



The NOTE



Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania • Fall / Winter 2015



MED FLORY PART 2 • BILL DOBBINS • SUE TERRY • COTA

In This Issue...

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

- 3 **A Note From the Collection Coordinator**
by Matt Vashlishan
- 4 **Phil In The Gap**
by Phil Woods
- 6 **Interview with Med Flory Part 2**
by Bob Bush
- 12 **From the Bridge**
by Sue Terry
- 14 **COTA Festival 2014**
by Rick Chamberlain, photos by Bob Weidner
- 17 **Reflections on Bob Dorough's "Eulalia"**
by Phil Mosley
- 21 **Al Grey at ESU**
by Guest Editor Patrick Dorian
- 27 **Zoot Sims: a True Jazz Master**
by Bill Dobbins
- 32 **Straight Talk Part 2**
by David Liebman
- 34 **Contributors & Acknowledgements**

From the Collection . . .



Cover Photo (front): Al Grey performing with plunger mute, ESU 1990. Photographed and donated by Bob Napoli.



Centerfold Photo: Woody Herman 2nd Herd, WOR New York Radio Broadcast from the Commodore Hotel. Donated by A. J. Julian.



Cover Photo (back): Al Cohn Performing at the COTA Festival in 1985, photographer unknown.

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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

By Dr. Matt Vashlishan

It seems like only yesterday when I was writing my first Note from the Collection Coordinator in my first issue of *The Note*. Time has flown by (they say it does when you're having fun, right?), and there have been several advancements at the ACMJC that I am happy to tell you about. Coming off the heels of a very successful Zoot Fest, I am more optimistic than ever for the Collection and the news that I have to share.

Accompanying me in the photo is Kelly Smith. She has joined the Kemp Library Staff and is an archivist for the Special Collections at East Stroudsburg University, which of course encompasses the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. Kelly earned her Masters of Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh, and worked as a Project Archivist at the Senator John Heinz History Center as well as becoming a Dance Heritage Coalition Fellow at Jacob's Pillow in Massachusetts. So far, we have been working together to rearrange and organize the Collection to make it easier to access and to eventually enable the Collection to be accessible online.

The ACMJC online presence is well underway in the form of a searchable database including all sound recordings that was begun many years ago between Bob Bush and Peter McAuliffe. We are working hard to put this database online in the near future so everyone with an Internet connection can see the material we have here at the University, and hopefully come to listen to everything in person!

Another project started years ago is finally following through, and that is the donation of Harold Karsten. In December of 2014 (a month before you are reading this), we will accept the donation that Mr. Karsten left in his will back around 2008. This collection is quite substantial and consists of LP's, CD's, books, magazines, and lots of it! I will be a great opportunity to use someone's extensive collection to augment the material here at the ACMJC.

We do, from time to time, receive small donations from friends that have been involved with the Collection over the years. Please notice the centerfold spread in this issue of the Woody Herman 2nd Herd. A.J. Julian of the Woody Herman Society gave us this wonderful photo, featuring one of the greatest saxophone sections of

all time. Accompanying this photo were several others that will no doubt make it into future issues of *The Note*.

As hard as I try, occasionally some details fall through the cracks. One occurred during the editing of the Brew Moore article from the last issue. At the top of page 15, we added Moore's name after Jerry Lloyd's name, thus implying that Brew Moore was the one driving the cab! That paragraph is about Jerry Lloyd, who played with Charlie Parker and drove the cab.

It is also my pleasure to announce that ESU Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Music Patrick Dorian has returned to *The Note*, this time as a guest editor. Pat has helped me along the way getting acquainted with the Collection and it is great news that he has chosen to continue offering his expertise in this issue.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone for the phone calls and emails, and for the continued support of *The Note* and the Collection. I love hearing the stories and am overwhelmed at the amount of interest in *The Note* and the concerts associated with the Collection. On that topic, be sure to check out the advertisement inside the back cover of this issue for the Phil Woods Saxophone Celebration. This concert is

sure to be a great afternoon with a rare chance to spend some time with Phil Woods, and as always, this concert will benefit the Collection to ensure I and everyone at ESU can continue to bring you the great music, stories, and history that is available in and around the Pocono Mountains, and more importantly, in *The Note*! Enjoy! ☺



John Herr

Matt Vashlishan and archivist Kelly Smith at the 2014 Zoot Fest.

Phil In the Gap



David Coulter

The Eternal Hostage

By Phil Woods

Shoulda called last column Pork Chop Nil! The title for this column was given to me by Dr. Phil Terman, dentist to the jazz world. Dr. Tee has treated everyone from Duke to Newk! The Good Doctor said most jazz artists in America will be eternal hostages.

Oh well, onward and upward! This month we will explore those times when my musical efforts never saw the light of day. Like the Lena Horne concert at Carnegie Hall with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops. In the late 70's I had the distinct honor of doing an album called "Lena-A New Album" with arrangements by Maestro Robert Farnon in London. Producer Norman Schwartz was the producer and he had the Hungarian recipe for omelets – "First steal a dozen eggs." He also called a Mel Torme album "Mel-A New Album." His reasoning was that someone would walk into a record store (whatever happened to them?) and ask if they had any new albums by these artists and of course they would be sold the "new" one even if it was 10 years old. I fired Norman a few years later.

Anyway, we were at Keith Grant's Olympic Recording studio in Barnes just outside of London with full orchestra plus Gordon Beck on piano (we had to fire the English pianist who was originally hired because

Lena found him "inappropriate" as she put it) and Lena and I in an isolation booth right next to each other. It was one of the most thrilling musical experiences of my life. I just had a part with harmonic outlines with suggestions from Maestro Farnon. Lena never went into the booth to listen to playbacks. She told me she didn't like to hear herself and preferred sit and knit and chat with me. So when she was scheduled for the Carnegie Pops concert she asked me if I would like to do the gig. Guess my response? So I picked up my kids Aimee and Garth and took them to hear their Daddy play in Carnegie Hall with the world's greatest singer conducted the world's worst conductor. Arthur Fiedler was an ex-violinist who conducted like a Dutch windmill in a category 10 tornado. Once again I was seated next to Lena but was not given a music stand or microphone. In fact Arthur kept asking the producer, "Who is that guy with sax sitting next to the star and what is he doing there?" After the concert I asked my kids how they liked the concert. They said they loved Lena but they couldn't hear me at all. Of course not – I was not given a mike. Such events are humbling to say the least.

And then there was the Kennedy Center Honors Awards show for Benny Carter honoring the master and

my dear friend. David Sanborn and I played the beautiful song Souvenir that Mr. Carter wrote upon hearing of the death of Johnny Hodges (news travels fast from a dentist's office). David played the first half of the tune and I played the bridge and last A section. Except when the show aired the director/producer or someone with perfect ears (no holes) left out the bridge. David played the two A sections and when I came in and I played a third A section. Truncation has its place but this was ridiculous..

A sidebar:

Russell Procope could not do a Las Vegas gig with the Duke so they got the King, Benny Carter, who sat next to Rabbit for two weeks and they didn't say a word to each other. I used to think Mr. Hodges was rude after I saw him at the Embers. I caught him as he got off the bandstand and said to him in my best collegiate manner, "Hello Mr. Hodges. I'm Phil Woods and just wanted to thank you for your kind words about my work with Quincy at the Newport Festival." He icily regarded me and snapped, "I know who you are!" and turned around and walked off. I asked Louis Bellson what is it with the Rabbit? He said Johnny was extremely shy and disliked any chitchat with anyone.

And then there was the Grammy Awards TV show honoring Quincy

and Billy Joel and others. I was given a dressing room on the 6th floor shared with some hip-hop group, and was called on to back up some girl singer with Bob James on piano. When the show aired it went from the singer to a short solo from Bob and then back to the singer. I was not seen but you could sort of hear me on the last note.

In 1980 Pat Williams asked me to back up Diana Ross on the title song of the movie "It's My Turn." My buddy Joe Lopes was in the booth while I was working and he told me the engineer thought I was a terrible choice for the saxophone solo. When the movie came out the sax solo was omitted. Me! The guy who made Billy Joel a star. I don't get no respect!

A few years back I did the Dave Letterman show with Quincy and a big band doing his then re-discovered hit "Soul Bossa Nova". We rehearsed it a couple of times with Q up front. He counted it off and the intro was played by a cuica, a Brazilian friction drum with a large pitch range produced by changing the tension on the head of the hand-drum. But when we did the tune for the show Q decided to count the tempo off as he entered from backstage. Half of the band did not hear the count-off and the cuica was virtually inaudible. The band all came in at different places and the leader of the house band, Paul Schafer was waving his arms frantically - why I never knew. It was a metric nightmare! We had to stay after school and redo the tune. Crackerjack New York band and we

couldn't find "one!"

I have often wondered why my picture was not in evidence in the Deer Head Inn. Everybody else seems to be represented. Well my son-in-law Rocky Streck found it on the third floor behind some kind of bush. My life is complete now. Also shown are my band mates Bill Goodwin and Steve Gilmore who are original members along with Brian Lynch and Bill



The Phil Woods Quintet performing at the Deerhead Inn, Delaware Water Gap PA.

Charlap. I have included this photo to save you climbing three flights. Looks like it was done with a Kodak Brownie. That's me behind the bush. Just an eternal hostage on the third floor.

Charlie Parker gave me a piece of cherry pie when I saw him at the Three Deuces in 1947. People, especially some journalists, have said it is my only jazz story and I should stop telling it. If they had a Pastie with Shakespeare would they not tell the story a few times? Another cliché I overuse is telling people that when I get up I brush my tooth. I used to have two teeth but lied. Recently I was eating some cherries and broke a

tooth. No more cherries but the tooth comment is no longer an exaggeration and I will continue to regale the world with the Bird story.

Back in 1956 Donald Byrd and I along with Art Taylor and Paul Chambers recorded with Bud Powell at Birdland for Roulette Records. Donald and I were looking for this album for years. Well the Japanese company Marshmallow Record has

finally issued this in limited edition. Only four tunes but Bud and Donald sound great. I sound young and nervous. Too bad Donald died without hearing it. I loved Byrd. We made a record called "Young Bloods" back before Vaseline and every time we saw each other we talked about doing a follow up and calling it "Tired Bloods." I miss him.

Donated by Phil Woods

I did a gig with Lee Morgan back in the day and picked him up in Philly for the drive to Baltimore. We stopped for gas and they wouldn't let us use the toilet, but took the money for the gas.

Gradually my improv powers are declining along with my breathing. The thing that bothers me most will be the inability to play the American songbook that Harvey LaRose instilled in me when I was fourteen. How will I ever survive without the joy of playing Gershwin? Arlen? Ellington?

The sax is like a bat - it flies better at night.

Up, up and away! ☺

From The ACMJC Oral History Project



Charles Perry Hebard

By Bob Bush, August 12, 2010

[Med Flory] I never thought about living in New York. I always wanted to move to L.A... Hollywood! You know I figure if Alfalfa could make it, how hard could it be?

[Bob Bush] What's Ray Anthony's band about? Tell me all about that.

[MF] Well Ray was just a terrible cat back in those days. Ugh, I don't want to go into it. That was an ugly thing.

[BB] Well you were on this for a pretty long time, right?

[MF] Yeah, about three years or something like that. And one time, Joanie - they didn't get along at all, and Joanie said, "Here comes Mighty Mouse" you know. [laughs] The short little devil.

So when we got out here, I hadn't worked with Ray for years until I got a call. And he's a different cat! You know, he's nice! So I'm all like, "What the hell happened to you?!" And he says, "Well I got out here and nobody needed to work. So in order to get them to work for me, I had to be a good guy. So I tried it!"

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] You know he played good. He's playing good right now, he's about 89, right?

[BB] You played with the Ray Anthony Orchestra on the road and did you also do TV work with him?

[MF] Yeah, the Plymouth Show.

Interview with Med Flory Part 2

[BB] That's the one that you played on and you sang on, too.

[MF] Yeah. We did thirty weeks of that. Not much TV after that, a few things you know, but mostly the Palladium, we did the Palladium a lot. I was going okay, you know. Joanie was saying we worked with Alex Golden who hired Jim Durante. Before a gig, Jimmy came in and he piano and we'd played together, you know. Greatest cat in the world, man. He played that old jazz. Not ragtime, but it was jazz. It was old timey jazz, and it was great to hear him. Anyway, Al Golden is a great cat, and Joanie and I worked with him two nights a week. With both of us doing it and whatever else I could pick up, we got along. We got amazing.

[BB] Clear something up for me, because I did some research on the Ray Anthony band. It listed the piano player as John Williams, now is it the same as the composer John Williams?

[MF] No.

[BB] Was there a John Williams on the piano there?

[MF] Well, there could have been another John Williams, but not while I was playing with him.

[BB] The "Star Wars" John Williams?

[MF] Yeah!

[BB] Okay. When did you form your first band out on the West Coast?

[MF] In 1956.

[BB] So right after you got out there.

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] Tell me about that.

[MF] Well, in 1958 we played the first Monterey Jazz Festival with the Jazz Wave. We recorded the summer before, and the album came out and we got the Monterey Festival and we killed it, you know. We had Mel Luis and Buddy Clark and Russ Freeman in the rhythm section. The trumpets were Al Porcino and Ray Triscari... just a great, great band! And on saxes were me, Charlie Kennedy, Bill Holman, and Bill Hood. You know, good band. Of course the critics from San Francisco thought we were a bunch of ruffians. [laughs] That's what they called us: "A bunch of ruffians." Because they're used to playing that... I don't know what they do in that little town, man.

[BB] What was the first Monterey Festival like? I mean, much

smaller scale than now, of course.

[MF] Well, Dizzy [Gillespie] was there and he played with us, so it was pretty good.

[BB] I guess!

[MF] Yeah, and Joanie sang and she had a great leopard skin outfit. We met Sandy Koufax and that was a biggie.

[BB] Oh, that's a thrill.

[MF] Yeah, he was there with Gene Norman. He hadn't taken over yet, but it was right around the—

[BB] No, not around 1958.

[MF] I played the next year playing baritone with Woody [Herman]. Ornette Coleman was on the thing with Don Cherry playing his pocket trumpet. I didn't tell him anything, but at the time I was thinking "I have a better place for him to stick that trumpet than in his pocket!"

