

# MUSICIAN

WAYNE SHORTER SPEAKS

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Dave  
Edmunds

Carlos  
Santana

J.J.  
Cale

L.A.  
Punk

Home  
Studio

Dave Marsh Interviews  
**TOM PETTY**





**Wayne Shorter** breaks his five year silence and talks to David Breskin about his monumental past with Blakey and Miles, his work in Weather Report, his years of drought and a creative comeback that is eagerly awaited.



**Tom Petty**, sobered by a bitter lawsuit for violence and a critical bum rap, talks to Dave Marsh about his new album and his new view of the world. Ducking tards and fashions, the Heartbreakers have forged themselves into the quintessential American rock and roll band.



**LA Punk** where the punks are mean as hell and proud of it, a descent into paradoxical pandemonium, where kinetic confusion and euphoric ugliness smash through the placid palms. Mikal Gilmore, Ken Tucker, Steve Ford and Chris Morris report from the front lines.

PLAYER & LISTENER

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# 24

**Shorter Solos. Mr. Gone returns from the Sahara and solos on Weather Reports, Make-Believe Ballrooms, Other Worlds, the Odyssey of Iska and the Familial Spaceship.**

**By David Breskin**

Chanting, chanting, chanting like singing wafts into the den. With it, the fragrance of fresh cut flowers, incense, and fish frying in the kitchen. For the next half hour, Wayne Shorter's spiralling song of devotion snakes through the house, washing over the Japanese watercolors, the Joni Mitchell photographs, the book of Folon prints, the gold records of *Bitches Brew* and *Heavy Weather*, the Lyricon and Prophet, the grand piano and stack of freshly filled staffs on its bench...

Listening, I drift back into Shorter's rip-saw tenor in Art Blakey's band, his hard-bop horn launched with Jack Kennedy's rockets. Thrust, pressure, liquid fuel, an arcing ascent into the bright blues sky of Coltrane sun and Rollins moon. The right stuff for a jazz messenger, higher, burning hotter in the thin air of rising masters. And with Miles, into orbit — each revolution, each pass across America more elliptical than the last. Blackness, blackness, the cool friction of Orbits above Tony Williams, heat shield of the 60s. Farther still, after tearing dreams of Super Nova and steaming jungles of the heart, Major Wayne demands a Weather Report. Space shuttling 'tween arrow soprano and tear-drop tenor, Shorter in asymmetrical equilibrium, weightless, letting less do more, moving beyond Milky Way. Boxer with Blakey, Bauhaus architect with Miles, Buddhist of Boogie Woogie Waltz, Army sharpshooter at Fort Dix, Mysterious Traveller; telescopes of tradition search him out without success: off-center, un-trackable, brilliant but invisible, soundings for a cosmic cartographer: no more notes. Shorter and shorter solos, Shorter lost in space, Shorter rechristened, Mr. Gone.

The earthbound critics, peering as usual through the wrong end of their binoculars, howl in dismay and *disappointment*. Jack DeJohnette's '78 composition, "Where Or Wayne," becomes the more critically convenient (though non-existent) "Where Is Wayne?;" Joe Zawinul and Jaco Pastorius are deemed contemptible plotters, driving Wayne, *our Wayne*, from the yearly Weather Report discs; one respected critic even pan-fries Shorter, in *downbeat*, for falling into "routine" by "comparing" his solos on two recordings of "Black Market" (*Havana Jam* and *8:30*) which do indeed sound similar — largely because they're the same take. What have you done for me lately? What have you done for me lately? — Madison Avenue manure dumped on the drought-stricken lawn of Shorter's art.

Lately, if the truth be told, Wayne Shorter has been writing

his rear off. He wrote a piece called "Twin Dragons" for Miles' long-expected new album (Miles to Wayne, via long-distance: "I asked you for a tune and you gave me a goddamn symphony!"). He's writing an album for Stan Getz, which Getz will probably record with a Swedish or Israeli orchestra. He's written new music for his next record, due out in late summer, which will feature Brazilian contralto Elis Regina and may involve *Double Fantasy* producer Jack Douglas. At the same time, he's been compiling a "story book" of new material for Weather Report, his own "whole earth catalogue of music," as he puts it. And if anyone thought his instrumental capabilities had deserted him, his playing on *Night Passage* — the most recent Weather Report — should have closed that case. Shorter's tenor wit and audacity boast *Night Passage* to the same altitude as '74's *Mysterious Traveller* and '72's *I Sing The Body Electric*.

