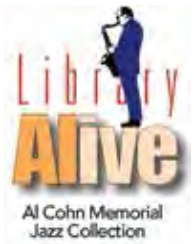




The NOTE



Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection of East Stroudsburg University • Spring / Summer 2017



CLARK TERRY • GERRY MULLIGAN • DEER HEAD RECORDS

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The NOTE contains some content that may be considered offensive. Authors' past recollections reflect attitudes of the times and remain uncensored.

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From the Collection...



**Cover Photo (front):
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students from the Deer Head
to the Castle Inn
Photo by Garth Woods**



**Center Spread:
Gerry Mulligan
Central Park Rehearsal
Photo by Bill Crow**



**Cover Photo (back):
Gerry Mulligan 1960
Photo by Herb Snitzer**

The NOTE



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The mission of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection is to stimulate, enrich, and support research, teaching, learning, and appreciation of all forms of jazz.

The ACMJC is a distinctive archive built upon a unique and symbiotic relationship between the Pocono Mountains jazz community and East Stroudsburg University.

With the support of a world-wide network of jazz advocates, the ACMJC seeks to promote the local and global history of jazz by making its resources available and useful to students, researchers, educators, musicians, historians, journalists and jazz enthusiasts of all kinds, and to preserve its holdings for future generations.

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A Note from the Collection Coordinator



Fran Kaufman

Dr. Matt Vashlishan

I will begin with the big news. For those of you annually on the lookout for Zoot Fest information, the next Zoot Fest will be on Thursday, March 29, 2018. We moved the date to align with the 30th anniversary of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. Started back in 1988, it's hard to believe that we are here 30 years later! There are big plans in the works, and part of those plans involve an early evening concert with a drastically reduced ticket price. The Collection can't survive without community support, and my goal for this upcoming concert (and others - more on that below) is to get the local community more involved. We appreciate support from all communities, and I know many of you travel some distance to attend Zoot Fest. This is ideally a time we can bring different age groups and communities together to celebrate the best jazz that history has to offer. So like always, please keep a lookout on esu.edu/jazzatesu for all information regarding Zoot Fest and other events we will have in coordination with the Collection.

As the ACMJC Coordinator, my efforts to promote the Collection are spread out through a variety of

mediums. Sometimes I communicate with you through this column, other times I get to spend time on the phone with you, or through email. Sometimes I meet people in town and the conversation leads to discussing jazz. One of these discussions in particular took place at the local coffee shop in town, Café Duet.

The owner of the café and I were having one of our usual philosophical conversations where I try to persuade him to realize his opinion isn't what he thinks it is (a fun game we used to play there often until he no longer worked as a barista behind the counter). On this particular occasion, the opinion he had was that he didn't like any big band music. Now, you must realize that along with incredible food, a hip atmosphere and excellent coffee, this café has one of the highest quality, well-rounded playlists in town (and only on vinyl!). I knew he had great taste in a variety of different genres, but as active and passionate as I am in the big band world, I simply refused to believe that he didn't like any big band music! We proceeded to discuss some of my favorite records, old and new, this composer and that composer, some of which he was familiar with and some he wasn't. I left him that day insisting there was a big band record out there that he absolutely loves, and I wouldn't back down! And in true form of our little game, he insisted there wasn't, and wouldn't back down either.

Fast-forward several months. We didn't see each other a single day during this time. My guess is business and family got the best of our social jousting. Out of the blue I get a voicemail on my cell phone, and it was him saying, "You'll never believe this and I hate to admit it, but you were right! I found a big band recording that I love!" So I stopped in the shop again and we talked about it. What was the

record? The Duke Ellington band playing The Nutcracker Suite! If you haven't heard this recording it is worth the effort.

Our conversation migrated towards how accessible this recording can make jazz to a wide variety of audiences. The culmination of our discussion that day is to try to bring that music to the community. I recently started planning to combine forces with a few local businesses to present this music to the community in its entirety this coming holiday season, featuring the musicians of the Water Gap Jazz Orchestra. So once again, please keep a lookout on esu.edu/jazzatesu for information regarding this concert. If you plan on attending the COTA Festival in the Water Gap this September, the Ellington Nutcracker could be a nice event to hold you over until the new Zoot Fest date in March.

The last few issues of the Note were themed issues, which got us off the beaten path a bit. This issue will set us back on track with a more random selection of material. Dave Liebman's Smithsonian interview is back picking up where we left off. Prior to this issue, I included his original interview with Bill Kirchner in its raw state, but upon further reflection I started to trim the fat a bit to make it an easier read. There are also a few newer contributors getting their feet wet, so enjoy that material as well. Please feel free to contact me with any suggestions or comments you might have as you read. I would like to give special thanks to Jazz Journal International for permission to provide you some of the material in this issue. I think it's a great partnership with the authors that I can present their work to you and at the same time provide you all with unique photographs that have been donated to the ACMJC that accompany their writing.

Thank you for your support and enjoy! ☺



James Richard

By Su Terry • Suterry.com

Warm Ups and Hot Ideas

In the winter of 1996-97 I lived in Köln, Germany for several months while playing a show at the Tanzbrunnen Theater, situated in a bucolic area on the River Rhine. Between the show and other gigs I didn't have much time off, but I did get to a movie theater once. *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, starring Marlon Brando, had just been released. The version I saw was dubbed in German, of course. Weird, especially since one of the main points of going to see a Marlon Brando film is to hear his unforgettably dulcet vocal modulations.

I settled into my seat in the well-appointed theater, preparing to ignore the previews. I never pay attention to them; I consider them an infringement on my space. In the old days of network television, I understood the need for ads to subsidize the program since viewers were watching it for free (if you don't count paying for the electricity and the home in which to watch the TV set you also bought.) But if I've already paid for something, why do I have to be subjected to otherwise unwanted content? Oh wait, I forgot: in the old days, we paid to have things. Now we pay to NOT HAVE things.

So there I was in a German movie theater, eagerly awaiting the appearance of Marlon Brandenburg, né Brando. Waiting, waiting, waiting. The movie, as it turned out, was preceded by a full 30 minutes of previews and advertisements! Americans would never stand (or sit) for this, I thought. But a mere decade later the same thing was happening in the States, not only in movie theaters but also on television (I guess I'll leave the sound on this time 'cause my muting thumb is SO tired).

Having traveled a good deal (and gotten paid for it, unlike you schlubs who fork over big bucks just because you don't want to work on your vacation like I do) I've been impressed with many innovations I've seen while on tour—long film previews and TV advertisements

notwithstanding. Apparently filmmaker Michael Moore had the same idea. His 2015 documentary *Where Should We Invade Next* features Moore's team scouting out several countries, researching good ideas to steal. How about eight weeks paid vacation in Italy? Or maximum security prisons in Norway where the prisoners have their own apartments and the facility has a music teacher, a recording studio and its own record label? I loved the brief scene of a thermalbad (thermal bath) in Germany, which I frequented weekly while living in Köln. In addition to restoring my shredded equilibrium (it wasn't an easy gig) the *thermalbad* was very affordable. All of the above are testaments to civilized living, n'est pas?

I recall a scene in the Netherlands as I was strolling down the *Binnenhof* about 30 years ago: a lady was walking a dachshund whose hind legs didn't work. He did just fine, propelling himself with his front legs while the hind legs tagged along on a miniature skateboard. I understand this workaround is commonplace now, but in the 1980s it sure wasn't. On the other side of the planet, in Tokyo Station in 1992, I bought a CAN OF HOT COFFEE from a vending machine. Brilliant! How do machines dispense hot coffee in the States? A flimsy cardboard cup drops down, some brown liquid squirts out, you spill it taking it off the tray because there's no lid. Attention, entrepreneurs: vending machines with hot coffee in cans—a gold mine! You heard it here first—cut me in for 1 percent and we're good.

In South America (my current base of operations as Artist in Residence at the Jazz Society of Ecuador) toilet paper is dispensed by machines outside the stalls. This handily circumvents the possibility that loose rolls of TP have rolled around on the possibly-wet floor, been picked back up and left sitting on top of whatever small ledge or asymmetrical platform surrounds the toilet,

where they can fall off and roll around on the floor some more, as happens in my native land quite often. Although it's possible that the TP in the machines also could have been dropped and rolled around on the floor before being picked back up and re-inserted—but the idea is good, you must admit! We can always work the kinks out later.

Let's help out our new White House administration that purports to be bringing change to the United States. I propose that a new commission be formed, somewhat on the order of Michael Moore's quest. It could be called the Committee for Appropriation of Foreign Ideas (CAFI). The job of this committee would

be to travel around the world on the government's dime, writing down and photographing every good idea it comes across, like skateboards for mobility-challenged dachshunds and vending machines with hot coffee in cans. Surely, readers of The Note would be ideal members of such a team. Submit your resumé's to this address:

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Compensation will be commensurate with experience. Kickbacks are negotiable. And I could use a nice, hot, canned coffee right about now. ☺



Illustration by Jonathan Glass — fountaingallerynyc.com

Clark Terry Interview with Steve Voce

For someone who must be amongst the most gregarious of jazz musicians, Clark Terry presents an atypically lone figure. For more than 30 years he has been acknowledged as one of the best craftsmen on his horns and has reached an eminence where the myriad of solo bookings he takes across the world each year are taken for granted, very much in the way that his seemingly infallible inspiration is. Promoters program his name at Nice or Newport without thinking twice. You can stick Clark with anything and it will work, and not only that, whatever it is will reach new levels because of his presence.

Terry is a great teacher with a real interest in the past and present state of the horn, and his was a benign influence on most of the post-bop players. His fluency and tone production are immaculate and something for young musicians to try to emulate. All this mastery comes with an effervescent character and sense of humor that make him one of the musicians most popular with his fellows. Add his strong sense of integrity—what you see is what you get—and it begins to sound as though we have an exceptional man in our sights.

He seems to enjoy himself so much that his appears to be a life without problems, and it is true that today he is probably happier than at any stage of his life. But he has had his ups and downs likely anybody else: He was shattered by the long illness and subsequent early death of his wife. Then on one occasion he was driving home through New York when his car had a puncture.

Clark tried to pull the hub cap off the wheel. The inside edge of the cap was razor sharp and sliced into all his fingertips. Apart from not being able to play for some time, the shock of this probably induced his diabetes—a blow to one who had so manifestly enjoyed a taste; ever since he has been able to drink only a little red wine.

He loves big bands and ran one of his own for years with great artistic success, but he doesn't have the tough nature that band leading requires. He learned a never-to-be-forgotten lesson when he toured Europe at the head of a team of ex-Basie stars and discovered what it is like to be at the wrong end of a prima donna temperament.

This begins to sound like a sad story, but that cannot be in the case of a man who makes people happy just to look at him. A man who, ironically, is known to thousands as a great and humorous vocalist, rather than one of the greatest of all jazz trumpeters.

THE INTERVIEW

In my hometown of St. Louis there were so many trumpet players, all the way back to Charlie Creath, the King Of The Cornet, Bruz Woods, Baby James, Levi Madison, Dewey Jackson, Mouse Randolph, Sleepy Tomlin. All were fantastic players, and us younger kids always had a bunch of these guys to look up to. Some we could ask questions of, but some we couldn't because in those days the older players thought that the younger players were trying to get in on their scene.

