

A HUNDRED POSTERS

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editor / Alan Davies, Box 319, Boulder, Colorado, 80302

Stephen Emerson:

THE LEE MORGAN MEMORIAL ALBUM

He wanted to take in, to exhaust, to possess, the tones. It was another time. The buzzing airplane blended with the distant music. The fish scorched on the pan, a glazed, crisp spot formed on his finger as he burned it on the handle, so that in his unsure grip, the fork emptied the fish into the glass of milk. She smiled at him and he mistook it for a taunt. The record was called, Sidewinder.

This page is empty. A tone, or maybe an errand to run, could involve it? Sepia, odor of fruit, tangy of well being, they sing as they unload fruits and flowers, or the land lush with ripe fruits, or a woman, as in a painting, or what colors the void is the tone of a brass instrument, which we call, warm.

She called it a tire iron, when what she really meant was, a lug wrench. The term seemed right, but it wasn't. He said, I love you, when it meant..., and he meant.... He picked up the arm to hear that part of the record again, where the saxophone took over the vocal part, somewhat against himself, you could never have that moment again. The sound, however, was startlingly identical.

Although freedom is, primarily, an undeveloped idea, the means it uses are external and phenomenal: presenting themselves in history to our sensuous vision. A might be black, and O blue. Rays redolent of sea and sky, colors that glance from the vectors of, the trumpet solo. Lee's own freedom was inhibited by his unexampled romanticism, his alcoholism, and his gunshot death on stage. As the grande dame remarked, Don't even know how you can blow: the life you lead is bad, I know.

What is one to make of elegance? Are its pleasures to be honored or not? That a certain misery, to which she gives an exquisite tint, will draw you, is an inevitability. The objection here is that the inevitability lies in your own necessity to see what happens to be that. Lee could play "out" music as effectively as Tin Pan Alley Ballads.

She doesn't speak our language, you dig? The world drops away in a single sheet just out of reach, or like so much past sucked out the back of a speeding car. On a hot day, a street lined with pederasts in linen suits, also some alert people with whom connection might intelligently be reached. Right now I could really go for something that would combine fish, lemon, and garlic. At this instant you can have every skill and grace you ever wished for.

Lee was fourteen, but playing, influenced by Hot Lips when it wasn't fashionable. Stylish as Hammett, with quick doodling phrases and tricky lippping. Lee was doing everything he could to keep from laughing. This was before they wired his mouth. He blew You Go To My Head with blood oozing from the mouthpiece, wearing a mantle he'd got off Clifford Brown, from the corpse, that he'd had dyed and made into an electric blue pimp suit.

The most amazing rehearsals were done with a single sheet of music. It was just one of those things, how, crouched on the edge of a stool, embittered, horny, and proud of it, he still blew clean and fast, like the old pro he was. Invariably he took a break, drank a soda, dropped a speedball, his thoughts wandering to Ceora, who'd gone to his head

more times than he'd blown Sidewinder, neither did he allow hocus pocus in the studio, his intuitive response to the surroundings brought everything together, all forgot the woes of their lusts, the brass of his instrument cast a glow over the room.

It seems impossible to predict what will ultimately prove the emotional worth of anything, i.e., after time has passed, asking the begged question to please shut up til I've finished. I think I've got a thing here, he said, stapling the sheets together. To what extent will the unmartrialled activity of your mind serve your values. The coffin, containing Bud Powell, was preceded by the Jazzmobile, on which Barry Harris and Lee played Dance of the Infidels, Bouncin with Bud, and Time Waits. An estimated 5000 people lined the streets to say goodbye.