

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opening\\_Night\\_%28album%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opening_Night_%28album%29)

*Opening Night* is a big band jazz recording of the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra playing at the Village Vanguard club in New York City in February 1966. This was the first performance of the group at this club although the recording was not released until 2000.<sup>[2]</sup> A 40+ year tradition for Monday nights at the Village Vanguard began from this first evening for the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra which later became the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra and eventually the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra.

### Track listing

1. *Introduction (Mel Lewis & Alan Grant)* – 1:50
2. "Big Dipper" – 5:10
3. "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" (Van Heusen, Burke) – 3:47
4. "Once Around" – 12:37
5. "All My Yesterdays" – 4:08
6. "Morning Reverend" – 4:50
7. "Low Down" – 4:25
8. "Lover Man" (Davis, Ramirez, Sherman) – 5:08
9. "Mean What You Say" – 5:35
10. "Don't Ever Leave Me" – 4:15
11. "Willow Weep for Me" (Ronell) – 6:25
12. "The Little Pixie" – 13:45

All songs composed by Thad Jones except as noted.

### Personnel

- Thad Jones – flugelhorn
- Mel Lewis – drums
- Hank Jones – piano
- Richard Davis – bass
- Sam Herman – guitar
- Jerome Richardson – alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet, flute
- Jerry Dodgion – alto saxophone
- Joe Farrell – tenor saxophone, clarinet, flute
- Eddie Daniels – tenor saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet
- Pepper Adams – baritone saxophone
- Snooky Young – trumpet
- Jimmy Owens – trumpet
- Bill Berry – trumpet
- Jimmy Nottingham – trumpet
- Bob Brookmeyer – trombone
- Jack Rains – trombone
- Garnett Brown – trombone
- Cliff Heather – trombone

**Released** May 28, 2000

**Recorded** 1966 February 7, The [Village Vanguard](#), [New York City](#)

**Genre** [Jazz](#)

**Length** 71:55

**Label** Alan Grant Presents

**Producer** Alan Grant

<http://www.allmusic.com/album/opening-night-thad-jones-mel-lewis-big-band-at-the-village-vanguard-february-7-1966-mw0000659800>

## Review by Ken Dryden [\[L\]](#)

The [Thad Jones/Mel Lewis](#)-led big band began as a rehearsal group that eventually became a regular feature on Monday nights at the Village Vanguard, an evening the famous nightclub had previously been closed before their long run began. Much of the music recorded was featured on the five-CD box set put out by Mosaic (already out of print by the time of this release), but this live CD actually documents over 70 minutes of the band's first public performance at the Village Vanguard on February 7, 1966. [Alan Grant](#), at the time a jazz disc jockey on WABC-FM, promoted the band's first date at the club while also serving as master of ceremonies, and wisely saved a tape of the evening's music before finally releasing it himself in 2000. The recording is very intimate, as if one is seated in the middle of the action at the famous venue, and this critically acclaimed big band kicks off their initial concert with flying colors. Either [Thad Jones](#) or [Bob Brookmeyer](#) (who is heard on valve trombone) are responsible for most of the arrangements, including the flügelhornist/co-leader's well-known "Mean What You Say" and "Don't Ever Leave Me," as well as delicious (though not clearly credited) arrangements of standards such as "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," "Lover Man," and "Willow Weep for Me." The band includes a formidable cast: [Hank Jones](#), [Jerome Richardson](#), [Pepper Adams](#), [Snooky Young](#), [Jerry Dodgion](#), and [Eddie Daniels](#), just to name a few. With a paucity of recordings available on CD by the [Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra](#), this historic disc should be considered an essential purchase for fans of this exciting band.



