The NOTE

Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania • Summer 2008

JOHN BUNCH • *LIBRARY ALIVE* CONCERT I • PHIL IN THE GAP • JAZZ AT ESU

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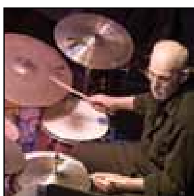

Cover Photo (front): Bill Goodwin, performing with the COTA Festival Orchestra, *Library Alive* Concert I, Sherman Theater, Stroudsburg, PA, April 13, 2008, by Garth Woods, donated by Mr. Woods.

Centerfold Photo:
Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra, performing at Birdland, NYC, 1956, by an unidentified photographer, donated by Al Stewart.

Cover Photo (back):
Lester Young in front of the Five Spot Café, NYC, 1958, by Herb Snitzer, donated by Mr. Snitzer.

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The NOTE is published three times per year by the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, as part of its educational outreach program.

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 of Pennsylvania. 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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David Coulter

Old Folks

by Phil Woods

Why don't the Republicans just shut up and take a pass on the presidential election and admit that for the past eight years they have put America in the toilet. And what a year this one has been so far! Airplanes are flying slower to save fuel. American Airlines is going so far as to charge $15 for your first bag and $25 if you have two. Other airlines will probably follow suit. McCain is considered too old at 72 – that really hurts. Recently, somebody did a survey and discovered that most old folks are happy, well-adjusted and social. However it is not his age that scares me – it is his Bush-like positions.

The housing market is up the spout. Oil is well over $130 a barrel, and a gallon of gas costs $4. And predictions are it will hit $6 before the summer is over. The Dutch pay $10 a gallon but, of course, they get something for it. The Saudis pay $0.45.

The Mountain Laurel Center for the Performing Arts, doomed from the start, finally gave up the ghost and closed. You just can't do art for only $17 million bucks. There is lead in toys, poison in prescription drugs, corn sugar in everything. And rice is no longer the low-priced staple of the world. Did you know that the FDA has not banned a single chemical in 17 years? And Pennsylvania's medical costs are 11 percent higher than that of other states. Otherwise, everything is hunky-dory.

But there is some good news: the United States Court of Appeals has ruled that our paper money is discriminatory. The court rejected an appeal from Treasury (which has fought this case for six years) and eventually, hopefully, we will finally join the 170 countries in the world that already have accessible bills for the visually impaired. Eureka!

On a recent trip the TSA man, seeing me in a wheelchair, asked me what my problem was. I told him that my medical condition was none of his business. Wrong move, Dubois! He got pissed. So I relented and told him I suffered from emphysema. He told me to put my "violin" case on the table and then he proceeded to go through it with a fine-tooth comb. After looking at everything (everything, that is, except the bell where any intelligent terrorist would stash something), he held up a box of reeds and waved them in the air. He said, "You have emphysema and you still smoke?" I sleep much better knowing these trained security specialists are on the job.

I just did a week with the Quintet at the Dizzy's Club in Lincoln Center and it is the hippest club ever – great friendly staff that treats musicians like people. They feed the band and don't make you use a different menu (as do most American clubs and the Blue Notes in Japan. Chicken or fish?). The view is gorgeous from the bandstand; a big picture window overlooks Central Park. Lots of "Moon" songs. Todd Barkham is the knowledgeable manager there and it shows. He used to run the Keystone Corner in San Francisco and knows what is happening. He also got us our third record deal with Venus Records so the Quintet will ride again! Also worth a mention: the Bimhaus jazz club in Amsterdam. The dressing rooms are down one flight but they have an elevator that takes you right to the stage. Elevators are my friend.

According to reporter Ben Stein, the most overlooked victims of the housing crisis are the pets left in homes abandoned by their owners. Shelters and kennels report a large surge in the numbers of these hapless and innocent animals.

I recently signed a deal with Jamey Aebersold for a CD/booklet of my tunes for his Play-A-Long series. I just received this e-mail from Jamey:

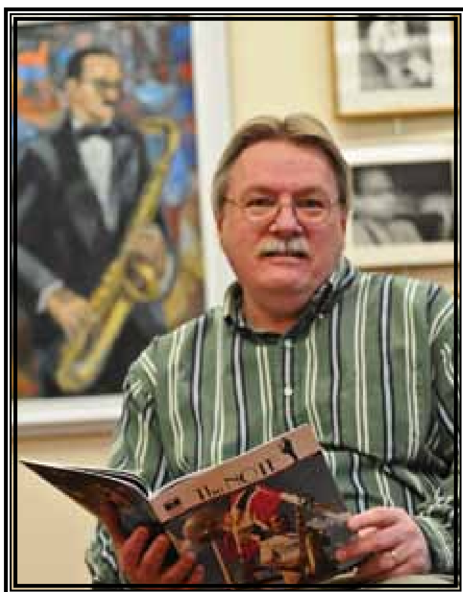
Phil,

About five or six weeks ago, we had your book and CD. When I opened the book, all of the minor chords had zeros instead of dashes and there were other problems. To make a very long story short, we had to recycle and toss all the printing. It was the printer's fault and he's right now finally figured out the computer problem and is reprinting them. The cover looks great but the chords were out to lunch. The CD sounds great. I will send you some as soon as they come in.

Jamey

Continued on Page 30

A Note from the Collection Coordinator



Charles Perry Hebard

The Library Comes Alive!

by Bob Bush

A very significant achievement in the history of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection took place on a blustery spring Sunday afternoon in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. On April 13, a little more than 20 years since the passing of "Mr. Music," the sounds of classic Al Cohn and other big band charts filled the Sherman Theater as Phil Woods and the COTA Festival Orchestra kicked off the *Library Alive* concert series.

For the first time since *Jazz Jubilee 2005: A Salute to Al & Zoot*, the vintage ACMJC music inventory was brought "out of the archive" and played before a rapt and appreciative audience. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this milestone event is that it's just the beginning of what will now be an ongoing series of public performances – a regular ACMJC community outreach to showcase these vintage charts for ESU students and local jazz fans. What better way to honor the legacy of jazz and to keep this important music alive for future audiences.

This project is also special because it represents a collaboration among three Pocono community arts organizations: the ACMJC at East Stroudsburg University, the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts, and the historic Sherman Theater.

Rick Chamberlain, COTA festival co-founder, came up with the *Library Alive* title when I first approached him about co-producing this project. When the idea was just a vague concept – that we should have a regular vehicle to publicly perform the scores and charts preserved in the Collection – Rick was immediately energized and helped to enlist Phil Woods (who didn't need to be coaxed), music "librarian" Jim Daniels, all of the other incredibly talented members of the COTA big band, and its respected musical director, Wolfgang Knittle. He also suggested the Sherman Theater as the preferred venue due to its excellent stage, acoustics, seating, facilities and support staff. Rick was right on all counts!

So here's a big "thank you" from me, on behalf of ESU and the ACMJC, to everyone who made the first *Library Alive* concert an outstanding afternoon of music and a true artistic success. I especially want to thank Phil, Rick, Jim, Wolfgang, and the entire COTA Festival Orchestra; the supportive members of the ACMJC Advisory Team; Rich Berkowitz and the staff and volunteers at the Sherman Theater; and Helen Yanulus at the Pocono Record for her excellent pre-event feature story. And, with deep gratitude, thanks to everyone who attended and the many generous sponsors who made donations to help up launch this series. The event raised funds for the ACMJC and the COTA Fund for Young Musicians for COTA CampJazz (sponsor names are proudly displayed inside this issue along with some of Garth Woods' wonderful photos from the concert).

Now that we've gotten the ball rolling, the ACMJC music inventory will be getting plenty of exposure in the coming months. For starters, Phil Woods and the Festival Orchestra will perform ACMJC music at the close of the Scranton Jazz Festival on Sunday, August 3. Then, the guys will bring the music alive on stage at the 31st COTA Festival [September 5-7]. *Library Alive* Concert II is scheduled for Monday, November 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Sherman Theater. Tickets will be available at the Sherman Theater box office (546 Main St., Stroudsburg, PA), by phone by calling the box office at (570) 420-2808, or by visiting www.shermantheater.com.

Charles Perry Hebard

Pocono Pockets of Jazz, Part Two

by Patrick Dorian

We continue last issue's remembrance of Pocono jazz vessels – clubs and salons that were committed conduits for the music, not just places that gave jazz a once-a-month attempt. My investigations have exposed information that's certainly worthy of publication.

And let it be known that this research has also led to verbalizations of spicy lore – the kind that unfortunately can't be published in such a classy periodical as The NOTE!

After the circa 1973 closing of his Back Door jazz club, located off Main Street in Stroudsburg, Jay Cameron opened another jazz performance space on Route 191 between Analomink (yes, that's the actual name of one of our local burgs) and Henryville.It was called the Lone Pine because of an interestingly shaped tree in the front of the domicile-like building that housed the club.

Many renowned performers presented there, including George Coleman, Zoot Sims with Bill Goodwin, Mike Melillo, and Dave Liebman with drummer Les Perlman, brother of actor Ron Perlman.

Denny Carrig, present co-owner of the Deer Head Inn, witnessed multi-instrumentalist, composer, and music experimenter David Amram swirling a tube above his head that was tied by a string, in his continued search for interesting musical sounds. Steve Gilmore has fond memories of musicians producing a medical benefit for him there.

Mark Hamza was an accordionist for several years before adding the Hammond B-3 organ to his arsenal. After playing the B-3 for a mere six months, he performed at the Lone Pine on a night when Al Cohn sat in. Al made Mark feel right at ease by asking him to play "Misty." Mark witnessed Al's modus operandi of making younger musicians feel like they belonged on stage. He told me he thinks of that night whenever he encounters younger musicians, admiring how over the decades many experienced jazz performers in the Poconos have nurtured young participants. Mark traveled quite a bit with the pop vocal group, The Happenings ("See You in September"), observing that he didn't see this unique situation in other regions. For him, it all started with Al's great attitude.

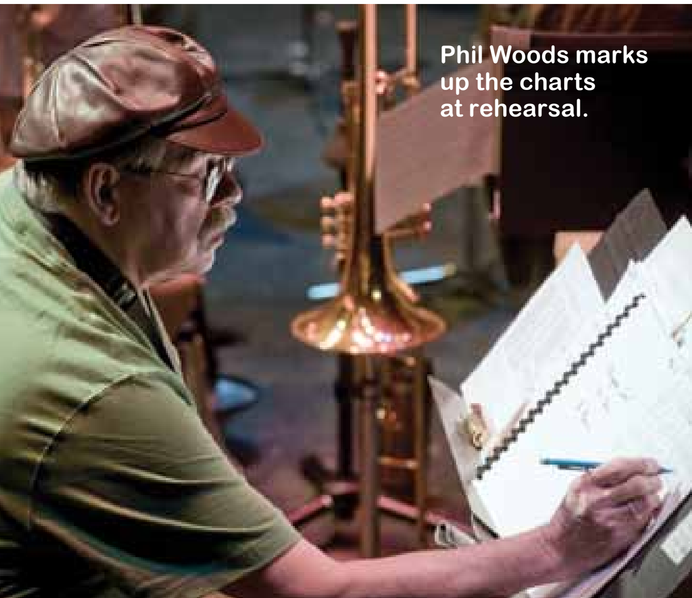
The final Lone Pine performer in the late '70s was jazz pianist Joanne Brackeen. The sign in front of the club displayed her appearance for a few years after the place closed. I actually remember seeing it upon my arrival in the Poconos in September 1980. I knew of Joanne's accomplishments and wondered for months if she would perform. Alas, in 2008, I'm able to construct the back story.

Several musicians have recounted to me the fable that took place a few years after the closing of the Lone Pine. It concerns a musician friend of theirs who had been imbibing elsewhere one evening and then decided to stop by to hear some music at what he thought was still the Lone Pine. Opening the familiar front door of the building, he walked right in ... to someone's living room!

Jay Cameron and his wife, Kita, moved to southern California many years ago. Since Jay's passing four or five years ago, Kita learned to play his baritone sax and has even played some gigs!

Thanks to Steve Gilmore, Denny Carrig, and Mark Hamza for their enthusiastic contributions to this episode. The memories seem to be contagious as the word gets around. As always, adjustments and additions will be given serious and sincere consideration. Next issue: Route 209 ramblings. Until then, let's all channel *Al's great attitude!*

A Pocono Community Collaboration



Phil Woods marks up the charts at rehearsal.

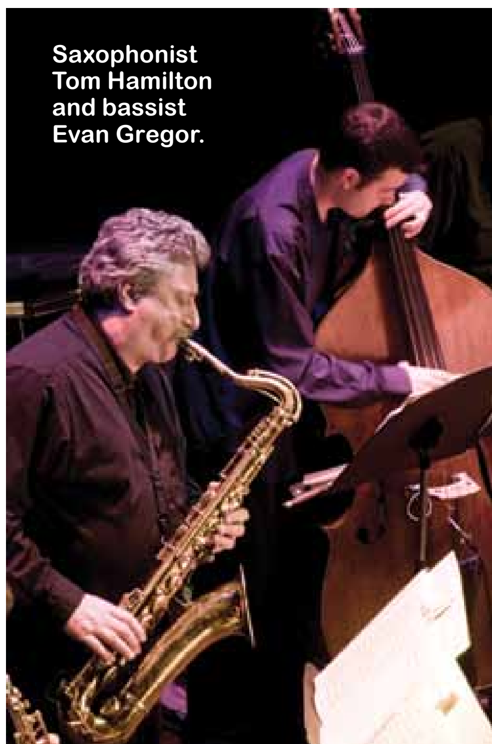
Swinging big band charts from the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at ESU found a whole new life on stage at the historic Sherman Theater on Sunday April 13 when Phil Woods and the COTA Festival Orchestra launched the *Library Alive* concert series.

Featuring compositions and arrangements by Al Cohn, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Jimmy Guiffre, Bill Holman, Johnny Mandel, Phil Woods and others, the concert was not only a major showcase for the Collection's music holdings but initiated an important collaboration among three of the Pocono region's foremost community arts advocate groups – the ACMJC and ESU, the Sherman Theater, and the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts.

