



# The NOTE



Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania • Spring / Summer 2014



MED FLORY • ZOOT FEST • DAVE LIEBMAN'S EXPANSIONS • JOE TEMPERLEY

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

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**Cover Photo (front): Bucky Pizzarelli at the 2013 Zoot Fest, by Garth Woods**



**Centerfold Photo: From left: Adam Niewood, Evan Gregor, Lew Tabakin, Joe Lovano, and Jay Rattman, by Garth Woods**



**Cover Photo (back): Cannonball Adderley, by Herb Snitzer, donated.**

# The NOTE



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

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

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

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# A Note from the Collection Coordinator



Fran Kaufman

By Dr. Matt Vashlishan

I would like to say my first hello to the loyal subscribers of *The NOTE*; followers of the Al Cohn Memorial Collection and the various activities associated with it and East Stroudsburg University. As some of you may know, long time Collection Coordinator Bob Bush left his position at the University this past year. After meeting with the East Stroudsburg University administration, I gladly took on the task of keeping the Collection going as well as communicating with all of you through this publication.

They say big shoes are hard to fill, and Bob's are enormous! Since I grew up in the Poconos of Pennsylvania and play the saxophone, it was easy to find out about Bob and the Collection at ESU. Over the years I have had a lot of contact with Bob through various Library Alive, Scholastic Swing, Celebration of the Arts, and Zoot Fest concerts that I have been a part of. His work and reputation are first rate, and he put his entire life into the Collection. I am happy to be following such a great example and plan to do my best to keep the Collection alive as well as introduce my own perspective whenever possible.

One of my main goals of course is to keep the flame going and to

## A New Beginning

educate people about the amazing resource available here at the University. As I mentioned, I knew about the Collection for years and visited it at least once a year when I returned to the area to teach at COTA Camp Jazz, so I had a "surface" understanding of what was available. I now find myself digging deeper to understand the scope of the Collection and am amazed at the amount of audio recordings, books, oral history, photographs, handwritten as well as digitally engraved manuscript, and countless other features that make up this collection. Furthermore, it goes far beyond a simple "jazz archive" or a dedication to Al and Zoot, although it does serve those purposes well. The Collection represents some of the best music in history as well as a representation of the rich musical culture created in the Pocono Mountains.

Part of my mission through ESU and *The NOTE* is to ensure that the younger generation of the Poconos becomes represented just as well as the veterans in an effort to keep the music moving forward and to keep things fresh. Many young people grew up in this area and were incredibly fortunate to be in regular contact with amazing musicians like Phil Woods, Dave Liebman, Bob Dorough, Urbie Green, and many others, all who are involved with the Collection in some way (either by writing for *The NOTE*, donating their time and/or

materials, playing concerts, etc.). I remember meeting Dave Liebman when I was about 15 years old, and the fact that young people get that kind of influence at such a crucial age in their development is something that doesn't happen in almost any other town in the country. The product of this musical "perfect storm" is something that should be documented and shared with the world.

Many students had experiences like I did: Bobby Avey, Jay Rattman, Evan Gregor, Dave Lantz, most recently Patrick McGee, and the list goes on. Many, if not all, of these younger people have gone on to create a career for themselves in music, and they are playing at a VERY high level. It is not by coincidence that they grew up under such giving tutelage from so many masters of the art, who were always there to encourage them and give them the tools necessary to do whatever they wanted with the music. It is because of the people represented by the Collection and the mere fact the Collection exists that creates these opportunities in this area.

Even in the short time I have been involved with the Collection, I have met wonderful people and am working on many interesting projects. I am excited for what is to come and I feel that music at ESU as well as the Collection both have a bright future, so watch your mailbox and inbox for information. Until then, please enjoy this issue of *The NOTE*! ☺

# Phil In the Gap



David Coulter

By Phil Woods

So here we are - jazz folks under the editorship of our new custodian of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection, Dr. Matt Vashlishan. I have known Matt since he was a young lion and he studied with me for a while. He is a great sax man, musician and a good guy who has a doctorate from the University of Miami. I think Al Cohn would be pleased with ESU's new president's choice of Matt to take up the burden of former custodian Bob Bush who raised the jazz bar very high during his tenure. I am confident that Matt will continue to maintain Bob's laudable high standards.

\* \* \*

The jazz world lost a giant and a dear friend. Frank Wess died on October 30, 2013, at the ripe old age of 91. He was born January 4, 1922, in Kansas City, and in 1953, he joined Count Basie's band playing flute and tenor sax. He left Basie's band in 1964, and was named an NEA Jazz Master in 2007.

I met Frank in 1956 on the Birdland All Star's tour and we became good friends over the years. When I was diagnosed with emphysema in the 70s Frank called and gave me a recipe of wheat grass and assorted herbal cures. He named me Wheezy and I always called him Sneezzy. We did a lot of gigs together and he was the most perfect musician I ever

played with. He did it all with aplomb grace, and humor – he was a funny cat. Here is his phone voicemail message:

*"Hey! How are you? You're not going to believe this but I was just thinking of you. You must be cyclic. It's so nice to have sensitive friends. If you have anything to make my blues turn green tell me about it. I want all the sordid details. However if your call relates to my doing a benefit for one of the so-called non-profit organizations of my performance with one of the trendy necrophilia ensembles I suggest you call my manager at: 1-800-182 oh I ate one or at 281 I heard you ate one too. And to ensure a prompt response please leave your phone number and a short message, your sexual preference, your credit card number and your mother's maiden name. Thanks for the call, --ahh ahh -- wait for the beep (Beep!) Now you talk!"*

They don't make 'em like Frank Wess any more. I will miss him very much. I loved him very much and life is a little darker with his absence. But he's in good hands I am sure.

Word has also just reached us that Iola Brubeck, soul mate of Dave, has died at the age of 90. A great lady has joined her husband. Both will be missed.

\* \* \*

## So Where are the Pork Chops?

What a winter of discontent! I haven't been out since Christmas. It was so cold I could only breathe out, but I did have a moment's respite when the Quintet, Jill and I did a gig in Santiago, Chile for the International Jazz Festival where it was 90 degrees. I was tempted to transfer my Union card and take up residence, but I already belong to Locals #577 and #802.

The International Jazz Festival of Santiago has been around for a few years. The early years were more 'smooth' jazz than the real thing. People were disappointed until new blood took charge. Roberto Barahona and an old friend, Pepe Hosiason, took the reins and brought the Festival up to very high standards. I first met Pepe in 1956 when the plane carrying the Dizzy Gillespie big band stopped to refuel in Santiago on our way to Buenos Aires. Pepe always knows when jazz is in the air or on the ground – how he knew we were refueling in his town is amazing. Refueling is not usually on the Arrivals/Departures board. Our friendship was further enhanced when the Quintet did a USIA (US Information Agency) Tour in South America and Santiago was one of our stops. Pepe and the local jazz club were most kind and solicitous. I did not know his partner, Mr. Roberto Barahona, but he told me that he



Donated by Phil Woods.

**Phil Woods with Benny Carter.**

came to my house in New Hope, Pa., in the 60s. My memory is not clear on the details but he and Pepe know the jazz scene and working for them (and being warm) was a delight. One of the performers was Melissa Aldana, a beautiful, young tenor saxophonist who won the 2013 Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition. We hung out at a party at Roberto's home and had a great hang. She is the first woman to win this prestigious prize and the first Chilean. In fact she was the first non-American winner - a coup for Santiago. And she can play! Not just a pretty face like me.

We flew down on LAN on their new plane, a Boeing 787. I was looking forward to this state-of-the-art aircraft (I am an aviation buff). My first flight with Dizzy in '56 was on a Lockheed Constellation, the first plane to have reverse pitch (useful for short runway use). The flight to Chile was 10 hours and although First Class had flatbed design, the food was so-so and the portions extremely small, like all flights these days. The return was at 11 p.m., and we left three hours later. Guess what the problem was? The software, of course! The computer couldn't flush the toilets. People in orange vests scurried to and fro and eventually re-booted it. My bladder is not new and they had to transport me to the men's room several times, which was miles away up many ramps. When they brought me back to the plane

the captain was in the doorway. I told him to consider a Boeing Triple 7 next time. He laughed. Nobody is laughing today!

The Malaysian Flight 370 has made the flying public extremely nervous. I sure am! But CNN is on 24 hours with the same story that has no answer as of this writing and it has been more than 10 days. There are other stories that should be addressed but CNN has a pit-bull grip on this mono event.

\* \* \*

Back in 2002 I did a world tour with Ray Brown celebrating his 76th birthday. Sadly he died before our last gig at the Blue Note in New York. The club called me and said because of his demise they would not need me for the week that Ray contracted me for. Instead, they were just going to have a jam session and asked if I could play on Thursday night only for \$200. I told them Ray would not appreciate this treatment of his alto man and to stick Thursday night "where the sun don't shine." For years I boycotted this club. But being a forgiving soul I reneged and did a gig there last year for two nights with my quintet - (two nights before Kenny G, who had three nights! Never trust a jazz club that hires Kenny G).

When I got to the gig I noticed they now had an elevator. I would be spared the long flight of stairs to the dressing room! Stairs are the enemy to victims of emphysema. However,

further research detected a flaw. The lift was on the second floor and only serviced the upper levels. It did not start at the beginning, the first floor, and therefore only aided the workers on upper levels, not the workers on the first level, let alone old jazz folks who might need the toilets. Yes, the facilities are on the second floor! What a perfect testimony to the intelligence (or lack of) of New York club owners.

A couple of months later Jim Hall called me and wanted me as a guest for his gig there to celebrate his 83rd birthday. And then he died. The club again called to say they would not need me because they were going to honor him with a jam session and cancelled all the cats that Jim had already hired. Déjà vu all over again! So I have decided no more jazz clubs in New York until they inaugurate the pension plan that Local 802 has been championing for years. If I die I want to have a tribute and then cancel everyone the day before the gig!

I have decided I cannot in good conscience work in NY jazz clubs until they initiate the paltry sum Local 802 is asking them to put into a pension plan for jazz musicians. If we had one when I started I would be getting more than the \$322 a month I now get. The Union helped the clubs get a tax repealed and the clubs agreed to contributing to the pension fund. Then they reneged! Nice guys huh? Please consider this when you



get closer to the head of the line.

\* \* \*

I am currently reading Terry Teachout's book, "The Life of Duke Ellington." Terry is the drama critic for the Wall Street Journal and is occasionally a bit snarly but his historical detail is on the money. I broke out all my Ellington CDs including the Mosaic set from 1932-40. Listening once again to the 1940-42 edition of the band with Jimmy Blanton, Ben Webster and Billy Strayhorn was blissful. Always was, always will be. This period led to the musical revolution of Bird, Monk and Dizzy's and puts their contribution in perspective – so logical. Jimmy Blanton's bass virtuosity is especially important; it freed up the rhythm sections for all time. Sadly, he died of tuberculosis two years later. Billy Strayhorn's writing influenced all arranger/composers from Gil Evans to Jim McNeely. Ben Webster (Jimmy Blanton called him 'Frog' and the cats called him 'The Brute') was a revolution unto himself but with the band it was awesome – a word I hate but it fits.

I knew Ben well. When in Amsterdam I would make it a point to call Ben Webster and have dinner or at least a visit. He came to see me doing a single in the Paradiso. Before the gig I scouted up a place to smoke some cannabis. There I was fresh from the States, paranoia intact, sneaking around the bowels of the building to do a bowl. Imagine my surprise when I hit the stage and looked out at the spaced crowd. They were getting high on every imaginable substance. There were stands set up in the lobby where one could purchase every kind of high! This was off-limits to the authorities and was Holland's way of isolating the action and keeping a loose control over such activity. Very civilized, the Dutch. Each morning the government radio station quotes soft drug prices and warns the kids about any bad stuff that might be in town.

We always had dinner together during those Euro years – 1968-1973 – either in Holland or Copenhagen. He was sober and dressed to the nines in a graceful gray Worsted double-breasted suit with a thoughtful

shirt and tie ensemble, a glaze on his skates and a hat right out of the Godfather. He was sharp and cool! My man! I got his address and showed up at the appointed noon hour. Ben was still in his pajamas but greeted me heartily. We had, some coffee (this was to be my most substantial meal that day), chatted, and listened to Duke. Who else? When you were with Ben you listened to Duke! He said he was going to order those pork chops, real thick ones! Did I want any beer to go with them succulent beauties that Ben was going to shake up right in front of my eyes? I said sure, a couple of beers would go darn good with those porcine delights we were soon to enjoy, of this I had no doubt! Well, the man delivered the pork chops along with a case of good, Dutch Amstel beer and we were off. I shall not bore you with all of the grisly details of this marathon day. So the story goes. Around midnight Ben collapsed on the rug in the living room, still in his robe - totally messed up! And so was I! I bent over to kiss him goodnight and as I got up after giving him a harmless peck on his wizened old cheek, he came to and cold-cocked me with a vicious right to the jaw, calling me a fairy! (The fashionable f-word of the era). I assumed that the pork chops were out of the question and took my leave.

A year later I was working at the Montmartre in Copenhagen. Ben had left Holland and taken up residence in Denmark. He came to opening night sober as a judge. I asked him if he had his horn. He said he just wanted to listen and was the model of decorum. Same thing the next night! I asked him if he had his horn, he said he would just listen. A couple of nights later, here comes Ben and he is tore up! I could hear him as he crashed through the ringside tables with his horn. NOW he brings his horn! He put it together somehow, climbed on the bandstand with considerable difficulty and proceeded to fall ass-over-tea-kettle right into the drums! He never did sit in. But we did have a lovely dinner the following night.

Ben was born in Kansas City, Mo., February 27, 1909, and studied violin and the piano. He made his

professional debut on the piano with Dutch Campbell. Ben played some stride piano that always knocked me out. He was a piano player before he was a tenor man and Ole Dude Albert Budd Johnson showed him how to finger the sax when they met in Texas before Vaseline! He did all of the territory bands and came to New York City with the great Benny Moten band. He worked with Benny Carter and Fletcher Henderson in 1933-34. He later went with Willie Bryant, then Cab Calloway. He is best known for his long intermittent association with Duke Ellington from 1939-43. In the 40s, Ben was the unofficial sheriff on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street. One night in 1946 I saw him personally eject three drunken sailors from the Three Deuces who had made the mistake of messing with the cute club photographer. Ben threw them into the path of an oncoming cab. That is where the nickname "The Brute" was put on him. He was also known by the sobriquet "Frog," but I never heard anyone but Harry Sweets Edison call him that. Ben was in Los Angeles in the 60s but lack of work led him to Europe where he worked more regularly in clubs and concerts around the continent. If you want to know more about this great artist I would recommend the video called The Brute and the Beautiful. This is John Jeremy's very compelling portrait of one of the legends of jazz.

