COMING OF AGE AT JAZZFEAST

A Former Prodigy Returns To Princeton

Jonathan Russell began to play the violin at age three and was already performing with trad jazz ensembles in New York City clubs by age seven. At nine he played the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and two years later made his first appearance at JazzFeast, sitting in with Ed Polcer’s group (inset photo).

As a teenager Jonathan received awards from the American String Teachers Association and the U.S. Embassy in Hungary. In 2010 he earned an honorable mention in the ASCAP Young Jazz Composer Awards for his composition “Danny’s Groove,” written in tribute to the slain Wall Street Journal reporter and violinist Daniel Pearl.

Now 22 and a newly minted college grad, Jonathan returned to Princeton JazzFeast on September 19, this time a leader in his own right, and performed an impressive 10-song set with guitarist Vinny Raniolo. Russell, who’s blossomed into a polished musician, played a five-string violin that he also used to great effect walking bass lines and comping chords when guitarist Raniolo soloed. The performance, which included two memorable Russell originals, and a crowd favorite “Besame Mucho,” was a festival highlight.

More on JazzFeast on page 24.
I’ll begin this month’s column by mentioning some recent changes in the composition of our New Jersey Jazz Society Board of Directors. During September’s meeting, Ted Clark was elected to the Board, to serve until the annual meeting in December, at which time he will stand for election by the membership-at-large to a full three-year term. Ted has been a member of NJJS for about ten years, and is a director of global strategy for a major electronics corporation. As an amateur musician, he plays bass and has studied 7-string guitar with Bucky Pizzarelli. He has had considerable experience in the non-profit world, having served in various capacities with the United Way of Bergen County, Bergen County Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board, Allendale Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the Archdiocese of Newark. Ted lives with his wife Karen and their three children in Allendale in Bergen County.

The Board accepted with regret the resignation of Lowell Schantz, due to time constraints arising from other activities, including playing in the eponymous jazz band led by his 16-year-old trumpeter son, Florian, who recently marked his 300th public appearance as a musician. Quite a record for someone of such a tender age! While on the Board, Lowell served as the manager of our e-blast function, by which we publicize to members and others on our E-blast list our own events as well as those of our partner organizations and member musicians. This function has now been assumed by Board member Carrie Jackson. Thank you Lowell for your service! If anyone out there who is reading this is not receiving e-blasts from us and would like to, please forward your e-mail address to membership@njjs.org.

■ The annual business meeting of the New Jersey Jazz Society will take place on Sunday, December 10, at Shanghai Jazz in Madison, beginning at 2 pm. At that time I will report on the Society’s activities during the year about to end, and treasurer Kate Casano will report on the state of our finances. The members present will then elect directors to the Board for three-year terms, including current members standing for re-election and those seeking election for the first time. After that, the Board will conduct its December meeting, at which it will elect the officers of the Society to serve in 2018, including the president, vice presidents, secretary and treasurer.

We welcome candidates for service on the Board, so anyone who is interested is urged to contact members of the nominating committee, including myself, executive vice president Stew Schiffer and Elliott Tyson, as soon as possible, and no later than 30 days before the meeting. Membership in NJJS...ongoing. Join us for music and mingling. Free for members, $10 non-members (applicable to membership) with just a $10 venue minimum. Watch calendar page 3 for upcoming dates and details. Beyond the schmooze, there are some serious musical prizes raffled off at our socials!!

Stay tuned to www.njjs.org
for at least a year is a requirement, as is a commitment to regularly attend monthly board meetings (which are held at the Best Western Hotel in Morristown), perform various ongoing functions as needed, and attend and help out at Society events such as the Pee Wee Stomp, Jazzfeast and Jazz Socials. As the Society has no paid staff, we rely on Board members to do most of the work needed to carry on our activities.

As has been customary for many years, the annual meeting will include two sets of music presented by a group chosen by the president. For this year’s meeting, I have selected a quartet led by the reed players Peter and Will Anderson, both Juilliard graduates, who have performed for NJJS and elsewhere in the metropolitan area and throughout the nation. Most recently, they appeared at this year’s Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp, and in the entire month of August they presented a series of four concerts in Manhattan featuring the music of Harold Arlen, George Gershwin, Cole Porter and Richard Rodgers, which received a rave review from Joe Lang in October’s Jersey Jazz. As usual, there is no music charge for NJJS members (others are welcome with payment of a $10 music charge), and only a $10 food and drink minimum, so mark your calendars and come on out for what promises to be a terrific afternoon of music and comraderie during the holiday season.

Incidentally, I have been very pleased with the recent monthly Socials, which have been of particularly high quality and attracted near full houses to Shanghai Jazz. These events have become a major part of NJJS’s activities, and we hope to continue them well into the future.

Many thanks to our music committee for selecting and engaging the musicians, David Niu and Tom Donohoe of Shanghai Jazz, and Morris Arts (formerly the Arts Council of the Morris Area), which provides partial funding for the Socials, and last, but certainly not least, the musicians whose participation has so greatly enhanced this year’s Socials.

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A New Jersey Jazz Society membership makes a great birthday gift!
Plus, if you are already a member, a gift membership costs just $25!
See page 43 for details!
1. This cutting-edge California-born pianist gravitated to jazz when she heard Charlie Parker’s music, and played in Los Angeles with Dexter Gordon, Teddy Edwards and others before moving to New York in 1965. She’s been a leader on more than 20 albums, having Eddie Gomez, John Patitucci, Jack De Johnette, Cecil McBee and Billy Hart among her accompanists. Now 79, she’s a professor at Berklee.

2. Winner of five Best Jazz Vocal Album Grammies since 2001 (most recently, Beautiful Life in 2013) the Denver-raised singer is renowned for her glorious voice, apt interpretation of lyrics, and her scatting. She played a 1950s nightclub singer in the 2006 film Good Night and Good Luck, about the legendary TV newscaster Edward R. Murrow. The soundtrack was one of her Grammy winners.

3. The Missouri-born guitar wiz has won 20 Grammies in 10 different categories over 30 years, beginning with Offramp in 1983 and lately, Unity Band in 2013. His popularity extends far beyond jazz because of his adventurous explorations into new technology and unusual settings for making music.

4. The impresario and record producer is from Ohio, but his love for jazz lured him to both coasts. He ran the Keystone Klub in San Francisco from 1972-83, later returning to Yoshi’s in Oakland. In New York he was director at Dizzy’s Club (2001-12) and headed the 32 Records label starting in 2000. He’s also produced records for many other labels in the U.S. and Japan.

Howie also welcomes suggestions for future questions — or comments from readers. Contact him at jazztrivia@njjs.org.

Hurray For The Hip, Hip NEA

Next April 18, the National Endowment for the Arts will honor the four 2018 Jazz Masters at a concert in the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. They’ll join the 149 other recipients chosen since 1982, each awarded a $25,000 prize.

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November Highlights

wed 11/1: AARON WEINSTEIN, ED LAUB and MARTIN PIZZARELLI
thu 11/2: RUSS KASSOFF
fri 11/3: JERRY VEZZA and GROVER KEMBLE
sat 11/4: BERNARD “PRETTY” PURDIE GROUP
sun 11/5: MILES HUDGINS TRIO
tue 11/7: JOHN KORBA
fri & sat 11/10: SOLOMON HICKS QUARTET
tue 11/14: JOHN KORBA
fri & sat 11/17 & 11/18: CLAUDIO RODITI
tue 11/21: JOHN KORBA
tue 11/28: JOHN KORBA

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I first heard the line above from Jersey Jazz contributor Sandy Ingham who used it as the title of a New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival report one year when he happily took me up on my suggestion to write about the Big Easy’s food instead of its jazz. I coopted his bon mot as the theme for the 70th birthday party I threw for myself last month when I invited a convivial group of friends of all ages to the recently opened Jack’s Seafood Shack in Montclair. In addition to a platter of Blue Points, the fishfest included a boatload of other frutti di mare — calamari, clams, crab cakes, scallops and Maine lobster — not to mention grilled cheese sandwiches and gnocchi. We all gave Jack’s a collective thumbs up, even if our lovely young waitress didn’t seem to know much about oysters and neglected to take the guest of honor’s entree order (whoops!). No matter any of that, Jack’s is a friendly place that serves up fresh and tasty food with spicy pizzazz.

Shown above, your editor offers a toast to himself as Lucie Lobdell looks on. As well travelled as she is well dressed, Ms. Lucie declared, “I ate a dozen oysters every day on my three trips to New Orleans.” Bene salute e cent’anni to that!

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Comments? Jersey Jazz welcomes your comments on any article or editorial. Send to editor@njjs.org or mail to the Editor (see masthead this page for address). Include your name and geographical location.

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NJJS Deadlines Submit press releases and event notices five weeks prior to issue date. Advertising space reservations are due five weeks prior to issue date. Final art is due four weeks prior to issue date.

EARLY SUBMISSIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.
WE SPEAK JAZZ
By Sanford Josephson

Big Band in the Sky

Larry Elgart, 95, alto saxophonist/bandleader, March 20, 1922, New London, CT – August 29, 2017, Sarasota, FL. Although the big band era had passed its peak by the early 1950s, alto saxophonist Larry Elgart and his trumpet-playing brother, Les, were able to support the Les and Larry Elgart Orchestra by playing college proms, country club engagements, and cruise ship ballrooms.

They received modest radio airplay from a 1953 album called Sophisticated Swing (Columbia), and, while in Philadelphia during a publicity tour, they met local TV host Bob Horn, who had a dance show called Bandstand. They wrote a theme song, “Bandstand Boogie,” for the show and recorded it in 1954. Then, Bandstand evolved into American Bandstand. Horn was succeeded by a young new host, Dick Clark, and the Elgarts received royalties for the next 60 years. In an interview with the Longboat (FL) Observer, Larry Elgart said, “If you hear Barry Manilow, at times, he’ll say he wrote ‘Bandstand Boogie’. It’s not true. He just wrote the lyrics decades later.”

At age 17, Elgart was hired as lead alto saxophonist by bandleader Charlie Spivak. He went on to play with bands led by Tommy Dorsey, Woody Herman and Red Norvo before joining forces with his brother, Les, were able to form The Elgart brothers split up in the late ‘60s, but Larry continued a bandleading and recording career on his own. The Washington Post’s Adam Bernstein (Sept. 1, 2017) described his music as “a polite lineup of big band favorites, cha-chas, and bossa nova standards. It was distinguished less by its choice of material than what Larry Elgart did with it. He fostered what he called the ‘Elgart sound’ — the lilting bounce of its tempos, the crisp precision of its horn section, and the swingy flourish of its saxes.”

In 1982, Elgart had an unlikely hit, the result of putting a disco beat to songs that were big band hits in the ’30s and ’40s. The album, Hooked on Swing (RCA), reached Number 31 on the Billboard charts and sold more than three million copies.

In 2014, Elgart and his wife Lynn co-wrote a memoir entitled The Music Business and the Monkey Business (Archway Publishing). In addition to his wife, he is survived by two sons, Brock and Brad; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.


Jazz Times editor Evan Hagan wrote (Sept. 4, 2017) that Becker and his vocalist/keyboardist partner Donald Fagen “bridged the gap between jazz and fusion and popular music in ways that earned a rare confluence of critical and commercial success…Becker and Fagen made a habit of employing only the sharpest jazz and studio musicians to record their music.” Perhaps the best example of this is their 1977 album, Aja (ABC Records), which included saxophonist Wayne Shorter, guitarist Larry Carlton, drummer Steve Gadd and keyboardist Victor Feldman.

In his allmusic.com review, Stephen Thomas Erlewine described Aja as, “A cooly textured and immaculately produced collection of sophisticated jazz-rock…even the simplest song, the sunny pop of ‘Peg’, has layers of jazzy vocal harmonies…Aja is a shining example of jazz-rock at its finest.” Other jazz artists who recorded or performed with Steely Dan included saxophonists Phil Woods and Chris Potter, trumpeter Randy Brecker, drummer Peter Erskine, and vocalists Carolyn Leonhart and Catherine Russell.

Fagen and Becker met while attending Bard College in the late 1960s. In a public statement released the day of Becker’s death, Fagen said, “We started writing nutty little tunes on an upright piano in a small sitting room in the lobby of Ward Manor, a moldering old mansion on the Hudson River that the college used as a dorm.” Touring together after college (Fagen graduated; Becker dropped out), they moved to Los Angeles and released their first Steely Dan album Can’t Buy a Thrill in 1972 on the MCA label. Steely Dan disbanded in 1980 and re-surfaced in 1993, releasing only two additional studio albums, Two Against Nature (Giant Records), which won a Grammy as Album of the Year in 2000, and Everything Must Go (Warner Brothers) in 2003. Their biggest hit single was “Rikki, Don’t Lose That Number” from the 1974 album, Pretzel Logic (ABC Records).

Becker was dealing with a heroin habit in the ’70s and, according to Fagen’s statement, “habits got the better of him by the end of the ’70s, and we lost touch for awhile.” After Becker moved to Maui, he broke the habit and became an avocado farmer, returning to music in the late ’80s. He and Fagen began collaborating on each other’s solo albums, while touring as Steely Dan. Fagen’s statement indicated that Steely Dan would continue to perform live. “I intend to keep the music we created together as long as I can with the Steely Dan band,” he said.

Saxophonist Chris Potter described Becker to Jazz Times as “one of the funniest, wittiest people I ever met, and always the smartest guy in the room, unless Donald Fagen was

continued on page 10
Sunday, November 5 • 4:00 p.m.
40th Anniversary Tribute: WP Jazz Orchestra
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Thad Jones, Rufus Reid, Cecil Bridgewater,
Jim McNeely, Pete McGuinness, and Bill Mobley

Sunday, November 12 • 4:00 p.m.
Barry Harris Quartet with
saxophonist Larry McKenna

Sunday, December 3 • 4:00 p.m.
Horace Arnold Trio with
bassist Buster Williams

Saturday, December 9 • 8:00 p.m.
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also present, in which case, they shared that honor. The depth of his knowledge on any subject was astounding; his curiosity about the world knew no bounds. His enthusiasm and knowledge about jazz music was especially profound."

Cause of death was not disclosed, and no information was available regarding survivors.

Dr. William Weinberg, 96, contributor to founding of the Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies, March 2, 1921, Philadelphia – September 7, 2017, Skillman, NJ.

Dr. Weinberg was an emeritus professor of industrial relations at Rutgers University. He served as assistant to two Rutgers presidents, Mason W. Gross, and Edward J. Bloustein, and also served as chairman of the New York-New Jersey Port Authority Employment Relations Panel.

A dedicated jazz fan, Dr. Weinberg convinced Marshall Stearns, the creator of the Institute of Jazz Studies, to move the IJS from his Greenwich Village apartment to the Rutgers Newark campus in 1967. Retired IJS director and author Dan Morgenstern recalled to Jersey Jazz that Dr. Weinberg “was the one who came to visit and offered me the job at Rutgers, to my total surprise. He persuaded Marshall Stearns and Rutgers president emeritus, remembers calling Mason Gross after the first Pee Wee Russell Stomp to say he had about $3,000 he’d like to donate to the college to establish a scholarship at Rutgers. “He told me he knew nothing about jazz,” Stine said, “but his assistant, Dr. Weinberg did, and he’d have him get in touch with me. It was the start of a wonderful relationship, and Bill became one of our most valuable contacts.”

Dr. Weinberg is survived by five children: Valerie Weinberg of Washington, DC; David Weinberg of Rainier, OR; Amy Weinberg, Highland Park, NJ; Judy Weinberg, Metuchen, NJ; and Nora Weinberg, North Brunswick, NJ. He is also survived by a grandson, Max Dienemann; several cousins; and a special friend, Sallie Van Merkensteijn.