You remember even Louis Armstrong back in those days used to keep the handkerchief over his fingers so that the cats couldn't steal his tricks. But fortunately that attitude is really the opposite of the situation today. Those of us who are involved in jazz education feel that it's a very important thing to impart knowledge to young people. Many of the things that are involved can't possibly be documented and if we go down with them so go down most of the secrets.

Amongst the first recordings that I learned to solo from were Erskine Hawkins' Tuxedo Junction and No Soap. I was very much surprised to find out that the soloist was not Erskine Hawkins, but a trumpeter by the name of Dud Bascomb. He had a unique approach to chords and resolutions and the harmonic structure he used was very original. He would pick beautiful notes out of the chord that the average person wouldn't even think of settling on. He would play flatted fifths, flatted ninths even back then in the early forties. So I was listening to him, and I was trying to use Lester Young's type of articulation.

I had a different concept of the way the trumpet should sound, and I played with a piece of felt over the horn. Perhaps my fluent technique came partly from the fact that I used to practice on the clarinet book when I was in the navy. The passages in the clarinet books seemed to be more legato and fluid—the trumpet ones tended to be staccato. I just loved to get involved in the velocity part of phrases.

As a result of this I became pretty versatile, so that people hired me to play certain roles. These may not have been roles that I would have chosen for myself, but I tried hard to do everything that was required of me. I suppose that if I had had the security and freedom I would have gotten into a different vein a little quicker.

Once I got out of the big bands I was more relaxed and able to get into what I eventually considered to be my thing. Most of the time in the old days the big band leaders would ask me to play something



Herb Snitzer

Clark Terry in Boston 1983

similar to the same solos each night so that alone would stymie you. That would put a stumbling block in the path of your ability to create.

With regard to the so-called half valve thing, it's not true that I derived my style from Rex Stewart. One of my contemporaries mentioned that I derived the style from Rex Stewart and the half valve, which was untrue. I'd never even heard or seen Rex Stewart at this particular time and I never knew what he was doing.

After I got into the Ellington band some of the guys in the band played this record where he was talking through the horn with Ivy Anderson singing, and I learned to do that little bit from the record, but it is completely wrong to suggest that I developed a style built around Rex's. Leonard Feather said that I played the half valve style. The only time my valves are half-valved when playing is when they don't come up, when they stick or something. I'm too busy trying to make as clear a note, as full a note or as beautiful a note, as meaningful a note or as colorful a note as I possibly can. I found that there were many other specific ways

to create that sort of effect other than to half suppress a valve.

I spent much of the early days in St. Louis with friends like Ernie Wilkins, although even then I used to travel a lot to out-of-town jobs. There was a pianist from East St. Louis, which is where Miles was raised up. I don't know his last name. Don't think any of us did, but we used to call him Duke. He was a fantastic player who was later killed while he was travelling to New York to start working there.

One time I got a phone call in the middle of the night. "Hiya, Clark." I'd just been hanging out and I was kind of half-wasted and half sleepy and very annoyed because someone's calling me up between four and five o'clock in the morning. "This is Duke." "Duke? What you doing calling me up at this time? Call me up later in the day," I growled. "What time?" he asked. "Any time after two or three o'clock." He said "Yeah, OK," and hung up.

I'm angry and mumbling, "This jive turkey calling me up at this time of the morning, gobble, gobble,

gobble.” I’m doing my mumbles bit, you know. So I slept until about one or two o’clock and finally the phone rings. “Hello, this is Duke. You told me to call you,” and the voice sounds a little different this time so I said, “Duke who?” and he said “Duke Ellington. I called you earlier this morning and you told me to call you back this evening after you’ve had some rest.”

I said, “Ooh yes, that’s right!” I felt like crawling under the bed, even though he wasn’t mad. I couldn’t believe that I had talked like this to Duke Ellington and that he actually called me back! This was of course before I went in the band permanently and he was calling to ask me to come into the band temporarily. To replace Frances Williams, I think it was.

The other Duke I mentioned used to work with Miles Davis and Miles will probably recall his last name. Miles’ teacher, Elwood Buchanan, was an old buddy of mine. We used to drink beer together in a couple of our favorite watering holes, and always used to be telling me. “Man, you’ve got to come over to school and hear this little cat, Dewey Davis, man, he’s fantastic.”

Elwood taught over in East St. Louis. So I went over one day and sure enough here was this little skinny cat about two inches wide all the way down and very, very shy and timid. When he played you could tell then that he was a very talented person. At this time he wanted to use vibrato and every time he would shake a note, Buchanan would slap his wrist and I’m sure that this was one of the determining factors in the puritanical straight sound which Miles developed.

On one particular occasion I was playing down at Carbondale, Southern Illinois, with a pianist by the name of Benny Reid, who had one leg. We called him Dot And A Dash. We were playing this May Day celebration and Miles came down with his high school band from East St. Louis. He came up while I was playing with Benny and asked me to show him some things he wanted to do on the trumpet. “Man,” I told him, “I don’t want to talk about no trumpet!” I was looking at the little girls sashaying around, so Miles, very crestfallen, said “OK,” and walked away.

About six months later I went to our favorite jazz spot called the Elks Club, where Roy would come and hang out. There were about 90 stairs up to the place and when I was about half way up I heard this fantastic trumpet, very fast. “Wow!” I said, “That’s a new horn, I never heard that one before.” I ran up the rest of the stairs. Eddie Randall’s band was playing and I ran up to the bandstand. This timid little skinny cat was playing and I said “Hey, man! Aren’t you the guy . . . ?” and he said “Yeah, I’m the cat you fluffed off at Carbondale.” We laugh about that quite often now.

It was through me that Count Basie acquired Ernie Wilkins. We were on Broadway at the Strand with the film *Key Largo*. I was talking to Basie one day while he was in the steam room. “Hey,” he said, “I need an alto player and a trombone player.” “OK,” I said, “I’ll get ‘em

for you,” because up to that point I’d brought many people into the band and he’d never questioned my choice of any of them. Right away I’m thinking, “...Alto player? I wonder if Ernie can play alto?” He was strictly a tenor player then but I figured he had a big enough sound, he read well and he’s a good enough musician. So I called Ernie in St. Louis.

“Hey Ernie! You wanna come and join Basie’s band?” He said, “Aw, man, stop kidding me!” I said, “Seriously. Can you get here in the next couple of days?” After some time I managed to convince him that I was serious. “And bring Jimmy,” I told him. “Jimmy too!” (His brother Jimmy is a fine trombone player). So Ernie and Jimmy came to New York and the next morning I took them into the theatre and I said, “Basie, these are your new alto and trombone players. Ernie Wilkins and his brother Jimmy. And in case Jimmy Mundy and the other arrangers get tied up, Ernie can write very well he can help them out.”

So Ernie came in with what we called a gray ghost, an old zinc plated alto saxophone that he had borrowed from somebody who had played saxophone in the church choir! It was held together by rubber bands. Anyway, just as I figured, he went to work right away and he had a good enough sound to sit there beside Marshall. The band was at its lowest ebb because it had just started, so Basie said to me, “You say this cat can write?” I said, “Yeah!” so he said “OK, we’ll let him do something for this new singer we got.” A kid named Joe Williams! So he let Ernie loose and the first thing he wrote was *Every Day I Have the Blues* and that particular tune with Joe Williams is what catapulted the band back into prominence.

You know I shudder sometimes when I think about how all of this happened as a result of that big lie that I told Basie when I called up Ernie Wilkins who was working in a little place over in East St. Louis, Missouri, for 75 cents a night!

Whenever he was ill, Count used to call for me to lead the band. And if they would try someone else in front of it he would say, “Hey, that’s the man you get. Get my man Clark up there!” and that used to make me feel so good. But it never really materialized to anything on a permanent basis after Count had gone because of his adopted son. He and I never saw eye to eye.

But I’m happy to see that they got a good man now in Frank Foster. Thad was great too, but they never did too many things with Thad because I think he really wanted to put his own type of band into the Basie band and I don’t think that would have worked too well. He asked the guys to bring in sopranos and so forth. You couldn’t blame Thad for that, but Frank has decided that he’s going to write strictly in the Basie idiom and keep the band swinging and still play himself. I envy him, because I really miss my own big band.

I ought to tell you how I came to join Duke Ellington. I was with Basie, and Duke had been scouting



Joe Warwick

Mousey Alexander and Clark Terry

me and he sent a few people over to hear the band at the Brass Rail and the Capitol Lounge where we were playing in Chicago. He said, "I can't just take a man out of my friend's band, so I'm going to put you on salary. Then you suddenly get ill and just go home, OK?" So I told Basie and I went home. Meanwhile I'm getting my salary from Duke and on November 11, 1951, Armistice Day, Duke's band came through, and I just happened to join the band. We were playing a big show that day with Sarah Vaughan, Nat Cole, Stumpy Patterson and Peg Leg Bates.

When I left Basie's band he had just given me a raise. I was making \$125 a week and Basie had given me a \$15 raise. I'm making \$140 and when I put my notice he took back the raise! I didn't tell Basie this story about going to Duke for years but when I did he said, "I knew it, I knew it all the time!"

There were so many guys in the Ellington band who were fantastic soloists and here I come, a little young upstart who nobody had heard of—I was lucky to get a piece to play on like Perdido. I'm just one of the few

people who soloed in the band that Duke only wrote one piece for. I think Juniflip for the flügel was the only thing he wrote for me from start to finish.

When I first joined Ellington, the band was not really too cordial to any newcomer. Many times Duke wouldn't call a tune. He would suggest what he had in mind through an introduction which all the guys who had been there for some time would know. Here I am sitting in the section, which at this time consisted of Harold Baker, Cat Anderson, and Ray Nance. They were nice guys, I can't say that they wanted to freeze you out, but it was just customary for the band members to be that way in the band to new people. So I'd look over to see what they're playing.

Then all of a sudden I found I had a friend up in the next row, Butter. So I would look up to Quentin Jackson. "Hey Butter," I'd say through the side of my mouth, "what are they playing?" "Oh, 156," he'd say. Then I'd flip, flip, flip through the book to where 156 was supposed to be. There's 155 and 157 but no 156 so I'd growl to Butter, "It's not here!" "Fake it, baby!" he said.'



Clark Terry singing

The reason Duke didn't write anything to feature me was that he was very busy at that period writing all the suites. Another thing, we had a saying that as a new guy coming into the band you didn't dare put your laundry in until after about five or six years because you didn't know if you were going to be there permanently or not. Maybe after about 10 years he would have thought, "Well, I'll write a few things for him."

He did use me in the suites. In *Such Sweet Thunder* I had the role of the funster Puck where I had to create a voice effect with the cocked valve and say, "Lord, what fools these mortals be!

I did some writing for the band myself and you can hear my style in things like *Jones*. Duke gets half composer credit and Barney Bigard always claimed that he wrote *Mood Indigo*, but the main credit there goes to Duke too.

He was very well known for that. For instance Cootie had as his warm-up before a session the phrases that Duke later turned into *Concerto For Cootie* and *Do Nothin' Til You Hear From Me*. Duke wrote down his warm-up. But Cootie would never have made a tune out of that, so if it hadn't been for Duke there wouldn't have been the two or three very beautiful tunes that fit right in there with the same set of chord changes.

So Duke wasn't really a person who stole things, he used the ideas of his surroundings, which were the guys in his band, and they used to say that Ellington could play his band like an instrument. It's so true. Like he did with me in *A Drum Is A Woman*. He said "Hey, Sweetie, you're going to portray the role of Buddy Bolden." Obviously I'd never heard Buddy Bolden, but after about five or ten minutes of convincing me that I could do it, I thought I was Buddy Bolden. "That's it!" he shouted. "You're Buddy Bolden!"