Alto saxophone master Phil Woods and the acclaimed COTA Festival Orchestra, under the guidance of Rick Chamberlain and the musical direction of Wolfgang Knittel, performed two sets that filled the historic Sherman Theater with the sounds of some of the greatest music ever written. Among the selections were: "Lady Chatterley's Mother," "Snapped Cap," "The Cats," "Sweet and Slow," "The Wailing Boat," and "Some of My Best Friends," (composed and arranged by Al Cohn); "Cottontail" (composed by Duke Ellington, arranged by Al Cohn); "Woody 'N' You" (composed by Dizzy Gillespie, arranged by Bill Holman); "Four Others" (composed by Jimmy Guiffre, arranged by Al Cohn); "Here's to Alvy" (composed and arranged by Johnny Mandel), and "Alvin G." (composed and arranged by Phil Woods).

Phil Woods and the COTA Festival Orchestra.
Front row, from left: Matt Vashlishan, Jay Rattman, Marko Marcinko, Evan Gregor, Zachary Giffel.
Back row: Jim Buckley, Tom Hamilton, Nelson Hill, Eric Doney, Bill Goodwin, Phil Woods, Ken Brader III, Rick Chamberlain, Eddie Severn, Danny Cahn, Pat Dorian, Joel Mikulyak, Jim Daniels. Not in photo: Wolfgang Knittel, musical director.

The orchestra swings the charts from the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection.



Saxophonist Tom Hamilton and bassist Evan Gregor.

Proceeds from this inaugural event benefited the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection and the COTA Fund for Young Musicians for COTA CampJazz.

NEXT CONCERT:

- Monday, Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m.

TICKETS:

- Sherman Theater Box Office 546 Main St., Stroudsburg, PA
- (570) 420-2808
- www.shermantheater.com.

Photos by Garth Woods

Trumpeters Ken Brader III and Eddie Severn talk shop.

Thanks to our Generous Sponsors!

We wish to thank the following individuals and businesses for making sponsor donations to help us launch the *Library Alive* concert series:

Charles J. Bourgeois
Narda & Bob Bush
Charlie Cahn
J.D. Carp.
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Emile & Diane Charlap
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Howard Storm
Richard Torrisi
Marlene & Billy VerPlanck
Susan Weaving
Judd Woldin
Phil Woods
Carl & Mary Zeplin

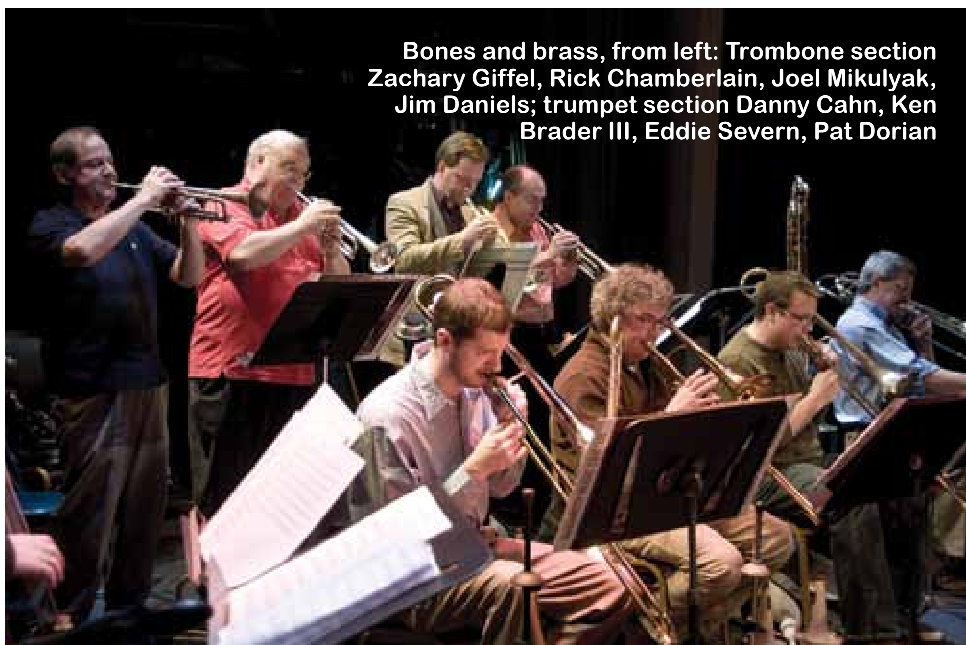
Swinging saxes (from left): Matt Vashlishan, Nelson Hill, Jay Rattman, Tom Hamilton.

Musical director Wolfgang Knittel confers with the band during rehearsal.

Library Alive Concert Series

Photos by Garth Woods

Veteran pianist Eric Doney talks with student saxophonist Jay Rattman.


Bones and brass, from left: Trombone section Zachary Giffel, Rick Chamberlain, Joel Mikulyak, Jim Daniels; trumpet section Danny Cahn, Ken Brader III, Eddie Severn, Pat Dorian

The drum department: Marko Marcinko and Bill Goodwin.

The ACMJC Oral History Project: John Bunch

John Bunch [JB] speaks with Flo Cohn [FC] about his successful career as a piano performer, accompanist, composer, music director and conductor.

His distinguished musical resume has included stints in the big bands of Woody Herman, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich, gigs at the Half Note with Al and Zoot, and long-running associations with Tony Bennett and Scott Hamilton.

This interview took place at Flo Cohn's home in Canadensis, PA, on September 22, 1990, and was originally published in an abridged form (due to space limitations) in the September 1990 issue of The NOTE (Vol. 2, No. 3). We are pleased to be able to print it now in its entirety.

John has donated many hours of his own taped recordings and other materials to the ACMJC, and we are grateful to him for his long-standing generosity and support. He continues to be very active with gigs in jazz clubs and festivals worldwide, and we hope to arrange a follow-up interview soon to allow John to update his impressive musical life story.

John Bunch, Otter Creek, OR, 1991

Donated by Mr. Bunch

Flo Cohn [FC]: John Bunch did me the favor of coming to Canadensis to visit. And so we're going to do the interview this morning ... and here we are. And now we're going to start on John's entire life from day one.

John Bunch [JB]: I'm freezing. I can't think of anything to say. *[both laugh]* You ready?

FC: You're on. You're from Indiana?

JB: I'm from Tipton, Indiana. Born and raised in Tipton, Indiana. ... When I was 11 years old, a fellow moved into our little town from New Mexico. He was a barber and he taught kids how to play piano in 10 easy lessons.

FC: Oh. *[laughs]*

JB: And the kids just loved him. He was just wonderful with children. Somehow my mother got [us] a piano even though we were in very bad shape. It was the Depression, you know.

FC: Yeah.

JB: So I ended up being his sort of prize student. I was the only one, I guess, but—, there was another fellow who played for a while but he gave it up. But I learned to play very quickly and by the time I was 12, 13, I was playing [and] he'd take me to his gigs. ... I remember I'd sit on the piano bench with him and watch how he did it, you know?

FC: Uh huh.

JB: He just broke me right into playing with bands, right off from the beginning. So that was sort of wonderful.

FC: Yeah.

JB: See, all he taught me was just to read the vocal line on sheet music. To learn how to read that one line. And then he taught me all the chords. Guitar chords ... guitar symbols. But I never learned how to properly read both clefs – the treble and the bass – together in piano music.

So after about a year of that, he told my mother that maybe I should take classical lessons. But the only classical teacher was very dry and a completely different—, a lady, a real old lady, a very tough and—. *[FC laughs]* She didn't present classical music like it could be presented, you know, and try to make fun out of that, too ... in some way.

So that, and being the only teacher in town, I'm afraid to say that I didn't become a very good sight reader. Didn't learn classical music. And that jazz came so easily. … When I got a little advanced, after about a year, my assignment was I had to learn three new tunes every week. ...

FC: Mmm hmm.

JB: ... Memorize them. The tunes that were being written in the 1930s, when you think about it, they were being written by Cole Porter, and George Gershwin, and Jerome Kern, and all those kinds of people. And Duke Ellington. And those songs ... I'm still playing all of those tunes today.

FC: [laughs] Yes, I'm sure.

JB: I mean it's amazing that those were tunes, brand new tunes of the day, from the Hit Parade, you know?

FC: Yeah.

JB: And here they are. Musicians are still playing those tunes. A lot of them.

FC: That's right. They're our classical music, huh? Those tunes.

JB: Well, it is classical—. In a way, I think that it'll turn out to be that. I think it's hard for jazz musicians to look at it that way, but—.

FC: So ... you understood about improvising.

JB: Yeah. He told me to listen to records and see how they—, he used to say, "break up the chords ... break up the chords." That's what he meant … to improvise and play around with the melody. [He] taught me to do that, which I still do. I try to have fun with the melody, I think, more than a lot of jazz guys do. There's [been] a tendency for the last 20 years or so to just play ... scales all the time.

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: I mean, I can do that but I find it sort of boring. I think it's more of a challenge to take—, of course, you've got to know the chords, too. I mean the melody. That's what Benny Goodman did and even Charlie Parker. A lot of people don't realize [the way] Charlie Parker played. He sort of let you know where the melody was, once in a while.

FC: Sure, yeah. *[laughs]*

JB: I think that's great. A great way to be.

FC: [Talk about] your first job.

JB: Well, when I was 14, at least, I started going over to a bigger town where the musicians were. There were hardly any [musicians] in my town. I had to hitchhike over to Anderson, which is a big city of 35,000 people. There were some players over there. A good tenor man – another high school kid, like myself – we used to go out to the "Colored Elks." That's what they called it. The black Elks Club. And they were wonderful to us. They let us play, jam, sit in with the black guys. And also now and then a band would come through. Cab Calloway came through there one time. And I got to play with Cozy Cole who I later got to know, many years later, when I came to New York. It was a real thrill, of course, at the age of 15, 16, playing with guys like that.

FC: Sure.

JB: I learned how to play the blues and I learned how to drink gin.

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: I was sort of raised in an atmosphere where "It's okay for the boy to be playing now" but, I mean, "When you gonna straighten up and get a responsible job?" Even though already at the age of 16, after spending Friday and Saturday in Anderson, I'd bring home four dollars, sometimes six dollars, which was more than the other boys in school would make from peddling papers all week ...

FC: Sure.

JB: … getting up at four in the morning – getting a paper route they used to call it – and get on their bicycle and throw papers on people's porches six days a week. I'd be making more money than them. In fact, they couldn't believe it. They said, "Where'd you get that much money?" and that sort of thing.

FC: But they had "real" jobs.

JB: They had real jobs. As a result of being raised in that atmosphere, though, I never really thought I had a chance of ever really making anything of myself, at seriously playing as a full-time musician. I thought I was good enough to maybe play Friday and Saturday night in town or around Indiana but that's about it. So I kept at it.

I went in the service in World War II and ... never played much there. Then I went to college, and Indiana University wouldn't let me into music school because I couldn't read, which I have quite a feeling about. So I studied speech and took some piano lessons. I learned how to read better [and] play classical music a little.

[Later on] I worked various day jobs. I worked in a factory for quite a while, and I worked as an insurance underwriter, and played on Saturday nights. Then finally, in Indianapolis (I was living there), some of Basie's guys would come through and I got in some sessions. Also, I got to play with Wes Montgomery and some really wonderful musicians who still lived there at that time. It gave me a lot more confidence that I was good enough to maybe do something with it.

So, about the age of 34, I went out to California and immediately got right in. I did know Leroy Vinnegar. He's from Indianapolis. I also knew Med Flory, who I had played with in college. Med and Leroy helped me. And Jimmy Rowles, who I'd known a little. They all helped me out to get going out there. And then I got with Woody Herman and I ended up in New York City.

So, you know, I never looked back. Thank God, I've always been able to make a pretty fair living playing jazz

music. I'm very thankful of that because I think I appreciate it more than a guy [where] that's all he's ever done. Some of these young guys, all they've ever known is to be musicians. And I think some of them tend to take it for granted – that they're entitled to that, you know. But I certainly appreciate it … *[pauses]* very much.

FC: Well, how did the conducting come into your … *[interrupted by JB]*

JB: Oh, that was pretty wild. I mean, I never thought I could ever do anything like that. Well, in '66 I went out to join Buddy Rich who was going to start a new band. I played with him before quite a lot. And that band had to not only play its own thing but [it] had to accompany a singer as part of the show we did out there.

Naturally, I didn't have to play for that singer. The singer had his own piano player and conductor. I'd watch the conductor, and watch how he did it, did his show. And I got to thinking, gosh, I think I might be able to do that, you know? I guess I got a little interested in it.

Then Tony Bennett, who I'd met briefly years before, came and sat in with the band in Los Angeles. … I had played piano for him and I guess he liked what I did because it was only a few months later I get a call. … I had left Buddy Rich. I was back in New York and I get a call. They said Tony wants to hire me to be his musical director.

So, I went over to talk to him about it. I immediately almost talked myself right out of the job! I told him I had never conducted in my life. I don't know anything about that. He was very nice. He said, "There's something about your playing I like and I think you could learn to conduct."

So, I quickly took two or three conducting lessons from Wes Hensel. He's an old friend. Wes told me everything I needed to know in two or three lessons. For that kind of a job, having …

FC: Yes.

JB: I mean this is different kind of conducting [than] conducting a symphony.

From left:
John Bunch, Al Cohn, Jack Lesberg, Bob Rosengarden, Chris Flory
S.S. Norway Floating Jazz Festival, 1985

Donated by Morton Trautman

FC: Yes.

JB: *[laughs]* Tony said, "All right, the first job will be at the Copacabana." I think that was for two weeks. He happened to like the house conductor there. He was acquainted with him, and had confidence in him. And he said, "You just watch how he does the show." And from that time on, I was a conductor. And I guess I did alright.

FC: Well, you were there a long time.

JB: Yeah, six years. … You know, so much of that is psychology. Oh, you have to have a good beat, of course, you have to have a very good beat. Then, you get to impart that sense of beat in what you do with your right arm.

FC: Mm hmm.

JB: Everything [Wes Hensel] told me was right on the button. And then I ended up conducting symphonies behind Tony Bennett, [in] L.A. and London and all around.

FC: Was that scary?

JB: Very scary, very scary. Of course, yes.

FC: But you did it.

JB: Well, I found out that the better the musicians—, in other words, in a symphony like L.A. or London, the easier it is for the conductor. … Even though they're not used to playing that kind of music, these people are such wonderful musicians they just have a sense of where it's supposed to go.

FC: Uh huh.

JB: [They] make somebody like me smell like a rose.

