

light hustle beat over it, I don't think there's anything wrong with that aesthetically. It's no different for this generation, at this time, to do something like that than Sonny Rollins doing *I'm An Old Cowhand*. I'm not saying that we should do *Invitation* with a hustle beat because we want to make \$8 billion. I'm saying let's do it with a hustle beat because it's a beautiful melody. I've always wanted to play on the tune, but I feel funny now playing it as a ballad. Is it so ludicrous for Trane doing *It's You Or No One* with a swing feel? I'm sure they sat at the piano and decided they would swing the bridge rather than the whole tune. Is swinging the bridge any different? It was the groove of the time. It's no different today where you utilize the grooves of the times. It gets out there quicker. I look at it as a vehicle for improvisation, not necessarily as a dance record. Jazz, or jazz-rock took a different turn after *Bitches Brew*. Take three groups, Mahavishnu, Weather Report and Return To Forever. To Weather Report, composition was the primary thing—the written note as opposed to the Blue Note tradition where the improvisation was more important than the head of the tune. Mahavishnu had a little better balance. The solo was the most important thing, yes. But after a solo, instead of taking another solo, they would allude to either some kind of melodic unit that came earlier in the tune, the basic melody, or a new little tune, an interlude piece, and then another solo. Then you had Chick, the Return to Forever with Joe Farrell, Airto and Flora, and even the Billy Connors period. Here, not only the solo was important. The written music, which was several pages long, became equally important. Yet, it's only because of the Mahavishnu Orchestra that we are all able to do what we do.

Smith: What about Miles?

Khan: It was Miles who gave it all the impetus, but he didn't headline in front of 20,000 people as McLaughlin did. I don't think Miles could have played the kind of audiences Mahavishnu did, *Bitches Brew* or not.

Smith: But if it wasn't for Miles there wouldn't have been a McLaughlin, a Corea, a Lonnie Liston Smith, or a Cobham.

Khan: Yes, of course. But the Mahavishnu Orchestra reached the kind of popularity that opened the doors for other groups to play larger concerts—out of the recital halls and into the arenas.

Those three groups influenced me a lot. The music on the (Steve) Marcus Album *Count's Rock Band* goes as far back as a graduation piece I did for college. The point is that watching those groups grow and change made me understand that I had to change too. You can't get up there, play the head, and then solo, solo, solo. There's got to be more writing involved. The written notes are just as important as the solo.

Smith: You mentioned that you do "live" recordings. Explain please.

Khan: There are some overdubs, but unlike most records today, we are all there in the studio at the same time. No rhythm section first, no solos, then brass, reeds, strings separately. The Marcus record was done live. I'm proud of that. Most of what I do is that way. You have to take more care with the writing doing it that way. There's more chance of in-correctible errors.

Smith: Do you like session work?

Khan: Very much. Its keeps you fresh,

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