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# CHORDS & DISCORDS

A Forum For Readers

## The New Coltrane

Exception should be taken to Dan Morgenstern's criticism of John Coltrane's involvement in the avant-garde and of his performance at the Titans of the Tenor Sax concert (*DB*, April 7). His group's extended performance exhibited controlled intensity and unity in terms of solos and over-all structure. Both Albert Ayler and Pharoah Sanders played with an organization and clarity that may have surprised those who had only heard of them by hearsay.

John Coltrane is to be respected for his refusal to rest on past achievements. His obligation to his audience is to be as musically honest as possible, regardless of the demands those who resist change may try to force upon him.

Van Penick  
Clint Padgett  
Princeton, N.J.

Just a comment on Dan Morgenstern's review of John Coltrane's concert.

I had the experience of catching Coltrane's new sound during his stint at the Plugged Nickel in Chicago, and I must agree that my reaction was much the same as Mr. M's. I was of the opinion that art should be the *symbolic* expression of emotion, not just the *expression* of it. Through art one should come to a better understanding of his feelings rather than just see them gutted out in front of him as Coltrane's group seemed to be doing.

I found it ironic that Morgenstern's Coltrane review followed his review of Bill Evans' Town Hall concert. One comes away from an Evans' interpretation feeling that this is what the composer must have meant by this piece; one comes away from the new Coltrane feeling confused, to say the least. The fact that Coltrane is a lyricist, perhaps second only to Evans himself, makes his new bag all the more tragic. Not only is jazz gaining noise, but it's losing a great source of beauty. Let's hope Coltrane rediscovers his old self.

Jerome P. Wagner, S.J.  
Chicago

## Rumsey And Kenton

As a person seriously interested in jazz, I enjoy *Down Beat* thoroughly. I always look forward to the *Blindfold Test* with real enthusiasm. In regard to the one featuring the comments of Howard Rumsey (*DB*, April 7), I have a few of my own to make.

Rumsey referred to Stan Kenton as "dear Stan carrying on his tradition as the Wagner of American jazz," that there is "no place for the band," and that it has "no particular place or rhyme or reason."

Kenton has chosen his "tradition" and the followers of progressive jazz are not always there, but judging from Kenton's ratings in the Readers Poll, Rumsey's comments weigh only slightly.

Kenton has always been way ahead of his time, which is sometimes very lonely

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