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] And Ornette, I couldn't figure him out, but I guess that he was okay. All I cared about was Bird. Bird and Dizzy and Bud and Max. When Miles Davis came on—I had a good name for Miles: "Miles Doofus."

[BB] [laughs] No...

[MF] That's what I'm gonna call him from now on... Well how old are you?

[BB] I'm 58.

[MF] Yeah, you're too young to have been there when the records were coming out with Dizzy and Bird, and we'd buy them. And then we buy this one and it's Bird and "Who is this idiot that's trying to play with Bird?" And it was... "Miles Doofus," going "da da da," and the guy had chops! I think that's the biggest miscarriage in the history of jazz is Miles Davis, joining that rarified group of the great be-boppers, you know. Back in 1949 when he did the "The Squirrel" and "Move," that's the best bebop he's ever played, you remember those?

[BB] No I don't...

[MF] Well, he played real bebop there. But then he met Gil Evans, and it made him sound like he knew what he was doing, you know if you have Gil writing for you! But still he would clam every third note and get away with it! I remember thinking, "why did they let this guy do that?" But all that is my opinion, you know.

[BB] I know how much you admired Bird; when did the Super-sax concept start to crystalize for you?

[MF] Well Rex was just a baby and Joe Maini (Joe was a GREAT jazz alto player, absolutely top flight) came over with a friend and they had an old record player and a bunch of albums. It was hot so I gave them 50 bucks for it. Bud Powell's "Moods" was on there, and "Blues For Alice." Then I did "Star Eyes" and "Just Friends." So we used to rehearse them, with Joe Maini and Charlie Kennedy on altos, me and Richie Kamuca on tenors, and Bill Hood on baritone. Then we played together and we played decent, and finally one day we

recorded "Just Friends". It sounded pretty good!

Years later, we're working at the Crescendo with the Dave Pell octet. Buddy came over here after the gig and he says, "Hey play that tape of the saxes," So I did. He said, "Boy, it'd be great to have a band doing that!" I said, "Yeah, but who was going to write it?" I was writing a movie script at the time that I still haven't sold, but he said he would like to try it so I showed him how to do it. He wrote some, and he'd write it all in the wrong order, so I said "No, you gotta write like on your hand, you know, alto, alto, tenor, tenor, bari. The baritone is playing the same thing as the lead and it's all in one octave because the most important thing is what Bird is doing, not what you're doing to embellish him; he doesn't need none of that!"

So he started doing it and he started writing like crazy, man, and he wrote good stuff! He was writing more than I was, so Joanie called up a place and got us a gig. She said, "Hey! Get this band—get them away—they've been over here rehearsing—they're driving me nuts!" So we went in on a Monday night and the place was packed and we started off with "Parker's Mood" and we played those first chords and everybody started laughing and jumping and screaming and clapping like crazy and Buddy and I looked at each other like, "Who knew for Christ's sake?" We were playing Charlie Parker... nobody was doing anything like that.

[BB] Oh yeah? It really is a unique idea.

[MF] Yeah and I kept telling him, "It's gonna be a hundred years before they get out of the shadow of Bird," you know. But anyway, we ended up getting signed for a three album deal with Capitol Records.



Med Flory, NYC 1954

Courtesy of Bill Scott

[BB] Is this still in the late 50s?

[MF] No, no. This was in '72. Well it came out in '73, so we won a Grammy for the best jazz group in '73 and we got nominated the next two years, but didn't win.

[BB] Let me just say for the record, to make sure I got it right. You really started with Joe Maini back in the early 1950s with the concept of Supersax?

[MF] Yeah, and then Joe died.

[BB] He died around '64, I think.

[MF] Yeah, something like that.

[BB] So what happened then?

[MF] Then we forgot about it. We didn't want to do it without Joe. There wasn't much of a point. So we didn't do anything more for a while. And then I was playing with Terry's band, Terry Gibbs, which was very interesting...

[BB] Well we didn't talk very much about that. What's the time frame around that?

[MF] 1958, somewhere around there I started. About that time I wrote "Back Bay Shuffle." And I wrote a few others, and Terry did a lot of that stuff.

[BB] You were an important part of that band.

[MF] Ha, well here's what happened, man, we played the Festival and then we come back to town and then Terry comes to town with a quartet, you know. Well he hears the band, the Jazz Wave. And so he's saying blah-blah we should get a big band. So like an idiot, I let him use some of my charts. I'll never do that again!

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] Because there was no more "Med Flory's Jazz Wave," it was Terry Gibbs. Now I don't blame Terry... he what any evil little... No! I'm just kiddin'. I dig Terry.

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] Even what after what he did to me. No he didn't do anything to me; it was a natural for him. Then I get a gig playing the same joint and he told anybody that plays on his band is not playing on my band anymore.

[BB] Well, there's some great music came out of Terry's Dream Band. I'm sure you had a large part to do with that.

[MF] Well, half of the book was mine if that counts for anything.

[BB] Counts a lot.

[MF] Yeah. But, that's the way it goes. I've made a

lot of dumber mistakes than that!

[BB] Fill in the gap for me between the time that Joe Maini died and 1972 when Supersax was revived. You went off and did completely different stuff, right?

[MF] Yeah, I would work with different bands; Terry's band, writing and stuff, you know, and I was acting there, too.

[BB] Well that's what I mean. You actually went off to become an actor in films and TV. Tell me about that part.

[MF] Well in August of 1960, something like that, I'm home on a Saturday night and I wasn't working and was really bugged. I was watching TV and there was some actor on there just chopping it to pieces and I thought "man look at that I can do better than that, what's that guy doing trying to act!" And then Joanie says, "well I know Lorne Greene, I studied with him in Toronto. I bet if I talked to him..." So she goes down to the Paramount lot, I'm playing tennis and I get back home and Joanie's on the phone and she says

"I'm bringing Lorne home for some drinks, get some scotch!" And I had no money at all! My friend of mine, he had five dollars. So we bought a half a pint of scotch and some mix and when Lorne got there in his 320 SL, the cherry red thing with the bat wing doors, every kid in the neighborhood is climbing all over him. So he comes in, he's a great cat, just salt of the earth. And we give him a drink, give him a real one, you know. And Joanie said, "Well don't you think Med would be good in TV?" He says, "I don't know, I've been trying to get friends of my own into the business for years and it doesn't seem to work out. What

have you done?" I said, "Well nothing on film, just local stuff like General Hospital and stuff like that."

[BB] You mean soap opera kind of things?

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] You did those?

[MF] Yeah, I did a couple of them.

[BB] Back in New York?

[MF] No, out here.

[BB] Oh.

[MF] Local out here before it went on network, it was a Hollywood show. So we were hangin' out, having fun. I'll tell you, the two guys that I would go to the most, if I needed advice, one would be Woody and the other would—would be, uh, would be him.

[BB] Lorne Greene.



[MF] Yeah.

[BB] *And Cartwright.*

[MF] Absolutely great guy, he did a lot for me, man. I need 500 bucks, I'd give it back to him right away, but when I needed it, boy he was there with it. He was a real, real friend. Anyway, a week later he says, "Uh Med, this is Lorne. Come on down to the blablabla", so I went down there and met Bill Mayberry, the casting director, and he sent me to a guy named Paul Wilkins, who was an agent. So we went over to the agent and I cold-read something and he said, "Look I got this actor of mine to take over this good part in 'Lawman,' it's a title role, but he's out of town. You wanna go over it? Take a shot at it?" I said, "sure." So we went over there and the director was Marc Lawrence. Do you know who that is?

[BB] *No I don't.*

[MF] Remember "The Asphalt Jungle," that movie?

[BB] *Yes.*

[MF] You know that that weasely little guy in there?

[BB] *Okay.*

[MF] You know who I mean?

[BB] *I think so.*

[MF] Yeah. He was always a heavy, Marc Lawrence. So he's the director! So he says, "You got it!" So that's the first thing I did.

[BB] *The first thing you did was "Lawman"?*

[MF] Yeah, right off the street.

[BB] *Oh okay.*

[MF] Never had a lesson or needed one. Acting classes they teach you to get over your fear of acting, but that doesn't make sense. [laughs] If you're afraid of acting, what do you want to be an actor for?!

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] Pick something you can do.

[BB] *Well tell me some more, rattle off some names of some shows that you were in.*

[MF] Might as well take it in sequence. I did that, then I did "Maverick" and "Bonanza," and I did a thing with Chuck Connors, what was that...

[BB] *"The Rifleman"?*

[MF] "The Rifleman", yeah. That was one of the highlights. Another highlight was many years later when Marlo Thomas did a remake of...

[BB] *Oh, "It's A Wonderful Life".*

[MF] Yeah, "It's A Wonderful Life," called "It Hap-

pened One Christmas." And I played the bartender, Nick the Bartender.

[BB] *That was the Sheldon Leonard role, right? In the old movie?*

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] *Yeah. That's a great role.*

[MF] Mm-hmm. And I did it up man, tougher than Sheldon could ever be, you know? [laughs]

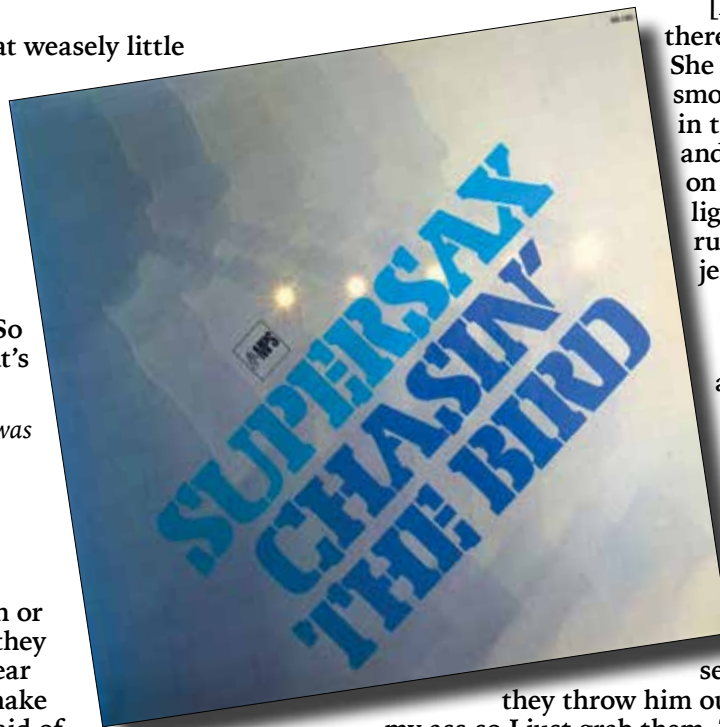
[BB] *[laughs] Well you had to throw someone out of the bar, didn't you or something?*

[MF] Huh?

[BB] *Well Jimmy Stewart gets thrown out of the bar.*

[MF] Well yeah, I threw both of these chicks out... uh, what was her name... Cloris Leachman.

[BB] *Yes.*



[MF] Well she was right up there man, a pain-in-the-ass. She was always saying, "Oh no smoking, no drinking." We're in the sound stage at Universal and it's huge and this guy clear on the other side of the stage lights up a cigarette and she runs clear across the thing to jerk it out of his mouth.

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] So we do the thing and Marlo's in there. I throw this guy out of the bar first. I squirt this guy. The Old Man who was going to poison the little kid?

[BB] *Yeah, the Pharmacist.*

[MF] Yeah, he was there, but he was just an old drunk. So I squirt seltzer water all over him, they throw him out. So the chicks, they're on my ass so I just grab them. This is the real set from the original thing, and they had put snow all over and it was just all mushy and shitty, so I threw those girls out of there, man. Marlo was okay, but she was busy being the producer and everything, but this other chick it was just fun to hurl her into the slime!

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] We did it three times! No twice, that's right; it was only twice. But I got to do it twice. And everyone applauded.

[BB] *[laughs] The highlight of your career.*

[MF] It was one of those moments.

[BB] *Well, at least one of them. Did you ever do commercials or anything like that?*

[MF] Oh yeah, man. I was the voice of Coleman Camping Supplies, the Great American Outdoors. I did

all the voice-overs and a lot of the on-camera stuff for about five years. I raised a family during commercials. I don't know how many I did, just a lot.

[BB] *So this is what you always dreamed about doing, right? Going to Hollywood and getting in films and stuff.*

[MF] Yeah. Like in "The Nutty Professor", that was good. The first picture I did was "Spencer's Mountain." There were all these wonderful people: Wally Cox and everybody; Maureen O'Hara, the greatest woman in the world. Just a true Irish beauty. She took care of everybody. Men were out where the mosquitos are and she's got bug spray spraying everybody's ankles.

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] Kinda like the diva you might imagine.

[BB] *Yeah. It sounds like a lot of the roles that you played were tough and rumbled ones, a lot of cowboys and stuff. But I want to go back and hear more about "The Nutty Professor."*

[MF] The first day of shooting I got there oh, ten after 8. I walk in and they say, "Where the hell have you been?? It's an 8:00 call! They're in there shooting stuff now!" It took me a few minutes to get in, but when I got there, Jerry, who cast me personally he's giving me some shit. Good natured. So we do the scene, where I want to go to football practice and he gives me some heat and then I go up and get in his face and pick him up and stick him on a shelf. And that was my big scene. So we got everything on the first take and got right back on schedule, so everything was cool.

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] And Jerry Lewis, case anybody wants to know, is a terrific guy and a great director and a mind that just won't stop. Absolutely just a great guy.

[BB] *Oh, that's nice. Nice to know.*

[MF] Well here's an example: Stella Stevens, me, and Skip Ward and Norm Alden, we were the three football players. And we're in the booth, talking and Jerry comes in and sits down with us and he's telling us how to do the scene. And this guy comes up: "Hey," he says, "Hey, uh, Jerry, we got the big thing all set up would you wanna take a look before we nail it down?" And Jerry looked up to him and said, "Can't you see I'm working with my actors?! Be gone!"

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] How's that?

[BB] *Pretty hip.*

[MF] Just great, man, and funny. Just funny as hell. So we were doing the exteriors over at Arizona State

and he's throwing a party for the cast and crew, so we had a band from L.A. Joe Maini's playing on it, and they knew each other, I guess. And they're jiving back and forth... one would top the other and the other would top him. It was great.