Ben could be very good or very bad, but all of his wrongdoing was nothing compared to the incredible way he could play a ballad; how he finds that one meaningful note on a fast tempo that you never heard before! When I want to hear a song and be touched, I listen to Ben Webster. He'll do it every time! Ben died following a two-week hospitalization in Amsterdam on September 20, 1973. He was a gentle giant and I shall always love and treasure his friendship and his music.

*"Works of art are of an infinite loneliness and nothing can reach them so little as criticism."*

-Tom Courtenay to Maggie Smith in the film "Quartet". ☺

# From The ACMJC Oral History Project



Charles Perry Hebard

## Interview with Med Flory

### Part 1 of 2

#### Editor's Note:

In March of 2014, the world lost a great musician. Med Flory was incredibly versatile and could play, write, and act. He was prominent in both New York and Los Angeles and founded one of the most popular saxophone groups to date: Supersax. This group was known for playing harmonized transcriptions of Charlie Parker solos with a standard jazz rhythm section (or sometimes with Med's big band), which was something that had not been done previously. It is hard enough for one saxophone to play any of Bird's solos let alone five!

When I learned of Med's passing, I immediately scoured the Collection to see if there was any relevant material that I could use to celebrate his 87 years. I quickly stumbled upon this interview that was conducted by Bob Bush a few years earlier. Throwing caution (and a rapidly approaching deadline) to the wind I set about editing the raw transcription for use in this issue. One of the perks of using the Collection in my perspective is that all of the audio recordings from the Oral History Project are intact, many of which must be used to properly edit words, phrases, etc. that might be unclear from the initial transcription pass. When I began listening to the recording of this interview, it was immediately clear why Med had such an interesting and multifaceted career. His voice, personality, and overall demeanor were so entertaining and captivating they drew me in, making the work (that can normally be tedious at best) extremely enjoyable.

The following is the first of a lengthy, two-part interview that is divided based on where Med was living. I hope his spirit comes alive through his printed words as it did on the tape. Enjoy!

#### By Bob Bush

Let me say that for the record today is Thursday, August the 12th, 2010. I'm Bob Bush. I'm at the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection in Kemp Library at ESU (East Stroudsburg University), and I've got Med Flory on the telephone from his home in North Hollywood, California. So, hello Med.

**[Med Flory]** Hey Bob, uhh, is it the 12th? I've gotta go; I've got a doctor's appointment I need to—

**[BB]** [Laughs]

**[MF]** I'm just kidding. Fire away, my boy.

**[BB]** Well, if you could just spare us a little bit of time, I'm gonna try to—

**[MF]** All you want, all you want.

**[BB]** Well, you've had such a diversified career there's a lot to talk about.

**[MF]** Yeah, I'm good at anything you can't make any money at.

**[BB]** [Laughs] Well being that you broke in during the big band era, and played with several of the most well-known band leaders, then started your own band and founded Jazz Wave, Supersax, the LA Voices, then went from the east coast to the west coast and are not only a musician, but you also got

involved with screenplays, film, and TV you have a lot to tell us, so let's get started. I'd like to just go all the way back to the beginning if we can. Let me ask you an icebreaker question: Where were you born and when?

[MF] I was born in Logan's Fort, Indiana, August 27, 1926, so I'll be 84 in a couple of weeks. My mom was a great musician; better than I'll ever be. When she was in high school, she was playing for silent movies you know?

[BB] Yep.

[MF] She memorized the classics, all the stuff that she had to play, but then she improvised. She was always improvising; she played the organ for the church and someone would come up and say, "That was beautiful, Florence, what was that?" She would say "I don't know, I was just messing around." [laughs]

She was a contra alto with a pure voice; she studied with Madame Schumann-Heink, who was the big one back in those days. She had a beautiful sound, perfect control, and perfect placement and no vibrato; she never sang with any. She was like John Wayne and would say, "Uh, vibrato's a sign of weakness," that kind of an attitude. She had it down; she was six feet tall, 180 pounds at her peak and I've never saw another chick get on top. You know, she always had everything under control. A great mom; great mom.

And my dad; he was in World War I, he carried a message to General Pershing in Chaumont, France. He was, you know, a 90 day wonder, and he went over with a black company because that was the only way to get over there. So on the way back, they said, "We were listening to them playing and it was just the strangest," you know I said, "That was jazz, daddy!" [laughs]

[BB] Wow.

[MF] The beginning of jazz, you know, so anyway I was born; my older sister Eleanor was almost 6 years older than I.

[BB] How many kids in your family?

[MF] That's it; me and my sister.

[BB] Ok.

[MF] And, we had a dog, a German Shepard; he weighed over 100 pounds, a big one—his name was Silver and he was the smartest dog you ever saw in your life. He could do 20 minutes, you know, be doing common tricks and throwing shit up in the air and catching it, you know, that was the family.

[BB] I would really like to know more about when you were a kid and your relationship with music and music teachers; that sort of thing.

[MF] Well that was the whole thing; my dad was a school teacher. He caught the flu in France and it turned into TB and he was in a sanatorium for a year when he was first married, but then all he could do was teach school. He was so weak when he got out. But he was a hybridizer; he hybridized daylilies and won international prizes for it. He loved to dig in the dirt, like my son Rex; he likes to dig in the dirt. He'll be 54 pretty soon so it takes a lot of weaning him away from that stuff [laughs].

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] So there was music there and mom thought voice lessons were for people who shouldn't go near anything or have anything to do with music but, you know.

[BB] Well did you play in the typical school bands?

[MF] Well, when I was 9 I got a clarinet and I studied with Bill Morocco, who became the big band master in the high school and controlled all of the music. When I was in the seventh grade after studying for maybe a year and a half, he got me in the high school band, with all their uniforms and all that. So all the way through junior high and high school I was in band all the way, and in the ninth grade I made first chair in the high school band and all that.

[BB] Well what was your favorite instrument then?

[MF] I played clarinet.

[BB] Mm-hmm

[MF] Yeah, he was a clarinet teacher; he went to Northwood. He was the greatest guy in the world, a real mentor for me. He taught me all kinds of stuff you need to go through life.

[BB] Were you in Logan's Port, Indiana all through your childhood?

[MF] Mm-hmm. Yeah.

[BB] What was the name of your high school?

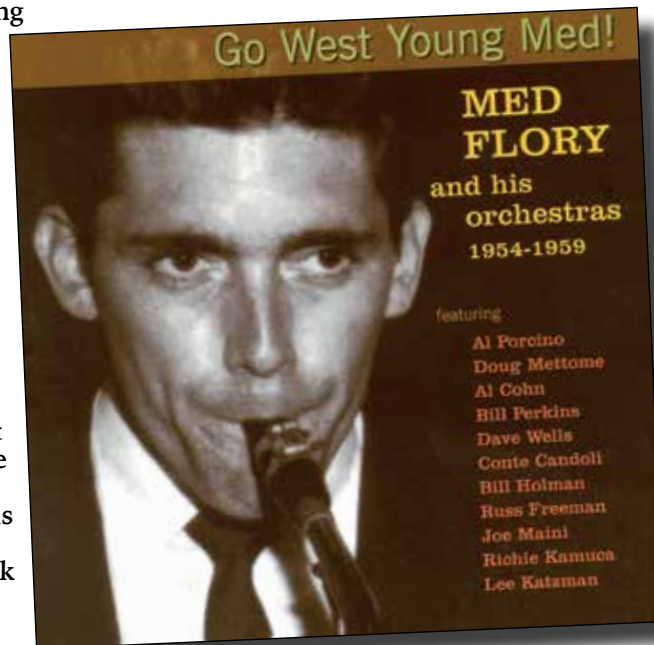
[MF] Logan Port High School. [laughs]

[BB] That's easy enough to remember.

[MF] Yeah. So in '44, I graduated and enlisted in the Army Air Corps in November of '43.

[BB] How old were you at that point?

[MF] I was 17 when I enlisted, 18 in January of '45 when I went in; I was in for two years. I was in the first troupe carrier command in the Army Air Corps and that was like taking gliders full of soldiers and letting it go; it flies down and hits a tree, then everybody gets





killed and that's the kind of...[laughs] But I was in sup-  
ply so I didn't have to worry about—

[BB] *Where were you stationed?*

[MF] Well, at that point, I was in Stout Field, Indianapolis and it was only 70 miles from my home so I was grooving, you know. And then we got our orders and we got our shots in August of '45, all ready to go over and the bomb went off and so they didn't need to bring any troops in. They were trying to get everybody out of it, so they dissolved the first troop carrier command men. So I went to North Carolina, Greensboro, and everybody was getting out on points in the band so I got in and I became a band leader for the next year that I was in.

[BB] *Tell me more, what was that like?*

[MF] It was great because we had a pretty good band, you know. I got my high school best buddy Mike Millhouse in there on baritone and he managed to carry through; he really wasn't ready for it, but none of us were, and that's where I started writing. I'd write a chart and say, "Come, let's go!" So we'd go over and play the thing. So that's where I learned how to write; in the Army. And I got out in December of '46 in Sacramento. Oh I LOVE that town. I don't care, we used to get high on the state house lawn because there was this club called the Zanzibar and that's where we used to score for some grass, you know and it was pretty good. And that was my first introduction to grass you know...

[BB] *Were you now at this point starting to think of yourself as a musician?*

[MF] Yeah, you know, in high school, Bill Morocco had this little band and we played two nights a week, Friday and Saturday; either the Elks or the Eagles, or the Veterans of Foreign Wars or the country club or something and I got my chick on the band; Mary Louis Stephe as the singer, that way nobody can be bird doggin' my old lady while I'm working. I wasn't so dumb!  
[Laughs]

[BB] *What kind of music were you playing with that band?*

[MF] Oh I don't know; nothing serious. But when I was a kid and just started playing in the high school band back in the 7th or 8th grade, I played with this Bill Morocco; he had a rube band, you know... a guy on snare drum, a guy on bass drum, a guy on trombone, trumpet, tenor, and I was playing clarinet. So we played all those old prohibition tunes like "My Gal, Sal," all those tunes; "These Days" and "Limehouse Blues," and in their original keys. I was forced into playing what went absolutely against my instinct because all I wanted to do was play in the key of C and on the horn (B flat concert). But that got me some early experience. It was like playing Dixieland only it was 4/4, Chicago style. That's what Chicago was; it was kind of like Dixieland only it was in 4/4 time, it wasn't a two beat.

[BB] *Oh, uh-huh.*

[MF] And Bill's brother Clarence, they both went to Northwestern so they were very hip compared to what was going on, you know. He played tenor and he

played in that style.

[BB] *Now you eventually went to the University of Indiana, didn't you?*

[MF] No.

[BB] *No?*

[MF] I went to Indiana University. That guy, what's that guy's name, Coseth? Uh, Cosell? Howard Cosell?

[BB] *Yeah.*

[MF] He never got it right. He always said the University of Indiana and it's Indiana University, it always has been.

[BB] *Ah.*

[MF] So I guess don't ever say that again...

[BB] [laughs] *I apologize...*

[MF] You got me? [laughs]

[BB] [laughs] *Got it. What was that like?*

[MF] Going to college?

[BB] *Yeah.*

[MF] Oh, it was great. I got out of the Army and went back [to college] in January because I was on the Bill of Rights so I got out in 1950 on the bill all the way so I had that coming in, and I started a band and we booked all our gigs in the first semester before we even had the band because we went down there and just did it, you know. Me, Warren, and Dick: it was like a partnership and I was the leader and I had the book. It worked out great. Warren played trumpet on the band and Dick played trombone. It was the band on campus, for all the time I was there. So then Tom Patton, a fraternity brother of mine, he got me on Thornhill's band because when Dick Hafer left to go with Woody, I think, he got me on the band. So instead of going to graduation, on that day I went to play on Claude Thornhill's band. We played West Point and then we were gone out there in the wilderness for two years. But we worked out of New York, so I considered that the home plate.

[BB] *So this is how you got from Indiana to New York at this point? You were going there to be part of Claude Thornhill's orchestra.*

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] *Did they make you audition for that?*

[MF] No, it's cut or pack: You cut the book or you pack and split and you don't get any transportation or anything like that.

[BB] *Oh, okay.*

[MF] So that was the deal. I made it on the band and I was playing tenor, and Sonny Salad was playing lead and in a couple of months he split. So we were playing a thing, I played clarinet on it, we were jamming and they said, "You wanna play lead?" And I said, "Yeah!" I didn't know they wanted a real clarinet player to play that.

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] They had Fazola and Danny Polo and all

great clarinet players and they had that old style of playing down, you know. So I made it and I did pretty good.

[BB] *Did you immediately love being in this band? Being on the road, and being a professional musician?*

[MF] Yeah, are you kidding? It's like being on a road, well not like, what happened since I don't even recognize it as, you know, noise. Benny Goodman called it "amplified noise" you know, rock. What a wise man he was. Anyway, yeah, so I'm playing lead and singing... I was a snowflake, we were the Snowflakes [laughs].

[BB] *What do you mean "the Snowflakes"?*

[MF] Well we were three guys and three chicks, a vocal group.

[BB] *Oh!*

[MF] We did the Tennessee Waltz together, we did it real funny...

[BB] *Why did singing start for you? Is that something you did as a kid too? Back in high school and all?*

[MF] Well you know, you do all that stuff when you can play, which I guess I could, so you get involved with everything. Like with the chorus and all that jive... you know. But in college, I was singing, "Watch the Birdie, Take a Candid Camera Shot," fooling around strike a pose and hold it, the whole band holds a pose, you know, it was big time! [laughs] As a matter of fact I did it on Thornhill's band too, and did it on Cavalcade of Bands. I was on that with the band back on the old Blue Network, Mutual. I guess that was the name... So we did that and we did Kate Smith and Perry Como. I was doing all kinds of stuff on the band, playing lead and then I was a snowflake [laughs] and I was singing funny tunes and a couple of nice tunes, too. Gil Evans was on the band too; he wrote me a chart. So it was fun.

