



Reggie, named for Benny's son, is a brightish unison theme that sounds as though it might have been adapted from a line blown by Benny or any of the soloists. (After all, as that wise old Japanese philosopher Tony Scott once observed, "It all starts with the soloist; what he plays today the arranger writes tomorrow.") Appropriately for the final track, this offers some of the best straight-ahead blowing of the whole session, with substantial solos by Benny, Art, Grachan, and Harold and a consistently stimulating underline from Herbie and Roy.

It would probably be fitting to close with some comment about the advances made in the Jazztet, along with an implication that this is their strongest personnel to date and that earlier albums have hereby been superannuated. But I don't happen to believe in planned obsolescence. The Jazztet was one of the finest combos in jazz in 1959; it is one of the finest today. This is enough; invidious comparisons are not needed. By the same token, three years from now there will be no need to assume that the present LP has lost any intrinsic value. Any group in which Farmer and Golson are leaders, and for which they themselves select the rest of the membership, can hardly go wrong.

Leonard Feather

HI-Information

This album was recorded at Nola Penthouse Studios in New York City, with Tommy Nola engineering the session. Microphones used included an RCA 44 on each horn, another on the bass, and U-47 Telefunken on piano and drums. It was taped at 15 inches per second on an Ampex 300-2. Produced by Kay Norton.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jack Tracy'.

JACK TRACY
Mercury Recording Director



PERSONNEL: Art Farmer, trumpet and fluegelhorn; Benny Golson, tenor saxophone; Grachan Moncur III, trombone; Harold Mabern, piano; Roy McCurdy, drums; Herb Lewis, bass.

The fall of 1959 was an eventful season. Monterey held its second festival. Reviewers receiving the first Buck Hammer LP hailed him as a neglected genius. Cannonball and Nat toured with George Shearing's big band, then reformed their quintet. Mr. Khrushchev never did get to see Disneyland, but Mr. Shostakovich dug the Adderleys at the Jazz Workshop. Buddy Rich barbecued his sticks after closing at Birdland; he would sing forever and never again play drums. A New Beard in Town, its owner blowing a new spastic saxophone, made its first New York night club appearance.

It was in the context of these happenings that the Jazztet, after a break-in date at Washington's Village Note, made its New York debut November 17 at the Five Spot opposite Ornette Coleman. In the three years that have passed, personnel turnover has given the Jazztet a completely new face, except for its leaders; yet the brand of music for which the group stands has remained constant.

This does not mean that Art Farmer and Benny Golson have been satisfied to remain in one groove, or that the groove has become a rut; it is rather that they have retained the courage of their original convictions and have progressed in the path they charted for themselves when the combo was conceived. The names of the sidemen are different, but the instrumentation is the same.

The overall sound of this combination (trumpet, tenor sax, trombone, and rhythm) has proved so attractive that in the course of the Jazztet's comparatively short life several other groups have been organized with the same setup, or have expanded their format to duplicate this instrumentation; among the best known are Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, formerly a quintet, and the Miles Davis unit, which also added a trombone. Yet none of the others could even momentarily be confused with the Jazztet. In the first place, there has been no deliberate attempt to imitate the Farmer-Golson group's sound; secondly, the Jazztet depends so greatly on the improvisational talents of its leaders, and the arranging style of its writers, that no convincing facsimile could have been created.

The success of the Jazztet can be attributed to a diversity of virtues, as has been pointed out at some length in print. It has been praised for its uniformity and togetherness (Ralph J. Gleason), intriguing repertoire, substantial sound, effective voicings (Don Gold), organization and spontaneity (Gene Lees), maturity (Nat Hentoff), moderated abandon (Dick Lewis), sartorial elegance (George Crater). It is difficult for me to add anything to this catalog except my concurrence. The Jazztet offers organization without calcification, unity without jejunity, self-control without loss of soul. It's a pretty powerful gallery of credits any way you listen to it.