<http://www.discogs.com/Thad-Jones-Mel-Lewis-Big-Band-Opening-Night-Monday-February-7-1966/release/690847>

Label: BMG Music (New Zealand) – 74321 51939 2

Format: CD

Country: New Zealand

Released: 1997

Genre: Jazz

Style: Big Band

## Tracklist

1	Introduction - Mel Lewis & Alan Grant	1:50
2	Big Dipper	5:10
3	Polka Dots & Moon Beams	3:47
4	Once Around	12:37
5	All My Yesterdays	4:08
6	Morning Reverend	4:50
7	Low Down	4:25
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10	Don't Ever Leave Me	4:15
11	Willow Weep For Me	6:25
12	The Little Pixie	13:45

## Credits

- Double Bass – Richard Davis (2)
- Engineer – Jason Backhouse
- Percussion – Mel Lewis
- Piano – Hank Jones
- Producer – Alan Grant
- Saxophone [Alto] – Jerome Richardson, Jerry Dodgion
- Saxophone [Baritone] – Pepper Adams
- Saxophone [Tenor] – Eddie Daniels, Joe Farrell
- Trombone – Cliff Heather, Garnett Brown, John Rains
- Trombone [Valve] – Bob Brookmeyer
- Trumpet – Bill Berry, Snooky Young\*, Jimmy Nottingham, Jimmy Owens, Thad Jones (tracks: 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12)
- Written By – Thad Jones

## Notes

"Exciting original previously unreleased tapes."

Engineered at Stebbing Recording Centre, Auckland, New Zealand.

"Morning Reverend" is dedicated to the Rev. John Gensel.  
Liner notes by Alan Grant & Warwick Woodward.

<http://www.cduniverse.com/productinfo.asp?pid=3113409&style=music&fulldesc=T>

## Product Description

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Recorded live at the Village Vanguard, New York City on February 7, 1966. The Thad Jones/Mel Lewis-led big band began as a rehearsal group that eventually became a regular feature on Monday nights at the Village Vanguard, an evening the famous nightclub had previously been closed before their long run began. Much of the music recorded was featured on the five-CD box set put out by Mosaic (already out of print by the time of this release), but this live CD actually documents over 70 minutes of the band's first public performance at the Village Vanguard on February 7, 1966. Alan Grant, at the time a jazz disc jockey on WABC-FM, promoted the band's first date at the club while also serving as master of ceremonies, and wisely saved a tape of the evening's music before finally releasing it himself in 2000. The recording is very intimate, as if one is seated in the middle of the action at the famous venue, and this critically acclaimed big band kicks off their initial concert with flying colors. Either Thad Jones or Bob Brookmeyer (who is heard on valve trombone) are responsible for most of the arrangements, including the flügelhornist/co-leader's well-known "Mean What You Say" and "Don't Ever Leave Me," as well as delicious (though not clearly credited) arrangements of standards such as "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," "Lover Man," and "Willow Weep for Me." The band includes a formidable cast: Hank Jones, Jerome Richardson, Pepper Adams, Snooky Young, Jerry Dodgion, and Eddie Daniels, just to name a few. With a paucity of recordings available on CD by the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, this historic disc should be considered an essential purchase for fans of this exciting band. ~ Ken Dryden Thad Jones met Mel Lewis while playing alternate sets in the 1940s - Thad with the Count Basie Band & Mel with the Stan Kenton Band. Eventually, forming their own band was discussed, and shortly thereafter, their ideas became a reality. Here is over 71 m Personnel: Thad Jones (flugelhorn); Mel Lewis (drums); Sam Herman (guitar); Jerome Richardson (flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone); Joe Farrell (flute, clarinet, tenor saxophone); Eddie Daniels (clarinet, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone); Pepper Adams (baritone saxophone); Jimmy Owens, Snooky Young, Bill Berry, Jimmy Nottingham (trumpet); Garnett Brown, Jack Rains (trombone); Bob Brookmeyer (valve trombone); Hank Jones (piano); Max Roach (drums). Liner Note Authors: Stu Grant; Alan Grant. Recording information: Village Vanguard, New York, NY (02/07/1966). Arrangers: Thad Jones; Bob Brookmeyer.

<http://www.jazz.com/music/2008/1/13/thad-jones-mel-lewis-big-dipper>

Thad Jones (flugelhorn), Mel Lewis (drums), Bill Berry (trumpet), Jimmy Nottingham (trumpet), Jimmy Owens (trumpet), Snooky Young (trumpet), Garnett Brown (trombone), Jack Rains (trombone), Bob Brookmeyer (trombone), Jerome Richardson (reeds), Joe Farrell (reeds), Pepper Adams (baritone sax), Hank Jones (piano), Richard Davis (bass), Mel Lewis (drums).

Composed and arranged by Thad Jones

**Recorded:** Village Vanguard, New York City, February 7, 1966