New Jersey Jazz Musician Awarded Chamber Music America Grant

Chamber Music America (CMA), the national network for ensemble music professionals, has awarded the prestigious New Jazz Works grant to jazz flutist Andrea Brachfeld for the creation and performance of a new jazz composition. The funding, made possible with the support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, is designed to provide financial and administrative support for new ensemble works and to underwrite performances and the recording of the new composition. Fifteen jazz composers and their ensembles were chosen from a pool of hundreds of applications.

“I am honored to have been recognized by Chamber Music America with this major commission,” said Ms. Brachfeld, “and I am thrilled to have the support of this acclaimed organization. My quartet and I look forward to our upcoming performances.”

Named Jazz Flutist of the Year for 2015 by Hot House Jazz Awards, Andrea’s music has been praised by critics and audiences. Her latest CD, Lotus Blossom, on the Jazzheads label received four stars from DownBeat. Featuring Bill O’Connell, Winard Harper and Rufus Reid, the release stayed in the top 20 on the JazzWeek charts for several weeks.

A graduate of Manhattan School of Music, Andrea started her career at All Nite Soul at the age of 16. She has performed with musicians such as Charles Eubanks, Adam Nussbaum, Tito Puente, Wallace Roney, Hubert Laws, Paquito D’Rivera, Hilton Ruiz and others. Her first straight ahead jazz CD, Lady of the Island, featured Wallace Roney, Wycklive Gordon and Bill O’Connell. She was recognized as a student with a Louis Armstrong Award, and later with the Chico O’Farrill Lifetime Achievement Award and the Pionero Award for her contributions to Latin music.

An NJJS member, Andrea presented a panel discussion on Latin jazz and performed an exciting program of Charanga and Danzón music with acclaimed Cuban-born percussionist Myra Casales at a May 2008 Members Meeting at Trumpets Jazz Club. Her current group, Insight, includes pianist Bill O’Connell, bassist Harvie S, and drummer Jason Tiemann.
Ana Gasteyer
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New York Voices

Dec 8
Dec 13
Jan 12
As the 20th century gets smaller in the rearview mirror, we keep encountering centenaries of the people who played important roles in the development of the music we know as jazz. Indeed, one could make entire festivals honoring the people whose birthdates hit the century mark recently. This year, for example, we saw the commemoration of icons such as Ella Fitzgerald, John Birks “Dizzy” Gillespie, Thelonious Sphere Monk and Buddy Rich. All four spanned the eras of big band, bebop and modern jazz and had an enormous impact on jazz.

In what has become an annual late summer event on the Hudson River, directly across from the World Trade Center site, New Jersey City University again held an open-air concert with a big band featuring musicians who either studied or taught in the school’s jazz program, including drummer Rich DeRosa, a recipient of the NJCU’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2014, as well as former faculty member Peter McGuiness. Dizzy Gillespie Alumni All-Star Big Band member Doug Purviance also took part in the performance.

The band was conducted by recently retired NJCU professor Richard Lowenthal and included a couple of “ringers,” longtime Gillespie protégé Jon Faddis and young jazz singer Cyrille Aimee.

Also taking place at the J. Owen Grundy Pier on Exchange Place was the third presentation of the annual Clark Terry Award, named after the trumpeter who made a name for himself as a leader, sideman, educator and mensch. The award, in the shape of Terry’s first crude instrument made from junkyard scraps, usually goes to a current student who exemplifies the late hornman’s ideals, this year went to a member of the alumni band’s trumpet section, Freddie Hendrix. Hendrix, a Teaneck native is a product of both the undergraduate program at William Paterson University and graduate studies at NJCU. Like Terry, he’s been a part of big bands, small groups and jazz education.

Although Richard Lowenthal is now retired he will continue to conduct the annual September Alumni Jazz Band concert. See story on page 19.
On Saturday evening December 2 at 8 pm, the exciting Israeli jazz flutist Mattan Klein returns for a fourth time to Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, 222 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ. His fourth recording, *Sound Tracks*, comes from Israel; it was conceived, sponsored, produced and recorded there.

Klein was born and raised in Jerusalem. He studied at the Rubin Academy there and graduated with honors from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. His original compositions have earned him awards at the John Lennon Songwriting Contest and the USA Songwriting Competition.

His style belongs to the current generation of jazz artists, with just a hint of the sensibilities unique to Klein’s world — a touch of New York, a touch of Israel and a reflection of his deep interest in the music of Brazil.

It’s all integrated into his unique voice, one that restrains the use of chromaticism that goes along with this style to create the balance of elements that still evades many performers.

He will offer a mix of jazz-friendly tunes along with Pablo Vergara, piano; Ben Zwerin, bass; Adriano Santos, drums; and special guest Tammy Scheffer, vocals.

Tickets are $18 per person, and can be purchased at www.aemt.net or call 732-545-6484.

Talking Jazz
A Jersey Jazz Interview With John di Martino

By Schaen Fox

John di Martino seems to play with almost everybody. Take Janis Siegel, who said when I interviewed her, “I am also excited about working with John Di Martino. We met on one of those jazz cruises. John was playing with Houston Person and he was at the jam session every night. That is where I sat in with him, and I thought, ‘This is nice. This is a special guy.’”

We spoke in January about his growing up in Philadelphia, his career centered in New York—and why his home is now in New Jersey.

JJ: Is there anything new or special you would like to talk about?

Jd: In recent years I’ve played for singers a lot. I have done maybe the last 10 recordings with Freddy Cole. I play piano and write arrangements for him. I met Freddy Cole when I was in Atlantic City for six years. We did the Detroit Festival in September. I wrote the arrangements for an entire program of Freddy with a chamber orchestra. It was really exciting!

I just recorded about my fifth record with Giacomo Gates. I’ve been working with Janis Siegel. I did her last solo record, Night Songs, but also we have a Brazilian co-project between myself, Janis Siegel and Nanny Assis, who is a percussionist from Bahia. It is called “Requinte Trio” which just means “Sophisticated Trio.” I’ve recorded a bunch of records with a young gal from Australia, Simone Kopmajer. I’ve known her because we’ve been recording for years for Venus Records, the Japanese label.

I have lost count of the records I have with bassist Nicki Parrott. I do her Venus Records work and we usually tour Japan every year or every other year. I also made about thirteen records with my own group on that label. They dubbed us the “Romantic Jazz Trio.” It wasn’t my choice, but I say, “Call me anything except late to dinner.” [Chuckles]

I have a series of records with some pretty sexy covers. They are not pictures of me. I didn’t have anything to do with it. I think they are a little over the top. [Laughs]

I’ve been doing these Strayhorn programs with Paquito D’Rivera. He plays clarinet on this project and he is a virtuosic clarinet player. He is a classical clarinettist as well. He enjoys this because it is a departure from the repertoire he plays with his band. We have one Latin arrangement: an obscure piece with different titles, “Lament for an Orchid,” and “Absence,” set in a Cuban rhythm called a danzón. I did maybe the past six or seven records with Houston Person, so I’ve been doing a lot on the High Note label.

I have two self-produced CDs. One is called Impromptu, a duo with the great Warren Vaché, the greatest cornet player in the world. Also a trio record called Turnaround with Boris Kozlov who I work with a lot, and Alvin Atkinson on drums.

One more thing; I record for a company in Thailand called Hitman Jazz. I think they are thinking in terms of Hit Parade, but it sounds different to us. [Chuckles] I have two records out that they have commissioned me to do — all music of the king of Thailand, who recently passed. He played jazz saxophone and clarinet, and has an extensive songbook. Everybody in Thailand knows his songs. I’ve done the two records with an all New York band, and I usually go there every year and do a concert. We are finishing up one now with a Thai singer, so that is in the original language.

My other big love besides music is film. I’ve always wanted to score a film, and I’ve finally had the chance. I scored five documentaries for an Austrian production called “A Glimpse of Paradise.” They are travel documentaries about gardens with sidelines into arts and crafts and things, but focused on the

continued on page 16
THE BICKFORD BENEFIT ALL STARS
Monday, November 13, 7:30PM
7th Annual Bash features Dan Levinson, Molly Ryan, Mike Davis, Jeff Barnhart, and more.

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TALKING JAZZ/JOHN DI MARTINO
continued from page 14

restoration of ancient gardens in the Islamic world. There is a series in Iran, Morocco, Southern Spain and other places. [Chuckles] It was really fun. That is work I want to get more involved in.

JJ: I’ve seen your name spelled several ways. How should the Di be spelled?

JD: Technically it should be Di, but I like how it looks with a small di, so I do that.

JJ: You’re from Philadelphia, home town of other musically important Martinsos, like Al and Pat. By chance are you related to them?

JD: Al I don’t know, but Pat I worked with for a while. We are both from the same neighborhood. That is not his real name. His real name is Azzara. I think Martino comes from somewhere in his family. We are not related except we both have a southern Italian heritage.

JJ: Were there any other professional musicians in your family?

JD: No. I feel that the talent comes from my mother, an amateur singer. She never did it professionally. She had a tremendous ear and influence on me. When I first started getting involved with music, we’d go through the fake book and she’d point out all the hip tunes, sing them to me, and we would play them together. I started becoming a heavy jazz fan when I was about 12 years old. My mother gave me a lot of vocal records, people like June Christie and Gloria Lynn, who I later worked with.

When I was about 19, I was obsessed with Tristano’s music. That was all I was listening to. Those guys would never play the melody. They just start blowing on the changes, but I’m telling you that my mom, without any musical training, no technical musical knowledge at all, but you could play the track, she’d listen, say, “Oh yes,” and start singing the tune. That is pretty amazing.

JJ: You did get to study with Lenny Tristano. What was that like?

JD: One of the first records I had was by Lee Konitz. I fell in love with Lee’s playing and people said, “Well if you are into Lee Konitz, you’ve got to check out Lenny Tristano.” Then I started listening to Lenny, and my mother said, “You should study with Lenny Tristano.”

I sought him out. I was late as a driver, so my brother drove me up to the first lesson. I called him saying, “Mr. Tristano can you give me driving directions?” He was blind. He said,

“Well I don’t drive. You dig?” [Laughs] He was quite a character, a real bebopper. He said, “You get to the midtown tunnel some fucking way. Just ask anybody in New York how to get to the fucking midtown tunnel, okay?” After that he gave me perfect directions to where he lived in Jamaica, Queens. I’d take Amtrak then the E or the F train out to 79th Street every week. [Chuckles] That was quite an experience.

His focus was on taking great solos by great jazz musicians, and first learning to sing them with the recording; then to sing them without the recording. The next step was to play it on your instrument. He thought if you just heard their music and went right to your instrument you would wind up just imitating, but if you did this singing process you’d really internalize it. He got this because Bird learned to play every recorded solo Pres ever made. Bird took these elements and developed something totally new with them.

He was very encouraging. I was a lazy kid. I remembered once I played something for him, and he was very moved. He grabbed me by the hand, and his eyes watered. I remember him saying, “It is so hard to get youngsters to understand.” He felt that I had a gift, and he wanted me to work harder.

JJ: What sparked your love of Latin Jazz?

JD: I fell in love with it in high school. I had Latino friends that were turning me on to The Fania All Star Records. I think I was 15 when I was playing with my first Latin band. We were doing covers of salsa hits. In the ‘70s the music of the Puerto Rican community was at a high point. It had the original Cuban energy, but there was something really unique about the contribution of the Puerto Ricans that grow up in this country in the same neighborhoods, or right next to the neighborhoods of African-Americans. There’s this influence back and forth and a very special energy to those players like Ray Barretto, who I later got to play with. There is a “grease” and a feel for the blues, the soul of American music that somehow fused with the Latin music. Cuban musicians have tremendous virtuosity, but actually they don’t have that feel; perhaps because they were cut off for so long.

I’d like to make a film to try to describe the intangible, this amazing musicality that is very unique to the musicians of Puerto Rican heritage in the United States. I got some of that energy playing it up until I was about 19. It became part of my DNA; then I got totally away from it. I didn’t play any of that music again until I moved to New York. When I moved to New York, one of my early bread and butter gigs was at the Rainbow Room. I played with the American band and also the Latin band, which was led by a great flute player from Panama, Marco Smith and my education, got to another level.

JJ: Would you tell us about your years in Atlantic City?

JD: I never went to music school. I

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had a scholarship to Berklee when I was 19, but you do stupid things when you are a kid. I didn’t go, but I feel that my destiny of music always pulled at me, even though I tried to run in the opposite direction. Atlantic City became my music school. I learned to understand not only music, but show business and also not to be a snob about any genre of music. One thing my teacher in Philadelphia, Jimmy Amadie, always said was, “When a player puts down a style of music, it is because he can’t cut it. Try to master the music first. Then you can say, ‘I really don’t want to do that.’” That opened me up in a way. I feel like those skills continued to serve me as I moved to New York, and frankly, those connections I made are still branching out to this day.

I was about 25 when I started working in Atlantic City. I got a house band gig at the Golden Nugget. This was an anachronism in the time that it existed. I started working there with Frankie Randel, a singer and pianist. The way he structured his show was, he’d be standing at the mic; I’d play about three or four songs at the grand piano; then he’d go to the piano and I’d go to the keyboard. I’d just add a little arranging color, a little string, a little brass, maybe an electric piano solo, depending on the style of the music. I actually wasn’t very happy because I wanted to play piano.

A month into the gig I said, “Frankie, I think I want to leave.” He said, “John, I can’t tell you why, but if you hang in a little longer I think you are going to like this gig.” [Chuckles] About a month later he became the entertainment director, so I was playing piano all the time and playing for great people who never really got their due, but also great people who were considered has-beens. It ran the gamut from jazz, show business folk, R&B and comedians. I remember playing for Mr. B [Billy Eckstein], Jack Sheldon, Fran Warren, Joni Summers, Charlie Callas and Pat Cooper. It was all the people I grew up watching on the Tonight Show. I feel so grateful for that.

The sound man recorded every show, and on one late trio sets, Mr. B sat in with me. I should find him and get that recording, because it was so beautiful. I remember playing “Lush Life” for Mr. B and at the end of it he said, “Not bad for an Italian.” [Laughs] I want a copy with that line in it of course.

**JJ:** You became close to the great Billy Eckstein and his accompanist Bobby Tucker in those years.

**Jd:** I was playing with Billy Eckstein, but I never replaced Bobby Tucker. They both became mentors for me. We became such good friends that they would add me on a gig playing the string parts on a synthesizer. I wasn’t into playing a synthesizer, but I just loved being around them. We spent hours just hanging out in the cafeteria in the Golden Nugget. Just to hear Mr. B and Bobby spin yarns was living history. Mr. B introduced me to Freddy Cole. Mr. B was a dear friend of his older brother Nat.

It was wonderful to hear Mr. B spin yarns about all the amazing people he dealt with. He had the hippest band in the world. He had the whole history of jazz in his band. He also had a way of putting people in their place. When someone asked him, “Eckstein, is that your real name?” Mr. B explained the whole German derivation of it and after that asked, “Don’t you hate it when people ask ignorant questions?”

I also worked with Billy Daniels, and I’ll tell you a funny thing about him. I would sub on his gig. I wasn’t his regular pianist. He would sing “If I Ruled the World” eloquently, but in the second chorus I would noodle the melody, and he would muse saying, “If I ruled the world, Texas would be my ranch. Maine would be my summer home…” but you could keep Mississippi and Alabama.” [Chuckles] I could do a whole hour about Billy Daniels. We would play the intro to “Black Magic” for about 15 minutes. He’d be shaking his shoulders and say, “You can’t rush into this song. You’ve got to feel it.” [Laughs]

They gave him a wireless mic, which he took full advantage of. He’d just bounce around the room. We played the intro and from nowhere you’d hear, “Alone from night to night you’ll find me…” and the people would be looking around to see where the voice was coming from. He’d be sitting on a chair in the back of the room. [Laughs] He wore a toupee and a woman said to him, “Billy I love your hair.” He said, “Give me a minute darling, and I’ll take it off and give it to you.” [Laughs] He was a real character, and there are not too many around anymore. [Laughs]

**Jj:** What got you to move to New York?

**Jd:** It was inevitable. I realized it was my destiny to come here. If I could go back in a time machine I would have moved here when I was 19. I think on some level I had a dysfunctional relationship with my teacher Jimmy Amadie. He was a great teacher, and I still hear his guidance every day, but he would say, “Oh, don’t go until you are ready.” That is the worst thing to tell a young person. The best thing is to tell them, “Put yourself in the ring and get your butt kicked as soon as possible. Then when you pick yourself up, you are better for it.” If you find you are in the wrong field, it is good to find it early.