In this new set, the group's second for Mercury (the other was *Here And Now*, MG 20698, stereo SR 60698), Art and Benny lead the same personnel that flanked them on that previous occasion. As has always been their policy, the leaders allow each performance to reach a comfortable length during which everybody can stretch out, but without any danger of over-

extension. The selection of material, too, follows a pattern established early in the sextet's career, concentrating chiefly on original pieces but counterbalancing them with old popular songs.

Space Station, an effective opener at a don't-look-back tempo, was written by the band's trombonist, Grachan Moncur III. Grachan will make any listener feel old who can remember the Teddy Wilson and Billie Holiday records on which his father played bass 20-odd years ago. The track is a good workout for all hands, with some particularly impressive Harold Mabern chording and a well-knit rhythm section for which this tempo is a challenge taken in stride.

Domino, a French song published here in 1950, is in the minor mode like *Space Station*, but aside from this one link it could hardly be in stronger contrast as a demonstration of the Jazztet's range of material. Played as a waltz, it swings indomitably all the way, reminding us how much peerless jazz was lost—or rather, never created—because of the long-maintained reservations against using this meter. Had it not been for these self-imposed restrictions, today we might have a legacy of unique jazz waltzes by Bird, Tatum, Billie and numberless others who never got to record in anything but 4/4. Notice the enterprising intervals in Benny's solo, and his warm, intimate sound; also the admirable support offered by drummer Roy McCurdy during Grachan Moncur's solo.

Another Git Together, opening with deep blue piano funk by Mabern, eases into a simple blues unison theme that originated on a Jon Hendricks session featuring his protege Pony Poindexter. On the Farmer-Golson get-together, as on the earlier occasion, to quote Jon's observation, there wasn't "nothin' else to do but swing."

Note the intriguing rhythmic pattern established by McCurdy's sticks-on-cymbals: eight beats to the bar, but with the second and fifth of these eight doubled into two sixteenth notes apiece. Art's remarkable sound, on fluegelhorn here, is brilliantly show-cased in a solo that reveals all the qualities of flexibility, individuality and sensitivity attributed to him by his contemporaries. The get-together ends with a mechanical fade on the piano, providing a gentle conclusion to a well-sustained mood.

The wistful *Along Came Betty* is a Benny Golson original, first recorded by Benny in 1958 with Art Blakey's combo. Benny's own solo here offers another of those occasional reminders that a gifted expatriate named Lucky Thompson might have touched the Golson horn at one time and left it marked with his fingerprints. Art's limpid timbre and personal phrasing are well served by the tune's changes. The out chorus is a moving demonstration of the group's ensemble feeling.

This Nearly Was Mine, introduced in 1949 by Rodgers and Hammerstein in *South Pacific*, is another waltz, for which Art outlines the melody and takes the first blowing chorus. An unexpected feature is the use of new thematic material in the out-chorus.

ANOTHER GIT TOGETHER

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ART FARMER-BENNY GOLSON JAZZTET

SPACE STATION (<i>Grahan Mauer III</i>), <i>Kopyak Music, Inc., (BMI)</i>	5:15
DOMINO (<i>Louis Ferrari, Don Raye & Jacques Plante</i>), <i>Picketek Music Corporation, (ASCAP)</i>	7:06
ANOTHER GIT TOGETHER (<i>Hendricks & Pointezler</i>), <i>Hendricks Music, Inc., (ASCAP)</i>	6:20
ALONG CAME BETTY (<i>Benny Golson</i>), <i>Andante Music, Inc., (ASCAP)</i>	5:51
THIS NEARLY WAS MINE From "South Pacific" (<i>Oscar Hammerstein II & Richard Rodgers</i>), <i>Williamson Music Inc., (ASCAP)</i>	6:30
REGGIE (<i>Benny Golson</i>), <i>Andante Music, Inc., (ASCAP)</i>	4:32

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