We were rehearsing at Nola's one time and Gil brings in a chart, and I don't know what key it was in... D or some damn key, and I'm on clarinet, back and forth over the hump all the time, impossible fingerings and it's supposed to swing! And Bird came in with Gil and he's sitting back there and we're up there for about an hour and finally we got this thing down; I look back and he had this big grin on his face. So I met him there. One night, Joanie and I were walking down Broadway and we went past Birdland. A guy walks up and goes, "Hey man, you have a few bucks?" And I said, "Yeah, sure." So I gave him five bucks and he said, "Thanks, man..." and he disappeared and Joanie said, "What did you do that for? We only had ten bucks!" And I said, "That was Charlie Parker!" And she said, "Oh." [laughs] She was so hip.

[BB] *That's a true story, huh? Wow...*

[MF] It's all true, I don't lie.

[BB] *Wow. Well this was around 1950 when you got on Thornhill's band. What band were you on next? Was it Art Mooney's band?*

[MF] Art Mooney, yeah. That's when I got my card, and Art was a pain in the ass, I gotta say. Anyway, that's an integral part of the story. I got in front of the Dixie Hotel in January of '52. Real cold in the middle of the night, got on the bus, and Art said, "Watch your head," (because he's my height; he's a tall guy... I could whip him though, but that's another story...) So I get on the bus and I'm walking back and I see this redhead in at the back of the bus, with a top light on her, you know, and it was Joanie... Her sister Gloria was with her and she looked over at Gloria and said, "There's the man I'm going to marry."

[BB] *Wow.*

[MF] Now what kind of chance did I have? This was the best lookin' woman in New York City and she wanted me. So what chance did I have?

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] And I just loved every minute of it, you know, we were married for 48 years. Parkinson's got her. Last 10 years she just, you know. Anybody who knows anybody that has Parkinson's knows that it's just the worst. So we were together a long time...

[BB] *How long did Art Mooney's band stay together?*

[MF] I don't know, I got out of it as quick as possible!

[BB] [laughs] *Where did you go next?*

[MF] Oh I stayed in New York. Claude went out for a few weeks and I went out with him, and Gene Quill was on the band too. Gene Quill is one of the greatest be-boppers of them all. I mean, Phil and Quill, you know?

[BB] *No argument from me on that one.*

[MF] Yeah right! I thought Phil was lucky to get by as easy as he did, because Gene Quill was a real killer, boy, and just the silliest... He was really short and he was Irish of course, and he was always getting in fights! We'd be on the road and our lead trumpet player, a pretty good-sized cat, would hear him and say, "HEY MAAAN!" We were in there eating, then we go in the bar and there were all these truck drivers surrounding Quill, you know, he's just asking for them to beat the shit out of him, and I went in and said, "Hey man, don't worry about him, he had a bad accident; he's been acting weird ever since." And they go, "We don't give a shit! We're gonna knock the shit out of him!" And so I said, "Well no you're not 'cause you'll have to go through me and George to do it!" And they go, "Alright, get him out of here."

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] We do a thing, this is a time we're in Defiance, Ohio, and there's a guy, a millionaire there, and every year he'd have a party for the town; free booze, and a line of chicks from Chicago and a headliner. It was Jerry Colonna this time and they had these little mustaches that everybody in the band wore, with the little hook on your nose, and we're up there doing stuff, Jerry Colonna is running around, and Brew Moore (juiced already), he walked up to him and said, "We need ya!" [laughs]

Brew was a terrible juice head. You know all junkies that quit junk, they become terrible juice heads, for a while anyway. But anyway we're in the car and Gene Quill is driving and his girlfriend was up in front with him and it's and me and Brew in the back. We're going fast (Gene liked to drive 80, 90 mph and he didn't care, you know) and all of the sudden Brew, just out of his bloody mind, he takes his scarf and puts it over Quill's head while he's driving and is trying to strangle him! [laughs]

[BB] Oh my.

[MF] And we're going like the wind, Quill's trying to get his cap on his head, he finally knocks him back off. Then it was Sunday, and we went in this joint called the Knotty Pine, a nice place where you go to eat Sunday dinner with the family and we go in there and sit down trying to look cool. And Brew, he's sliding his chair around backwards and bumping into other people, stuff like that, and cussing his ass off! And me and Quill just look at each other and grab him and drag him to the door and of course he fell on the floor and the door was just right, he banged his head against the door a few times and he just looked up right at me and smiled. [laughs]

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] So we get him in the car, and we go back and finish eating and we go back out after apologizing to the whole town. We come out and he's gone! So we go looking for him and Dave Figg, Dave was with us too, and he had on one of those blue jackets with a mutton-type collar and so did Brew... and we walk in this joint looking for him and the bartender takes one look and he's over the bar with a club, you know, and when he got closer he said, "Oh, you're not him!" And I said, "Heh! We knew he'd been here!"

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] And what had happened, the cops grabbed him and said, "We'll let him go if you make sure to send him into his hometown and never let him get back here again," and so Brew was gone, we never saw him again! [laughs]

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] Boy was he something. Anyway, there were a few characters that came along from time to time. Red Kelly, my man came on the band January of '51, and both summers were great because we were out west in all the cowboy country. We were in the same car together: I had a '49 Dodge Wayfarer; front seat only and

no back seat, big trunk, straight-six, just the greatest little car you could ever... We drove across Texas; 90 degrees in the middle of the summer, the thing didn't even heat up! It was a great car.

So we get to Salt Lake City, we had a great night the night before, Saturday night, completely out. We were in the same room. We got up and he came in and stuck a pipe in my mouth and gets me loaded and said, "You gotta see this!" And we went across the street to this auto place, and they had this little yellow MG, with cream leather. Just a real pretty little car and he talked me into buying it, trading in. So we took it out on the road and naturally an MG is built for England where you're always never more than 50 miles from water, you know, and it didn't really work out too good. We could only drive it so fast and something went wrong. Then you take it to a mechanic and he would look at you like you were from the stars.

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] You never saw an MG outside of LA. It was rough in that regard, but we had a lot of fun in that thing. We were driving down in Kansas. We were going like crazy down this road with the top down and everything and we look over and there's this wolf in a field running along beside us! And that was a wolf, it wasn't no coyote! It's pretty easy to tell the difference and it was not a police dog. It was a damn wolf! So we make a left hand turn and he almost jumps in the car with us! Just misses!

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] So we played the Palladium which was great, I fell in love with that joint. So we're going up the coast, we get just below Crescent City in California, up along the old ocean road, right beside the coast all the way, and Kelly's driving and obviously fell asleep and we side swiped a log truck coming the other way! You know how big those things are?

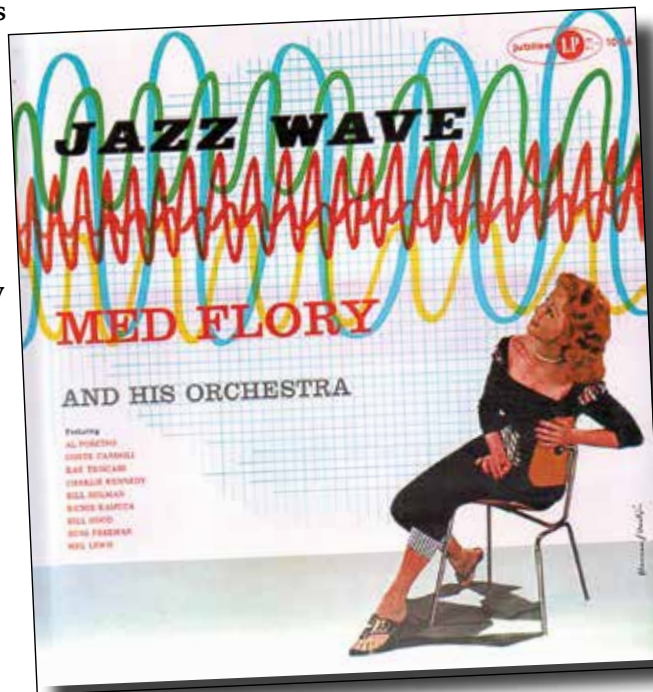
[BB] Yeah, I see quite a few of them in upstate New York.

[MF] [laughs]

[BB] You don't want to mess with them.

[MF] And we banged into this thing, going back and forth and we're spinning around like crazy and we hit a rock with our back end and it took out a wheel. So we just put the other wheel on and drove away, man. We could've been killed! He was an Irish man all the way, just crazy. And he could drink; he drank pretty good and anything else that happened to be around. He was an omnivore person.

[BB] [laughs] Well I'm waiting to hear when you ran into Al Cohn, was that when you got on Woody's band? Back in the early





'50s? 1953 or something like that?

[MF] Well yeah right around '53. We worked the Rustic Cabin with uh, it might have been Art Mooney too; I forget who it was.

[BB] You didn't play with Jerry Wald's band, did you?

[MF] Yeah, I played with him once, with Al's book. You know he wrote all the charts for that band, that's why it was almost a jazz band. Except for Jerry Wald... it's a Wald-aphone! It looks like a clarinet... it fingers like a clarinet... but it don't sound like a clarinet. It's a Wald-aphone!

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] He was terrible. He tried to burn my own lady for some bread. She sang with the band, and finally got it, but...

[BB] So tell me about Woody's band.

[MF] I got on in '63 I guess, the first time. Al was on the band, I knew him from before. Absolutely the craziest cat you would ever want to meet. Great lead player. I never met anybody quite like him. He had it all. In '53 we did two things; one of them was with Al, I forget what it was called, but another one was with Dick. Dick Collins or something?

[BB] Well there's a record you played on with Dick Collins. Its called "Horn of Plenty," that I know.

[MF] Yeah, I think Al was on that, wasn't he?

[BB] Yes.

[MF] Yeah, that was the first one, with Al, but what was his album called?

[BB] Which one?

[MF] Al's first album with Columbia for Jack Lewis.

[BB] It might be "Mr. Music" but I'm not quite sure if it was the first one.

[MF] Well Jack Nimitz was on it and me, and then I think we played the Rustic Cabin. That was for a couple of weeks and so we hung out a lot together and then in New York, at Charlie's Tavern and all those places around. Joanie and I used to go down to see the Pennsylvania... whatever they were calling it that week and Elliot Lawrence's band was in there and it was a great band, with Tiny Kahn on drums and Al Cohn. . . Al Porcino was on that band yeah, it was a great band. The whole book was written by Johnny Mandel, Al Cohn, and Tiny Kahn. You couldn't go wrong. I listened to him a lot in that band. I knew him, we were in the same neighborhood, Times Square.

[BB] Did you strike up a good friendship with him at that time?

[MF] Well yeah. When he came out here to the

west coast he would stay with Lou and we would hang out together. Yeah, I don't know if you'd called it a "deep friendship," but like anybody else in New York I certainly didn't put down the time. He's such a funny... you know that joke he said, when he's in Sweden: They say "How do you like our Elephant Beer?" He says, "I drink to forget!"

[BB] [laughs] Everybody loves that one.

[MF] Those were the four words, anything else was extra. "I drink to forget." Some might say, "yeah, I do, but-" That wasn't in it.

[BB] Right.

[MF] Sometimes they don't tell it right. I hate that.

[BB] Since you were there, I'm interested to learn something more about Al's composing and arranging side of his career. Did you ever observe him at work doing that? He did so many arrangements for Elliot Lawrence back in those days.

[MF] Yeah he did for me, too, for my first thing with on the Emarcy [label]; He did "The Fuzz" and. . .

[BB] "Wonderful You"?

[MF] "Wonderful You" and out here he did "No Thanks," I recorded it out here and he was here for that. Yeah man, "The Fuzz." I went over this club, he was working there and he handed me the chart and he said, "This is either the greatest chart in the world or the worst."

[BB] [laughs]

[MF] Pretty good. It's a pretty good chart. Terry Gibbs would kill to get it, but I won't let him have it.

[BB] Well we appreciate you giving us a copy to put into the Al Cohn Collection. It's very difficult for us because we want to get all of Al's charts back here.

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] But they're sprayed all over the place, you know?

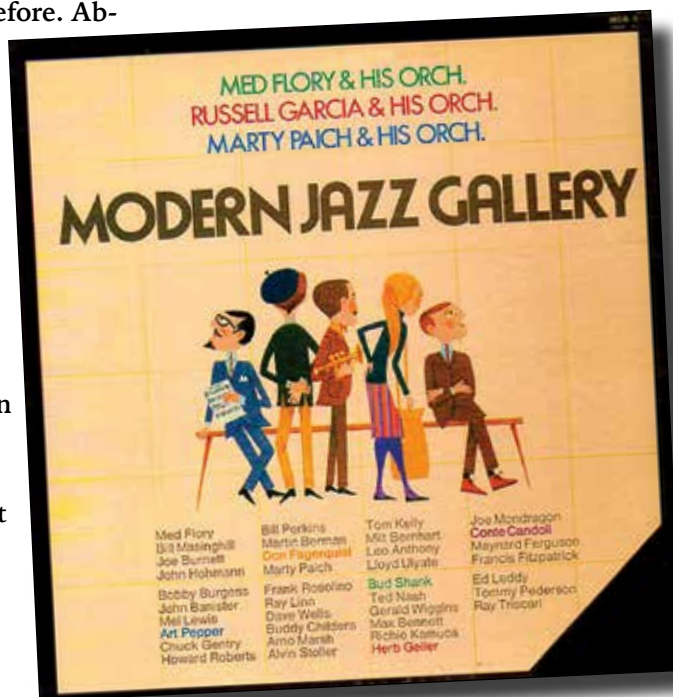
[MF] I know.

[BB] But thank you for helping us with that.

[MF] I'm still looking for "No Thanks." I'll come up with it one of these days.

[BB] When did you first meet Johnny Williams, the pianist?

[MF] We were living in 252 West 71st Street and John lived downstairs from us and he didn't have a piano so he was always up in our pad because we had a little piano up there. He was always bangin' on it. So when we recorded that thing for Emarcy, he was a



piano player. John is such a pure cat, a wonderful guy.

[BB] *He's still a big Med Flory fan, I can tell you that.*

[MF] Is he?

[BB] *Yes he is and he's been corresponding with me. You know he's down in Florida?*

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] *You told me you went down there a few times to play in Sarasota?*

[MF] Yeah I wrote some things for strings, they had a string section. It sounded good too, I couldn't believe it. I guess it's not that hard to write for strings unless you get hung up trying to write like them. Just write what sounds good and it usually sounds pretty good.

[BB] *Well Johnny's been a long time great supporter of the Al Cohn Collection, so he has been pestering me for many months to get this interview off the ground so I'm glad to be able to do it today.*

[MF] What, with me?

[BB] *Yeah.*

[MF] *[laughs]* Yeah that's right, he did mention that once or twice.