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: Incredible.

FC: So, had you been to Europe before? Well, you were there in the war.

JB: Well, yeah. My first experiences over there—. I don't know if you know this or not, but I was flying missions over Germany, bombing missions in B-17s, and I got shot down. I was taken prisoner of war. I bailed out and all that stuff … terrible … *[interrupted]*

FC: Where? Where were you?

JB: Over Merseburg which is near Leipzig.

FC: Oh, dear.

JB: Yeah, right in the middle of Germany.

FC: How long were you a prisoner of war?

JB: Six months. The last six months of the war.

FC: *[shoo sound]*

JB: Well, anyhow, that was my first visit to Germany.

FC: And then what happened? How about what happens in New—, I don't want to miss anything that took place back then. You played with many bands. You played with Buddy Rich. You played with Woody Herman.

JB: [I] started out with Woody. That was the first big-name band. That was a big thrill. I always had great ambitions to work with Woody Herman and it's so satisfying … even though it wasn't probably one of his greatest bands. But it was a good band. Actually, he always had a good band.

Then, after that, I came back to New York and immediately got in with Benny Goodman. Immediately. [I was] just so lucky that one of the drummers that we'd had with Woody had left him to go with Benny and he got me an audition. I was very happy to audition. I wasn't proud. And I guess I was just what he liked. He immediately hired me and I went out with him. It was really Benny's last full-time band that he ever had [that] I played in.

FC: Uh huh.

JB: I mean, where it was every night we played somewhere. Then I got with Maynard Ferguson and we played at Birdland a lot. And then I played with Buddy Rich and we also played at Birdland a lot. All that was very lucky because playing at Birdland, being in there and working there a lot, I met so many musicians. You know, it used to be so many musicians would come into that place as customers. And that's how I got very well known around New York right off, playing with either one of those bands. They played there so much.

FC: And you're home. That was another good part, huh? Being in New York ... home.

JB: Yeah, yeah ... and I lived near there [Birdland]. I could walk there, walk there to work. And then I worked at the Metropole … with Gene Krupa. I played with him quite a lot, too. I played with Zoot Sims and Al Cohn.

It was unbelievable. It just seemed like I was jockeying between those three groups: Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, and Zoot Sims and Al Cohn down at the old Half Note. It just worked out that I hardly ever [had] a conflict. Sometimes there was a conflict between Gene and Benny, and Gene was so devoted to Benny Goodman that he always said, "You go play with Benny and your job will be waiting for you when you come back."

FC: How nice.

JB: He was so nice about that. Great guy, Gene. Gene Krupa and Woody Herman are my favorite band leaders that I've ever worked for. Wonderful.

FC: And you went to Russia with Benny.

JB: Yeah, I went to Russia with Benny in '62. Zoot was on that. It was a great band.

FC: Phil? Was Phil there?

JB: Phil Woods! *[laughs]* ... It certainly was an all-star band. You know, it was a great band really – all of them. Some of the best trumpet players: Joe Newman and Jimmy Maxwell. And all the great musicians, everybody in every section. Victor Feldman was on that band. Mel Lewis. Teddy Wilson – I can't leave him out. He was my strongest influence when I was first starting out, Teddy Wilson. So to get to know him, and work alongside him, even [to] talk to him all the time, was just so much fun.

FC: How was it as an American visiting musician [to be touring] with a very big name [Benny Goodman] in Russia? Did you get treated nicely? Did you have a nice time?

JB: Russia was really a strange place. Thousands of people came every night. I think we worked five nights out of each week somewhere. Roughly speaking, it was a week in each place for six weeks – a very long tour. The people loved us. The receptions were [great]. We could hardly ever get off the stage without playing three or four encores. It was unbelievable.

But yet, when we'd come out of the stage entrance, [the Russian people would] all [keep] away from us. There wouldn't be any ropes up to keep them away from us, they just stayed away from us. It was the strangest feeling. They were afraid. When we were in the hotel in the day time ... they wouldn't come in the lobby. They wouldn't come in the hotel, even though some [local] musicians were dying to meet us. [It was] very hard to get them to come.

I think Phil, and maybe Zoot and Jerry Dodgion, I think, were able at one time or another to get a couple musicians to come up to the room. Victor Feldman brought along some records and gave some records out. They were absolutely overjoyed at that.

But they were very stand-offish with us. I think because of the pressure from the KGB, or some police, whatever it was in those days. I guess it must be different now but it was a real "cloak and dagger" time. You know, '62 was really quite a breakthrough for us to go there in those days. Cold War – and it was really cold.

FC: Benny may have been the first.

JB: I think he was the first big name that ever went there. I never cared much for the Soviet Union. I don't think any of us did, really.

FC: Some people got sick, I heard.

JB: Yeah. And we lost weight. Everybody lost weight. The food wasn't very good at all. [It's] the only place I've ever been that I didn't enjoy the food. I'm always willing to try any kind of food, but that food – their cooking – that's *[scoffs]* a joke. Teddy Wilson lost enough weight—. I've got a before and after picture of him. It's noticeable.

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: ... We ate in the best places, by the way. Best hotels. The restaurants all had the same kind of a smell to them. Kind of an unpleasant, oily smell. And Teddy'd still go in there, take one look at that dinner table, and he'd just grab a bottle of wine and go back to the room.

FC: *[laughs]* **Well, when you came back, did you stay with Benny?**

JB: I played with Benny. Benny had his favorites, you know. I was his favorite many, many times over a 25-year period or so. And then I wasn't his favorite any longer. He'd use other piano players [even] while I was playing with him: Derek Smith, Roland Hanna, Hank Jones. I'd say particularly those, yeah. But I think I probably played with him more than anybody [based on] the amount of gigs ... because I was with him from '57 up to the last gig I played with him. …'83, I think it was, 1983.

Well, that's 26 years right there. When [I worked for] Tony Bennett, of course I never worked with [Benny] at all then. Tony Bennett – that's the only exclusive job I've ever had. He kept me on a retainer, in other words. So I just didn't dare take [another gig] since he was paying me for not working.

FC: Sure.

JB: He'd pay one salary when I wasn't working and another salary when I was working. I felt that I couldn't take a chance and promise somebody I'd work with them. That was really an exclusive job. But then, I no [sooner] left Tony and Benny called me right away.

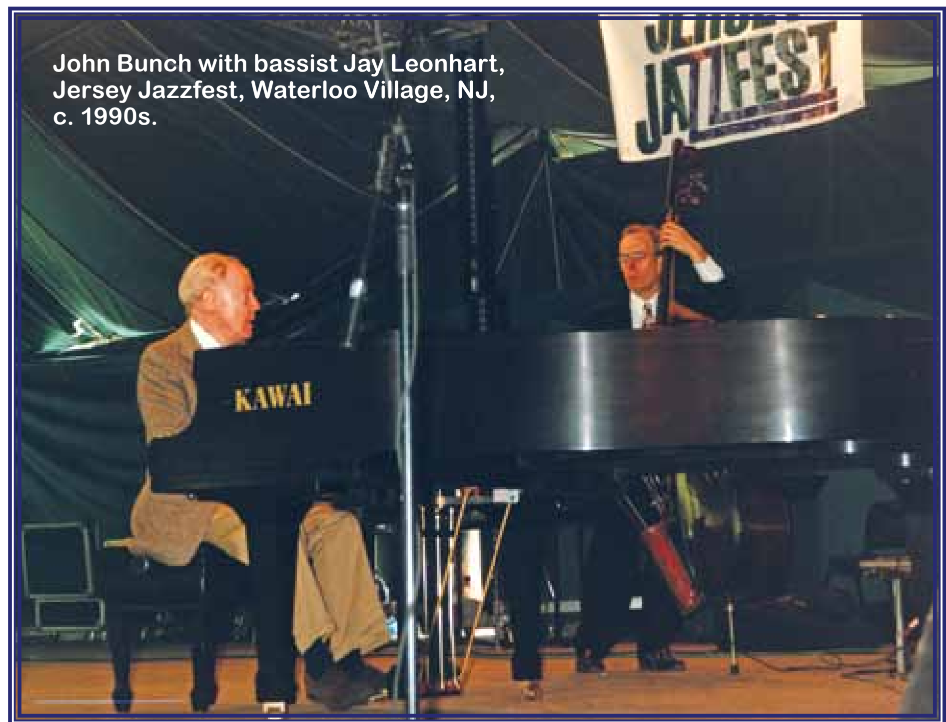
FC: Oh. *[laughs]*

JB: I think Benny liked me because I know what to leave out. I never was flashy. I never had that much technique, frankly, to play any Art Tatum or any of that stuff. I think he liked that. *[laughs]* I think that's what he wanted in a piano player. That's why he liked Connie Kay. And Connie Kay lasted with him a long time too during the period of time I was with him. Because Connie's just not a flashy drummer. He just plays a good beat and that's it. That's what [Benny] wanted: a guy who could play with a good strong beat and not play too loud. Connie was just the answer for that. He liked Mel Lewis too. But, you know Mel ... and the personalities started *[laughs]* …

FC: Oh, sure.

JB: ... That didn't last too long.

FC: And Mousey?



John Bunch with bassist Jay Leonhart, Jersey Jazzfest, Waterloo Village, NJ, c. 1990s.

Bob Bush

JB: Yeah, Mousey [Alexander] played with him. He had drummers for very short periods of time. But I know Mousey played with him quite a while.

FC: So have you done any advertising work, that kind of work?

JB: No. Like I said, I'm not a great sight reader. Never was. So the studio work I've never really gotten to do, just fringe stuff sometimes. Since I live so close to the studios, I used to sometimes get a call to go in and play something – to finish up a Hank Jones date or something. Or finish up [for] Bernie Leighton or something like that. But the only real studio work I did was mostly when it was Tony Bennett, and actually, in those days, we had big orchestras all the time. You know, really big. I think the least amount of musicians we ever had on a Tony Bennett date was probably about 40, you know.

FC: You'd get harp and ...

JB: Oh, harp and percussion and a full jazz orchestra like the Basie instrumentation. Plus 12 or 20 strings, and the harp and everything. When I first started with Tony ... our standard band we had behind us in those days was a 16-piece. By that I mean eight brass – four trombones, four trumpets – five saxes, and three rhythm. That was fine. Then after about two years, [Tony] suddenly said ... "We're going to play the Greek Theater for a weekend in Hollywood and we're going to use strings." That just froze me; I was so scared! I had heard so much about violinists. And [myself] not having a good classical background, I just felt so awkward and inferior. How am I going to conduct strings?

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: Then [Tony] said that David Rose will do it. About two days before we had to go out there, David Rose ... came around to me and he said, "I am just in bad health. I just don't feel like I can do that job." And I said, "Mr. Rose, I've never conducted. I'm not a much of a conductor." I said, "I'm so scared." I told him what I just told you about not having a good classical background. And he said, "Oh, that's all crap ... strings are like everybody else. You just do the same thing you do with the Basie style and the band and everything will be fine."

Whatever he said put me right at ease. He was so nice and down to earth. He wasn't the "distinguished *[laughs]* conductor" that I had imagined somehow. He was just a down-home guy. He put me at ease and it

did work out that way.

FC: They are just part of the band after all, huh?

JB: Yes. Like I say, I learned [that] the better the musician, the easier it is to conduct because they just have the talent. It's not just being able to read. It's more than that. They're sort of like Al was, because it's that innate talent along with the reading, you know? They just know how to do it. *[laughs]*

FC: You told me earlier that you had done some writing, with some tunes.

JB: Yes. The first one I wrote was a tune for Woody Herman that was recorded by Woody and called "Why You?" He played that a long time.

FC: Who arranged it?

JB: I did. It was my first arrangement that was recorded. Talk about good luck, eh?

FC: Ah, that's great.

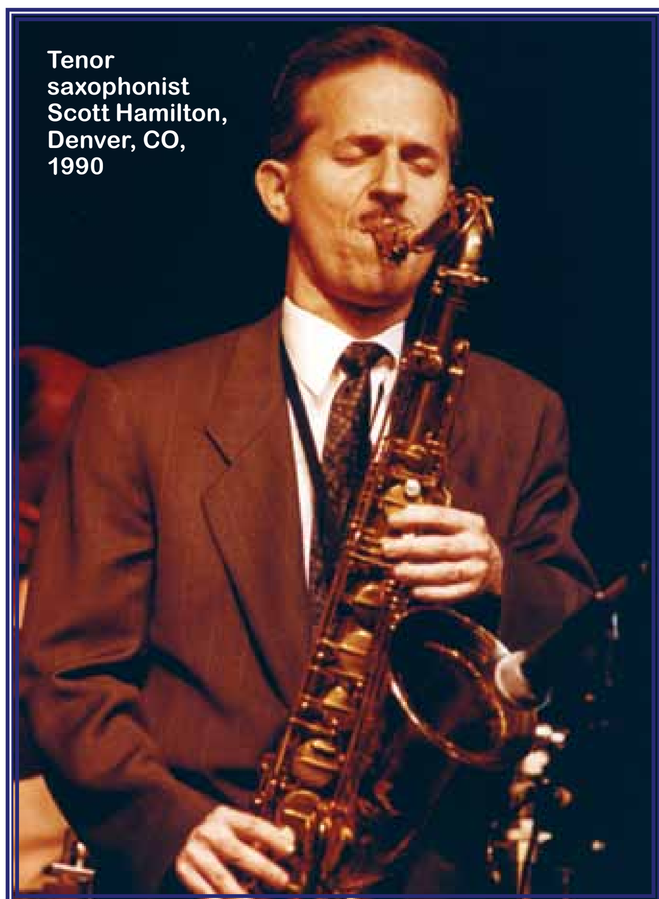
JB: Yeah. Then Benny Goodman had me re-do it for his band. So he recorded it too … over in Russia.

FC: Terrific.

JB: That was on the Russian album, the one we made over in Russia. Then, for Benny, I wrote a couple more arrangements. One [was] another original tune that I also wrote the arrangement for called "Feathers." I had a lot of success with that one because it turned out to be the shortest arrangement on the Benny Goodman Russian album. And that album was very hot, not just on jazz stations, but because of all the publicity of us going to Russia. It was in the newspapers almost every day, about what happened to Benny Goodman in Russia. When we got back and that album came out, that tune was played much more than any of the others on the radio. So I made very good royalties there for a couple years.

FC: [Did it] encourage you to write more?