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] Oh man, but you didn't know Joe, did you?

[BB] *I did not.*

[MF] *[sighs]* Killer player.

[BB] *That's what I hear.*

[MF] Nothing but funny. You know, he always had a lilt to his playing like he was home, boy, he was great, you couldn't stop him.

[BB] *You mentioned earlier that you have been working on a screen play or a script.*

[MF] Oh, a lot of them.

[BB] *How many of them? Tell me something about them.*

[MF] Haven't sold any them. I optioned one called "Tore," made of 17 grand in options, you know, which is some-

thing. Some writers may never get

that much in their lifetime.

[BB] *What was it? Tell me a little bit about it. What was it about?*

[MF] A big turtle. Kids are fishing, one of them dynamites for fishing, and they find this huge, big turtle or tortoise or something, like thirty-feet long, and it ends up doing all kinds of stuff, like eating a ball game.

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] It's a great script, you know. Maslansky, the guy that produced all of the "Police Academy" movies optioned it. Paul Maslansky. He optioned it for the Lad company and they had it for a year and a half. But this is just before "Jurassic Park" came out. If it was animation it would have been the easiest to do, but they were showing us the guys that did "Kong," and how they had all the knobs and things for the facial twitches and stuff like that and it was amazing.

[BB] *Yeah.*

[MF] It was a big, huge deal.

[BB] *Well let's get back to the music part because I haven't asked you enough to explain to me about how the L.A. Voices got started.*

[MF] Well, I wrote a chart on "Embracable You" and a couple of other things.

[BB] *Well, I got your CD in my hand, the one that is titled: "Med Flory Presents the Best of Supersax and the L.A. Voices".*



[MF] Pretty good album, huh?

[BB] Oh my goodness. It's a killer. And I do a little radio program once a week here at the university and I've been playing this constantly.

[MF] Oh, no kidding!

[BB] Yeah, because I love the sound of those voices, unbelievable, and then the combination of that and Supersax to me is just terrific. Was Don Shelton ever involved with the L.A. Voices?

[MF] Yeah, but not recording. Afterwards when we did the Moonlight Tango and places like that.

[BB] Let me change the subject and start to wrap things up. There are a few things I still want to know. You've played with so many musicians along the way. Tell me some that you feel never got as much recognition as they deserve.

[MF] Conte Candoli.

[BB] Tell me more.

[MF] Conte Candoli. Do you know who Dizzy said plays most like him? Conte Candoli, that's what he told me. So he dug him.

[BB] I believe Diz.

[MF] Yeah, now he was the most absolute, marvelous cat.

[BB] Well Conte and you go way back; I know you've spent a lot of time together, right?

[MF] Well, playing together on that band for 30 years. [laughs]

[BB] Well, when you look back at all of the great jazz musicians of the forties or fifties, who were your heroes? I mean, who was your greatest influence?

[MF] Charlie Parker.

[BB] Mm-hmm.

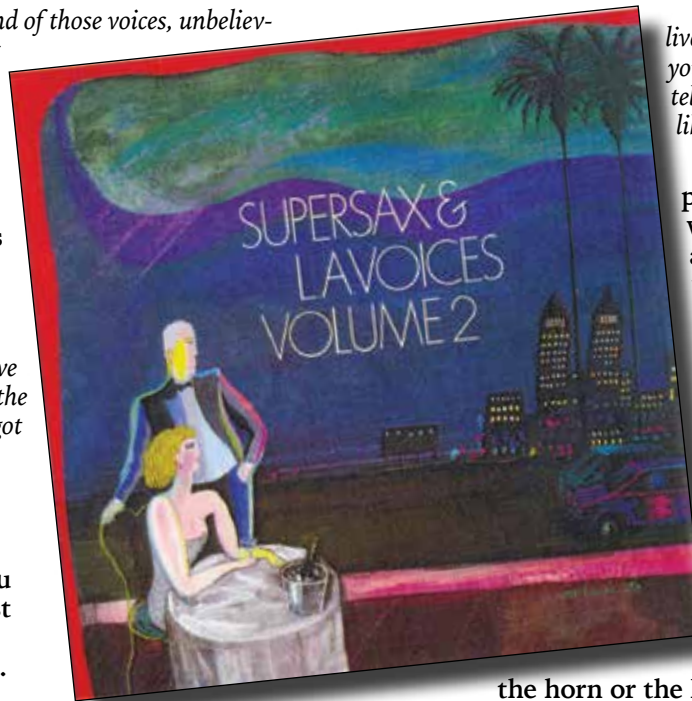
[MF] Diz, and going long way back, Louis Jordan. I liked Louis Jordan before I heard Diz and I never could stand Johnny Hodges. I just couldn't stand that slurpy way he played. I just didn't like him. I wasn't nuts about that band, for that matter except for Paul Gonzalves and a few guys. It was a good band, and they made some marvelous stuff. On the whole I shouldn't say that I didn't dig that band. I did, but then I didn't somehow. Mainly because every place you went, every band that you were on, there was some joker trying to write in the Ellington style. If you can't do it, don't! I thought it was terrible. But hey, I can't blame Duke for that.

[BB] Were you an admirer of Lester Young?

[MF] Yeah. Sure, when he did those things back there with Red Callender, and Nat Cole. It was Nat Cole, Red Callender and Prez.

[BB] Let me change the subject again and ask you this. I think you have an opinion about this, so I'm going to take a shot. Imagine that you were talking to a group of young student musicians today, which you probably do on occasion.

[MF] Yeah.



[BB] Having gone through and lived through the era of jazz that you've lived through, what do you tell these kids about what it was like back then in the 40s and 50s?

[MF] Well I don't. They play for me and I tell them what they're doing right and what they're doing wrong, and how to just play swing time. Divide the beat into three instead of two and don't even mention the word "rock" when I'm around! I don't allow anybody to say that even in my own house. Even if he's a geologist!

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] [laughs] So I tell the lead alto player, "Look, either you play the horn or the horn plays you. If the

horn's playing you, no one's going to hear you because the horn likes the sound a certain way and we get it, it sounds a nice... but you gotta get that sound out there about six feet in front of you where it all comes together because you're competing against seven idiots who don't give a rat's ass whether you live or die because they're blowing their brains out!" Then when the saxes come in, they gotta come in! I play hard as I can sometimes, to keep up with the trumpets and trombones. Wonderful people. As long as they stay back in their place.

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] [laughs]

[BB] So are you optimistic or pessimistic about jazz?

[MF] [sighs] Oh, I don't know. Hey, I'm not optimistic about anything!

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] I am kind of with the opinion that the world has already come to an end, but we're too stupid to realize it.

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] Really, man. What do we got? What's getting better? Basketball?

[BB] [laughs] Well let's wrap this up. Thank you so much Med. It has really been a pleasure to talk to you and thank you too, for all this great music you've given to us over the years.

[MF] Well thank you too, man. You know, just putting one foot in front of the other, that's all it is. ☺

From the Bridge



James Richard

by Sue Terry

GIVE ME THE SIMPLE LIFE

*"A cottage small is all I'm after
Not one that's spacious and wide
A house that rings with joy and laughter
And the ones you love inside"*

(bridge to Give Me the Simple Life; lyric by Harry Ruby, music by Rube Bloom)

Let's whip out the old cellphone camera and take a snapshot of the Zeitgeist, shall we? We've got the warm-and-fuzzies covered: cute animal videos, people helping each other, random acts of kindness. But then there's the economy. Health care, war, alternative energy. Robots, nano-particles, RFID. Genetic alteration, biohazards, terrorism. Currency control and manipulation. Poverty, hunger, drought. Foreclosures, unemployment, climate change. Digital everything. And where the heck are we going to put all the trash?

Forget the cellphone camera - we need the wide angle lens!

Since the time when most people thought the Earth was the center of the universe, we've acquired objectivity. No longer tethered to the surface of this bulbous, heavy planet, we fly over it in airplanes, in spacecraft. We go to the bottom of the sea, and burrow inside the earth's crust with quantum measuring devices. We probe every probability with lines of computer code that bind us, Matrix-like, to the busy-bee mentality that keeps us churning out honey.

Some of us have been saying, "Hey, did I sign up for this course? And is it required to graduate?" Folks are quitting their jobs, starting their own businesses. They're forming communes and communities; they're riding bicycles and growing their own vegetables. They're making their own biofuel for their cars (sign me up for that!) and getting off the grid with windmills, solar panels and geothermal power. They're even adopting dietary regimes that supposedly mimic the "natural" lifestyle of our Paleolithic ancestors.

Heaven knows why there's been a shift toward living simpler lives, in the midst of this amazing era of technological advancement. Maybe in the background of our minds, we're still a bit worried about that 2012 business a while back. Why did the ancient Mayan calendar end there? Did something happen and we're the last to know? Are we now inhabiting an Alternate Universe?

In order to better assess the truth of this Give Me the

Simple Life idea, let's divide human endeavors into seven general categories:

1. The Basics (food/air/water/shelter)
2. Health
3. Money
4. Love/Relationships/Family
5. Work
6. Religion/Philosophy of Life
7. The Arts/Entertainment

The Basics

In this category we see a search for purity. Natural foods and clean air and water are increasingly demanded by citizen/consumers. That demand is being filled, and the choices are tantalizing (at least in the USA). Do I see myself drinking from a spring in Poland, a park full of bounding white tail deer, a South Pacific island, or do I put my trust in Science, and avail myself of the brand that claims to have filtered out every possible impurity from its H₂O? (Don't laugh—your choice of bottled water defines you! I was shopping in a women's store in Brooklyn and couldn't help overhearing another customer agonize over the color of the wallet she wanted to buy—"What does a green leather wallet say about me?") As for shelter--just type "build a yurt" into the Google search window if you don't believe there are actually people who aren't interested in a 3BR 2BA with a white picket fence. Hey, it's been working for the Mongolians for centuries.

Health

A highly topical subject, considering the frenzied and vociferous debates on health care occurring as we speak. Time will reveal whether ancient modalities like acupuncture, Yoga, Qi Gong and Reiki (a modern version of "laying on of hands") will become an integral part of whatever national health system we end up with. In the area of nutritional supplements and pharmaceuticals, many contain the same plants and herbs that our ancestors dug up from the ground or extracted from leaves or squeezed out of reptiles. Hospitals now use maggots to clean wounds, and leeches to cleanse blood. Bee sting therapy is used for arthritis and Multiple Sclerosis. The popularity of "Grandma remedies" is also an indicator of a desire to return to the old roost. Chickens always come home to roost, and as Louis Jordan said, ain't nobody here but us chickens.

Money

There have been a couple of particularly interesting developments in the past decade that harken back to olden days. The first is the re-emergence of barter. (For reference, see sites like Craig's List and Barter Depot.) The other is the increasing use of regional currencies, like the BerkShare in the Berkshire region of Massachusetts, or the Chiemgauer in Germany. There are regional currencies in several European countries, as well as Canada. So now, whenever I go walking on the beach, I make sure to collect some pretty shells just in case wampum comes back.

Love/Relationships/Family

Society's re-evaluation of relationships that differ from that of the traditional Barbie & Ken model points the way toward a more inclusive future society. I sense sort of a Pa-gan vibe. Gay, bi, transgender, and more hugs all around! I think satyrs and mermaids are included too. As is often the case, this revolution has been taken up by the younger generations, thereby ensuring its continuation and development well into mid-century, if the world still exists then.

Work

As Daniel Pink points out in a popular TED Talk, the "new" business model reflects time-honored values that somehow escaped CEO consciousness in previous decades: Autonomy—the urge to direct our own lives. Mastery—the desire to get better at something that matters. Purpose—yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves. Modern companies like Apple Computer, Zappo Shoes and Google are examples of this "new" business model, although even these cutting edge companies may be too corporate for some people.

Religion/Philosophy

From the corporate gurus to the toothless soothsayers of the Indian Subcontinent, there is no shortage of purveyors of Ancient Cosmic Truth, whether they be clothed in sheep's wool, wolf pelts, Brooks Brothers, or nothing. Or perhaps we should be guided by the voices of celebrities. Madonna is into Kabbalah. Tom Cruise is a Scientologist, and Lisa Simpson, the animated baritone saxophonist, has been known to dabble in Buddhism. Wayne Dyer, Deepak Chopra, Marianne Williamson, and the pundits from *The Secret* are some of the go-to guides for the Enlightenment bequeathed to us by sages of yesteryear.

Arts/Entertainment

I hate to put these two together. The differences between art and entertainment will make great fodder for a future column; however, for the moment let us consider their interface as our palette. There are two modern entertainment phenomena that strongly remind one of days of yore: Storytelling and Karaoke. Storytelling has got to date back to the cavemen. ("And then, from behind the rock, I heard the unmistakable grunt of a female saber-toothed tiger!") Even though Karaoke uses published songs (aka "intellectual property") and professionally rendered backing tracks, the star of the show is *Whoever's Got The Mic*. Therefore, these are entertainments in which "user-generated content" is king. (Remember back in the day, when we used to sing user-generated content over intellectual property around the old upright in Aunt Mary's parlor?)

If we admit that the Give Me the Simple Life mentality is creeping into the unsuspecting 21st Century, what does that mean for musicians?

Most of us pros started playing music as wee lads and lassies, so perhaps it means reacquainting ourselves with the reasons why we wanted to play music in the first place. (Even though I've heard guys say they started playing to get chicks, I doubt it, unless they were, uh, quick bloomers.)

When you're a kid, you see/hear the magic of music. And you want to do the magic, so you get an instrument and start playing. Sometimes the magic disappears, and you quit. But for those who stick with it (whether professional or amateur) we must hold on to that feeling of magically creating something. If we don't, then playing

becomes automatic, like typing. (If you're playing a bar mitzvah with a bunch of screaming kids running around and the music from the DJ in the next room bleeds through your ballads, it may feel more like typing than playing music, trust me.)

The best way to keep connected with the magic of playing is by closely identifying with the tone of your instrument. The tone is the first thing heard. It comes before you dazzle 'em with your dizzy technique, before you amaze 'em with your awesome improvs. The true masters of music are known first for the beauty, character, and uniqueness of their tone: A few come to mind immediately, like Maria Callas, Ben Webster, Sarah Vaughan, Miles Davis. . . Clara Rockmore even tamed the bestial Theremin to sweetness!