Shorter stops chanting. Outside, cliches of spring chirp and flutter, promising rain, green grass, new tunes, saxophone rebirth, a good conversation. Over the next two days I'll meet his mother, wife, and daughter at home, and his good friend, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, at the Roxy for a Gil Scot-Heron set. (Gil was married in this same den. Kareem was the best man.) I'll hear the man from the Brazilian consulate at the front door, and hear Miles trumpeting over the telephone. I'll hear of Wayne's love for his neighbor and portraitist, the husband of

**This new gold horn is beautifully balanced. It sounds like a swordsman's horn. It's like Jim Bowie's knife, you know, made from a meteor, made from a star. This horn has flight in its sound.**

his first wife, Billy Dee Williams, and of his visit to "Strav's pad" (read: Stravinsky's house) back in the Miles quintet days. I'll see a report on the Space Shuttle on his large-screen Sony television and see him hard at work at the piano. And I'll remember mostly his sly laugh and his odd humor, and these solos, which speak for themselves.

### The Back Fire Escape

I used to see Lester Young when I was very, very young. I had no saxophone. I was about 15, and he'd come with the Jazz At The Philharmonic to a theatre 'round the corner from where I lived in Newark. I'd get together with some guys and we'd go up the back fire escape and sneak into the theatre. There'd be Billy Eckstine opening up with Stan Getz, and Charlie Parker with strings, and Lester would have the finale.

I noticed that Lester Young was different from *ev-ry bo-dy*. He was always late. The show was long on and here comes Lester...walking into the theatre lobby. And he was the only one who used to carry the saxophone in a bag too. The rest of the guys had big, heavy, hard cases. His bag was shaped like a saxophone and he had this black overcoat and his pork pie hat and as he was walking in everybody — all the promoters — would run down into the lobby, yelling, I remember this, "There he is...there's the Prez!!"

As soon as Prez came on stage, it was "Yeeeeeaaahhhh!" I



VERYL OAKLAND

# WAYNE SHORTER



didn't know what these guys were "Yeahing" about, because I'm 15, listening to the musicians who played *flashy* things. I didn't see at 15 the depth of where he was coming from. Then as time went on I found out Prez started a lot of things, and a lot of sayings that people started to live by, or watch out for. He would say, "Watch out for the tiddy boom" — once a drummer was playing too loud and he took the mike and said, "No bombs, bay-beah, no bombs... just tiddy-boom, tiddy-boom." You know, "Ting te ding, ting te ding. No bombs, baby, no napalm."

I met him years later at the Town Tavern in Canada when I was just out of the Army. He said, "Let's go downstairs to the cellar and get some real cognac out of those kegs." We went downstairs and he made a toast, grabbed some cognac outta one of those faucets — he got a double or triple, I got a double or triple — and we drank it. Then he went back to work.

As time went on, I met his niece, Martha Young. She told me a lot about him. She would say, "You know one thing? You remind me of Uncle Bubba." His name was Uncle Bubba, she told me; "Yeah, he's a Virgo just like you."

Lester's style was all-encompassing. Charlie Parker listened to — not even listened but *observed* — Lester a lot. He hardly moved his fingers on a horn. Or when he walked into a room, same thing, you'd hardly see him come into the room. He walked with his feet close to the ground. He lifted them up, but he walked close to the ground. He didn't scrape them. And he never made a false move; if somebody came into a room to surprise you, or upset a household, he'd be the last one to turn around. Not deliberately, not trying to be cool. He'd turn around and say, "Heyyyy, what's happenin'," or, "Don't you belong in the hospital."

Anything that was very disruptive, Lester kept it inside himself. That's why no one knew he was sick, really sick. Curtis Fuller was one of the last people with him when he died. Curtis never knew. But he knew Lester was going to die if he kept drinking; drinking, drinking, drinking. Curtis had to call the ambulance.