I did move to New York in ’88 and in the beginning I would run back to Atlantic City to do gigs a lot. Then I realized if I kept doing that I would never get into the scene up here. I had to burn some bridges to build some new ones.

**Jj:** How did you start writing for DIVA?

**Jd:** Out of the blue, Stanley Kay took a liking to me. I was playing with one of his protégés in the band, Karolina Strassmayer. She is now with the WDR Big Band in Cologne, Germany. I don’t think he had heard my arrangements, but just saw something in me. He said, “Johnny I want you to write for the band. He had an idea for “Oh What a Beautiful Morning,” and that was one of the first charts I did. I have ten or more charts in their book. He was one of the first to trust me as a big band arranger. I’ve done some writing for their small group as well. I’ve enjoyed writing for them.

**Jj:** I heard you joke about your connection
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TALKING JAZZ/JOHN DI MARTINO

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to the tune “Johnny Come Lately.” Would you explain that?

Jd: One of the early records I got was by Chet Baker/Russ Freeman and there is a duo version of “Lush Life” that I love. The next Strayhorn number I fell in love with was “Passion Flower.” Grover Washington’s “Mr. Magic,” was a big pop-fusion hit record. It has a beautiful Bob James arrangement of “Passion Flower” with Grover playing it on soprano sax. He had a really unique soprano sound. The first time I heard “Johnny Come Lately” might have been the Strayhorn record by Wynton Marsalis. “Johnny Come Lately” has become a regular part of my trio repertoire. Let’s put it this way, I’m not one of those people that gets to the gig an hour early.

JJ: Do you have any career souvenirs at home that a visitor might see?

Jd: Sure. I have a picture of Bobby Tucker in my studio, and I have a picture of myself and James Moody. I have one with Kenny Burrell, but I don’t know where I put that. I have pictures of some of the greats like Joe Zawinul, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea and Keith Jarrett on my wall to keep me inspired. And I have a poster from a tour in Japan. The way they did it was cool, so I kept that.

JJ: Is there a film, book or play you feel will give us non-musicians an accurate idea of what a musician’s life is like?

Jd: I always felt that Amadeus gives the idea of the life behind the scenes; the internal stress that takes place, the jealousy of Salieri, yet there is nobody he loves more than Mozart. Also The Turning Point, about the young ballet dancer, gives a feeling about what it is really like.

JJ: What got you to move to New Jersey?

Jd: In 1988 I moved to New York. I mostly lived in Brooklyn with a year and a half in Queens. Then I moved to New Jersey and lived with my girlfriend, Sarah for two years, after that, I bought a condo in Union City. I think I’ve been here about 12 years. The rents in Brooklyn just drove me out, because I went through a time where my career wasn’t so prosperous. Oddly enough after I moved to Jersey, my career seemed to take off again.

I really love living in New Jersey. I’m less than a mile from the Lincoln Tunnel, and when you come out of that tunnel everything just seems more peaceful. I like the idea that I can go out of the rat race and then go back into it. I really love River Road, which Houston Person hipped me to. He is like a taxi driver from the old school. He drove all over the United States, so any time I need some secret route to get somewhere I ask him. He was a Newark person for years.

Anytime I have to go anywhere in a northern direction, I go up River Road. There are so many great things I do off that road, like Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods, and the Japanese market Mitsua. And all the sessions I did at the legendary Rudy Van Gelder’s with Houston, you take River Road to the end and there you are. I love Korean food so I go to this great restaurant in Fort Lee called Dong Bang Grill. There is even a Korean sauna called King Sauna that I love. Jersey has a lot of nice things, and I feel really good about living here.

JJ: How did the ban on smoking in clubs affect you?

Jd: Yeah. I have chronic allergies. When I started playing in clubs, I’d come home and I had to inhale steam because I couldn’t breathe. The ban was really good for me.

JJ: You said earlier that you wanted to run from music as a kid. What did you want to run to?

Jd: There was nothing to run to, I was just dealing with irrational fear. I’ve always been a writer and could have gone to Eastman, but didn’t for some reason. It’s like destiny said, “No, you have to be a musician.” All of us who are in this are in it because we love it. There is no other reason to do it. If you are just thinking about what is the most financially practical thing there are a lot better things to do. [Laughs]

JJ: A sad truth, but a good point to end with. This was great fun talking to you. Thanks for doing the interview.

Jd: Thank you for making me famous. [Laughs] I really do appreciate it. Talk to you soon.

Schena Fox is a longtime jazz fan. Now retired, he devotes much of his time to the music and shares his encounters with musicians in this column.

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You can catch John with Giacomo Gates at the Blue Note brunch on Oct. 8. He’s with Nicki Parrott and Warren Vaché in a Blossom Dearie tribute at the Jazz Loft in Stony Brook, Long Island on Nov. 25 and then (again for the Dearie tribute) with Nicki and Ken Peplowski at Sarah’s Wine Bar in Ridgefield, CT on Nov. 26. On Nov. 28 he’s at Mezzrow, NYC with Deanna Kirk. Finally, you can hear John with Catherine Russell, La Tanya Hall and Carolyn Leonhart in a live broadcast celebrating the Ella Fitzgerald Centennial on WBGO on Nov. 16.
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More jazz to enjoy

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For the 1980 Manhattan Transfer album, *Extensions* (Atlantic/WEA), vocalist/songwriter Jon Hendricks was asked to write lyrics for keyboardist Josef Zawinul’s popular composition, “Birdland.” Thomas Cunliffe, in his “retro review” of the album on jazzhistoryonline.com, pointed out that “Birdland,” the opening track, “established [the album’s] jazz credentials” adding that, “Janis Siegel’s sharply pointed delivery makes her voice sound otherworldly…”

That collaboration developed into a long-term relationship between Hendricks and the Manhattan Transfer and a special connection with vocalist Siegel, a member of the quartet since its inception in 1972. “Jon has definitely been a mentor of mine,” she told Jersey Jazz in an interview prior to her August 30th performance at the Axelrod Performing Arts Center in Deal Park, NJ. Siegel paid tribute to Hendricks toward the end of the concert with a dazzling delivery of his lyrics for the Lee Morgan classic, “Sidewinder,” mixing the words with her unique brand of scat. At times, it seemed as if she emitted the actual sound of a trumpet.

In the pre-concert interview, Siegel said her favorite American Songbook composer is Harry Warren, and, true to form, she led off the concert with three Warren songs: “You’re My Everything,” “Jeepers Creepers” (her favorite), and “I Wish I Knew.” She also highlighted one of her favorite composing teams — that of Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart -- “La Vie En Rose.”

Siegel predicted that the Axelrod concert would be “eclectic.” It lived up to that promise. Among other selections were the 1940s big band hit, “Green Eyes,” written by Cuban composer Tito Menendez (“Aquello Los Verdes”) and made famous by vocalist Helen O’Connell; Billy Strayhorn’s “A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing” and Lorraine Feather’s “I Know the Way to Brooklyn,” a salute to Siegel’s roots. When the audience called her back for an encore, she sang another American Songbook standard, Irving Berlin’s “Change Partners.”

After the Axelrod performance, Siegel and di Martino traveled to Utah for the Moab Music Festival where they joined Assis and bassist Leo Traversa for a night of Brazilian music. They also “sprinkled in motown” with songs by Aretha Franklin, Aretha Franklin, Dolly Parton, Burt Bacharach, and Motown. They also “sprinkled in some Christina Aguilera, Rumer, Addison’s original tunes, and a jazz standard or two.”

The Mezzrow performance recalled the approach taken by Siegel in a 1989 Atlantic album, Short Stories, recorded with pianist Fred Hersch. In an allmusic.com review Ken Dryden pointed out that the album concen-trated “more heavily on modern pop songs rather than standards…interpreting works by James Taylor, Todd Rundgren, Joni Mitchell or Judy Collins.” Playing with Hersch, Siegel said, was like “a dream come true. He spoiled me because he’s a true collaborator. He engages, leads and follows, and communicates like a partner. Together, we created interpretations.”

Any conversation with Siegel about partnerships, though, inevitably returns to Jon Hendricks. Five years after Hendricks wrote the lyrics for “Birdland,” the Manhattan Transfer recorded an Atlantic album called vocalese, devoted exclusively to Hendricks’ lyrics. Allmusic.com’s Scott Yanow called it “one of their finest jazz recordings and a classic of its kind.” When the Manhattan Transfer went on the road with Hendricks, Siegel recalled, “he would push me to go on stage and improvise when I was terrified. He just kept pushing.”

In the chapter on Hendricks in my book, *Jazz Notes: Interviews Across the Generations* (Praeger/ABC-Clio), Siegel described the road performances with Hendricks as “like a master class after the show.” Hendricks, she added, “is one of the greatest scat singers ever. Jon and the whole legacy of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross have really had a big influence on the Manhattan Transfer.”

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**Janis Siegel’s Eclectic Repertoire Favors Harry Warren, Jon Hendricks**

*By Sanford Josephson*

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**John di Martino accompanies Janis Siegel at the Axelrod Performing Arts Center on Aug. 30. Photo by Love Imagery.**

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“I Didn’t Know What Time It Was” and the Edith Piaf classic, “La Vie En Rose.”

Egidio Leitao, reviewing the album for *Musica Brasileira,* said the trio brought “a unique sound to Brazilian music…Janis’s command of Portuguese is amazing…John di Martino’s arrange-ments are beau-tiful creations that augment these tracks.” Siegel pointed out that di Martino “is very conversant with Latin rhythms. There’s a certain way that a pianist can play a bossa nova.”

Before playing Maurizio Fabrizio’s “Alla Luce Del Sole,” Siegel told the Axelrod audience that di Martino “learned to play this on our trip to Brazil.” They followed it up with Jobim’s “One Note Samba.”

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After the Axelrod performance, Siegel and di Martino traveled to Utah for the Moab Music Festival where they joined Assis and bassist Leo Traversa for a night of Brazilian music. She was also looking forward to an engagement at Greenwich Village’s Mezzrow with Addison Frei, a young pianist from Lawrence, KS. Frei currently holds the piano chair in the Juillard Artist Diploma Ensemble, the conservatory’s flagship jazz group. Siegel and Frei explored “some tunes from when I was growing up. He approaches these with a very fresh and open mind — Simon and Garfunkel, Elvis, Patsy Cline, some folk songs, some Dolly Parton, Burt Bacharach, and Motown.” They also “sprinkled in some Christina Aguilera, Rumer, Addison’s original tunes, and a jazz standard or two.”

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Siegel saw Hendricks, who turned 96 on Sept. 16, this past summer, saying "You can still see the music in him. I took him to see Dee Dee Bridgewater with the Count Basie Orchestra, and everyone over there said hello.

Another of Siegel's musical idols is the late saxophonist/flutist James Moody, who was in the band for Vocalease. "One of the greatest thrills of my life," she said, "was singing the girl part of 'Moody's Mood for Love' with him." In the 1970s, the Manhattan Transfer was appearing in Las Vegas, opening for Bill Cosby at the Las Vegas Hilton. Moody had moved to Vegas in the '70s so he could earn a living and raise his daughter without traveling on the road.

In my obituary of him Jersey Jazz, February 2011), Siegel recalled that, "We were doing a sound check with the big band, and we called the tune, 'You Can Depend on Me', a Basie vocalese which called for a tenor solo in the middle of the arrangement. The four of us were singing, singing, singing and then stopped for the solo. Suddenly, we all stopped dead in our tracks because the solo that was coming from the [Hilton] band was so magical that we all turned around at the same time, astonished to see the great James Moody. We were completely blown away by the fact that he was a member of the Hilton house band."

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Siegel moved to the West Village in 1981, telling chelseapinesinn.com in 2011 that, "as a hippy girl with guitar, it was the West Village that sparked my passion and ignited the youthful dream that I would live here someday, among the freaks, artists, writers, and other denizens of Bohemia." She remembered that when she first moved to the Village, "Murray's Cheese was a tiny storefront, Zito's Bread pumped out fresh semolina and prosciutto loaves every night in their basement lair...John's and Joe's were the only game in town for really great pizza in our neighborhood."

She also bemoaned the loss of Bradley's, a bar/restaurant on University Place, which she described as "the ultimate piano bar" (now a sports bar named the Reservoir). "I sat in there with the great Jimmy Rowles as a young whippersnapper," she said, and "heard Kenny Barron, Kirk Lightsey, Tommy Flanagan, and so many others."

Siegel was pleasantly surprised to learn that the Axelrod theater was named the Sheldon Vogel Auditorium. "I'm very close with Sheldon Vogel," she said. "He was the comptroller at Atlantic Records. Vogel and his wife, Anne, residents of Colts Neck, came to the performance, and, said Siegel, "We had a great old talk and a hug."

3Divas Trio at Shanghai Jazz

By Schaen Fox

On Thursday, September 7, we traveled to Shanghai Jazz in Madison to hear Sherrie Maricle’s newest group the 3Divas (Sherrie Maricle, drums, Amy Shook, bass, Jackie Warren, piano). We expected both great music and a full house, but the gig was surprisingly lightly attended. David Niu, the former owner of the popular supper club, explained that a very large party had cancelled at the last moment. If that affected the trio, it never showed in their music. They played with such enthusiasm and joy, that I am sure their rehearsals must be fun.

The set was a nice mix including, "I Thought About You," "Back At The Chicken Shack," and "Maggie." Sherrie announced that as it was the 87th birthday of Sonny Rollins, "We’ll play one of his standards. I just don’t know which one." They settled on "Doxy," and later played "St. Thomas."

Sherrie is a personal favorite who we have followed for years. She never phones it in, and can deliver a drum roll that is crisper than garden fresh lettuce. She is always there in the moment whether she is driving her big band The DIVA Jazz Orchestra, or backing someone else. Naturally, her newest bandmates are up to her standards.

Later she told me how this trio formed. "Amy Shook lives in Maryland. She and I had met maybe nine or ten years ago, teaching at a jazz camp called Maryland Summer Jazz. We were both just randomly on the faculty. We played a couple of notes together, and it felt natural. We loved playing together. Unfortunately, I didn’t have a chance to even see her again until Maurice Hines started his show Tappin’ Thru Life in November, 2012 at Arena Stage in Washington. We needed a bass player, because the production company didn’t really provide housing for me to bring the regular DIvas. I thought, ‘That great bass player Amy Shook is there. Let me give her a call.’ That is how we reconnected."

"In Cleveland, we needed a pianist, and I called everybody I knew there. Every person immediately said, ‘You’ve got to get Jackie Warren.’ She almost turned down the gig, because she was reticent about an all-women band. Then she googled us and heard the band and wanted to do it. Every day, we just started jamming between shows in the half hour call before the doors open. It turned out to be one of the most fun parts of the evening. We just decided to create a trio. It all evolved from there."