[BB] *Good.*

[MF] Well I think it's great what you guys are doing because Al [Cohn] is the all-time unsung hero of jazz.

[BB] *What makes you say that? I just have to follow up with that kind of a question. What makes you admire Al Cohn so much?*

[MF] Well my two favorite tenor players are Al Cohn and Dexter Gordon. Those are the two I dig the most. Al had that fine, Jewish soul that shined from everything he did. When he starts wailing boy, where you gonna go? You have to go with him. Nobody plays like Al.

[BB] *Well Al had a very complex career, not only as a performer but a composer, arranger, conductor, all of that stuff. Where did you go next after the Woody Herman band?*

[MF] Well, I was living in New York, working up at Roseland, working with a clarinet player. Aaron Sachs and I played in the band together. We had a lot of fun working there. You could go down the back stairs and you're in Charlie's Tavern. Charlie's was a great place. Charlie was a terrific cat. Just another New Yorker. Just mean as cat dirt, but underneath it all was the soul of the saint. I was at the bar at one night and I had a check from home but I couldn't get the thing cashed in and I was moaning and groaning about it. He came up to me and said, "here." He handed me a 100 bucks and said, "now shut up!" *[laughs]*

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] I paid him back in a few days but that's the way he was. I would walk in there with Joanie, and that was a sight to behold. There were all those guys checking her out, although very subtly. She was gorgeous. Joanie, she was something else.

[BB] *Did you play any gigs at the Half Note?*

[MF] No.

[BB] *Do you remember that bar?*

[MF] I don't think it was there then.

[BB] *Okay.*

[MF] I left Christmas night of '55. It might have been there, but the main place was Birdland. There were some other places, but could have been down uh, was that down in the Village?

[BB] *Yeah, that was Spring and Hudson Street.*

[MF] Yeah, it might have been.

[BB] *Well Al & Zoot played there quite frequently but I don't know if it was this early in the 50s.*

[MF] It wasn't because I never heard them play together. That happened later, I guess.

[BB] *You mentioned that you know specifically that it was Christmas night that you left for the West Coast?*

[MF] Yeah.

[BB] *Tell me about that.*

[MF] Well I had gone to Indiana earlier and picked up a car, a dark convertible and drove it back to New York. Johnny Williams was there when we left that night. He was great. I've got to give him a call because I didn't check out his political woes yet. *[laughs]*

Anyway, we left that night with the car packed all up and headed back to Indiana. Some guy named Rudy gave Joanie a parakeet named Rudy. So we're driving across the country in January in a convertible and he's sitting on the steering wheel looking at me. All the way across the country. He's looking at me with this baneful stare, like "What are you doing, man? What are we doing here?"

We stopped in Vegas for a few days because Joanie got a gig singing in the Tropicana hotel. She was on a revolving stage, and she was getting morning sickness. So she would sing and then go off stage and barf and then come back.

[BB] *[laughs]*

[MF] I came back out here to play the Palladium. Then we got together and got a joint up on Beachwood Canyon. Terrible place but we were there for a while. We're doing quite the bit of work, and then that fall we got that TV show. So that straightened us out.

[BB] *What was the reason that you moved from the east coast to the west coast in the first place?*

[MF] Well it was Sputnik I think or something like that was going on. I remember thinking if anything did happen, all we had were the bridges and the tunnels to get out of there and all of the little people would just knock me out of the way. I figured, "Now's a good time to move out." I always wanted to go to the coast anyway. I never thought about living in New York. I always wanted to go to Hollywood and get in the movies. I figured, "Hey, if Alfalfa can do it, how hard can it be? ☺"

*To be continued . . . next issue.*



# Remembering Brew Moore

by Gordon Jack

**Editor's Note:** This article was first published in *Jazz Journal International* in May 2013 and is reprinted with permission.

On the eighth of April in 1949, five of the best young Prez-influenced tenors assembled in a New York studio to record original material by Al Cohn and Gerry Mulligan. Allen Eager, Al Cohn, Stan Getz and Zoot Sims were already well known but the fifth man, Brew Moore, was destined to remain under the jazz radar throughout a fairly brief career. As if acknowledging his low profile, he is the only one to have one of the titles recorded that day dedicated to him: “*Four and One Moore*” by Mulligan.

Milton Aubrey Moore Jr. was born in Indianola, Mississippi, on March 26, 1924. After briefly attending Ole Miss (the University of Mississippi), he started playing in Memphis and New Orleans burlesque clubs like the Puppy House and the Kitten Club. He was making \$23 a week, which was good money for the time, playing behind exotic dancer acts, such as, *Kalema and Her Pythons*. He once said that he was 21 years old before he saw a naked woman from the front.

By 1948 he made his way to New York where he had to wait six months for his Local 802 union card which would allow him to work in the city. He was one of the regulars, though, along with Mulligan, Sims, George Wallington, Kenny Drew and Warne Marsh who played in private sessions at Don Jose's studio, a fourth floor walk-up on West 49th Street. The studio was characterized by a red door which became the title of a well known Sims-Mulligan original (“*The Red Door*”) and, much later, to which Dave Frishberg added a very hip lyric (“*Zoot Walks In*”). He did manage to get the occasional booking in Brooklyn strip clubs with the young Mike Zwerin, who described him as one of the ‘White Presidents.’

In 1949 Brew worked briefly with Claude Thornhill, who he said, “... *was some kind of freak genius. He could take the worst, out-of-tune piano and make it sound in-tune.*” The band loved his playing but apparently found him hard to handle because of his heavy drinking which nevertheless did not affect his playing. Ironically, Serge Chaloff, who had his own personal demons, was warned by his mother (the celebrated Madam Margaret) to keep away from Brew because of his extreme behavior. She thought he was a bad influence!

By now he was playing regularly at the Royal Roost and Bop City in a Kai Winding group which included Mulligan, Wallington, Curley Russell and



Brew Moore —1951 Central Park, Gerry Mulligan rehearsal.

Property of the ACMJC Photo Archive, donated by Bill Crow.



Max Roach or Roy Haynes. They worked as far afield as Tootie's Mayfair in Kansas City, where Bob Brookmeyer sat in, and they recorded no less than 14 titles in 1949. Occasionally trumpeter Jerry Lloyd (aka Hurwitz) was added. Moore had played with Charlie Parker and was highly regarded by his colleagues but his recordings never seemed to do him justice as a soloist. He composed two fine originals for the group – *"Mud Bug"* and *"Igloo"* – but by the late 50s he had dropped out of music and was driving a cab in New York to make ends meet. Some enterprising label should reissue all the material Moore recorded with Kai Winding because titles like *"Sid's Bounce," "Night On Bop Mountain"* and *"Lestorian Mode"* feature some of his finest work.

In the late 40s, Moore began a long romance with Arlyne Brown (songwriter Lew Brown's daughter) which continued until 1953 when she became Mrs. Gerry Mulligan. Arlyne once described Moore to me as, *"A soft, sweet, southern boy with an enormous talent looking like a combination of Leslie Howard and James Dean."*

Moore often performed with Machito's Afro-Cuban orchestra at Birdland and the Apollo and he can be heard on their recording of *"Cubop City."* Harry Belafonte once sat in with the band at Birdland and Brew has a solo on the singer's debut recording, *"Lean On Me,"* with Howard McGhee's orchestra. Soon after yet another Birdland engagement, this time with Miles Davis, J.J. Johnson and Charlie Parker, he returned home to New Orleans where he apparently lived in a *"dive"* with Joe Pass and writer William S. Burroughs. While he was working there he drove up to Baton Rouge for a two-week engagement at the Flamingo with Mose Allison. The pianist told me that he had heard Brew in many situations, *"... but even on the dumbest gig with people that could barely play he always sounded terrific. He was a very bright, sensitive character who could also write poetry. He was something of a hero to all the southern guys because he was the first one of us to work and record in New York."*

Moore continued working in the South but early in 1953 he was booked to appear with Charlie Parker in Montreal for a TV performance on CBFT's *"Jazz Workshop."* Returning to New York he recorded with Chuck Wayne and then re-joined Kai Winding at Birdland. The arrangements were by Tom Talbert, and Winding's group included Phil Urso, Cecil Payne, Walter Bishop Jr., Percy Heath and Philly Joe Jones. In an enthusiastic Metronome review George T. Simon said, *"The soloists are all good, notably Kai and Brew Moore, who blows some mighty exciting, moving, well-toned horn. Urso keeps up with him some of the time (the two engage in cutting sessions now and then) but he has neither Brew's ideas nor his drive."*

Brew worked fairly steadily at the Open Door in Greenwich Village, usually with Don Joseph or Tony Fruscella along with Bill Triglia and Teddy Kotick. There were always a number of drummers available, like Nick Stabulas, Al Levitt or Art Mardigan, and Freddy Gruber kept his kit there when he was not working. Charlie Parker was often the featured attraction and, on one occasion, he and Brew "goosed" each other as they slowly ambled around the dance floor. They finished up serenading a large piece

of chewing gum stuck to the floor. Another of Brew's favorite haunts in Greenwich Village was Arthur's Tavern where Parker often held forth. Once, when the great man didn't have his alto, he borrowed Brew's tenor. Arthur's Tavern opened in 1937 and is still going strong – no cover charge, minimum one drink per set.

Some time in 1955 folk singer Billy Faier drove through Washington Square shouting *"Anybody for the Coast?"* Brew's gig book was anything but full so he joined Billy who also had Ramblin' Jack Elliott and Woody Guthrie in the car. Brew left them in Los Angeles and took the bus to San Francisco which was to become the center for the new beat culture.

The years spent in California were busy and productive ones. Brew worked regularly at the Black Hawk and the Jazz Cellar where Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Kenneth Rexroth gave poetry readings. It was probably at one of these clubs that Jack Kerouac heard him because he mentions listening to Brew in his book *Desolation Angels*. He had a popular two-tenor group with Harold Wylie at The Tropics and he recorded with Cal Tjader for Fantasy. He also appeared at the 1958 Monterey Jazz Festival with trumpeter Dickie Mills and he sat in for a set there with Gerry Mulligan.

He always said, *"I go where the work is,"* and in 1961 he emigrated to Europe. He did six months at The Blue Note in Paris with Kenny Clarke and appeared at the Berlin Jazz Festival with Herb Geller, who told me, *"He was a wonderful, natural player, like Zoot. It was strictly talent and intuition with both of them. I was very fond of Brew."* He worked extensively in Sweden and Denmark throughout the sixties but often returned to the States doing casuals in Manhattan. He played at the Half Note with Bill Berry and, on one occasion there, Anita O'Day and Judy Garland were also on the bill. He was featured at Newport in a jam session in 1969 which was the year he played Danny's Restaurant and The Scene with Dave Frishberg. John Carisi sat in at Danny's and Dan Morgenstern's Down Beat review said, *"Brew is incapable of playing a dishonest note. His music is just pure and loving and a joy to hear."* Ira Gitler was similarly impressed at The Scene: *"Moore's brand of emotional, romantic, hard-swinging music captivated the waitresses and bartenders as well as the regulars. Brew was beautiful."*

The story of how Brew Moore died in Copenhagen in 1973 has become an established part of jazz folk lore but not all the details are well known. He gave a party to celebrate an inheritance and during the festivities fell down some stairs and broke his neck. Mose Allison filled in the gaps for me a few years ago: *"Brew had been staying at Carmen Massey's house in Biloxi when he heard he had inherited all this money. He had been scuffling on the fringes of the jazz world all his life and never made much at all. He left for Europe and discovered he had lost a good luck charm he had been carrying around for years. He wrote to Carmen asking him to check if he had left it at the house. The next thing Carmen hears is that Brew had died and a few days later they found Brew's lucky charm. That story sounds like something out of Truman Capote."*

As Herb Geller once said, *"It could only happen to a jazz musician."* ☺

# Brookmeyer and Me: An Odyssey of Friendship

An updated excerpt from:  
*Experiencing Jazz: A Listener's Companion*  
by Michael Stephans ©2013 Scarecrow Press

## PREFACE by David Liebman

What is it that makes jazz so special? Surely there is a lot of music that has commonalities with jazz: solo excursions co-existing with group participation; spontaneous improvisation; a “groove” of some sort; virtuosic expertise on an instrument; passion and sophistication all mixed together and more. So WHY JAZZ?

Simply because it represents THE music of our time coalescing in American cities created by people from all cultures mixed together, most notably in its birthplace, early 20th century New Orleans. Jazz, being a folk music of sorts reflected the life of the people of this epoch, the joy, sorrow, aspirations and celebrations. Certainly African Americans are well represented, yet as I write in 2012 it is fact that jazz increasingly includes people from all over the world. Musically speaking, the technical aspects of jazz are heard far afield from its home environment, in pop music and contemporary classical settings and of course more and more in “world” music. Jazz is the lingua franca of the past 100 years and as an educator, I can attest to the abundance of jazz learning going on worldwide on the university level. Jazz, despite the impression that it may be of importance to only a few listeners, is here to stay in one form or another.

Art can communicate on any or all three levels that Michael refers to in this book as ears, mind and heart. One may be attracted to a work of art because the technique is so dazzling, or the mood that the piece conjures up strikes a responsive note. Sooner or later it is the spirit and passion of the artist that truly affects the receiver of the art. For jazz, the listener may

at first enter the door of appreciation on any one of these levels. Other arts have a more shall I say “dramatic” atmosphere when they are presented... ballet, theater, poetry, painting and sculpture, etc. One can physically see the artistic creation.

But music is much more elusive, especially when it appears to move fast as improvised music often does as a result of several improvisers offering their experience, knowledge, heart and soul in the moment, creating a special synergy. The way Michael presents the material in this book offers a perfectly balanced approach to entering the world of jazz as a listener at first on the “mind” level, but with the understanding that one will sooner or later hear the music from the heart.

I have known Mike for the past six years since he moved to the area of Northeast Pennsylvania where I live, a fertile area for jazz musicians by the way. Michael is first and foremost a great jazz drummer with an encyclopedic knowledge of the music. We have shared some great moments recording and performing together. Besides other musical abilities (trombone and singing for example), Mike is a published poet and excellent prose writer as you will see. What makes him the perfect person for a book of this sort is that he truly wants to communicate with people about this special music that we hold so dearly. People who dedicate themselves to jazz are well aware of the necessity of honesty and sincerity when entering this universe.

*Experiencing Jazz: A Listener's Companion* is a “perfect storm” of sorts....written by a master musician, poet and writer describing the special world of jazz past, present and future in a lively, non-academic tone that for anyone who has an inkling of interest in jazz will further their appreciation of the music.