### The Father's Armchair

I remember when I was about fourteen I used to listen to "The Make Believe Ballroom" on the radio. It came on at 7:30 every evening. My father used to come home from work, sit down in his armchair, turn the radio on and it was Martin Block's "Make Believe Ballroom," the announcer would sing ... "because it's Make Believe Ballroom time!" He'd play Fletcher Henderson, Cecile Noble, something by Tommy Dorsey, Bing Crosby, Virginia O'Brian, even records by her, she was an actress and comedienne, Margaret Whiting, Barbara Whiting, Doris Day coming up through the big band thing, Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong. Then one night he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, we'd like to try something a little different tonight, in life everything changes, so we're gonna play a new kind of music, from now on we're gonna play three or four of these records each night, see what you think about it. They call this music... Bop." Boom, straight to the music, I think first Monk, then Charlie Parker, then Bud Powell.

I was playing the clarinet. I liked the way Woody Herman sounded, and Artie Shaw. I liked the sound of the clarinet. I listened to classical music a lot; I loved when the orchestra would cut out and you'd hear this lone clarinet, like in Rimsky-Korsakov, sounding like it was going over the sand dunes. I said, "I want one of them horns, I don't care, give me a horn!" My grandmother, my mother, they got together and got me a clarinet. Before that they got me a little Tonette. My mother came home one day and she had bought a Tonette.

### Corn On The Cob

Newark was a hell of a place to learn something about how to survive... a lot of things, whether you were well-off or very, very down in the dregs of poordom. Poordom. There is only a few people from Newark now who are somewhere in the world, imparting their knowledge of survival intelligently, or just daily survival.

The people from New York always said that the people from Newark who got out of there were slick. And they'd say: slick, hip, and crazy. And it's a funny kind of craziness. We'd all go from Newark to New York and to Birdland, and when we started doing that we found out that Newark itself didn't give us anything. We were learning how to get out of there. We knew there was a fight going on with the mentality: we used to go around telling people, "You are *cor-ny*, you're putting down the so-called be-bop. You're putting it down and you don't know what you're doing."

We were stone be-boppers. We were talking about progressive *everything*. There was a group of us that had found each other. And some of the people in the group melted back into the very things we were trying to destroy; the way to have a party for instance, or the way to go out on dates. We'd say, "Why you go out on a date on Friday night?" We were being *fresh*. My brother and I put signs on our saxophone cases. He had a saxophone too. We changed our names, he called himself "Doc Strange," and I put on mine, "Mr. Weird." We thought it was necessary to be weird, 'cause no one else was weird enough.

### A Few Good Men

I was drafted right after I graduated high school. Just before I had to report to Fort Dix, I went into New York to a jam session at the Cafe Bohemia. I stood with my saxophone way at the end of the bar. Max Roach stood next to me. Charlie Parker had just died, Cannonball had just come to town and he walked in. Jimmy Smith came in, brought his organ in there in a big ole truck. Art Blakey was there playing drums, Kenny Clarke was there, Oscar Pettiford was on the bandstand... it was like a turnover. Sonny Rollins came through there that night. And Max Roach said, "You're the kid from Newark, right? Bring your horn on up." And I did. And I figured this was the last time I'm gonna play in my *life*, because I'm going into the Army, and I had my draft notice in my back pocket, and man, all this stuff was going on. So I said, well, at least I was on the same bandstand with all these guys.

### The Subway, 1950s

When I was in music class at NYU, the teachers would give me assignments and say, "If you want to experiment, do it on your own time and do it outside of class. When you're in class you have to do it the way it is supposed to be done." But a few of us would do an assignment and sneak in what we wanted anyway. And they would say — they didn't exactly know what was wrong because we'd sneak it in so well — "This is incorrect." Sincerely, they thought it was incorrect. But they didn't know what was going on in my mind. You know what I mean?

Except one. One teacher. She said, "This may be incorrect, but it's alright. I know you're sneaking around on the subway doing all this stuff." We used to ride the subway and experiment, "Hey, why don't we move this C sharp over here, and let's do some perfect fourths *anyway*" because they said we couldn't do that. And we'd try to hide 'em. But that one teacher would catch 'em. Every time.

