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LaFaro-Fernández's own memories of her brother are constantly supplemented by her numerous interviews with the other friends, family members, girlfriends, and musicians that were a part of his life.

The second half of the book focuses more closely on the technical aspects of LaFaro's music. LaFaro-Fernández's contribution includes reproductions of pages from LaFaro's notebooks and commentary on his compositions by Eddie Gomez, Gary Peacock, and Marc Johnson, bassists who followed him as members of the Bill Evans Trio. A useful chapter by Jeff Campbell focuses on LaFaro's less often discussed but extremely competent work as an accompanist in a wide variety of idioms from swing to free improvisation, with 12 short transcriptions to illustrate his style. Phil Palombi, author of a book of transcriptions of bass solos from *Waltz for Debby* and *Sunday at the Village Vanguard*, adds a chapter on LaFaro as an improvising soloist.

This extremely comprehensive resource on Scott LaFaro would be useful for any reader interested in LaFaro, bass playing, or the jazz scene of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The engaging writing, numerous illustrations, and enormous number of contributors provides a rich, detailed picture of LaFaro and his community, both musical and personal, and the extensive discography and bibliography make this book the essential point of origin for any future studies of this artist. *Reviewed by Kimberly Hannon*

The Ghosts of Harlem: Sessions With Jazz Legends. By Hank O'Neal. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009. 488pp (hardcover). Photos, Discography, Index. ISBN 978-0-8265-1627-5. \$75

The Jazz Loft Project: Photographs and Tapes of W. Eugene Smith from 821 Sixth Avenue, 1957-1965. By Sam Stephenson. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009. 268pp (hardcover). Photos, Index. ISBN 978-0-307-26709-2. \$40

Two aesthetically attractive collections of writings and photographs, *The Ghosts of Harlem* and *The Jazz Loft Project* seek to expand the canon of historical jazz scholarship beyond the anecdotal interviews and technical analysis that already exist by providing a rich contextualization of the music they consider. Both books examine a uniquely specific style of jazz, the musicians who were integral in its fostering, and the location where that music thrived. Photography of the locations and people involved allow both books to succeed in detailing the everyday goings on that surrounded the swing of Harlem and the bebop of the loft scene typified by 821 Sixth Avenue. The lifestyle details of jazz that are consistently over-romanticized are here displayed with pointed photos and interviews or casual conversational transcripts, realigning the focus on a more accurate history of these genres.

The Ghosts of Harlem and *The Jazz Loft Project* report their information in two very different formats that succeed in emulating the styles of music represented. *Ghosts of Harlem* sticks to a predetermined set of questions that Hank O'Neal asks each musician interviewed (chronologically by birth year) resulting in several usually corroborating points of view of the Harlem scene. Forty-two brief, consistently structured interviews with little room to stray from predetermined questions aligns with the uniformly structured swing numbers that the musicians involved in this project once performed for ball-

rooms of dancers. In contrast, *The Jazz Loft Project* jumps around non-chronologically through the conversations between Gene Smith and the musicians and artists who frequented the building. The chapters outline frameworks for stream-of-conscious improvisation on a theme that can be carried through several decades, long after the building lost significance.

The Ghosts of Harlem collects Hank O'Neal's 42 interviews and portraits of prominent and lesser-known musicians active in the swing ballrooms of Harlem in the 1920s and 1930s. The height of the music's popularity during the so-called "Golden Age of Jazz" was also the peak of culture in the uptown neighborhood of Harlem, a time when people from all over the city would convene to dance, drink, and marvel at the entertainment prowess of the great big bands. The popular venues of the period, including the Cotton Club, Renaissance Ballroom, and Apollo Theater are juxtaposed pictorially in their heyday with the more current occupants of the spaces, usually boarded-up buildings that show the decline of both the area and the popularity of jazz in general. The men and women who performed at these clubs, including Cab Calloway, Benny Carter, Joe Williams, Jimmy Hamilton, and others reminisce and respond to a similar set of questions that gather details on the ambiance, racial diversity of the audience, favorite groups to hear and see, impressions of why the Harlem scene faded, and if the music will ever come back on a large scale. The stories from the musicians usually corroborate each other because of the specificity of the questioning, leaving less room for anecdotal ramblings that could have distracted from the overall flow of the book. The interviews are succinct reminiscences that piece together an unromantic view of the daily and nightly life of the musicians. While many of the interviews reflect on the fact that most of the performers have not even been back to Harlem since the 30s and the sad decline of live jazz, the book includes more recent accounts of a rebirth in the scene and a companion CD of the surviving interviewees performing in the studio.