## By Michael Stephans

I first heard valve trombonist Bob Brookmeyer when I was in my mid-teens. My family and I were in Jacksonville, Florida visiting some relatives, and while out walking around town one day, I happened into a record shop and bought an album by baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan and The Concert Jazz Band. To make a long story much shorter, I brought the record back to my cousin's house, took it out of its glossy, black sleeve, and plopped it onto the phonograph. The first cut I heard was one of those finger-snapping things that sort of chugged along like a big old Hudson Hornet, lumbering from side to side, rooty-tooting down the street. The piano and tenor solos were good, but sort of unmemorable; however, after the tenor solo, there was a funky, raspy, downright greasy trombone solo that changed how I would hear and play music over the next 50 years. It wasn't a slide trombone solo, even though initially, I knew it was some sort of trombone. This was a different breed of animal – one that wheezed, bleated, belched, farted, yowled, and groaned. This was down and dirty and somehow I knew in my underdeveloped teenaged brain that this was the real deal. This was my first exposure to the genius of Bob Brookmeyer.

Now, even an uneducated green-gilled teenager like me back then could figure out that Brookmeyer didn't play slide trombone. He played the valve trombone, which has always been considered the illegitimate step-child of the more conventional slide instrument.

But it wasn't only the valve horn that caught my attention. It was the way that Bob Brookmeyer was playing it that completely turned me around. By using certain valve techniques, Brookmeyer could bend and twist notes. He could actually



sing the same note he was playing into the horn and make the note being played sound wet and raspy, like a bull elephant with a cold. Sometimes he would not play a note at all, but just move the valves and breathe through the horn, sending a column of air loudly out of its big brass bell. All of these techniques made the valve trombone sound incredibly like a living, breathing thing – a gruff, yet fundamentally primordial voice that dug down deep into something I could not even begin to identify. It sang and resonated. It mesmerized. It incandesced brilliantly like a dizzying mix of silver, gold, and copper stars blanketing the ‘glades at midnight, and like a full, hot Florida sun at midday.

Even though I was a young and somewhat overzealous jazz drummer, I wanted to be as soulful and hip as Brookmeyer. Whoever said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery would’ve been amused at just how much I embodied that statement. I cut my hair in an ivy-league style like Brookmeyer’s. I dressed in that early sixties New York hip couture like he did. I even tried to affect his mannerisms. It was quite ridiculous, really; it was idol-worship at its most chronic. When no one was home, I would crank up the volume on the stereo in my room and play air trombone to Brookmeyer’s solos, bending forward and arching backward, swaying from side to side, like an old Hassidic rabbi singing and praying on the Sabbath. I was pretty far into it after school one day, when my father (who came home early that afternoon) opened the door and leaned in to ask me to turn the music down. Catching me in a particularly dramatic pose, as I pointed my air trombone toward the ceiling at the zenith of the solo, my father looked at me with bewilderment before closing the door, leaving me to feel like someone who just got caught with his hands deep in the cookie jar. What does one say at a time like that? In my house the exchange probably would’ve gone something like this:

*“Oops...Excuse me Dad, I was pretending to be Bob Brookmeyer.”*

*“Who? Bob who?”*

*“Brookmeyer. The famous jazz valve-trombonist. You know, the guy who plays with Mulligan and Getz and...”*

*“A jazz musician? A jazz musician? This is your hero? What happened to Mickey Mantle, Sandy Koufax, President Kennedy? A ball player, I understand. A president, I understand. Even Jimmy Hoffa, I understand. But a jazz musician? Is this Brookmeyer Jewish, at least?”*

Given the circumstances in my house, had this been a real scenario, I probably would’ve lied and said “yes.” And somehow, at least for a little while, that would’ve made it alright. But, my father merely closed the door behind him, leaving me to the demons of self-doubt who pointed at me and shouted, *“Weird! Weird! Weird!”* before I chased them away with a swat of my invisible horn.

I finally met Brookmeyer in the mid-70’s, about a month after I moved to Los Angeles from the east coast. We became immediate friends and musical associates, jamming, rehearsing, and playing local jazz joints. Those were rough years for Bob, since he was battling alcohol addiction – a battle which he eventually won. After a time



Photographer unknown, contributed by Michael Stephans.

**Bob Brookmeyer**

he began the long and arduous journey back to music and life, and his rebirth as both man and artist.

In the late 70’s, Bob moved back to New York City and rejoined the vigorous Manhattan jazz scene. Even so, he returned frequently to the west coast and we played some successful and inspiring club gigs and concerts. In the mid-80’s, he called from New York and in his dryly laconic way, said: *“I think it’s time we made a record together.”* And so, a dream came true for me. We recorded Oslo for Concord Records in September 1986. Every minute in the studio with Brookmeyer, pianist Alan Broadbent, and bassist Eric Von Essen was like magic, and Bob’s disciplined and focused approach to recording was inspiring and challenging. Bob and I went into the studio again in 2000, and along with my then-future-wife, Kathleen, co-produced a beautiful recording called Stay Out of the Sun for Challenge Records, further documenting our lifelong friendship. Kathleen became very much a part of the fold around that time and several years later, Bob and his lovely wife, Jan were the best man and woman at our wedding in a small chapel in the Vermont countryside.

Brookmeyer regained his stature as a well-respected jazz soloist, evolved into a brilliant composer, and became a beloved teacher – both here in America and in Europe. And our relationship continued to flourish, even though we didn’t play together nearly as much as we used to. But when we had the opportunity to make music together, it was always as though we never stopped. It was never less than very personal with Bob and me, and our musical moments were often filled with joy and humor and even a touch of sadness. Until his passing several years ago, I continued to dot Bob’s i’s and cross his t’s, and he continued to turn around and smile at me when we moved along through the music on the same wavelength: the teenaged kid from Miami and the suave, world-class hipster from New York-cum-Kansas City. The stuff dreams are made of... ☺



# ZOOT FEST



**Adam Niewood, Evan Gregor, Lew Tabackin, Joe Lovano, and Jay Rattman:  
“Another Four Others” perform “Four Brothers” charts by Al Cohn at Zoot Fest.**

Photo by Garth Woods



# EST 2013





# ZOOT FEST 2013



"COTA Festival Orchestra" with Phil Woods conducting.



Joe Locke



Jam Session



Joe Cohn



From left: Bucky Pizzareli, Ed Laub, Walt Bibinger.



From left: Jerry Dodgion, Bill Goodwin, Joe Cohn, Bill Crow.





From left: Phil Woods, Joe Lovano.



President Marcia G. Welsh, Ph.D., and Rick Chamberlain present Bob Bush with an award for more than 10 years of tireless support of jazz performance and education.



From left: Jim Daniels, Phil Woods, Joe Lovano, and Marion Evans share a humorous moment about their past jazz adventures.

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# Expansions: The Dave Liebman Group



Bud Nealy

Dave Liebman's Expansion Quintet: Alex Ritz, Dave Liebman, Matt Vashlishan, Bobby Avey, Tony Marino

## Near Dawn: Thailand Tour November 2013

### Introduction by Dave Liebman:

As some of the readers may be aware, I began a new group in the last year after 23 plus years with Vic Juris, Tony Marino, and Marko Marcinko (prior personnel being Phil Markowitz and Jamey Haddad). By chance I was invited to take part with the new group last fall as part of the 180th anniversary of relations between Thailand and the U.S. (News to me!!). From previous trips to "exotic" locales (specifically India and Mauritania) I try to make it a habit to search out the opportunity to find the true musicians of the country I am visiting and interact with them, hopefully for a recording at the least. After expressing my wishes to the consulate person (thanks Kelly) and to Dr. Pat whose article you will read accompanying this column, we were suddenly surrounded by what I presume were folk musicians from Thailand. (As an aside, jazz is a "folk" music of sorts, meaning from the people.) In any case, I took advantage of the situation and requested that we somehow record together. Visiting a home type

**"This trip was and probably will be one of the most memorable and enjoyable experiences I will have playing music."**

studio in the hood, the final result is the CD, "Near Dawn."

Improvised music is a universal fact, the differences being the sound of a particular instrument(s) along with the improvisational material itself whether it be pentatonics, strange scales, odd rhythms, whatever. The bottom line is that musical communication goes beyond the here and now. This might sound cliché but it's true.

This recording and interaction between the Thai musicians and "Expansions" (with Matt Vashlishan, Bobby Avey, Tony Marino and Alex Ritz) will resonate for years. I still remember doing a similar project in India, in 1975, with "Lookout Farm" and Badal Roy that still remains one of the highlights of my musical life. The bottom line beyond the music is that Thailand is a beautiful country with the most hospitable people around.

\* \* \*

### Matt Vashlishan:

This trip was and probably will be one of the most memorable and enjoyable experiences I will have playing music. There were so many combinations happening; the exotic environment, the wonderful people, the unique music, and the opportunity to hear our own music grow as a result of the trip overall. Our trip consisted of two days of master classes for Thai students in high school and college, a recording session, and our main performance for diplomats from about 70 different countries in celebration of 180 years of relations between the United States and Thailand.

We met many wonderful musicians during our week, several of which played on the Near Dawn

recording session: Somnuek Saeng, Chumchon Suebwongs, Pruettiron Nanthawowat, and last but certainly

not least Pathorn Srikananda. The music consists of free improvisation blending our western instruments with Thai folk instruments, one Thai folk tune, and one of His Majesty's compositions.

Pathorn Srikananda or "Dr. Pat" as we called him, educated us throughout the week on various Thai customs and traditional Thai music. What stood out to all of us in particular is how interested the King is in jazz. Pathorn has been involved with the King's music for many years and has a very good understanding of his history playing saxophone and clarinet, as well as his composing. From the 1950s to present day, Thailand has remained interested in jazz and this was very apparent when working with the students over the course of our week there. On one occasion during one of Dave's lectures about transcription, we played a Miles Davis solo for them. Almost instantly



the entire room started singing along with his solo! Jazz is everywhere, and many different kinds of people manage to find something in it that resonates with them so much that they decide to devote at least a portion of their lives to trying to play it themselves.

During the evenings we visited several clubs in Bangkok where a jazz band was performing, and we heard about several others as well. It is interesting to discover how far America's true art form can travel from home.

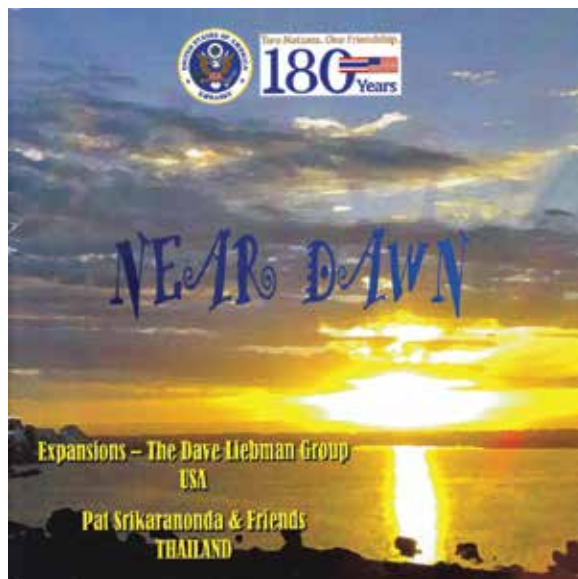
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### Pathorn Srikaranonda:

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand was born Prince Bhumibol Aduldej in Cambridge, Massachusetts on December 5, 1827. His father, Prince Mahidol, was a medical student at Harvard and his mother, Princess Sangwal, a nursing student at Simmons College. Previously, the King's royal parents were living abroad while studying as the King's elder siblings, Princess Galyani and the future King Ananda, were born in London and Heidelberg respectively.

When Prince Bhumibol was 2 years old, the royal family moved back to Bangkok. After Prince Mahidol's untimely death, Princess Sangwal took her young children to be educated in Lausanne, Switzerland. Prince Ananda was unexpectedly elected King when their uncle King Prajadhipok abdicated the throne without issue. The royal family, however, remained in Switzerland throughout.

While living in Switzerland during the years between the World Wars, the two royal princes were encouraged to take up wind instruments for medical reasons. King Ananda took up the clarinet while Prince Bhumibol took up the alto saxophone. The saxophone would become his love affair throughout his life. During this period, the Princess Mother paid tuitions for her children's music lessons. After three years of basic training on the instruments and classical music theory, the royal children started to play the music they preferred. The "hottest"



music in Europe at that time was the craze from the New World – jazz. The royal children, as any ordinary youth at that time, quickly embraced this new sound. During the years that led to World War II, jazz in Europe was at its full swing. Prominent figures in jazz such as Sidney Bechet, Benny Carter, Coleman Hawkins and the likes, traveled to Europe and enjoyed their celebrity status even more than in their own hometowns.



The King playing clarinet with the late Laykram Band (Manrat is already at piano) c.1956

Donated by Pathorn Srikaranonda.



In late 1945, the royal family briefly moved back to Thailand in preparation for King Ananda's coronation. While in Bangkok, Prince Bhumibol met his relative Prince Chakraband Pensiri. Prince Chakraband was an amateur song writer who also embraced the new sound of jazz. After a brief conversation about the blues, the impressed Prince Chakraband

encouraged Prince Bhumibol to take up jazz composition. A couple of months passed by before Prince Bhumibol would pen his first royal tune, the soulful Candlelight Blues. A month later, three more tunes were written – "Love at Sundown," "Falling Rain" and "Near Dawn" – all became the mainstay in Thai music literature. Enjoying the early success, Prince Bhumibol wanted to pursue his music career and study music in a European conservatory.

A good start it may seem, however with King Ananda's tragic death from a gun accident on June 9, 1946, Prince Bhumibol became King in his brother's place and his dream of a music career came to a halt. When he returned to Switzerland, the new King switched his studies to law and political science in order to prepare to be king. No more professional career in music, however the King still continued to play and compose music throughout his life and still does up to the present day.

\* \* \*

### Royal Compositions

Of all 49 compositions written between 1946 and 1995, nearly half are in a jazz style. More than a dozen are written in his favorite style, New Orleans/Dixieland. The best-known pieces are the blues such as "HM Blues" and "Candlelight Blues," and the show tune type such as "Love at Sundown" and "Can't You Ever See." There is even a Broadway hit called "Blue Night" which caused a sensation in New York City in 1950. Apart from this, he was also fond of the



Reception of gifts from the US Embassy of Thailand at the conclusion of the Expansions concert. FROM LEFT; Bobby Avey, Dave Liebman, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Sihasak Phuangkitkeow, Ambassador Kristie Kenny, Pathorn Srikaranonda, Matt Vashlishan, Alex Ritz, Tony Marino.