### Hey Joe

Fifty-second street, Birdland, right on that corner. The first time I met Joe Zawinul, he'd been in New York less than a month. He'd heard about me, wanted me to be in Maynard Ferguson's band with him. I don't remember talking that much, but it seemed that Joe and I talked without talking. I drank so much that night that I didn't remember he couldn't speak English very well. He was just happy to meet someone over here who shared some similar thoughts.

### The Devil Look

I played in Maynard's band with Joe and Slide Hampton for about four weeks. Then we were up in Canada at a big festival and Art Blakey was there. Hank Mobley wasn't — he was in the band but he wasn't there, so Lee Morgan came right up to the



**A** tune? It comes as a sound, a note. First it's a person without eyes and a nose. If you stay with it, all of a sudden the note becomes a real person and the person starts pointing his finger to the next. The whole thing has a life of its own.

bandstand when we were done and said, "Hey man, you want to play with us?" I'd met Lee one summer, I was just out of the army, and Lee and John Coltrane came to Newark to play on their night off. It was a Monday night special, "John Coltrane from the Miles Davis Band and Lee Morgan from the Jazz Messengers." Someone said to me, "Better take your horn, man." I took my horn. John was just starting to explore that "sheets of sound" stuff and Lee said, "Hey you, the guy from Newark, come on up." He always had that little devil look, and he was *looking* at me. So later when we saw each other, he never forgot. In Canada, he said, "Hey, come on man, what you doing in a big band, man, come on." So I joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and Art said, in that gravel voice, "The guys seem to dig ya. I know about you, too." I knew about two tunes.

#### Desert Boots Over Tokyo

The only thing I had on my mind was getting that horn together, getting a distinctive sound, not being a general tenor sax sounding guy, general tenor sax looking guy. And Art knew that. He would say, "Let's go down and get some custom made suits. We don't wear uniforms, we wear *suits!*" He wanted something special, and that band was a terror because we walked out on stage with some blazers and all — we broke new ground as far as how you appeared. We wore desert boots and in Japan they put them in the showcase windows; they said, "Dis is what Jazz Messenger wear." And we knew that we were something because Miles didn't want to be on the same bill as us.

Miles would call up in the middle of our rehearsals. Blakey would answer the phone, he'd say, "Miles want to talk to you." He'd say, "See there, Miles trying to steal my tenor player." He first called in '61, but I stayed with Art until '64. Miles got George Coleman 'cause I told Miles I wasn't gonna desert the band that I'm in, that nobody likes a traitor. And Miles would go, "I can dig it, I can dig that." Because he dug some integrity.

#### 49 Into 64

People said, "Hey that's a helluva change going from Blakey to Miles" but it really wasn't so hard. I knew what to do about changing styles: I was like an actor playing a different role. I knew what kind of teamwork, what kind of method was needed for the Messengers — hard bop, *bombastic*, man, hit it! Now Miles was different, but I'd been rehearsing or practicing at home and in hotel rooms and in the Army, practicing the horn with pianos and violins and stuff like that, so that I already knew what Miles and all his different bands were doing. I used to play with his records and blend, start to blend right in. It's like with an orchestra player: he might go from playing *The Rite of Spring* to *Daphne and Clois*, or from Gustav Mahler to Eric

Satie. I was prepared, I was ready to go. And early on, during a break, Miles came to me and said, "Do you feel like you can play anything you want to play, anytime, anywhere, just play anything you want to play?" I said, "Yeah, just about." He said, "Yeah, I know what you mean."

Though no one could accuse me of rehearsing for five years with Art Blakey to go with Miles, Miles' whole thing had been a part of my life since I was very young. I'll show you something I drew when I was 15 years old — it has some of the feeling, some of that sensibility, sensitivity, Miles had, and the way Herbie played the piano as opposed to the way Bobby Timmons and all those cats played. This is a comic strip I drew. This was 1949.