In recent history, the digitization and restoration of unknown jazz recordings from original magnetic tape has brought to light many inspired jam sessions that would have otherwise remained unknown and unappreciated. Sam Stephenson's book painstakingly reviews and assembles 1,740 reels of tape recorded by noted magazine photographer W. Eugene Smith between 1957 and 1965, along with many of the 40,000 pictures Smith took while in residence at the loft. The backdrop for the book, a five-story loft building on New York City's Sixth Avenue, was wired for audio recording by Smith to document the frequent jam sessions of both prominent and unknown jazz musicians along with their everyday banter.

The success of *The Jazz Loft Project* lies in its careful contextualization of the music played, heard, and discussed there within the physical space of the neighborhood, the interconnected social community involved, and a backdrop of the era's historical and political events. For example, Stephenson juxtaposes bits of speeches by Martin Luther King and Fidel Castro that Smith recorded with events from the lives of the musicians he documented, and personal conversations captured between pianist/composer Thelonious Monk and arranger Hal Overton (another long-term loft resident) on the subject of their concerts at Town Hall (1959), Lincoln Center (1963), and Carnegie Hall (1964) serve as supplemental documentation to the celebrated recordings of the concerts themselves. The photography is evenly balanced in focus between the musicians in their celebrated

performance element as well as shots of the neighborhood and building itself to give context to the music created there. Finally by placing emphasis on lesser-known jazz greats like Zoot Sims and Sonny Clark and practically unknown artists like Ronnie Free, Stephenson avoids hero-worshipping already prominent figures in jazz. The end result of the multifaceted picture Stephenson creates is that the musicians are described rather than deified. The taped transcriptions show the musicians, photographers and artists in their day-to-day social habitat. The tapes do not glamorize the heroin fits of Sonny Clark or mysticize the meetings of Monk and Overton. Gritty vignettes glue the factual observations of the tape and photography together.

As far as the visual presentation of the book is concerned, there are excellent photo-representations of scenes from the jam sessions that continually filled the lofts, but the way that the author organizes the shots (non-chronologically) makes this an excellent artistic display. The layout of the book is easy to read, not forcing too much information to fill white space.

Both *The Ghosts of Harlem* and *The Jazz Loft Project* contribute a large amount of specific knowledge on the Harlem and Loft scenes by the musicians who were the creators. Through their use of musicians' voices as the primary sources of information, both books offer perspectives on the communities they describe that go far beyond the typical descriptions and romanticizations of the swing and bop eras. The very specific line of questioning that O'Neal uses creates a unified thread through the recollections of Harlem musicians on their heyday more than half a century ago that leaves the reader with a less glamorous notion of the Jazz Age, noting that it takes hard work to create and sustain a music scene. In a similar manner, *The Jazz Loft Project's* unique source material gives readers a perspective on musicians involved in the bebop that could not be gleaned from their depiction in magazines or even the music they created. By presenting exact, unfiltered, artist-to-artist conversations readers are given a glimpse of this scene that is uniquely candid and serves as an ideal supplement to more traditional sources.

Reviewed by Chris Teal

Popular Music

B-Sides, Undercurrents and Overtones: Peripheries to Popular in Music, 1960 to the Present. By George Plasketes. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009. 214pp. ISBN: 978-0-7546-6561-8. \$99.95

At the start of a b-side to one of George Harrison's 1970s singles he can be heard muttering something like, "Oh no. Not another B-side." Harrison disliked making B-sides but weathered them as a commercial necessity; in his later singles, Harrison was able to use album tracks to fill the void. If one were to expand such concepts to engulf Harrison's role as a Beatle, then one might say that his whole career with the Fab Four was sort of a "B-side." Despite the innovative musical qualities of Harrison contributions such as "Blue Jay Way," "Taxman" and the long-delayed "Not Guilty," he was never going to top what the Lennon-McCartney team could pack into an album in the way of hits — though it appears Harrison finally did so with *Abbey Road*. This proposed *locus classicus* at-