"I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."
-- Albert Einstein

In my purse, I carry a small wood flute that Tim Price gave me. It makes me feel I can make music whatever happens and wherever I end up. After all, if you're wandering the earth looking for survivors of the superflu. . . nuclear holocaust. . . superstorm. . . superquake. . . meteor collision. . . Planet X flyby. . . a sax gets kind of heavy after awhile.

If the Simple Life, for musicians, means connecting with the deepest layer of Sound and feeling the magic that initially inspired us—what does it mean for the music listener?

I would propose it means immersing oneself in the listening experience without distraction. Since I am a listener as well as a musician, I will speak on this as well.

1. It's essential to make the effort to go out and enjoy live performances. The magic of music has much to do with feeling the sound vibrations. That's why the volume level of performances has increased over time--people want to FEEL the music. Unfortunately, raising the volume is a misguided attempt to feel the music. It results in desensitization. When people are bombarded by sound, they make no effort to listen deeply. Good music, however, is a two-way street. If *Lush Life* plays in the supermarket and no one pays attention to it, does it still exist?

2. Take some time to deepen your knowledge and understanding of the art form. Take a class, read a book. You could even take a private lesson on listening with a musician you admire. There are also innumerable tools online where one can learn more about almost any aspect of music--basic theory, or Brazilian rhythms, for example.

3. Expand your musical horizons. Trade mix tapes (on CD, flash drive, cassette) with your friends. Turn them on to a genre or a player they might not know, and they'll do the same for you.

4. Host a Listening Party. No talking while the music is playing! And don't serve anything crunchy.

I guarantee that all investments made in listening better will pay handsome dividends, not only in your music life but in many other life areas as well. Teach this to your children. As we say at COTA, talk to your kids about jazz, before it's too late!

That's all for tonight, thanks for being here. See you next time, when we take it From The Bridge.

Sue Terry is the author of:

Greatest Hits of The Blog That Ate Brooklyn: Inside the Mind of a Musician, For The Curious, I Was a Jazz Musician For the FBI, Practice Like the Pros - Her website is: www.sueterry.net ☺

COTA Festival 2014



Phil Woods, Al Cohn, Steve Gilmore, and Bill Goodwin (pianist unknown) performing at the COTA Festival in 1978.

by Rick Chamberlain
photos by Bob Weidner

Is that the crisp faint smell of leaves beginning to do their post labor day coloration thing? Something so familiar yet reserved in importance. Of course it's the weekend after Labor Day and of course that means it is time for the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts. Like a trip to an old vineyard to see what has been in the making since the last visit – COTA is a tradition unlike any others for performers and listeners alike.

This year's COTA was a delightful blend of young and old; the tried, the true, and some performers experiencing the spreading of their wings for the first time "on the big stage"!

In the photo taken in 1978 (with Al Cohn, Phil Woods, Bill Goodwin and Steve Gilmore and unsure of piano

player), probably standing and spreading their wings somewhere close to the "the big stage" would have been Nancy and Spencer Reed – the opening performers from this year and in 1978! It is one of the unique features of COTA: that the "local" world-class jazz musicians come to perform for each other as well as for their neighbors. It is a way for the artistic community to "mark time" and measure artistic growth.

COTA began officially on Friday night with the music themed art show at the Dutot Museum accompanied by the tender classicism of the woodwind quartet "Calliope" - ideal music for viewing the art work and to underscore the murmur of excitement of the announcement of those chosen by a trio of art folks as the best at artistically articulating the jazz and music theme of the show. The art show was followed with the migration across the street and "up the steps Miss Shirley" to the sanctuary of the Church of the Mountain for a program of string chamber music, theater and dance.

Saturday dawned warm with reported threat of scattered thunderstorms. In the old days sound, lights, stage managers, crew, security and all the other hard working volunteers that help to make the festival run like a well oiled machine had a single weather report to guide the

Contributed by Rick Chamberlain



Nellie McKay



The Bob Dorough Group

day... now virtually everyone has the latest up-to-date weather maps right in their pockets! And the threat of rain didn't materialize until halfway through the last set so the always-ready rain tent was not needed in 2014.

After the "tried and true" of Nancy & Spencer Reed leading off the show on Saturday came a couple of "spreading of the wings" groups – and what beautiful wings they were. Part of the beauty of the COTA program since it's inception has been the emphasis on passing down the knowledge from one generation to the next. Matt Vashlishan and Evan Gregor

grew up within the COTA program as students in the COTA Cats (high school age honors jazz band) – graduated from acclaimed music schools and are now educating a younger generation of which Najwa Parkins is a part.

Then what can one really say about the rest of the evening with Bob Dorough showcasing his immeasurable talents and presenting "newcomers" to his band with Chris



Erica Golaszewski, Katherine Rudolf, Matt Vashlishan, Theresa Tonkin at the ACMJC Booth.

Persad, Michael Hornstein and Jimmy McBride.

But it doesn't stop there! Next was the crowd favorite Phil Woods and the Festival Orchestra, then



Rick Chamberlain directing the Jazz Mass



Miss Ida Blue

Sherrie Maricle and her DIVA Trio with Sue Giles on vocals. Finally came the rain and slightly shortened the set of Miss Ida Blue and her unique old jazz stylings.

Sunday morning dawned into a beautiful day for jazz and all the arts. The Jazz Mass annually performed on the big stage seemed to be a livelier than usual tribute to Bob Hartman, the original choir master who, since the festival, has passed on to the great heavenly choir.

Both days featured strolling bands, special events in the children's area, and food – itself a smorgasbord of local vendors and home baked goodies. Visually, the arts and crafts tents were awash in color and first class creativity. There was something for everyone!

And the music continued on. This year the schedule featured fewer bands with longer sets and special stadium seating – a hit with those with trouble maneuvering the hill-

side.

Bill Mays performed in a magical trio setting to begin the afternoon's offerings, followed by the hard charging Co-op Bop, then the 34th edition of the COTA Cats – the raison d'être for the COTA educational endeavors. A fine blend of old wine in new bottles brought us Dave Liebman's Expansions Quintet and the Vic Juris Trio. The former COTA Cats were represented once again with the latest song stylings and original works by the one and only Nellie McKay.

Wrapping up the festival was an unusual turn for COTA with Tim Carbone and the Shockenaw Mountain Boys – bluegrass asskicking music but improvised nonetheless. It was time to kick up your heels then call it a night and begin the anticipation for COTA number 38. ☺



Vic Juris and Evan Gregor



Najwa Parkins sings with her After Hours Quartet

Reflections on Bob Dorough's *Eulalia*

by Phil Mosley

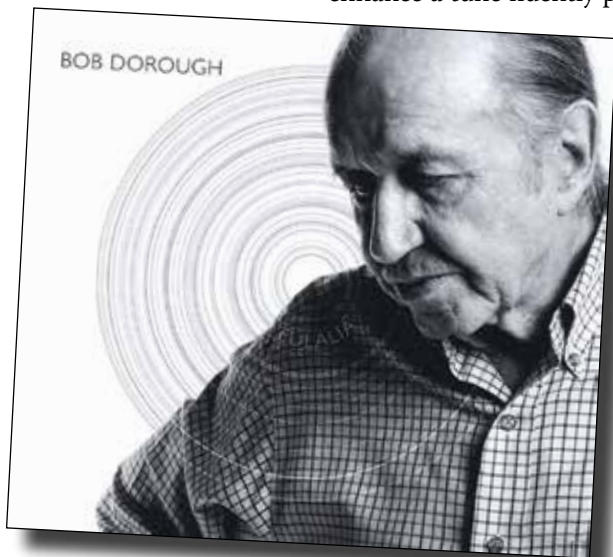
Posting to *All About Jazz* forum in 2005, Pithecanthropus wrote “I’m doing this song [Bob Dorough’s “I’ve Got Just About Everything”] at a wedding. I’ve been having a hell of a time figuring the changes from the recording. The singer I’m working with emailed Bob Dorough and he sent her the changes. What a guy!” That gracious, generous attitude allied to an amiable manner and a positive outlook on “just about everything” (including a mission to educate young people through his music) has endeared Dorough to the wider jazz community as much as to the one in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania of which he has long been a member. In addition to these good vibrations, Bob, now in his ninety-first year, still performs with considerable verve and consummate technique. And I’ve never failed to see him taking time out to meet and greet those who come to hear him sing in his inimitable style and play some beautiful, swinging piano.

“I’ve Got Just About Everything” is on his latest CD *Eulalia* (Merry Lane Records, 2014, recorded in 2011) along with five other of his best known songs plus two instrumentals: the eponymous composition bookending the record and an impressionistic piece entitled “Consummation” by album co-producer Joe Peine. Bob is accompanied throughout by a fine ensemble featuring Phil Woods on alto sax, Steve Gilmore on acoustic bass, Bob’s daughter Aralee Dorough (of the Houston Symphony Orchestra) on flute, Warren Sneed on tenor and soprano saxes, Dennis Dotson on trumpet, Thomas Hultén on trombone and tuba, Ray Wilson on guitar, and Herman Matthews on drums. Several additional instrumentalists help out on various tracks: Mike Mizma on vibes and pandeiro, Keith Vivens on electric bass, and Gary Mitchell, Jr. on Hammond B3 organ.

Bob’s voice, ever the lip of hip yet never losing its earthy Arkansas grain, is unmistakable. And he has an eccentric way with a lyric, twisting and turning it, working its dynamics, pausing here, darting there, pulling little surprises and stealing odd moments. He can sound ironic and world weary one minute, tender and heartfelt the next. And let’s not forget his skill as an arranger. It’s on full display here: imaginative, attentive to detail, and showing Bob’s sensitivity to his fellow musicians to whom he gives plenty of room to shine.

“Eulalia,” which Bob wrote for Sam Most in 1954, is a limpid, classically tinged piece that features Aralee. It sounds as if it could come from a romantic European art movie of the sixties. Bob’s piano drops in like softly falling

rain. Then he steps right up to an infectious Latin beat in a quirky take on “Love (Webster’s Dictionary),” which he wrote with lyricists Dan Greenburg and Monty Ghertler. Only Bob Dorough, it would seem, could get so much mileage out of singing a set of dictionary definitions that stretch to “love/in tennis/means no points scored/ and you have nothing/and I have nothing.” Solos by Gilmore and Wilson enhance a tune fluently propelled by Bob’s piano. His voice



shows its cutting edge in “Whatever Happened To Love Songs,” a collaboration with lyricist Bill Loughborough that gives vent to a thoroughly cynical viewpoint. As everywhere on this album, Bob’s arrangement seamlessly weaves his vocals in and out of his inventive musical lines. A deft switch of mood brings out Bob at his warmest and sincerest in the lovely ballad “But For Now.” It’s a measure of the song’s enduring quality that young British jazz star Jamie Cullum chooses it as a show closer. Bob’s piano solo is exquisite, and there’s some fine trombone by Hultén. In “I’ve Got Just About Everything”—another well covered song whether

your taste is for Tony Bennett or Tuck and Patti—Bob’s scatting as well as his interpreting of the lyric confirm his status as a master of phrasing. Gilmore and Matthews engage in lively dialogue, while the icing on the cake is Woods cutting loose as only he knows how.

Acknowledging the title of Dizzy Gillespie’s 1979 memoir (and perhaps also a George Shearing tune), “To Be Or Not To Bop” shows off Bob’s vocalese in an energetic, eight-minute celebration in which everyone involved is “chasin’ the Bird” from start to finish. Sneed, Dotson, Gilmore, Matthews, and Bob all weigh in with tasty solos. Fran Landesman and Bob have long been kindred beat spirits as evidenced on the 2006 album *Small Day Tomorrow*, his brilliant interpretations of her storied songbook. Here he offers another of their collaborations, “A Few Days Of Glory,” a rousing slice of spiritual truth served up as a mix of Dixieland and gospel soul complete with more notes of glory from Woods’s alto. As well as playing the organ, Mitchell acts as choirmaster and harmonizes with vocalist Tammie Bradley. Once this parade has passed by, the album ends serenely with Aralee soloing on the wistful, fleeting “Consummation” before reprising “Eulalia” with her father whose piano solo is parentally gentle but firm.

“Timeless” and “ageless” are two adjectives often employed to praise Bob Dorough and his music. Many more could be added. “I like the human race,” he sings in “I’ve Got Just About Everything,” and it shows in the spirit of this exemplary album, as good a recording, I think, as any from his long career in jazz. What a guy, indeed! ☺



Broadcast from the Commodore Hotel Century Room, May 1948

Leader - Woody Herman
Saxophones (from left to right) - Stan Getz, Al Cohn, Sam Marowitz, Zoot Sims, Serge Chaloff
Trombones (from left to right) - Ollie Wilson, Earl Swope, Bob Swift
(from left to right) - Ernie Royal, Bernie Glow, Marky Markowitz, Shorty Roger, Stan Fishelson
Lead Otis, Bass - Harry Babsin, Drums - Don Lamond, Vocalist - Ms. Mary Ann McCall

Al Grey at ESU

by Patrick Dorian
ESU Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Music

A Reminiscence of Al Grey at ESU

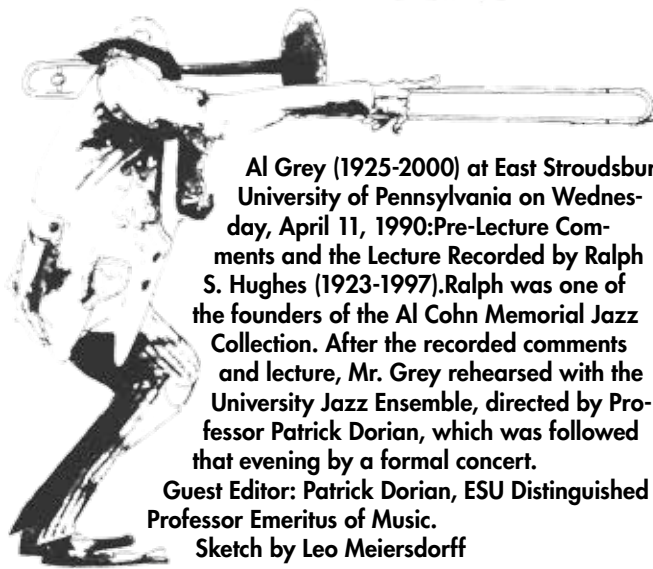
Al Grey was our guest soloist with the University Jazz Ensemble at ESU on April 11, 1990. All of our famous guest soloists from 1988 through 2003 presented a lecture entitled *My Life in Music*, rehearsed with the student-based jazz ensemble, and performed a formal evening concert. Especially with the plunger and Pixie mutes, he had a style all his own, which is every jazz musician's goal. Al made his mark in the Count Basie band beginning in 1957. I had witnessed the magical artistry of Count Basie & His Orchestra live several times, and in high school I laughed until I hurt when director and actor Mel Brooks had newly appointed sheriff Cleavon Little ride past the Basie band (with Al) set up in the middle of the western plains performing April in Paris in the movie *Blazing Saddles*.