*The "comic strip" is a rather thick book of blue pen drawings entitled, Other Worlds. There are launching pads and space suits and rockets and monsters and warfare and whirlpools, and one dapper looking future-man pointing out of the frame and saying to another, "Note the texture of her hair." The drawings are precise, intricate, clean, and crumbling from the press of time. Note the texture of her hair: Milesesque indeed.*

### Whim, The Mutha of Invention

By the late 60s, we knew we were on the verge of something. Herbie said, "I don't know what to play no more." So Miles says, "Don't play nothin'. Only play when you feel like it." So we'd be playing a piece of music, and Herbie's sitting there with his hands in his lap... then all of a sudden he'd play one sound, and Miles said, "That one sound you made was a bitch." So everybody saw something happening... and we began playing songs without chords. Tony Williams then melted into the rock-jazz-swing thing, Lifetime, and I saw at that time maybe something more elusive, which came on *Super Nova*. Elusive, but not so elusive as to be uprooted out of the earth, the earthiness of life. At the time all this was going on, I could see the changes happening — but I couldn't really know the depth, the gravity of them.

First of all, there was that recording of "Nefertiti." Joe Zawinul said when he heard that, he knew he wanted to hook up together. I remember being in the studio doing "Nefertiti," we kept repeating the theme and not soloing, we kept repeating, and Miles said, "Do you feel like soloing?" I went, "No man, I don't feel like it," so Miles just said, "Oh shit, let's keep repeating it." And Tony Williams just kept bashing. It was, "Ohhhhhh shit!" and I remember thinking, "Uh-oh, nobody else is doing this." In between "Nefertiti" and *In A Silent Way* there was a complete 180° turn. And then *Bitches Brew* came along. That's when Miles sent for John McLaughlin, I got a picture of him playing with us on the wall, see? I said, "Here comes Prince Valiant." He looked like Prince Valiant then.

### Now, Now Child

We spent a whole evening at Joe's apartment in New York trying to come up with a name for our co-operative group. I said, "Let's have a name that people are confronted with everyday, how about 'The Six O'Clock News.' They have politics, and sports and the weather forecast." We decided we stay out of the political arena, the racial arena, and the fortune-telling thing, I heard, "Weather Report," and everybody, simultaneously, said YEAH! You report exactly what's happening now — as opposed to forecasting what's gonna happen. It leaves no room for ulterior motives or anything. It's very, very difficult to report exactly what I think now. Or now... or right now. Or now, for instance.

We knew we'd be together for a long time, but not ever doing something so *stale* that we'd have to break up. We said we'd be together as long as it was fresh, fresh and exciting, and when it's happening, it's only because we're doing individual things. And we'd say, let's get together later on and make it an event — another Cecil B. DeMille movie, bam!! This way we can give so much more when we perform than if we played all year long together, dropping our grain of rice into people's lives with the attitude — if you see us all the time, it must be worth something — it doesn't work like that. And if you're

playing all year round, you can't write anything new — even if you write something new in your hotel room, it'll be the same music. You may think it's new, but it's probably an extension of the something you're already doing.

Weather Report has honed some other planes, other sides of planes and surfaces. We've tried to give some kind of alternatives for feeling about something or someone. When you play our music in a house, some people for the first time may think of music as interior decoration. Maybe we've done musically what certain designers have done, those that go further than design, those that go to the soul; exterior decoration of the soul, interior decoration of the body. That's pretty good... that came out like a child.

### The Drought

Material that's written, that's the life of the band. It's just as important as the expression of the material. So Joe has been asking me to write more because that would give more dimensions to the band, so that we can keep our personalities more colorful. Joe would like me to do, say, 85% of the writing — but I was struggling. I was struggling, trying to write — starting about 4½ years ago — trying to break through, wondering who else is like this, in the world, struggling and struggling. It was very painful trying to write, for the first time. I've heard about painters who would stop in the middle of the canvas and say, "That's all... I have nothing more to paint." That's how I felt. I was worried I'd gone dry, permanently. I'd wonder. And sometimes I'd talk to Miles and he'd say, "Yeah man, I know what you mean; if there ain't no more, there ain't no more." (Laughs.) Miles was glad to have some company.