"How did the trio form is always a good question. It’s simple. We love playing together, so we formed a trio and started looking for gigs it was really simple to ‘form,’ but it is not as simple to develop as a unit and secure gigs. When you get a new group together, you want to create unique arrangements that highlight the band and its individual members, but since we all live in different cities, it’s impossible to rehearse. When we are together, we are usually performing, so we really have to carve out time to rehearse in between gigs. By the way, our first official gig as the 3Divas, was at Shanghai Jazz about a year ago. We have been successful at getting many wonderful bookings whether in New Jersey/New York/PA (my area) or down in the DC (Amy’s area) or Cleveland where Jackie lives. We have certainly done many a mini tour and intend to do a lot more and have our eye on the national and world stage!"

And I intend to catch as many as I can.
There’s nothing wrong with a little nepotism,” a happily corrupt big city mayor once said, adding an important caveat, “as long as you keep it in the family.” There’s a lot to be said for that. Maybe your cousin Bernie really is the best choice for Commissioner of Weights and Measures.

And you can’t fault artistic director Ed Polcer for booking his son for the 26th Princeton JazzFeast. After all Ben Polcer is one of the busiest bandleaders working in New Orleans these days, and the star-packed pickup septet he led in Princeton pretty much stole the show. (Full disclosure, lest we be accused of pushing fake news, Ed did stress that Ben’s appearance was suggested by former Palmer Square marketing director Anita Freselone, who heard him play in New Orleans and was suitably impressed.)

The apple didn’t fall far from the tree and the trumpeter inherited a clean sound and swinging style from his father. Ben Polcer grew up surrounded by jazz. His parents owned Manhattan’s famed Eddie Condon’s club on West 54th Street, where his mother was the manager (and late night singer), his sister ran the coat room, and Ed worked the bar and led the house band (talk about all in the family). By age 18, Ben was pressed into service as a roadie for his father’s gigs and started to learn the business from the inside. He moved to New Orleans in 2007 to begin his own career. Starting out working for tips on Royal Street he soon became one of the leaders of the traditional jazz resurgence among the many young musicians in the city.

But Ben was third on the bill at JazzFeast. First up, for at least the umpteenth time, was the D.C.-based Alan Dale’s New Legacy Jazz Band who first played here in 1992. Pianist Rick Eldridge in particular was in fine form, peppering energetic solos with eclectic quotes from tunes like “Tequila,” and doubling on banjo for a feisty “Sweet Georgia Brown.”

There followed the urbane Houston Person, resplendent in a blue seersucker suit and a rumpled bucket hat, who offered a lyrical and languid seven-song set. Patter in between tunes was kept to a minimum, as in there wasn’t any. That included song titles, but we did recognize “Since I Fell For You” and “Sunny” in the impeccably played mix.

So far, so good. But many in the crowd were still reading the Sunday papers, working crosswords and thumbing their smartphones. Clearly it was time for some excitement and Polcer and company were ready to bring it.

After an opening “Shine” Ben offered his first gritty vocal on “2:19 Train Blues.” “The one song they’d let me sing,” in his 18-year-old band roadie days he explained. Another energetic vocal followed on “I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate.”

Polcer’s supporting cast may all have been New York-based trad/swing players, but this music was all New Orleans — from its tuba bass bottom to its interweaving frontline horns, namely Brian Nalepka, clarinetist Dennis Lichtman and Jim Fryer on trombone. Dalton Ridenhour (piano), Justin Poindexter (banjo) and Rob Garcia (drums) rounded out the rhythm section.

“Everybody Loves My Baby” had a jungle drum and clarinet open before morphing into straight ahead swing, and then festival director Ed Polcer picked up his cornet to sit in on “Old Fashioned Love in My Heart.” This was jazz with its roots showing, reeling off tunes like “Beale Street Blues” and the Hot Fives’ “The Wild Man Blues.” That good old good one featured Jim Fryer’s soulful...
trombone as the leader channeled the Armstrong vocal.

The group closed its set with a rousing “Panama Rag” that had the crowd on its feet. The bandleader seemed to share their enthusiasm, “All gigs should be like this!” he declared.

While this was Ben Polcer’s first appearance at JazzFeast, Jonathan Russell, who followed him to the stage, had been here before — more than a decade earlier at age 11. Times have changed. The flowing blonde curls are darkened and trimmed and he’s added a rakish beard. He’s also grown into a very fine jazz violinist and composer and his set of duets with guitarist Vinny Raniolo was something special. Raniolo, playing a vintage archtop in place of his usual round hole guitar, is the perfect musical foil for the spirited young violinist. This duo make music that deserves a recording. (Arbors Records, are you reading this?)

Then came the Stan Rubin Orchestra to close the day with a musical homecoming. Mr. Rubin is a Princeton man (Class of ’55) and he started The Tigertown Five when he was a freshman there. The band played at the 1951 Princeton v. Navy game where Dick Kazmaier led the Tigers to victory. (The running back went on to win Princeton’s only Heisman Trophy that year).

Thus launched the Tigertown Five soon became the hottest college band in the country. In Stan’s senior year they sold out Carnegie Hall and he was signed to RCA Victor. He later graduated from Fordham Law School but eschewed legal practice to form a big band dedicated to playing swing music. Today Stan’s band still plays weekly at two New York City clubs, Wednesdays at Swing 46 and Saturdays at the Carnegie Club.

His band at JazzFeast, turned out old school in matching shirts and ties, played a swinging program of big band music à la Goodman (“Let’s Dance”), Shaw (“Moonglow”) Rich (“Let’s Blow”) and Basie (“Hay Burner”), among others.

Ed Polcer is only the second artistic director in JazzFeast’s 26 years, having replaced NJJS founder Jack Stine just a few years ago. But he clearly has the music programming knack and the 2017 edition was another big success. We wonder what he’s got in store for next year. If he wants to bring his family back, that’s okay by me.

— Tony Mottola

“We’re gonna let these guys play some jazz here,” declared Princeton grad Stan Rubin who led a 12-piece swing band across the street from his alma mater at 2017 JazzFeast. Photo by Lynn Redmile.

AND THEN THERE’S THE FOOD: After all, man and woman don’t live by jazz alone. The Tiger’s Tale Bar & Grill (shown above), which sells a ton of lobster rolls and barbecued clams, is just one of nearly 20 local restaurants that surrounded Palmer Square with enticing food stalls. Among the offerings were artisinal pizzas, crepes, soups, ramen, Indian food, sausage & peppers, burgers, hot dogs, and huge pans of simmering paella. You could miss a whole set just trying to decide what to eat next. Photo by Tony Mottola.
In March 1991, bassist Christian McBride and pianist Benny Green were playing a duo gig at the Knickerbocker Bar and Grill in Greenwich Village. “Benny’s manager was very good friends with Ray Brown,” McBride recalled to Jersey Jazz, “and she brought him to hear us play. We were scared to death, but Ray seemed to enjoy what he heard, and he invited us to hear him play at the Blue Note.”

Today, Christian McBride is arguably the Number 1 bassist in jazz. He has won five Grammy Awards, is the artistic advisor for jazz programming at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, and is the artistic director of the Newport Jazz Festival. In those early days of his career, though, his musical idol was Brown, longtime bassist with the Oscar Peterson Trio, who played a leading role in the development of modern jazz. Brown became “a friend and mentor, someone I spent a lot of time with off the bandstand,” he said.

At age 45, McBride is now becoming a similar role model to younger musicians. His working trio includes the rising stars Christian Sands on piano and Ulysses Owens Jr. on drums. Reviewing the trio’s 2013 Grammy-nominated Mack Avenue CD, Out Here, allmusic.com’s Matt Collar pointed out that McBride “certainly lets his band mates shine in the spotlight throughout much of the album.” Sands is also the pianist in McBride’s big band, which anchored the Spotlight Gala 2017 njpac@20 concert on September 23, celebrating the performing arts center’s 20th anniversary.

“Christian Sands,” McBride said, “is still up and coming. He’s a very, very special young man. In many ways, he sort of reminds me of the way I was. He’s thoroughly entrenched in the music. He’s the best musician he can be, always looking to get information from his elders. In a world where young musicians are concentrating on creating something new or gaining Instagram followers, it’s refreshing to see someone who has a throwback attitude. I think he’s going a long, long way.”

Just as McBride became a protégé of Ray Brown, the 27-year-old Sands was a protégé of the late pianist Billy Taylor. When I interviewed Taylor in 2008 for my book, Jazz Notes: Interviews Across the Generations (Praeger/ABC-Clio), he told me Sands was so good that, “I took him to the Kennedy Center with me. I let him close my set. I played with the trio, and then I got off the stage and let him do the last thing. I’m really proud of him.”

McBride’s first big band recording, the 2012 Mack Avenue album, The Good Feeling, won a Grammy Award for Best Large Ensemble Jazz Album. The second big band recording, Bringin’ It, also on the Mack Avenue label, was released September 22. “It’s an extension of the first record,” he said. “I do hope my arranging skills have gotten a little better over five years.”

Allaboutjazz.com’s Dan Bilawsky called Bringin’ It, “a tight and tasty program of music designed by McBride and bolstered by his bass. Everything you’ve come to expect from this musical dynamo — taste, punch, humor, intelligence, solid gold grooves, an appreciation for lyricism — is here for the taking.”

McBride has a new quartet called New Jawn that he’s very enthusiastic about. “I knew it was time again to start a new group that was completely different from the trio,” he said. “It’s a group without any chordal instrument, something I thought would be an experiment worth trying.” The band features Josh Evans, trumpet, Marcus Strickland, saxophone/woodwinds, and Nasheet Waits, drums. It’s performed at a number of venues including Dizzy’s Coca-Cola and the Village Vanguard, and McBride said a new recording is expected by late spring or early summer 2018.
Reflecting on the early days of his musical career, McBride recalled that, “the first style I connected with was soul music. The great music from the late ’60s through the ’70s informs everything I do. Everything for me comes back to classic soul music.” McBride grew up in Philadelphia, which he remembers as “a great city for so many different types of music. By age 12, I was grateful to have seen every soul musician. My uncle was the promotion manager for a radio station. I saw Wilson Pickett, Gladys Knight, Dionne Warwick, the O’Jays, the Spinners. I saw jazz shows with Eddie Green and Charles Fambrough (Green was a pianist who backed the soul singer Billy Paul; Fambrough, a bassist, performed with Art Blakey and McCoy Tyner). And I also saw the Philadelphia Orchestra for the first time. It was great to be in one place where there were so many different things going on and so many branches off the same tree.”

Although McBride became artistic director of the Newport Jazz Festival in March 2016, this year’s festival was the first one entirely under his artistic direction, assuming that responsibility from 91-year-old founder George Wein. “I think it came off pretty well,” he said modestly. “Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It rained on the second day, but it cleared up by noon.”

Emphasizing that, “I don’t let my personal preferences decide what’s played,” McBride pointed out that the festival has been moving in a younger direction for awhile. “I’ve been to a lot of Newport festivals in the past,” he said, “and I thought the audiences looked pretty young. Mos Def was a headliner one year when I performed. Another year, they had Bruce Hornsby. I think it varies. Certainly, Roots headlining on Sunday afternoon this year was going to bring all kinds of new faces. George Wein said to me, ‘You have your work cut out for you next year, pal.’”

The New York Times’ Giovanni Russonello (August 7, 2017) pointed out that Roots was “not likely to have been booked by Mr. Wein,” adding that, “more than in years past, the main stage featured music to move to. The pianist Jason Moran brought his Fats Waller Dance Party, making a ricocheting funk jam out of old repertoire… Saxophonist Maceo Parker reprised a handful of tunes from the James Brown songbook . . .” And McBride, he said, “elevated a number of musicians from his native Philadelphia, where jazz’s inheritance machinery is especially strong.” Russonello also singled out the performance of Christian Sands, saying he delivered “airtight compositions and punctilious improvising.”

This year’s TD James Moody Jazz Festival at NJPAC, being held November 4-12, will, McBride said, be “almost all new. I have not done a full duet concert with Dianne Reeves before; it just seemed a no-brainer that we do a duet concert. And, we will be having Gregory Porter and Regina Carter.” Vocalist Porter and violinist Carter will appear in a concert on November 12 entitled “Ella & Dizzy, the Centennial Celebration.” It will also include trumpeters Randy Brecker and Sean Jones and McBride’s big band. The McBride-Reeves concert will be on November 11. Other highlights will include a return of trumpeter Chris Botti on November 8 and the Manhattan Transfer on November 4. The annual Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition will be held on November 12. Guest judges are: drummer TS Monk; vocalists Ann Hampton Callaway, Will Downing, and Vanessa Rubin; and WBGO’s Gary Walker.

The jazz portion of the Spotlight Gala on September 23 was ignited at the beginning by McBride’s big band’s sizzling performance of his original composition, “Gettin’ To It”, featuring solos by trumpeter Scott Wendholt, tenor saxophonist Ron Blake, and guitarist David Gilmore. The band stayed onstage to back the remarkable singing of young vocalists Alexis Morrost and Ricky Persaud, Jr., who performed a duet of the Josef Myrow/Mack Gordon standard, “You Make Me Feel So Young.”

Vocalist Michael Feinstein thanked NJPAC for its support of the Great American Songbook series on PBS and recalled celebrating Frank Sinatra’s centennial at the performing arts center in 2015. Then, he delivered a medley of Sinatra songs, leading off with Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn’s “Come Fly With Me” and including George Gershwin’s “A Foggy Day” and Harold Arlen’s “I’ve Got The World On A String.” Feinstein was followed by Paquito D’Rivera, who was genuinely “so happy to be here,” creating a blend of Dizzy Gillespie and Mozart on his flute. “Christian McBride,” he said, “told me he [Mozart] was from New Orleans.”

D’Rivera was joined by the Latin vocalist India, and the second half of the show included performances by the vocalists Cecile McLorin Salvant and Lisa Fischer and a spectacular bass/tap dance duet by McBride and Savion Glover. The evening ended on a soaring high note as the Alvin Ailey Dance Company performed a segment of its signature, “Revelations.”
NFL PLAYERS PROTEST QUIETLY WHILE THE MUSIC WAIS...BASIE’S ‘SLAM-BANG SWINGERS’ OF THE 1960s...PIANIST GLENN GOULD HUMMED WITH BACH LINES...QUINCY JONES’S GLOBAL JAZZ TV CHANNEL ON THE WAY
Longtime NJCU Music Educator Retires

By Dr. Joseph d’Auguste

Professor Richard Lowenthal parks his shiny blue convertible outside of Rossey Hall on the New Jersey City University campus. He smiles broadly as he makes his customary high spirited entrance into NJCU’s Department of Music, Dance & Theatre’s central office; faculty, staff, and students all stop to acknowledge the legendary professor whose presence still commands the room after 50 years of dedicated service. From there, he makes his to a third-floor office filled with music, videos, programs and archives of papers written by former students (many now major players in the music industry).

Lowenthal credits the students for keeping him enthusiastic. “Students help create the energy of a program,” he says. “The students are the ones that keep you going. New and exciting challenges present themselves every year when you’re teaching and performing.” He recalls returning from a European tour with his students; before even landing back on American soil, they were already asking, “What’s next?” Lowenthal always has an idea on the back burner. “You always have to be one step ahead, thinking of new ways to motivate and move forward.”

A graduate of the University of Michigan and Juilliard, he takes pride in positions with multiple programs. Notably his appointment by the Dean of Manhattan School of Music, Dr. Joseph Polisi (later president of Juilliard), to start and chair the MSM Jazz Program. It grew to be one of the most renowned and respected in the U.S. during his 18-year tenure.

“At first I was hired to create a graduate program which was to be a one-year masters degree,” he explains. “Later, it became a two-year program with applicants streaming in from all over the world as the undergraduate jazz major was also established. They recognized our exceptional program with a professional faculty that was second to none. I hired two to three instructors on each instrument with specialties in different genres of jazz so that students would be exposed to all styles.”

He did the same at MSM as he did at NJCU, the band performed regularly. “We were always moving and doing something. From European tours to local and regional concerts, we were always performing — and to this I attribute our huge success, in addition to recruiting and exposing the best talent out there.”

