Alabama...her name was Florence Bledsoe. She came from a very close family. For instance, one particular story she told me about how close she was to her mother was that she never lied to her mother...and there was a particular thing that happened with her returning some merchandise that she had borrowed from a neighbor and the neighbor's kids were teasing her...and they slammed the door in her face, and the third time--she spit on them!...and she told her mother she didn't do it, but the next day her conscience got the best of her. ^①the relative story underlying that is how close she was to her mother...and how she was more like a very, very religious, basic type of person. So,

as she grew up, she could play cards and she could do a lot of the other tricky stuff...but when she got to a point where she was enlightened into religion by this particular lady, who you're going to read in her biography that I have in the book, you'll see that the lady changed her and she stopped, uh, doing anything worldly and she became a Christian at a very early age. Now that's my mother.

Parham: When was she born?

Martin: My mother was born in 1900. November 25.

Parham: In Alabama?

Martin: Yeah.

Parham: You don't remember the town?

Martin: All that information is compiled in the book I'm going to give you.

Parham: Your father?

Martin: My father was born in Missouri. Birdcall, Missouri.

Parham: Birdcall?

Martin: Yeah.

Parham: OK and your dad's name?

Martin: My dad's name was Willie Martin. My oldest brother's named after him.

Parham: OK and uh, when was he born?

Martin: He was born one month before my mother.

Parham: So, uh, October 25, 1900?

Martin: He was a Scorpio and, uh, he was reputed to be an alcoholic, which I never really accepted, see, because I know the pressures of all races coming up through the Depression and in the area and many of the men were pressed into different habits that were characterized as alcoholism and everything, but a lot of it was just dissatisfaction, because my dad was a very aggressive man that tried a lot of things. He could press, he could hang paper, he had his own, uh, garbage pickup or he was a junkman at one point. He was many, many things, but he was a man that believed in himself. He was a man that believed he had a place, and he was a man that would not stand up under any type of heavy pressure from the corporations like Chrysler and all those different big firms that were going--Pan American and all those things. When he worked for those people he was short patient. He couldn't stay there because there was always something that they would lay on him that he wouldn't accept, and that was--they called him "Willie", or, yeah, they called him "William"--and he always had

this kind of thing where, if anything went wrong he wouldn't take it--he wouldn't stand for nobody to beat him unjustifiedly.

He taught me mathematics by popping me on the head when he would give me haircuts. If I couldn't answer different questions he would...that's how I learned to do my mathematics. It was a physical thing involved with the fear of his coming down and finally I got so I knew all my mathematics through this type of thing that he, he induced on me. You know what I mean? Not to say whether it was bad or good, but in the final analysis there were many freedoms that I experienced as a young person coming up because I distinctly remember him taking me--he made wine, he made root beer, he made all these different things in the basement of our home...there at 623 Indiana..he made all these things. And before that they lived on Wabash and they had other children...

Parham: This was is Toledo?

Martin: This was in Toledo. And, uh, this booklet I've got is going to cover a lot of the details so you can check that out. But anyway, one of the things that I really remember most about him is that he was very unorthodox. He brought a piano for my sisters and

everybody in the family was trying to read and very proper, but I seen him experience, uh, extempore expression on the piano. In other words, I seen him express different things at a very early age that I felt were very stimulating so far as being able to free your mind. And you know your behind follow, whatever...that goes, because it was certain things he did that I was just able to observe him. I guess the rest of my brothers and sisters saw it too, but they might have saw it a different way than me. But I saw it just as a personal freedom of his personal expression, that's how I saw it.

Parham: So, how old were you when the piano came into the house?

Martin: The piano was in the house when I was born. And he had got it for one of my older sisters, Katherine, who--Katherine Martin, she was a very fine, beautiful, religious vocalist who really had all the dynamics and the purity of the religious vocalese in her singing.

Parham: How was she trained? Were your parents musically inclined at all?

Martin: My mother was always singing, she was always in the choir. And everybody that came through the family, they had to go through the choir.

Parham: Church choir?

Martin: The church choir.

Parham: What church was this?

Martin: Church of God, 619 Colinwood--and I sang in the junior choir which I started singing at the age of eight. I started singing in the junior choir. But my first vocal experience came when I was exactly two and a half or three years old and I wandered away from the house...and at this particular time as I do sometimes now on rare occasions I stutter...I get my words tied up and I start stuttering. But then I had it very bad. Me and my brother Carl both were stutterers as we grew up. But it was two white guys working on a gas station, building a gas station down the street and I remember this: I went down the street, I wandered away from the house. I went down the street--I must have been about two or three years old--and they were amazed because I could sing melodies without stuttering, but I stuttered when I talked to them, so they gave me a nickel. That was my first encounter I had that made a distinct impression on

my musicality--you dig what I'm trying to say? And this is before I even started in to school.

But, getting back to my parents--with having eight brothers and sisters, we had a tight-knit type of way that we were brought up. But we were never projected into being poor. It wasn't like we should be ashamed of being poor, but that just wasn't something that was in the vocabulary of our home, and because we had such a high level of *esprit de corps* and spiritual involvement in the home, I never really even started looking at myself as being poor, until I got a little older I see guys that would get different things that I couldn't get, but I never felt resentment for that--you dig what I'm trying to say? And I never felt a competitive thing like somebody was getting something that I shouldn't get--although I did have some trips, like I remember one time taking some things from a guy. I went off for a trip and I was going out to the country and the guy had some bread and stuff and I was with a bunch of other guys so I just took it. And we and the other guys ate it and everything and, of course, I went to the court procedure with it. My mother was very afraid that I was going to go off because I had one brother, Carl, who was a little older

^{than}
that me and he'd had some problems in that area, so she was afraid I was going to go off--but it happened that I didn't. Through her prayers and through sensitivity and everything.

But getting back to the way we were brought up, the thing that I appreciate most is that there was never a strong projection towards being poor--that wasn't something that was put on our heads--you know? And we just seemed to more or less come up and take whatever that came in through the family as a family cooperative group. We got our first house together where all of us helped my mom to buy it.

And during some of the periods that my dad wasn't there I can talk very strongly on, but I can't talk that strongly because my children have experienced me not being there with them, see, and I relate to it not in the way that I'm copying my father, but I relate to it in the more acknowledgeable way because I know that situations and things can bring you in a position where you're alienated from your family or you're not around your family, but that doesn't mean that you don't love them and that doesn't mean that you're still not trying to accomplish some of the things that you want to accomplish

to make their lives better along with yours...and I still experience that today.

Parham: So, back to you mom and dad's musical experience: did they have much, uh, training, or you say your mom was singing all the time...?

Martin: My mom was in the choir. She was a member of the choir there at the Church of God, 619 Colinwood and, uh, it was just a natural thing for her to want us to go into that. Then we had pianos in our house. We always had a piano in our house as long as I can remember.

Parham: Did you ever take lessons? Did anybody, did your sister ever take lessons from a teacher or did she just go at it by herself--do you remember?

Martin: I think my sister Katherine, my older sister, now she's totally different 'cause she's got a big theater organ that she plays and she's got a totally different approach--and for me it's removed from the natural approach that I came up under. Because I found that lot of the people like her and my sister Joan, who is another of my sisters who did some legitimate studying on the piano and she could read, Katherine could read. They could read and everything, but it's different for me

now--not that I've become so much greater than them in that area, but it's just, it's weird, when I see them trying to do stuff now that when I was coming up as a child they did just naturally. But now, when I'm in their presence and they're doing stuff, it seems like they try harder and it doesn't come off exactly like that and it could, because I've grown...but I think mainly it's because many times that artistic expression that comes through people, they discard it to become other things and thereby throwing that relativity you have to have to be in touch with this--they throw it away for something else and when they try to get back to it, it's hard...I don't know what kind of value that would have to what we're talking about but...

Parham: I'm trying to get an idea of the musical environment in your home as you grew up.

Martin: The musical environment was very strong. Because, uh, just like I said, we were made to go into the church. I remember one of the church members was sick and that was Brother Hampton. He found "Do Nothing 'til You Hear From Me" that I had gotten out of one of those Hit Parade and he said, "Well, it's amazing that you'd get this." because I was just a little kid and he

was one of the guys that sang bass. When I started singing in the choir I sang bass.

Now sometime when I was between three and four years old I went to my aunt's house and she had this great big mouthpiece that had come off a Victrola and I fell in love with it--it had a tremendous bass sound. That was the first time that that type of affirmation came to me, that that was just a natural part of me, you see, because at that particular time I got carried away. I played this thing 'til I wore it out. I went over to my aunt's everyday just to play this Victrola top. That came off the Victrola, you know the one with the dog sitting on it? It was one of those.

Uh,...the musicality I'm sure goes back beyond my grandmother because my grandmother just died a couple of years ago--she was a hundred and two years old when she died. And I remember being in her presence in her eighties and sometimes in her nineties. And she would always come up and she would be singing the Blues, or she would be singing something like that when you would be trying to talk to her. Or in her quiet moments that's what she would be doing--humming and coming out with "Oh Lordy mama" and the different mournful things that a lot

of the Southern women and Black women in this country utter in a natural type of way, so...

Parham: Now where was she from? And what was her name?

Martin: Her name was, uh, all I remember is "Sister", but it was more than that--in fact, all the information that I can't give you is in this booklet I'm going to give you.

Parham: This is your mom's mom?

Martin: This is my mother's mom. As I recall I had five uncles that were all into music.

Parham: This is your mom's brothers?

Martin: This is my mom's brother's, on my mom's side. And my mom always had a dread because all my uncles drank. And, uh, they were into music and I swear that I saw a book with one of my uncles in the book because the gentleman looked exactly like me and as far as I could follow it down, he fit into the pattern. In fact, I talked with my mother like that about it and she didn't clarify that I was of a Mohawk descendant until sometime thereafter, because maybe I was too inquisitive and she wasn't ready to let me know. But I saw one of my uncles in this band that used to travel throughout

Indiana and that part of the country--Missouri, all up in there. They used to travel. And a striking resemblance--maybe I'll be able to get that later, so...it's hard for me to say how far back in my family the musicality went. But I know it was a very binding and integral part of my existence.

Parham: So, did you have a radio? Did you play a lot of records? Was there a lot of live music that you heard? I know you went to church...

