

f jam, man! back to the camera, khe, two stalwarts of the Big Band, it cool.

ZONK JAN 64

## 1 be Greatest 1 bing 10 Happen

In Our Jazz

in with a happy, swinging solo on alto sax. The number winds up with an ending similar to the introduction.

CHRIS McGREGOR'S JAZZ
FESTIVAL BIG BAND recording is the greatest thing
to happen in our jazz scene
since Dollar Brand's Jazz

Epistles (featuring men like Kippie Moeketsi, Hugh Mase-

Ntshoko, etc.) broke the ice with probably the first modern jazz L.P. recording of original compositions by South African

The Big Band's album is called Jazz/The African Sound on (Gallo NSL 1011).

This well-conceived package has disarming simplicity to which jazz devotees and dis-ciples must respond immediate-

ly. It has got a personality of its own and does not lean on

**Greatest Exponents** 

Chris McGregor highlights the works of two highly rated jazz musicians, Dollar Brand

and Kippie Moeketsi, the great-

est exponents ever to come out

of South Africa. Coupling their

works with his own two originals. Chris shows his abilities as a musician with imagination. His arranging of the works to blend with the

playing of a 17-piece band, is

Kippie's alto and clarinet in

Side 1 opens with Kippie's original "Switch". The tune has an arresting rhythmic pat-

tern which serves as an intro-

duction followed by wind in-struments repeating the intro-ductory line. Kippie then sets

ensemble authentic sound of its own. It's no Count Basie or Duke Elling-tonian gimmick! The playing is bright, open, clean and

derivative stunts.

superb. The

the spotlight.

musicians.

Unison playing of the band in a meditatingly slow tempo introduces Dollar's work "Pippie." McGregor's piano repeats
the theme. Sammy Maritz
(bass) and Early Mabuza
(drums) combine in a relaxed
mood to back Chris. The
smooth combination of the reed section is commendable. Kippie carries on with the lead when he switches to fine clarinet blowing.

The romping number, "Early Bird" written by Chris, brings out a firm, resonant and swinging rhythm section formed by Maritz, Mabuza and Chris. This section definitely inspires the blowers into a stomping en-semble work and fast-riding solos. Drums move into the spotlight.

## Heights of Virtuosity

Moeketsi's mournful "I Re-member Billy" starts with lin-gering piano strains which set the mood for the composer's clarinet. The whole band joins in. The three sections, walling trumpets, billowing trombones and swarming reeds are notably good. Kippie's clarinet soars high and reaches the stagger-ing heights of virtuosity. Nick blowing an as-good-as-gold tenor sax concludes the work.

The whole rapport is wound up by McGregor's straight-forward, catchy tune "Now." This intriguing track is in the mould of groove jazz. Maritz's bass sets an arresting walking paca against the swarming wind instruments. Nick Moyakhe's tenor is highflown and imagina-tive, Mongezi Feza's trumpet solo superbly done. The band's

ensemble work is cohesive. Thi bluesy track is dedicated t

Featuring leading satellite in the South African jazz galaxy, this handsome pack age is evidently a product o hard work, inspiration an imagination.

imagination.

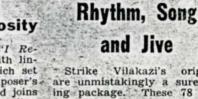
"Dollar's compositions are repertoire in themselves, and love them all... Kippie doesn regard himself seriously as composer but has a veroriginal and personal approact to writing which knocks mout — his things are full opossibilities," says McGrego who apparently is dedicated these remarkable jazz exponents. ponents.

## **Abundance** and Jive

Strike Vilakazi's original are unmistakingly a sure sell ing package. These 78 RPM records are winners all the way They have an abundance o rhythm, song, and they are ful of jive. They swing in their own wonderful way. Topping them is the New Year Swinger's treatment of "Jabulani" and "Thabazimbi" on (Winner O.K 135).

Another real swinger, a dazzling Christmas gift is by the Magnificent 7 with Shumi They render "Kwela Big 7 Lekker" on (Quality T.J. 696)

Sparks Nyembe rocks every body's nimble feet with rocking "Hamba Njale st/Bi.
Man Sparks" also Quality
T.J. 695).





A section of the Big Band's warm, melodic reed section - left to right, Ronnie Beer, Chris Colum-