Asked to describe some of the greatest moments at NJCU, Lowenthal chuckles. After thinking for a minute, “The first time Clark Terry came in, I remember thinking ‘I’m conducting for my idol, Clark Terry.’”

Clark returned five times over the years (including a one week tour with the band), and each time, Lowenthal was as awestruck as the first. Eventually appointed to direct the NJCU Alumni Jazz Band, Lowenthal spearheaded a tribute to Clark Terry and Wynton Marsalis came in to perform with the band.

“I will never forget that performance as long as I live. Seeing alumni from the early 1970s through the most recent graduates participate in such a memorable performance was a personal joy for me.”

Other guest artists included Jon Faddis, Bucky and John Pizzarelli, Randy Brecker and Lou Marini. One concert honored Buddy Rich. “He heard the NJCU Jazz Ensemble perform after winning a major competition against some highly respected music schools. Buddy Rich had never played with a college band. Suddenly, he ran out of the audience with drumsticks in hand. He…literally kicked our drummer off the bandstand, sat down, and played right along with us. Every player in that band said they will never forget that night.”

Lowenthal also kept busy with a career as a conductor, trumpeter and contractor and was in demand with big bands, orchestras, operas, and Broadway shows; he also was a regular in the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra.

What advice does he have for young musicians? “Play everything, play all kinds of music. Also, every sax player likes to think they are Phil Woods or Michael Brecker but they should go and find out who Phil and Michael listened to. Go back, dig deeper, and listen to every kind of music possible.”

Each experience teaches something new. “I played with big bands, operas, wind ensembles, orchestras, tours, circus and ice shows, studio recordings, avant garde, churches, you name it. If you play with poor players, they pull you down. Play with the best players you can!”

Professor Lowenthal has lived a life musicians dream of. He shared his passion with thousands of students and always made decisions he felt would enhance the prestige and quality of the programs he led. He speaks of legendary jazz artists that we study and idolize by first name, because he has built friendships and relationships based on mutual respect and love of the craft.

“It is really important to never forget the past. There were a lot of great faculty and students that came through our program and we have a good number of young, talented faculty. I’ve done everything I thought necessary in order to keep the overall program growing through the decades.”

Regarding his retirement, Lowenthal says, “I set up a date with a friend of mine who recently retired. The Tuesday after Labor Day will be the first in 51 years that I will not be teaching. We are planning on going for breakfast and cocktails. It will be very different.”

He’d like to start some big bands in Florida where he’ll be living. He is on the board of directors of the Arts Garage in Delray Beach and is hoping to meet up with colleagues and attend performances himself.

And Professor Lowenthal will returning to NJCU. “My heart will always be at NJCU because it was my first gig. I have been taking a few moments to think about all the great people I met at NJCU. There will always be a place in my heart for the school.”

The legendary jazz educator and longtime faculty member will be missed but will continue to advise the music program and the University President. And he will also continue to serve as director of the NJCU Alumni Jazz Band which performs each September on the Jersey City Waterfront.
It can be imagined that a respectable number of readers are wondering what the devil has gotten into editor Mottola to include pages from the war memoirs of the Society’s co-founder in his magazine. If this registers as a reader objection, serious or not, let me counter it with one often expressed by the other co-founder, Bill Cleland, who, between references to John Jameson and Arthur Guinness, would aver that “Jazz is where you find it.”

So bear with us a bit longer, dear member, and you may find enough of Panassie’s “le hot” in another issue or two to provide enough of a taste of jazz for anyone looking for it. It might be fun.

* * *

Lunch hour that first day of my service in the United States Army found the major and me eating in the officers mess where anyone could see he was a favorite regular. Everyone entering or leaving stopped at our table to have a word or two and this, of course, resulted in an introduction to me.

“Got a new one for our side,” he would say, whacking me on the back. “Don’t ask him anything because he doesn’t yet know anything yet. But I do think he may have possibilities. Of this, we’ll see.”

Everything so far was very jolly and relaxed, thanks to the major. I must say I was getting very fond of the old guy myself. I’d put him down for somewhere in his late fifties or early sixties and it developed that I was not far off. During our brief acquaintance and in his own blunt way of establishing a point he told me about his own enlistment in the early nineteen hundreds, serving as an enlisted man during the time of the border face-off with Mexico under General Pershing, his idol. Soldiering appealed to him and as a good one he soon earned a rating of staff sergeant. When America entered World War I, he was given a field commission as lieutenant and went to France as a member of Pershing’s staff. Here he was now, well into his sixties and somewhat past the ordinary age of retirement, preparing new grunts like me for a career like his own.

Obviously the major would never again see service where vicious action was the order of the day, yet his mere presence as modest survivor spurred impressionable youngsters like me to sense the satisfaction that rewarded selfless performance. As a battered old boxer might recall the golden years in the trade where Jack Dempsey was king, so would major regale me with Dempsey-like tales of Pershing’s greatness. If such examples didn’t always make the intended point, they did nothing to dampen the pride I was beginning to feel wearing his olive drab, which was start enough for now.

Lunch over, the next step in my initiation to the service was the barracks area where the major collared the captain in charge with, “Got a new one for you here. I want you to put him up for a couple months, so don’t get him mixed up with the short termers, hear? Hasn’t got any papers yet but I should have them for you tomorrow morning, dog tags and all that goes with them. Got it? Any
prob-lems, save them for me and I’ll be around first thing tomorrow to settle up.”

And he left me on my own.

This new captain, like the major, was an old timer in the service and that went a long way toward making me feel at home. He pointed out that the normal stay at Fort Monmouth was about two weeks. “Not long enough really, but all the new army can allow for updating the latest developments in radar training.” The Signal Corps, whose stock in trade was anything pertaining to communication, had fallen heir to developing and teaching new techniques of bouncing radio signals off anything of interest and putting the revealed information to work — nothing new there, of course. “The Japanese and Germans been doing it for years, just like us, but they’ve been at it longer and are probably better at it than us so right now it’s a matter of playing catch up ball. Everything’s become hurry up and shut up…intelligence, in other words, which I imagine is the reason you’re here with him.”

I started to say something but he clamped me right up.

“Don’t tell me anything, for God’s sake. For one thing, if you’re with him,” waving to the major now pulling away in his car, “you don’t have to tell me. And for another, I don’t give a damn. All I’m doing is running these casual quarters here. Most men get two weeks. You, on the other hand, get as long as you want and I guess that makes you special. But special and me don’t mix, okay? So let’s see what we have for you.”

The barracks resembled nothing so much as a long wooden tunnel lined along each side with double decked beds. The front door made for the company street; the rear one led to the back yard where two separate buildings, the mess hall and company latrine, completed the premises that were to be my home until I completed my crypt school course. The captain gave me an upper bunk near the back door where a rolled up mattress awaited me and an orderly appeared out of nowhere with a footlocker, bedding, and instructions on how to make up a GI bed.

Everything now in order, I lay back to consider everything that had taken place that day. So far so good, I felt, but if this amounted to something like an earned accomplishment that I could look back on some day with appreciation, it really was really nothing of the sort. More likely it was the kind that the clatter and din of barracks activity could easily dispel. And it did.

Reality took over. You probably ain’t seen nothing yet! So get ready, I figured.

I rolled over and fell asleep.

Next issue: First days at crypt school, the remarkable genius of William Friedman who created it, and a whiff of the possibility of connection between cryptanalysis and improvisation. Don’t discard those old Ellington and Tatum records just yet.
Dan's Den | (Woonsocket) Rhode Island Is Famous For...Jazz!

By Dan Morgenstern

The well known Schwartz and Dietz song doesn’t identify the “you” Rhode Island is famous for, but, primed by a recent visit to our smallest state, we have a few candidates, all born in the grand metropolis of Woonsocket except two, who however were raised there.

The most famous is, alas, no longer with us — the wonderful Dave McKenna — but his singing sister is, more of her later. And another singer, and pianist, our dear friend Daryl Sherman, whose homecoming was the occasion of our journey, in the company of two of the greatest jazz fans, Nancy and Jerry Miller. (There are all kinds of jazz awards but no fan category — if there were I’d nominate these two.)

That homecoming took place at Chan’s, a combination jazz and blues club and Chinese restaurant, long the scene of many great musical moments. The place was packed for Daryl and her special band of musical friends: guitarist Jon Wheatley, bassist Marshall Wood, and fellow celebrant Harry Allen (born in D.C. but to Rhode Island at 11) — a most compatible foursome.

Visiting Chan’s always brings back memories of Sammy Sherman, Daryl’s father, born in New York City but brought to Woonsocket at a young age. A splendid trombonist, doubling expert violin, he was championed by Leonard Feather but gave up music as a profession to raise a family. On occasion, however, he would appear at Chan’s with such visiting firemen as Warren Vaché, Howard Alden and Loren Schoenberg, among others. Fortunately, he was captured for posterity recorded live at Chan’s for Arbors. That CD is subtitled An Autumnal Statement, and autumn was much in the musical air on this October night.

A packed house savored Daryl and her foursome in such seasonal fare as “This October” by Bobby Troup and the much better known “Autumn in New York,” with both stanzas. The first sitter-in, Jean McKenna, offered “When October Goes,” another rare gem, by the unlikely team of Barry Manilow and Johnny Mercer. (Manilow adding his melody to an unpublished lyric almost a decade after Mercer’s death). She is a first-rate singer, with a beautiful voice and engaging personality, but while encouraged to pursue a career by many musicians and fellow singers, among them Daryl who always asks her to sit in when in the audience, she preferred to stay home, teaching high school and raising a family. She finally did record, self-producing a fine CD, Full Circle, under her full name, Jean McKenna O’Donnell, with Messrs. Wheatley and Wood plus Mike Renzi and Dick Johnson. (Highly recommended, it should be available by way of Facebook’s The Dave McKenna Appreciation Society.)

Then came a most welcome surprise. Carol Sloane, who was in the audience but unseen by most, responded to urgings and came on stage. Greeted by thunderous applause, the native of Providence did a set including “The Lady Is a Tramp,” with the seldom-heard verse, and a touching “The More I See You.” The voice is as lovely as ever, and, needless to say, the interpretative powers unimpaired. Sloane, as she prefers to be called, offers workshops at her home in Stoneham, Massachusetts that include instruction in how to identify authentic jazz singing (which I’d recommend to inumerable critics), and told me that she’s ready for a comeback (agents, club owners, record and event producers please note). She can be reached at Slocol55@gmail.com. (On a personal note, it was a great pleasure to encounter Sloane, whom I last saw in New York quite some time ago. Aside from having been a fan since my first hearing and sighting at Newport 1961, she was a contributor to DownBeat when I was editor, writing better and needing less editing than many a so-called pro.) While Sloane did no autumn-related songs, Harry, who played superbly all night — he has long since become a virtuoso and shedded a Stan Getz influence (by no means a bad thing) to arrive at his own style — added humorously to the autumn theme with “Falling In Love” and skillfully transposed the flute part on Daryl’s own delightful “Cycling Along With You.”

It had been far too long as well since I’d last heard and seen Wheatley and Wood. Jon should be far better known but too seldom leaves Boston. He has his own style, which is exceptionally imaginative and tasteful, and his sound is most appealing. As for Wood, many of my readers will have encountered him with Tony Bennett; fortunately he was available. His time, touch and support are impeccable and his solos more interesting than most such offerings on the instrument. Daryl features her piano too seldom for my taste, but happily did so needing less editing than many a so-called pro. While Sloane did no autumn-related songs, Harry, who played superbly all night — he has since become a virtuoso and shedded a Stan Getz influence (by no means a bad thing) to arrive at his own style — added humorously to the autumn theme with “Falling In Love” and skillfully transposed the flute part on Daryl’s own delightful “Cycling Along With You.”

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All told, a truly memorable homecoming! P.S., you can catch Daryl with her longtime colleagues James Chirillo and Boots Malson at Kitano on Nov. 15, and at Mezzrow with Houston Person on Dec. 13. Next Den I’ll tell you about a band dedicated to the music of the Swing Era (and some pre as well) that I belatedly have discovered.
JAZZ TRIVIA ANSWERS
questions on page 4

1. Joanne Brackeen
2. Dianne Reeves
3. Pat Metheny
4. Todd Barkan

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RHYTHM & RHYME

Poetry editor Gloria Krolak explores the world of jazz in verse. This month she features a Beat Generation poet who found inspiration in the jazz clubs of San Francisco.

ROBERT KAUFMAN was nicknamed “The Original Bebop Man,” and a member of the Beat Generation of poets who gathered in San Francisco in the 1950s. Among his contemporaries were William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso and Lawrence Ferlinghetti. They became known for their experimental and formless verse, their rejection of societal conventions and poetic formalism, striving for authenticity of thought and feeling.

Kaufman usually recited his poems by memory spontaneously in the bars and coffee houses frequented by the poets and jazz musicians by whom he was inspired. He rarely wrote his work down.

He was born in New Orleans in 1925. Kaufman’s mother was a Catholic islander from Martinique, his father a German Orthodox Jew. He attended the services of both religions, and could also include his grandmother’s voodoo beliefs among his influences. At 13 he ran away and joined the Merchant Marine. Before he landed in New York twenty years later, Kaufman had lived through four shipwrecks and had circumnavigated the globe nine times.

In the ’40s he attended the New School in Greenwich Village to study literature where he met Burroughs and Ginsberg. The three would travel to the West Coast, forming the epicenter of the Beat Movement. With the backing of the journal Beatitude, which he helped found, his reputation grew, and in 1961 he was nominated for Great Britain’s prestigious Guinness Award but lost to T.S.Eliot.

But poverty, drug addiction and withdrawal, harassment, electroshock treatments and imprisonments dogged him. Protesting the death of John F. Kennedy and the war in Vietnam, Kaufman took a Buddhist vow of silence. He did not speak from 1963 until the day the war ended in 1975. He was industrious and productive until 1978 when he retreated into silence once again, saying, “…my ambition is to be completely forgotten.” Kaufman wrote at least nine books of poetry, most of which had to be transcribed by friends and family, and was awarded a National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship in 1981. He died in 1986 of emphysema.

“BATTLE REPORT,” in fabulous surrealistic imagery, imagines the triumphant bebop as a bloodless coup with shades of Greek mythology’s Trojan horse and modern special ops. The music’s sheer power turns every ear. Its creative force is irresistible. And, in poet Kaufman’s (translated’) scat poem “Crooteey Songo,”

Get it bop never lied, never lied never

What became known as bebop began with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker — Parker recorded the tune “Now Is the time,” in 1945 — taking over swing and the orchestral jazz to which hordes of young people reinvented dancing at places like Roseland and the Hollywood Palladium. For Kaufman and the other Beat poets bebop seems to have been life sustaining. It was not mere entertainment but part of his “ancestral cross.” He feared and resisted its losing its immediacy and depth in commercialization.

Kaufman’s search for authenticity was paralleled by the “fragile” musicians who lived inside their music. That battle has been won.

*Notes to Make the Sound Come Right, TJ Anderson III, University of Arkansas Press, 2004

BATTLE REPORT
By Robert Kaufman

One thousand saxophones infiltrate the city,
Each with a man inside,
Hidden in ordinary cases,
Labeled FRAGILE.

A fleet of trumpets drops their hooks,
Inside at the outside.

Ten waves of trombones approach the city
Under blue cover
Of late autumn’s neo-classical clouds.

Five hundred bassmen, all string feet tall,
Beating it back to the bass.

One hundred drummers, each a stick in each hand,
The delicate rumble of pianos, moving in.

The secret agent, an innocent bystander,
Drops a note in the wail box.

Five generals, gathered in the gallery,
Blowing plans.

At last, the secret code is flashed:
Now is the time, now is the time.

Attack: The sound of jazz.