Al was performing for many of the great bandleaders (including our 1993 guest soloist Benny Carter) for 12 years before he went with the Count (aka the Chief). It was his tenure with the Chief that made him a true "edutainer," a fine example of a great artist who entertains. Basie called Al "Mr. Fabulous," which shortened to simply "Fab." Stanley Dance's book *The World of Count Basie* (1960) dedicates a chapter to Al (pp. 204-209). A fine article about the first 23 years of his career is "Al Grey: Playing from the Heart" by Valerie Wilmer in the January 25, 1968 issue of *downbeat* magazine (pp. 27-28).

Al's spirit permeated the Fine & Performing Arts Center in 1990, interacting with students, faculty, staff, and the community. His long-time manager and companion, Rosalie Soladar (1928-2009), was with him. By observing and listening to their interactions, we got a lesson in how to support and celebrate a great musician. The Al Grey/Rosalie Soladar Papers (82.5 cubic feet!) are in the Al Grey & Rosalie Soladar Memorial Collection in the Special Collections and Archives of the University of Idaho Library, along with the collections of several other iconic jazz musicians (<http://www.ijc.uidaho.edu/>).

The concert was a resounding success and even resulted in a photo on page 11 of the September 1990 issue of *downbeat* magazine of "Fab" performing with two ESU trombonists using, of course, plunger mutes with Pixie mutes. In the early spring of 1991, I was preparing the University Jazz Ensemble for its second of three concerts with Clark Terry (1989, 1991, and 1999) and received a phone call from Al Grey. He had heard that his close musical colleague, "CeeTee," would be coming to ESU again and wanted to know if he could join us. I was overjoyed to say the least, but in full disclosure told "Mr. Fabulous" that our budget was almost depleted. Al said, "Anything you offer would be fine." That concert with the University Jazz Ensemble, CeeTee, and Fab was another triumph for the campus. In the middle of one selection, Al and Clark broke into an extended musical "conversation," using, you guessed it, their plunger mutes. It brought the house down.

AL GREY



Al Grey (1925-2000) at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania on Wednesday, April 11, 1990: Pre-Lecture Comments and the Lecture Recorded by Ralph S. Hughes (1923-1997). Ralph was one of the founders of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. After the recorded comments and lecture, Mr. Grey rehearsed with the University Jazz Ensemble, directed by Professor Patrick Dorian, which was followed that evening by a formal concert.

Guest Editor: Patrick Dorian, ESU Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Music.

Sketch by Leo Meiersdorff

The Pre-Lecture Comments:

Ralph Hughes: We're on, Al.

Al Grey: OK. I would like to say "Hello World in Music" and it's much of a happiness for me to be in Stroudsburg, because I'm a Pennsylvanian. I come from very close by, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, and we had a ballroom there called the SunnyBrook Ballroom. Larry Fisher just told me that he saw me for the first time, his only time ever seeing Count Basie, at the SunnyBrook. I come from a family that played in the church, the Pottstown Baptist Church, but . . . as a kid I would go to the SunnyBrook Ballroom and listen to the big bands that would come in like Tommy Dorsey, Louis Armstrong, and Count Basie. They had a coal bin in the back of the bandstand and I'd go down, put my ear down there, and they would chase me away. This music sounded so good that I knew that I wanted to be a musician.

I ended up where I joined Benny Carter [1945-1947], Jimmie Lunceford [1947], Lionel Hampton [1948-1951], Sy Oliver's recording studio band [1952 & 1960 for Decca Records], and on to Dizzy Gillespie's band [1956-1957] and Count Basie [1957-1961, 1964-1966, 1971-1973 and sporadically after that]. These were the big bands but I was also the musical director of the small bands of Arnett Cobb [1954-1956] and [rhythm and blues singer] Bullmoose Jackson. Later on I became the musical director of singer Lloyd Price and his big band where we developed jazz instead of all of the rhythm and blues at that time.

We were talking a few minutes ago about Al Cohn and we played together at his last appearance in Chicago [December, 1987] at the [Jazz Showcase in the] Blackstone Hotel for a New Years greeting to all of the world [probably a radio broadcast]. The "front line" was Red Rodney, Buddy Tate, Al Cohn, and myself. But this was New Year's



Al Grey giving a masterclass at ESU, 1990.

Eve that we all played, and the next night it was just the two of us left, Al Cohn and Al Grey. Al didn't come down, so I went up to his room and he was too sick to leave his room, so I asked a doctor in the audience to check him out and he said, "Get him in the hospital immediately." And that was it. I called back the next day and the doctor said, "I'm so sorry to tell you, Al, that his time is running out and he has less than six months," but it was less than two months until he died [February 15, 1988]. [Some sources report that Al Cohn became stricken on December 30, not New Year's Eve.] The most terrible thing was that when I put him into the hospital [Mercy Hospital], Joe Segal, who owned the jazz club, gave me Al Cohn's tenor sax to hold on to, and it was three days before Al's wife, Flo, could pick up the tenor sax. I was a nervous wreck having this horn on my hands and she got there three days later and what a relief that was. Al and I were so close and we discovered some years back that my son, [trombonist] Mike Grey, and his son, Joe Cohn, went to college together at the Berklee School of Music in Boston and they were friends. I have a family-type of band today where Joe Cohn plays guitar with me and we recorded a compact disc that was a tribute to Al Cohn and his music [*The New Al Grey Quintet Chiaroscuro* CR[D] 305, recorded three months after Al Cohn's death]. Because he was such a great composer and arranger, we just knew that we had to do this and I'm very proud of the CD and I'm very proud to have Joe Cohn with us. I think that he will become, without a doubt, one of the all-time great guitarists in the world, and he is also playing trumpet with us on ensembles and plays solos and composes. So, to me, Al Cohn is still right here today with us.

I go on in the music world because I'm one of the only ones living that had the chance to play with all of the big bands starting back to Benny Carter, and then Jimmie Lunceford, Lionel Hampton, Lucky Millinder, Dizzy Gillespie, and then on to Count Basie for many, many years.

What created my success was a thing that I was doing but didn't realize what I was doing with it, and that was the plunger [mute]. So I eventually ended up writing a book because they asked me to write one and I didn't know how to write about it because I didn't know what I was doing. I did a lot of research on myself and it took almost two years to do the book [*Plunger Techniques: The Al Grey Plunger Method for Trombone and Trumpet* by Al Grey and Mike Grey; pub. Second Floor Music; 1987], and now I know how to help others to form the various different sounds with a plunger. When you go back to Glenn Miller, plunger parts were marked on the sheet music as a plus [+] and an "o" to sound like "doo dot doot dah," but

John Bender

now I can show them how to get sounds in between that, because I can now give them five different sounds off of one note. This is very important for the young people that are in schools today because this is something else that is not taught in the schools, and that's another reason I'm very happy to be here today to give a few demonstrations of what happens with the plunger. It has been going on for decades in jazz and I find it's needed today, from the recording studios for cable television and radio, and we can get these various different sounds. In fact, I know in my life what made my mark in music history was to go out to Hollywood and do the soundtrack with the plunger for composer Quincy Jones and director Steven Spielberg for the film *The Color Purple* [1985]. A song I was featured on [playing trombone with plunger mute on the song *Miss Celie's Blues (Sister)*] came up for a nomination for an academy award [for Best Original Song]. The movie had 11 nominations, but Steven Spielberg didn't get one vote, so it knocked all of our nominations out of the box.

I am going around to many of the universities and colleges throughout the country and in Europe. In Europe they know more about jazz than they do in America, because they have their own encyclopedias and so on and so forth and we just have Leonard Feather.

I just wish I had a chance to continue on for a long time here, but I want to let you know that I thank you for letting me say a few words to you.

RH: Thanks Al Grey, this is Ralph Hughes. Al's going on to his lecture in about 10 minutes, so we're going to cut this off now. It's April 11, 1990.

The Lecture:

Patrick Dorian: It's an honor to present trombonist Al Grey as he gives a lecture entitled *My Life in Music*. If you look at the inner right side of your

printed program for a moment, you'll read exactly where this gentleman has been. He's also willing to answer some specific questions as the hour goes on. So it's a great honor and a pleasure to introduce to everyone, Mr. Al Grey [applause].

AG: Thank you very, very much. Hello, good afternoon. I'm very, very happy that I have the opportunity to say hello to you today. First of all, as you read my biography in the program, I'm going to start off by telling you a story. Our family did come north when I was three months old from Virginia to Pottstown. My father was a musician, a trumpet player, and by the time I was four years old, I would hear him practice and I loved the sound. He would come home and say, "Uh-oh, someone's been messing with my trumpet," and here I had been messing around with his trumpet and then trying to get it back into the case right. This became a big problem, because he came home one day and saw I was looking at the case, so he smacked my fingers a couple of times. "Leave that alone, don't touch." With his sound and my hearing him practice and everything, I wanted to see if I could just blow that hard. So on another day he came home and I didn't get it back into the case right, but this time I had bent the second valve where it didn't function. So he proceeded to give me a vicious, vicious spanking until my mother had to grab him and say, "Stop it, Ed!" She thought that he was going to really just beat me up anytime I touched that horn, but *the sound*, I just loved the sound so much and I wanted to play it. So my mother went out and got a job at Lamb's Music House, a music store in Pottstown, the village where I still live, where she would clean the floor every Saturday. I would take out the trash baskets. Well, during those days, she'd be on her knees with a brush, because you had to brush the entire area . . . it took a long time, whereas today, you can take a mop and do it maybe in ten minutes. But in those days, on her knees. We didn't have any money and so she bought me an instrument to keep my father from beating me up all the time.

I certainly was very interested in playing, so when I was in junior high school I played in the high school band, from wanting to play that much. Then they moved me from playing the baritone horn to the E-flat tuba, and then from the E-flat tuba to the B-flat tuba, which is the bigger one and the fingering is completely different. I was fortunate enough to get into the Forensic League for honors, and I went from there to the championship of the state of Pennsylvania to the National Forensic League and playing tuba. The art of that was that we would play in Atlantic City on the boardwalk at the convention center with 500 selected musicians from the eastern seaboard schools under the direction of Leopold Stokowski [1882-1977]. It seemed like we were just plucking back and forth from the sound hitting you back in the face (laughs). But anyway, this was another thing that was inspiring me to be a musician.

In the meantime, my father had started us playing in the church all the time by having my sister play trumpet and my brother play clarinet. We had a musical family. I wasn't allowed to play jazz at home. My mother used to say, "I don't want that kind of music to be played in this house," and she thought it was the devil's music. I never could figure it out, you know? I grew up and playing with various different bands and when we played places we noticed that sometimes fights would break out and it came from people getting drunk. It came from where you had a lady and someone else is dancing with your lady and these

fights happened, so this was the devil, but it had nothing to do with the music. So my mother never would come and see me play jazz, until eventually I was honored with a plaque from *Playboy* magazine for my group, the Al Grey-Billy Mitchell Sextet [1961]. So she comes to see me after many, many years of not coming to see what I was doing, and she said, "Son, I believe you're going to make it." But at that time I had already played with Benny Carter's band and then to Jimmie Lunceford and then to Lionel Hampton, going into the studio where I worked on staff [for a radio orchestra] for Sy Oliver and Dick Jacobs. I was very fortunate to have that job because at that time black artists just weren't hired in studios or anything like that, but getting a chance like that allowed me to be more aware of what surrounds you out in this music world, if you want to be a musician.

I continued on by going to Professor John Coffey in Boston to find out how to really know the trombone because it seemed like many of us had learned on their own when we had no one to teach us how to blow your instrument. For instance, like Louis Armstrong, he had no one to show him, so he had pressure on his lip where he would press the trumpet against his lip. When he passed on, he had a gash in his lip a quarter of an inch deep from pressure. Then we had Dizzy Gillespie who can play like he does, but it was with the jaws. It was OK when he was young, but now it is hurting him. So he will play a concert and he may play two numbers on the trumpet and then he will play conga drums. He's a great conga player and he plays all kinds of rhythms, but he does this to more or less take the pressure off of blowing out his neck. So that's the first suggestion of any musician out here who's trying to learn how to breathe, and that comes from the diaphragm, which I'm quite sure that you are being taught that today. Back then, you didn't have anyone to tell you about that and we just didn't have any jazz classes or seminars, etc. It's important to artists that have come along in this field.

My life today--I feel as though I'm like an ambassador to jazz because I travel the world playing and the rest of the time I'm doing many universities, colleges, and high schools. Last year in Switzerland I even did a kindergarten class for ages five to eight. Now what do you do or say to little young ones in that category? Rhythm! You must have rhythm. I felt as though that was the greatest start they could ever have. If they had two little round sticks to beat on, you can tell them, "OK, class. If we all do this together we might get some rhythm out of it. I want you to say, 'Click the sticks, and then tap the foot.'" Then you can get a rhythm, but you still have to have that beat. So eventually you can hit the stick and tap your foot alternatively, and if you can get that to a pretty good speed, you can get a rhythm out of that. We found a lot of times that many in the class couldn't do that. Teachers need to teach you how to count: 1-ee-and-ah 2-ee-and-ah 3-ee-and-a 4.

