INNOVATIONS IN BRITISH JAZZ
VOL.1 (1960-1980)
BY JOHN WICKES
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INNOVATIONS IN BRITISH JAZZ 1960-1980 by John Wickes sets the standard to which other similar histories in the future will need to aspire! Avant contributor and jazz fan John Wickes, takes us through Britain’s own often unsung contribution to jazz history in 350 pages detailing an incredible period in British music. The book also contains some very rare photographs never seen before! Volume 2 coming soon!!

This is a book that needed writing. It covers that important period when a new generation of British Jazz musicians emerged no longer in thrall of American idols and determined to stand on their hind legs and growl. It was a brave and courageous time. It was a time of revolution in music, art and life. John Wickes’ book is the history of that revolution.

John documents meticulously the successes and achievements of the period without ignoring the screw-ups and wrong-turnings that always accompany innovation. This book has clearly been a labour of love. It’s a remarkably thorough and detailed history of that crucial period of British Jazz. There’s nobody missing who should be here and a few half-forgotten faces get name-checked along the road.

This book succeeds in locating its subject in the social and political changes that were taking place. John Wickes clearly understands that culture doesn’t exist in some Arts Council vacuum but is responsive and responsible to its time. It’s also clear that the author is no Sixties’ revisionist. There have been too many from Left and Right that have decried the decade’s achievements and the fact is that its cultural successes far outweigh its failures.
It was a time of tremendous openess. There just weren’t the boundaries between different styles or genres and players were willing to go out and experiment. It was normal to find Henry Lowther playing with John Mayall or John Surman with Alexis Korner or Mike Osborne with Mike Cooper. Those were the times and John details them very well indeed.

The book contains a wealth of photographs documenting the period discussed, taken by some of Britain’s leading jazz photographers - most of them never published before. Also reproduced is a selection of over 150 album covers; plus the book is accompanied by a free comprehensive CD containing music performed by musicians active during this time.

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