Published in 1965,
Solitudes Crowded with Loneliness assembles ten years’ work of Bob Kaufman, celebrated in San Francisco as the original Beat and in France as “the American Rimbaud.” Kaufman created spontaneous, prophetic verse, mixing street talk and jazz with vision. Available at Amazon and other online booksellers.
CAST PARTY
Birdland, NYC | Aug. 28

On Monday nights for the past 14 years, Birdland has been home to Cast Party. Hosted by Jim Caruso, a talented and charismatic performer in his own right, these are opportunities for a variety of performers, mostly singers, to drop by, and get to do their thing with top-flight accompanists.

The house group on August 28 was Tedd Firth on piano, Steve Doyle on bass and Daniel Glass on drums. They constantly demonstrated their versatility as the artists who made the scene were varied in both style and talent. Firth in particular showed exactly why he is among the most sought after piano accompanists around, adapting to whatever tunes and styles he was challenged with in a ready, comfortable and masterfully manner.

The trio set the mood for the proceedings with a lively take on “Lady Be Good,” and were next joined by Caruso for a wonderfully good-humored look at a tune closely associated with Nat Cole, “I’m an Errand Boy for Rhythm.”

There followed an eclectic parade of performers. Composer/lyricist Matthew Lee Robinson sat down at the piano to accompany himself singing two original pieces, “Dear Future Me” and “Boy Band,” both of which were polished products that he presented in a stylish manner.

Joan Crowe is a singer with a sense of humor and an appealing style. She sang a song to which almost everyone could relate, “Putting Things Away.”

Before the customers were seated, there was a distinctive looking individual at the bar who looked like a plainclothes cop from a film noir movie. He turned out to be an accomplished vocalist from Brazil named Cosmo Brunetti who put across an effective reading of “It Had to be You.”

Caruso called up a young lady whom he said had a famous grandfather. She turned out to be AJ Lambert, daughter of Nancy Sinatra, who gave performances of “Sunny Side of the Street” and “You Do Something to Me” that would certainly have put a smile on the face of grandpa Frank.

These were the most memorable and appealing singers who were present for this edition of Cast Party, but the evening in general was a fun experience that Caruso moved along with great aplomb, and all of the participants were comfortable and confident in their presentations.

While the cast of performers changes from week to week, the constant presence of Jim Caruso assures that the evenings will flow smoothly, and be programmed for maximum enjoyment. Cast Party is a wonderful way to spend an evening.

KATIE THIROUX
Birdland, NYC | Sept. 10

Fresh from a three-month gig at Quincy Jones’ new jazz club in Dubai, bassist/vocalist Katie Thiroux kicked off a month-long tour of the east Coast and Midwest to promote her new CD, Off Beat with a strong set at Birdland. Ken Pepowski on tenor sax and clarinet, Steven Feifke on piano and Matt Witek on drums provided the support for Thiroux.

Thiroux, who has been a stalwart on bass since her teenage years in Los Angeles, has also developed into an interesting and appealing vocalist. She offered both aspects of her talent to an appreciative audience at Birdland.

Her program included five selections from the new album, “When Lights Are Low,” “When the Wind Was Green,” “Why Did I Choose You,” “Willow Weep for Me” and “Ray’s Idea.” Thiroux also included two tunes from her first album, Introducing Katie Thiroux, “The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else” and “A Beautiful Friendship.”

She showed that her book is not limited to the songs on her albums by including “Let’s Fall in Love,” “Tricotism” and “I’ll Follow My Secret Heart.”

Pepowski did not play on all tunes, but when he did, he added a nice extra dimension to the arrangements. He was particularly effective on “When the Wind Was Green,” where his clarinet was the only instrument supporting Thiroux, her voice and her bass.

Her duo with Feifke on “Why Did I Choose You” was superb, and Feifke took a scintillating solo turn on “Tricotism.”

Other notable selections were “Willow Weep for Me,” where her self-accompaniment on bass was the only support for her vocal. On “Ray’s Idea,” an instrumental piece composed by Ray Brown, Gill Fuller and Dizzy Gillespie, Thiroux added a wordless vocal.

Thiroux had great command throughout the set, both musically, and in her commentary, which was full of good humor and congeniality. This young lady has matured swiftly into a confident performer and a strong leader, who knows how to put a show together, and make it work on all levels.

continued on page 20
CAUGHT IN THE ACT
continued from page 36

CLEVELAND CLASSIC JAZZ PARTY 2017

Duke Heitger, Randy Reinhart, Andy Schum
(trumpet/cornet)/Dan Block, Ken Peplowski, Scott
Robinson (reeds)/Dan Barrett (trombone)/Howard
Alden, Andy Brown (guitar/banjo)/Ehud Asherie,
James Dapogny, John di Martino, Rossano Sportiello
(piano)/Joel Forbes, Nicki Parrott, Frank Tate (bass)/
Ricky Malichi, Pete Siers, Hal Smith (drums)/Nicki
Parrott, Petra van Nuis (vocals)/Faux Frenchmen –
Paul Patterson (violin)/George Cunningham, Brian
Lovely (guitars)/Don Aren (bass)

Crowne Plaza Hotel | Sept. 14-17

For four days, September 14-17, the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cleveland was where it was happening for those who dig mainstream jazz, as it was the site of the 2017 edition of the Cleveland Classic Jazz Party. This gathering was an event where 24 premier players were mixed and matched for a steady stream of wonderful sounds.

For those who arrived early, the opening evening was a four and one-half hour jam session where the musicians floated on and off the stage in a variety of combinations. These are players who were mostly old acquaintances, and who were familiar with the broad catalog of tunes that form the core of the jazz repertory, so they were comfortable no matter which of them were on stage at any given time, and what tune was called.

On Friday morning, Dr. Phil Atterberry gave a multimedia presentation about Ella Fitzgerald, the “First Lady of Song,” whose Centennial is being celebrated this year.

The four outstanding pianists, Ehud Asherie, James Dapogny, John di Martino and Rossano Sportiello each played a half-hour solo set during Friday afternoon. These are four pianists with distinctly different styles, and each sparkled during their segments.

The first evening session, extending from 6:00 PM to 11:30 PM comprised eight sets with each led by a different player. The groups varied in size from an octet led by cornetist Andy Schum to a quartet led by guitarist Andy Brown. The other leaders in this session were bassist/vocalist Nicki Parrott, pianist Rossano Sportiello, pianist Ehud Asherie, vocalist Petra van Nuis and trumpeter Duke Heitger.

There was also a set by the Faux Frenchmen. There followed two late night duo sets, the first by Randy Reinhart and John di Martino, with Rossano Sportiello and Frank Tate playing the nightcap set.

Saturday was broken into two sessions. The earlier one ran from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM, comprising seven sets with reedman Dan Block, van Nuis, cornetist Randy Reinhart, trombonist Dan Barrett, Parrott and Sportiello in the leadership roles, along with a set by the Faux Frenchmen. The later seven sets took place from 5:45 PM to 11:00 PM with the leaders being Heitger, Barrett, pianist John di Martino, drummer Hal Smith, Schum, Block, and another visit from the Faux Frenchmen. Another set of duos took place with Scott Robinson and Rossano Sportiello first up, and Andy Brown and Petra van Nuis closing the evening.

Sunday was the final day with one eight-set session running from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. This time the Faux Frenchmen led off followed by sets led by Howard Alden, Ken Peplowski, Schum, van Nuis, Asherie and pianist James Dapogny, with Dan Barrett in charge of the finale.

The event seemed like one highlight after another. There were a few sets with definite themes. Sportiello’s two sets as a leader both had a focus, the first being “The Joys of Dixieland,” and the second being “From Chopin to Basie.” John di Martino devoted his set to the music of Billy Strayhorn. The first set led by van Nuis was titled “Let’s Face the Music and Dance,” a collection of songs with dancing as their subjects. Perhaps the most buoyant and joyous set of music was the “Tribute to Wild Bill Davison” led by Hal Smith with Reinhart, Schum, Barrett, Alden, Sportiello and Forbes joining Smith to salute the effervescent Davison.

The closing segment was reminiscent of a Jazz at the Philharmonic concert with the trio of Rossano Sportiello on piano, Frank Tate on bass and Pete Siers on drums providing rhythmic support for a medley of ballads performed by Block, Heitger, Schum, Robinson, Peplowski, Reinhart, Brown, van Nuis, Alden and Barrett. Then the horns split on the two sides of the stage to jam on “One O’Clock Jump.” It was a rousing conclusion to four days of musical pleasure provided by a talented cast of superb jazz players.

Music Director Nancy Griffith, with input from the musicians, put together one compatible group after another, and programmed them in a way that provided a nice variety of music presented in a well-paced manner. Administrative Director Kathy Hancock kept the business side of things flowing flawlessly. Stage Manager Larry Pavelka assured that the tight schedule was efficiently followed.

This was another year where the Cleveland Classic Jazz Party had everyone smiling from start to finish, and the music should linger on in memory for quite some time.

Note: For those unable to attend, or those who attended and would like to revisit some of what you saw and heard, keep an eye on Michael Steinman’s Jazz Lives blog to see some video from the event. If you are not already a subscriber, you can go to https://jazzlives.wordpress.com on the web and sign up for it.

GABRIELLE STRAVELLI

City Girl, Country Boy – Gabrielle Stravelli Sings Willie Nelson

Birdland, NYC | Sept. 24

Let’s get this on record up front — this show was brilliant! Much like her subject, Willie Nelson, Gabrielle Stravelli has stuck to her artistic vision, and gone forward where others might have compromised or thrown in the towel. Her program of songs written by and/or associated with Willie Nelson found her reconceiving the Nelson material in a jazz context with intelligence, imagination, musicality and a voice that equaled all of the challenges that the material presented.

Stravelli, in her commentary, provided the background for why she chose Willie Nelson as a source of inspiration, and told enough of his story to place the songs that she chose in the proper perspective.

The program was a challenging one in many ways. Nelson’s interpretations of his songs are generally iconic and definitive. Giving them a completely different take was daring, but ultimately wildly successful. The fact that Nelson has a lot of jazz feeling in his own vocalizing is surely a part of what appealed to her, and made her decision to pursue this concept more logical than would appear on the surface. She was aided by an outstanding quartet of musicians, Scott Robinson on tenor sax, flute and trumpet, Joshua Richman on piano, Pat O’Leary, who also served as musical director, on bass and Eric Halvorson on drums.

Wisely, Stravelli selected songs that demonstrated the broad scope of Nelson’s music. She opened with a song from Nelson’s latest album, God’s Problem Child, “Lady Luck,” and paired it with a country classic by one of Nelson’s idols, Lefty Frizzell, “If You’ve Got the Money Honey, I’ve Got the Time.” Another song from the new album, “Butterfly,” a wistful ballad that featured Robinson’s flute, was followed by a song from Nelson’s first album And Then I Wrote, “Three Days.”

This set the stage for her to present material from the album that turned Nelson’s career from an
occasionally successful songwriter who had provided hits for other artists while having only moderate success as a performer, to a major country music star, Red Headed Stranger.

From this concept album, a song cycle telling the tale of love gone wrong, Stravelli showed off her convincing ability as a storyteller by performing two selections from the album, “Time of the Preacher” and “I Still Can’t Believe You’re Gone.”

The next major phase of Nelson’s career was his decision to release an album of standards, Stardust. This was music that Nelson had heard as a child. He has often cited the influences of the music of the big bands and the Western Swing bands on his music. Stravelli sang the title tune from that album as memorably as it has ever been sung, full of emotion and musicality of the highest order.

Another strong influence on Nelson was Django Reinhardt, as anyone who has heard him stretch out on guitar during one of concerts can hear. Stravelli sang the Spencer Williams lyric for Reinhardt’s most famous and popular composition “Nuages,” “It’s the Bluest Kind of Blues.”

Nelson’s frequent partnership with Waylon Jennings provided material for two of the many highlights of the show. Perhaps only Stravelli could imagine “Mama Don’t Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys” as a bebop tune, but she did, and it was thoroughly satisfying. She then gave a reflective ballad reading of “Good Hearted Woman.”

In 1998 Nelson released an album that was a departure from his usual range of sounds, Teatro. Stravelli effectively combined a tune from that album, “Somebody Pick Up My Pieces” with his most well known song, “Crazy,” a medley that brought the audience to its feet. The set closed with the Nelson song that has probably been recorded by more different artists than any other, “Night Life.”

In her opening remarks, Stravelli spoke of becoming aware of Willie Nelson while attending one of his concerts at the Garden State Arts Center. Her sister had gotten the tickets, and Stravelli went along just to see the show, unaware that she was about to see a performer who would enter her consciousness, and remain there.

It was Nelson singing “Always on My Mind” accompanied only by his own guitar that made her a fan forever, and she returned to the stage to movingly sing that song accompanied only by Richman on piano. It was a perfect ending to a perfect set.

One thing that made this show so special is that it could be enjoyed on two levels. For those familiar with Nelson’s work, it was a wonderful opportunity to see how his genius reaches far beyond simply country music audiences.

Anyone who has been to one of a Willie Nelson concert is struck by the diversity of the crowd, from button-down chaps in three piece suits to folks who look like that just got off of the tractor to get to the show, and a wide variety of others in between.

For those unfamiliar with his work, the sheer force of Stravelli’s artistry enabled them to enjoy songs that were new to them as if they were old friends.

This is a show that deserves to be presented many more times, and to be preserved on CD and DVD.

MARIA FRIEDMAN
Sings Sondheim and Bernstein
Feinstein’s/54 Below, NYC | Sept. 19-23

There are performers who have a presence that immediately dominates a stage, and makes the audience feel that something special is about to happen. From the moment Maria Friedman arrived on the stage at Feinstein’s/54 Below to sing songs by Stephen Sondheim and Leonard Bernstein, it was evident that she was prepared to give a memorable performance, and that those gathered to see her were expecting exactly that. They were not disappointed.

When they collaborated on West Side Story, Sondheim, the lyricist, was a Broadway novice, and Bernstein an experienced Broadway composer who was also a significant presence in the world of classical music. This proved to be Bernstein’s last success on Broadway, but it was just the start of a career that would find Sondheim develop into the most significant figure in the Broadway musical theater for the remainder of the 20th century.

Friedman, although a major West End musical theater star in England, expressed a particular affection for New York City. This was clear in the opening medley of “What More Do I Need,” “New York, New York” and “Me and My Town,” a clever triptych of songs. It was emphasized again when she segued into a pairing of “Lonely Town” and “Another Hundred People.”

Her wonderful facility with comedic material was in full evidence when she did “100 Ways to Lose a Man,” “Getting Married Today,” during which she donned a wedding veil, “I Can Cook Too,” and “Gee, Officer Krupke,” for which Friedman brought along a couple of wigs and a policeman’s hat to embellish her characterizations. She spread these pieces out through the show to provide some levity among the more serious material.

Friedman’s choices of songs, when she grouped them into medleys were perceptive and effective. A trio of songs related to love, “A Little Bit of Love,” “In Buddy’s Eyes” and “I Have a Love,” the first questioning if love is real, the second showing a desperate need to believe in a love that is fading, and the third an expression of the power of love.

In the middle of the show, Friedman performed three songs that mirrored her perception of the way the world is today, “So Pretty,” “Take Care of This House” and “Children Will Listen,” numbers that she performed with deep emotion.

Two selections stuck out for Friedman’s conception of them. She performed “Broadway Baby” in an understated, at times coy manner, much unlike the brassy, world-weary approach usually taken. Her “Losing My Mind” was angry and dramatic rather than slightly unhinged as it is normally performed.

She did two encores, the masterful take on “Gee, Officer Krupke,” and a tender “Some Other Time.”

This was a bravura performance by a lady who is as adept at dramatic presentation of musical material as she is with her immense vocal talent. Friedman was abetted in all of this by her pianist and musical director, Jason Carr, who was a one-man orchestra.