Martin: I went to church and so far as jazz was concerned and music like that--that was considered worldly, but I still remember "Open the Door Richard" and I remember, uh, different tunes that were very strong like, uh, "Shoe Shine Boy, Sitting in the Parlor". I remember those songs. And I remember my mother going to church and when she'd go to church, soon as she get around the corner, my brother Carl who plays accordion, piano and trumpet would get on the piano and start playing Boogie Woogie and everything 'cause that was his thing in the city...he could tell real long jokes and he played Boogie Woogie. As soon as my mother left to go to church, that's what we would do...we'd get into music.

Parham: You mean you folks didn't go to church with her?

Martin: A lot of those nights she'd be going to prayer meeting and different things like that, so whenever she would go...sometimes the word would get back to her 'cause they were telling her, "Miss Florence, as soon as you walked out the door, your boys, and it was jazz flying all over the place..." you know. 'Cause my brother was that type of a dude--Carl--he's in New York City right now and he claims to be greater on accordion than Dick Van and all the rest of them guys...that's what his claims are...he verbalizes on it...'cause he plays fast like Art Tatum. He plays highly articulate classical works on the accordion and he loves his ingenuity because he knows that there are not many Blacks that have pervaded into that music...and I think that his pervasion into classical accordion and the jazz accordion that he plays evolves from the same type of areas that my musicality comes from...because for a long time I didn't see any colors in music--I didn't listen to music and say, "Well, this guy's white, this guy's Black." I just listened to it--I loved it all. I had classical music I loved, I had all the different types of musics--you know what I mean?

Then I got a little job I picked up as I was growing up at the Waiter's and Bellman's Club where Art Tatum, Duke Ellington, Count Basie--you name them, all the greats came through there--Jon Hendricks, all the greats came through. And they had Nickolodeon. Lucky Millinder, Tiny Bradshaw, uh, Andy Kirk and the Clouds of Joy--all of these great people came through this club...and I washed dishes there. I would see these gentlemen and I would dig their mannerisms and stuff, but I was mostly impressed by the little television thing that you go up and put a nickel in. And I knew all of those different things that they would go through, all the songs that these guys would sing or the songs they would play--I knew these songs by heart, 'cause I'd be there washing dishes and watching these guys do it. And, as it would happen, ironically, as I got older I got a chance to go back in that same club, the Bellman's and Waiter's, and perform on a professional level. And to me that was a step into a reality that evolved around me going around quite a few months when I got a bass--I purchased my first bass at the age of seventeen--carrying that bass around New York and lying about where I was playing and bullshitting 'cause I wasn't playing nothing.

See, I wasn't even playing the instrument. I just had it, turning people on, telling them where I was going to play and, ironically, I played at these places. So that's the kind of life I'd been up to so far as that.

Parham: OK, uh, let's back up--then you went to grammar school and you went to high school--tell us about your education.

Martin: No, I didn't go to high school--'cause by the time I got in ninth grade, I had been singing with a group called the Four Leaf Clovers--the Cloverleaf Quintet was what it was called--it was Julian Woodard, Herbert Searles, Bob Stewart and myself along with McClinton Hayes, who was a classically trained pianist who did a lot of the arrangements of our music. Because we had a very vast repertoire--we not only sang spirituals, but we sang the classics like "Danny Boy" and all those types of things--We sang all the type of musics that were the same, and myself and my bass voice was the catalyst of many of the arrangements that we would do. Like we'd just do things like: (sings a version of "Lady Be Good"). A lot of the music was the catalyst of my personality and it took my brother to bring it out 'cause it was something that I was doing naturally--it wasn't

something that was wrong, you know, so they kept me in kindergarten--I flunked kindergarten! Anyway, uh, we all went to this school and we grew up in this school. The musicality was very highly competitive. Like there was another group that I remember, uh, Robert West and his family, they all sang. They lived down the street from us on Indiana, so we'd compete with them, we'd compete with all the other groups around. But it wasn't a conscious competition, but yet it was.

Parham: Let me ask you, uh, before we get too far-- what date were you born on?

Martin: 1932, January 5.

Parham: OK, so by the time we're talking about this level of your period, this is in the Forties. The Depression's over, World War I is happening--World War II, while you're going through this and meeting these people and developing, and so you're hearing the sounds of Ellington and radio is a big deal...

Martin: I remember one time I went in a contest to be on Duke Ellington's show, and I think somewhere in my heart I found it very difficult to get over the shock I felt when we won the contest and we went back to the Triana Ballroom in Toledo to sing on his show and he said

"NO!! you can't sing." and he was very cold about it. And I could understand as I grew older the professionalism of it, but I was hurt. Because that was one of many sharp pains and kicks in the butt that I got when I was coming up.

To make my perspective clearer and to make me have a better understanding--like once in the Apollo Theater--we went to New York and we went in the Apollo Theater, we went in the place with Arthur Godfrey, we went in the Apollo Theater but they told us we were too professional--so they couldn't give us first prize on the Apollo--you know? I've had multiple experiences like that. But I do distinctly remember the situation with Duke Ellington because it was during that time that the group was very hot in Toledo. And what we did that made us so much different is that we would sing our music up and down the street. In fact, that's how I met my first wife... 'cause she was a kid and she remembers seeing me coming up and down the streets singing with these guys. So we would just take off and we were that free in our minds that we didn't have to get on a stage--we could get on the street corners...and sing...and, uh...

Parham: What style of singing is it like? Would it

be like, uh...

Martin: See, the style of singing that it was, Doug, could not be stereotyped into rhythm and blues or anything like that--it couldn't be stereotyped like that.

Parham: Like the Andrews Sisters? or...

Martin: It was a cross between classical, jazz, spiritual and soul--it was all together, but it was highly articulated and advanced compared to what everybody was basically doing--like we'd do:

Jump, jump children, the water's fine
 If you can't swim just hold that line
 Hangin' on the rhythm in a jazz on time
JUMP--the water's fine

Hey all you hip cats, what have you got to say
 If you can't swim like I swim
 You gotta swim the other way--Yeah!

Jump--like you can do

I'm not from Chicago, I'm from a little town
 I'm not from Chicago, I'm from a little town
 But I really do the boogie and I sure am
 naughty

Well, anyway we had, uh, along with "Yon Bonnie Banks", along with "Danny Boy", along with various songs and various shows--starting with George Gershwin and others--we had a very wide repertoire. And a lot of that was based on McClinton Hayes, who now lives in Long Island somewhere in New York. And he was responsible for

giving that total classical awareness because he was accomplished--he went to Fisk University. He got his degree in music and all that and he spent a lot of time playing and performing in our presence.

And we had a group there in Toledo, uh, it was like a, more like a, a show group and everybody in the group was highly talented--Marilyn McGarrity, Betty Taylor, whose name changed when she married, of course, and several other people. We had--it was an actor's guild. I became a part of that at a very early age, the actor's guild. And it was through this group that I was able to really focus in on the Cloverleaf Quintet, but that's getting ahead of myself because I sang in church--I started singing in church when I was eight...in the church choir...I started singing bass in the church choir.

Parham: OK, what types of, uh, music do they use in the Church of God?

Martin: The Church of God--they don't use anything that swings too hard. They don't use anything that's got too much enthusiasm--it's gotta have a certain dignity to it, you know? It can't just be like those songs where you hear people singing out there and you don't know

whether they're singing jazz or whatever, and the only way you know they're not singing jazz is 'cause they got "God" and "Lord" and everybody running through it-- otherwise they're singing jazz--it could never be like that. So, I'm not trying to say that the strain was pure, but I'm trying to say that...

Parham: It was hymns, more or less, church hymns?

Martin: It was uncompromising.

Parham: And, uh, did you have an accompanist? In there? A piano, organ?

Martin: You mean in the choir?

Parham: Yeah.

Martin: The first choir director that I worked under was Mrs. Hamilton, who is deceased now. She was a tremendous teacher, uh, of the vocalese--she could get out of you what she wanted. Uh, you had to know, uh, in other words, she was just a taskmaster type of person-- getting you to do what you're supposed to do, getting you to go, really go, through what you're supposed to go through...she was a taskmaster. And there were several other people in the church that aspired towards the vocalese like the Hamilton family, her sons--Eugene Hamilton and Freddie--he's still in Toledo. Eugene has

died, but Eugene was a very high level pianist and organist that rose to a very high level in Toledo and he died not ten or fifteen years ago...he died. But his family, his whole family had that type of musicality where they too were exposed to, uh, just, you know, real strong musical drive.

Parham: OK, so, by the time the ninth grade came you had your group...

Martin: By the time I got to the ninth grade, it became urgent for this group and I to take off to New York. And it had to be something in my mother's foresight because none of the others--none of my older brothers and sisters ever left home at that age and it was ridiculous for anybody to think of it. But for some reason, she felt that since I was so dedicated to it and that she'd have to release me to go, and she did. So, I went to New York and after I was there for over a year and a half or so, then my brother came up--he was supposed to be in pursuance of me and when he came up, the way he found me--I was in Jamaica, New York, singing with these same guys out on the corner and he heard us singing and that's how he found me...when he came to New York, he didn't go to nobody's house, he just came up in

Jamaica, and when he got into the Black community in Jamaica, that's where we were at, on the corner singing.

Parham: How many, how much later?

Martin: This was about a year and a half later. After I went up, see, 'cause I went up in 1946 and I stayed there until 1950, see... 'cause I went into the service in New York. I went into the paratroopers from New York City.

Parham: What year did you go into the paratroopers?

Martin: 1950. I was there from 1950 to 1954.

Parham: And where were you stationed?

Martin: Fort Campbell, Kentucky. And I did my paratroopers training at Fort Benning, Georgia. I did my leadership course at Camp Chaffey, Arkansas and I think I came in twenty-seventh in a class of...so many hundreds of guys.

And all these guys I went to school with went to that class where some of them were--like you--college-bred type of individuals, you know...degrees that they hung on the wall. I wasn't competing against the guys, it was just that, whatever it was, you know...

Parham: Where were you stationed?

Martin: Fort Campbell, Indiana

Parham: I mean, after you got all your training.

Martin: I went back to Fort Campbell.

Parham: So, you were there for the rest of the time?

Martin: Right. The 188th Airborne, that's where I was at.

Parham: So, did you do any performing or anything during your time in the...

