

Revelations are the most important by-product of reading: they seem so casual in the midst of a quick novel, and they seem like serious weight in the midst of a theoretical or historical volume from which details just hop and joust about. With this stack of four titles come, in some cases, very sincere, lovingly delivered revelations, some fairly obscure and very basic historical data, and some journalism acting as polemic and history at once.

MAXINE MCGREGOR's book on her late husband, **CHRIS MCGREGOR AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF BREATH** (1995,

Bamberger Books, 244 p. + discography, index; \$17.00), is the exemplar of a revelatory book written with the most genuine relationship between author and subject. For me, the text uncovered the lineage of British free Jazz and collective musicianship while really being a wonderful recollection of McGregor's actions as bandleader, composer, and pianist from his young adulthood in South Africa to his and Maxine's marriage and life in France as the proprietors of a somewhat ramshackle farm. McGregor's always been a fascinating musician, perhaps the best to intertwine township musics of South Africa and the more out Jazz directions he and the Blue Notes, Brotherhood of Breath, and various aggregates of both were all exploring and also creating.

The stories of Dudu Pukwana, Mongezi Feza, Harry Miller, and others are each at times touching and overall very sad, as any story of exile is bound to be. But amidst the emotional range of the narrative, there are reams of details about gigs, and not the discography type of details. That is, McGregor's feelings after or during a gig are relayed in abundance, though not heavily-handedly. And his role as big band leader at once, it seems, very frustrating for those in the group seeking higher direction and also so democratic that everyone who would, found a niche within the group's various stages and moments of being. There were, of course, more than one Brotherhood over the years. None of them was fully documented at any period on record. That in itself is a musical tragedy, not to mention the scarcity of solo piano recordings from McGregor. I've said in these pages before how much the Dedication Orchestra's work means to me, what with its revisiting the great works of Pukwana, Feza, McGregor and others under the direction of the sole surviving original expatriate from South Africa, Louis Moholo. If anyone



Chris McGregor

reading this review has had the same feeling with either the Brotherhood, Blue Notes, the group's constituent members, or the Dedication crew, then this book is a must read. It's full of review clippings (not all properly cited, a downer for scholars) and is a work of care and memory that begs to be re-read.

Similarly broad in its appeal is **JAZZ MILESTONES: A PICTORIAL CHRONICLE OF JAZZ, 1900-1990** (1993, Vail Publishing; 176 p.; \$45.00). A slim coffee-table size book that looks curiously like a bargain remainder, this volume, compiled by **KEN VAIL**, is overflowing with dates of recordings, deaths, and births, arranged by years onto spacious two-page spreads. There are generous black and white photos, maps of Storyville (!) and Greenwich Village, an index of musicians listed, and scores of dates and LP titles to be digested. Things are, of course, not as complete as mega-discographies, but by and large this is a full and rounded portrait of Jazz's minutiae without narrative accompaniment. Helpful also are the bibliographies of books and films published by the years catalogued. There are hundreds of citations, each of them working in conjunction with others to show a career's trajectory. There are even dates for New York clubs, from Eddie Condon's to Slug's to the Knitting Factory. This is an often-consulted item for me.

For the specialist in Japanese Jazz, the **TOGASHI MASAHIKO DISCOGRAPHY** (1995, Takahashi Hiroshi, 118 p.; \$18.00) is a brief but informative tour of the scene through one drummer's recordings and compositions. From his 1957 debut with Sadao Watanabe to the more out leaning dates with Masahiko Sato, Steve Lacy, and even Masabumi Kikuchi, Togashi's credits are vast. The pages each reproduce an album cover (in miniature, of course), and there are indexes of both musicians and compositions by Togashi. The angles of ascent in the text trace Japanese Jazz from bop through various electro-acoustic out leaning aggregates, solo recordings, and unusual sessions to what are likely more measured, mainstream late outings with Terumasa Hino and others aboard. Surely this isn't for everyone, but it's definitely long on details.

As for **LUCY O'BRIEN'S SHE BOP: THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF WOMEN IN ROCK, POP, AND SOUL** (1996, Penguin Books, 464 p.; \$14.95), it is expansive in its breadth and to that extent an incomplete volume. Of course she traces women's roles from the "classic" blues scene to "Women and Protest" and through the androgyny of post-disco funk and punk rock. There's lots and lots of good reading here, and it's certainly an oppositional title in that it works against the grain of specifying a particular period or genre and then unpacking it at length. It's also a gloss-over book, covering whole periods in music in dozens of pages. For the Jazz-interested reader, this will not take over your reading schedule. For anyone interested in gender and popular music, or gender and the prismatic directions pop music has gone in since the classic blues' mass popularity, this is a good place to start reading the history of both white male dominance in the control of the music industry and in ways women have been forced to subvert that dominance while maintaining