JB: No. You would think it would but, see, I wasn't like Al Cohn, you know. I was very slow at it. It took me forever to write – a long time. Then I wrote some little originals for Joe Morello. I guess that's about it. Oh, the Muzak I did. Thanks to Jane Jarvis, I wrote some Muzak tunes and arrangements, mostly Latin stuff, which I'd never done before. But she gave me quite a chance. She said, "I think you're capable of doing this and, if you're willing to do this, then I'll give you the whole year to write." I think it was either 11 or 13 charts. It took me that long – took me the whole year to write that. Al could have done that in three or four days, probably. *[FC laughs]* I know how fast he could write. I did very well with that – good royalties on the Muzak stuff. I made more money from that than I ever made from the jazz stuff. I think Al did some of that [Muzak] at one time or another.



Tenor saxophonist Scott Hamilton, Denver, CO, 1990

Russ Chase

FC: I think so. Not much but some, yes. *[pauses]* **Well, what's happening this minute?**

JB: I've played with Scott Hamilton for a long time. We've been playing together, the same five guys, for 11 or 12 years now. They were very young when they came into New York. They had been playing together as a quartet, you know. There was no piano.

FC: Who's in it?

JB: Scott Hamilton; Chuck Riggs, the drummer; Chris Flory, the guitarist; and Phil Flanigan, the bassist. They had been playing together as a quartet in high school and they all came to New York around the same time and decided, after some reason or another, to start using piano. So I've been playing with them. I think we've made about 11 albums now. The same five guys. … We were in Europe for four-and-a-half weeks – we just got back awhile back. … We were in Kansas last week.

FC: And New York, too?

JB: In New York, we work at Fat Tuesdays two or three times a year. And the two clubs across the river in New Jersey: Struggles and Trumpets. So, I've been doing that. Even though they're half my age, we seem to get along pretty good. They play sort of an older style of jazz, I guess you might say. And so do I … it comes natural for me.

FC: It's nice that it was their choice to play.

JB: Yeah.

FC: So, way back when you were just beginning with this man who was a barber and musician, who'd he have you listening to?

JB: Fats Waller, mostly. And Teddy Wilson, too. And Duke Ellington, some. Then a little later, Nat "King" Cole…

FC: Oh gee, great.

JB: Oh, Nat was great. A lot of

people forget about what a wonderful influence he was on piano players. You know, it's funny how they sort of leave him out when you talk about the great pianists. And, of course, "Fatha" Hines. But I actually tried to imitate Teddy Wilson. And Count Basie, too. I imitated him a lot. They called me "Count" in high school.

FC: Oh yeah?

JB: Count Bunch.

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: That's how kids can learn. I think imitation is very important, and besides it's fun to see if you can play like somebody else. I mean, Flip Phillips to this day can imitate Lester Young. ... I think any really great saxophone player or any instrumentalist in jazz started out that way. I'm not saying you keep doing it but I think to learn you have to. I would encourage kids to try to play like somebody else that they like, somebody that they've heard play.

FC: It takes a long time to find out who you are.

JB: Yeah. Now, see, that's happening to Scott Hamilton now. He's about 35 or 36 years old and he's starting to really get into his own thing now. Oh, he can really play. He's really becoming a giant like Al or Zoot, I think. I think he's getting into a class with those guys.

FC: That's nice.

JB: He already is a giant, I think. I've been playing with him all these years and I never cease to be amazed how good he is. But like I say, I would encourage kids when they're starting out to deliberately see if they can play like whoever their big influence is. That's how you learn.

FC: Well, tell me about your writing again, about how you go about it. ... When you were writing ... you wrote something for Tony?

JB: No, I never wrote *[indiscernible]*

FC: Benny, before that?

JB: I wrote a little for Benny, and for Woody Herman. And, like I said, [for] Joe Morello

FC: Was Woody the first?

JB: Woody was the first one, yeah.

FC: So ... in that case, were you thinking about how the other arrangements were—, how his band—, it had to be for his band. ... That must be hard.

JB: You mean did I try to write it in some kind of a style of Woody Herman?

FC: Woody Herman, the band style. Yes.

JB: I don't think so, I don't think I did. I just got a tune in mind and put it together.

FC: Does it all work at once? Did you write the arrangement while you were writing the tune?

JB: Yes. Well, I probably got the tune in mind. I think you have to get the tune in mind first and then you make an arrangement out of it. It's a primitive arrangement compared to the ... really good jazz writers but I guess maybe being primitive, maybe that was good in a way. It's pretty simple and fairly short which is kind of nice, particularly in the recording business – the more chance of it being played on the radio. *[both laugh]*

FC: So right now you're living in New York City, as you have for how long?

JB: Oh, 30, 32 years now, something like that. Well, my favorite gigs today are when I do these duo gigs downtown, down in the Village. There are three places I play in now: the Fortune Garden Pavilion, the Knickerbocker, and Zinno's. Those jobs are my favorite and I play exactly what I want to play at all times.

FC: And your bass player?

JB: My bass player [is] currently Steve LaSpina. Phil Flanigan and I played together a long time but Phil has just moved down to Florida, so Steve's doing it. Steve does a great job. Sometimes it's Jay Leonhart, too. I worked with him years ago. But those duo jobs, they're very rewarding. Sometimes people don't listen but I don't care

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: You know, I've finally gotten over that.

FC: That's their problem.

JB: Yeah, we try to have a lot fun no matter whether they're listening or not.

FC: New York is not the late town it once was, is that true?

JB: No, it isn't. Yeah, you've noticed that? That's right, it isn't. Fat Tuesdays, when you work there, you just play two sets – one at 8 o'clock, get off about 9:30. And the next one's at 10, and you play till 11 or 11:30 and that's it and go home. It didn't used to [be that way]. At the Metropole, and at Birdland, you had to play until 4 o'clock.

FC: I know.

JB: You started at 10 and you played until 4. So, you're right. People don't hang out as late.

FC: That's good

JB: Yeah, I think it's because a lot of people are on health kicks and get up and go jogging in the morning.

FC: Probably [it's] because they're afraid they'll get a knife in the back. *[laughs]*

JB: Well ... that's always possible. The only late spot I know of—. I guess, the Blue Note goes pretty late, and...

FC: But only on Saturday night.

JB: That's about it.

FC: Yeah.

JB: At the Knickerbocker, the latest that we've played is 1:30 and that's only the weekend. And then [at] the Fortune Garden and Zinno's, it's more like 12 o'clock, except maybe 1 a.m. on weekends.

FC: And you've done the ships?

JB: Yeah, that's getting to be – the jazz cruises and the jazz parties – a big thing that didn't used to happen. That's only in the last 20 years or so that they've had those things. A lot of musicians are on those things.

FC: You like them?

JB: Yes, I do.

FC: Are you a good sailor?

JB: Yes, I am, I've become that, yeah. The rougher it is the more I like it, actually. It's more exciting when the boat swings around.

FC: *[laughs]*

JB: They manage to miss those hurricanes, anyhow. They somehow are able to sail right away from those things.

FC: So, you've been to the Caribbean. Have you done the Alaska trip?

JB: We've done Alaska ... been on that with Scott Hamilton. And then I did it on my own playing solo one time. [I've] done the Alaska trip twice. Then we did one once down to Acapulco and back. Oh, that's the one we did with Al.

FC: No, Hawaii.

JB: Oh, that was Hawaii. Yeah, I forgot about Hawaii, that's right. I've done that one twice. And the one around the Gulf of Mexico, done that a couple of times. That's a nice one, out of Miami. They're very nice … particularly when you can take your wife along and make a vacation out of it.

FC: Mmm hmm. ... And is it the same on the ships as working in a club? Or would it be more like doing a concert? Or is it a combination?

JB: It's kind of a combination. A little more in the direction of a concert, because people do listen there. That's why they take the cruise, in most cases, because they want to hear the music. It's certainly a more attentive crowd than you would find particularly in New York City.

FC: Are New York City audiences worse than other places?

JB: Well, they don't listen. They talk through a lot of things. In a lot of clubs they're kind of noisy. But the thing I've got to give [people] credit for is they do come and support the music, for whatever reason. It may be a phony reason; they may think, oh, it's chic to like jazz. You know, that attitude. But at least they do come and support it. … In the other cities in this country, unfortunately, there are not very many people like that. They may be very wonderful listeners. But if there are only six people in the house, how is [jazz] going to be supported?

FC: Yeah.

JB: People have to go out and support that live music. I'd rather have a place packed full of non-listeners – I really would – and be working. And also, the music sounds terrible. The musicians can't really play very well when they've got just a handful of people there. [It's] kind of depressing.

FC: So, some of the places in New York are trying to strike the happy medium of filling up the place and making them be quiet.

JB: Well, that's good. I hope that works. That would be nice.

FC: And how are the pianos, generally speaking, where you go?

JB: Oh well, I'm so fortunate there. Every place I play in, the pianos are first-class Steinways. Late model Steinways.

FC: Have they learned? It wasn't always so.

JB: They probably learned because of necessity, you know? [I] hate to say it about the Japanese pianos. They are beautiful pianos. But they can't take seven nights a week, 365 days a year, year in and year out. They can't take that kind of playing. Some of those pianos only last a couple years and then you've got to buy a new one. So, I mean, it's better to go ahead and buy the Steinway to begin with and the piano lasts. The one at the Knickerbocker is, let me see, '73, 16- to 17-years-old now, and [it] still has never had any major overhaul on it. It really needs it now, but I'm saying that's a lot of piano playing. They never close. That piano is being played seven nights a week...

FC: Right, with air conditioning.

JB: ... for 16-17 years with air conditioning. Door open. Door closed. Lots of people in there. Nobody in there. All the variances of humidity and temperature you can imagine. And yet the piano is in pretty good shape.

FC: And it's a Steinway?

JB: Yeah. I guess that's why they cost so much. *[both laugh]* I sound like a commercial for Steinway, but...

FC: That's okay. What do you have at home?

JB: I have one Steinway, a good one.

FC: And you like to play a lot. When you're not working, you play anyway, don't you?

JB: No, I don't play.

FC: You don't?

JB: No, I wish I could get back to that wonderful enthusiasm I had for music when I was real young. You couldn't keep me away from the piano. I played for hours. Drive people nuts with it. Some guys practice right on up to the day—. You know, Benny Goodman practiced the day he died. I mean he never lost that enthusiasm at all. I thought that was just wonderful. And I understand Hank Jones is that way. He's still got that same enthusiasm. It's great.

My best playing comes after I've finished a week at Zinno's or something because my fingers get loosened up from playing so much on the gig.

FC: Have you been to the parties where they put two piano players together, and sometimes three?

JB: Yes. I like that, it's nice. It's a situation that you can't practice for because ... you're never around any place that has two pianos like that. It's really a jazz situation because it's all got to be made up right there on the spot.

FC: Yes. It's hard. Like two orchestras trying to play.

JB: I did one in Oregon with Tommy Flanagan. It was so funny, it turned out. How people loved it. Just by accident, the way it ended up, we played Dave Brubeck's tune "In Your Own Sweet Way." And when we got to the end of it, that A flat 7 portion that Miles Davis played on his record, that he's sort of vamping to an A flat 7. We didn't know how to get out of that thing. So ... in D flat, I played the triad of the "Claire de Lune." *[sings the triad]* And [Tommy] finished it, and it turned out great...

FC: Well, you certainly have to be a good listener to play with another pianist.

JB: Yes. You have to. ... It's funny, though. The pianist I've played with that I seemed to get along [with] the best

was Marian McPartland. I think that's because we have two completely different kinds of styles of piano, I guess you might say. Different. Very different. And somehow her good points rubbed off on me without even thinking, and my good points rubbed off on her, and the next thing you know, we sort of sounded like each other.It was strangest thing. Call it a phenomenon almost, how that worked out that way. We had a lot of surprises. And people like that too. They see that you're sort of surprised by what's going on. They see it in your face, and they can tell it's all being made up and improvised. And people like that.

FC: Sure... it's a miracle. *[laughs]*

JB: With the experience of having played as long as we all have, most of us, that's jazz … in the respect that, okay, so in the middle of your solo you take a wrong turn. You play something that's not what you intended or something. Or you make a mistake, maybe. Well, you learn how to capitalize on that mistake, which is kind of fun. I've had people say to me, "Oh you never make any mistakes." Oh, I make a lot of mistakes; I make a lot of clinkers!

But you just learn from experience to make it sound like it was intended. It's a disguising job that you do. *[FC laughs]* I think every jazz musician does it but probably doesn't even think of it that way. But that's really what happens a lot of time. You paint yourself into a corner, crowd yourself into a corner, and now you have to get out. Now what are you gonna do? *[Both laugh]*

FC: I guess that's the interesting part about the player.

JB: Yeah. You can't do that with classical music. You miss one way or you're early. It has to be done note for note.

FC: Do you ever feel like now it would be fun to read some classical music?

JB: Not really anymore. I guess I've sort of lost it. I suppose if I went to hear a classical pianist more often it might put me in the mood to try to do something with that. ... I listen to music hardly at all. Isn't that funny?

Herb Snitzer

John Bunch with trombonist Dan Barrett, unknown location, 1995

FC: *[laughs]* **That's funny. But the funny part is not funny. A lot of musicians say that.**

JB: I get a little of it on the radio. You know, turn a jazz station on. That's about it. I have a tape player in this car and I was going to bring some tapes and I didn't bring them. I don't know what it is. I guess I can only take small doses of it. Maybe it's because I'm playing quite a lot.

FC: And you'd rather play than just sit and listen.

JB: Maybe that's it.

FC: Well, that's good. So what lies in your future? *[laughs]*

JB: Well, as far as I'm concerned, if I can just keep doing what I'm doing, I'm happy. If I was a multi-millionaire, I swear to God, I would absolutely not change a thing. Not a thing. You know, to be able to play with good musicians, that's number one to me. To be able to play an occasional job with Urbie Green or somebody like that – somebody I really respect – is still a great thrill for me. That's all I want.

FC: I'm sure that's what you'll have. I want to thank you, John, very much. This will be going into our library at school and some of those young people who are just starting out may get a different view from you.

JB: Yeah, well I hope so. I particularly want to emphasize what I said before, that you don't have to feel bad about—. I think some kids do feel that they shouldn't imitate someone. But I think that that's certainly how I learned. And besides, like I said, it's fun. I would encourage kids to do that. It's fun to see if you can do it and to see if you can play like whoever it is that you idolize.