Martin: No, during the time I was in the service, I got embarrassed, because, just like I was telling you, before I went in the service, I got this bass at Wurlitzer's in New York City on 42nd Street and Broadway. I remember it had a blue cover and I liked the cover. I liked the bass, but I wasn't into...I didn't play it or anything, I just carried it around and told people I played it. So when I went in the service, I had a whole entree of different people that thought because of the way I pumped the bass with my mouth, and the way I talked about it, that I was a virtuoso, which I really wasn't...and, uh, it was a couple of situations where I got caught uptight because one of my friends that played piano--I can't really remember his name right now--invited me to play bass with him--and I'd been lying to

this guy--and I got to this place, I never will forget this--and there was a bass lying right in front of the piano--and he didn't even look around, he knew I could play, so he just started toward the piano and I walked over to the bass and I remember picking the bass up, but then I put the bass down, and I remember feeling very embarrassed because every time I would see the guy afterwards, I would feel like he was thinking about that lie that I told him that I could play bass, and that really bothered me a little bit about that, you know?

Parham: Uh huh. So, when you got out of the service in '54, is that when you began your musical training?

Martin: Well, I think my musical training began when I started singing and I knew I could sing and go on to the whole process. I think that when I came out in '54, taking on a bass teacher like Lester Kacklemeister, who was a German Jew and who was very dedicated, and who told me immediately after I'd only been playing for six or eight months and went to him, that he was trying to get the sound that I had for twenty years. And that

inspired me to become even more adept at what I was doing.

Parham: So, as soon as you mustered out of the paratroopers you went and bought yourself a bass and looked up a bass teacher and started right away?

Martin: Before I looked up a bass teacher...I collected albums the whole time I was in the service, so before I looked up a bass teacher, I would copy what they were doing. I would copy what they were doing but at some early point in my bass playing escapade...(tape is unclear)

Parham: So you used to copy these guys on their records when you got out of the service--did you buy a bass as soon as you got out of the service? Or did you have that same bass from before?

Martin: My brother insisted that I buy one--no, I didn't have the same one, my brother insisted...I said, "Well, maybe I can talk with Mom and maybe she'll help me." He said, "NO, don't talk with her." And I remember at the time that I was talking about doing this, I had a very, very fine record player that played 45s and it played LPs. It was very fine, and it was an RCA Victor and it was a blonde RCA Victor, I mean this instrument

was really fine. And, uh, during the time I was in the service, I neglected to tell you, I wasn't really the kind of guy to go out on leaves and stuff like that. My big thing would be to go wherever the cities were surrounding Fort Campbell, like Nashville and those places, where that's the first time I really saw Charlie Parker...but my thing would be to go into those places and collect records--to get all the different type of records. I had records by all the classical people--Jose Iturbi--uh, Rubinstein, Rachmaninoff, Stravinsky, uh, Chopin, Brahms...Mozart, uh, all those different composers. I had music by them--Oscar Levant--I had "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue"--and in fact, I had one of the largest collections of 45 records that anyone in the service--in the community I lived in, I had the largest. There was other guys that had larger ones, but you better believe they were much better off, or financially more secure than I was, because that was my biggest preoccupation was going to the cities and picking these records up, and then I would listen to them.

The thing that was remarkable about this is during the time I was in the service I could listen to music all night, maybe get in a couple of hours of sleep and get up

in the morning and not even feel any pain and go through the whole Airborne training or hikes or whatever the heck we doing, and I get back and do the same thing the next night, staying up most of the night. So I did a lot of listening in the service, so when I got out, uh, my brother insisted that I go on and he helped me, my brother Carl helped me get my first bass. He didn't pay for it, but he helped me...you know, he co-signed and he helped me get it. Now after I started to go through the trip with Ray Brown and Blanton and all the other tremendous great bass players that...

Parham: You just played along with the record?

Martin: I played along--there was things that these guys could do that I could do note for note. I could do their solos. Like I remember Ray Brown made a album with his trio which had, ah, Shadow Wilson on drums and Hank Jones on piano and the "Volga Boatman" was an extended bass solo that just featured the bass--I could do those things note for note...I could play a lot of Ray Brown's stuff note for note and then I could hear Ray Brown and other guys trying to use the bow and I would get disgusted, 'cause I knew I could do it better...but I hadn't reached that level of virtuosity...but I had the

vision in my mind of what I would do and, uh, after I got so far into it, I discovered I could re-institute and re-project all the different melodies and everything I ever experienced in singing--I could go as far back as I remembered and any melody that I vocalized on and play it on the bass...that became a part of my movement towards playing the bass.

But, the main thing that I had was that I would not only play free, I would not only play little ditties and tunes I heard in my head, but I had an expansive approach to my rehearsal, my practice, which never was under three hours ever, but it usually exceeded from four to five and this was along with a day job. And what I would do, I would have a certain period where I would do nothing but read music, then I would stop reading. First, I would play nothing but scales, then I would read music, then I would play whatever I'd heard that day and I always had it broken up in those different segments in order to allow my mind to be able to coexist and feel free in any type of existence there was, 'cause I felt like there were certain pressures that could be brought to bear and even today when you're looking at music, you gotta look at the music, can nobody hear you reading it. But you

gotta look at it and it's a certain thing that it'll do to you unless you can see beyond the music into what you're doing--it will impede whatever personal expression you have 'cause you're looking at the music as if the music's going to do something. The music ain't gonna do nothing, and can't nobody hear you reading it anyway. And I learned that from Erroll Garner, 'cause that was one of his defense mechanisms when people used to talk about him not being able to read music and stuff like that and he would always say, "You can't hear it--Hoochie Coochie!" I love him very much--"Hoochie Coochie" man--"Hoochie Coochie" is more like a money word, where when you utter it and stuff, money's gonna float free and you gonna get some money--and every now and then I find myself doing that.

But, anyway, yeah, I copied these guys and, uh, Chubbie Jackson, Eddie Safranski, uh, the dude Charlie Parker liked so much...Oscar Pettiford, uh, Tommy Potter, uh, all of these men impacted on me and that's why today if you ask who's my favorite, I don't have no favorites--'cause I see greatness in everybody that play and I'm always inspired by people who might seem like they know less, like our student Tony, you know Tony? And I was

very enthused by him because of his energy that he put into it and that untrained aspect tend to spark more of a creative interest, 'cause there's too many things that we're trained and we feel like we gotta do them in a trained manner.

But, uh, it's very hard for me to say who would be the favorite because there's so many guys--Joe Benjamin, Ron Wilhelm, he was almost like--he was a Creole that played bass with Duke Ellington many years ago and uh, it's many people that impacted on my mind and I just feel good when I see somebody performing. I don't try to compare anybody with nobody else or make anybody sound like nobody else or ask them why they don't 'cause if they're expressing personal creativity...like I had a discussion with a drummer the other day, and he was trying to come down on Tracy Wannomae 'cause he felt that Tracy was trying something that 'Trane had did and Tracy couldn't do it. I told him that was bunk, I said, "And I think that Tracy should be allowed to try anything he wants to." Just like everybody else should be allowed to try what they want to 'cause being able to try what you want to do is the freedom of jazz!...When we get so we can't try fresh new things and different things we trying

to move towards--then we're not playing jazz anymore, we're just playing institutionalized music like a lot of the college-bred people that I know, their minds is messed up 'cause they're institutionalized--I don't mean to drop no lugs on you, Doug, 'cause I know you work for these degrees and everything...

Parham: Yeah. So, after you, uh, got out of the service and got this bass and you started playing along and learning these solos note for note--what--how long after you got out of the service did you look for Lester Kacklemeister?...And he was your first legitimate teacher?...So to speak?

Martin: Uh, it couldn't have exceeded nine months.

Parham: OK, so after nine months you said, ah, after you'd already established yourself a routine--you'd been working at it, you knew how you were going to step, approach it--then you looked him--how did you, what led you to this man?

Martin: Well, he worked in a music store called Greene's. It was downtown in Toledo and what he did was re-polish the brass instruments and the tubas and everything like that...That was a very skillful thing that he did, but he also played in the Toledo Symphony

and, uh, I was directed to him by the first guy that taught me how to tune up the bass and I can't even remember his name--he was an accordion player. He's deceased now, I can't remember his name, but it was through him and other people that I was directed to Lester Kacklemeister. After I met Lester and had been studying with him for less than a year, he felt that I was ready to go into the Jewish Community Center Orchestra, which, at the time I went into I don't think there was any other people of my color that had involved themselves to that point, you know, of being involved. So that was more like a, that was how the, that was how my classical actuality came about, through the Jewish Community Center. Because through there, I went from there to the Toledo University, which I have between eight and ten years of performance and participation without even seeking for a degree which I could have fought for, because in most of these orchestras like the university symphony, whatever they was playing--I don't care how often they practice it--I had a method I would use and I would go to rehearsal once a week, where these guys would be playing it every week and after I went to--any rehearsal I go to I wouldn't care how complex the

music was--between my ear, my intuition and my desire to really perform the music on a high level, I was always able to--after going two or three times--to master whatever the repertoire was and that's how I developed my awareness of the classical repertoire.

Now there are people like Stravinski and Shastokowitch and very complex people of that level that I didn't get a chance to participate in their music as much as I would have liked to during that period, but so far as the basic classical repertoire is concerned, I definitely had comprehension for that. So it was through Lester Kacklemeister that I started on this move towards the classical orientation and the repertoire and being able to play with five or six other basses, being able to have people holler at you and tell you you were playing wrong, being able to, uh, have to set down and really analyze the fingerings and know what you were going to do with the passages and sound right in the orchestra.

That's when that first affected, but after I went into the Jewish Community Orchestra and I was with them so many years, they finally made me the principal bassist and at that time all of the people that was in the bass section quit...'cause it just wasn't something that they

liked...for somebody like myself, or something like that, so these guys quit. But that gave me even a stronger direction because I found that even though they had gone, if I really studied and analyzed whatever I was doing, I could come up with a profundity that--I'm not trying to say it would embrace four or five men playing--but I'm trying to say that you would hear it...and that whoever was conducting would be totally satisfied to some degree--I'm not trying to say that they would be totally satisfied, 'cause I'm not trying to say I had become a perfectuous classical person, but I'm just trying to say certain things happened to make you strong--because you're thrown into something where you have to function and you have to make something happen without the help of anybody, no crutches or anything...OK, am I getting ahead of myself?