Sondheim and Bernstein provided wonderful material for Friedman to interpret, and she did so in an exquisite and constantly engaging manner.
Other Views
By Joe Lang
Past NJJS President

I am loaded with new CDs to report on, including some more sparkling reissues from Fresh Sound, and I will try to cover all that I think will have some appeal to you.

Most NJJS members are familiar with the name BILLY VERPLANCK as the husband of vocalist Marlene VerPlanck. In fact, he was a fabulous arranger who had started his career by playing trombone on the bands of Claude Thornhill, Tommy Dorsey and Charlie Spivak, among others. Ultimately he concentrated on the arranging side of his talent, and that also included his considerable talent for composing original melodies. In the 1950s he had an association with Savoy Records. It was there that he made a series of albums for the label, and they were the only ones that were ever released that also contained his unique and whimsical charts that are already used the words unique and whimsical to describe the band and its music, and they probably are the best descriptions of the album. There are twelve selections, each singular in nature. If you are open to a very different listening experience, I recommend this and the other three albums by the Ghost Train Orchestra. It is unclassifiable, but quite interesting. (www.accuraterecords.com.)

THE DAVE PELL OCTET was formed by Pell in 1953, and he continued to perform with iterations of the group until the ill health that led to his death last May at the age of 92 made it no longer possible for him to get out there. The first recordings of this group are now available on a two-disc set, The Dave Pell Octet Plays Irving Berlin, Rodgers & Hart and Burke & Van Heusen: The Complete Trend and KAPP recordings 1953-1956 (Fresh Sound – 934). These tracks were originally released on four albums, the Berlin as a 10" LP, later rereleased as a 12" LP with four additional tracks; the Rodgers & Hart as a 12" LP; and the Burke and Van Heusen released as a 10" LP under the name of vocalist Lucy Ann Polk, and the remainder as a 12" LP with eight instrumental tracks plus four from the Polk LP. The players, many of whom had been on the Les Brown Big Band with Pell, were all first-call West Coast Jazzmen. They included Don Fagerquist on trumpet, Ray Sims on trombone, Ronny Lang and Pell on reeds, Jeff Clarkson, Donn Trenner or Claude Williamson on piano, Tony Rizzi on guitar, Rolly Bundock on bass and Jack Sperring or Bill Richmond on drums. The arrangers included Shorty Rodgers, Jerry Fielding, Wes Hensel, Marty Paich, Johnny Mandel, Bill Holman, Bob Enevoldsen, Jack Montrose, Med Flory, Jim Emerson and Buddy Bregman, an all-star lineup indeed. Their charts make the Octet often sound like a full big band. Pell tried to program tunes that were not the obvious ones from these songwriters, so you get to hear Berlin songs like “Love and the Weather,” “Kate,” “I Used to Be Color Blind” and “This Year’s Kisses,” from Rodgers & Hart “Why Do You Suppose,” “You Are Too Beautiful” and “Sing for Your Supper,” and by Burke & Van Heusen “My Heart Is a Hobo,” “It’s Always You,” “Just My Luck” and “Humpy Dumpty Heart.” The playing is superb, the arrangements hip and Lucy Ann Polk is a delight. If you love songs, you’ll dig this set! (www.fershsoundrecords.com.)

Among the more unique bands around today is the GHOST TRAIN ORCHESTRA. Leader Brian Carpenter, who also plays trumpet, arranged a collection of melodies by the likes of Raymond Scott, Alec Wilder and Reginald Forsythe for Book of Rhapsodies, Vol II (Accurate 5072). There are also three selections from the band of the obscure American clarinetist Hal Herzon who looked to playing outside arrangements of music composed by a variety of American composers. It is difficult to describe the whimsical charts that Carpenter has devised. This is the second volume of similar material by the GTO, and it is equally strange and appealing. The band is based in Brooklyn, and there are a few players on the band, clarinetist Dennis Lichtman and drummer Rob Garcia, who will be familiar to many NJJS members. I have already used the words unique and whimsical to describe the band and its music, and they probably are the best descriptions of the album. There are twelve selections, each singular in nature. If you are open to a very different listening experience, I recommend this and the three other albums by the Ghost Train Orchestra. It is unclassifiable, but quite interesting. (www.accuraterecords.com.)

Tenor saxophonist LUCKY THOMPSON was a player who never garnered the recognition that he deserved. His outspoken distaste for the business side of the music business gave him a reputation as difficult, and his playing opportunities became more and more limited. By the mid-1950s he made a move to Paris hoping to find conditions more to his liking. He was immediately accepted by the French musicians, and in the years between 1956 and 1959 he recorded many small group sessions, and a few with larger ensembles. The former are gathered on a magnificent four CD set, Complete Parisian Small Group Sessions 1956-1959 (Fresh Sound – 933), while the latter can be found on The All Star Orchestra Sessions Lucky Thompson in Paris 1956 (Fresh Sound – 938). There are 19 small group sessions, seven with Thompson as the leader, four co-led with drummer Dave Pochonet, one co-led with guitarist Jean-Pierre Sasson, one co-led with pianist/singer Sammy Price, one co-led with pianist Jack Dieval, three with groups led by Dave Pochonet, one with a group led by drummer Kenny Clarke, and one led by trumpeter Emmett Berry on which Thompson does not appear. The earliest was recorded on February 21-22, 1956, with the latest dating from March 25, 1959. Thompson’s playing throughout is masterful and impressive. His ballad work is exquisite, sensitive and light-toned in the Lester Young mode or infused with Ben Webster-ish breathiness. On the more up-tempo pieces he swings mightily. Equally impressive is the quality of his appealing original compositions. There is a lot of music.
to enjoy and absorb in this collection. Do not be surprised to find yourself returning often to these discs to savor the artistry of Lucky Thompson.

The four sessions comprising the other disc were all recorded in 1956, on March 5 and 7, March 29, April 17 and May 11. The earliest two dates were recorded under the name of the Modern Jazz Tentette featuring Lucky Thompson, the next two billed as the Lucky Thompson & Gérard Pochonet All Stars, and the last as the Dave Pochonet All Stars featuring Lucky Thompson. Pianist Henri Renaud composed the tunes by the first group, while Thompson wrote the songs for the balance of the sessions. The groups varied in size from eight to ten players. All of the bands have a full sound, much closer to a big band than a smaller group. The charts mostly have a swing feel, but a few of the earlier ones have a touch of cool about them.

While Thompson’s playing is the focus of these recordings, the quality of the French players is also impressive. Particularly notable are pianist Martial Solal and drummer Gérard “Dave” Pochonet. Solal has been a major figure on the international jazz scene for well over 60 years, and is still active at the age of 90. Pochonet also had a busy career, eventually settling in the United States. Jordi Pujol is to be commended for making this music widely available again, and in great sound. He has also contributed informative notes to both of these items. (www.fershsoundrecords.com)

- **Vocalist PETRA VAN NUIS** and guitarist ANDY BROWN are musical partners, and partners in life as well. Husband and wife teams in jazz are not unusual, and their situation enables them to share their music on a special level. Each of them performs on their own as well as together, but when they do get together, as on the self-produced Lessons Lyrical, the magic truly happens. The program is replete with good tunes not overdone, and some like “Save Your Sorrow for Tomorrow,” “C’est La Vie,” “Doctor Jazz,” “Simple Isn’t Easy” and “Peter Had a Wolf” are true rarities. A few, “Bali Hai” and “Slow Poke” are not usually part of a jazz singer’s repertoire. Van Nuis has a warm, pleasant voice, and a sense of phrasing that is all her own. Brown is supportive and creative at the same time. When he has solo space, it is a delight to hear him stretch out. In the notes, Van Nuis briefly describes the message that she had taken from each lyric, the “lessons lyrical” that she is passing on to the listeners. This is a nice way to have them relayed to the listener. (www.petrasings.com)

- **Late Set (Anzic - 0060)** captures the magic created by vocalist HILARY GARDNER and pianist EHUD ASHERIE when they hold forth at Mezzrow. Both of them are steeped in the music from the golden age of the Great American Songbook. Here they take nine tunes, “Shadow Waltz,” “Sweet and Slow,” “A Ship Without a Sail,” “After You’ve Gone,” “I Never Has Seen Snow,” “I Used to Be Color Blind,” “Everything I’ve Got,” “Make Someone Happy” and “ Seems Like Old Times,” and put their own stamp on each of them. Gardner is one of the finest singers working on the New York scene today. She has a warm, assured voice, enunciates each word with rare clarity, brings out the essence of each lyric and phrases with taste and wonderful musicality. Asherie, who has chops to spare when performing solo, shows his sensitive side as an accompanist. He provides a perfect bed of sound for Gardner’s vocalizing. Hear this album, and you will try to be among the lucky few who can fit into the intimate listening space at Mezzrow, a wonderful room in which to hear exceptional music like that created by Hilary Gardner and Ehud Asherie. (www.anzicrecords.com)

- The self-produced Dream a Little Dream by vocalist MICHELLE LORDI is a dream of an album. It could have been called “The Philadelphia Connection” for the Philly-based Lordi has surrounded herself with many of the top players on the city’s music scene, including the venerated tenor sax master Larry McKenna and his longtime colleague, guitarist Sonny Troy. Along with pianist Mike Frank, bassist Matt Parrish, drummer Bill Auyou, trumpeter Jay Webb and trombonist John Swana, they provide swinging and tasteful support for Lordi’s warm and appealing vocals. The songs are solid standards, including “Dream a Little Dream of Me,” “They Say It’s Wonderful,” “No Moon At All,” “The Lamp Is Low,” “I Hear Music,” “Thou Swell” and “This Time the Dream’s on Me.” The only drawback is that the album is on the short side, so that the pleasure that it creates feels too short-lived at 30 minutes. Lordi’s connections with the songs and the musicians are spot on, making for a terrific listening experience. (michellelordi.com)

- There are relatively few singers who could be considered pure bebop vocalists, but JOE CARROLL has to be one of the first that would come to mind if you were asked to name them. He is best remembered for his work with Dizzy Gillespie on such classic bebop tracks as “In the Land of Oo-Bl-Dee” and “Oh-Shoo-Bee-Doo-Be,” but he recorded with others, including a superb album for Epic in 1956 that includes his unique interpretations of standards like “Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,” “Route 66” and “Jeepers Creepers.” This material can be found on Epic & Prestige Sessions... and More (Fresh Sound – 935). Eleven of the 27 tracks have the equally effervescent Mr. Gillespie on trumpet, and some of the vocals. Carroll brought any session in which he participated to a level of exuberance that is infectious. This collection is guaranteed to lift your spirits no matter where they were when you placed the disc into your player. (www.freshsound.com)
Book Review

MY DEAR DEPARTED PAST
By Dave Frishberg | Backbeat Books, Milwaukee (224 Pages, 2017, $27.99)

My Dear Departed Past captures the unique individual who is Dave Frishberg, a superb jazz pianist, a truly individual stylist as a singer, a terrific composer, a brilliant lyricist, and a masterful storyteller. It is a memoir, an autobiographical collection of anecdotes that are insightful, and filled with the effervescent, and sometimes wry, sense of humor that is characteristic of many of his lyrics. It is often sentimental and nostalgic, a reality that is reflected in the book’s title.

Most of the twelve chapters are named after a song that Frishberg has written, and these chapters start with the text of the lyrics. The Chapter titled “The Dear Departed Past” covers the story of his life from his early years in Minneapolis, through his Air Force days.

“Do You Miss New York” relates his move to New York City, initially working as a newsletter writer for WNEW before entering the world of life as a gigging musician. This chapter, as are each of them, is filled with stories that will fascinate you, and often make you laugh out loud. Do not miss the brief paragraph subtitled “Ava and Me.”

His initial success as a songwriter is covered in “Peel Me a Grape.” It also touches upon his work with the likes of Gene Krupa, Ben Webster, and, of course, his days of playing with Al Cohn and Zoot Sims at the Half Note, the legendary lower Manhattan jazz club where he spent several years as essentially the house pianist. He concludes this chapter with a reflection on one of his most profound musical influences, pianist Jimmy Rowles, another must read interlude.

The brief chapter titled “I Want to Be a Sideman” offers some insights about lyric writing, the declining state of creativity in much of jazz, and his views about critics.

“Too Long in L.A.” finds Frishberg speaking about various aspects of his career during his move to Los Angeles.

There follows very brief chapters, each of which touches upon a specific and limited subject, “Dear Bix (notes),” Schoolhouse Rock,” “The Hopi Way,” and “Van Lingle Mungo.” Frishberg’s love for baseball is the focus of “Matty,” a chapter that will find an emotional connection for anyone who loves that uniquely American game.

He concludes with two more brief chapters titled “You Are There” and “Portland.”

This book is almost impossible to put down once you have started it. Frishberg’s way with words is irresistible, as are the anecdotes he relates to tell his story. Several things come through most strongly, his intelligence, his sense of humor, his willingness to express strong opinions, his admiration for the individuals whom he considers artistically exceptional, and his love for “the dear departed past.”

Once finished with reading this book, you will likely feel that you have just spent some actual time with Dave Frishberg, and you will wish that it could have been many times longer.

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Jazz Up Your Wardrobe

There’s a new crop of NJJS and Pee Wee Stomp t-shirts!

At $15, they make great gifts for yourself and your friends. You can buy them in person at some of our events, and we can bring them to Jazz Socials on request. But if you don’t want to wait, order via mail and get your shirt within days! Shirts are 100% cotton, crew-neck, short-sleeved shirts; they may run slightly snug. Cost is $15 per shirt + $4 shipping fee.

Styles — choose from:
- white shirt with red NJJS logo
- black shirt with red NJJS logo
- white shirt with red+black Pee Wee art

Sizes — choose:
- unisex S, M, L, XL, or XXL
- ladies’ S, M, L (slightly more open neckline, smaller sleeve cut, slightly tapered body)

Make check payable to NJJS. Mail to NJJS, c/o Linda Lobdell, 352 Highland Ave., Newark NJ 07104. BE SURE to specify style and size, and give us clear mailing instructions. Please also provide your telephone number and email address in case we have questions about your order. Do YOU have questions? contact Linda Lobdell at 201-306-2769 or LLobdell@optonline.net.
Morris Jazz

The Bickford Theatre at the Morris Museum, Morristown Tickets/Information: 973-971-3706

This is the month to give thanks for family, friends, life, love of country, and of course, America’s original music, jazz.

The Bickford Theatre joins with Hot House Jazz Magazine to launch a new concert offering celebrating the Fans Decision Jazz Awards presented each October by Hot House and New York’s Metropolitan Room. While the names of the performers have not been announced as of press time, you can be assured that this concert will be something special. Each year the public nominates and then votes in various categories with the winners being announced at a celebratory program. This year’s ceremony honors the founder of the Newport Jazz Festival, George Wein, and the co-founder of New York’s famous Village Vanguard, Lorraine Gordon. If you follow these annual awards you know that many of the winners in the past are huge favorites here at the Bickford. Of course, by the time you are reading this not only will the various winners be announced, we will be able to reveal who our guests will be for the very special Hot House Award Winners In Concert.

So save the date, Thursday, November 9 at 7:30 PM, and mark your calendar for an evening of great jazz performed by fan favorites. It’s a new tradition for both the theatre and Hot House Jazz Magazine and it will be sponsored in part by the New Jersey Jazz Society.

