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From the editor

We're seeing stars again this month – given the pummelling from pro-star readers, possibly from being punch-drunk. By popular demand they're back, with conditions in an attempt to admit some sobriety. Some writers have asked where's the scope for jazz assessment in the ratings regime (see page 20)? Do you give five stars to a record that made or will make history but you don't consider jazz? Answer: yes, but make your opinion clear in the text. Likewise, four- and five-star ratings will need a lot of textual substantiation in musical terms – or why the rating? The new ratings are designed to achieve long-view objectivity and eliminate such subjectivities as "I love this artist" or "I love this music" – such feelings can be made clear in the text. Bizarrely then, we should therefore see more three-star reviews of deeply cherished recordings and more five stars for unloved but unique music. I predict attempts at ***(*) are going to dominate: To paraphrase Mick Jagger, "It's only jazz but I like it".

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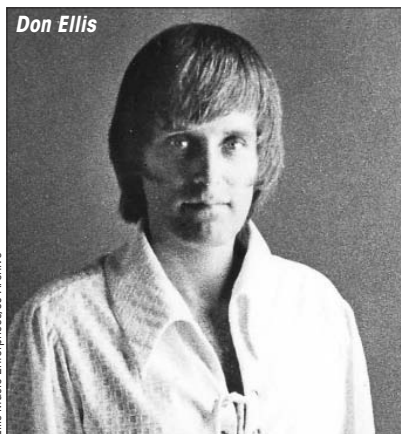
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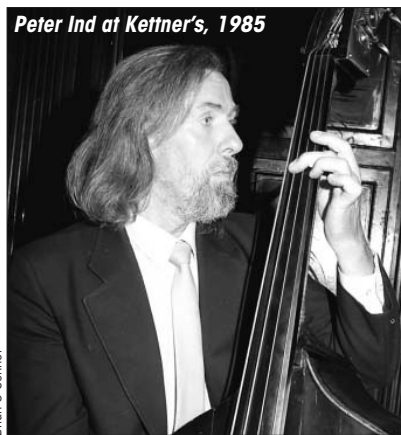
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Outbreaks of pretentiousness are a good thing, says Brian Morton

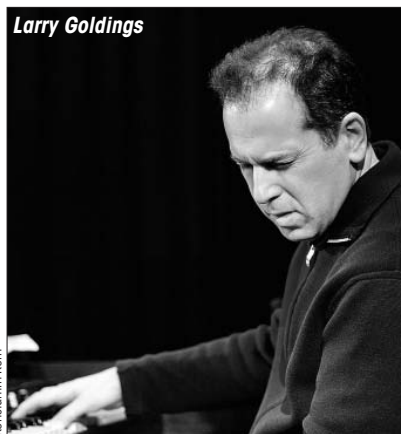
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