"Manrat" to him. By that time, many members of the Lay Kram Band had left due to illness or old age. Eventually only two, the King and Manrat, were left in the band so Manrat asked the King for a royal permission to take in more musicians to become the core of the new band: The Au Sau Friday Jazz Band. The reason behind this name was

Photo provided by Pathorn Srikaranonda.

Viennese Waltz and wrote more than a dozen in that style, some of which became a part of his "programmatic" ballet music the Kinari Suite, which was written in 1959. For this suite, the College of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna (now the University of Music and Performing Arts) presented the King with an honorary degree when he made an official visit to Vienna in 1964. The King also penned four marches for the military branches and five anthems for universities and other establishments. There are also five compositions where the King wrote the lyrics (in English) himself, all of which are love songs dedicated to his wife, the Queen. The last two songs, written in 1994 and 1995, are musical settings to poems written by his second daughter, Princess Sirindhorn during her youth. In 2004, the University of North Texas presented the King with an Honorary Doctor of Music in composition for his contributions in the field of jazz composition.

\* \* \*

### Jazz musician

Since his earliest time back in Bangkok for good in 1950, the King formed an amateur band composed of mostly royal relatives playing different kinds of music, which included some traditional Thai instruments. The King would play clarinet and saxophones in the band. He named it "Lay Kram" – meaning "antique" due to the age of most musicians in the band. In 1954, the King granted a royal audience to a young Portuguese-Thai pianist, whom the previous year the King granted a Thai name

that Au Sau (or A.S.) are the initials of the King's old residence, the Ambhara Stan Villa where a radio station of the same name was also located. The band, being the "official" band of the radio station, would broadcast live music every Friday night (there is even a royal composition called "Friday Night Rag") and rehearse on Sunday nights. So when the King moved to the Chitralada Palace, he also moved the radio station with him but did not change the name so the name Au Sau Friday Jazz Band remains in present day. These musicians were not the only ones who have the privilege to play music with the King. Some foreign musicians were also granted audiences. Among the list includes big names in jazz such as Jack Teagarden, Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton, Stan Getz, Benny Carter, Maynard Ferguson and the most recent, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, who awarded the King with an honorary membership. In 1998, the Yale School of Music also presented the King with the cultural citation and the Sanford Medal for his unique role in musical life of his country, particularly the influence of jazz through his music that takes roots in the Thai society since 1946.

At present, the King no longer composes music. At the age of 86 he still enjoys the company of his Au Sau Friday friends, who drive down every weekend to Klai Kangwon Palace, the King's current residence in the South. They spend time together playing jazz as they have been doing for more than half a century. ☺

# From The ACMJC Oral History Project



Jonno Rattman

By Jay Rattman

January 6, 2010

*[Jay Rattman] Let's see, it's January 6, 2010, and I'm here with Joe Temperley at the Manhattan School of Music, and I want to thank you very much for speaking today.*

**[Joe Temperley]** Oh it's my pleasure to be here, you know I was looking forward to this.

*[JR] Good. So let's start at the very beginning. Where and when were you born?*

**[JT]** 1929 in a place called Cowdenbeath, Scotland, which was a coal mining area. It's no longer a coal mining area because you know, people don't use coal anymore. Back then it was a very vibrant coal mining area. There wasn't much in the way of music going on, unfortunately.

*[JR] Was anyone in your family musical?*

**[JT]** No, nobody.

*[JR] So how did you start playing?*

**[JT]** My brother bought me a saxophone; an alto for my 14th birthday.

*[JR] Did he play at the time?*

**[JT]** He played the trumpet, but not very well. I had a few lessons, but unfortunately after about six months I could play better than the teacher. So that was about the extent of my musical education at that time.

## Interview with Saxophonist Joe Temperley

*[JR] And who was your teacher?*

**[JT]** He was just a local guy, you know? He was also a coal miner and he played in little local dance bands, which I gravitated to after a couple of years. I started playing in these little dance bands around the area. Around there, you know they had these little places called miners institutes where everybody used to congregate, and they had meetings, and socials, and weddings and galas—all kinds of things. They had one in practically every town in the area. So that's what I was doing.

There used to be a musical paper called "The Melody Maker" in London and they had a dance band competition, which was nation-wide, and they divided the country into different sections. So we went in for this dance band competition in our area and of course we didn't win. We weren't really good enough to even come anywhere close to that, but a few weeks later, the band that won was from Glasgow. Now Glasgow is a big city as far as I was concerned. So the band that won, the bandleader sent a letter to the bandleader that I was associated with and asked if I would be willing to come through and rehearse with their band and go to the finals in Manchester. Now that was a big deal! That was a really auspicious occasion for all the finalist bands that met in Manchester. So I used to go to Glasgow every Sunday to rehearse with this band. I guess I did it probably for three or four months. Finally, I went to Manchester with this band and we played a couple of Glenn Miller tunes. Of course, we didn't come anywhere either. The band that won prob-

ably came from London or that area, because they were much more proficient. But anyway, through done doing that, I got a job in a nightclub in Glasgow, called the Piccadilly Club, which was on Sauchiehall Street. So, I was sort of more or less on my way, [laughs], so to speak. I maybe worked there for 18 months or 2 years, or something like that. I met this really fine trumpet player who'd worked in London. He worked in London for a long time and he had come back to Scotland, you know he wanted to sort of settle down and he came back to Scotland. He took me sort of under his wing; his name was Jimmy Morgan and he was a beautiful trumpet player. He took me under his wing and taught me a lot of stuff. I started studying with a saxophone player in Glasgow called Bobby Thompson who had a big reputation at that time. So that was really the extent of Glasgow. I used to make 10 pounds a week but I used to make 15 pounds a week playing Snooker...

[JR] *Playing what?*

[JT] *Playing Snooker.*

[JR] *What's that?*

[JT] Snooker, it's like a form of pool only you play with 15 red balls and a series of colored balls. Like a yellow ball and a green and brown and blue and pink and black. And I was pretty good at that. I used to make more money doing that than I did playing the saxophone in this nightclub.

But anyway, the next thing that happened was there was a band from Scotland and the band leader's name was Tommy Sampson and he had this big band. Big bands used to come up to Glasgow to play at a place called "Green's Playhouse," and I did an audition there with Tommy Sampson and through doing the audition, I got a job with Tommy Sampson and went back to London with him. So then I was in London. This must have been probably around the mid 50s or somewhere around there. Then I started looking at London, by then I was based in London, and there were many more opportunities in London to associate with different people. Up to then I had tried to play somewhat "jazz" but mostly I was playing dance music, and making a living, things like that.

I played with Tommy Sampson for a while and then after that I went with this clarinet player; his name was Harry Parry and he had a radio rhythm club sextet and he was pretty famous. He had clarinet, trumpet, and saxophone, and a rhythm section, and a singer. So I started doing that and did that for a couple of years and then I went with this famous dance band, Joe Loss, who was probably the most famous dance band leader in the country at that time. But at that time, we used to play "In the Mood" three or four times a night and [laughs] "Woodchopper's Ball" and things like that. He was a real businessman. I mean, he wasn't interested in musicians or musicality or anything like that. It was business to him. If we played in a dance hall that held 2,000 people and only 1,600 people showed up, well then he considered that lost money. You know, that was the kind of mentality.

From there I was making progress, and I went to a band called Jack Parnell, and Jack Parnell had a really hot band then. The place I took was Ronnie Scott's.

Ronnie Scott left to go out on his own and I took his place, so I was playing tenor that time. So that's how I came to be with Jack Parnell's band. I stayed there probably two or three years and then I started free-lancing around London and stuff and finally ended up playing with Humphrey Lyttelton. There was a bandleader called Humphrey Lyttelton. He had a sort of jazz band; we played mainstream jazz. Buck Clayton, sort of Basie, sort of stuff, Ellington – a lot of Ellington stuff – and we used to do tours with Buck Clayton and Jimmy Rushing and Big Joe Turner and people like that. I stayed there until I came to the states. I stayed with Humphrey probably for about 8-9 years, and then I came to New York.

I had previously been to New York in 1959 to do a tour; a big tour with this British band. On this tour was the Thelonious Monk quartet, George Shearing with a brass section, Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh with Lenny Tristano, the Cannonball Adderley sextet, and Anita O'Day. It was all one, big package. That was a good introduction to what was happening in New York. Then we were there in New York for this tour for best part of the month and spent some time in there. I was going down to the Five Spot to hear Benny Golson and Curtis Fuller – they were working at the Five Spot at that time. So that was my introduction to New York. I went back to England but then I thought "I'll come back to New York at a later time." So I went back to England in 1959 and came back to New York in 1965.

[JR] *Before that, how much jazz from America had you heard?*

[JT] Well, there was a union ban that banned American musicians from coming in to the country. But that was all changed when the Beatles and the Rolling Stones became world famous and they were coming to America. That opened the floodgates for people to come to England. So we got the best of it: they got the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, but we got Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Al and Zoot, Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster and people like that. So that opened up the jazz world, so to speak, at that time.

[JR] *When you were first starting, who were your favorite musicians to listen to or who were your early influences?*

[JT] The first record I ever heard was Cab Calloway's band and on one side was Hilton Jefferson, and on the other side was Chu Berry playing "Willow Weep For Me." I can't remember the name of the Hilton Jefferson [sings]. The big record over there was "Sing, Sing, Sing," you know, by Benny Goodman. We had a sort of jazz club, and we used to meet and play "Sing, Sing, Sing" [laughs]. And that brought me all the way to New York.

[JR] *And when exactly did you move to New York?*

[JT] I came to New York on the 16th of December in 1965. I remember walking down the street with Gene Quill and he said, "Why did you come here? There's nothing down here." And you know, there were musicians all over the place. Every hotel had a band and there were like four or five television shows in New York. I mean a whole lot of things going on, compared to today. Now you're quite entitled to say nowadays "There's nothing happening in New York,"



but then to me there was a whole lot of stuff happening in New York. But, I had to wait six months to be in a Union so I went to work in a department store: in Korvette's on 5th Avenue. I worked there for maybe the best part of six months, and then Jake Hanna and Nat Pierce got me on Woody's band, and that's how I started. In the saxophone section was Joe Romano, Sal Nistico, Carmen Leggio and myself. So that was a real eye-opener, especially to hear Sal Nistico. What a great player!

I stayed with Woody's band a couple of years, but it was very grueling. There used to be some awful bus journeys. It was a hard life, you know: 10-hour bus ride and you'd get to the job 20 minutes before you had to hit, then change your clothes in the toilet downstairs and play all night. And then, maybe sleep that night and then the next night you would hit and run; but you play the gig. You sleep all night and travel all day to the gig, and play the gig – this is the second night – play the gig and then travel all night to save a night's rent. Those were the days. That happened all the time. After I had enough of that touring and stuff, I just couldn't do it anymore. I came back to New York and by that time I was semi-established and I started working around New York and started subbing a lot for Pepper [Adams]. I used to sub for Pepper quite a lot. Then Pepper's mother got very sick and he went back to Detroit. So I played with Thad and Mel for three and a half years. All the time Pepper was back in Detroit, I was his permanent sub. This was in the late 60s, early 70s. So that was a real eye-opener and a wonderful experience. And you know, to me, that's one of the greatest bands of all time.

[JR] Absolutely.

[JT] I would like to play with that band now! I wasn't ready for it then, but I would like to play with them band now.

[JR] Yeah.

[JT] Of course, it's a whole different band now. But that was a wonderful band; there were some great players in that band.

[JR] Who in particular really stood out to you?

[JT] Well the saxophone section was Jerome Richardson, Jerry Dodgion, Joe Farrell, and Eddie Daniels, so that was really something. Eddie Daniels used to amaze me because we used to play a thing called "Fingers" which was at breakneck speed. And one night, Eddie would play it on the piccolo and the next night he played it on the flute and the next night he played it on the tenor and then he played on the clarinet. I'm

like, "My god. What am I doing here?!"

[JR] Yeah. [laughs] And when you first got to New York, did you ever get any sort of weird vibe "because you were from Scotland" or "because you didn't fit the mold," whatever that was?

[JT] No, no, I never got anything like that. I got weirder vibes when I went back to Scotland. They used to call me Joe the Yank.

[JR] Really?

[JT] Yeah, but you know I never experienced any one like that.

[JR] That's good.

[JT] It was a little tricky with Woody at one time. Around the time that Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated and there was a lot of bitterness and it was terrible – it was really a sad time. We just lost – and then a little while later Robert Kennedy was assassinated. The intriguing thing about Sal was that he was completely obsessed with who shot President Kennedy. He spent his whole life trying to figure it out. But that was a bad time. Riots in Newark, and a bad feeling. But happily, we've sort of come through all that.

[JR] At one point you mentioned that you studied with Joe Allard?

[JT] Yeah.

[JR] And when was that?

[JT] That was around that time, in the late 60s.

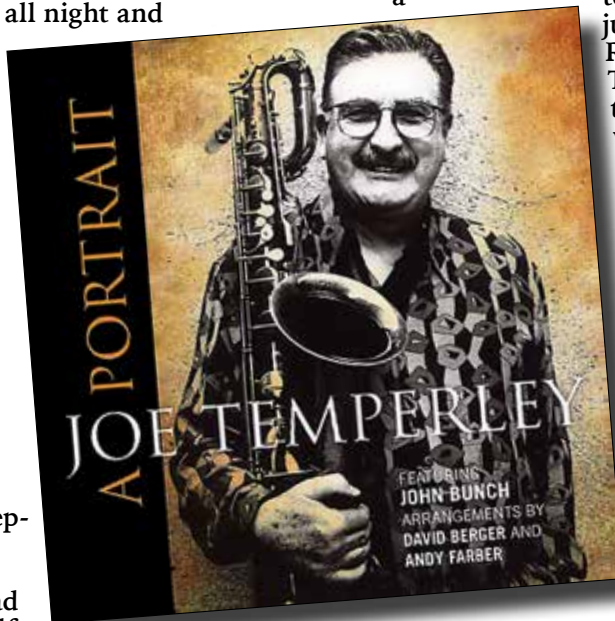
[JR] And what was that like?

[JT] That was a real great experience. I studied also with Harold Benett [flautist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra], but I was never able to make any connection with the flute; it didn't appeal to me at all. You know, I sounded like a police whistle and I couldn't really associate myself with the flute.