I go on about my life's story, and the first famous band I played with was Benny Carter and I was a very good soloist at that time. I came from the good music program in the Pottstown schools under the direction of Billy Lamb, Arlen Saylor, and some other great teachers. I learned music correctly, because way back then in jazz you didn't have that many jazz artists that could read music like you can today. It becomes very boring when you have to sit home and practice scales, but that's the bottom line: scales, scales, scales. Then maybe you might be able to ad lib. In my time with Benny Carter, he was so great as a teacher, helping me



Al Grey teaching ESU students plunger technique, 1990.

John Bender

very, very much in my playing of reading and phrasing, but not that much as a soloist. The phrasing for the first trumpet player and the first alto player, they had to form a creative style that when others listen to them, they'll too make a big sound. For instance, like in Benny Carter's band since he played alto sax, he had really great reed men.

So moving from Benny Carter, whose musical style contained many long notes in a relaxed manner, I'll give you a little demonstration [Al Grey scats], and it was fun to play in that manner. I left Benny Carter because he broke up his band to compose for the movies and I went with Jimmie Lunceford, who needed musicians and selected me to come and replace Trummy Young in the band, one of the all-time great trombone players. He sang and he played and my job was to learn his solos exactly like he played them, which actually wasn't good for me, but it was a job and it was leading me to what I wanted to do, play jazz music. Anyway, in Benny Carter's band where you played everything long, in Jimmie Lunceford's band, everything was the opposite. Everything was short. So that same tune I sang a minute ago would go like this [Al Grey scats]. So it took a period of time to change from a long dotted quarter to a quarter or an eighth to make them shorter, which was another way of creating a style, so that's why his band was famous, because he had a unique style. His birthday and my birthday were the same day, June 6. Lunceford attended Fisk University and everything in his band was really strict and he directed the band with a long baton, like Paul Whiteman, which looked like a metronome. And you had to sit up straight all the time, and he would bust a man for clapping going on, and when he died in 1947, I went with Lionel Hampton and there it was just the opposite. He made you clap your hands, which was another thing that gave you more rhythm, plus helped you to gain a personality. As you may look at bandleaders, Dizzy Gillespie always was cracking up, but every time he played, he really played the music. So I was very fortunate to go with Lionel Hampton, just really relaxing and playing jazz. I had the oppor-

tunity to improvise more than just playing arrangements.

During the meantime when I played with Benny Carter's band, we would be playing in Hollywood at the Trianon Ballroom and we would get off from work at 11 o'clock at night. Miles Davis was in Benny Carter's band at that time, too [probably April/May 1946], and I'm quite sure you have heard of Miles. Miles would say, "Hey, come on, let's go catch Charlie Parker [Bird]." He came to work at 12 midnight and he played until 6 in the morning. But Bird was the only musician hired, so what was happening was that we had Bird, and you had piano, bass, and drums, but he was so great, everyone wanted to play with him. So we had a line of bass players, a line of drummers, and a line of bass players. This is one thing that brought the musician's union in, because

at this club, the Miyako Club [in the Miyako Hotel at First and San Pedro Streets], which today is the police department building, they brought the union in. So then it was decided that if you were out jamming and you got caught, you got fined, as well as the bandleader. So it became pretty strict. It used to scare me to death to go up and play with Charlie Parker. I felt as though I could play the blues pretty well, but he'd play *Stella by Starlight* and all those tunes and he created a big difference there. He made you aware that you had to get out and jam and study more about the chord changes [harmony] of the music, which became a necessity. If you want to improvise, you have to really learn how to by playing scales and studying the instrument, and if you have a chance to jam, it gives you a chance to experiment with what you have studied.

We would play in Las Vegas and we'd have baseball teams in our bands and we would play Harry James's band in baseball, Jimmie Lunceford's, Les Brown's . . . so it's just more to it than just playing every day. It has to develop into something that you love and you want to do all the time. So my experiences made it very happy for me and led to my joining Dizzy Gillespie, when bebop was still at its height at that time. That meant that I had to really learn how to play "the changes" to play bebop, as developed by Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker.

Then I moved on to Count Basie, off and on for 19 years. I became very famous on a tune that was recorded three different times with Count Basie called *Makin' Whoopie*, especially the version on Frank Sinatra's album with Basie, *Sinatra at the Sands*, in Las Vegas [recorded in early 1966], which is one of the only instrumental tunes on this album. Basie had respect for what I did with the plunger, which was really wonderful. One time, he listened in the booth to the playback of a recording we did featuring my solo and he came out and says, "Well, that's pretty good, but don't try to play all you know in just this one number." I was trying to impress him that I knew all about these chords and everything and he's saying, "Oh,

no. Simplicity.” At this time, Mitch Miller had an album out titled *Sing Along with Mitch* [1958]. So then Basie came out with this album *Sing Along with Basie* [recorded May 1958]. So they wanted more or less a melody and I learned that you do have to listen to your leader for what he wants you to do. You can’t be a person that defies him because you want to play for yourself. That’s a main point: that you just can’t always play for yourself. And so he went right to the point and he says, “Well, I have a position for you, but you have to make things more understanding to the people that don’t play music, they just listen.” I stopped playing so many notes, trying to get more feeling out of what I was doing, because a lot of times you learn in school, technically, but then you don’t “give up your heart” when you play. The reason is because you don’t have the feelings. And you have to have feelings for playing jazz. If you continue on and have a chance to jam a lot, you will find that out.

I was lucky to come along one of my signature techniques by accident with Lionel Hampton’s band. We had a blues singer, his name was Sonny Parker, and when Sonny Parker sang the blues he would leave a lot of holes [musical rests] in what he would be singing. I would fool around a lot of nights after having maybe a little taste here or there, feeling good, and I would fill in these spots [behind him], and so Lionel Hampton came up and said, “Hey, that’s IT Gates” (he used to say “Gates”). “That’s IT, Gates, keep it here, keep it here.” So I found myself playing fills for Sonny and so what happened just became a thing that stuck. So when I moved on from Lionel Hampton’s band and went into Count Basie’s band, they had Joe Williams singing. So I used to do all the fills and things for Joe Williams when he would sing, and then then one day Ella Fitzgerald asked me to do it, then Frank Sinatra, then Tony Bennett, then Sarah Vaughan, who I just went to her funeral a couple of days ago. So I became very much a “fill-in” player.

Count Basie recorded *Five O’Clock in the Morning* with the vocal by Joe Williams. We actually recorded this song from around four o’clock in the morning until after five o’clock, and it was a tune that he sang, on this album, and I



Playing at a Denver Jazz Party, 1990.

Russ Chase

played these fills. Fred Astaire heard these fills and he took my plunger playing and made a choreography to my playing with dance steps, he and [his female dance partner] Barrie Chase. [The Basie Band appeared on an hour-long NBC television special with Fred Astaire called *Astaire Time*, broadcast on September 25, 1960. It’s viewable online by searching “YouTube Astaire Time.”] When we went into the TV studio to do it with Fred Astaire, I couldn’t read my part. At that time they didn’t have ways of teaching [and arrangers didn’t have a way of notating] the different sounds of plunger playing, so they had different notes written out for different things I had done on the original recording. So here we are, out in the studio, and they pass out the music, 8 o’clock in the morning, having donuts and coffee, and then say “OK, let’s go!” We start, and now I’m killing Fred Astaire because

we get 8 or 12 bars into it and I am messed up because I couldn’t play what he had heard on the record. Next thing the band was laughing at me, saying, “We command a lot of money to tape that because Al has it together!” And you’re supposed to get these two numbers in the morning together, but we didn’t because I was messing up. So we were supposed to get off at 12 noon and I see Fred Astaire is getting tired from spinning and they’re saying, “Cut!” because it’s not together, so they say, “Well, you’re going to lunch.” So the band and everyone goes to lunch at twenty minutes to twelve and I say, “Well, let me hear that record,” and I went into the studio’s listening room while they went to lunch, and I listened. This is when I pulled out the sheet music that I had and marked on it all these different sounds that I’d created on the record. I had gotten really nervous because of band members and especially Marshall Royal, who is a real famous saxophone player still today, was the “straw boss” who takes care of the band, getting out the tunes, etc. So he kept on talking about how much money we were going to make because Fred Astaire was making all that money, we were making a little bit of money, and the engineers were there and I’m holding up the whole works. After lunch, Chief came out, which is Count Basie, because we rarely called him Count back then, we called

him Chief, and he said, "Well, what's the problem?" I said, "Chief, I just don't know." I said, "Here it is early morning and we were at an early morning club, but we had played all night and we had a little taste and everything like that and here I don't have nothing this morning," so they sent out and got me a bottle. I'll never forget, a bottle of Jim Beam [bourbon]. I was so nervous because the guys were teasing me and it was terrible. It was the biggest crisis of my career. And so I took me a triple . . . ughhhh! . . . and the band came back and I had marked all these things. One take! It was done!

That's why I have a book on the market today on how to play the plunger for trumpet and trombone. The owners of the mute factory of Humes and Berg had asked me to do this book. Willie Berg is my personal buddy who had brought me my mute when he didn't have a store or anything, and he would make mutes and he would go around and these mutes were in these two baskets. Now, today they have this big, big, big factory in East Chicago and they make mutes for the world. At that time he had invented this mute, which he called the Pixie mute, and he gave me this aluminum mute. It was so expensive to make that they don't make them out of aluminum today, they make them with other types of metal. But anyway, he asked me to write this book and I said, "OK," but then I discovered that I didn't know what I was doing MYSELF when I used the plunger. It was a natural talent that I had that I could play this mute. So I did research on myself and I found that for trumpets you put the plunger up to the horn and take the plunger away a half of an inch. Then I discovered another half of an inch away, and the next one, a half inch away up until five positions: one to five. I can teach you how to get five different sounds out of the same note. [Al Grey scats the sounds.] This is where you can create your sound and you will be original and you're on your own; you wouldn't sound like me or any other player, it would be up to you to learn how to do the five sounds/positions which are in the book. It took almost two years to write the book and [by analyzing my techniques] it taught me how to play these positions. I know what I'm doing now, so I can single out any note or sound effect, which is a necessity when playing the [plunger and Pixie] mutes. You know Glenn Miller [and his brass section's plunger sounds]. In those days it was just two [sounds - open and closed]. [Written as] Plus [+] and o. [Scats *doo* and *dot*.] But now I can show you how to get all these different notes in between those two, which are like a one and a five, so I can show



Al Grey performing with the ESU Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Pat Dorian.

John Bender

you how to get another sound out of two, out of three, and out of four.

So a couple years ago [1985] I was called out to Hollywood to make sounds for Quincy Jones and Steven Spielberg for the movie *The Color Purple*. Quincy had all these different kinds of sounds from writing many things for me in Basie's band and he knew that not many trombone players could do that at that time. There are a lot of trombone and trumpet players that can do that today. Way back, you had the famous Cootie Williams and all of them, but there was no one to teach or to tell anyone about this. Also, back in those days there were a lot of musicians who WOULDN'T help you to learn to play your horn. They used to talk about Louis Armstrong, using the handkerchief and all of that, but it wasn't true! What was happening was that Louis Armstrong played different notes with different fingerings. When Red Nichols and all these other famous trumpet players would come by to see what Louis Armstrong was doing, he didn't want them to know. So he would take that handkerchief and put it over his hands so they couldn't see what he was doing. But they thought that he was able to do all of this, but it was all untrue because Pops used to tell us. Pops couldn't read [sheet music], so he used to sit in with Count Basie's band, with Thad Jones and Snooky Young, to improve his reading and he began to get pretty good at reading, see? We had so many [musicians] that just could NOT read, but by me coming from the Pottstown band that was strict on learning the reading, I was very fortunate to come along in that period. But today, because of schools and everything, you're getting it all.

I want to say before I finish, again, that it's such a big honor to be here because up in this area I have some very dear, close friends. One of them I lost a couple of years ago, and that was Al Cohn. We were very much buddies and it was several years before I discovered that my son, Mike Grey, was in school at the Berklee College of Music with his son, Joe Cohn. I would go up to Berklee, Mike's

school, and play sometimes.

On a particular night [in late December 1987] we were playing in Chicago at the Blackstone Hotel [Joe Segal's Jazz Showcase]. The night before, we had played for New Year's Eve, with Red Rodney, Buddy Tate, Al Cohn, and myself, but now New Year's night [it might have been December 30] he didn't come down, so we thought, you know, it's the holidays, whatever, but he wasn't well. We had a doctor in the audience and the doctor said, "Get him to the hospital immediately, right away." So it has become very personal that Al's son, Joe, has been playing with me ever since. I got Joe away from Artie Shaw's band, which is a job, but if you want to be a good musician, you have to learn to be on your own, to play in any band, or ad lib . . . to be a soloist. You can't do that in Artie Shaw's band because you have to still play exactly what Artie Shaw played 40 [or 50] years ago. So how does a young person learn to be a good musician if they're playing the exact same thing over and over every night? It becomes very much of a terrible thing. It's just like my son when he came out of college and he went with the Broadway show *Ain't Misbehavin'* to have a job, and he had to play the exact same notes every night until it just drove him off the wall and he had to get out of there.

But anyway, I'm just scanning over many things that can lead to greatness. So Al Cohn's son, Joe Cohn, will be, without a doubt in my mind, one of the world's greatest guitar players. I have wanted to come to this area for a long time, due to Urbie Green, and I'm looking forward to meeting his son this afternoon, to show everyone that we have feelings and things like that since we've always been very close. Phil Woods and I recently played together, on February the 12th, at a heart thing for Ella Fitzgerald [*Hearts for Ella* at Avery Fisher Hall in Manhattan, a benefit for the American Heart Association], which I got a card from her thanking me yesterday. I brought it along with me because it's deep in the heart, especially since I just attended the funeral of Sarah Vaughan. When I returned home, here is this card from Ella, and in the meantime I have received some pictures from the night of February 12th when we had an all-star band.

It featured the greatest musicians in the business, so that means Urbie Green. The reed section was famous artists like Stan Getz, Jimmy Heath, Phil Woods, David Sanborn, Nick Brignola, and Benny Carter. The trombones were Slide Hampton, Urbie Green, Jack Jeffers, and Carl Fontana . . . all great trombone players. Trumpets were Clark Terry, who was here at your school last year in February, Jon Faddis, Red Rodney, and Joe Wilder, and you can't get no better than that! The rhythm section was Ray Brown, Bobby Durham, and Louie Bellson. We had four or five different great piano players: Tommy Flanagan, Oscar Peterson, George Shearing, Hank Jones. So they sent these

pictures that I brought along today to show and to give to Urbie Green's son, because I don't think that Urbie has any of these pictures.