FC: Well, imitation is the way everybody learns everything.

JB: Yeah

FC: [It's] the only way you learn to speak, walk, everything...

JB: Yeah, it's true.

FC: ... if you stop and think about it. Okay, the next thing I'm going to ask you to do is try to come out sometime and give us a concert at our jazz series that takes place...

JB: Oh, okay, sure. Now that I've got the car, it wouldn't be such a hassle, you know.

FC: *[laughs]* **Okay. Then that's what we'll look forward to next.**

JB: Okie doke.

The Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, Birdland, NYC, 1956

Back row, from left: Paul West (b – not in photo), Lee Morgan (tp), Al Stewart (tp), Carl Warwick (tp), Burt Collins (tp – hidden behind Dizzy)

Middle row: Charlie Persip (d), Melba Liston (tb), Bill Elton (tb), Rod Levitt (tb);

Front row, from left: Wynton Kelly (p), Billy Mitchell (ts – hidden behind Dizzy), Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Phil Woods (as), Jimmie Powell (as), Benny Golson (ts), Marty Flax (bari).

Photo donated by Al Stewart

by Sascha Feinstein

This essay by Sascha Feinstein is the opening chapter of *Black Pearls: Improvisations on a Lost Year*, to be published in September by Eastern Washington University Press, and is printed here with permission.

Nick Fata

What were my last words to my mother? I had never considered the question and had forgotten how she slept for a day and a half before she died. Up until recently, in fact, I considered my junior year in high school to be "the lost year," a landmark period with a few markers and no land. I knew it began in early September 1979, and ended mid April 1980 – the unexpected diagnosis of my mother's cancer, and then her death – but I couldn't piece the narrative together, nor did I ever know what memories would emerge, or when. Dramatic events. Evasive fragments. Sometimes, just color or sound.

I didn't write much about the experience during the year itself or the next, but those minimal fragments of memory fueled my poems and stories in college, and then in graduate school – so much so that, ironically, I began to feel trapped by experiences I could barely conjure. I didn't *want* to write another poem about my mother's cancer, and kept reprimanding myself: "*Enough*. Get on with your life." Dwelling on loss seemed utterly self-centered – because it is, if loss becomes one's only focus. I assumed I had recollected everything meant to return to my consciousness, and that it didn't matter if I could not place a single event chronologically. In essence, I accepted the mind's erasure.

Then, 20 years later, I found myself able to revisit that lost year and began to connect events. At first, I thought my greatest triumph would be to create a linear timeline: the date of the initial diagnosis; the number of weeks we lived thinking the cancer might be microscopic and therefore killed with radiation; the word "terminal"; the reality of that word; the passing; the immediate aftermath. I wanted to place individual visitors, and groups of visitors, and particular moments that I recalled for both spectacular and mundane reasons. I thought control meant constructing a calendar, but now that the dates have been slotted into place (more or less), the nature of this return seems so much more expansive, as if challenging time itself.

The trigger for this dramatic transition in sensibility and consciousness arrived in 1999 when I returned to New York to aid my father, who had undergone an aortic valve replacement. The poor staffing at Mount Sinai kept me in the hospital for long hours, and I felt an oddly parental obligation to oversee his treatment. That's not to say my father welcomed my help; disgusted by his vulnerability, he scoured at my attention. But one morning I brought my electric razor to shave him, and he smiled broadly – the first look of true happiness after the operation. I remember pulling up a chair as he puffed his cheeks, and while the razor hummed and buzzed, I realized how little I had done for my mother during her illness. I brought her things, of course, and sometimes I would wash her feet, but every act that suggested the duties of a nurse emphasized a truth I so wanted to deny.

True, being with my father wasn't exactly parallel: it's one thing to preserve the dignity of the living, and quite another to comfort the dying. But as his soft skin emerged, I found myself unable to dismiss comparisons, and it seemed almost ceremonial when I tapped the razor onto an old newspaper and folded the dust-like hair into the *Times*.

Two weeks later, after he'd been brought home and seemed to be recovering well, I felt comfortable leaving and exited at 96th onto the West Side Highway on my way to central Pennsylvania. I'd grooved this route between my childhood home and my new one, so I didn't feel daunted by the substantial traffic and the lousy weather.

Inside the car, I could hear only two things: a Charlie Parker tribute on WKCR, and a thunderous rain that consumed the city. *Parker and weather reports,* I thought. *Perfect guides home.*

Most people know of Charlie Parker's astonishing music and his wildly self-destructive life. Rarely did his excessive behavior destroy his artistry, but at least two infamous recordings prove that even Parker's stamina could not sustain the intensity of depression, and they remain some of the saddest recordings I own. The first almost-unlistenable session is from late July, 1946. Scholars call it the "Lover Man" sessions because on that ballad, Parker loses command and, in a matter of hours, is taken to Camarillo, a mental institution where he remains for six months.

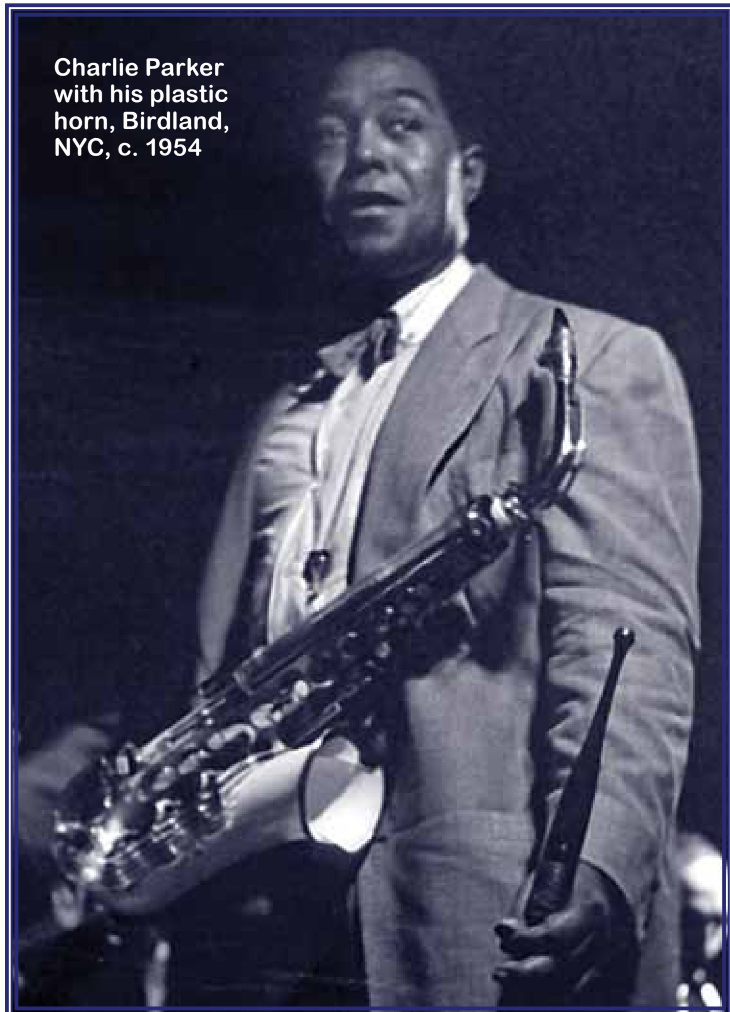
Phil Schaap, the host of *Bird Flight* on WKCR in New York City and an encyclopedic jazz scholar, was introducing the second breakdown: music from a Carnegie Hall concert on Christmas, 1954, when Parker couldn't quite finish "My Funny Valentine." It's his daughter's unexpected death, Schaap announces several times, that precedes and shapes these recordings of heartbreak. I knew enough of that history to imagine Parker on the West Coast, hearing of Pree's death

and sending his wife four bewildered and disjointed telegrams. Hard to absorb, also, is the fact that Parker dies three-and-a-half months later, on March 12, 1955. He was 34. I'd already outlived him.

Outside, the rain fell with such a fury that I thought it might be hail. Cars began to hydroplane. Some pulled to the berm. I could see the fogged outline of the George Washington Bridge and pressed on. Someone on the radio announced that this was record rain, that people should stay inside because sections of the highway had been washed out. That's when the exits began to close.

At first, the closings hardly registered because they started at the southern end of the highway, but when they closed 96th Street, I knew the storm had manhandled the city. Then the exits shut down closer to the time when I passed them, and I began to imagine the world disappearing behind my tires. Defrosting the windshield and mirrors did not clear the opaque rain and fog, and I kept wiping away nothing but my own hand. Behind me: grey and gray. I felt like someone fleeing from a tornado, or like a character in a science fiction movie who's chased by a consuming time warp.

Parker's music and Parker's life. My father's illness and recovery. The whole highway vanishing in my rearview mirror. When I crossed from Jersey into a much-sunnier Delaware Water Gap, all three fused into memory's prism, and I fell back 20 years to Friday, March 14, 1980. My mother had a month to live. I was 17 by a day. And the West End Jazz Café was honoring the 25th anniversary of Charlie Parker's death.



Charlie Parker with his plastic horn, Birdland, NYC, c. 1954

Scott Hyde

Now defunct, the West End used to be located on 113th and Broadway, and throughout the 1970s and early '80s, it mainly featured outstanding sidemen who never attained the fame of their leaders but who almost always provided an evening of lasting music. Many knew the club as the hangout for Columbia students because of its proximity to the university and because it sold reasonable grad school grub. I listened to many wonderful piano players there, including old Sammy Price from Kansas City, and Ram Ramirez, who composed "Lover Man."

Ramirez once spent an evening complaining – even from the stand! – that he had to suffer through the gig instead of attending a huge party hosted by Ruth Ellington, Duke's daughter. Another night, he backed a student vocalist from Eastman who sat in with his trio because, she said, "Lover Man" was her signature tune. (She was dreadful.)

I heard many other pianists, too many to name, and liked almost all of them, even though the piano itself wasn't terrible good. As Lee Konitz said to the crowd one evening: "That's the great Dick Katz on piano . . . I'm calling it a piano; you know what it is."

By 1980, I had switched from my first horn, the clarinet, to the saxophone (alto, then tenor), and I paid most attention to the horn players. Some nights I heard Willis "Gatortail" Jackson bar-honk his way through the blues; other times I'd hear former Ellington and Basie band members, players like multi-reedman Russell Procope and tenor saxophonist Harold Ashby. And with some frequency, a hungry Big Joe Turner arrived for a late set, ate a pizza, and then thundered choruses of "Roll 'em, Pete," "Flip, Flop, and Fly," or "Cherry Red":

Now you can take me
pretty mama,
roll me in yo' big brass bed.
I want you to
boogie my woogie,
Till my cheeks turn
cherry rehhhhhhhd,
cherry red.

When he'd leave the stand, I'd yell and yell – everybody yelled – and sometimes we got another song or two.

Most frequently, I heard the tenor player Percy France and the bebop pianist Joe Albany, who looked as though he'd been punched in the face every night of his life. I don't remember seeing photographers, but 1980 was the same year of Albany's "comeback" documentary, *Joe Albany: A Jazz Life*, in which he talks about his hopeless years – how his second wife kills herself, how the third tries to O.D., how his own drug use left him in a swamp of irresponsibility (he

recorded only once between 1946 and 1971). I don't know if Albany noticed me, but some nights I'd be half his audience. And once I asked if I could join him at his table between sets, and he said that was cool. The waitress brought him fish and chips.

"I like fish," he said to me. "For a long time, I couldn't get a good fish. It's not so bad here." Not deep fried, no ginger or soy sauce – just wet cubes of pasty flesh. At that moment, nothing in the world seemed more sad.

One evening in 1981, I found enough courage to bring my tenor saxophone and ask Percy France, a sideman that night for Sammy Price, if I could sit in with the band. He checked it out with Price and said he'd give me the nod in the second set. Peck Morrison was on bass; Billy Hart on drums.

When France motioned for me to join them, I felt so sick I didn't think I'd be able to blow a single note. But we played a blues, my choice of key, and when we traded fours, France didn't bother to cut me up. He knew that would be too easy. I can't imagine that I played very well, but when we finished, Sammy Price leaned into the microphone and said, "Let's give a hand for Youngblood." Even now, their generosity makes me grin and shake my head.

Sometime later, when I began to consider poetry as a dual center of my life, I described that evening. The poem was 100 percent autobiographical and I thought it captured the anxiety and joy of the event. It didn't. It was an awful poem – and failing in that way made me feel that I'd met my twin in Bill Matthews' "Mingus at The Showplace":

> *I was miserable, of course, for I was seventeen,*
> *and so I swung into action and wrote a poem,*
>
> *and it was miserable, for that was how I thought*
> *poetry worked: you digested experience and shat*
>
> *literature.*

A few lines later, the speaker shows Charles Mingus the poem, and the great jazz bassist responds, "There's a lot of that going around." The poem concludes:

> *He glowered*
> *at me but he didn't look as if he thought*
>
> *bad poems were dangerous, the way some poets do.*
> *If they were baseball executives they'd plot*
>
> *to destroy sandlots everywhere so that the game*
> *could be saved from children. Of course later*
>
> *that night he fired his pianist in mid-number*
> *and flurried him from the stand.*
>
> *"We've suffered a diminuendo in personnel,"*
> *he explained, and the band played on.*

Mingus could have been blistering to young Bill, and the poem has a built-in sense of gratitude. And similarly, what I learned most from sitting in with Percy France and Sammy Price was not so much the act itself – that I could and did play – but that they accepted what I was able to do at that time. At the West End, the famous people were not so famous (even if they seemed mythic to me) and anyone who wanted to remain anonymous could slouch within a booth or drink at the deep end of the bar. Who knows what I wanted to be, or even become, but I went regularly to hear the music. Nobody knew me, but it was enough – much more than enough – to feel the need to be there.

When my 17th birthday approached, my father asked what I wanted and, for a change, I had a suggestion: enough cash to host three friends at the West End. (My father welcomed this idea; he spent all of his "free" time attending to my mother's terminal illness.) My friends were new and a year older – high school seniors who, I later found out, had been instructed by an English teacher to include me in gatherings because I was a loner and my situation was known. On the night of March 14th, they arrived as a group, and I enjoyed introducing them to my father.