[JR] Sure.

[JT] But Joe Allard, I learned a lot of things from Joe, especially about the mechanics of playing; the mechanics on how to make reeds work and how to deal with mouthpieces and all that kind of thing. I've played the same mouthpiece forever. I've played a mouthpiece on my bass clarinet – I've played it for 40 years, the same mouthpiece. I'm always terrified I'm going to bite through it. I tried all kinds of other mouthpieces but I can't get the timbre of this particular one. I got it from a guy called Bob Pierson who was on Woody's band. He loaned it to me and when I got it, I played it for a little while and I said to him, "you know, I'm gonna keep this." He didn't have a bass clarinet. So I said, "any time you need a bass clarinet, you can borrow mine, but I'm borrowing your mouthpiece," and I've had it since then. Bob died about four or five years ago in Las Vegas, so I guess I could keep it now.

Anyway, after Thad and Mel, by that time I was



busy working in New York; I'm doing all kinds of different things. I played in a lot of jazz clubs, and I've played a lot of big bands. At that time, everybody had a big band. Clark Terry had a band, Duke Pearson had a band, Joe Henderson had a band, Frank Foster had a band. There were all these people – it was all the same people who worked with all these different bandleaders, you know?

[JR] Right.

[JT] Everybody was working in New York. I remember we were working at the Half Note with Joe Henderson and we played for the door. And I think we played Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for \$8 each or something like that.

[JR] Huh.

[JT] But nobody cared, because everybody was working all the time.

[JR] Right.

[JT] That was a great experience.

[JR] What were the more lucrative gigs back then?

[JT] Oh, well, doing things like telethons and those kind of gigs.

[JR] Uh-huh.

[JT] Those gigs paid well—I remember one time I made a record with John Lennon and it was like 1968 or something and we recorded the whole day and we made \$1700 and that was a lot of money then.

[JR] Yeah.

[JT] And the record was terrible. You know, we had no music; we were just making it up, and double tracking: like we'd play and then play again on the same track. I couldn't understand any of it, you know, but the fact was the money was nice.

[JR] [laughs] It allowed you to play \$8 gigs with Joe Henderson.

[JT] That's right, yeah, and at that time I was working at the Rainbow Room. I worked there a lot, especially with Joe Williams. That was nice, with Norman Simmons, Lisle Atkinson, and Ted Dunbar. I used to look forward to that. We used to do a lot of things. The great thing about Joe was he never told you what he was going to sing. But New York was vibrant then. You could go and hear Al and Zoot; go one night and Phil would be sitting in with them and another night Richie Kamuca would be sitting in with them. You could go hear John Coltrane and sit all night, buy a bottle of beer, two bottles of beer, and sit all night and listen to the music. Not like now, you gotta pay a deposit to get in the door.

[JR] Heh.

[JT] Yeah.

[JR] So how did it come about that you toured and recorded

with Duke Ellington in 1974?

[JT] Well in 1974, first of all, Ellington died in April. And then Harry [Carney] died in November. Harry was a good friend, I knew him well.

[JR] How did you first meet him?

[JT] I met him in England. When the band came to England, they did about 26 concerts and we probably saw 22 or 23 of them. We just got in the car and drove around all over the country. Wherever they went, we followed them. I got to know Harry pretty well and when Harry died, John Gensel was the pastor at the Lutheran church on 54th Street. He was the "shepherd of the night flock," that's what Ellington used to call him. He asked me if I wanted to play at Harry's funeral, so I played "Sophisticated Lady," and then that's how I came to be in the band. Mercer [Ellington] was sitting there and he offered me the job and I started

working with the Ellington band. But it wasn't the same; it wasn't the same Ellington band, but it was still a pretty good band. It just didn't sound like Duke Ellington.

[JR] And what year was this that Ellington came to England when you saw him?

[JT] 1958. We spent a lot of time with the band there, too.

[JR] Was that the same trip where he met the Queen?

[JT] Yeah. That was in Leeds. There was a big festival at Leeds, and I was there with Humphrey Lyttelton and the Ellington band was there. We went

out to eat one night and I was sitting there amazed by the way some of the guys ate there. Quentin Jackson ordered five pork chops with five eggs on top [laughs].

[JR] Woah!

[JT] [Laughs] And Harold Ashby, he ate a whole steak dinner and then he had a fish dinner and then he had something else. But I guess, you know, probably traveling all day and you don't get a chance to eat.

[JR] Sure.

[JT] They make up for it after the gig [laughs].

[JR] Right.

[JT] I was there off and on for a couple of years. I worked off and on with the band but I didn't stay because I didn't want to be touring all that much. I went to Japan with them a couple times, and I went to Europe a couple times. And then they got the Broadway show, "Sophisticated Ladies." I did that for two years. Previous to that I played "Brigadoon" for probably 10 or 11 months. That was a beautiful job because that had a woodwind sextet and it was really great going to work and playing in that context every night.





[JR] *What instruments were in your book?*

[JT] I played bass saxophone, bass clarinet, and a little flute and clarinet, but mostly bass clarinet and doubling with the bassoon. The bassoonist was a man called Sandy Sharoff who was a wonderful player and a great friend of mine. When he did “West Side Story,” Bernstein made a special solo for him. He was a great player. Al Regni was there too, and Al was a really great player too. There were a couple of people from the American Symphony; there was the clarinet player, and the oboe and English horn player. It really was a thrill to play in that context every night.

[JR] *One of my favorites songs is from that show, “Heather on the Hill.”*

[JT] “Heather on the Hill,” yeah. My hometown in Scotland, I call that “Brigadoon” because ever since I was a kid, it’s never changed. It’s always looked the same to this very day...

So we did “Sophisticated Ladies” for almost two years. The band played on stage, and that was a lot of fun.

[JR] *What years were those?*

[JT] That was 1980.

[JR] *Okay.*

[JT] Gregory Hines was in the show and Phyllis Hyman and Judith Jamison. It was great. There was a wonderful singer whose name was Patricia Baskerville. She was a wonderful singer. That was enjoyable too, but I got tired of the routine of working on Broadway. You know, once you go there and sit down and start playing it’s OK but just the thought of it. [Laughs] Dragging yourself in there every night.

[JR] *Huh.*

[JT] And after that came Wynton [Marsalis]. That’s when I met Wynton, around that time.

[JR] *And how did you meet him?*

[JT] About two or three years later, after “Sophisticated Lady,” I started playing with Wynton. When the Lincoln Center Band was first put together, it was more or less to play Ellington music. So there were a lot of Ellington people there, you know. The first saxophone section was Frank Wess, Norris Turney, Joe Henderson, Jimmy Hamilton, and me. That was the first saxophone section. After Joe Henderson left, Todd Williams came in. He worked for a while with us, Todd. He’s a great player, too. And then gradually, Wynton sort of brought his septet: Victor Goines, Eric Reed, Herlin Riley... Veal?

[JR] *Reginald Veal.*

[JT] Reginald Veal. Yeah, and Wess Anderson. Gradually those people came into the band. We started playing with the band in ’87 or something like that, and in 1990 we became a constituency and we started from there. We started touring and working all the time and I’ve been there ever since.

[JR] *So I guess you like it.*

[JT] I do, yeah. I love working for Wynton, I love Wynton dearly because he’s a wonderful man. I have a

lot of respect for him.

[JR] *What have been some of the highlights of your experiences working with that band?*

[JT] Oh well you know, different aspects of touring. Like going to China, and going to Korea, going to Australia, Brazil, and Russia, all over Europe. There’s talk of us going to Cuba.

[JR] *Really?*

[JT] They’ve been talking like that for a while so I don’t know, but I would like to see it happen one of these days. But we’ve been everywhere. Wynton also writes a lot of orchestral things so we get a chance to play with symphony orchestras.

[JR] *Right.*

[JT] We played with the Chicago Symphony, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic; we recorded with the LA Philharmonic; we played with the Concertgebouw Orchestra; we played with Berlin Philharmonic. In fact, we’re going to Berlin to play with the Philharmonic next June, to spend 10 days with them. So Wynton wrote a piece called “All Rise,” which consisted of the band plus the symphony orchestra plus the Morgan State Choir. It was a huge undertaking, so I would imagine he’s in the process of writing something like that for Berlin.

[JR] *How do all these orchestras compare?*

[JT] Well I would say at that level of orchestra, they’re all pretty good orchestras; they’re wonderful orchestras. I’ve met some great players in those orchestras; became friendly with a lot of different people. One time in Chicago, I heard a trumpet player with the most beautiful sound. I said to somebody, “Who’s that?” and he said, “Oh that’s so-and-so and he’s 90 years old.” [Editor’s note: most likely this was Adolph “Bud” Herseth.]

[JR] *Wow.*

[JT] And he was one of the principal trumpet players for the Chicago Symphony at that time.

[JR] *Right.*

[JT] He had the most wonderful sound. And here I am, this present day. I found a wonderful career in America, much more than I ever dreamed of when I left to come here.

[JR] *Could you tell me about the Fife Youth Jazz Orchestra and what that is?*

[JT] Well that came about when I met this school-teacher named Richard Michaels and he was talking about this Fife Youth Orchestra. I used to spend a lot of time going back to Scotland at the time.

[JR] *What time was that?*

[JT] That was around the late 1970s and 1980s. And we finally got together and we started off with 11 kids. We had a seminar, a summer school with 11 kids, and we built it up in the span of oh, five, six, seven years, something like that. It became 70 kids. That’s like three full-scale orchestras; big bands. There were little kids, 8, 10, 11 years old, and then there were

intermediate kids between 11 and 15, and then the senior kids. It is still thriving and still doing well. But unfortunately I don't have the time to get there, too much. Every time I say I'm going to go there something comes up and I can't go. Maybe this year. I think this year we'll have some time off in the summer.

Last year we [Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra] went to 7 different countries in July. You know, it's not fun anymore. Trying to deal with airports and crowds... Getting instruments on planes and getting luggage on planes. And people have computers nowadays. People travel with computers, and they have all kinds of keyboards and that all stuff. Touring is a lot different now than it was.

[JR] *How many weeks a year is the band out on the road?*

[JT] I would say last year we were probably out about 14 to 16 weeks, something like that. Three different tours. A tour usually lasts about three to four weeks. Like in March, we're going to do a tour and it's about three and a half weeks. And in June we're away the whole of June. We have 10 days in Berlin and then a week in London at the Barbican. That takes us up to the 21st of June, and the rest of June is going to be spent doing some one-nighters in the rest of the UK until the 30th. Then we come back to the States. Then I think we're off for all of July and August as far as I know, which I'm looking forward to.

[JR] *Yeah, I'll bet.*

[JT] Maybe I'll get a chance to go to Scotland.

[JR] *How often do you make it back there?*

[JT] Well I was there in August; I went to the Edinburgh Jazz Festival and spent about a week in Edinburgh, which is a beautiful town.

[JR] *Yeah.*

[JT] My hometown was probably about 20 miles from Edinburgh, over the other side of the Firth of Forth. So hopefully... You know, I like to go back there. It's the only time I ever get a chance to play golf. It's too hard to play golf around New York.

[JR] *I'll bet.*

[JT] I gave it up. You know, getting up at 5 o'clock in the morning and driving for an hour and a half and then waiting for maybe an hour or an hour and 15 minutes. And then it takes between five and six hours to play because it's so small. It's not fun. In Scotland, you play golf for three and a half hours and it's over. You walk up to the course, head straight out. Three and a half hours, walking.

[JR] *Yeah.*

[JT] I guess right out where you live you can play golf. [Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania]

[JR] *Yeah I think so.*

[JT] *Yeah.*

[JR] *Well having taught for nearly 18 years at Manhattan School of Music and the past number of years at Julliard since their program started, how do you approach teaching? Or what has teaching been in your career?*

[JT] I don't have any hard or fast method. The thing that I like to teach is to teach people how to be themselves and how to get a sound and how to approach music and their musicianship in their own way, and try and deal with that, rather than make them... I mean, I like to play exercise books and play duets and things like that with them, too, but I really try to encourage people to figure out how to make a living in the music business, because not everybody can be a jazz star. That's not possible.

[JR] *Right.*

[JT] Not everybody. I mean there are a few special people that can do that and God bless them and good luck to them, but not everybody can do that. So the thing is to try to encourage people to make a living as a musician. Not to go into some obscure club and line up to play 85 choruses of blues. First of all, encourage them to play all the saxophones. Then encourage them to play the clarinet, which is very important. And a lot of people don't want to do that, you know? A lot of people say, "Well I'm an alto player." No, you're a saxophone player. You should be able to play any saxophone. And also, you have to play the clarinet and the flute if you want to have a family and a house and a car. So that's my approach to teaching.

[JR] *And from your perspective of these schools, do you think there's anything missing from jazz education? Or what would you change about the overall approach that you see?*

[JT] The only thing I see – the only fault I find is the obsession with John Coltrane. I mean I love John Coltrane. I've always loved John Coltrane, but there's a whole lot of other saxophone players who are never mentioned as far as I can see in these schools. Like nobody talks about the way that Zoot can play a melody and sing a song, you know, or Al Cohn's approach to playing and Stan Getz and Phil Woods, and different people like that are never brought up at all. I try to encourage my students to listen to people like Bud Freeman, and when I tell people that Bud Freeman had a big influence on Lester Young, they don't believe it, but he did. Bud Freeman and, who was the other one, that C melody saxophone player?

[JR] *Frankie Trumbauer?*

[JT] Frankie Trumbauer. They had a big influence on Lester Young.

[JR] *Yeah.*

[JT] And what a wonderful saxophone player Jimmy Dorsey was.

[JR] *Yeah.*

[JT] And a wonderful clarinet player, you know? I get my students to make transcriptions of things like that. Don Bias to me is another important saxophone player. Lucky Thompson too. You know there are a whole lot of people. But the emphasis is all the time on John Coltrane; it's not Coltrane's fault, of course. I like Al Cohn's description of "Giant Steps." "Do you play "Giant Steps?" He said, "Yes, but I play my own changes."

[JR] [laughs] *That's great.*



[JT] The thing about listening to music is, listening to the difference between Art Tatum and Vladimir Horowitz, you know, things like that.

[JR] Yeah.

[JT] Teddy Wilson. You know, people forget about that. I don't enjoy going to jazz clubs because to me, nowadays, everything is too loud, especially the bass or the drums. Way too loud!

[JR] Why do you think that happened?

[JT] I guess people tried to play like Elvin.

[JR] Huh. Interesting.