I'm really looking forward to this gathering this evening, because again, I've sent music in advance and this afternoon around two o'clock we're going to explore about the plunger mute with the students and I'm going to demonstrate how we can get these sounds. I imagine it will grow on you. I'm saying again, musicians don't have to become a jazz artist, since there's so much room for you to become rich [?] in studio work, television, and cable [TV].

If you want to be a musician, you must keep on practicing. When I was with Jimmie Lunceford, I got a letter from Trummy Young and in it he wrote, "Yeah, you're doing real fine." But then he wrote around the edges of this note "Practice . . . practice . . . practice . . . practice . . . practice."

I would like to open it up now for any questions anyone would like to ask. Any questions?

Audience member:
Are you going to play for us.

AG: Play for you? Yeah, I'll play something for you. Anyone else have anything to say, anyone? Time's running out. OK. No ques-

tions. I'm going to show you what I was speaking about, since you asked me to play. You take a mute, which the students in the band coming in have been informed of, and you make your mute even with the bell so that your hand holds this in the right spot. I don't have my plunger with me, since it's still in the room for rehearsal, but it covers the bell like this and the heel of the hand is considered the "hinge" because it allows you to separate to get the sounds [plays sound effects on the trombone, using the plunger]. You can get sound effects for movies like the sound of a train chugging along. So I'll play you one little tune because it's about that time [plays the melody of *Cloudburst* - Mvt. 5 of the *Grand Canyon Suite* by Ferde Grofé, and then improvises] [audience applause]. I thank you. That's another thing: you must warm up! Take five or ten minutes to warm up your horn. I missed a couple of notes there because I just picked the horn up cold. I appreciate it and thank you very, very much for stopping by for this little talk about my life. It has been very good for me in the last five years, but it has been very shaky in jazz many years, too, because it's not always designated that you get out there and everyone knows you. But once, if you keep trying, someone will notice you and someone will take you on. That's my vow in life today, to look out for Joe Cohn. He didn't have anyone to actually look out for him, but now he is playing wonderful. And I thank you very much for coming. Thank you. [Audience applause]. ☺



Al Performing at the Nice Jazz Festival in France, 1982.

Peter Manders

Zoot Sims: a True Master



Helene Snihur

By Bill Dobbins

Shortly after completing my M.M. degree at Kent State University in 1970, I moved to a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, with my wife, Daralene, and our two-year-old son, Evan. I had the great fortune of playing jazz seven nights a week at two well-paying clubs for the duration of our residence there, right up until our move to Rochester, New York, where I joined the faculty of the Eastman School of Music in the fall of 1973.

A musician friend of mine, who was a few years older than I was, and who often hired me for jingle recording dates, would come in to hear me occasionally at one of the venues where I played. In our conversations during the breaks he sometimes offered the observation, “You know, you’re a really great piano player, but your solos sound like exercises.” Although his remark really was meant in a constructive way, it really annoyed me at first; but after thinking about it, I realized he was right. Having been mainly self-taught in jazz, in the days when jazz was still forbidden in most university music departments and conservatories, I hadn’t been exposed to much well informed criticism. This one remark stuck with me, and eventually taught me the great value of constructive self-criticism.

At the time, however, the realization that my playing was not very melodic sent me into such a state of creative purgatory that I immediately searched through my record collection for examples of what, to my ears, were solos that sounded like musical stories told in an expressive and compelling manner through melodic phrases that included clear thematic motifs, informed by the greatest music

Editor’s Note: For this year’s Zoot Fest (held about a week ago at the time I am writing this), we all had the pleasure of experiencing some knowledge and insight into the music of Zoot Sims from one of the most accomplished educators I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with: Bill Dobbins. Originally scheduled to appear at Zoot Fest, Bill could not make it this year. However, he gladly sent me his portion of the program as an electronic document so I could include it in his absence. After presenting his material (which could not have fit the program better, by the way) I knew I had to include it in this issue of The Note, for all the readers to enjoy. There is plenty here for musicians and music enthusiasts alike, and it is a great addition to the written material we have here at the ACMJC. Thanks Bill!

from the American songbook, the classical masters and the blues, and an irresistible rhythmic drive that made it impossible to keep the body still. Being a pianist, the first indisputable jazz master I discovered in my search was Wynton Kelly. However, it wasn’t long before I fell completely in love with the tenor saxophone artistry of Zoot Sims.

During my high school years in the early 1960s I bought many Gerry Mulligan recordings, including those of his mid 1950s sextet and those of the highly acclaimed Concert Jazz Band, in some ways a forerunner of the Thad Jones/ Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. Although I greatly admired the playing of all the soloists of these groups, and still consider most of them to be great melodists and real swingers, there was something about Zoot’s playing that seemed to bring me back, time and time again, to the tunes in which he was given plenty of space. As I listened more attentively to Zoot’s playing I began to notice things that I wasn’t so aware of earlier on. Inadvertently, my pre-occupation with technical virtuosity for its own sake had caused me to miss some of the most important elements in the playing of the jazz masters.

First and foremost was Zoot’s irrepressible sense of swing, no matter what the tempo was. Although he swung powerfully yet effortlessly at the fastest tempos, he seemed to truly love whatever tempo was being occupied in a particular tune. At medium or medium slow tempos he rarely became excessively involved in doubling the tempo, but was usually content to just swing comfortably and allow the listener to enjoy the special quality that is

unique to each particular tempo.

Next, his playing was expressive in a natural and uninhibited manner. His use of vibrato, a wide dynamic range, and the expressive devices we all associate with great jazz, such as scoops, fall offs and growls made it clear that the listening audience was important to him and that he intended to communicate his musical message in a clear and unmistakably personal manner. Zoot's playing conveyed much of the human condition, from boundless joy to brooding melancholy and, when appropriate, an unselfconscious sense of humor; and it always sounded honest, never preachy or pretentious.

Finally, his musical content was a perfect balance of simple melodic ideas that any interested and attentive listener could understand, with imaginative development that was often spellbinding and always engaging and entertaining. The infectious rhythms and the melodic contours always seemed to be perfectly suited to each other. Moreover, the command of a number of basic rhythms and their extension or combination seemed to facilitate and clarify the motivic development, just as the rhythmic cadence and manner of delivery can enable a great storyteller to clearly communicate important details or subtle connections in the plot as the story unfolds.

More simply put, perhaps as much as any jazz master whose music has inspired me, Zoot didn't just improvise a solo; he most often improvised a song. The longer I have been involved in playing jazz, the more I realize just how difficult and evasive that ability can be. As Red Mitchell expressed it in one of his songs, "Simple isn't easy, it's the hardest thing to do."

During my first years on the faculty at the Eastman School I began to listen to a lot of early jazz and swing, especially because I was responsible for teaching a jazz history course for the jazz majors who were in our masters degree program in jazz studies. I then began to hear that much of Zoot's musical personality was influenced by the playing of Lester Young and Ben Webster. This underscores the fact that the playing of the most important musicians who have contributed to the ongoing evolution of jazz invariably exhibits two aspects, each of equal importance. Their playing brings some recognizably new and personal element while, at the same time, expressing a clear connection to the essence of all that came before.

Before saying a few words about some particular Zoot Sims solos, I would like to share some narrative about Zoot by one of the most important jazz arrangers and composers, Bill Holman. I visited Holman in Hollywood during the summer of 2011 and recorded several days of conversations about his life in the music and his memories of experiences with many of the musicians and bands he has worked with during his long and illustrious career. We hope to complete this project for release sometime next year. When I asked him what jazz soloist he had been most eager to collaborate with, he replied without hesitation, "Zoot Sims." Here are some of his recollections.

"When I joined Kenton in early 1952, the band included Conte Candoli and Buddy Childers. Frank Rosolino wasn't there yet. Don Bagley was the bassist. Frankie Capp was the drummer. Later Rosolino came on, and then Zoot Sims. But Zoot was the bright spot of my life at that time. Being around him and hearing him play

every night was really heavenly. Zoot was total honesty, both personal and musical. In Santa Ana, where I grew up, everybody was kind of closed up. And a guy like Zoot who was wide open to everything, good and bad, was just amazing to me. So I got to spend a few months with him. We travelled in the same car."

"If you remember a comic strip called *"Smilin' Jack"*, it was about a bunch of bush pilots, and there was this one guy called Downwind. The only time you would see him is when he was piloting a plane, and you were sitting in the right hand rear seat, and all you saw of him was the rear quarter of his head. He never turned around or anything, it was just like that. So he was downwind. Well, Zoot sat in that seat, so he started calling me Downwind. All he saw was that back view of my head."

"Anyway, that was really nice to hear him play. I'd met him a few months before. You know, I'd really come to appreciate him. Dick Meldonian, as I said, got me listening to those guys. And in a few years, I'd say from 1948 to 1952, he was like a god to me. But he always looked so fierce, you know, with a grumpy kind of facial expression. He always seemed to have a scowl on his face. And I thought, "Oh, boy! I'd like to meet him, but I'm scared."

"We were in New York, and he was playing an off night at Birdland, and I made up my mind I was going to meet him. So I went over to him and said, "Hey, Zoot. I'm Bill Holman and I'm playing with Kenton. He says, "Hey! How'r ya doin'!" He was so friendly. We wound up going back to my hotel room and hanging out."

"So that was the last time I saw him until one night, when the band was in Milwaukee, I was struggling up the circular staircase with my horn, and this voice says, "Here, let me help you with that." It was Zoot. He grabbed my horn and helped me up. So that was the beginning, and the night he left Kenton's band was the night I gave my notice that I was leaving."

"We'd had a bus wreck on a freeway. We were doing a tour, travelling in two busses, and they didn't have rules then about how long bus drivers could drive. And the bus driver went to sleep, and he rammed into the back of a semi that was pulling out of a rest stop. The whole trombone section had been asleep in their seats, and the impact threw them into the seat in front. Just about every one had smashed chops."

"So we had to get a trombone section. We were in Philadelphia, and Bill Russo knew a bunch of guys from Chicago, so he called one and we got a new trombone section. Stan said, "Well, we have to rehearse tomorrow, 'cause we're getting' a new trombone section." So Zoot said, "Well, we know our parts, so why do we have to rehearse them?" Stan said, "Because I said so, Jack!" He always called him Jack. He could never quite get out the name Zoot. So Zoot kept saying, "Why us? Why do we have to do that? We've just been through this terrible bus wreck." Finally Stan said,

"You better give your notice." So Zoot said, "You got it." Two weeks later he was out, and that's when I gave my notice."

When I asked Holman to describe the qualities that, for him, made Zoot such a special soloist, he replied, "Well, the time, for one thing. And he had a very original way of playing, you know. He was surrounded by bebop

roots, but he wasn't playing any bebop licks. And there was such emotionalism in his playing. He was not afraid of playing a whole note, if that's what got the idea across. It's just, again, total honesty, you know. This is jazz playing! The energy is just somethin' else." I agree wholeheartedly with Holman's observations.

Now I would like to say a few words about three of my favorite Zoot Sims solos from his recordings with Gerry Mulligan. It would be impossible to narrow my favorite Zoot solos to less than a few dozen, so I decided to focus on solos from the Mulligan groups because they were so important in shaping my understanding and appreciation of this great American art form we call jazz.

Broadway is one of my favorites from the Mulligan sextet book, and comes from the first recording by the group for the Emarcy label in 1955: Presenting the Gerry Mulligan Sextet. The piece features two marvelous choruses of vintage Zoot, as well as an exceptional arrangement by Bob Brookmeyer, who also played valve trombone in the group.

The theme of Broadway is cast in a typical AABA song form with four eight-bar phrases. The A sections emphasize the tonic note in the key of Eb, and the blue third, Gb, is prominent in the concluding phrase of these sections. These basic elements of the theme clearly play a role in Zoot's solo. In fact, the tonic note already gets the listener's attention in the B section of the theme. Here, as occasional occurred in Mulligan's groups, the horns improvise collectively in a contrapuntal manner instead of stating the actual melody of the B section. Although this section modulates to other key centers before returning to the main key in the final A section, the tonic note, Eb, actually fits every chord of the B section except for Bb7, which brings the music back the key of Eb. While trumpeter Jon Eardley, Brookmeyer and Mulligan spin out colorful interwoven melodic lines during the B section, Zoot simply plays the single note, Eb, restating it with emphatic, swinging rhythms, and then finally moves down stepwise to resolve to the Bb7 chord that leads to the concluding A section of the theme. This melody of one note is a great example of how easy it can be to make eight bars of captivating music.

Zoot is the first soloist, and he begins his first chorus with a strong emphasis of the tonic note, Eb, on beats one and four of bar 1 and beat three of bars 2 and 3. After two longer phrases that convey a strong blues feeling, the second A section begins with a long D, a half step below the Eb from the first A section, like a teasing reference to the solo's beginning. The second A section ends with another bluesy phrase that returns to the opening Eb at the beginning of the B section. Here, however, the Eb feels different, as the harmony starts its motion to the new key centers heard in the B section of the theme. The final A section of the first chorus begins with a return to the opening Eb, and a recurrent D leading back to Eb at the end of the first chorus and the start of the second chorus. The same Eb returns at the end of each 8-bar section of the second chorus. The solo ends with a final bluesy phrase that emphasizes the blue note, Gb, before coming to rest on this Eb that was prominent through the entire solo and was played throughout the B section of the

theme.

Otherwise, Zoot makes use of the simplest technics of thematic development, which give the solo clear musical continuity that musicians and non-musicians alike can follow to some degree. These include repetition, sequence (that is, the recurrence of the same musical phrase or shape, but starting on a lower or higher pitch), rhythmic repetition (where the rhythm is repeated but the melodic shape varies), and rhyming (where two or more long phrases end with the same easily recognizable rhythm). Just as important is the fact that Zoot leaves ample space between phrases, enabling an interested listener to follow the musical thread in which each phrase is related to earlier statements.

(Plays *Broadway* recording.)