He was very good at that. I would say it was very important that he took some of these

ideas—perhaps even Barney would never have written down *Mood Indigo*, but Duke did it and of course with his harmonic structures. Neither Cootie nor Barney had the expertise or the know-how to voice and compose and arrange like Duke did, so I think it was a beautiful idea.

Now about *Jones*, it was customary always if a member of the band brought a tune in, Duke would say "OK, we'll play it." If he liked it he'd explain that, in order to record it, he would have to make himself half-composer. But what you didn't realise was that he was going to publish it too—he had his own publishing

Peter Kiefer



Joe Warwick

Clark Terry Whispering to Zoot Sims

company. First of all, publishing-wise, half belongs to the publishing company, so he's already got half of it. Now he's half-writer of it as well, so whack! There goes another bit, and he's got six bits and you got a quarter!

I was with Duke for almost nine years. Many many people ask me why I left. It was almost like they thought I'd left heaven to go to hell or something, but people don't realise that a musician is constantly trying to better his financial condition. There were occasions when I went out on a gig for someone else and on just half of the gig I made as much as I would have done in two full weeks with Ellington. It's sad, but it's true.

I left the band to join the show Free And Easy which Quincy Jones was putting together. We were due to go to Europe with Duke's band, so I went to him and said, "Maestro, I don't particularly want to go this time." He said, "Oh, come on! You've got to go!" At that time my salary was \$235 a week. I knew I had a deal with Quincy making about \$200 a week more. I said, "If you need me, just pay me! \$450 a week." He said, "You drive a hard bargain, Sweetie!" "I can get you a guy for \$200, Duke," I told him. So he said, "Yeah, but he's not you!" We didn't discuss it any longer, but then he came back later and said "Well, I think you win. We'll give it to

you." So I was on \$450, but just for the European tour.

When I was with Quincy at first I was the contractor, that is the guy who hires the musicians, but after a lot of politicking Jerome Richardson, who thought he should have had the job, finally got it. All of a sudden I wasn't being called, although I had called him for all the jobs. Same thing happened to me with another good friend of ours. There's an organisation in New York called Mark Brown Productions. Mark and I were very good friends. He needed a couple of guys to write for him and I got Jay Jay Johnson the gig. I had hired Jay Jay on contracts, you know. So Jay Jay got the gig with an office and a secretary, and all of a sudden he's hiring people and Mark comes to him and says, "Where's Clark? I don't see him on any of the gigs," and Jay Jay says, "I don't know, he's probably busy." So Mark calls me and asked if I had been busy on any of the dates. "No," I said. So then he passes the word down that for all the dates hereafter the first person to be called is Clark. If he's not available make the dates so that he is available.

The studio work was drudgery to a degree, but we did have a chance to play lots of new and varied music and at the same time we were in a position to do all of



Clark Terry 1988

the club things. There are many times when there was so much to do that you would start early in the morning and work straight through the day and work your show at the studio. Then if you did a jazz club like Bob Brookmeyer and I used to do the Half Note, we'd finish so late in the morning that we couldn't even go home. We'd have to stay in a hotel close to the next morning's gig. One of the old timers warned me when I first went into the studio: This is referred to as 'The House', but remember, Clark, a house is not home!

Bob Brookmeyer and I got along beautifully and we still do. That band which included Roger Kellaway, was the product of a sort of mutual admiration society, because I'd always loved Brookmeyer, and my first instrument had been valve trombone. He was a fan of mine so we had it automatically made because we both had great respect for each other. The merger of the flügel horn and the valve trombone, two illegitimate scale instruments, played by guys who had put lots of time into them, seemed natural. It like the fish horn, the soprano, it had the same difficulties.

I first took to the flügel horn in November, 1957. The horns made a beautiful marriage and Bob and I were good friends so the result was good, happy music. We were fortunate enough to get some good players in the rhythm section and we had some good tunes

together. We had a nice 'home' at the Half Note where we could go in any time and play as long as we wanted. There were three groups Zoot and Al, Jimmy Rushing and our group used to take turns playing there.

Bob and I first met when he was on tour with Gerry Mulligan's Quartet and I was on the same tour with Ellington. We shared a dressing room together. Bob was very much in his cups in those days and Mulligan was married to a very strange lady. Then Bob and I were in the Gerry Mulligan Concert Band together just before we formed our own group.

Gerry was kind, and different to work for. He was very much of a perfectionist. He still is today. He brought a group on a cruise last year. They thought they'd just come on and play a couple of times a day, but he rehearsed them every day for a couple of hours and the guys didn't like it too much. He's a great player and a good writer. He writes some excellent tunes. But I think he's made a lot of enemies. Some of the guys who've worked with him are not too fond of him. I like him. He always has superb big bands.

I've always loved big bands, and of course had my own for a long time. In that first one we had a lot of youngsters who were then on their way up, people like Randy Brecker, Lew Soloff and Lloyd Michaels, as well as veterans like Frank Wess, Ray Copeland, Chris

Woods, Ernie Wilkins, Ernie Royal, Ron Carter and Grady Tate. I recorded the band under my own label and fortunately, with a Japanese company ordering a couple of thousand and Big Bear in England using a lot more, I almost broke even on that!

As it is, I'm very happy because Ursula and I are fortunate enough to enjoy the best of both worlds, Europe and America, and it's nice that way. We spend half the year in New York and half in Zurich.

I was directly responsible for the return to manufacturing of the flügel horn. I used to tell Keith Ecker, who was technical adviser on brass at Selmer in Akron, Indiana, "I'd like some kind of horn with a more intimate sound." I used to put the felt hat over the bell of the trumpet to acquire the intimacy which I had always sought. "What about the old flügel horns they used to use all those years ago?"

Now there'd been a couple of guys who used them, Shorty Rogers and Miles Davis, but they both put trumpet mouthpieces in them and played very high because of the larger tubing. They were using them in that fashion and the horns weren't really good models or old models so Keith said, "Let's just see what we can put together." We sat in this basement and got some tubing and put it together and tried different curvatures and tubing and so forth, and eventually we put together this horn right in his basement. The very first one that was made by Selmer was the one that I was playing.

One of the first jobs I had after I had got it was a record date for Riverside. I used Thelonious Monk as a sideman, but when Monk died they brought the record out as by Monk with me as a sideman! I'd played with him on his Brilliant Corners album. It was always a challenge playing with him and I always loved his music. I feel that he was creative and as different from other musicians as Ellington was, although he didn't have the finesse nor was he as knowledgeable as Duke. I think Monk took much of his style from Ellington and he would like to have been an accomplished pianist who could have articulated in the fashion of Ellington. Ellington was a great pianist, as you know—a lot of people are asleep on that. Monk wanted to play like that but because of his shortcomings he was thrown into another category which, although it was a strange type of playing, created something that was different. We love him for that.

I was surprised when he agreed to do the gig with me. I thought he would probably say no, but he was happy to and he was very easy to work with. He had his moments, but he was a beautiful person and I loved him very much. I wrote most of the pieces for the session and when they reissued it some years later, they retitled one of my pieces.

I had a brief foray with the electric trumpet. I was with the Selmer Company. I felt so bad about that because it was teaching young people to rely on a gimmick. But I was being paid to do it and what could I do?

I still have the gadget at home in my garage. I look at it with contempt and spit on it occasionally. I made that one record with it, It's What's Happening.

It's funny, you practise and practise all your life to try to become as near perfect as you can on the trumpet, try to articulate, manipulate and do everything to have the right sound and then you make one record of a stupid song where nobody knows what you're singing and it opens up all the doors that you thought would have been opened by practising legitimate trumpet.

Brotherhood Of Man? Yes, I recorded it twice. It came from the show How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying. I did it once with Gary McFarland and the other time was with Gerry Mulligan's group. Both versions were at the same tempo and in E flat. They were pretty much at the same time, because that tune was very popular then.

Gary McFarland was a fantastic talent. It was such a waste that he went out the way that he did. He was just a beautiful cat. He was in a bar with some friends and he did something very stupid. They were playing Russian Roulette with a poisonous drink. He swizzled it around with the other drinks, and he got the bullet. He was just that daring type of person, like Joe Maini in California doing the same with a gun, spun the chamber around, put the gun to his head and just happened to get the bullet.

With Oliver Nelson I did that tribute to Louis on Winchester Cathedral and do you know, I haven't heard that thing to this day. I would love to have a copy of it. I was trying to pay tribute to Pops and in retrospect I think about how important that was because later on towards the end of Pops' career I had occasion to go by his house, to tell him that Harvard University wanted to offer him an honorary doctor's degree. He was still in good spirits, but his limbs were very frail and he was very thin—he'd lost lots of weight. It was about three and a half weeks before his total demise. He called me in and asked how I was. "I'm fine, Pops, aside from just the pleasure of coming by just to see you and be inspired and get my batteries charged again. I'm on a special mission because Harvard University wants to offer you an honorary doctor's degree." So he said, "The hell with 'em, Daddy. Where were they 40 years ago when I needed them?"

The last thing he said to me, he said, "Yeah, Pops, you know you're my man!" He looked me up and down and he said, "I love you, you're Pops, man, and I gotta tell you one thing, you know. The people love trumpet playing, but you gotta sing more. People like to hear you sing." I took that as good advice and I try to include a little singing in every performance I do. ☺

Pepper Adams' Joy Road: An Annotated Discography

by Gary Carner (2012, Scarecrow Press), winner of the ARSC Award for Best Jazz Discography



Chuck Lity

Pepper Adams - Birdland 1956

About Pepper Adams, pianist Hank Jones told the author, in a 1988 interview:

Baritone was the instrument, the medium that he used to express his ideas, which were endless; absolutely endless and varied. I worked with him at Fat Tuesday's on a job, and I never ceased to be amazed at the flow of ideas—continuous flow. Every chorus was better than the last one. Now, that's genius! And absolutely flawless execution! What else can you say? You see, there are lots of ways to play the instrument. You can play an instrument with what we'd like to describe as "safe." That is, you don't take any chances. You don't go out on a limb. You play everything absolutely safe. Of course, you can get by like that. But Pepper didn't play it safe. He got out on a limb. He took chances and always made it work: harmonically, melodically, everything, in every possible way. I've never heard anybody that played like that on saxophone before. The man was just a total genius!

The word genius carries with it many implications and connotations. When you say, "The man is a genius," that means that he's capable of doing things that nobody else is capable of doing, or at least relatively few people. Charlie Parker had that same thing. Charlie Parker had an endless flow of ideas, which he could execute flawlessly at any tempo, with a tone that was impeccable.... I was just always amazed: I used to get the impression that there was nothing that [Pepper] couldn't do. I got that same impression from Charlie Parker. There are probably things that he couldn't do, but, if there were, I don't think anybody ever invented them!... I never felt I was up to his standards, to tell you the truth. I was reaching to play along with him. Pepper would extend your thinking, your abilities. That was part of the greatness of Pepper. He would make you play. He would make you think more creatively because he was thinking and playing creatively."

THE GERRY MULLIGAN SEXTET

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Gerry Mulligan formed a short-lived sextet in 1963 with Art Farmer, Bob Brookmeyer, Jim Hall, Bill Crow and Dave Bailey. They

recorded a couple of albums now reissued on Lonehill LHM 10222 and also appeared at the Newport Jazz Festival that year. It is an earlier version of the sextet that is remembered with most affection however - the one which worked pretty extensively from September 1955

until late 1956 featuring Zoot Sims, Bob Brookmeyer and Jon Eardley.