Parham: No, that's fine...Um...so, anyway, so you studied with him for a year and...

Martin: No, I studied with Lester Kacklemeister over a period of seven years.

Parham: Uh huh, so you started in about 1955 almost...

Martin: 1955.

Parham: And, uh, what next developed in your study of the bass?

Martin: Well, the next thing that developed is, after I got with Lester, I wanted to go into the thumb position and I wanted to go on into the higher scales like, uh, what is it?...The C melody scale or, uh...

Parham: The melodic minor scale?

Martin: Well, yeah, this is a particular type of scale that's derived from the bass...well, anyway, I wanted to get into that. And he did not see any need for me to go into that type of study, because they didn't use a lot of those harmonics and octaves and all the different really high notes on the instrument--they didn't use them in most symphony orchestras, so it didn't make sense to him. It didn't, I had to take on Jean Lindner who was a woman that came from the Boston Symphony. She played second bass in the Boston Symphony and when she came to Toledo she played first bass...and she left Toledo going to Chicago playing first bass.

Parham: Uh huh, what year was this in?

Martin: This was in, uh, this was in the '60s. We've gotten into the '60s by now. See, this is around,

uh, 1960, 1961 and intermittently thereafter I studied with her.

Parham: Uh, huh, so, between 1955 when you started with, uh, Lester, and through '61, had you been doing any professional playing...or was it mainly just practicing?

Martin: No, it wasn't mainly practicing. That's another thing that I never did like my brother Carl--he's been a practicer ever since I've known him--and for me, when I say somebody's a practicer, they're somebody that practice all the time but they never go out and indulge and really involve themselves with other people and there's a lot of progression and energy and learning that you get by just playing with people--by putting yourself in a position where you don't really know what's going on and you gotta take somebody else's lead, or you gotta use your ear, or you gotta catch on after the tune goes by a couple of times. You have to catch it...and it goes back to the oral perception which comes from Africa. And once you inaugurate that in conglomeration, everything else you do, uh, you know, you tend to move fast...but I never did relegate myself. I was playing gigs in bars and stuff after just playing a little more that nine months. I was into, you know, that area.

Parham: Uh huh. What, uh, type of music and who are some of the groups that you played with?

Martin: The very first group I played with was at Tate's. That was Swing Lee. Now Swing Lee is a phenomenal drummer from Toledo, Ohio, or from Detroit, Michigan. But he and his wife and family, they stay there in Toledo and he has some young sons that are also musicians, but he was a phenomenal drummer. He was also a very excellent, articulate reader of the drum parts and when I first joined his group there was Dave Seaman on tenor saxophone who I distinctly remember...and, uh, there was Paul Stewart who is deceased, he was on piano. But this is one of the first professional groups I worked with. I remember we got salt and pepper suits and it was a really big thing, and Benny Cooke was in there singing vocals--Benny Cooke. Benny Cooke and I went to Chicago with Kirk Lightsey in the '60s and we stayed at the Cass Hotel under the tutorship of the Four Stepbrothers who were our managers and I remember distinctly how they took care of us for six months. Whatever bills that we had, they took them and paid them, and that was, uh, that was Fritz Spencer, it was Al Williams and it was another guy, I can't think of his name, he's a tremendous guy in fact,

all these guys loved us and, uh,...we went to, uh,...we lived at the Cass Hotel and uh, in Chicago for at least six months before we got into the Playboy. When we got into the Playboy Club, which had just been opened three months, we got in there on top of the heap--Kirk Lightsey, myself and Benny Cooke.

I went to Iowa when Rahsaan made his first album called "Introducing Rahsaan"--he wanted me to be on the album and at that time he asked me, I just didn't feel like I was ready to be on an album. I didn't feel like I, I had got my chops or whatever else I was looking for--I was kind of leery of that--although I was playing good and OK...and, uh, I never will forget going to Iowa and missing that record date with him, not that I missed it as anything 'cause I don't look at record dates like that...there's a lot of record dates that I could have made that I didn't make because it just wasn't happening for me...but, uh...

Yeah, it was, it was then Bill Overton, he was in Toledo. I played with Bill Overton, I played with Eugene Hamilton, I played with, uh, uh...You ever remember a guy that was very famous for playing "Malagueña"? He's deceased also. He's a tremendous piano player. What is

his name? Jan August. I played with Jan August. I played with Kai Winding in Toledo. I played with Jay Jay Johnson right in Toledo. I played with, uh, oh any number--Yusef Lateef. I used to go over to Detroit and play with him almost every week, in fact, he used to call me "Verona". Yusef Lateef. Uh, there were several different groups that I played with because I was just kinda got preoccupied between keeping a balance between symphonics, jazz, oral perception and just the music coming down the drain.

Parham: OK, uh, I'd like to ask a question here before we go on with too much more history. We're already up to the early '60s; you've been playing in Chicago at the Playboy Club, and, uh, what has been driving you all this time? Had you a vision of yourself in the future as a bass player or is it just something that you're doing by intuition? What's making you practice and study?

Martin: No, I have a vision of my bass clarity-- like when you listen to my different works I composed and you listen to different things that I do--these things, some of the things that I do might seem very easy...they are things that I worked on for years to perfect and

develop. And there are things that in my perception of what I heard on the bass by what was being did when I came up--listening to the bass a lot of times I heard, uh, awkward...uh, cumbersome...uh, unmasterful approach to the instrument in my own ears--I heard that and I had a vision of how I could study, through mastery of the bow, through mastery of the written and through mastery of the unwritten...and the jazz repertoire. You find that your mind, really, when you get into that, how you can adapt to different musics, and stuff like that have a lot to do with the flexibility of your mind.

So, when I set out, I was in a highly competitive state of mind a lot of times because I would hear guys either playing changes that I thought could have been played better, or whatever. I even was disgusted with Ray Brown when he bowed 'cause there was something about his bowing that wasn't happening for me, you know?--that was my own personal perception. Not to put him down because he's one of the most articulate *pizzicato* bassists that has ever existed in the annals of jazz, you know?...but for me, I could see the total expansion of the instrument.

And I could see the bass becoming an orchestra. I could see a bass player having the same imagination as a pianist or a horn player or anybody else and that's one of the things I've still to be--not that I want to ever rid myself of the function of the bass--I love the bass. But I'd rather look at myself as a composer and as an artist and as a person that has the ability to hear a melody and hear a whole orchestra, 'cause when I first started hearing a whole orchestra and everything, it scared me...until I got around Rahsaan Roland Kirk and I found out how he functioned and that partly clarified how my mind had been working all the time with different things that, phenomenal as he was, he impacted on me very heavily.

But the thing about Rahsaan is, I started with him when he would have goo and stuff coming out of his eyes and I'd have to wipe his eyes...and we'd be travelling from Chicago to Milwaukee and he didn't have the care...and we'd have to drive from New York to Chicago in a station wagon...or we'd have to drive where we had to go in cars, cramped up and stuff, 'til...I worked with him 'til he started flying every place he went. And when he started flying and really got on a high level, I still

made the choice as to whether I wanted to be with him under certain things--it was never anything that confined me to what he was doing from the standpoint of my reputation or with him being one of the heaviest horn players in the country, or something like that--with me being in that area where I'd have to be with him on that basis, although he would have liked that. But I never went for that, because I love classical music, I love legitimate music, I love oral music. I love spontaneous, creative music and I think that if anybody wants to do everything they want to do, but they have to find the place to do it, even if they're working in a prison where y'all was today. But, I won't let my mind be tied down to the prison because there are certain things I'm working on that I'm going to be slipping and trying to work on while I'm there...and trying to re-introduce it into somebody else to bring it back and let it focus clear; but, I would never just say, "Well, I'm working on a daily gig for eight hours and I gotta train these kids and everything, 'cause even if I gotta teach somebody, I'm going to get something out of it, you know.

Parham: Um hmm...

Martin: OK, I hope that's a good stab at...

Parham: Let me, let me ask you one more last question; it looks like we have a few more minutes here-- so how did you finally go on the road with Rahsaan? How did that come about?

Martin: Rahsaan, after he...it was another bass player that's in my home town, Clifford Murphy--he's a huge guy like myself, he's big, and he's very phenomenal in his bass playing prowess, and he'd heard about Murphy, and he'd come to Toledo and played at some jam sessions but I didn't show up at these sessions and he heard about me. And one day he took a trip all the way to Toledo just to meet me and just to play with me and just to talk and it wasn't like we really...well, no, wait a minute, he didn't make a trip to Toledo, I met him in Chicago. And he came back to Toledo and went to my church, the Church of God, and went there to meet my mom and everything and to really check out, check me out. And I remember at this particular time he asked me had I ever tried to play two basses at once, and whether I could ever play two bows at once, because he wanted something that was on a phenomenal level--that what he was doing, which was playing three horns at once simultaneously getting various melodies from them along with being able

to play all the other instruments he could play. So he was kind of seeking that. So, that was like meeting half way...of our minds and everything like that. Rahsaan Roland Kirk.

Parham: What year was that that you met him?

Martin: 1960.

Parham: 1960. OK, and then when did you play your first job with him?

Martin: We started playing at the Gator Horn and stuff like that in Chicago, but Stanley Cowell and I got busted for pot and he came through and did a concert and he used both of us on the concert and he was urging everybody not to turn against us, 'cause we got busted in the '60s. See, in the '60s it was a motherfucker for you to get busted with pot. It was like getting busted with, you know (conversation cut off by end of tape)

Parham: So we're talking about your meeting with Rahsaan Roland Kirk in 1960 and you went ahead and started playing with him.

Martin: Right.

Parham: Who else was in the group at the time?

Martin: Well, at the time I started with Rahsaan we were doing things that, like at the gig on horns was Ira

Sullivan and uh, the Chicago-based type musicians were participating a lot. Campbell--he was the drummer as I recall. Wilbur Ware was on the scene at that time, he wasn't playing--he would play occasionally with Rahsaan. But Ira Sullivan, I definitely remember him playing. There were several other Chicago-based people that participated in that very first phase.

Parham: So was it near then that you made your first recordings with him also?

