Bill Evans Trio
Sunday at the Village Vanguard

BILL EVANS, piano; SCOTT LaFARO, bass; PAUL MOTIAN, drums; Recorded "live" at the Village Vanguard, New York City, June 25, 1961.

Bill Evans' other Riverside albums include—Explorations (RLP 201; Stereo 1001)—Portrait in Jazz (RLP 315; Stereo 1165)—Everybody Digs Bill Evans (RLP 284; Stereo 1123)—New Jazz Conceptions (RLP 229).

SIDE 1

1. Gloria's Step (4:45) (Scott LaFaro)
2. My Man's Gone Now (4:20) (George & Ira Gershwin)
3. Solar (4:32) (Miles Davis)

SIDE 2

1. Alice in Wonderland (5:20) (Paris Rutherit)
2. All of You (6:20) (Cole Porter)
3. Jade Visions (5:40) (Scott LaFaro)

Just because I see a write-critic in the jazz field doesn't mean that I can't review an album like this because it is true that when one is forced to listen to "x" amount of LPs every week, there are times when the spirit can become feeble toward the very thought of records. But, fortunately, the most effective antidote to this malaise do entail less judgment in the trouble source itself. There is nothing more healing than good music.

Whenever a new BILL EVANS album is issued, another weapon has been added to my arsenal of therapy against boredom, fatigue, irritation or what-have-you. I have all his trio albums (this does not make me unique) but I have never written about him at length in any professional capacity.

"Everybody Digs Bill Evans" was used as one of his album titles and the phrase became a literalism. So much has been printed in praise of Bill that it is difficult to express positive thoughts about him without quoting some other critic, either literally or indirectly.

One writer who did an excellent job of capturing Evans, the man, was Don DeMicheal in the December 9, 1960 Down Beat. One reason for the piece's success was the cogent assessment he managed to draw from the pianist. In one, Bill was talking about his and it led to some accurate insights into just Evans said, "Actually I'm not interested in the final result, as a philosophy, nor in joining any movements. I don't pretend to understand it. I just find it comforting. And very similar to jazz. Like jazz, you can't explain it to anyone without having the experience. It's got to be experienced, because it's feeling not words. Words are the children of reason and, therefore, can't explain it. They really can't translate feeling because they're not part of it. That's why it bugs me when people try to analyze jazz as an intellectual theorem. It's not. It's feeling."

Anyone who has experienced the playing of Bill Evans is aware of his deep feelings and the great charity with which he communicates them. His written to the listener who has followed Evans' progress on Riverside is the constant striving for a real group projection where each man improvises and all think in it together. Most trios consist of bassist and drummer supplying rhythmic backing for a pianist. Here, there is an inter-relation of melodic and rhythmic phrases actively involving everyone. The freshness of the Evans trio's approach produces music with a truly magical aura.

The trio-pianist who is the back cover of the Vanguard album.

In listening to the present album, I had myself so absorbed that consciousness of my body disappeared and I became as one large ear, equipped only with a psyche. I am not aware of the act of listening. I am suffused by the sounds and become one with the music. Evans' comment — "It's feeling" — has never been more graphically presented.

The regular Tuesday matinees at New York's Village Vanguard have earned a wide reputation as attracting the most

— IRA GITLER

PRODUCED BY ORRIN KEEPNEWS. RECORDING ENGINEER: DAVE HOWE. MASTERED AT PLAZA SOUND STUDIOS. ALBUM DESIGNED AT THE RIVERSIDE STUDIOS. BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE SCHAPIRO.

The six selections that make up this album were recorded on the afternoon and night of June 25, 1961—the final performances of a two-week stand at the Vanguard for the Bill Evans Trio. (Specifically, the version of Scott LaFaro's lush Visions that concludes the album was the last number they played that evening.) As it turned out, this was to be the last time together for those three musicians. For it was only ten days later that LaFaro was killed in a tragic highway accident.

It was a shocking death—as it all death, and sudden death in particular. To us as deeply involved in jazz, the loss of a young man in the very midst of the process of realizing what were generally recognized as really major potentials as his instrument, is all the more tragic. For Bill Evans and Paul Motian, who had worked so closely with Scott for most of the past two years, it was the double loss of both a friend and a vitally important fellow-musician.

I had asked Bill to write a few words about Scott and their association to be printed in this space. He tried, but not too surprisingly found that he simply could not. I cannot really substitute Bill here, but having heard this trio countless times, and having supervised three sets of their recording sessions, I am very much aware of the strong, unusual and richly creative interrelation between Evans and LaFaro, and of the way in which they stimulated, challenged and assisted each other towards the development of an approach they considered far more rewarding than the conventional 'lead voice plus two rhythm' of most piano-trio jazz.

I know that the Vanguard engagement as a whole was musically a highly satisfying one to the group and that they were all pleased with the overall results of the last day's recording. In our assembling of this album, Bill's preferences were influenced by a desire to emphasize Scott's contributions, but I don't think sentiment interfered with judgment there. The album does happen to be one that can stand as a fitting memorial to the abbreviated career of a talented bassist. Bill has said he'd like to think of it as "dedicated" to Scott by him. I'd prefer to put it that this LP can serve as a permanent reminder of not only how much, but also why, Scott LaFaro will be dearly missed by Bill Evans, and indeed by everyone who ever heard him play.

— ORRIN KEEPNEWS

This record will provide highest quality sound reproduction on both standard long-play and stereophonic playback systems.