A trumpet, trombone, tenor and baritone ensemble is one Mulligan first worked with as a member of Kai Winding's group in the late forties with his good friend Brew Moore along with trumpeter Jerry Lloyd (aka Hurwitz). A few years later in 1953 there was talk of Mulligan, Stan Getz, Chet Baker and Brookmeyer going on the road together but this never materialised because Stan and Gerry could never agree on who was to be the leader.

Although Mulligan's sextet was officially launched in New York in 1955, west coast audiences were given a preview when Zoot and Brookmeyer appeared as guests

with Gerry's quartet at a San Diego concert in December 1954. Three tracks were recorded for the album titled California Concerts - Western Reunion, I Know Don't Know How and The Red Door. Reunion is Gerry's homage to Zoot Sims and is in fact a Bweebida Bobbida contrafact. I Know is a delightful ballad based on the bridge from Line For Lyons and Red Door is a joint effort by Sims and Mulligan (Gerry wrote the middle eight). It was named after a rehearsal studio on West 49th Street between Broadway and 8th Avenue. Mulligan, Sims, Lester Young, Frank Isola, Jerry Lloyd and their friends used to pay a rental of 25 cents each to play there around 1947-48. On one occasion when nobody had any money Gerry took a band that included Jimmy Ford, Brew Moore and Allen Eager to rehearse in Central Park.

The sextet's first rhythm section was Peck Morrison and Dave Bailey who were both quite new to the Mulligan scene. Impressed by his writing for the Miles Davis nonet they visited Nola's studio where he was rehearsing a tentet. It is worth pointing out once more that Mulligan's contribution to what became known as The Birth Of The Cool was far greater than was acknowledged at the time - he arranged seven of the 12 titles recorded by the ensemble not five as was originally thought. John Carisi who wrote Israel for Miles confirmed this when he said, "Gerry wrote more than anybody" and in an interview for this magazine Lee Konitz told me that he considered Mulligan to be the guiding light for that particular project. Just as an aside the principal writers - Mulligan, Gil Evans and John Lewis - were apparently never



Chuck Lily

Gerry Mulligan NYC Jazz Fest 1956



Gerry Mulligan at the Newport Festival

Bill Crow

paid for those hugely influential charts.

Oscar Pettiford and Osie Johnson were booked for the Nola rehearsal and when they didn't appear Idrees Sulieman who was in the band introduced Morrison to Gerry. Peck mentioned that

Bailey played the drums and that is how they joined the sextet which opened in Cleveland's Loop Lounge the following week. A little later when the group became very popular Pettiford and Johnson wanted the gig back!

Dave told me that Mulligan was

always generous and protective of his musicians and a good example of that occurred at a club in Baltimore. Bailey and Morrison arrived early to set up and then sat in the club lounge waiting for the rest of the group. The owner told them to wait in the kitchen because that is where musicians stayed when not performing. On Gerry's arrival he found the policy only applied to black musicians so he told everyone to pack up - they were leaving. Dave said the venue was sold out because "Gerry was hotter than a firecracker at the time" and not surprisingly the policy immediately changed that night, allowing the musicians to sit where they liked. Peck didn't stay too long with the sextet because of the demands on a bass player in a pianoless context and his wife was probably not too keen on all the touring he was doing with Mulligan. Bill Crow who had been working with Marian McPartland took his place.

Don Joseph another of Mulligan's friends was an excellent player and he was the first choice on trumpet for the sextet. He had played with all the big bands that came to the Paramount Theatre in Times Square but his career went downhill for various reasons at the end of the forties. Band leaders refused to hire him and he even found himself unwelcome at Charlie's Tavern which was a musician's hang-out. Charlie would have one of the bartenders throw him out if he tried to get in, prompting the trumpeter to once shout from the door, "It's me - Don Joseph. I'm banned from bars and I'm

barred from bands!". He missed the rehearsals so Idrees Sulieman was selected for the first few bookings although he didn't stay too long because he had other fish to fry.

After the Cleveland booking the sextet played Boston's Storyville be-

fore recording their first album with Sulieman's replacement, Jon Eardley on trumpet. The repertoire included a number of quartet staples like Bernie's Tune, Nights At The Turntable and The Lady Is A Tramp as well as a hard swinging Broadway which has a real back-to-Basie feel. Incidentally Turntable has part of Chet Baker's 1952 solo transcribed for Eardley and Brookmeyer to play as a background behind the leader's statement.

For the next few months they remained pretty close to home often performing at New York's Basin Street and radio broadcasts from the club have been released by RLR Records. They also did a short package tour with Dave Brubeck's quartet and Carmen McRae which began with a midnight concert at Carnegie Hall. John Williams, one of the finest pianists of his generation was an interesting and surprising addition to the sextet for the tour. Things didn't really work out and John returned to New York after engagements at Ann Arbor, Cincinnati and Philadelphia. On one occasion Carmen McRae sat in with the sextet and she was later to tell Leonard Feather that Mulligan's group was her all-time favourite.

Just prior to a European tour that began in February 1956, the sextet was again in the recording studio performing Gil Evans's chart on Debussy's *La Plus Que Lente* and Mulligan's *Mainstream*. Initially the guardians of the Debussy estate refused to permit an arrangement to be made of his work. Luckily they relented because *La Plus* is a sensitive ensemble reading with brilliantly observed dynamics and intonation. The cute *Mainstream* is a stimulating exercise in improvised counterpoint by two masters of the form, Sims and Mulligan. The melody is only eight bars long but they weave their way creatively through two choruses of a 32 bar sequence based on *I Got Rhythm* with the lead constantly switching between the tenor and the baritone.

The group sailed for Europe on the SS *Andrea Doria* which was the pride of the Italian navy at the time but it sank a few months later after a collision with a freighter off the coast of Nantucket, Massachusetts. They were accompanied by Gerry's wife Arlyne (songwriter Lew Brown's daughter) who was there as his manager and Bob Brookmeyer's wife Phyllis also came along. Concerts were performed in Naples, Rome, Milan, Genoa and Bologna followed by a three week engagement at the Olympia Theatre in Paris. They were one of the acts on a variety bill featuring jugglers, comedians, a dancing violin duo as well as the Nicholas Brothers and Jacqueline Francois who was the headliner. There was also an unsuccessful booking at the Palais d'Hiver in Lyon where the audience made it quite clear that if the music didn't sound like Sidney Bechet it wasn't jazz.

Talking to me about the tour a few years ago Bill Crow had this to say, "We ran into places where we followed Chet Baker whose group was leaving a trail of bad junky vibes around Europe. As a result we were not welcome in some hotels and we were searched quite seriously on the trains. Of course the authorities nearly always picked on Dave Bailey to be the one they searched and he is the straightest guy you can imagine." Baker sat in with the sextet for eight numbers at the Air Force club in Landstuhl, Germany but if recorded these performances have never been released.

The Dutch Jazz Archive Series has recently issued the sextet's entire concert from the Amsterdam Concertgebouw where the group was in fine, uninhibited form. There are also three tracks recorded in Milan on RLR Records.

Soon after their April return to the USA on the Queen Elizabeth Jon Eardley moved to Florida and Don Ferrara took his place for the sextet's final recording on the 26th of September 1956. They rehearsed

in the afternoon and after a meal break recorded six titles later that evening including *Elevation* which finds the group at its most spontaneous and free-wheeling. An up tempo blues it opens with the trombone and baritone in unison before the trumpet and tenor are added for a second chorus in harmony. The climax is a stimulating passage of extemporised polyphony with each horn submerging its identity resulting in a quite unique ensemble sound. In his role as resident Pied Piper Mulligan develops Don Ferrara's closing phrase leading the group through a series of extemporised riffs and phrases, creating a form and structure worthy of a written arrangement.

Gerry wanted Ferrara to remain with the sextet but Don was working with Lee Konitz at the time so Dave Bailey recommended Oliver Beener who sight read the parts with ease. He remained with the group for several weeks including the sextet's final booking at the upstairs room of the Preview Lounge in Chicago. By this time Zoot Sims had begun working with his own quartet and he told Gerry he would not accept any more sextet bookings. As Mulligan explained to me a few years before he died he readily understood, "A soloist like that would have found it to be a strait-jacket after a while and I certainly didn't try to replace him – Zoot was Zoot".

The sextet was the finest of all Gerry Mulligan's pianoless small groups and everything it recorded is currently available – as far as I can tell. ☺

DISCOGRAPHY

The fabulous Gerry Mulligan Sextet (3 CD set) – Fresh Sound 417.

Gerry Mulligan Sextet/Quartet Rare And Unissued 1955-56 Broadcasts RLR Records 88660.

Gerry Mulligan Sextet Jazz At The Concertgebouw MCN0801.



Gerry Mulligan Central Park Rehearsal 1950s – Phil Leshin (I)

Photo by Bill Crow



(bass), Harry Bugin (bass), Gail Madden, Gerry Mulligan

The Deer Head Inn & Deer Head Records

The Center of Jazz in the Poconos



The Central House: Before the Deer Head Inn

Matt Vashlishan: *It is Friday, April 21, 2017 and I am here at the Deer Head Inn in Delaware Water Gap, Pa., with Mary and Denny Carrig, the owners of the Deer Head Inn. We are going to talk a little bit about the Deer Head Inn as well as their new record label Deer Head Records. I would like to start off by asking if you could explain the history of the Deer Head – how it came to be or maybe what it was before it was a music venue? It believe it was a hotel of some kind? (For more information on this topic, see Pat Dorian’s article in the Summer/Fall 2012 issue 58!)*

Denny Carrig: Yes it was a hotel. 1853 is the date that we have. There are a few sources that have discrepancies as far as the date goes, but we chose 1853 because it was the most common. It was called the Central House back then. The construction lasted until 1865 because it was done in three different phases. The house where Bob and Fay Lehr lived [the first owners of the club], the barn that Fay restored, was the carriage house for the main building which was the Central

House. I’m not sure who actually changed the name to the Deer Head Inn but it was before Bob and Fay.

MV: *Did they have music back then?*

DC: No, I don’t think so. Not when it was the Central House.

MV: *So you aren’t sure when it actually became known as the Deer Head Inn?*

DC: No not exactly, but it changed at some point because the inside was lined with deer heads all around the room on the walls. Actually the first thing Fay did when she took it over was she took out all the deer heads because it freaked her out! [laughs]

Supposedly, and I’m not sure if it was 1950 or 1951, there were a few guys that were going to be playing some Dixieland at the Stroud hotel in town. It was



Bob Doherty

The Deer Head Inn 1959
Left to Right: Jerry Segal, Bob Dorough, Bob Doherty, Bob Newman

scheduled for Good Friday, and somehow it got canceled. They said they couldn't have it on Good Friday. So Bob said, "Dixieland? Sure! Come on over!" So the band came over to the Deer Head and they had the gig here. It went really well so they kept it up continually.

MV: So it was never created specifically as a music venue, it sort of just fell into place?

DC: Well, I think Bob had it in his head to have music. He hired Johnny Coates in 1962, when Johnny was a senior in high school. And he played here that summer and got to know some musicians. John Dangler was one of the guys in the original Dixieland group, and he looked out for Johnny when he was up here.

MV: Then he became the house pianist right?

DC: Yeah he played here continuously for over 30 years.