Josh was a tall fellow with tight curls and a smile that always seemed to say, "I'm a good guy. You can trust me." I knew he had personal battles with his father – a man in politics who began as a philanthropist and then succumbed to the Reagan regime – but Josh rarely let on that this made him ache.

Karen played a pretty good piano and sometimes we'd get together for "Tin Roof Blues" or the adagio from Mozart's clarinet concerto. When she'd

Duke Ellington (left) with multi-reedman Russell Procope, Randall's Island Jazz Festival, NYC, 1960

Herb Snitzer

braid her hair, she looked like a Native American princess.

Equally beautiful but in a blonde, Nordic way, Brita played flute as well as piano and saxophone; one had the sense she could play anything she wanted. I found her wildly attractive.

Just before we left the house, my mother called from her bedroom, and when I turned, I saw her standing – leaning against the door jamb, but standing on her own with my grandmother two steps behind, poised to catch her if she lost her balance. She wore a colorful dress (how long had that taken?) and my grandmother had combed her hair. The light in the doorway, no doubt dimmed by my mother's instruction, left her in near shadow so that the dress and the shimmers of hair drew our eyes away from her skeletal face and frame. I know she wished us well. I think she even raised a hand to wave.

("Sleep well," I used to tell her every night, even though both of us knew better. Sleep well. Those must have been my last words.)

Although that evening I didn't allow myself to meditate on my mother's state of mind, I realize now how fully conscious she must have been of her imminent death, how she knew, for example, that she would not be alive for my next birthday. I suspect, when we left, she agonized over forthcoming milestones: graduations, marriage, grandchildren. But she shared none of her sorrow – that night or any other. Only once did she begin such a conversation. "Oh Sascha," she said, late into her illness. "There's so much I want to tell you." But then she became teary, and I said, "I know."

On the walk to the West End, Karen tried to be encouraging about the cancer, how great it was that my mother could get out of bed, but I couldn't talk about it. I didn't allow myself to think of her pain, or even her courage. Worse, I felt angered by the display, as if my new friends would think, "Hey, it's not so bad at his house" and abandon me. I kept thinking, "I don't want to dwell on this tonight. If only for one evening, I want it all to disappear." Then someone started talking about being seventeen, and someone hugged me, and someone else asked a jazz question, and pretty soon we arrived at the club.

Before that evening, I almost always went to the West End alone, and most often I didn't drink booze, though I could. (The drinking age was 18, but in New York nobody seemed to care if you were shy a couple of years and kept to yourself.) I ushered Josh, Karen, and Brita past the eatery and into the back room, which featured, at opposite ends, a bar and a small stage. Tables filled the center but we took a booth against the wall, not far from the pianist's left hand. I think my waitress never imagined that I could *have* friends, so when I ordered beers for the table, she gave me a wide smile. I felt I owned the joint.

Big Joe Turner, backed by Buck Clayton (left) and Jack Teagarden, Newport, RI, 1958

Bill Crow

At that time, I knew nothing about Phil Schaap, the club's emcee. He had not yet won Grammy awards for his liner notes, and he wasn't known as an historian either, since this predated CDs and his work in record studio vaults, research that would later enrich my understanding of jazz.

Should I admit that I thought he was merely thin and boring? It seemed as though whole concerts could be performed within the pauses of his clichéd delivery: "Ladies and . . . gentleman," "proud . . . to present," "one-n-only," etc. Josh said something like, "Sascha, get up on that stage and teach this guy how to talk," and I grinned, trying to be the cool one. Didn't I know that Schaap was centrally responsible for hiring, and in some cases rediscovering, these musicians? Wasn't I smart enough to assume a reason for his role as announcer? No. I knew nothing about running a club – any club, much less a New York City jazz club in the "Jazz is Dead" '70s.

The band that night featured Howard McGhee, a terrific trumpeter who had recorded with Charlie Parker in the mid 1940s for labels such as Dial, Stash, and Verve (I knew several of those sessions). Wearing shades beneath the brown lights of the club, he still had the look of a '50s hipster, and my eyes kept following the map of his face, badly pockmarked and grooved by years of heroin. He was the headliner, and a virtual unknown outside of jazz circles.

Joe Albany played piano that night, but the other names

escaped me, which is why, 20 years later, I telephoned Phil Schaap to see if he could conjure the line-up. Immediately he recalled the tribute, but not even Schaap could remember the bass player (Jeff Fuller) or drummer (Shelton Gary). The alto player, he thought, could possibly have been Dickey Myers, an obscure saxophonist who gigged around town in those days. Much later, Jeff Fuller confirmed Myers had indeed been in the front line with McGhee.

Myers, in fact, got most of my attention. Was he better than McGhee? No, and probably not as good. But I played the saxophone, too, and here was someone who could invoke Charlie Parker – who knew the tunes, knew the bop cadences – and he seemed so damn *happy* to be there. If Josh or Brita or Karen spoke during the first set, I did not hear them. I'm not sure if I've ever been more lost in music.

And where did Howard McGhee's memory travel through the chasmic silences of Schaap's break notices? What fragments from the announcer's microphone lingered? "Bird," "Bird Lives," "McGhee, who recorded," "Legend," "Dial sessions," "tonight, so proud," "back soon."

Maybe, at least for a moment, McGhee fell back to July 29, 1946, when a 25-year-old Parker drank a quart of whisky in a failed effort to settle himself for a studio recording. Joe Albany had been slotted to play piano for that infamous gig at Dial (he fought with Bird the night before and quit the band) but McGhee was there and had helped arrange the recording. They cut only four tunes: "Max Making Wax," "Lover Man," "The Gypsy," and "Bebop."

How Parker was able to play at all is something of a medical miracle, no matter what version of the story you believe. Some say he took fistfuls of Benzedrine all week and was suffering from withdrawal; some say he couldn't score enough heroin and was jonesing from the little he had in his system. Some say he got six Phenobarbital tablets at the gig itself.

McGhee's version is more to the point: "He was in trouble. ... His horn was shooting up in the air and he couldn't stand still, he couldn't sit down. ... He didn't know what to do."

It was McGhee who tried to salvage the session, and McGhee who got the call that, after Parker left the studio, he'd gotten into trouble at the Civic Hotel. Fire. Bird had burned the room, or was it a cigarette smoldering on the mattress, or was there really a fire at all? (McGhee said he never saw any signs.) And Bird was naked, though where they found him also changes from account to account – in his bedroom, in the hotel lobby, in his car, on top of his car. (What version of the story should we believe?)

McGhee drives to the hotel, but Parker's already in police custody, sent to Camarillo State Hospital where he'll stay for six months. According to McGhee, Bird had calmed down once he found him:

McGhee: *Damn, what's goin' on, man?*

Parker: *Oh, everything's fine, everything's fine. Give me my clothes. I want to get out of here.*

McGhee: *Well, it ain't quite like that, Bird. I can't get you out like that. You have to go to court and all that sh--. I don't know what the f--- they got against you, but they got something against you. It sounds kind of bad.*

As for the recordings from that afternoon, Parker later called them "my worst on wax. … They were all awful." And how could they be otherwise? He was spinning – spinning away from the booth, his horn oscillating the way the room should have spun for someone who'd finished a quart of whisky. Then, and forever on record, he misses the entrance to "Lover Man," and when he reaches for his first major run, his horn – did he arc it to the side or turn his back to the microphone? – drops out of tune. Doppler effect.

I didn't know any of this that night at the West End when they featured Dickey Myers on "Lover Man," nor can I offer a telling detail about McGhee's reaction, though he announced the ballad feature and left the stand for a round at the bar.

Did the 34 years dull the ache of those Dial sessions, or would a rendition like this, with cascading Bird-influenced lines, jigsaw McGhee's memory?

Doppler effect: *everything's fine, everything's fine*. Tune coming to a close. *You have to go to court and all that sh--*. Shelton Gary motioning to the bar. *Damn, what's goin' on, man?* Someone yells, "Bird Lives!" *It sounds kind of bad*. "Welcome back to the stage, a living legend . . ." *Well, it ain't quite like that, Bird*. Sotto voce: "Let's end the set with something fast. Anything fast." *Give me my clothes. I want to get out of here.*

"52nd Street Theme." Break.

My friends came back into focus. We had another round of cold beer and they wished me happy birthday yet again. "You should ask the sax player if you can study with him," Brita said, and Karen thought that was a wonderful idea. "Yes, definitely," she said.

I saw the band members grouped near the bar and walked over. I said they were wonderful and asked Myers if he gave lessons. "Yeah," he said, mildly interested. "You can call me if you want." But then he leapt from the topic and threw his arm around McGhee. Suddenly he got all sugared up.

"This is the *man*," he said, beaming now. "It's such an honor to be here with him. I'm so humbled." McGhee smiled, looked down, looked away, said nothing. "I mean,

Charlie Parker with strings, Birdland, NYC, c. 1954.

Scott Hyde

this guy *played* with Bird, you know? This guy's my *hero*."

It was my cue to say something nice about Howard McGhee. But I didn't quite know how to respond. I mentioned that my father had loaned me the Savoy sessions that featured him with Parker, but, unintentionally, I'd created a bizarre time shift. 1946; 1980. McGhee looked at me – thin and white, eager but near-mute – and lost interest immediately. What could I possibly know about jazz or a jazz life? Hell, where was Howard McGhee in the consciousness of America?

At this point, memory jump cuts like a scratch on a record; I can't recall saying goodbye or walking away. But when I returned to the table, Josh seemed very excited. He didn't think I'd actually approach them and he wanted to know all about the encounter – not because he cared about jazz musicians, but because he cared about me. (I know that now.)

Karen and Brita encouraged me to pursue the private lessons, and I told them I'd think about it. For me, though, it was enough that I had thanked them for playing. It would be the first time among many where I'd be amazed that the audience hadn't mobbed the band and that no one, in fact, paid them any attention whatsoever.

In the late '80s, the West End Jazz Café changed its name to the West Gate and moved a block north before folding. Most of the players I used to hear are gone, too

Howard McGhee died in 1987, age 69. As of today, only four of his records remain in print, the last from 1976.

Joe Albany died in 1988, shortly before his 64th birthday; he has about four CDs as well.

As for saxophonist Dickey Myers, I know only this: no recordings are available (not even as a sideman), and he died in 1992, unknown even to most jazz aficionados.

That same year, Percy France died after being hit by a car in New York City; like Myers, only a couple recordings exist on CD.

My three friends attended different colleges while I finished my final year of high school. I'm not sure if Josh fully resolved his differences with his father but, with rather astonishing circularity, we ended up a quarter of a century later in neighboring summer homes.

He's lost touch with Karen and Brita, too. Someone told me Karen moved to Indonesia and founded a school in Bali. As for Brita, I heard she married well and spends half the year in Europe, though I've never followed this up. Some things, I think, should be left in the time where they grew, and I'm comfortable leaving them there in the wooden booth.

That night, I learned the importance of hearing music with others, even if nobody says anything. I witnessed the essence of courage: my mother walking on her own for the last time, laboring to give everyone a sense of hope for a full evening. I experienced the pleasure of being a host, even if I only had a two-beer tolerance.

But most of all, I remember the quintet itself, the front line of saxophone and trumpet, those bebop tunes and phrases I didn't even know I knew by heart. Throughout the evening, my collapsing life at home transformed into a world of sound as the spirit of Charlie Parker flooded the horns. McGhee no longer had to mourn a loved friend; Bird was *there*, and we were there to hear the room become the tunes themselves: "Hot House," "Cool Blues," "Confirmation," "Parker's Mood," "Now's the Time," "Dizzy Atmosphere," "All the Things You Are," "Groovin' High."

To imagine my fingers on the keys, my lips around the mouthpiece of a saxophone, all I had to do was close my eyes.

I'm closing them now. 𝄐

Part Two – Tension and Release

Marek Lazarski

by David Liebman

A successful artistic statement, to be fully balanced, should include emotional depth as well as technical ideas and content. The full range of human emotions (love, sadness, joy, anger, etc.) provides the source material an artist draws upon to create, while the intensity of one's passion fuels the process. How an artist balances emotion and technique in relation to the ongoing process of tension and release, one of the primary aesthetic principles of artistic creation, is a major factor in determining the ultimate success of a work of art.

From the technical standpoint, achieving a convincing balance between tension and release depends on how the artist uses the options available within a particular artistic parameter. If a painter has to decide upon the right tool for portraying a specific figure, the appropriate selection may depend on the story line and what aspect of the picture needs to be emphasized or minimized, thereby influencing his choice of a thick- or thin-bristled brush. In music, the juggling of dynamic levels dramatically influences the denouement of tension and release in a performance or composition. This ever-present ebb and flow of tension and release is determined by subtle and intricate technical matters to be chosen accordingly by each artist. Balance and contrast within the constraints of tension and release are omnipresent in artistic creation. An artist's work should be flexible enough to absorb the extremes as well as the subtle shadings inherent within the tension and release principle.

Appreciating Art

A deep appreciation and understanding of an art form results from a combination of spontaneous emotional responses and a familiarity with the work itself. The former is inexplicable and largely intuitive while the latter is developed through education aimed towards understanding the processes taking place. People have an inherent fascination and curiosity in knowing how things work. When one appreciates the thought and discipline involved in producing a work of art as well as emotionally enjoying it, admiration and respect follow. The bottom line to appreciation is education and repeated high-level exposure to the art at hand. For the artist personally, it is important to be able to judge and to enjoy work in one's field in an objective manner, taking into account personal taste and the potential of a natural competitive element, especially if the work is in the artist's own area of expertise.

Grafting

Two common traits among most serious artists are the desire to acquire fresh information in one's field and the ability to learn new material. Knowing how to learn assumes being able to recognize useful information, followed by the ability to comprehend the concepts involved, then lastly the skill to incorporate the material into the artist's already familiar milieu. The concept of "grafting" can be helpful when confronted with the task of incorporating new material. This process involves the transference of concepts or techniques from one area to another, possibly quite removed in context from the source itself. It may also mean translating ideas from one medium to another. For example, many of the harmonic concepts of the outstanding twentieth century classical composers have been "grafted" to the language of jazz throughout its relatively short history. Instrumentalists might graft techniques which are natural to

a specific musical instrument to their own instrument, thereby creating a new context for the concept. Over the years, I have had several guitarists comment to me that they were trying to emulate a saxophonist's concept of line construction, purposely avoiding the habitual finger patterns that are natural to the guitar. Vice versa, on the horn I have often tried to imitate the way a guitarist or Indian flautist bends notes. Grafting is a major tool for discovering new combinations.