Everyone talked and wrote about the onslaught of my partners, Jaco and Joe, but that's wrong. It was something I was going through myself. Other aspects of my life were developing. I was going through a metamorphosis, like the pain of being born. Parts of myself, which had been stunted for a long time, started to grow, and they met resistance. If value is being created in your life, you meet a lot of resistance. A lot of resistance came in the form of "Hey, you're not taking care of your music, you're not the 100% musician you're supposed to be." But I let everything go, I didn't try to do some forced music, which would have been catastrophic, to commit that kind of suicide. When you talk about someone's life, that's a helluva thing: to talk about somebody's life in terms of just how much music somebody's writing, or how many plays, or how many films... I would say the heaviest struggle I've had in my life has been the last four and a half years.

### A Child Is Born

Iska. That's Iska in the kitchen. She was given a vaccination when she was very young, you know, a baby. And they called it Vaccine Pertussive something — for the arteries in the brain. And she had an allergy to it, to that shot. So that now she has brain damage. Over the years it's caused me a lot of pain, over the years; and that's another reason I started practicing this Buddhism. I've tried to break through some things, no matter what it might cost: it might cost a lot of publicity or negative comments, or people wishing out loud, "I wish Wayne would get up off his butt and take charge some more," they'd say, "Man, he used to be one of the top composers," and I'd say, "I'd like to hear him play, too." But it takes a human revolution when you start to do something because your daughter's got brain damage and you can't do anything, you feel like you can't do anything about it. But when you try to do something really valuable, you always meet with resistance, and it will erupt in your entire life — which cuts across everything you do — in your music, everything. We try to change the negative thing to a positive thing, to make the most value out of it. We call it changing poison to medicine. Not avoiding the poison — you drink it — but you change it to medicine. You face it.

I mean, you can't ignore the notion of karma. Why are we together, Iska and I? Why are we linked together? Iska was normal for three months, until she got that shot; I said never



TOM CDP

**W** eather Report: You report exactly what's happening now, as opposed to forecasting what's gonna happen. It leaves no room for ulterior motives or anything. It's very, very difficult to report exactly what I think now. Or now...or right now. Or now, for instance.

*mind* the shot, her life came in this condition to change ours, to open our eyes. It's very funny, but it's like... Iska kicking my butt, and at the same time, she's contributing a helluva message to us, every moment we look at her. She's fortifying us, she's helping us become indestructibly happy — even in the face of droughts and external catastrophes. We don't live in fear of earthquakes or what people might say. Iska's got a message, especially now, in the past year, she's made me try to take care of *everything* 100% — put 100% into everything. It grew, it was a growing message, so that naturally now it comes. Now I don't have to be really torn up about going on the road and she being here. But there will always be someone with Iska 24 hours a day, for the rest of her life. It's already set.

#### Shorter Takes

*Chaos, Genesis, Go, Yes Or No, Jujú, The All Seeing Eye, Playground, Footprints, Tears, Milky Way, Wind, Storm, Calm, Joy, Marie Antoinette, Tom Thumb, Sincerely Diana, Lester*

*Left Town, Elegant People, Schizophrenia, Paraphernalia, Miyako, Twelve More Bars To Go, House Of Jade, Mahjong, Free For All, Adam's Apple, The Odyssey Of Iska, Freezing Fire, Super Nova, Limbo, Nefertiti, Armageddon, Sanctuary, Chief Crazy Horse, This Is For Albert, Orbits, Dolores, The Moors, Shere Khan The Tiger, El Gaucho, Night Dreamer, Sweet Pea, Eurydice, Beauty And The Beast, Blackthorn Rose, Hammer Head, Africaine, Port Of Entry, Children Of The Night, Charcoal Blues, Black Nile, Capricorn, Harlequin, Face Of The Deep, Pinocchio, Water Babies, Palladium, Umbrellas, Deluge, Montezuma, The Elders, Lost, Surucucu, Manolette, Three Clowns, Moto Grosso Feio, Antiqua, Ana Maria, Iska, Non-Stop Home...*

#### Right To Life

A tune? It comes like a sound, a note — it comes like a person. And first it's like a person without eyes and a nose, and if you discard it, it's an abortion. But if you stay with it, stick with it, all of a sudden, the note becomes a real person and the person starts pointing his fingers to the next — and there's another note. The one you're writing tells you what the next person is gonna be like, and then the whole thing has its own life. And it's a natural feeling.