Martin: My first recording came out in 1962 so it had to be made in 1961--that was "Dominoe". And that features Andrew Hill, Hank Duncan on drums, Wynton Kelly on piano again along with Andrew Hill, and Herbie Hancock played one track which was called "E.D.". It was one of the fastest tempos that was played during that time--on record, that was the fastest. Now, one of the strong tunes on the first album "Dominoe" was "How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" which they eventually had to delete from the album because of some contractual problems that they ran into when reproducing it, but it was a very successful Broadway show. And, uh, that was a feature: dah, dat, dat, dat, dah (sings opening melody to accompaniment of fingersnaps on "two" and "four").

That was it, that was a tough tune and I remember Wynton Kelly going out for that record date to get the music for the tune. I remember Roy Haynes being on the tune, or on that particular album. I remember the spontaneity of "Dominoe"--or not "Dominoe", but, uh, "Get Out of Town" which I'd never performed even in public with Rahsaan before, but because of his spontaneity, he just took off on it in the studio and it came out a gem on the recording. In fact, Rahsaan was so impressed about it he just sat back and said, "Man listen to that!" right in the studio, 'cause they played it right back for us after we finished.

Parham: You weren't looking at the music or anything?

Martin: LOOKING AT MUSIC?! No. We wasn't looking at no music. This was an area where I exercised my oral tradition coming from Africa. I exercised that natural ability that, uh, elicits all the different energies and gets you focused into whatever you're supposed to function in any type of particular music context and make you fit. You know what I mean?

And like Miles Davis had impacted on me 'cause I think "Sketches of Spain" had been out. But Miles

impacted on me many, many years because of his different--the concepts that he has about race in his music, which, there is no race and I appreciate the fact that he's one of the first to say that. And I appreciated the high caliber and the high motivating factors that make him the resounding person that he is today. And I still work out by "Tutu"--that's how I do some of my physical workout because it's not like I'm trying to dig what Miles is doing but I think that for what he has accomplished, which is, you know it's undeterminate--you can't determine that, there's no way you can. And it's not like he had to earn the right to express himself like he does now, because a lot of people got conflicts in their mind about hearing him. But when I hear Miles in "Tutu" or anything he does now, I can still hear the old Miles. I can still hear different things he does that...in the orchestration of the music and the chordal conglomerations and everything he use that have their unique Miles Davis thing about them, and it doesn't take anything away from--it just makes him greater because his music is forever expanding and he's on top of it. He's taking advantages that a lot of these cats that sit on the sidelines, traditional and untraditional, that try to

criticize his music--they can't take it, see? So they try to talk about his intonation and all that kind of bullcorn. But that isn't nothing but bullcorn. That's nothing but professional jealousy. That's nothing but somebody trying to throw a dart at you or trying to, "Well, I'm gonna put my foot up this guy's ass". That's all it is. But so far as Miles Davis is concerned, for me, he can really do anything he wants to and I'll listen to it with a total awareness and, just like in his quips and in his conversation and whatever he says, even if he talks 'way out; if you listen and you get beyond how he's talking, you gonna get some kind of beautiful rationale. And that's the thing about Miles Davis that I really like. 'Cause he's always progressive, uh, he's always been into denial and he's been like that for years, you know.

But, uh, I remember Sonny Rollins come to my home town...and he'd kind of been sent there. And I think he was kind of just laying out to see whether I would come, 'cause they sent for me, you know, when he was having jam sessions down in Toledo at one of those places, and I didn't feel moved to go. And, uh, that type of thing has been pervasive in my personality 'cause I'm not, uh, a

commercial type of person. In other words, I really have to be motivated towards projecting myself into something musically and it has to come natural. I'm not the kind of guy that'll go and ham it up, get a lot of electronics, get my degrees and carry them around on the front of the piano or nothing--I'm not that kind of guy.

Parham: Ssssssssss.

Martin: You dig what I'm trying to say? I'm ha?

Ha, ha...

Parham: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, I think we were talking about your first recording session with Rahsaan in '61.

Martin: Well, the first recording session came after Rahsaan and I went to Carnegie Hall to do a benefit for Billie Holiday. And the thing that was phenomenal about that was that Rahsaan come in town and said, "Vern!" he said, "We're going to Carnegie Hall" He said, "I'll be coming through Toledo at such-and-such a time to pick you up 'cause we gotta be in Carnegie Hall the next night." And that was, like, happening out of nowhere but yet, it's an underlying preparedness for whatever type of moves you're going to make...'Cause I have found in my own personal experience that after you start moving to

whatever you're trying to accomplish musically, and you start to getting it finished and worked out, that something is going to present itself that's going to give you more leeway to continue on that path and to continue to enrich and project yourself. So it's something that not only comes from your commercialism when it comes to how you approach people, how sharp you are and how much you can talk, it comes from something within you that you're able to evaluate, you're able to look at and you're able to say, "Yeah, I'm ready now." Something comes to you and tell you and at the same time you're saying you're ready and you have these feelings and everything, all of the rest of the stuff fall in. So, what I'm saying is that, so many of the things that happen to us in our musicality, they are based on different things that we're striving for and that we are working for and through accumulating energy and sincerity and dedicatedness, what's brought about's going to come about. So you don't have to really premeditate your level of awareness, projection, perfection and how much time you put in it, and having the concept in your mind of what the potential is going to be. You have to have all that together in yourself and then as it comes

together you can get the picture--otherwise you get into different things that's coming to you, you know--"Why, why am I getting this?" or, "I didn't do nothing to get this." This is because people don't know what their areas of preparation are in getting to a point of Carnegie Hall, in getting to a point of Newport, in getting to a point of being able to perform your music on a totally professional level. There's certain things that have to happen within yourself, and it's between you and the gods--Allah, God, or whatever you want to call Him, that, this connection is made...and you're able to--within your own personal self, without having anyone else evaluate you--be able to tell where you're at in something. And when the time comes, you're ready, you're there. That's part of being ready.

Parham: Um hmm.

Martin: "Vigil." John Coltrane. John Coltrane, Elvin Jones, nobody else showed. Everybody was high, they didn't show but John Coltrane and Elvin played. "Vigil." Perception. A propitious concept of each step that you make in any area. Awareness, knowing when the time is...hope we going, brother...

Parham: So, in 1960, then, you began your career as

a member of an international touring group?

Martin: Well, you might say that I just started to have encounters with Rahsaan--having to do with travelling, having to do with going to Milwaukee and playing an after-hours joint, having to do with wiping that stuff that would get in his eyes, and his eyes did get a little better. But, when I met him his eyes would run. All kinds of goo and stuff would come out of his eyes and everthing...and I would wipe that stuff out of his eyes and we would get on a train to go from Chicago to Milwaukee to play at an all-night session that was gonna happen there on a Monday. And, uh, when we get back to--as I started to venture out to get to New York and everything--we get to New York.

One of the first places I played with him was the Five Spot. And we were at the Five Spot for almost six months. We were there as long as Ornette Coleman, but it just happened that we came in after Ornette Coleman. And, uh, just the whole expansion of our music together, which meant riding in little tight cars and screwed-up station wagons and cars that broke down--to flying. So I made that type of transition with Rahsaan. You know what I mean? But I never tried to put myself in a position

when I was doing it, that it was an absolute type of endeavor 'cause I had other interests.

I had my own individuality which was coming through and my own original music, and I was piecing that together piece by piece, and I always had something that I could do that nobody knew about because they were too busy doing what they were doing. And one of the things that I discovered after participating in it for some time, was that a lot of the people that I could do their music, they couldn't do what I was trying to think about...not because it was greater, but because they just weren't going to put their energy in that way...they were too self-centered and into their own evolution still.

Listen, though, and the only aware person I can think of back at a really early, incipient stage of my evolution, musically, would be Jon Hendricks, who was also from Toledo and he also at different times begged me to allow him to put words to some of the things he heard me play...Because I didn't ever give him any names, or anything like that, but he would just listen. Jon Hendricks listened to everybody. He's like a master, uh, listener and profundo in the realm of being able to have a perception...I remember at one time he was trying to

get, trying to put words to some of Miles's stuff, like "My Ship" and stuff, and Miles didn't want him to do it and he would talk to me at times about it. But as I came to know Jon Hendricks intimately, I found him to be a highly religious man, and I found him to read the Bible every day and be a totally different type of person than you would conceive of him being on his records with Lambert, Hendricks and Ross. You know, he's a very, very, religious man, you know. And I had the pleasure of having him befriend me and let me stay in his house overseas. When he was in London he had his home and everything--he had servants and he used to let me stay there when I'd come...Of course, that wore out because I was pretty radical at that time and I was doing some pretty off-the-wall shit, if you want to look at it that way...and, uh, he just wasn't into it so, you know, I wasn't able to continue. I remember once he put us out of his pad, you know, 'cause he just wasn't cool--it wasn't like we was abusing his pad...but Jon is a very, very beautiful man, and, uh, I recall that about him.

But the perception of being into what I was trying to do with my own personal creativity--as broad a range as Rahsaan Roland Kirk came out of--it was still a

suppressive thing, because it was certain things I was trying to do that just couldn't find its way into his repertoire, see, 'cause he was too busy evolving around his three horns and all the different things he was doing and making Rahsaan Roland Kirk reign, you know, high and everything into jazz.

But that had its ramifications too, 'cause I really believe that if I had of went into the musical world with a less stereotyped individual, that I wouldn't have become stereotyped, which I was. And there are many things that I was able to accomplish on records and everything with Rahsaan that still haven't got their correct credit because people won't allow themselves to sit down and listen to a man that can play 45 instruments, that plays all the time and can play three instruments simultaneously at one time with different melodies and everything coming out in harmony.

And I remember when we went to the Five Spot in New York, one of the big things they talked about there is whether Rahsaan was going to blow away Count Basie's reed section. See, that was one of the big jeopardies that was in the minds of a lot of musicians. And I remember getting criticisms from Ornette Coleman about Rahsaan and

why he played all his instruments, but I also remember seeing Ornette Coleman pick up the same instruments and try to play them no less than a year afterwards. And he still can't play violin, small violin, as good as me-- that may be neither here nor there, 'cause I don't even profess to play small violin, but yet I can play it and I think I can play it better than Ornette Coleman...if I applied myself to it and if I pursued that, you know.

