

in the nation's largest city. One other outlet, National Public Radio's WBGO, a 24-hour jazz station, is beamed into the Big Apple from Newark, N.J., just across the Hudson River.

Phil Schaap, an ebullient 33-year-old aficionado who helped establish the jazz policy at WKCR in 1970 while a Columbia freshman, is associated with both of these stations. A walking encyclopedia who can spout obscure historical facts and birth dates of jazz musicians at the slightest provocation, Schaap says the record industry sounded the death knell for jazz in 1956, when Elvis Presley generated such vast sales with his popular imitations of black rhythm 'n' blues. Since then, jazz records rarely have been issued as singles to be played on the radio or jukeboxes. This served to cut the music off from the general public.

Horace Silver, the pianist-composer who had many jazz-funk hits

in the sixties, recalls, "In the old days they would allow jazz singles if they had a danceable rhythm and some degree of commerciality about them; but today, if you're not playing stone rock 'n' roll or at least fusion, you can't get on the jukeboxes."

Schaap paints a grim picture for the future of jazz, noting: "There is not a jazz superstar under the age of 50. Many of them are dead. Mingus. Monk. Ellington. Now Basie. Wynton is a hot item in a jazz sense. He has the best shot at it of anybody. But he still isn't a Miles Davis in terms of popularity." He adds one final note: "We're in a decade of decision making. Someone is going to have to decide whether jazz is going to be a living or museum art."

These dire reflections are echoed by George Wein, who says he books his jazz festivals with popular artists like Ray Charles, B. B. King and Gladys Knight & the Pips—performers of "quality pop

## BLOWING SOLID GOLD

At the young age of 22, Wynton Marsalis is one of the most sought-after figures in the music world, fulfilling a busy schedule that finds him playing jazz part of the year and classical music the other. But his progress, unlike that of most young musicians, has been painstakingly plotted.

George Butler of CBS, who has been his mentor since 1980, first met Marsalis when he was 17 at the urging of Alvin Batiste, an outstanding New Orleans clarinetist.

"I saw Wynton as someone who could revitalize and dignify jazz," says Butler. "I wanted to sign him because I knew this was an extraordinary person who would be an excellent role model for the young."

His first album, *Wynton Marsalis*, was recorded for Columbia Records in 1981 when he was 19, but Butler deliberately sat on it for six months. "I didn't want it to come out and just be buried," he says. "I made media contacts, tried to stimulate interest in him. I made certain word got around at CBS as to how special he was."

After the album was released, Butler called his friend, comedian and actor Bill Cosby, who was scheduled to be guest host of the Tonight Show. Two days later Marsalis appeared on the show, with Cosby introducing him as "the young man I want my daughter to marry." Immediately his recognition factor soared.

Butler realized that novelty could be a vital factor. He fought for eight months before convincing the Masterworks division of CBS to record a classical album by Marsalis, which was released simultaneous-

ly with his second jazz album. "I wore them down with memos," Butler recalls. No one at CBS will disclose the amount of money invested in promoting Marsalis, but Butler says, "It is rare for a new artist to get this kind of treatment. They love him here because he can back up everything he says with his horn."

### The Horn Blows Solid Gold

That horn is beginning to yield plenty, according to Marsalis' manager, Ed Arrendell of Boston. A 31-year-old financial planning specialist with an M.B.A. from Harvard, Arrendell met Marsalis at a club in Seattle in January 1983. "We just took to each other naturally," recalls Arrendell. He agreed at that time to handle the young musician's business affairs.

They have established a planned approach to his career. The first step was to

renegotiate his record contract. Arrendell will not reveal Marsalis' current royalty rate but says he tightly budgeted the second jazz album at \$35,000, less than half the cost of the first. Already it is making money, along with the classical album. His next recording of jazz standards with strings has crossover possibilities and probably will yield at least one single.

Other items on the agenda included establishing a pension plan and an investment strategy and forming a corporation. Marsalis' touring schedule has also been reorganized to generate more exposure.

"When he gets to be, say, 60, he won't have to go out and gig," says Arrendell. "He'll be able to draw several hundred thousand dollars a year. My objective is to see that Wynton is financially independent so he'll never have to compromise his music to pay his bills." Marsalis can command up to \$40,000 for a performance.

Marsalis has his own advice for jazz musicians:

- "Watch out for people telling you 'It's always done this way,' because then you know you're about to be screwed again."

- "Get someone who knows more about the business than you do, because you can't understand all of it, though there are some things the musician should try to understand for himself."

- "Remember that all these people work for you. You don't work for them. Everybody in the business works for you, because it's your product that is being sold." □

P.G.



*Marsalis and Arrendell orchestrated a business approach to the musician's career*