MV: So are you originally from this area?

DC: No, I was born in Washington D.C. but I grew up in Trenton, NJ, actually five blocks from Johnny Coates. When we got talking about old times we discussed how we were both from Trenton and what part we lived in. He went to a high school in my old neighborhood, and he dated a girl that lived on my block. His dad was a musician from Trenton as well.

MV: How did you first learn about the Deer Head then?

DC: I was in college, and I was kind of into jazz. I liked listening to it. I had some friends in Trenton that played, and I would go to their gigs and I thought it was pretty interesting. Then I heard that the Deer Head had a really good jazz piano player.

MV: Who was Johnny Coates right?

DC: Yeah, so I came over with a couple of friends one night to hear him when I was twenty years old.

MV: That was your first time here?

DC: Yeah. After that I was hooked and have been coming continuously since then.

MV: Did you stay around the area the whole time?

DC: No, but I would always come back for jazz periodically.

MV: I see.

DC: I did theater and things like that around the country. Mostly in New York and D.C.

MV: So how and when did it happen that you finally decided to take over the Deer Head?

DC: One time before Donna and Chris Soliday took it over (after Bob and Fay), Bob and I were around here a lot.

MV: Do you know how long Chris had it?

DC: I think they had it fifteen years. And before that Bob and Fay were looking to sell it, and I was even thinking about taking it over back then! So I was toying



with the idea and I went home and said something to my wife and she said, “what, are you crazy?!” [laughs] So that didn’t come to be, I got into other things. So Chris and Donna ran it for about 15 years and then in 2005 we took it over. We just took the leap. My sister Mary had been here a few times over the years and really liked it. So when the possibility came up she wanted in too. I might have been a little hesitant but I thought it was a good idea to keep the jazz going.

MV: Of course.

DC: Like Mary, I’m one of the proprietors. We’re the keepers of the keys so to speak. We’ve had it going on twelve years now.

MV: Wow it doesn’t seem like it has been that long already. And of course you did some changes when you took over right? I remember you remodeled...

DC: Physically yeah. We basically took the building apart and put it back together again.

MV: One element of the Deer Head people might not realize is that there are a few upper floors used for apartments and lodging. You redid all of that right? Was that originally how it is now or much different?

DC: Oh not at all! [laughs]

MV: I was never really up there, but you redid the entire thing? What a project. You made it into a functioning hotel and music venue.

DC: We tried to bring it all back to what it should be.

Mary Carrig: We did, and we added private baths in all of the rooms. Prior to this there were shared bathrooms.

MV: Was it more or less an apartment building way back then? Or was it designed as an Inn?

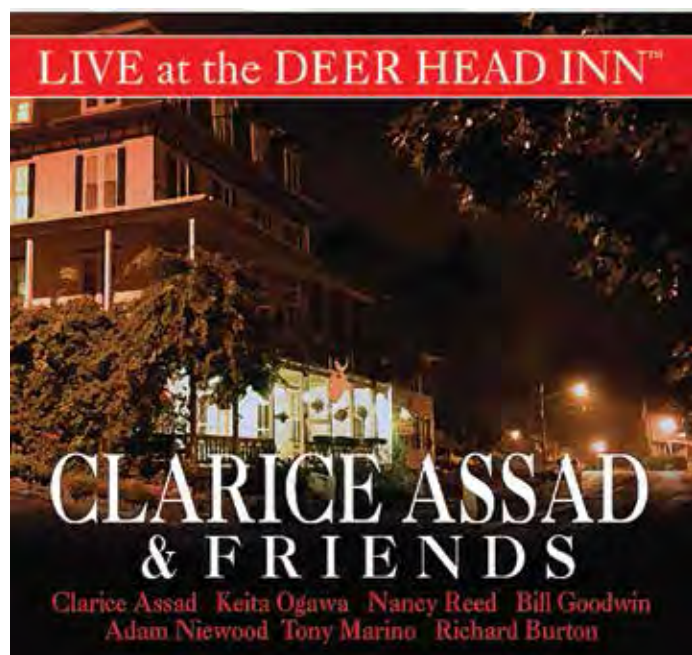
DC: Well when Bob and Fay were running it, it wasn’t an Inn. However, they did renovate some elements of it. They turned a few of the rooms into efficiency apartments, things like that. Young guys would stay here and share the bathrooms. I think there were three bathrooms.

MC: There were two on the second floor, and one on the fourth floor. I used to laugh when I first got here because every musician that came through said they lived at the Deer Head at one point... I asked, “did anyone not live at the Deer Head?” [laughs]

DC: I guess that’s how they got a gig here! Bob was a teacher over in New Jersey and eventually became the Superintendent of his district. So a lot of younger teachers, mostly guys besides musicians, who were looking for a cheap place to live would have a room here. Fay would keep a couple rooms reserved that she would rent out overnight. When I was doing theater up here I invited my parents up for a show, and I arranged for them to stay here. It was in pretty good shape.

MV: Are there a lot of musicians that stay here now? Maybe musicians who are booked for a show or otherwise?

DC: Occasionally yeah. If they are traveling from far away and need a place we offer them a room for a musician rate. We also have a few area musicians living





in two apartments here as well.

MV: That's interesting. So moving forward, if you can summarize this, I'm wondering what you think the Deer Head Inn means to the Poconos? Either musically or culturally?

DC: Well I think it's definitely the epicenter of jazz music in the Poconos.

MV: And for quite a radius as well right? I mean, there is so much music happening in the area, you'd think there would be a few more venues, but the Deer Head is really the whole reason that this music is even happening here.

DC: Yeah and even from the beginning the lions have been mentoring the cubs so to speak, and that continues. And I witnessed a lot of it here myself when I used to come to the more formal gigs that would eventually turn into great jam sessions with Johnny Coates, Al Cohn, Zoot Sims, Stan Getz, and Keith Jarrett would play the drums when John was playing piano. So there's always been that nucleus that emerged from here. It was a great place for the guys to hang out. I always say it was John Coates that made it the center for jazz in the Poconos, but it was also Bob. He was the guy who let it happen and encouraged it. He loved music and played a little bit himself. He's the one who let these guys hang out until "the wee small hours of the morning."

There was a lot of good music happening and a lot of good ideas emerged here as well, with guys sitting at the bar. That's where they got the idea for the COTA Festival, and it's now in its 40th year. And from that, a lot of things emerged. Of course from the COTA Fes-

tival, the COTA Cats emerged. You know about that, because now you will be directing them and giving back yourself. You've mentored and are mentoring a lot of younger musicians.

MC: And Monday night big band!

MV: That's a good point too. Can you discuss that variety of music you have here now? Is it any different than it used to be? I mean, there is a lot of music going on here. This week in particular you have a Thursday night jam session, a straight ahead jazz quintet on Friday, NEA Jazz Master Jimmy Cobb on Saturday, a duo on Sunday, and a full size big band on Monday. That's quite a selection!

DC: Yeah, we get a lot of people that want to play, and a lot of people we want, so it works both ways. Sometimes we approach them, and other times they ask us, so we just make decisions based on the music we want to listen to or what works best with the schedule and the jazz community here.

MV: It seems like Friday and Saturday cater more towards quartets, quintets, maybe a singer, and things like that. Then Sunday is usually a smaller group, is that right?

DC: Yeah, or solo piano. Saturday night is probably the headliner night, but not always.

MV: Do you put any particular effort to reaching out further than local musicians? Or do you try to keep a good mix of local and non-local artists?

DC: Well, I have connections like you and other musicians that live here locally. Other times I know





people that have the connections and I do it that way. That's how we got Bucky Pizzarelli playing here initially. Walt Bibinger was playing here and he was a friend of Bucky's and playing with him, so I said, "Hey Walt, what do you think if you guys played here?" And that was actually one of the first live records that we did here, that guitar trio.

MV: That is an excellent segue. Let's talk about this. So a little while back you started Deer Head Records?

DC: The Deer Head Music Group is the official title.

MV: So who is involved with this?

DC: The initial conversation was between Bill Goodwin and I. We were chatting and he mentioned he had all these recordings; some live things that he wanted to put out or maybe turn into a series at the Deer Head of some sort. He wanted to release them live and they had been recorded at the Deer Head. Coincidentally Sonny Murray (a local lawyer that has been involved with the music scene in the area for many years), Mary and I were talking about starting a label. We were thinking the same thing: "Live at the Deer Head Inn," and it would be great. So we asked Bill if he would help us out because he is a great drummer but also a great producer. He produced the records for the Phil Woods Quintet for nearly the entire run of that group. So he said, "OK" and we then thought his sister (also Phil Woods' wife) Jill would be a great addition as well. She basically ran the business of the Phil Woods Quintet/Quartet for their entire run. She handled the business end of it and had a lot of experience about the industry and the recording business. So she came on board and actually helped us a lot.

MV: And when was this all happening? When would you say it officially began?

MC: In 2013.

DC: Is that all it has been? Wow. Here I am thinking about all of the records we have put out since then...

MC: Richard Burton has also helped us a lot on the business end. He is instrumental in doing the distribution. He has a lot of experience from running Vector Disc. He has been doing this for years.

MV: So how many do you have at this point?

MC: We put out two per year, so there are eight so far.

DC: And there is a couple more in the works.

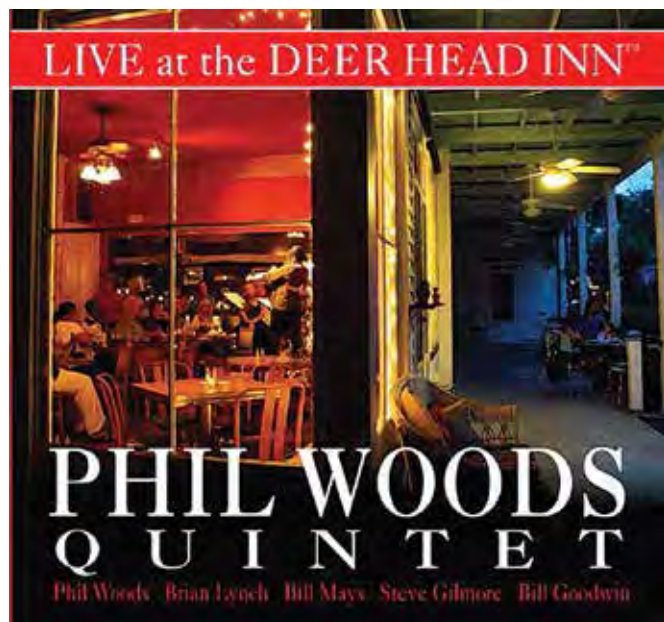
MV: All of them were recorded live here?

MC: Yeah. The first year we released the Guitar Trio and Nancy Reed with John Coates. Year two was The Quartet and Su Terry, then Phil Woods and Five Play, and finally Clarice Assad and Bob Dorough.

DC: The idea when we first decided to do this was to do ten records and see what happens. So right now we have eight and one or two more in the works.

MC: We have a bunch of Phil Woods recordings that are all live from here so there is plenty of material to do another volume of that band.

DC: The next one will probably be Najwa Parkins. That has been in the works for a little bit. You know the problem has always been marketing. We are trying to get the word out and it's hard these days with all of the different media outlets – all the internet sites and social media.





MV: Who do you have doing the physical recording? Are you using the local people like Kent at Red Rock Recording?

DC: We use Kent and Jim McGee at Spectra Sound. Kent has done a couple and Jim did most. We used a few people that Richard knew for a couple as well.

