

DA remembered

where we've
25 years on,
ed a number of
ans and writers
ir personal
ctions or
tanding of
rbulent time.

What was significant for me about that time was that I was considerably older than people I was working with, usually by ten years. Unless you were 38 in 68, you don't know what ageism means! Culturally, I can't understand why 68 has become such a focal point; for me, music was more active in the mid 60s. But I met a lot of new people around that time, different sorts of musicians to the ones I'd been working with before. Not necessarily better players, but they had this open, comprehensive view of music that was a revelation to me. I'm talking about people like Evan Parker, Han Bennink, Paul Rutherford, Willem Breuker. It was an odd time, looking back; 1958 seems to have more relevance to today than 1968. The 60s were an odd aberration, the idea that it was a golden age for new music is one that I can't subscribe to. Overall, things are better now

DEREK BAILEY, musician

May 1968 heralded my 15th year. Girlology was yet to feature. O levels were breathing down my neck as I wrestled with Moliere. Paris and Vietnam featured heavily in the news, but a birthday present of a sparkling new guitar overshadowed them. Coupled with a change of address featuring a large enough basement to hold band rehearsals, heaven seemed close by. Armed with 33, 45 and 78 rpm volumes of music I immersed myself in Hendrixism, Staxonomics, and caught Motownitis. Due to Dad's vinyl habit I became exposed to the contagious rhythms of Jamaica, as The Skatalites and The Wailers blasted out of his powerful sound system. Also a fan of The Equals, Stones, Beatles and Cream, I'd decided it was time to test out the newly built recording studio at school with my compositional skills, demoing songs that were later to be featured on the *Best of Matumbi* album. Spooky Tooth, Free and, of course, the Master BB King were more reasons why I had to become a professional musician.

DENNIS BOVELL, musician

The revolution that might have been for me centred around Chris McGregor and the great musicians who came with him from South Africa — Mongezi Feza, Dudu Pukwana, Louis Moholo, Johnny Dyani. I made a rather naive attempt at managing them at the time, having produced a couple of records of the Sextet and Trio. Those evenings at Ronnie Scott's Old Place in Gerard St and the sessions for numerous recording projects, many of which never saw the light of day, haunt me still. Britain seemed totally unprepared for the intensity of musicianship that came pouring out of them. Britain's (and my) failure to provide a working living for that group always struck me as one of the great tragedies of music in this country. They are all dead now, save Louis, and the thought of the lightweight stuff we all raved about then compared to the divine inspiration which poured from those men makes me humble and sad. I guess there must be some connection between France's ability to shake its establishment far more profoundly than Britain ever did and its ability to make a home and provide a platform for Chris McGregor.

JOE BOYD, producer

Elsewhere... Paul Bley was in Seattle for concerts (and an excellent album — *Mr Joy* on Mercury). In New York that complex organisation The Jazz Composers Orchestra was recording a couple of Michael Mantler's monolithic "Communications" (numbers nine and ten, featuring Larry Coryell and Roswell Rudd respectively). I was reviewing Coltrane's *Expressions* album, having finished a far-too-long piece on Milford Graves (but he liked it) and watching the events on telly. Throughout the decade it had been a volatile city (the summers of 61 and 63 were pretty lively if you were there). Hank Mobley was back home too, after a stunning gig at the Cafe Montmatre in Copenhagen.

JACK COOKE, writer