As I've included Some of Bill Holman's recollections about Zoot, I've chosen two Holman arrangements for Mulligan's Concert Jazz Band to illustrate other aspects of Zoot's improvising. They were both recorded live in 1960. First is *Go Home*, a slow blues by Ben Webster that was recorded earlier on the quartet album, *Gerry Mulligan Meets Ben Webster*. Holman's writing is economical but masterful, whether in simple backgrounds or dramatic full ensemble statements.

The soloing by Mulligan, Brookmeyer and Zoot is full of spontaneity, patience in sticking with specific musical ideas and the good taste to use the written ensemble material as a springboard for improvised dialogue and interaction. And each soloist is able to find a path that is quite different from the others. Zoot's responses to the exclamations of the ensemble at the beginning of his extended solo are especially effective, as are his down home blues statements over the final sustained chords.

(Plays *Go Home* recording.)

I would like to close with Holman's arrangement of the Mulligan line, *Apple Core*, which is based on the chord changes of the old standard, *Love Me or Leave Me*. This is the kind of up-tempo tour de force that both Zoot and Mulligan's band could deliver effortlessly. Holman says, "I really wrote it for Zoot, and did a lot of hip things for him playing with the band, like he's got some tenor lead in there, where he doubles the ensemble. It's what I could conceive of him doing with a big band."

In the middle of Zoot's extended solo there's an intense section with unison saxophone lines that seem to spur him on. The extended stop time section is breathtaking and leads to some truly irrepressible swinging by soloist, rhythm section and ensemble alike, capped by a final stop time solo break and a short solo cadenza over the final ensemble chord.

Before listening to this final selection, I would like to applaud all the organizers and staff for continuing to support and celebrate the marvelous music of Zoot Sims and Al Cohn, and to thank Matt Vashlishan for inviting me to participate in this year's festivities. I definitely intend to celebrate this music in person with all of you at next year's Zoot Fest. In the mean time, it was a pleasure to put together this short homage to one of my jazz heroes, and I wish you all the very best of times in continuing the celebration.

(Plays *Apple Core* recording.) 🎶

Broadway

Zoot Sims' Solo*

Wood/McRae/Bird

(from Presenting the Gerry Mulligan Sextet (Emarcy, 1955))

Transcribed by Bill Dobbins

Medium swing $\text{♩} = 180$

1 $E\flat 6$ $A\flat 7$ 3

5 $F m 7$ $F\sharp 7$ $G m 7$ 3 $G\flat 7$ $F m 7$ $B\flat 7$

9 $E\flat 6$ 3 $A\flat 7$ 3 *vib.* *vib.* *vib.*

13 $F m 7$ $F\sharp 7$ $G m 7$ $G\flat 7$ $F m 7$ $B\flat 7$ *vib.*

17 $E\flat 7$ $A\flat 6$ *vib.* *vib.*

21 $A\flat m 7$ $D\flat 7$ $G\flat 6$ $F m 7$ $B\flat 7$

25 $E\flat 6$ 3 $A\flat 7$ *vib.* *vib.* *vib.*

* sounds as written

29 Fm7 F#°7 Gm7 Gb7 Fm7 Bb7

33 ² Eb6 Ab7

37 Fm7 F#°7 Gm7 Gb7 Fm7 Bb7

41 Eb6 Ab7 3

45 Fm7 3 F#°7 Gm7 Gb7 Fm7 Bb7

49 Eb7 Ab6

53 Abm7 Db7 Gb6 3 Fm7 Bb7

57 Eb6 Ab7

61 Fm7 F#°7 3 Gm7 Gb7 Fm7 Bb7 Eb6

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff (measures 29-32) features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and slurs, with vibrato markings. The second staff (measures 33-36) includes a circled '2' above the first measure, indicating a second ending, and features a half-note rest followed by eighth-note patterns. The third staff (measures 37-40) continues the melodic line with slurs and vibrato. The fourth staff (measures 41-44) includes a triplet of eighth notes and vibrato markings. The fifth staff (measures 45-48) features a triplet of eighth notes and vibrato. The sixth staff (measures 49-52) includes a half-note rest and vibrato. The seventh staff (measures 53-56) includes a triplet of eighth notes and vibrato. The eighth staff (measures 57-60) features a melodic line with slurs and vibrato. The ninth staff (measures 61-64) includes a triplet of eighth notes and vibrato. Chord symbols are placed above the staff to indicate harmonic changes.

David Liebman - Straight Talk



Matt Vashlishan

Understanding the Common Qualities that Artists Possess

Part 2 of 2

Of course you know that one of the elements of jazz is what we call spontaneity, spontaneous improvisation. The whole idea of spontaneity and flexibility, the ability to change in mid course and alter plans, not be upset, to try something different on the spot, in the moment, is really something that's a good attribute to have in life because we can't tell what's going to be coming down the road. In jazz, again, the music demands that we are like that on a musical level. You have to be like that, otherwise we couldn't handle this music. We'd be better in classical music, which is knowing what's coming up. The great classical musicians, of course, are spontaneous in their performance but for the most part they have a game plan that they have practiced and they have studied. We have a game plan in which the premise is spontaneity and to deal with what's coming at you. That's brings in one of the great things about playing jazz -- the interaction with the other people. It's the fact that I really don't know what the drummer is going to do; I don't know what the piano player is going to do. We have some kind of guide, we have some kind of plan but I'm not sure. Taking that into real life makes for a kind of attribute in one's personality that I think is very handy to have which is the ability to change and not to be stuck in one way. We never know what's going to happen, even though we think we know what's going to happen. So again, I think the music makes that a common attribute among jazz musicians: flexibility, spontaneity, loving to take a chance. We dig that. In fact, without it, we probably wouldn't be as happy as people. That's part of our

makeup.

Finally, on my little short list here, probably the most important thing that summarizes everything is individuality. One of the understood goals that a musician looks for in the final result is that after learning what came before, what everybody else is doing, what everybody else has done---what one goes for is an individual voice. Now in ordinary life, everybody had an individual speaking voice. Your tone of voice is individual, the way you speak, the way you phrase things, there are no two people that are alike. In jazz, in this art form, individuality is the main goal. You strive for individuality through the music, not only through your personality, not through what you wear or through how you talk, but how you play that instrument. And I always say to the serious students, can you tell who it is from the first note? Those of you who know the music, can you tell that that's so-and-so from the first or second note they play no matter what song they play, no matter what period of history they played in? It's like can you tell Picasso from Monet? Well, I think you can, okay? Can you tell Fellini from Woody Allen? Everything and everybody has a signature in the art field. In our field, individuality is a big priority, at least to some. It's not something that everybody reaches or cares about necessarily. Among musicians this is an endless discussion. If I sat down with Phil (Woods) and Bob (Dorough) (two of the speakers during the course) and we put on ten records now, we'd probably end up discussing: "Well, this cat, I don't know. He sounds good, and sounds OK, you know, he sounds like

Note: The Jazz Masters Seminar was taught at East Stroudsburg University by Professor Patrick Dorian from 2000 through 2008. In this unique course Professor Dorian prepared undergraduate and graduate students for ten guest speakers and performers each semester by lecturing about the impact of these musicians on the jazz world. The classes were interspersed with presentations by the musicians, which were open to the community. Each semester also featured three evening concerts. Over the years, 110 presentations enhanced the cultural life of the campus and the community, with a total attendance each semester of 1,200 people. These lectures and concerts are archived on videotape in the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection.

David Liebman's summary speech on April 26 of the 2000 spring semester incorporated the premise of Steven Covey's best-selling book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, aligning it with the careers of the upcoming speakers.

By Patrick Dorian

a good musician, he's done his homework. But I can't really identify who it is, only who his influences are. It just sounds like a big melting pot." And then somebody would put something on and all three of us, or all twelve of the speakers that you've seen would go: "That's him. I know who that is. That's that guy."

That quest for individuality and the desire to bring it out was a really important lesson to me. It's what I learned most from this music. I had no idea about that. Nobody ever told me that that's the name of the game or that you have to form your personality, and have a way of being in whatever you do from ordinary life to the way you treat people to what your work is. You inevitably are going to have a style so best be it that you are aware of it, develop and hone it to where it is together so that at least you are close to the way you want it to be...as best as it can be because it's never a finished product. The important thing is that you are developing it. And that point of individuality is something that we, in different degrees, sit down and think about. That's a good thing to learn from this music because when you hear it, what you're hearing is a group of people who pursue individuality at all costs. In some cases, they really paid a lot for it. That's something that you really don't see too much in this world: the pursuit, glorification, exaggeration of the individual instead of the group. And that's one of the great lessons from this music. On the other hand we play with others and are dependent upon cooperation and egolessness. It's a great balance.

Now there are a couple of other things that are unique to the field which I'm not sure you're going to find too much of in the rest of the world. We definitely live in a subculture. We are a dot of a dot of a dot on a page. Now I'm sure you've heard some of the people talk about that aspect of it. What does it feel like to be not in, forget the majority, not even in the minority, to be kind of in the corner in the sense of the entertainment world and show business. Now if you're Black in this country you know that for sure, right? If you're short and have three legs, you know about that. In other words, a lot of people know about being different in some way. Some more than others.

But this music thing isn't about what you came on the earth with, or what you were born with. This is what you chose to do. You chose to do something that is in the corner that is definitely not in the mainstream, that is not commercial, that is not going to be popular. I don't care what anybody says, it is not meant to be popular in my opinion. It's like a little group of people who know about this stuff. You say Coltrane, boom, you say Miles, boom, you say Bird, boom, everybody knows. Everybody knows everything I just said and all of its implications and you may not even know the other person. And then, if you get more specific, you say record number 1328 from the year 1949 and it gets even more specific. So, this is something that we jazz musicians have definitely taken upon ourselves, to not be part of the mainstream. We really don't care what anybody else thinks. Now that's a tough one because all your whole life you've been told to join the club. Everything pushes you into the club. I'm talking about doing something with integrity, with moral principles and ethics, but you're choosing to be in the corner. Now that's something that you will not find very much of in the real world. And to me, that separates us in some ways.

When I was a teenager, I remember one thing I thought about way before the music ever entered as a viable entity. As much as I love my parents and this has nothing to do with them personally. They were teachers, nine-to-five and so on. I said to myself: "Man, there's no way I'm going to do that. No way. I will rob a bank, anything, but I am not going to do that." Now, I don't know where that came from. I have no idea because I had no models and knew nobody that was like that. I came from a very straight-ahead family in a normal place and so on. But I knew I wasn't going to do that straight thing. Luckily I found this music, otherwise you know, who knows where we'd all be. I always think about some of the guys I know. If they weren't playing music they'd probably be among the cleverest criminal minds there could be, precisely because of all these great things that we've been talking about. Because if you turn these points into the dark side, then you've got some strong power.

So there's something about jazz that is really unique. You go into rock and roll or pop music, well you're not looking to be in the corner. Let's face it. You're looking to be on the cover of Time Magazine. You're looking to be a hit. And if you go into classical music, just talking music, you're joining a gigantic thing -- not that it's popular either -- but you're joining something that's established and well funded. These things are understood. But when you get into something like jazz, or let's say serious jazz, then you're going into the circle. It's esoteric and it's a few people. And that you have to accept. That's something that I think is unique to this field of music, though of course there are other fields of life which are similar. This being non-conventional increases the brotherhood that musicians feel.

I'm involved with teaching in schools from all over the world. It's an organization that I am the founder of. It consists of mostly 20-25 year old students who are part of schools of jazz from, at this point, 40 countries on every continent. We've been doing this for 12 years already. And what's always remarkable to me is the first day we get together -- we are in a different country every year, this July it's in Paris -- there are these fifty to sixty young people from over twenty countries. Within a day or two it's unbelievable how much more is in common than different. And it's because of the music. Now of course half of them can't even talk to each other, literally, because of the language as they come from different places and so forth. But it's unbelievable how much is understood those first two or three days that we are together. And that brotherhood is what this music is about. If you put together all these 12 people that talked to you, this room would be buzzing for the next 10 days. It's just a strong understanding - all different, all unique, all individuals, all have their own way of organizing things, all the stuff I just said. But there is so much more in common than there is different. And that's because of the power of the music.

So this is the final thing. If there is ever anything in your life -- music, religion, spirituality, something that takes you to a point that shows YOU things, that tells YOU truths -- you

have found Mecca. That will be a fountain that will never run out. Because you will run out, believe it. But when you got that in front of you, be it the sound, a vision, a story, whatever it is that you have in front of you, that will stay with you forever. That light will shine brighter and brighter because you get better and better at recognizing it. It's like listening to it. You're hearing jazz now as a result of this class. Those of you who continue to hear it five years from now are going to hear it completely different. It's the same with this light I am referring to. You see this light, and you'll say, "Yeah, that truth that I heard, that's even brighter now than it was 10 years ago." How is that going to happen? That's the real lesson from what you've seen with these people because you've seen everybody in a very personal way here. This is unusual. You didn't just

see them on the bandstand playing. Here you had people standing in front of you for an hour, some showing more than others and you asked them questions or whatever. You never get that view of people. And that one thing that's common to them is music. That's an experience that all people should have, I hope, that somewhere in their life, something in their life makes them say, "Yeah, this is something else!!"

Now by the way, this doesn't mean you have to become that. When so and so sat down at thirteen and took lessons or when I started with my first teacher, it wasn't like we were thinking: "I think I'm going to play with Miles Davis." I didn't even know who Miles Davis was. I mean, in fact, even five or ten years after that, I still wasn't thinking it. The innocence of this pursuit is what I love, because it means we are there

because we love the music and not because we thought we were going to make a fortune, or be part of this subculture and be mysterious or look hip or look cool. It had to do with the power of the music. If that happens to you, I urge you to seize upon it. That will be a revelation that will guide the rest of your life. We musicians meet in our travels many listeners who are so dedicated to the music, who love the music so much. They don't play or maybe they play a little bit - they just love it and it's been a force for them the way it's been for me. And they're not musicians. Usually they do something else in life that is positive because they see that that's the point. That's something that no matter what you do, if you got that out of this seminar, then you've gained something irreplaceable and special. ☺

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Al Cohn performing at the COTA Festival in 1985.

Photographer nnknown.