MC: For the Nancy Reed and John Coates recording Spencer Reed actually had the recordings that he made, so we used those for that.

MV: I know you mentioned you wanted to produce ten and see what happens, but do you have any long-term plans or goals in the back of your head for this? Would you like to expand or keep it a small operation?

DC: Well the age old goal is figure out how to keep doing it and make some of the money back!

MV: Would you like to keep it as documenting live gigs at the club or maybe expand to where other people can submit recordings for release under your name?

DC: We've talked about that. I can't be sure at this point but we need to see how that evolves. I do like the idea of the live recordings. There are so many great groups that we know now from booking every week. There's a lot of music to be heard. Obviously hopping into a studio would be a little easier than bringing everything into the club.

MV: But the acoustics are actually really good in here for recording.

DC: Yeah we got lucky. I don't know. There's just enough plaster and wood...

MV: As a musician you'd never think it's cool judging from the way it looks, but it is.

MC: You would think on big band night that you would get blown out of the place but...

DC: Yeah people like sitting right in front of the band!

MV: I know I see them come in before we start and I often ask, "are you sure you want to do that?" [laughs]

DC: And a lot of people request to sit there. Nobody wants to sit in the back, they love it.

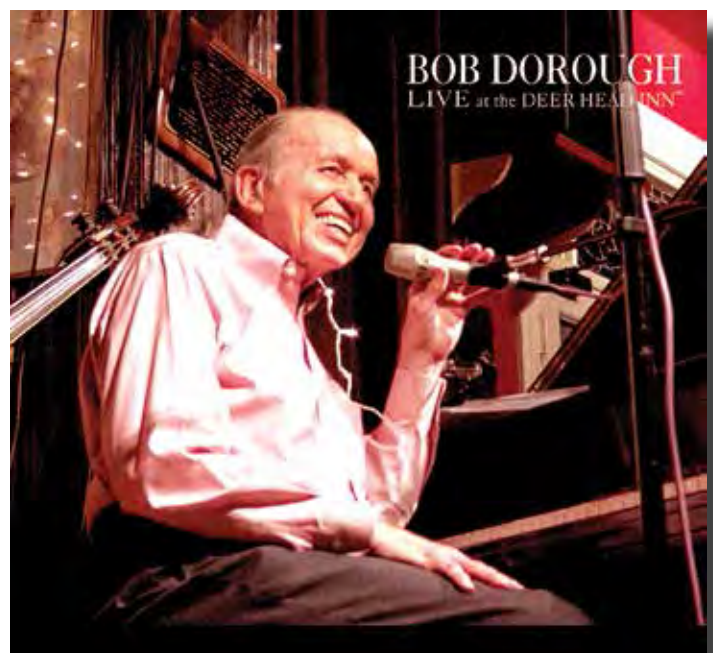
MV: I should know the date, but remind me how long we've been doing the big band here. It started when we were rehearsing for the last record.

MC: Yeah Phil needed a place to rehearse, so Rick Chamberlain and Phil organized it so the band could meet here once a month leading up to the "New Celebration" recording session.

MV: It is interesting how it has evolved, because it was never necessarily supposed to be a monthly concert.

DC: Well that was all Rick. He actually wanted to do it once a week! I said, "whoa, whoa." [laughs]

MC: During one of our late nights here he was talking after one of these rehearsals saying, "yeah the guys were all really diggin' it... how about we do it once a week?!"



DC: So I quickly responded, “hey how about once a month? That’d be great!” [laughs]

MV: What year was this? The record was in 2013 or so, so maybe about five years? The big band has been a staple in this area forever. It seems really appropriate that we finally started a regular residency so to speak.

Over the years you have been really generous with the space you have at the club. Just the other month Mary was nice enough to let us rehearse here during the day for the upcoming Phil Woods Sax Quartet recording, and you have been very involved with the COTA Festival as well as COTA Camp Jazz. For the jazz community, the Deer Head has become a central place in the Poconos, much like a scaled down version of the Local 802 in New York City.

MC: Yeah, and some guys even teach lessons in one of our spare rooms. The other thing that occurs to me is that we also partner with the Morning Cure, which is every Saturday and Sunday. They come in and use our facility to turn the Deer Head Inn into a breakfast restaurant. We’ve been doing that for at least five years.

MV: This underscores the whole point I’m trying to make about the club. Sure it’s the only club within maybe 20 or 30 miles. You can see live music on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday (depending on the week). These shows feature completely different musical experiences and a completely different mixture of musicians. People can hear solo piano to big band within the span of four days. And we aren’t talking \$40 per set like in New York. These sets are \$10 or \$15, which I think is incredibly reasonable. Our Monday big band night is \$10! In a quiet town like the Delaware Water Gap, it’s pretty incredible.

DC: I think some times I take it for granted...

MV: Well I think we all do.

DC: I have friends that are really in to it that come from other parts of the world and they are completely amazed at the scene we have going on here.

MV: That’s what I always used to tell people when I went away to college. That was the first time I realized that you don’t have something like this in say, Minnesota. Phil



Woods, Dave Liebman, Urbie Green, John Coates, and so many others are not living right up the street from you in those places! I often wondered what it would be like growing up in the middle of nowhere. All you have are the records, which are a great thing. But hearing it and seeing it live is a whole other story, especially for a young kid trying to learn the language. And these people came to the jam sessions here. Here I was a little kid in high school learning saxophone getting to hear and play with Dave Liebman or work with Phil in the Cota Cats big band, etc. It completely changes the game.

So in closing, what can people expect when they come to the Deer Head Inn? What lodging is available if they want to spend the night or the weekend here?

MC: Most weekends we are pretty full. It has been good. We offer jazz packages for people that stay here on Friday and/or Saturday. These include the room, the music charge, and a food voucher. We also pay a portion of the breakfast charge and that comes with the room. All of our information is available at deerheadinn.com.

MV: I think that sums it up nicely. Thank you both for taking the time to share all of this information with me. I’m looking forward to the next Deer Head Records release! ☺



Looking in from the porch of the Deer Head Inn

Laurie Samet

Review of You 'n Me

Al Cohn-Zoot Sims Quintet (1960)

By T. Storm Heter

The album “You 'n Me” by the Al Cohn-Zoot Sims Quintet (1960) is available for listening as part of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. Listening to this record for the first time, I was struck over the head by the power and depth of Zoot Sims’ soloing. His lines are fresh and modern. Nothing he plays sounds like a lick, even fifty years later! I get the sense that playing next to him must have been like riding in a friend’s new Ferrari—you hold on, just waiting for him to punch it.

Al Cohn’s arranging, composing and full-throated playing pull the album together as a whole. Cohn’s two compositions “The Note” and the title tune, “You ‘n’ Me” were my favorites. They showcased Cohn’s ability to write for two tenors. On the opening chorus of “The Note,” there are several different interactions between the two leaders: parallel lines, exchanging one or two beats to create a phrase, harmonies, and wonderful call and response sections. These two musicians are not just thinking of lines in their own minds and playing them; they are creating the musical thoughts as one. Listening to them reminded me of the literal meaning of the word “conspire,” which means to “breathe together.”

I recommend listening to this record on headphones. The record is mixed with Sims on the left



channel and Cohn on the right. The stereo separation heightens the already sharp contrast in tone, timbre and approach between the two tenors.

As a drummer, I was especially interested in hearing the contrasting rhythmic tendencies that the two masters used when approaching solos. On “The Note” Cohn solos first. He starts with two and three beat phrases, building to a wailing style that echoes of some of the popular music of the time. Then comes Sims. First he offers a four beat phrase, then a breath, and then a long, glassy eight beat phrase. He goes on like this for three choruses, with five, six or seven beat phrases that float across the bar line. His phrasing is propulsive. His time is so good, it makes you want to go to the mixing board

and click mute on everyone else, even the very good drummer, Osie Johnson.

On the Cole Porter tune, “You’d Be So Nice to Come Home To,” the tenors took a different approach to sharing the lead. Sims states the melody the first time through, with Cohn commenting. Then the two reverse roles. If I had gone to music school, I probably would have studied this tune as an example of difference in tenor saxophone playing. Sims’ playing is light, even, layered, and cool. Cohn’s playing is sweet, warm, and bold. Both approaches are won-

derful, and to hear them stacked against each other on the same cut is fun. In the end, my own ears are again drawn to Sims’s approach, with its lightness and rhythmic gymnastics.

One sign of a good record is that it forces one to rethink their own playing. What are my take-aways? In Cohn’s playing I hear the importance of craft, drama, and emphasis. He shows that an honest, well-placed quarter note is devastating. Through Sims’ playing I hear how the musical imagination can be stretched far across the bar line. His liquid style is an antidote to relying on licks. Fifty years after it was recorded, “You ‘n Me” remains an instructive, inspiring album. ☺

You Can't Get There From Here

By Steve Voce

When the exquisite coda to the ballad ended, the tsunami of applause raged around the theatre as the tenor player bent to speak to his pianist.

"Now who's your favourite tenor player?" Stan Getz demanded.

"Al Cohn," said Lou Levy. "Isn't he yours?"

Zoot Sims famously described Stan Getz as being an interesting bunch of guys. I was lucky to meet the affable one of the pack that day in Nice during the 1980s.

With an interview in mind that I arranged the evening before, I planned to meet Stan at eleven the following morning outside his hotel. Naturally it was one of the best hotels in town.

As I stood there weighed down by a BBC portable tape recorder. I thought it quite likely that he wouldn't turn up. But he did, five minutes late, with his very attractive partner and a male friend who he introduced as an acupuncturist "who does wonders for my back pains."

Stan led the way to the hotel's private beach and paid for me, as a non-resident, to enter. He chose a good spot, pointed to the towels and we all lay down to sunbathe. After about 20 minutes Stan began to talk about music and I started up the Uher.

He talked first about his early days and of the band he and Shorty Rogers had when they were eleven and how he left school when he was 16 to join the Jack Teagarden band.

Teagarden was a wonderful man," he said. "The war was on and sidemen were hard to get. But my mother and father were anxious about me going, so Jack had to become my guardian to convince them that I'd be OK."

Stan quoted some of the things that Jack had said to him and suddenly I jumped. The voice he used was Teagarden's and I thought for a moment that the Texan was lying on the beach with us!

It turned out that Stan, who I knew had a perfect musical memory (he never forgot a tune once he'd played it) was also a brilliant mimic.

The morning drifted on and the reels turned. I was ecstatic. I left them to it at lunchtime.

I took the recorder back to my modest hotel and set up the tape. It was then I discovered that the battery had failed making the tape record slow and the playback like a bunch of white mice on a hot plate.

The back pains turned out to be the lung cancer that eventually killed him.

Another tenor player, Bud Freeman, was cited by Lester Young as one of his main influences. Bud liked to think of himself as a cultured man and a connoisseur of



Bill Potts

A very young Stan Getz from 1955

many arts besides his music making.

Very much an anglophile, he had always affected an English accent, and was delighted when it became time for his first visit to England in 1960.

When he stepped off the plane he was met by a Rolls Royce sent for him by the Hon Gerald Lascelles, a cousin of the Queen's.

Bud was swept through the beautiful English countryside to Fort Belvedere, ancestral home of the Lascelles family and other royals. The Rolls passed smoothly along the long winding drive with its beautiful poplar trees and up to the magnificent portal of the house, where, as a liveried footman held the car door open for him and others scurried with his luggage, he stepped out onto a red carpet.