And it was only during the period from 1970 to 1979 that I was the music director of the Creative Workshop in Toledo, Ohio on Doris Street, that I got a chance to totally exploit all of my music creativity. In other words, I could compose a composition in my brain and come up with an oral perception of it and have it performed by anywhere from ten to fifteen guys by the end of a day. And at one time I was going in every day creating some new musics. Whenever I was on TV...WSP or any of those TV stations there in Toledo--Channel 11 or whatever it was--I would always take a whole entourage--anywhere from eight people to twenty-five, thirty people. The people in the studio would get upset 'cause they didn't know how the organization was brought together 'cause they didn't see the notes. See, they didn't see the scores and

stuff..so that kept them in total frustration. But I was able to cool them out because anytime they wanted to know if I could do any composition, regardless of how many horns or whatever it incurred to do it exactly, I'd say, "Yeah, we're going to do it exactly the same." And they would. But it was during that period of time that I really got to totally exercise my own personal creativity.

And so far as Rahsaan Roland Kirk is concerned, he's a very pervasive, vast musicale within itself. But I think within all of us, regardless of how far we go into music, there are certain limitations that we can put not only on ourselves but on others, you know. And it just happened that I wasn't getting what I felt was really close enough to what I was trying to do...And I was forever seeking it, regardless of what type of steps I might be making with Rahsaan, or whoever else might be current that I might be performing with, you know.

Parham: Let me, uh, get on another topic now. You mentioned earlier that you met your first wife when you were, uh, just singing down the street in Jamaica, New York.

Martin: No, I met her in Toledo.

Parham: Oh, in Toledo.

Martin: This was before I went to Jamaica.

Parham: OK. And, uh, what's this woman's name?

Martin: Her name is Donna.

Parham: Donna.

Martin: Donna Conchita.

Parham: Conchita. And, so, did you, how long were you married to her?

Martin: I was married to her...let me see, we were legally divorced in 1979, we were legally separated in 1974...so, and we married in 1955.

Parham: So, about nineteen years of marriage?

Martin: I don't think you'd call it nineteen years of marriage, because during those years I did a lot of extensive travelling.

Parham: Uh, huh.

Martin: I think marriage is something where you get beside a woman and you both stay and like that. I managed to have prime time with my children, and when I would be travelling I'd try to...when I come back home I'd try to give them prime time--I got all my daughters in ballet and I exposed my sons and stuff to music and everything like that. And, uh, we still have a deep love

and appreciation for each other because of the attitudes that came out of it. 'Cause I don't believe that Donna ever really undermined me to my children--I don't think she ever did that, you know, and I think that's the difference the wives or husbands that do that, 'cause that makes a big strong...

Parham: So, you were making pretty good money when you were travelling and so you were able to support them? And that's, uh, how...

Martin: No, it wasn't like I was making good money all the time--the biggest money I made was a thousand dollars a week--that was when I would go over to Europe and travel...to Denmark, Sweden, Copenhagen and...

Parham: That's pretty good money...

Martin: Yeah, but that was peaking at the end of my sojourn with Rahsaan Roland Kirk. Because at the time I got to the highest levels of the financial thing with him, I was aware of the fact that I wasn't getting where I wanted to get with myself...and I had to make a choice as to whether I wanted to become an integral part of the Rahsaan Roland Kirk Vibration Society, or whether I wanted to try to see what I had to offer myself and see what was going to happen, so I had to make a choice...and

I think that choice was brought about in 1979 when I returned to Toledo to the Creative Workshop. Not only because it was the natural thing to do, but because it would afford me new areas to venture out into and to see how I could handle my total creativity.

Parham: Right. And that was a position that came with a paycheck, right?

Martin: Oh, yeah, it was a paycheck...I had just had another child. I wanted to have that family focus and because that was my home town I could participate in that level.

Parham: So, when you say your first wife--you don't have a second wife, right?

Martin: Yeah, I got a second wife, my second wife is ChyReal Love--although I went through some other women before I got to her...and ChyReal is more like a soul, soulmate because, with all the different things I can think that don't go right, there's a lot of things that do go right, and she's been more attentive and aware and involved in my musicality, which has made me much more comfortable with her than some of the other ones that came through my life--not that I'm a heck of a lover, 'cause I couldn't lay claim to screwing all these women

and stuff--I never would...but, the ones that I've managed to get involved with, they had short term beliefs and insights and they just didn't have that certain something that can take you through the gulleys, you know... 'cause they might be appalled by my music... Well, anyway, like I was saying about ChyReal Love though, you know, women are women, you know, whoever they are, but some of them just can blend with you more and they do have true comprehension--although you will have the problem between male and female and decisions and all the basic things there...but it's an underlying understanding that, once you become sensitive to it and you know that you need it and you want it and you find somebody that can give it, you accept it and you're naturally happier. Whatever the final outcome is, you're naturally happy with the person 'cause it seems that you get a better understanding, you know--plus ChyReal, she's like a therapeutic involvement with me in that I'm not trying to correct her life, but there are many ways that I try to help her and just to see her making the strides that she's making now, after having the stroke she had and going through all the pain and anxiety she's been through, has been really a bright spot on my own personal

self. Not egoistically speaking, but just speaking from a standpoint of being able to believe that anybody can come through it--anybody can get themselves together and move on and get things did, that's where I get the light from her at.

Appendix II--Interview with Vernon Martin
at an Ethnomusicology Forum
at UCSB on Oct. 21, 1987

Parham: How do you survive economically?

Martin: Well, I don't know. I guess I've always kind of co-existed in times where I made a lot of money, and there were other times when I was around friends and people that understood what I was doing...I'd get aids. Like I just finished doing a play called "Ode to a Bit Player" down in Los Angeles, and it ran for six weeks and they expect to pick it back up; but, uh, it's just some various situations like that, plus the house that I stay at--I take care of that myself so that brings in money. Then I do an in-house care thing for a lady that's living with me. I take care of her 'cause she's a stroke person...so I get money for that...and Doug, he gets me these gigs occasionally--he's not getting as much as he used to. Anyway, yeah! Well, you know I'm not rich. Sometimes you got to get help from the county or whatever, you know? I'm talking about a basic type of posture that creative artists in this day and time that's not commercial is up against...compared to commercialism, 'cause if you're commercial, all you gotta do is be like everybody else and you're all right, see? But if you're

creating and you've got something different to say you might have to work a little harder at it and you're going to have to make any type of adjustments and try to rationalize in your mind, you know, that...it's all right! But one of the adjustments that you have to make is, uh, compromising with the people you live with...and I usually prefer to be with women, so...I couldn't say I had a whole bunch of women, but the women that I had, up to this point, have always been eager...they've had some kind of interest in my music and what I was doing that helped things...and the only time they would get tired is when the money didn't turn up right, you know? Uh, the ones that I had when I was making money, they still love me, you know...and they still own the property that (they) gained by being with me at that time, you know, so they been keeping it for me.

But anyway, you know that kind of thing, you know it's not...I don't really feel bad about it because it's just one of the conditions that a country like America, as great as it is and as beautiful as it is, it puts this on you, you know, because this is a commercial country, you know and, uh, if you're not commercial, you're not into the "in"crowd, you know...

Parham: What would it take to make you commercial?

Martin: You'd be asking me too much to be commercial, because being commercial would confine me to being a certain way every night, or into a certain type of area with my dress and my mannerisms, and I'm a very spontaneous individual, see, what I mean? So I prefer to be put in situations where people can respond to what I am as an artist rather than what I am compared to other artists.

Parham: I imagine commercial to be a bass player at a dinner house or a bar.

Martin: Oh, I've been that bass player at a dinner house, I've been there. I've been the bass player in a bar.

Parham: These people are making say, \$1,500.00 a month--wouldn't you want to do that?

Martin: I could tap into it, you know, but I wouldn't want to get forced into a psychological situation where I felt I had to work in a club and relegate my energies to a night club or a tea house or something because people pay for that...that's what people pay to come and see, you see what I'm trying to say?...and the people that can't see it, which are the

people in the street and the people that might want to really be touched by the music, they can't get to 'cause they can't afford it. It's like this thing I did for the World Food Bank the other day--they used my song as a theme song, that was great! It was very uplifting for them to use that song, but what was kind of off-the-wall to me was the fact that you had this situation in a big mansion up in the hills of Santa Barbara and did anybody here know about it? Did anybody here come?...See what I mean? So that's an exclusive, exclusive type of thing that I recognized early on in my musical, you know, going into music, I recognized it and I knew that I had to make a choice as to what I would contribute to a musical society (that) would relegate itself to any particular type of peoples, you know what I mean? So you make a choice...the commercialism comes from what you do with your energy, you know, I want music to be able to reach little children, I want my energy to be able to reach community-type situations where everybody can get it, rather than playing in night clubs and big concert halls. They've got concert halls you're playing--you can't go see the guy, "Well so-and-so's playing, I'm fixing to go.--"Twenty-five dollars!" You know you can't go to see

them! You know?...So they're like 'way up there somewhere playing and you don't get a chance to say. "Well, here's this guy, I'm going to dig him"...and that's commercialism to me...versus the attitude that I have which is that, you know, in the realm of commercialism there are certain things that I might have been able to do, like "Happiness"--I'd like to see that become a commercial success in that it would bring me more checks in, and I wouldn't have to be reverting to these different compromising things. I could be independent and throw people out of the house rather than have somebody throw me out all the time, you dig?

Parham: So you'd prefer to share your music with people who can't afford to hear you at a concert?

Martin: Whether they can afford to doesn't matter...it's that if they want to hear it and be exposed to it, they should be able to hear it. And I think it's disgraceful and the commercial aspect of this country that leads musicians down the line of going in the studios all day, going into paid situations, as (opposed to) communication on a community basis where--we're just gonna get together and jam, ain't nobody going to make nothing, but we gone play, you know, we'll invite some

people over and we gone party and we gone play--that has broken down, see? Where twenty-five, thirty, forty years ago guys wouldn't think anything of pulling their horns out and playing! Now you tell a guy, "Where your horn at?" He'd say, "Got ten dollars?--How much is it?" You know, that's what they ask you. They don't say anything about it, so that type of communication has broken down. Now, in relation to jazz, it has stigmatized jazz, because "jazz"--the word--"jazz", is a funky name anyway that don't really mean what it says so--it stigmatizes it because it allows the people that have the money that can put these different other people into focus...it allows them to keep these people in focus and it allows them to suppress something that's very badly needed by people in this country and the rest of the world, you know?