[JT] Maybe that's what it is, I don't know. Amplifiers too, of course. Bass players turn up their amplifier, and now the bass player is louder than the whole band.

[JR] [laughs] Are there any people today that you particularly like or that you think are playing music that you like better?

[JT] Uh, yeah! I have to think about that. I don't know. In days gone by, there were so many people to go and listen to, you know?

[JR] Mm-hmm

[JT] But you can't do that anymore. I don't want to go to a club and hear somebody's "project." I don't want to hear a band trying to play like Cannonball.

[JR] Right.

[JT] I don't want that. Or, the Beatles Project, you know, stuff like that. What I want to hear at the club is somebody playing like themselves.

[JR] Sure.

[JT] That's hard to find nowadays.

[JR] You've released some CDs over the past few years haven't you?

[JT] Yeah.

[JR] "Concerto for Joe" and "Double Duke" and...

[JT] The last one I did was Sinatra. I enjoyed the Sinatra album.

[JR] Oh right.

[JT] Yeah.

[JR] Do you have any projects coming up that you're working on?

[JT] I'm thinking about recording again in May. I just recorded one track for a Japanese project. I've been playing this tune called "A Single Pedal of a Rose" on bass clarinet for quite some time now.

[JR] Right. In "The Queen's Suite."

[JT] Yeah. In fact, the lady heard me play at Lincoln Center. She took me and my wife; she flew us first class to Paris and put us up for five days and I played that one tune at a wedding.

[JR] Hmm.

[JT] With Dan Nimmer, the piano player in the band. Just to go over there for that one tune. It was a wonderful experience [laughs].

[JR] That's great.

[JT] Well I've played it at people's funerals; I've played at people's weddings. It's a great piece. And I love playing the bass clarinet.

[JR] Yeah, the piece seems like it's written for the bass clarinet.

[JT] Absolutely!

[JR] It's got that low D-flat in it.

[JT] I first heard it when Ben Webster played it with Hank Jones.

[JR] Hmm.

[JT] Well, the first time I've heard it was in the "Queen's Suite," with Ellington as a piano solo. But then, I've got this record of Ben Webster, and all of a sudden, I heard him playing the "The Queen's Suite," playing "A Single Pedal." I'm really a big fan of Duke Ellington, I guess; Billy Strayhorn too. I just love that music.

[JR] What's your favorite recording by the band?

[JT] My favorite Ellington record is "And His Mother Called Him Bill."

[JR] Yeah. All the Billy Strayhorn tunes.

[JT] Yeah. But the band is so good. And the record that Dizzy plays a solo on, uh, on U.M.M.G. [Upper Manhattan Medical Group, from the album *Jazz Party*.]

[JR] Oh right, right.

[JT] With all of the percussion instruments. That's a great record too, because of Dizzy. That solo he plays is so—not many people can play a really authentic solo on that tune.

[JR] Yeah.

[JT] That's a great piece. But that band was funny, you know, when they came to England. They did two shows a night, and I used to go to the first show, and there would be about six people on the bandstand. There'd be Jimmy Hamilton, Harry Carney, Russel Procope, and maybe Lawrence Brown and Cat Anderson and the rhythm section. And Harry Carney would beat off, "Take the A-Train," and they'd play "Take the A-Train" and make it sound exactly the same.

[JR] Even with all those people missing.

[JT] [laughs] With everybody missing, it still sounded the same, and then people used to drift in. They'd play a couple of tunes and then somebody would come on, and then another couple of people would come on, and always the tune before intermission, Johnny Hodges would walk out. And then Paul [Gonsalves] wouldn't appear for the second half. But he would appear, sit down, and go to sleep.

I think we should have a little toot on the soprano now.

[JR] I think that sounds good. Well, thank you so much for sharing all of this.

[JT] Oh, my pleasure. I can't believe I actually did all that stuff, when I think about it. ☺

# David Liebman - Straight Talk



Matt Vashlishan

## Understanding the Common Qualities that Artists Possess

### *Part 1 of 2*

Following is a transcription of a talk that I gave to a class of students at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania for the conclusion of a course titled “Masters of Jazz.” For 12 sessions, guest musicians spoke about their lives to the students. The textbook for the course was my “Self Portrait of A Jazz Artist” (Advance Music). The topic for the talk was to describe and understand the common qualities that these artists possess which define success in jazz and in life.

I wrote down a few of what I would describe as common qualities that you saw in these speakers, in various intensities, that you will find in the real world no matter what you do, no matter what field you encounter. I think there are some general lessons here that you can observe and then there are some very unique things that we only see so with such intensity in the jazz field.

One of the things I really admire about the musicians, maybe the main thing is that the musicians and people involved in jazz are in it for the music and possess a certain kind of --- I'm going to say it slang-wise --- a certain kind of down-home,

informal quality...straight-forward vibe basically, just plain folks. These are the kind of people you can talk to anywhere. This is not to disparage any other field or any other kind of music, but the idea of the prima donna, the idea of the “great artist” sitting in an ivory tower aloof and away from the real world for the most part really doesn't exist among jazz musicians. It's just not in their “M.O.” I think that is something we really value. I'm not saying that they're not sometimes quite introspective and like their privacy and so forth, but they're the kind of people who don't hold airs or come on strong with an attitude. To me, that's a very endearing quality in common with all the jazz musicians I've met. And by the way, this is true all over the world regardless of language. That's a nice thing to see and something that I feel anyone would prefer to encounter in the real world but of course that isn't always going to be the case. This is definitely something in common with the artists you have seen here.

Another thing that you might have noticed, again depending on what each of the people spoke specifically about, meaning what the

emphasis of their discussion with you was, is how the word “integrity” enters into the life of these artists. Integrity is a word that gets bandied around a lot and means different things to different people. I think for the most part what you saw are people who are so true and connected to what they do that it would be very difficult to imagine them moving from that place. Their ways of achieving what they want are going to be, for the most part, honest, moral and ethical. And that is I would say, a very common trait among jazz musicians. They are very straight, honest people in that respect with no game-playing. These are not the kind of people that are going to take the money and run. For the most part there is a real honesty about intentions and personal dealings.

What is it that makes these common traits among people who come from all different experiences? I always go back to the fact that the music is the source of the truths and our principles. In other words, what we heard, and you heard everybody talk about their influences --- who inspired them, how they started, what gave them the idea to even



play --- what you find in the music is usually something much higher and much more spiritual, much more balanced than your life or the life you see around you. The music is perfect, after that it's what we bring to the music. When you listen to those who inspired you, you are turned on by the beauty, the logic, all the great intellect and the great technique. That beauty that comes through the music I have always felt showed me a better way to be as a person. In other words, if I had a doubt about how to be, I would listen to Coltrane who would straighten me out, especially when I was in that period of my life searching for how to be which was my early 20s for the most part. In other words, when questions arose about which way I should go, the kind of things that one confronts in life, when I would listen to Coltrane, it would make me say: "Well there's no question about which way I have to follow." So there's something about the music that gives a sense of integrity and direction to those who love and devote themselves to it. This is a definite common trait.

More to the practical world. I read a book years ago called "The Lives of the Great Composers." It was by a very famous critic from the New York Times, Harold Schoenberg, a classical music critic, very respected and so forth. It was biographies of all the guys from, you know, Mozart right on through the modern ones. I remember my impression of the book was how different everybody was in the way they organized music. Some were completely organized, I forget, it was one of the H's - Handel or Haydn, one of those guys was so organized; he had everything together, everything was copied, parts were together, and he would hand it to the King or whomever and that would be it. One of the other dudes, Debussy or somebody, was up at 5 in the morning the night before it was due, copying the parts. I'm talking all geniuses, all great, all different paths to the same thing. A quality you see among all these musicians, a quality you can glean from all of these speakers is some sense of organization. Now, if you were to compare the organization of Speaker A with the organization of Speaker B and go to their studio, you'd see one guy's studio where

there are saxophones in the corner on the floor, reeds, music paper, pencils strewn all about, and go to some other studio and everything is in boxes and neatly stacked. This would reflect an obvious difference in the style. But I think, beyond the style, beyond the way one does it, for somebody to be able to play and be involved in this music, you have had to be organized somewhere, somehow. Because there's no way that you could amass this kind of information, to be able to spit it out in a spontaneous way in such rapidity that we do in jazz without being organized in some fashion. I mean like a computer. The boxes in the brain are divided up into little segments which work. They're different for everybody but they are very, very clear. There's no way that they would get to this kind of level if they weren't like that.

Another thing that's in common, that goes along with the organization principle, is the ability to project, to think ahead, to imagine. It's thinking about a situation, about what will it be like, what is happening tomorrow, what will the music sound like if I do this, where will the music be played, etc. In other words, what we spend a lot of our time doing is preparing for the next event, whether it's a gig, or writing for a recording, or traveling, or organizing a tour. These are very practical things. Or maybe I am preparing to learn something so that possibly in a year or two I'm very good at it. In other words I'll learn this piece and then I'll get better through the discipline I've learned by studying. A musician has to be able to imagine what things are going to be like, to project and not be afraid of the future, or be scared about how it will sound...just go out on a limb. In a way, that's very tied to the spontaneous nature of what we do, that we're playing on the spot, in the moment and we're not sure how it's going to work out. But even more than that, even away from the instrument, it is the ability to really look ahead and say "What would happen if I did this? And if I do this, what would the results be?" That's a certain kind of ability. I don't know if that comes through the music or that comes because of the music, but I think that is in common to a lot of jazz musicians

-- the ability to project ahead into the future.

Obviously a big thing, and this you probably got very clearly from all the speakers as they spoke about their past and their lives and how they developed is the ability to learn from experience. How to take a kernel of information and let that be a lesson to do something better the next time. Now we do it every minute with the music. If we see a chord change, or we see a new pattern, or we see something musically that is thrown in front of us that is unusual, the way we handle that is a preparation for the next time that comes up. We may not realize it but of course we're honing our abilities... we're disciplining ourselves every time we see that particular problem. One might say: "Well you know what, I saw this chord progression which was very difficult in this tune that I did on a recording date. I got through it but it was a bitch to play. I'm taking it home, I'm going to practice it and write 20 extra exercises on it to make a study out of it." Well, that's quite organized and very, very disciplined. Another person might just be more spontaneous about it, in the sense of saying: "Well you know that thing I saw yesterday in the music was quite challenging and I will remember that and lodge it in that part of the brain that I can use for experience." That's very important...to learn from experience. We do it with the music, which is no different from anybody in any other part of life who learns from experience.

But that's what's unusual about us. What's different from other people in this respect is that the music made us become this way. That's how I feel about it. It wasn't like we came on to the planet with these things. We came in as anybody else, equipped with whatever our past is and whatever our upbringing was. But when we got to the music, usually at a very impressionable age, it told us these things without even spelling it out. So they're all things we got from music and then of course those that are smart enough or that are aware will take these things and develop them further. ☺

*To be continued . . . next issue.*

# Readers, please take **NOTE**

## **COTA Camp Jazz**

July 21-27, 2014 Founded in 2007 by Phil Woods, the camp focuses on small group improvisation, inspiration and motivation for musicians ages 13 and up. Students experience level specific study of harmony, ear training, listening, history and more. The curriculum also includes the world-renowned Deer Head Inn, Red Rock Recording Studio sessions and a family gazebo concert.

Faculty: Rick Chamberlain, Dr. Matt Vashlishan, Evan Gregor, Bobby Avey, Sue Terry, Dr. Sherrie Maricle, Spencer Reed, Jay Rattman with Master Classes with Phil Woods, Dave Liebman, Bob Dorough and more...

[www.campjazz.org](http://www.campjazz.org)

## **The 10th Annual Scranton Jazz Festival**

August 1-3, 2014 This summer The Scranton Jazz Festival will celebrate its 10th year at the historic Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel and various downtown Scranton venues. Attracting international, national, and regional jazz/blues and world beat artists, the SJF has proven to be a "don't miss" summer musical event!

[www.scrantonjazzfestival.org](http://www.scrantonjazzfestival.org)

## **The Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts (COTA) Festival**

September 5-7, 2014 Founded in 1978 by NEA Jazz Master Phil Woods, trombonist Rick Chamberlain and the late Ed Joubert primarily to share jazz and it's relationship to all art forms with neighbors, COTA has become a reunion of old friends both on the stage and off. The festival features many local jazz and visual artists that have made the Poconos their home. This year the festival will feature: The Absolut Trio, Evan Gregor and Matt Vashlishan Quartet with Vic Juris and Jeff Hirschfield, Najwa Parkins and the

After Hours Quartet, Walt Bibinger, Bob Dorough, Diva, La Cuchina, the COTA Cats, Co-Op Bop, Dennis Jeter, and many more. Come celebrate the festival in its 37th year, the weekend after Labor Day.

[www.cotajazz.org](http://www.cotajazz.org)

## **ZOOT Fest 2014**

November 9, 2014 noon-6 p.m. Zoot Fest is a major annual fundraising event to benefit the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection and its important outreach initiatives. A portion of ticket proceeds will also benefit COTA Camp Jazz via a donation to the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts Fund for Young Musicians. This year Zoot Fest will be held in ESU's new Innovation Center conveniently located off Interstate 80 at the Marshalls Creek exit.

[www.jazzatesu.com](http://www.jazzatesu.com)

## **Pennsylvania Jazz Collective:**

*Improving the future through arts education.*

The Pennsylvania Jazz Collective is a Lehigh Valley Pennsylvania 501 (c) 3 non-profit, non-stock company, organized exclusively for educational and charitable purposes, more specifically to foster jazz appreciation through a regular series of educational initiatives, public performances, and special programs.

*"Pa Jazz focuses on the musical communication that is at the core of jazz, which is an expression of individuality and the spontaneous artistic language spoken within the context of a democratic framework. We are cognizant that jazz performers and students draw upon multiple educational and social disciplines to simultaneously interact in a manner that uniquely ties together many educational disciplines and learning domains."*

[www.pajazzcollective.org](http://www.pajazzcollective.org)

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# LEGENDS LIVE ON

## But not without your support

Representing all forms of jazz from all eras, the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection was founded and named in honor of the award-winning Al Cohn — legendary saxophonist, arranger, composer and conductor.

Housed in Kemp Library on the campus of East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, the collection consists of jazz recordings, oral histories, sheet music, photographs, books, videos, original art and memorabilia. The collection also includes outreach projects.

**YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT** of the collection is crucial in helping to promote music education and preserving the iconic jazz history of the Pocono region.

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**Cannonball Adderley**

Photo by and donated by Herb Snitzer.