Bud stood and surveyed the scene with satisfaction.

"Aah," he sighed. "I always new England would be exactly like this."

A few years ago Bill Crow was kind enough to let me have his recollections of the backing for soloists when he was in the Gerry Mulligan Concert Band:

"Gerry Mulligan established a good system with his Concert Jazz Band. Most of the charts hung together very well, with some backgrounds for the soloists. But

Gerry liked to improvise backgrounds as well, as he did in the quartets. When he wanted to open a chart for longer solos, he would leave the soloist in the open with the rhythm section for a chorus, and then begin inventing background patterns. If the soloist went on longer, the rest of the sax section would pick up on Gerry's patterns, harmonizing them. Then the brass section might add a counter-pattern (Brookmeyer and Clark Terry were very good at inventing that sort of thing). The backgrounds would build, encouraging the soloist, until Gerry felt we'd reached a climax, and then he'd signal us to go on to the next written section. That system kept the charts alive, and kept us all excited to see what would happen each time we played a chart... it was always somewhat different, and yet familiar enough to keep us in a comfortable groove. The band got very flexible with it, and as a group, came up with wonderful new readings of the same material.

"When I first joined the band the esprit was as high as I've ever experienced, mainly because it was a good band that looked like it was going to stay together for a while. Gerry and Norman Granz had made a deal that would keep us working, and we were all high from the music. (By the way, Al Cohn wasn't playing with us... he just wrote some good things for us). But when the Granz deal disappeared, and Gerry was only able to book the band for occasional appearances at Birdland, the spirit changed a little. Since everyone had to make a living, subs were sent in when there were conflicts in schedule, and even though the subs were ace, like Thad Jones and Phil Woods, and the music was great, there was a loss of central purpose that had made the band

so fine in its earlier days."

A Canadian priest, Gerald Pocock, went to hear his friend Duke Ellington at New York's Rainbow Grill in the early '70s:

"I sat at the bar to wait for Duke and the small band to arrive. Sonny Greer (a childhood friend of Duke's who had left the band in 1951) joined me at the bar and we chatted. Ellington eventually arrived and approached me saying things like, 'Father Pocock! How wonderful to see you! You look wonderful! How have you been? We must get together!'

"Ellington didn't say a word to his old friend Sonny Greer who was sitting next to me. He eventually excused himself, saying that the band needed to start its set.

"Sonny Greer was understandably miffed; how could his old friend ignore him like that? Ellington and the band started to play, and at some point in the set Ellington made an announcement.

'Ladies and gentlemen, we recently travelled to Ethiopia, where we were presented to their king, the man who has more titles than the Pope, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie, Menelik, the Lion of Judah. We were ushered into his large royal chamber. We were on one side of the room and Selassie was at the other side on his throne, with an assistant standing at either side. Selassie turned and whispered something to one of his assistants. It was very suspenseful. The assistant walked all the way across the room, bowed and said to us: 'The emperor would like to know ... what the hell is Sonny Greer up to these days?'"

Sonny Greer broke up laughing. ☺



From the ACMJIC archive

Blue Note - Chicago, January 1955 from left to right: John Williams, Bill Anthony, Stan Getz, Frank Isola, Tony Fruscella

David Liebman



Matt Vashlishan

Smithsonian Institute NEA Jazz Masters Project: Bill Kirchner with David Liebman Part 3

The following is the Smithsonian Institute interview between Bill Kirchner and David Liebman following his acceptance of the NEA Jazz Masters Award, and took place in January of 2011. This interview is incredibly extensive and is presented here in its entirety via several installments. This is the third “episode.” If you missed the first two portions, they were printed in the Spring/Summer 2015 and the Fall/Winter 2016 issues.

Kirchner: You were involved in the loft scene and started this thing called Free Life Communication, right?

Liebman: When I knew that I had to play a lot, I had to get into the loft situation. I was familiar with the loft situation because of Bob Moses. By 17 he was already living in a loft. I understood what it was about. You could play all the time. This was exactly what I wanted. So in 1969 when I finished college (I graduated in June of '68), the next day I went to upstate New York to a place called Lake Katrine, near Kingston... Woodstock. I found a place. I went up in April. I drove a taxi in NYC for one week in April, Easter week, mid-break. Drove 20 hours a day to make just a certain amount of money, because my parents said, “Once school’s over, you got it. You’re on your own. We did enough for you.” The NYU was \$3,000 a year then, which was – I had to get some money! So I drove a taxi. That was an interesting week. I had enough money that I could rent a place for like \$200 a month. It’s 1969, I had a girlfriend, and I had a bass-player friend. We went and lived in this place from June, the day after graduation, until Thanksgiving. And that’s my only real time of

serious eight-hours-a-day practicing. I really had the chance to do it. What I did, I don’t know. Transcription or whatever.

When I came back, I said, “I must get a loft,” and I had to teach school. I had a degree, and I had the license for substitute teaching. I found a place on 19th Street in January through the Village Voice. You had to go at 7 a.m. to Sheridan Square to get the Voice as soon as it came out. You went into the ads, and you made the calls. By 9 a.m., you had a place or you didn’t. Sometimes you call and you didn’t even get it! I found this joint on 138 West 19th Street. The landlord’s name was Lieberman, Sol Lieberman. Talk about coincidence! This is comic. Nobody lived there. It was a Tie Dye shirt factory, three floors. I don’t know what was on the first and second floors, but the third floor was the one that was available. It’s the first time I ever got wind of what key money was. I had to pay somebody off in order to get in the door! Wild shit!

Anyway, to make a long story short, the loft became a center, and we played all the time. In the mid 70s, late 70s, Moses was the first who said it. He said, “There’s organizations, the Chicago AACM, and there was something in St. Louis, that Oliver Lake thing, right? And Julius [Hemphill].” We were playing the loft for ourselves. There are hundreds of hours of tapes. We’re not playing for people, because jazz in '69 is at the lowest point it had ever been, at least up to that time. Rock-and-roll was completely ascendant. I said, “We got to do something. Why don’t we organize? Go out and play in churches. Do something. We got to play for people. We’re just playing for ourselves! It’s not right.” Forget about making a living, because every-

body was driving a taxi, or a bartender, or whatever. We had to do something to figure this out. So Moses said, "They did organizations, blablabla." Moses wasn't quite the organizing kind of guy, but I am. I said, "Let's have a meeting."

We had a meeting and we invited Leroy Jenkins, who was the St. Louis guy, and Anthony Braxton, who was the Chicago guy, to come and talk to us. I'm talking 20 guys sitting on the floor of my loft. Bob Berg, Michael [Brecker], Randy [Brecker], Chick Corea, Dave, Lenny White, some guys who disappeared since then. Richie Beirach, Frank Tusa, those guys. I remember, because Leroy came up, and he basically said, "If you don't have a cause, there's no reason to organize," for community and all that stuff. Kind of left us like, "why did he come here and talk?" Then Anthony came up at 10 o'clock at night, and he was peace and love. He was like, "Oh yeah, it's beautiful. I think it's beautiful." So that night, we talked, and we came up with a name. Bob Berg came up with the name, Free Life Communication. Somebody had a friend who was a lawyer. Next thing I know, we're a 501c. Next thing I know we're up for the New York State Council of the Arts grant and got \$5,000. Next thing I know we're in the Space for Innovative Development on West 36th Street, a renovated church that the Rubin Foundation, who then supported the National Symphony in Washington – that's all I know about them – they came to my loft to hear us play, so we could get in. The Nikolais Ballet, Murray Louis Dance Company, and Free Life Communication on a 2,000-foot square, beautiful, pristine space. We became the resident music group of this place. So we were a big deal for a couple of years. 300 concerts the first year, all free jazz.

The first year of our official stay at the – it was called the Space for Innovative Development, this renovated church I'm talking about. As I say, we were there with Alwin Nikolais Ballet, the Murray Louis Dance Company. It was prestigious, as I discovered. I didn't know it then. But we were all into free jazz.

Just to go aside now, the model for the music, for at least the people I was hanging with, was Coltrane's Ascension. We just wanted to play like that. The loft, these tapes I have, the most that went on in my loft and other lofts – Moses had a loft, Gene Perla had a loft – maybe less so in Gene's place over there. He had Jan Hammer and Don Alias living there. But definitely in my loft it was free jazz à la Ascension, 6 guys – 6 saxophones at once, everybody playing drums, piano. It was like the collective energy jazz of Ascension. Let's put it this way: we were not even aware – I was not even aware of Nefertiti, Sorcerer, the whole mid-Miles quintet. I really didn't know what the heck – I had no awareness of that. Everything was Trane, and late Trane! I think is what was happening in New York in the late '60s, right? The cluster's around '70, '71 is the remnants of the free-jazz movement, because of

Coltrane's death. Coltrane embraced the free-jazz thing at the end, as we know. With his passing, it was like Charlie Parker's passing in a way, like what happened with bebop. Not just the man, but the music.

Kirchner: A father figure was gone.

Liebman: Yeah. And Trane being so massively the father-figure, and having taken so many of these guys under his wing, specifically who was on that record date, by the way, on Ascension. Him not being there, and free jazz never catching on as a popular, commercial music, which was never going to happen. We were kind of like the leftovers, because we're predominantly white and a little late in the game. There's a big separation. This is 1968. This is Vietnam. This is the height of the assassinations, and [Robert] Kennedy and [Martin Luther] King. There's a whole social milieu thing happening that this is and that we're part of. On the other hand, we're also white middle class, a lot of us, and to one degree or another we are exposed to rock-and-roll because it's part of our generation. We're 20 years old. We passed through the '60s. We saw the Beatles. We heard the Beatles. We heard Janet [Joplin]. We heard Jimi Hendrix. I always say, if it had been a couple of years later, it would have been Jimi Hendrix, not Coltrane. That would have been, "This is my idol."

I'm saying, what we were doing in the loft, we had Ascension, and then we had Bitches Brew, In a Silent Way, Filles de Kilimanjaro, Miles in the Sky. I've got to give them all credit, because they're all of a whole. Then Live-Evil and eventually, On the Corner, with me. We were really caught in the crosshairs between a change of music. So, even though the loft represented the free-jazz thing, slowly, everybody's starting to see that there's this fusion thing, and that leads me to my gig with Ten Wheel Drive, which means, I'm on salary. This is what's most notable about Ten Wheel Drive in my life is, you're on salary.

The day I got the gig, I auditioned for the gig through my friend Steve Satten, who was playing trumpet. They needed a guy playing baritone, soprano, clarinet, flute, and tenor. It was the first soprano I had to play, so I had to go get a soprano. I auditioned, got the job, and it was \$125 or \$150 a week, and you were on call every day. You either rehearsed or had a gig. This was a working. Fusion, standing aside next to Chicago, Blood, Sweat and Tears. Never as famous, but it was in that genre. Genya Ravan, the singer, she was a Janis Joplin knockoff, but she was great. Five horns. The guys who arranged it, Aram Scheffrin and Mike Zager. Mike studied with [Stephen] Sondheim and was a real Broadway writer who organized this music. The music of Ten Wheel Drive was pretty heavy, actually. I've listened to it over the years, once in a while. Words were great. Music was great. It was that orchestrated rock-and-roll. It was not some throwaway stuff. So with seeing that there's a way – there's something going on

here that is a new thing... Of course Miles opened the door, but Blood, Sweat and Tears, Chicago, the whole idea of horn bands, the New York studio musicians who were in the studios at that time had a chance to play, do some improvising, and be commercial but yet jazz. This is all a big fermenting pot, from '68 to '72.