Artistic Stages

The first stage of the artistic process involves the absorption of principles and techniques that have already been accepted as the standards in the field and the ability to duplicate these concepts up to minimum level of competency. For a time, this may mean that the long-term and overall goal of formulating an individual style is temporarily put on hold. After this imitative stage, the artist personalizes past and contemporary styles via active participation in real world activities happening in the field.

As this participatory process evolves, some artists will progress to the third stage of innovation; that is, they may contribute something unique, potentially of major importance in the field. But it could also be as subtle as discovering a different way to play something on one's instrument or possibly inventing a new fingering, etc. From the personalization (second) period onward, further study of technique and past achievements in the field broadens the expressive power of the artist's work, enabling a wider range of emotions and ideas to be conveyed.

Study of the past need not be an obstacle to creativity, but rather a source for conceptualizing the present and future. Bela Bartok wrote "that only from the entirely old can the entirely new be born." In jazz, study of older styles and artists can result in fresh insights when "grafted" onto a modern concept.

The stages of artistic growth reveal themselves in more obvious ways during the beginning years. For example, significant improvements in technique and conception at an early point of musical development can be easily noticed by simply hearing two recordings of oneself done several months apart. After the beginning stages, improvement appears to be measurably slower since progress is more subtly revealed. An artist must maintain a sense of positive reinforcement at this stage. This is psychologically crucial, especially during the times of frustration and self doubt which many artists go through at this stage (or at one time or another).

When I was working with drummer Elvin Jones, I asked him how he heard himself after so many years. He said that the ability to execute something with more ease than before was indicative of musical growth for him. The mature and long-practicing artist recognizes this activity as the refining and editing process. What is more important as the years roll by is that the artist vigilantly places oneself at the center of the creative storm dealing with any new challenges that arise in the field. Process becomes more important than results at this later stage of development.

When one looks to the past in the study of an art form, (s)he should aim at finding the original source of a style. Current exponents of a particular style may initially serve as source material and inspiration. But for true and honest artistic growth, second (or later) generation artists are not the most effective vehicles for learning what came before. For example in jazz, a student interested in the Coltrane style should study the music of the master himself, not me or some of my contemporaries. Our value to the learning artist is useful as it relates to how we each took one aspect of Coltrane's music and developed an individual approach. (Of course, in the years to come, who can predict from where the next new source will come?)

Being Objective

At the outset of the artistic process a student practices and learns on a mechanical level with little reflection about any deeper implications. This approach is advantageous during the early stage of learning the craft since beginner learning requires, to a large extent, rote memorization. As one matures past the early stage, a certain degree of self consciousness may occur which can complicate the learning process for a time; the danger being that one's mind gets in the way of the laborious (and daily) discipline necessary to hone the craft. Clear objectivity is important at this point. One must address the technical issues at hand and let the psyche slowly collect the impressions, feelings, etc., that will eventually find their way into the personalization stage. The challenge is to maintain awareness of one's weak points while organizing an approach towards improvement. As the craft is fine-tuned, the ability to achieve a balance between negative and constructive criticism improves over time.

On the subject of craft, it should be noted that in many cases artistic breakthroughs have been accompanied by technical innovation. Examples are numerous, such as Picasso's cubist renderings of the human anatomy, or James Joyce's stream of consciousness writing style. In jazz, the instrumental technique has been extended or enlarged with every major artistic breakthrough. Louis Armstrong extended the playing range of the trumpet; Charlie Parker seemingly doubled the fluidity of the saxophone; John Coltrane extended the range of the tenor sax; John McLaughlin, Cecil Taylor and Art Tatum pushed the technique forward on their respective instruments and contributed to the evolution of the entire music as an art form.

For a beginning artist, technique can lead to more knowledge and advances, but craft should never supersede content. Self-awareness and objective evaluation by the artist is crucial at all stages of development.

Jazz at ESU: Mentors/Masters

Photos by Garth Woods

At right: Jim Daniels

Below: Bobby Avey (left) and Matt Vashlishan

The 2008 ESU Jazz Masters Seminar (Volume VIII) was a highlight of the spring semester and brought to the ESU campus a wide array of accomplished jazz professionals to interact with students and the Pocono community. The seminar has been taught by Associate Professor of Music Patrick Dorian since he developed and launched it in 2000.

The featured presenters included:

■ Pianist Bobby Avey and saxophonist Matt Vashlishan, two young, gifted and conservatory-trained jazz musicians who were raised in the Pocono Mountains region.

■ Dennis Carrig, Mary Carrig and Jason Wilson, new owners of the Deer Head Inn, who expressed their passion for presenting jazz artists at the historic venue that has been the home of jazz in the Poconos since the early 1950s.

■ Singer/pianist Bob Dorough and bassist Ben Tucker, who have been musical partners for more than 50 years. They have collaborated on such projects as the hit song "Comin' Home Baby" and the *School House Rock!* television series.

■ Concert XV of the ESU Mentors Series, which featured the quartet of Dorough, Tucker, saxophonist Nelson Hill, and drummer Bill Goodwin, and the singing group The Bobettes (Vicki Doney, Val Hawk, and Nancy Reed).

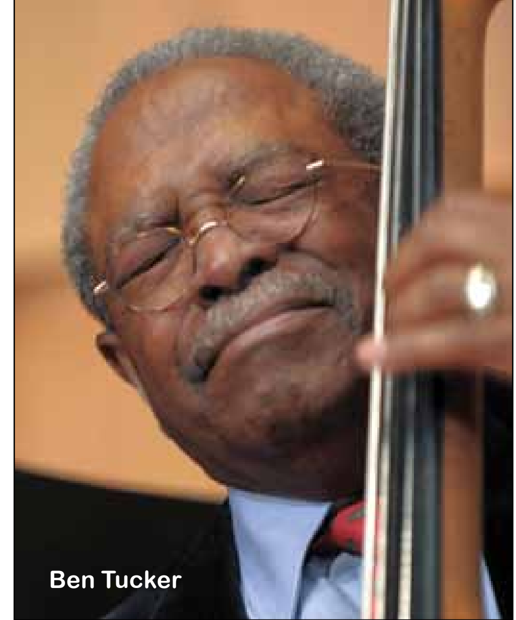
■ Bass trombonist and tuba performer Jim Daniels, who has toured with the Woody Herman Orchestra, Chuck Mangione, the Mel Lewis Orchestra, the Phil Woods Big Band. He currently teaches in the ESU Music Department and is the director of the ESU Jazz Ensemble;

■ Acclaimed author and jazz historian Ashley Kahn, who presented an in-depth focus on his 2001 book *Kind of Blue: The Making of the Miles Davis Masterpiece.*

Up Close and Personal with the Professionals

Photos by Charles Perry Hebard

Nelson Hill


Ben Tucker

Bob Dorough

The Bobettes (from left): Vicki Doney, Val Hawk and Nancy Reed

Continued from 3

And my reply:

Hey Jamey,

No problem! I never use minor chords; they seem so sad to me. In these perilous times, we should concentrate on happy major chords. And no dominants with flat nines! They are almost as dangerous as half -diminished chords and even more depressing. Did you know that Berklee teaches students that a half-diminished is a chord built on the seventh step? So, in the key of C, you should use a C scale as B half-dim. But don't try to harmonize the C natural as a ninth because it makes me weep. Consequently, students all over the world are messing up Dizzy's tune, "Woody 'n' You"! Dizzy always considered half-dims as minor chords with the sixth in the bass.

Phil

After a wait of more than 49 years, I am happy to report that the *Children's Suite* is finished and Bill Goodwin is ready to hit the record companies and sell it. The Walt Disney Company worked closely with us to give us the best possible deal and we are grateful for their generous consideration. The piece is based on the verse from A. A. Milne's "Now We Are Six," and features my Little Big Band and the voices of Bob Dorough and Vicki Doney. Eric Doney was the musical director and we also added a string quartet to the mix.

Ozzie Cadena, a record producer of jazz and gospel music from the 1950s to the 1970s for the Savoy and Prestige labels, and later a promoter and booster of jazz in Los Angeles, died on April 9 in Torrance, CA. He was 83 and lived in Redondo Beach.

From 1954 to 1959, Mr. Cadena was an in-house producer and A&R scout for Savoy, a small but influential record label based in Newark, NJ. He helped arrange for dozens of important sessions, including ones by Charles Mingus, Little Jimmy Scott, Yusef Lateef, Milt Jackson, Marion Williams, the Ward Singers, and Shirley Caesar. He also produced the first albums by Cannonball Adderley and the J. J. Johnson – Kai Winding double trombone group.

Cuba has two parks named after a Lenin: one for Vladimir and one for John (Lennon). This is similar to Belgium's 20 franc note with Charlie Parker on one side and Adolph Sax on the other.

Spanish proverb: If you eat well and sh-- hard, there is no need to fear death.

Hal Stein was my first guru. We were in Juilliard together and used to go to the Claremont Hotel and play with Wilbur Hogan, a great drummer. Hal was the first cat I heard up-close who could articulate the bebop thing. He taught me so much about music as well as life. I loved him deeply and we remained friends right up to his recent demise. He died while I was flying home from Denver and probably passed me on his way to Heaven. He was great man, a great player and teacher, and I shall miss him.

The following was posted on Hal's website [www.halsteinjazz.com] by his pianist and friend, Lee Bloom:

"It's never easy to bear sad news. This past Sunday evening [April 27, 2008], the jazz community lost one of its great personalities and original musical voices, saxophonist Hal Stein.

"Hal was a charming, passionate musician; a gifted improviser and a dedicated teacher who made lots of great jazz and mentored many younger players during his long career. I feel privileged to have been his friend, pianist and collaborator for the past seven-plus years and will miss him terribly.

"Hal finally succumbed to lung cancer; he would have been 80 years old this September. Hal is the subject of an in-progress documentary film by Lee Bloom and Mike Waters. An up-close and personal look at the life of a serious jazz musician, the film features concert footage plus in-depth interviews with Hal, Phil Woods, Bill Stewart and many others. In the coming months, we will be posting new short clips for your viewing pleasure.

"Mike and Lee are seeking interested parties to donate funds to assist with the completion of this film. Please contact us at lee@leebloom.com."

I asked my dear friend and one of the world's greatest saxophone players, Vic Morosco, for some of his memories of our Juilliard days together. This is what he wrote back to me:

Yo Nabe!

What a nice surprise to hear from you. We were at Juilliard in 1953-54. I was a freshman and you were a senior. We actually shared one class together. I think it was a last-ditch attempt on your part to get some academics in. It was an English literature class with Mr. Makepiece. You bummed all my cigarettes and I was delighted to share them with you. I first saw you playing in the student lounge for a freshman orientation dance. I was 17 years old and haven't quite recovered since, but I am gaining on it. The year seemed to come to an abrupt end, with you at the Apollo Theater with Charlie Barnett. I think that's the way that goes.

Vic

When my clarinet teacher from Juilliard, Vincent J. Abato, died in January, Vic told me the following story about my old professor (who was more commonly known as "Jimmy" Abato). I never knew about this.

Vic wrote:

"I often asked him about innate talent versus training, and one day he told me a story about a clarinet student auditioning at Juilliard. The student played his audition for the panel (which included such players as Daniel Bonade, Augustin Duques, and, of course, Mr. Abato) and each of the judges wrote down whether they would accept the player or not. Each paper was examined, and in the end, all the votes

were NO. All except for Mr. Abato's.

The head of the panel asked him why he voted to accept this student whom everyone else had rejected. He said that this student had more talent than anyone in the room (and this was quite a room full of talent!), and he would prove it if they would bring the student back in. They brought the student back in and Mr. Abato had him go through a few basic tests, involving singing and reproducing pitches played at the piano. Afterwards, the head of the panel agreed to accept the student if Mr. Abato was willing to take him on. Mr. Abato agreed, and the student was accepted. The name of this clarinet player was Phil Woods."

This story touched me very deeply.

I missed my final exam because I was working at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, very close to Juilliard physically, but light years away philosophically. I had taken a leave of absence to do a tour with Charlie Barnet's great band, and my exam coincided with our Apollo sojourn.

Unfortunately, due to my youthful stupidity, my clarinet was stolen on the day of the exam. I went to the school to tell Mr. Abato what happened and I asked him if I could reschedule the exam for a later date. He went ballistic and called me some very bad names. I never took the exam and regret not getting my diploma, but things happen.

I never saw Mr. Abato again but I had some great lessons. I got a kick out of some friends telling me that whenever my name was mentioned, he would say, "Phil Woods? Taught the kid everything he knows!" Maybe, Jimmy. Maybe! He was a difficult man sometimes but he was a very important man in my formative years.

Garth Woods

I am composing a new saxophone quartet dedicated to my old teacher. Hopefully it will be premiered next year at the 2009 Saxophone Congress, which will be held in Thailand in July.

Good reads and other recommendations:

A Life in the Golden Age of Jazz by Fabrice Zammarchi and Sylvie Mas. Parkside Publications [www.parkside-publications.com/defranco1.html]. A wonderful biography of dear friend and NOTE recipient, Buddy DeFranco. It is loaded with great photos and stories. I just did the Buddy DeFranco Jazz Festival held at the University of Montana in Missoula and, at 85, he sounds better than ever.

And this, about one of my heroes, Lee Konitz, who says in the preface:

"That's my way of preparation – to not be prepared. And that takes a lot of preparation." *Lee Konitz - Conversations on the Improviser's Art* by Andy Hamilton, with a foreword by Joe Lovano. The University of Michigan Press [www.press.umich.edu].

And this, from my number one son, Garth, regarding www.uctv.tv/podcasts: "A great site with tons of lectures, concerts, interviews, etc. You can watch most of the stuff right on this site. But an even cooler way is to use iTunes (in iTunes, click on 'iTunes Store' => 'iTunes U' => 'UCTV'). That way, you get the stuff delivered to your computer automatically."

Don't miss the May 19, 2008 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine [www.newyorker.com]. There is an outstanding article on Phil Schaap, disk jockey on WKCR, Columbia University's radio station. His program, *Bird Flight*, focuses on the music of Charlie Parker, and is arguably the best jazz program ever. By the time this column appears, the issue may be difficult to locate but will be worth the search. I am sure it will be archived.