Parham: You'd rather have your music free to reach everyone?

Martin: I'd rather have my music free to reach everyone and I would rather be able to live in the realm of being able to totally support my own personal creativity without trying to see how somebody else gone to feel about it...if they like it, they like it; if they don't they don't...But I don't want to set myself in a

frame where I'd be relegating my energies to Joe Blow...I gotta bow my bass and I play "Mares Eat Oats and Does Eat Oats" and "Tea For Two", you know, I might not feel like that, you dig?

Parham: What about the fact that you have to put up with somebody in a very intimate situation? Does that not take any time or energy away from your creativity?

Martin: That takes energy and time away a little because you're putting up with somebody in an intimate type of situation. But you've got more of a chance to get them to rearrange their way of thinking to where you're coming from than you are when you're in a situation where you just go and the people don't, they don't have it...Just like the situation Sunday--when we got up there Sunday at the World Food Day, they got a whole bunch of older people that's got a whole bunch of money--they're all bankers and all that stuff--and they didn't come to hear no Black person or Japanese or nobody give them a message, see? They come for you to be the background and for them to talk and for music to be underlined. If I'd a got up and sang one of your favorite songs, (sings) "I've just found joy..." Man, those people would have sat up there and danced, we'd

have been there all day, you know, but I gotta...They don't want to hear that, see, so it has to do with your own personal perception of it, you know what I mean?

'Cause you can make yourself look like you really like me, but if you don't like me, I know you don't like me-- as you're trying to push me over, you dig what I mean. OK, you want to look me in the eye?

Parham: OK, to paraphrase what you've said about how you survive and how you work around that--I'm hearing you say that it's preferable for you to deal with people in an intimate relationship, especially women, than to deal in a commercial situation, where you'd have to play a song they'd want to hear to please them--that you'd rather please somebody who says, "Would you please take the trash out, would you please shut the door..."

Martin: Now wait a minute, let's not take what I said out of context. I said, you know, it is a compromising situation. I've lived with maybe fifteen or twenty women, you know. I wouldn't put myself on really a pimp level where that's all I do is solicit the passions of women to survive, that's not what it is...but any woman that I would have in my personal involvement with me--intimate--whether she owned the place or I owned

it or whatever, they gotta have some comprehension of what I'm about--so I won't have to deal with whether I'm going to take a gig or not, or whether or not blah, blah this or blah, blah that, but just like you're saying, in everything you do, there's compromise...But I would really (rather) compromise on a personal level like that than to compromise on a level where I'm up there blowing my guts out every night trying to play some tunes that I've been playing for fifty thousand years--I've played these same tunes and I'm doing it just because I'm going to get a buck and I'm bored and I've got some other stuff in my mind that I want to do...I don't want to do this shit! So I'd rather, you know, rather than do that--no, I don't want to be bored with that, you know...and if that means I have to extend myself in certain ways--I'm not going to murder nobody, I'm not going to steal from anybody, but I'm gonna try to find the way that's gonna make it easier for me to continue with my creativity, 'cause I feel that my creativity is important and because I know many great players that's went down in the hole: Art Tatum, King Oliver, go all the way back to the beginning of jazz--all these guys--they got it in the butt! They got it in the butt because...even Duke

Ellington and Count Basie had a certain amount of commercialism that they had to go with...It was certain things they didn't want to do...These cats didn't want to travel every night--they had to travel every night 'cause they had managers and they were managed by the co-ops and they made them do it. That wasn't what they wanted to do. John Coltrane didn't find out he didn't have to play in clubs until he was two years from dying! Rahsaan Roland Kirk never found it out...He died playing in clubs. I found it out, and that's when I started saying "If I want to play in a club, I'll play in it." So my thing for a club is conditional. Like we played Joseppi's last Monday, you know what I mean? What did we get? We got the door. What was the door? Eighty-five dollars. Who was on the gig? Five people, six people--you dig what I'm trying to say? But the overall thing was that...that certain something that I was trying to get was...I had a tune I wanted to play that night and I could play it. If I had something I wanted to do that night I could do it without nobody dictating to me what I was supposed to do...and it's not that I can't take that...But I paid my dues, buddy. I was playing long before you started trying to tickle them ivories!

Parham: So, when you play in a night club you want to be able to play whatever song you want to at any minute, and if you have to sit there and play to the whim of the audience--that's a frustration and it gives you anxiety and you'd rather not deal with it--am I paraphrasing what you said?

Martin: Yeah, in a way, but then I do like to deal with that. I like to deal with talking to people and trying to convince people that maybe they're missing something by just liking classical music and maybe they should try to listen to a little more jazz. I like to deal with them on other (levels)...So there's certain encounters that I like with the public, but I try to set myself--if I'm gonna get into something like that, if I've got any pictures beforehand of what I gotta do, I would prefer to be in a situation where the club owner has some empathy with the music. Maybe he's a past musician, maybe he's got some kind of exposure or his sensitivity could be kind of relative to where I might be coming from--not that I got to go in his club and change whatever he's doing in there, but I gotta go in there and be myself. I can't go in this club and--I've seen other musicians do it, you know, they wear a tie every night,

you know what I mean?...and they're sharp, they're right on it. That's their whole thing and then they stay right in that area...In other words I know a lot of musicians in Los Angeles, in New York and everything--they have psychological communication with night clubs. They'd never think about playing in a church or going out in a park and playing for the kids at a park concert or nothing like that--they'd never think about that! 'Cause all they do is think about how they gone make some money and so they got...they're into an ass-kissing thing with the club owners, see--'cause they gotta go in there and shuck the club owner: "Look, I'm the best man 'cause I'm wearing a tie and I know how to sing 'Sweet Lorraine'", you know?

Question from audience: Was early jazz that way too--concerned about money? Or did they just get together and play?

Martin: From the beginning I think it was a primeval type thing that came through where the people that got together--and they say it was mostly Blacks that got together and created the music and everything--I think that a lot of it was community and I think it was--came over from the African tradition which had music as

an integral part of the family and the tribe or whatever...I think that's what came over...and I think that when it came over, the people that were here in this country and everything--things started to get these different visions and started to elicit this different music from these people, you know, in different ways...and I think that's where the change came...And the underlying factor with jazz would be that because of the fact that it's always been a kind of music (that) is stereotyped in the minds of people when they hear the word...you know, 'cause the first thing a person think of when they hear "jazz" is that "jazz" is not "classical"...Is there anybody here that's classically involved? I mean, that really loves classics?...well, I love them too! You know, I played classical too, I went through that whole procedure going through the classical repertoire, but I got them on the lam...and you know what Beethoven's been doing for the past two hundred years? Anybody know?...he's been decomposing! Tell you what, you know, that's nothing against him, 'cause we all gotta...that's (laughs) but anyway...

Parham: At present, how is jazz tied to the community?

Martin: Jazz isn't tied to the community in my view. Jazz is tied to the colleges and the universities. Jazz has moved out of the community because the community got corrupted by Michael Jackson and the like...you know...The way that's did is through the communications systems...'cause those who own air waves and everything ...the people that own these stations and everything...they just turn that type of thing on because it's pleasing, it's commercial...It's just like Quincy Jones, as much as I admire him--his music is very sweet, it's very easy to listen to. It's the kind of stuff you listen to where you don't have to have any fear, 'cause it's not going to scare you. It's gonna all be lovey-dovey--"I love you, baby"...that's what this music is about...and that's why people can conform to it...and that's why he got where he got...because he was a conformist...he fit into that realm, you know. But with real message music, and when I said "real message" I mean music that, when you listen to it, it's going to make you think about something...like Monk might make you think about something when you hear him...How many of you have heard Thelonius Monk?...Have you ever heard of him? Now, he was like a throwback because people put him down

and criticized his music for years... 'cause they said he wasn't playing nothing... and it was just within the last ten years that Monk became a real player, so far as the ears of a lot of critics and all that's concerned... So, when he became a real player, that was when he told them. They say, "You want to play, Monk, for us? We're going to pay you so much...?" ... "NAH! I don't want to play." 'cause he was tired. He spent his whole life creating this musicality that he had and when he presented, people would laugh and say he was silly... so that stuff wears you out, you know.

Back to music in the community. Anyway, what I'm trying to say is, jazz is not an integral part of the music of the community, and any jazz musician in Los Angeles or anywhere would know it... 'cause if you go to a party or something like that, here's the scene: Everybody at the party is partying. We got Vernon Martin that's going to play. Vernon Martin takes out his bass, the piano player sits down and plays---soon as they hit the first couple of notes and they're playing some jazz, the little kids look around and say, "What happened to Michael Jackson?... What happened to Yippie Dippie Doo?" They'll ask that first, then the next thing you see,

there's four or five guys coming and they got big boxes and stuff. They say, "Look, we love you guys, but we're going to let you get off early tonight." Then they bring this machinery out...they bring amplifiers and everything out and they get it on, and that's when the party starts. But when you start playing jazz, they're either going to leave, you dig what I mean? Or they're going to roll in that little turntable on you and tell you, "Hey, we're going to pay you for tonight, man--we dig you--but the crowd around here don't really, you know, go the way you're going.

Parham: What about the people who love jazz, would you call them a community?

Martin: No, I wouldn't call it a community, 'cause, ah, it's too diverse and it's too small. A community has to be made up of some kind of people. You can't have three or four guys coming through during the week, or something like that, that you're doing with a community--that's not a community. I would just call it the same type of perception that happens when anybody that opens themselves up and really listens to some jazz and let it go, you know? Don't try to hold on and don't try to predict what the guys are gonna do, how they're gonna

sound, just listen to it and it'll start taking you places that changes the course of your attitude and life! Because I find people that--not that classical people aren't very erudite, very smart and all that kind of stuff--but I find that people in jazz, they have a certain communication thing they're on and they got certain things they talk about that rock and roll people don't talk about, that funk people don't talk about. They have different introspections and like they can't talk about it 'cause it's like whatever it is that motivates them is deep and they're really into it...So that calls for a special type of person you're talking about. You're talking about one out of so many numbers, like yourself, out of so many numbers.

Parham: Is jazz alive, or is it dying?