The loft, our little Free Life Communications thing, was a little window of what we were doing, what this particular crew of people was interested in. We had 60 people in the organization at one point. Guys were getting auditioned to come in, which is a mistake. I learned a lot. I learned about, first of all, the administration, leadership, and don't judge your peers. A lot of stuff.

Kirchner: Judge your peers, but don't judge your peers.

Liebman: Don't tell them. But we were like the underground – this is before the Lower East Side, before the whole downtown thing, we were kind of that. Again, predominantly white, middle-class guys. Not New York. A lot of guys coming from elsewhere, but all around 20 to 25 years old and all working other kinds of gigs for the most part – making a living and just wanting to play jazz. But this is the era when jazz is at a very low point, when there's a transition happening musically, and when economics were such that you never expected that you were going to be playing jazz for a living. It wasn't like that. Everybody wanted to be a sideman to somebody who was still around. It was still Horace Silver. It was still [Art] Blakey. It was still Elvin. It was still Miles. There was always the hope that somebody will get picked. Two things happened. Horace Silver got Mike and Randy [Brecker]. That was heavy, but not really because Horace was, with all due respect, considered a little... not commercial, but not quite the real deal. But when Gene Perla got the gig with Elvin, that was the beginning of our generation starting to be taken into account. Gene's older than me, but he was part of this little crew, and when he took Wilbur Little's place and became the bass player with Elvin Jones – you can't talk about a heavier position for a bass player. That, and Bill Evans. Those are the bass player gigs at that time. That's the top of the pyramid. When that happened, that meant, slowly – it was a signal and a sign that our generation was coming of age, that some of us would become part of the scene and of the mainstream, which is eventually what happened.

Kirchner: When you were doing these loft sessions and concerts, who were some of the young saxophone players besides yourself who were involved in them?

Liebman: The main crew was Michael Brecker, Steve Grossman, and Bob Berg. We were the crew. Gary Campbell, who has been in Florida the last few

years – he was there some of the time. We were definitely together all the time. We were buds. We were living together. It was: he went to Juilliard. He was done on Wednesday. He'd come home with me. I did my substitute teaching Monday and Tuesday. Took the tie off. We'd drop a little LSD or something of that sort, and we would be launched for the next four days, ending up in Chinatown at four in the morning, come back, play, listen to tapes. Also, we were into macrobiotics at that time, and in this building . . .

Kirchner: Acid and macrobiotics. What a . . .

Liebman: Yeah, what a great collection. Talk about well, yin and yang, after all. And we're in the building with Dave Holland on the second floor. This is another story, Dave Holland on the second floor, and Chick is on the first floor of this loft. So this is a pretty happening loft building. Because these were small lofts, 1200 square feet. This is nothing like the massive lofts that were usually identified. But this was quite a community going on there in this period. And Miles – I'm there with Miles, on top of it.

Kirchner: There was one on Grand Street that Marc Copland told me about.

Liebman: I moved to Warren Street eventually, in '72, the next loft in '73. Down the street was Abercrombie and Copland. That was down by the World Trade Center, on Warren Street. Michael came and took my place from me. He was there for 10 years. Michael eventually, in the '80s, went to Grand Street. There were a couple places that meant open-door policy, pretty much. You want to play? I'm ready. Whoever. Bass player? Whoever wants to come up. Let's play. Again, mostly free jazz, until one day, everything changed.

Lanny Fields, the bass player – I remember this distinctly, '70, '71. He walked in. He says, "Any of you playing this record called Speak No Evil?" I said, "No." He says, "Check this out." Phonograph. Great tunes, great tunes. "Man, what's that tune about? What's that tune about?" We spent the whole night transcribing the record. Taking the bass lines, best we could. Suddenly we realized, "You know what? We're really not that good on chord changes. Certainly not these chord changes!" In other words, slowly (at least, this is for me. I don't talk for anybody else) but slowly, the reality of the past and of the need to understand the legacy, reared its head. I don't think we sat down and decided this. I don't think we realized, "you know what? To one degree or another, we have to take care of business, that stuff that came before. And this isn't Ascension. It's pre-Ascension." In other words, what was Trane doing in '58, '57? Can you do that? Can you play on Speak No Evil or Witch Hunt, etc.? Slowly, the whole mood changed, which has never

come back again since then. But it changed to... I don't say more conservative, but the need to have a total jazz education. Remember, we didn't have school. We didn't have anybody to tell us this. Nobody said, "You got to know..." Because there's a course on jazz history, you're going to transcribe Louis Armstrong. Nobody did that for us. So we came to that on our own, collectively, and then slowly, by the mid-'70s, now I'm Miles and Elvin. Michael is on his own. Slowly we're becoming the guys of the next scene. But this is a very interesting period, for these reasons.

Kirchner: Before we go any further, there's one teacher of yours that we haven't talked about, and that's Joe Allard.

Liebman: Oh yeah. He was the guru of saxophone. I was 16 or 17. After three or four years with Mr. Shapiro from Bromley studios, I can see that I have to move up. I literally take the phone book and look for saxophone teachers. I think it was even the yellow pages and I called, (among others) – Marty Napoleon, Garvin Bushell, and Joe Allard. I didn't know anything. I just see their names. And I spoke to them. My mother said, "You speak to them." Joe seemed to be the most personable or whatever. He was at Carnegie Hall studios. That didn't sound so bad. You got to take lessons, you take lessons at Carnegie Hall!

I went every Sunday to Joe. I'm not sure if this was before or after Lennie Tristano. It might overlap. I'm not particularly sure, but it's somewhere when I'm 16, 17, 18 years old. It goes on for a few years, and I took Saturday lessons. It was the subway, same thing, to Rockefeller Center, D train, Sixth Avenue line.

The great lesson with Joe is – outside of saxophone – is that when it's really heavy, you definitely don't know it at the time. You really need to take some time to understand the depth of what's going on. And that less is more. Joe gave me the same lesson over and over again. Did you study with Joe?

Kirchner: I took a couple lessons from him.

Liebman: You had the same lesson I had. I just had more of them. He did repertoire, I'm sure, with the classical guys, because he had straight guys too. But for me, I wasn't classical. This has got to be right before Queens College, because I did go in purportedly for clarinet, because you needed an instrument major. So that's got to be 17 years old. So that would be '64.

Kirchner: You used your lower lip to cushion the reed?

Liebman: I didn't know anything. Here was the main thing: his thing was about sound; my teacher had never said a word about sound. And you know what?

To this day, most teachers don't talk about sound. The thing about saxophone is, you put it in your mouth, and you can play it. You really don't need much to get sound out. Something comes out. Whether it's pleasant or not, but it's unique for sure, which is probably why it was so good for jazz.

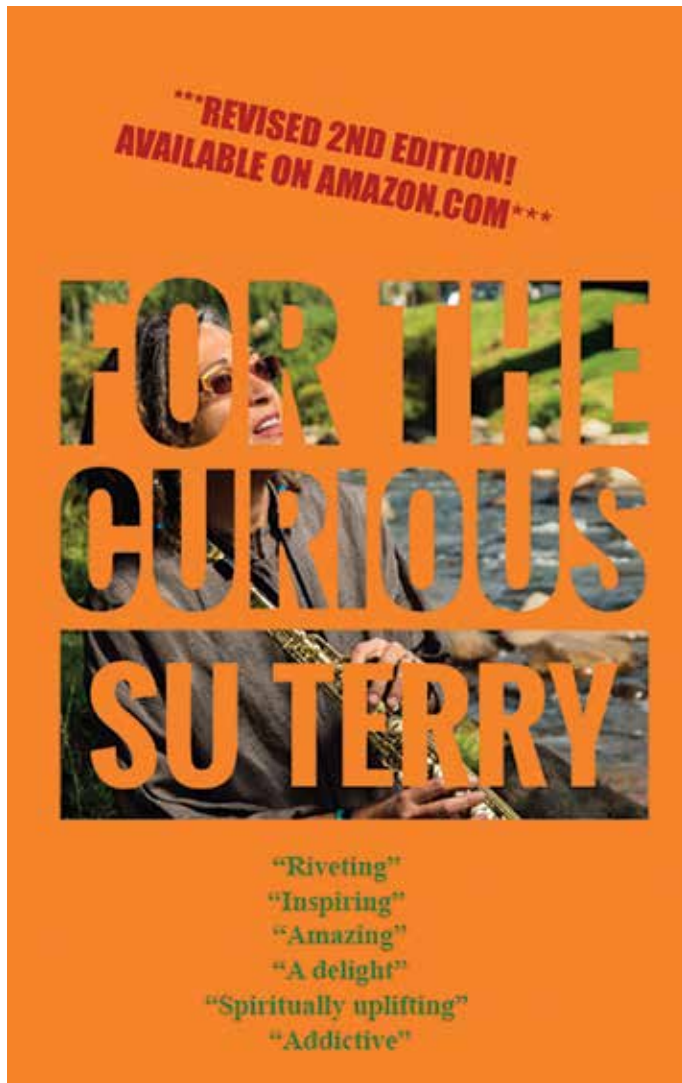
Kirchner: And why there are so many bad saxophone players!

Liebman: Well, that's the thing. It's self-taught. You don't need much. It's not iron chops to get this instrument down. My teacher again, he never said a word about sound, not Shapiro. He taught me to transpose up a step, (thank you very much!), and to read, and to be a good technical musician. But he never said a word about sound. I never understood really what sound meant. What does tone mean? What is the significance of a good sound? What is a good sound? Joe's thing – although he didn't talk about it like that, his thing was to understand the basics, get your principles together, so that you're at least in a position to be able to find a sound that's you. That's the overall gist of what he did. Most of all not be handicapped.

You walk in there to your lesson. Your head's too low. You're putting pressure here. Your lip is like this. How can you play? You're not hearing it. You're not singing it. What are you feeling? It's not just fingers. Basically, that's what his thing was. I was young, but I still had bad habits already. By 17 years old I had bad habits. To break habits and to instill new ones is why he gave the same lesson over and over again. I see that now. He just said, "Overtones, the lip, things with the larynx. Take out the book, the Grey's Anatomy." He'd point to that page. He'd show you the breathing thing. I use it right now. He'd show you the whole throat, the larynx, the pharynx, the trachea, the whole thing and what's going on. Then he explained opera singers and what they use to sing, and how they would do it.

I didn't know what he was talking about. I think it was \$15, \$20 a lesson. Guys are lined up from all over the world. The guy taught 70 people a week! I'm walking out of there that first year, going like, "I don't know. Sounds like a con job to me!" Here's another Lennie Tristano vibe. I'm getting no books. I didn't get past the first four bars in the Rose clarinet studies the first six months! I didn't get past the first four bars! I played the first bar, he'd stop me and just rap, have me do these singing exercises, the overtones, the mouthpiece alone, all the stuff I teach. I said, "This is the heaviest teacher in New York? What's this? Is this it? Is this all there is?" As I said earlier, it was ten years later when I realized it, because it took me about ten years to get what he was talking about. ☺

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Zoot Fest!

In preparation for the ACMJC 30th anniversary in 2018, Zoot Fest will not be held this November, but instead will be in March, 2018. More information will be available in the January 2018 issue of The Note, as well as on the esu.edu/jazzatesu website. Check back often for any updates and we look forward to celebrating 30 years with you!

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Gerry Mulligan 1960
Photo by Herb Snitzer