Brotherly Jazz: The Heath Brothers [www.brotherlyjazz.com] is a great DVD about one of the most beloved families in jazz. "The Heath Brothers have made the world a better place. They're what jazz is all about," says Sonny Rollins. I couldn't agree more! Produced by Danny Scher for DanSun Productions and directed by Jesse Block.

The Pocono musical community lost one of its biggest supporters when Bette Bowman passed away recently. She will be missed!

So, be nice to each other. As Al Cohn once said to me, "Phil, it's nice to be nice."

Amen to that.

Bandstand 101

by Hal Galper

Last March I was pleased to have been invited to Boston's Berklee Performance Center to play at a tribute for my old mentor, Herb Pomeroy, who passed away last year. While there, I was reminded of an experience we shared together and I offer this as my little testimonial to his greatness.

We all talk about the demise of the "School of the Bandstand" created by the collapse of the apprenticeship system. I was lucky to have been among one of the last generations to experience it.

I "came up" in Boston and a couple of years after leaving Berklee School of Music, as it was then called, I started working around town with its best musicians.

Alto saxophonist Boots Mussulli, of Stan Kenton fame, had a club called the Crystal Room in a town just outside of Boston where he'd feature a concert for the local luminaries from time to time. The bandstand was behind the bar. It was only one person deep so the musicians had to set up in a row – like it used be at the old Metropole in New York (for those of you old enough to remember it).

I was positioned on the far right at the spinet piano. Next in line, from right to left, was bassist John Neves, then Herb Pomeroy. On the other side of Herb was drummer Jimmy Zitano, and on the far left, alto saxophonist Charlie Mariano.

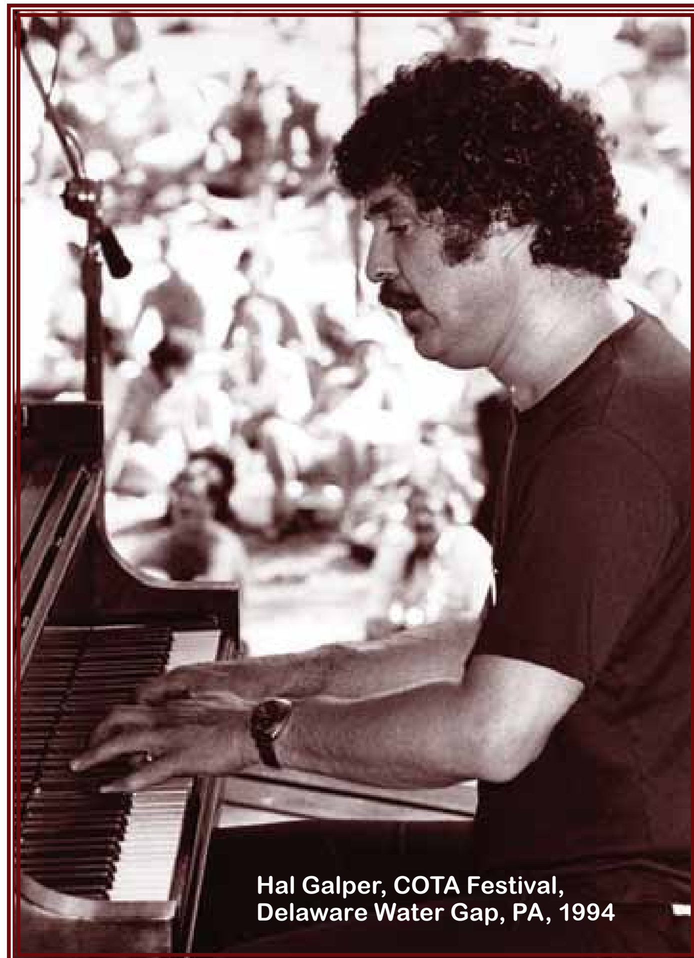
Charlie had quite a temper. His combos at Berklee were known for their acerbic content. He could be heard all the way down the hall yelling, "you no-playing [expletives] don't know sh--. … You couldn't swing your way out of a paper bag." And so on.

In any case, we were playing a song and it was Charlie's solo. At one point he stopped, took his horn out of his mouth, turned and looked at me, and yelled "!!!@%$&***!!!." He put his horn back in his mouth to resume his solo. But because he was so far away, I couldn't make out what he was yelling. So I looked to Herb for some help, as he was closer to Charlie. Herb looked back at me and shrugged his shoulders. He couldn't hear Charlie either so I just kept on comping.

About a minute later Charlie stopped his solo, took his horn out of his mouth again, looked at me again, and yelled "!!!@%$&***!!!" with this angry expression on his face and then resumed his solo.

I looked questioningly at Herb again, seeking assistance. He walked over to me and said, "I think he can't hear you and he wants you to play harder."

That made sense to me since Charlie was so far away from the puny little spinet that made hardly any sound at all. So, trying to be the perfect accompanist, I played harder.


Hal Galper, COTA Festival, Delaware Water Gap, PA, 1994

Walter Bredel

Charlie stopped again, twisted his face toward me in a furious rage, and yelled "!!!@%$&***!!!" and started playing again.

Still unable to fathom what Charlie wanted I looked to Herb again. He held both his hands out, like playing the piano, making the charade of someone pounding the keyboard. So I pounded the sh-- out of the poor spinet.

The tune and the set finally ended. Overcome with curiosity and my desire to learn, I fearlessly approached Charlie and asked him what he had been yelling at me. Charlie said he was trying to get me to stroll. Never having heard the term before I asked him, "What the hell does stroll mean?" He explained, "it means lay out." [i.e. stop playing]

Thanks, Herb. I'll never forget you.

Readers, Please Take Note

Pocono Jazz Hour Makes Its Debut:

A new weekly program, the *Pocono Jazz Hour*, was launched June 18 on ESU's campus radio station, WESS 90.3 FM. Co-hosted by Bob Bush and Bill Hopkins, the show is dedicated exclusively to the recordings of the many musicians who have contributed to the fertile legacy of the Pocono Mountains regional jazz scene. This new one-hour program starts each Wednesday at noon immediately following *Jazz From A To Z*, which begins at 10 a.m.

St. Louis Gallery Exhibits Photos by Herb Snitzer:

The Sheldon Art Galleries in St. Louis, MO, is featuring an exhibit, *Herb Snitzer: Photographs from the Last Years of Metronome, 1958-1962*, at the History of Jazz Gallery through September 20, 2008. Herb Snitzer has donated many of his outstanding jazz prints to the ACMJC over the years, and we are pleased to feature them regularly in The NOTE (see back cover). This exhibit presents historic photos taken in New York City when Herb worked for Metronome jazz magazine. For more information, call the Sheldon Art Galleries at (314) 533-9900 or visit www.thesheldon.org.

Time for the Scranton Jazz Festival:

The 3rd Annual Scranton Jazz Festival is scheduled for August 1-3, 2008 at the historic Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel and various other venues in downtown Scranton, PA. Presented by the PA Jazz Alliance, under the artistic direction of Marko Marcinko, the scheduled performers this year include Spyro Gyra, the New York Voices, Sherrie Maricle and Five Play, Hendrick Meurkens' New York Samba Group, J.D. Walter, the Marko Marcinko Latin Jazz Quintet, the Festival Big Band featuring Phil Woods, and others. For more information, visit www.pajazzalliance.com.

COTA Jazz Festival in September:

The 31st edition of the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts (COTA) festival will be held September 5-7 in Delaware Water Gap, PA. The scheduled lineup includes David Liebman, Urbie and Jesse Green, Bob Dorough, JARO, Lew Del Gatto and Bob Keller, Nellie McKay, and the COTA Festival Orchestra featuring Phil Woods playing music from the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. For more information, call (570) 424-2210 or visit www.cotajazz.org.

Inaugural *ESU Jazz Synergy Series* Coming in 2008-09:

The first two events in a brand new jazz performance series co-produced by the ACMJC and the ESU Music Department have been scheduled. On Thursday September 4 at 7:30 p.m., "ESU Welcomes COTA '08" will help kick off COTA weekend with the sounds of Co-op Bop: Alan Gaumer (tp), Nelson Hill (as, ts), Craig Kastelnik (org), Tom Kozic (g) and Gary Rissmiller (d). Then, on Thursday October 16 at 7:30 p.m., a "Pocono Piano Fest" will take place featuring a double-bill of solo keyboard masters: Hal Galper and Phil Markowitz. Both concert events will take place at the Cecilia S. Cohen Recital Hall in ESU's Fine and Performing Arts Center. For more information, call (570) 422-3828 or send email to alcohncollection@esu.edu. Additional events in the series will be announced at a future date.

ACMJC Oral History Project Continues:

It was a pleasure to travel to NYC in June to record an oral history interview with Stanley Kay – professional drummer, road manager and assistant drummer for Buddy Rich for more than 30 years, manager of such show business talents as Maurice and Gregory Hines, Michelle Lee and Paul Burke, and currently manager of the Diva Jazz Orchestra and its acclaimed small group, Five Play. Stanley is not only a passionate jazz advocate and captivating storyteller, but he has been an ardent supporter of the ACMJC (he personally rounded up a dozen sponsor donations to help launch our new *Library Alive* concert series). Thanks, Stanley, for your time, your memories, and your important contributions to jazz history!

Saxophonist Identified:

Several people, including Glenn Davis, Mark Hamza, Byron Mutnick and Phil Woods, came forward to supply the name of the unidentified saxophone player in the Harry Leahey COTA group photo on page 12 of the previous issue of The NOTE (Winter/Spring '08). That tenor player is Mack Goldsbury. Thanks to everyone who helped to set the record straight!

Mailbag

Wow! The new format of The NOTE is outstanding, comparing favorably with all other music magazines. The content, quality, colors, the layout, and the rare, beautiful photos are all impressive. Al would be proud to see it.

Bless you all who are making it happen! A check to help with the postage is enclosed.

Jerry Dorn
(a happy reader),
Philadelphia, PA

Thanks so much for sending the latest issue of The NOTE along. It was fun to see the picture on the front. I always thought it was very cheerful and colorful. That was a particularly good week at sea and Al helped make it special.

This is a particularly good issue. Keep 'em coming. You may post [this] note anywhere you'd like except on the bathroom wall!! Some folks are coming over this afternoon to discuss a new book project and I plan to show them how effective color photographs can be. Your issue of The NOTE is a perfect example.

Hank O'Neal,
New York City

[Editor's Note: We've received a lot of positive feedback on the new look of The NOTE.

These two letters best represent the feelings of many of the people we've heard from. Thanks to all of you who took the time to give us your reactions.]

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Readers, we love hearing from you! Just make sure you mark somewhere on your correspondence that it is intended as a "Mailbag" letter (so we know that it's not a personal note), and include your name, city and state/country.

Send it to:

Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection – Kemp Library
200 Prospect St.
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301.

If you send your letter via email, put "Mailbag" in the subject line. Our email address is: alcohncollection@esu.edu. Please note that due to space limitations, those letters selected for publication may be edited.

Contributors & Acknowledgements

For additional information about contributors to this issue of The NOTE, you can visit their websites:

Patrick Dorian – www.esu.edu/~pdorian
David Liebman – www.davidliebman.com
Phil Woods – www.philwoods.com

Special thanks to:
Dave Walsh and Jon Erb, for helping to transcribe the John Bunch oral history interview; Hal Galper, for contributing his amusing remembrance of sharing the bandstand with Charlie Mariano and Herb Pomeroy; Sascha Feinstein, Professor of English at Lycoming (PA) College, for sharing his touching personal memories and indelible jazz impressions from his formative years; Al Stewart, for the wonderful centerfold photo capturing his time with the Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra; Scott Hyde, Bill Crow, Russ Chase and Morty Trautman for photos taken from the Collection and used to illustrate the inside articles; Herb Snitzer, once again, for his classic Lester Young photo on the back cover; and, photographers Garth Woods and Charles Perry Hebard, also again, for capturing jazz history-in-the-making at the *Library Alive* Concert, ESU Jazz Masters Seminar and Mentors Concert.

About the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection

Long-time readers of The NOTE are no doubt very familiar with the history and makeup of the ACMJC. However, we're delighted to be adding new recipients to our mailing list on a regular basis. So, for those of you who may be just getting acquainted with us, here's a bit of general background information to let you know about this valuable ESU educational resource.

The **Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection** was established in 1988 to honor the life and legacy of "Mr. Music," Al Cohn – saxophonist, arranger, composer and Pocono neighbor. The collection is located on the ground level of ESU's Kemp Library and consists of donated jazz recordings, books, periodicals, oral histories, sheet music, art, photographs, memorabilia and ephemera. All styles and eras of jazz are represented in the Collection, with a special emphasis on the preservation and documentation of Al Cohn's music, his long-time association with Zoot Sims, and the contributions of the many jazz musicians considered to be influences, colleagues, disciples, admirers and friends of Al.

There are also several special collections within the ACMJC. The *Pocono Jazz Heritage Collection* maintains the history of the fertile jazz community here in the Pocono Mountains, through recordings, documents, photographs and a complete set of videos from the ESU Jazz Masters Seminar and Mentor Concert Series. The thousands of exceptional recordings in the *Coover Gazdar Collection* reflect the life-long love of jazz of this avid record collector and discographer. The *Eddie Safranski Collection* contains personal materials from the acclaimed bassist who played with the Charlie Barnet and Stan Kenton orchestras in the 1940s and worked as a music director for NBC in the 1950s and 1960s.

Materials in the collections are available year-round to students, researchers, musicians, journalists, educators and jazz enthusiasts, and are used as part of the ACMJC's outreach activities, such as the publication and world-wide distribution of The NOTE three times per year.

The ACMJC Needs Your Support!

Donations to the ACMJC are gratefully accepted and help to sustain the Collection and The NOTE. Corporate matching gifts are very welcome too! Please make all checks payable to "ESU Foundation – ACMJC" and mail them to:

ACMJC – Kemp Library
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania
200 Prospect St.
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301-2999

To donate materials, please call the Collection Coordinator at 570-422-3828 or send email to alcohncollection@esu.edu. And to all those who have so generously contributed to the ACMJC in the past, please accept our heartfelt thanks!

For more information, visit the ACMJC website at www.esu.edu/alcohncollection.

Photo by Herb Snitzer

Lester Young in front of the Five Spot Café, NYC, 1958