Right now, my improvising is intricately related to my writing. It's very related now because I'm investigating — not new harmonic structures or anything like that — but the way different harmonies go together. Once in awhile I take the chance to pick up my horn, and I feel something different happening with expressing the improvisation *throughout*, and over and underneath and around, the kind of harmony that I'm writing now. I'm incorporating scoring, you know.

#### Tools

I've got a new horn, a new tenor. It's got a sound that's outasight. It's gold-plated. My silver one sounds more tenta-



live. The new gold one is beautifully balanced. It sounds like a swordsman's horn. It's like Jim Bowie's knife, you know, made from a meteor, made from a star. This horn has the styles I want to travel through. This horn has flight in its sound. That's what I like about Coltrane's sound — he has flight in his sound. I think with this sound, I can make a lot more notes sound like just a few. I'm gonna use both on stage.

I'm also getting myself a completely new instrument that an inventor, a young Russian guy, has been working on for ten years. There's no name for it yet; for convenience, they call it the Synth-a-phone. But I call it the Magic Wand. It's gonna have touch-digital stuff, and on the back there's 26 keys and buttons and rollers, like a bassoon. It has two or three things, like a Wave Bar, which are first-time-in-history features. The inventor is the same guy who made that big Tonto synthesizer, and helped with the Oberheims and invented the insides — the guts — of the Prophet. It costs as much as a grand piano and I should get it any week now. The first one is for me.

### The Body Electric

One thing I've found out about the synthesizer is that it doesn't quite yet have the tonal weight of the acoustic instruments. There is a kind of transparency after awhile with the synthesizer. But we will get to the point when it won't matter, because the synthesizer will no longer be sounding like or competing with acoustic instruments. It should compete with itself and become a whole — another kind of weight, another kind of body and texture. The only one who gets the full weight out of the synthesizer right now is Joe Zawinul, except for maybe Tomita.

Well, I have something about that whole electric vs. acoustic controversy. I think that electricity has water in it. Electric neutrons or something like that, protons or neutrons, whatever they call them, whatever goes on: there's water *inside* them. Ha! So where there is water, there is acoustic! I mean, you know, it's like a little room that's moving around, a little room that's on fire.



Ana-Maria Shorter: I met Wayne through his music, it was love at first listen.

### Non-Stop Home

I've been listening mostly to movie soundtracks recently. I like some of the sounds John Williams gets in *Close Encounters*. Remember the ending, when those little things are coming, making way for the big ship? There were some great musical nuances, because my mother — she's 68 — she's in here watching it one day, and she said, "Dear Lawd." — she talks like that you know — "He's gettin' down with those sounds, honey!" And I said, "Yeah!" Cause the music started to swing with the visual.

Outer space? You know what attracts me? The security of it. Space tells me there ain't nothing to worry about. Even though you might worry about things, you still got that as a home. That's home too, you know. This home is only home

**B**y the late 60s, we knew we were on the verge of something. Herbie said, "I don't know what to play no more." So Miles says, "Don't play nothin'. Only play when you feel like it." So Herbie's sitting there with his hands in his lap... then all of a sudden he'd play one sound & Miles said, "That one sound you made was a bitch."

because that's home, ultimately. It's exciting to have that much room for unlimited adventure. So when you go out that far, you ain't going nowhere but home.

### The Little Big Band

A lot of the strength of Weather Report's playing — our playing all *together*, not just individual soloing — is because of our tone quality. Jaco's got a certain, unique sort of tone, and Joe started getting really outstanding synthesizer tone qualities and I have a style, a tone quality, which in the mid-seventies was mostly coming from the soprano sax — and the tone quality seemed like it wanted to pull us ahead to be on display, for itself.

A lot of other groups, they would have the soloing on top, mainly because of the thinness of the tone quality. One person would have to take a turn, you know, individual solos one after the other, in order for each instrument to have that kind of presence. What I'm saying is that our tone quality *allows* us to play more freely.