Martin: Jazz is alive in the bigger arenas. That's where Miles Davis and a lot of the people play, they don't play in the community. The people in the community can't afford to go hear them. Dexter Gordon will come and you can't go hear Dexter, 'cause you're living in the community where it's hard for you to get gas for your car and it costs you anywhere from seven to fifteen dollars to go see this man. I'm not trying to project a very

drab picture, 'cause the people that are aware of it that play it and involve themselves--they're there, you can hear the sounds of jazz floating through the neighborhood, but you'd better believe that when one of those cars comes by with the rock and roll sounds that seem like it's in a big auditorium, it's going to blow it away--you'd better believe that, see? So I mean, I don't know, like it's a fight going on and it's been going on for years and I don't think it's stopped yet...I think it's, you know, even getting greater, you know, the fight of suppression--you go back to suppression, you know, you go back to a racist type of attitude about the music, you know, all those things enter into how it's dispersed to you. Cause if racism and stuff wasn't in it, then, when you sat down and you could turn on any station you wanted to and you'd hear rock and roll on this station, jazz on the next, jazz on the next, jazz...you'd hear it, but you don't hear it. You hear rock and roll, rock and roll, rock and roll, rock and roll, rock and roll, rock and roll, jazz, rock and roll, jazz, you know and the jazz is so...it don't even get the same sound as rock and roll. Rock and roll rolls out when you say it but jazz--"jazz". It's jazz--whoa!--you know, like that.

Parham: Please talk more about racism in the media.

Martin: The media is discriminating against people who have a real interest in jazz--it's not whether they are Black or white. The media discriminates against people who have enough awareness and perception to say that, "I'm gonna listen to it and see what I get out of it." They're discriminating against--'cause sometimes when you turn your radio on, or you look at TV, you don't want to see some long-haired pretty guys up there singing and dancing and playing drums real loud and shit and making a lot of noise, you just want to see some cool guys--white guys with haircuts and shit, you know, looking cool and they're playing jazz. You don't ever see that on TV man, the only time you see a little jazz on TV is when they have a festival or something and they give you a shot just before the news, but you ain't gonna sit down and look at no jazz on TV like you do rock and roll and stuff--they have that stuff on all day. You can get up in the morning at three o'clock and there's some white guy on with long hair, man he's--"Yeah, baby" and everybody's trying to make a whole bunch of noise. You can pick anytime, now that's all I'm saying, you know.

Question from audience: Do you feel that rock and

roll and funk are a threat to jazz?

Martin: No, I'm going to tell you what I feel like: I feel rock and roll, punk rock, or whatever it is--jazz is the mother and the father--and I'm one of the trees that's out here in this forest of weariedness tell (you that) you'll never back away from it, it'll never leave. Percy Heath is the same way, you're going to meet him tonight. If you think I've got a strong conversation about acoustics compared to jazz, or about where jazz stands in the community--talk with Mr. Percy Heath... and he's one of the bass players that, when I met him, he liked me. He didn't come up and say, "Well, man, wait a minute, I'm playing with the Modern Jazz Quartet, you gotta be cool..." He said, "Come on up, man." So me and him went up to his room and I tired him out, you know, he finally said, "I got to go to sleep..." But, anyway, that's the kind of guy he is, you know, that's just communication. But, yet, on the other hand, you know, jazz is still alive and it will never die--because it started all the other musics, you know, for me, that's my perception of it.

Parham: What is your place in jazz history?

Martin: My place in jazz history is to never stop playing and to always be a part of it and participate-- that's my place. But I don't have to pick out a place as far as my leverage and I'm better than this guy or that, 'cause that's all a bunch of bullshit anyway, see? These polls they have--they don't mean shit! Those guys, excuse my language, those guys that's on those polls and stuff--they know themselves they're not the greatest, you know? They know that, see?--'cause behind every trumpet player, every horn player, there's somebody that taught these people. There's somebody that they're scared of to even talk about..."I didn't know you knew so-and-so..." and they won't utter them on their record reviews or when they interview, because they're not honest enough to go back and say, "Joe Blow is the first guy that taught me." Like I can think of right now seeing a young piano player in my mind--he's in your age group--that I babied him, cradled him, I taught him to put holds and taught him a whole bunch of stuff--you think he would ever give me recognition? NO! 'Cause he's just too concerned about using affiliates...he was too concerned about using people that have already got over, that he thought using them would make him bigger, so, that's one of those weak

things so far as an artist is concerned, 'cause there's a lot of ego and it's easy for me to win a poll and say, "Hey, man, I won the poll, I'm Vernon Martin." Hey man, you ain't nothing--there's somebody else that can play just as good as you or better, you know? And you trip like that, you'll come across them one day. You'll say, "Wow, I didn't know it, that guy plays just like me." You know, it's just like Sonny Stitt and Charlie Parker. Now they say Sonny Stitt copied Charlie Parker--did he? I heard that they had a blow out when him and Parker met and he was blowing and Parker was blowing...and Parker told him, he said, "Man, you the closest thing to me." or something, or, "You got the key." or told him like that, but, that's another one of those things that happened with the universe we live in.

And there's no unique person on the universe. There's nobody that's come up with something nobody else got. That's bullcorn. There ain't nothing new under the sun so far as I'm concerned in music or otherwise...

Computers will never--as long as they got them--they'll never be able to make a bass sound like I can make on my bass--they'll never do that, or Percy Heath or somebody like that, they'll never do it.

Question from audience: Did you originally start playing jazz, or did you start with popular music like rock?

Martin: Rock? When I was coming up, rock wasn't even around and then, on top of that, this other music, what do they call it?--soul? or whatever, that wasn't around. Wasn't any of that happening.

Questioner: It was jazz from the beginning then?

Martin: No, it wasn't jazz, it was music, period. It wasn't jazz. 'Cause like, I love classical music too, Debussy and all those people. I love them, I played their music. I love them. I'm very much aware of the classical repertoire, you know what I mean? And, ah, the interest was great because, I would say over a period of so many years, I was one of the first Blacks to ever get in the area of principal bassists in a symphony, which I accomplished that. I mean, it wasn't like it was a major symphony or it wasn't like it was great, but they played some hard stuff that wasn't easy for you to play...and in the area that they were, there wasn't no Black gonna get up there and play no principal bass unless they knew what was going on. And I had that type of thing happen to me.

But, in the realm of my learning classical repertoire, it was never like, "Well, I'm playing Debussy." or something like that, I was just playing music and I was reading it...and it was stacks and stacks of music and there's a whole bunch of stuff that I know that I would never try to account for, 'cause it doesn't even make sense--as in jazz, you dig? So, what I'm trying to say is that I had a wholesome evolution into jazz. I came from a musical family. I had a couple of sisters that played piano, I had a brother that could sing classical music, I mean the straight classical stuff, "Ave Maria" and all that stuff, he could sing that, my brother. So I come from that type of environment, you know? And, ah, as I came up--Doug's got some information about how I washed dishes in this place and I used to watch Art Tatum and all these guys come in and play their musics and stuff. And they had a little nickel TV I would watch and they had these shows--these guys would come on skinnin', dancin', playing everything...I would watch them everyday. I knew all of the stuff, so, that's how I developed in that type of atmosphere, you know.

Art Tatum, he lived around the corner from me...you know he was a tremendous impact in my life. I go out and visit him...out here in Los Angeles. Now I go out to, you know, the gravesite, 'cause I know they go to see Elvis Presley and some people ask me, they say, "Why would you go to see Art Tatum?" I say, "Why do you go see Elvis Presley?" By the thousands, you know, it's like recognizing the ancestors and it's like having some type of awareness, you know what I mean? But...ah, I would just say that, you know, well maybe the thing that really made me like jazz a lot too (is) because, when my mother would leave, we would always play it, since she was a church person.

APPENDIX III

Additional Compositions

♩ = 116

Ayeeta

337

by Vernon Martin

Bossa Nova

Chord symbols: C, B^b₇, E^b, D^b₇, G^b, C^m₇, F₇, B^b₇, E^b₇, A^b₇, D^b₇, G^b₇, B₇, F^m₇, B^b₇ #⁴ #⁹, E^b

Tempo: *Bossa Nova*, *Swing*

Chasing My Shadow

by Vernon ³³⁹Martin

$\text{♩} = 120$

5x (select any notes ad libito)

accelerando

4x

Am7/D

Am7/b

(unmeasured shakes)

ONE ON ME

by Vernon Martin

$\text{♩} = 152$

INTRC:

B^b E^b_7 A^b D^b_7 G^b_7 F_7 B^b_7 E^b_7 A^b_7 D.S.

PARIS

$\text{♩} = 63$
Ballad

by Vernon Martin
transcription by Tracy Wamowae

C Am7 Dm7 G7 C F#7
F B^b B^b C Am7 Dm7 G
C Am7 Dm7 G7 C Am7
Dm7 G7 F E^b D^b C7
Dm7 G7 D^bm7

The Sands of Time

342
by Vernon Martin

$\text{♩} = 116$

Chord symbols: Cmi7, F7, Bmi7, Bbm7, Eb7, Ab7, Dø, G7, Fmi7, Bb7, Eb, B, Cmi7, F7, Fmi7, Dø, G7, Cmi7, F7, Cmi7, Bmi7, Bbm7, Eb7, Ab7, Dø, G7, Cmi7, F7, Cmi7, Bmi7, Bbm7, Eb7, Ab7, Dø, G7, Cmi7.

KNOW

343

$\text{♩} = 152$

by Vernon Martin

INTRO:

The musical score for the introduction of "Know" is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of a bass line and a guitar line. The bass line starts with a G chord and a quarter note G, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (A, B, C) and a quarter note D. The guitar line starts with a G chord and a quarter note G, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (A, B, C) and a quarter note D. The score includes various chords and triplets, with some chords marked with a circled number 1 or 2. The chords are: G, A^b/G, C/G, F[#]/G, B₇, E_{mi}, F[#], B₇, E_{mi}, A_{mi}⁷, D₇, G, A^b/G, C/G, A^b/G, G, A^b/G, C/G, F[#]/G, B₇, E_{mi}, F[#], B₇, D/E, F/G, A^b/B^b, B/C[#], D/E, G, A^b/G, C/G, F[#]/G, B₇, E_{mi}, F[#], B₇, E_{mi}, A_{mi}⁷, D₇, G, A^b/G, C/G, A^b/G.