The "less is more" thing, that was quite right, because I was investigating some things. With a particular tone quality, you might not want to continue playing long, drawn out phrases. At some point the best part of the tone quality that you have *rings out*, but doesn't stay long; so my phrases were short for that search, that quest. Now, the audience may experience something different, because I'm right on top of a tone quality that's more conducive to "more is more." I'll probably be playing longer phrases, and that "less is more" formula will not apply to what's going to happen from this point on.

### F-14

Improvising to me is like, say you're captain of a big commercial 300 passenger jet liner, improvising to me is like getting in a fighter plane. Same guy. No passengers. Solo! *So-low!* And going for total speed and destination. The trouble with being a big airliner, see, is you've got to regulate your speed, and regulate your destination. But when you improvise, ain't no room for passengers on that trip.

### Sweet Science Swing

I'll tell you a funny thing. Joe saw me working out one time and he said he thought that if I had gotten into the ring to box,



that I would've become a champion boxer. He felt the same way about himself, and about Miles, of course. I haven't seen them move like boxers, but what they do rhythmically — and what Sonny Rollins does — would make them good in the ring. And it's the same thing in reverse with a boxer, like Archie Moore. We used to correspond a lot, a whole lot, and I think Archie Moore would have been a good bass player or something like that. Some boxers I know, they *know* music.

### The Spaceship

What makes me happier than anything? Music? No. When I see a lot of other people, happy, like when I see the group now, and all our families. We've all come through a lot of personal things and we're holding together over the years. Families, domestic things — this makes me happy — everybody still pulling together like in a big spaceship of people and we all still have the individual things that we are, and we all overcome obstacles. That's the kind of happiness that keeps refueling itself. It can't be destroyed. Maybe it's someone overcoming something in the hospital, maybe it's someone overcoming something to write a composition, you take that and then you go out and play somewhere and you play with greater *gusto*.

### Ana Maria Shorter Speaks

Ever since I was a girl, I've had a big passion for Miles. He calls from New York nearly every day. We talk to him. Maybe he and Wayne might rehearse something together over the phone. A few weeks ago, I called Miles at the studio. He played me a ballad, like I haven't heard him play for seven years. Well, I *screamed* and *cried* so loud. It was beautiful. And Miles said, "What a fool!" but then he went around telling everybody, telling the whole world, "Man, Ana Maria *cried*, Ana Maria *cried*." I did. I *cried* that day — it was one of the happiest days of my life. I was so happy to hear his life again, because that's what you hear in music: the essence of a life.

When I first met Wayne, he was real weird. I met him through

his music, it was love at first listen. That told me a lot about the man, his music. Then I met him in person, at the Bohemian Caverns in Washington, he was playing with Miles. I was 18. I was after him, and when a woman is after a man it's only a matter of time until she gets what she desires. I'm from Lisbon, Portugal and I came from way far away to this country to meet Wayne Shorter, what else. Destiny. And I asked him to marry me. I asked, of course. He's not as weird any more; he's focused his life a little more, he's more in control.

He was drinking hard when he was with Miles. He'd sit up at the bar, ordering doubles and triples. Now mind you, he was a very quiet man. He kept everything inside himself. He was a very sad man — coming out of his first marriage — but he was writing beautiful music. Even after drinking, he'd pick up his horn and play the shit out of it. But later on, it began to affect him, and our marriage, and then I started to drink. And you can't have two. Wayne always told me being on the road is the loneliest thing; "It's lonely out there," he'd say. I guess drinking filled up that hole.

Wayne had a long drought. It was hard. He was entitled to it; he took the time to take care of other things in his life, away from music and Weather Report and whatever, and now he'll take those things with him. When I'm upstairs and I hear him downstairs and hear the music *pouring* out of him, I think, "MMMMMMM...Fantastic!" He gets up early, he's given up drinking. He hardly ever smokes a cigarette. He eats and writes music. You wait... he's gonna bombard the world again.

### Wayne Again

I think the high point of my career is coming. Moments higher than before are coming, they're on the way already. I have two good horns now, I have the tools; and I have the valuable breakthroughs, crashes, changes, and turnovers in just my life that had to do with me, brought about by me, sifted out by me, and are all my responsibility from here on. I'm going up on Hill No. 5. I'm going for it now. Going for it the right way.



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