The seventh annual Bickford Benefit All Star Concert will once again both surprise and dazzle the musical ears of the audience on Monday, November 13 at 7:30pm. All of the proceeds of the concert help support the year-round programming at the Bickford Theatre including its expanded concert line-up for the Bickford Jazz Showcase including its recent very popular Jazz Summer-FEST. Band leader, Dan Levinson (clarinet & tenor sax), continues to amaze and delight our audiences year after year assembling a most talented team of musicians guaranteed to entertain Bickford regulars and all jazz enthusiasts. Let’s start with the ladies of music, Molly Ryan (guitar/vocals), Brandi Disterheft (bass) and the boys, Jeff Barnhart (piano), Jim Fryer (trombone), Mike Davis (cornet), and Stéphane Séva (drums). This concert will sell out fast, so get your tickets today. Special pricing for this benefit are as follows $20 members of the Morris Museum and $22 for non-members in advance, $27 for non-members at the door. The best value for a benefit anywhere especially for a line-up of all stars like this!

COMING EVENTS:
Jan. 8 – Bucky Pizzarelli’s Birthday Bash
Jan. 20 – Chris Brubeck’s Triple Play
Feb. 22 – T.S. Monk — Eric Hafen

All shows start at 7:30 PM and are assigned seating; for best seats, order early.

Jazz For Shore

Midweek Jazz at the Arts & Community Center at Ocean County College, Toms River Tickets/Information: 732-255-0500

After five months of exciting concerts featuring five totally different shows — the Jazz Lobsters Big Band, Swingadelic (featuring the incredible Vanessa Parea channeling Ella Fitzgerald), Geoff Gallante in duet with Joe Holt, the sensationally swinging Champian Fulton Quartet and Dan Levinson’s Roof Garden Jass Band recreating the music of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band — the MidWeek Jazz series at Ocean County College will take the month of November off.

However, the Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts will still feature a memorable evening of jazz on Tuesday, November 7, just not under the MidWeek Jazz umbrella. It will be one of the college’s more marquee shows and will feature the Preservation Hall Legacy Quintet, The Blind Boys of Alabama and Crescent City “Soul Queen” Irma Thomas for a night being billed as “The Heart and Soul of New Orleans.”

It should be noted that faithful supporters of MidWeek Jazz can get a discount to this show by subscribing to the MidWeek Jazz series and purchasing tickets to five shows. (If you can’t make it on November 7, the discount will also apply to a February 14 concert by the Birdland All Stars.)

And there’s lots of good stuff coming up between now and the end of the season in June. All will be revealed in future issues of Jersey Jazz but don’t miss out on the return of twin reed virtuosos Will and Peter Anderson on December 13 as they will be performing a special evening of music from Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess.

And breaking news at press time: The Midiri Brothers will be back to do their...
annual salute to Benny Goodman’s Carnegie Hall concert on January 24 and because this is the 80th anniversary of that historic event, Paul Midiri has written in to say he is putting together a bona fide big band for the occasion! The Midiris usually draw huge crowds with their sextet; a full big band paying tribute to the “King of Swing” might have the potential to break some box office records so get your tickets in advance!

There’s even more coming up in the spring of 2018 including returning favorites Bucky Pizzarelli (March 7), Dennis Lichtman (March 28), Glenn Crytzer (April 11), pianist Stephanie Trick in tandem with husband Paolo Alderighi (May 16) and once again closing the show, the Jazz Lobsters Big Band (June 20). Again, a subscription to five of the remaining seven MidWeek Jazz shows gets you a 50% discount to either the Preservation Hall Jazz Band or Birdland All Stars shows so it’s win-win all the way around. Thanks for supporting live jazz in Ocean County—more to come!

— Ricky Riccardi

All shows 8–9:30 PM; $22 regular admission, $18 for seniors and $12 for students.

Jazz At The Sanctuary

1867 Sanctuary at Ewing | 101 Scotch Road, Ewing

Tickets/Information: 609-392-6409

The NJJS co-sponsors jazz events at 1867 Sanctuary and members receive a $5 discount on admission. This Romanesque Revival church hall has exceptional acoustics, padded seating and is wheelchair-accessible. Concerts have varied start times and are either one 90-minute set, or two sets with intermission. Free light refreshments (including cookies!) are served.

NOVEMBER:
Fri – Nov. 10, 8 PM: Ben Rosenblum and Deborah Davis. Original and classic jazz and American Songbook. Deborah Davis (Vocals), Ben Rosenblum (Piano)

COMING SHOWS:
Fri – Dec. 8, 8 PM: Eric Mintel Quartet/Charlie Brown Christmas
Sat – Dec. 9, 8 PM: Richie Cole Quartet
Sat – Jan. 6, 8 PM: Pyrenesia – vintage jazz/Gypsy/klezmer/folk
Fri – Jan. 12, 8 PM: B.D. Lenz Trio
Sun – Jan. 14, 8 PM: Luiz Simas. Brazilian solo piano jazz
Sat – Jan. 20, 8 PM: Jack Furlong Quartet
Sat – Jan. 27, 8 PM: Stephen Yee Quartet

— Bob Kull

$20 for general admission and $5 for students with ID. Group tickets (10 or more in advance) are $15 each. Tickets are available online, at the box office 609-392-6409 or by email: 1867sanctuary@preservationnj.org.

About NJJS

Mission Statement: The mission of the New Jersey Jazz Society is to promote and preserve the great American musical art form known as jazz through live jazz performances and educational outreach initiatives and scholarships.

To accomplish our Mission, we produce a monthly magazine, JERSEY JAZZ, sponsor live jazz events, and provide scholarships to New Jersey college students studying jazz. Through our outreach program, “Generations of Jazz,” we go into schools to teach students about the history of Jazz while engaging them in an entertaining and interactive presentation.

Founded in 1972, the Society is run by a board of directors who meet monthly to conduct the business of staging our music events, awarding scholarships to New Jersey college jazz students, and conducting Generations of Jazz programs in local school systems, among other things. The membership is comprised of jazz devotees from all parts of the state, the country and the world.

The New Jersey Jazz Society is a qualified organization of the New Jersey Cultural Trust. Visit www.njjs.org, e-mail info@njjs.org for more information on any of our programs and services:

- e-mail updates
- Student scholarships
- Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp
- Collaborative Jazz Concerts:
- Ocean County College
- Bickford Theatre/Morris 1867 Sanctuary at Ewing
- NJJS supports JazzFeast presented by Palmer Square, Downtown Princeton.
- NJJS is a proud supporter of the Morristown Jazz & Blues Festival, the N.JU President’s Jazz Festival in Jersey City, and more.

Member Benefits

What do you get for your dues?

- Jersey Jazz Journal — a monthly journal considered the best jazz society publications in the country, packed with feature articles, photos, jazz calendars, upcoming events and news about the NJ Jazz Society.
- FREE Jazz Socials — See www.njjs.org and Jazz Jersey for updates.
- Musical Events — NJJS sponsors and co-produces a number of jazz events each year, ranging from intimate concerts to large dance parties and picnics. Members receive discounts on ticket prices for the Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp. Plus there’s a free concert at the Annual Meeting in December and occasionally other free concerts. Ticket discounts (where possible) apply to 2 adults, plus children under 18 years of age. Singles may purchase two tickets at member prices.
- The Record Bin — a collection of CDs, not generally found in music stores, available at reduced prices at most NJJS concerts and events and through mail order.
- FREE listings — Musician members get listed FREE on our website.

Join NJJS

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS Member benefits are subject to update.

- Family $45: See above for details.
- Family 3-YEAR $115 See above for details.
- Youth $15: For people under 25 years of age. Be sure to give the year of your birth on the application where noted.
- Give-a-Gift $25: Members in good standing may purchase one or more gift memberships at any time for only $25 each. Please supply the name and address of giftee. Good for new memberships only.
- Fan ($75 – $99/family)
- Jazzzer ($100 – $249/family)
- Sideman ($250 – $499/family)
- Bandleader $500+/family)
- Corporate Membership ($1000)

Members at Jazzzer Level and above receive special benefits. These change periodically, so please contact Membership for details.

To receive a membership application, for more information or to join:
Call 973-610-1308 or email membership@njjs.org
OR visit www.njjs.org
OR simply send a check payable to “NJJS” to: New Jersey Jazz Society, c/o Mike Katz, 382 Springfield Ave. Suite 217, Summit NJ 07901.
From the Crow’s Nest
By Bill Crow

I started playing the bass in 1950, and in 1952 I was working sporadically with the Teddy Charles trio, with Don Roberts on guitar. Don left for a better paying job, and we were able to get Jimmy Raney to replace him. Jimmy had been playing with the Stan Getz quintet, but Stan had made a trip to the West Coast by himself, and so Jimmy was available for the summer.

When Stan returned in the fall he called Jimmy and said, “We have a week in Boston at the Hi-Hat. Roy Haynes is living up there, and can make it, and I have a pianist, Jerry Kasinsky, so get a bass player and come on up.” Jimmy asked me if I wanted to do the gig, and of course, I said yes. We took the train to Boston and checked in at the hotel where Stan was staying. Jimmy told me about the tunes that Stan liked to play, and showed me the chords to the tunes I didn’t know.

That night, for the first tune, Stan called “Lover Come Back to Me,” and kicked off at a bright tempo. Halfway through the second chorus, my D string broke. (Bass players all used gut strings at the time.) I tried to finish the chorus by playing around the missing string, but I was having trouble finding the notes I wanted to play. Under the piano was another bass, which belonged to the house group. I quickly laid my bass down and grabbed his. I immediately wanted to play. Under the piano was another bass, which belonged to the house group. I quickly laid my bass down and grabbed his. I immediately discovered that the guy was a left-handed bassist! His instrument was strung in the opposite direction from mine! I tried to rethink the fingerboard and play it anyway, but sure played a lot of sad notes.

At the end of the tune, Stan gave me a minute to put a new D string on my bass, and we continued the set without any further problems. I guess I sounded so lame on the first tune that Stan was relieved at how much better I sounded on the rest of the set. At any rate, he kept me on the band for the next six months, and I got to learn from him and all the other musicians he hired from time to time, including Frank Isola, Duke Jordan, Kenny Clarke, Al Levitt, John Williams, John Mandel and Bob Brookmeyer.

Bass trombonist Tony Salvatori, who was in the house band at New York’s Copacabana from 1968 to 1970, told me about a night during Don Rickles’ second show. They had held the show for a while, waiting for Al Hirt and his party to arrive. Al had just played a concert at Carnegie Hall. Rickles finally went on, and five minutes into his act the waiters began setting up a special table at ringside. Then Hirt and ten of his friends came down the front stairs and were seated. Rickles started in on them. “Look! Here comes the fat guy!” He couldn’t get here on time. Couldn’t you find a cab?” The party was seated, champagne was served, and Rickles continued to rag on Hirt, who picked up a bottle, extracted the cork with his teeth, took a big swig, stood, and spit champagne all over Rickles. Laughing, Don sputtered, “You son of a bitch!” and then continued his act.

Russell Alexander sent this to me: Jazz musicians talk about “waiting for the call.” Whether it was from Benny, or Miles, or other luminaries. Rock musicians would also “wait for the call” from Frank Zappa.

Guitarist Steve Vai sent Zappa a transcription of the drum solo “Black Page,” so-called because that’s what the chart looked like. Zappa responded by inviting him to a rehearsal to audition. The following is from an interview with Vai:

So I’m 20 years old, and I’m auditioning for Frank Zappa, I’m thinking “this is ridiculous.” But I went down. He told me to learn all these songs, and of course he pulled all these songs that I didn’t know. He made it so difficult!

There was lots of things, but this one thing, during my audition...he plays something and goes, “Play that.” And I play that, and he goes, “Play it in 7/8.” I say “Okay” and I play it in 7/8, and he goes, “Now play it reggae 7/8,” and I go, “Um, okay,” and I do it. And he goes “Okay, now add this note,” and I do it, playing reggae 7/8 and I’m adding these notes, and he goes “Okay add this note.” It was impossible. It was physically impossible — not just for me, but for anybody.

And I said “Oh, I can’t do that.” And he goes, “I hear Linda Rondstadt is looking for a guitar player.”

At the end of the rehearsal I went up to him and said, “Thanks for inviting me. I’m really sorry, I’m gonna go home now.” And he goes, “You’re in the band!”

Jay Leonhart sent me this one: “I was in a recording studio with a bunch of accomplished studio musicians, among them the irrepressible Bob Rose on guitar. We were in the final few minutes of a jingle recording and were under the usual pressure to finish on time, when over our headsets we heard the control room phone ringing. In a few seconds the engineer informed Bob Rose that Stevie Wonder was on the phone and wanted to talk to Bob. Here we are in “crunch time gotta finish the jingle time” and Bob looks around the room and then tells the engineers ‘Tell him I’ll call him back.’”
What’s New? Members new and renewed

We welcome these friends of jazz who recently joined NJJS or renewed their memberships. We’ll eventually see everyone’s name here as they renew at their particular renewal months. Members with an asterisk have taken advantage of our three-years-for-$115 membership, and new members with a † received a gift membership. Members who joined at a patron level appear in bold.

### Renewed Members

Robert Adams, Florham Park, NJ  
Mr. Robert (Britt) Adams, Kendall Park, NJ  
Mr. William Ash, Allendale, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Banas, Hillsborough, NJ  
Irene Burczynski, Morristown, NJ  
Mrs. Rae Daley, Morristown, NJ  
Joanne and John Dusinski, Nazareth, PA  
Edward A. Eick, Belvidere, NJ  
Alan Eisenberg, Hackensack, NJ  
Dave Elgart, Mendham, NJ *  
Gloria & Len Feiner, Springfield, NJ  
Mr. Charles Ferrante, Passaic, NJ  
Sandra Fink, Fort Lee, NJ  
Salvatore Franchino, Bridgewater, NJ  
Mr. Morris Grossman, Springfield, NJ  
Mr. Willi Hegelbach, Kendall Park, NJ  
Neil & Patricia Holmes, Lake Hiawatha, NJ  
Mr. Theodore Jones, Morristown, NJ  
Mr. Dan Katz, West Orange, NJ  
Ms. Sheila L. Lenga, Union, NJ - Patron  
Joseph and Louise Manzaro, Scotch Plains, NJ  
Mr. Arthur W. Markowitz, Mahwah, NJ  
James L. McKechnie, North Plainfield, NJ *  
David Moran, MS HRM, Morristown, NJ  
Mr. Greg Natic–Scotch Plains Music Ctr., Scotch Plains, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Olsen, Dunellen, NJ *  
Mr. Henry W. Pfeiffer, Chatham, NJ  
Virginia K Pierson, Mendham, NJ  
Mr. Dave Post, Hoboken, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. Monroe Quinn, North Bergen, NJ  
Mr. Sidney Rabinowitz, Aberdeen, NJ  
Mrs. Cheri Rogowsky, Scotch Plains, NJ  
Victoria Sadowski, Ewing, NJ  
Alex Samu, Valley Stream, NY  
Ms. Bria Skonberg, New York, NY *  
Dave Spinelli, Ringwood, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Tarpinian, Lawrenceville, NJ  
Dale Trimmer, Verona, NJ  
Mr. Basil Vorolief, Hawthorne, NJ  
Herb & Elinor Weiland, Califon, NJ  
Leonard Whitmore, Intervale, NH  
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Woodruff, Silver Spring, MD *  
Mr. Herb Young, Lancaster, PA

### New Members

Martin and Karen Arensatul, East Windsor, NJ  
Kevin Berry and Sharie Verdu, Titusville, NJ  
Mr. Sergey Dubin, Basking Ridge, NJ  
Doug and Iris Emery, East Windsor, NJ  
Kathryn Gardner, Fairbanks, AK  
Bruce Hector, Glen Rock, NJ  
Neil Holmes, Lake Hiawatha, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles and Nancy Johnson, Randolph, NJ  
Mr. Michael Marcus, Springfield, NJ  
Organized Sound, Hopewell, NJ  
Phyllis and Frank Panetta, Succasunna, NJ  
Audrey T Parker, Madison, NJ  
Mrs. Joyce Singh, Emerson, NJ  
Technical Operations Services and Solutions, Maplewood, NJ  
Mr. Deepak Vaidya, Princeton, NJ  
Mr. & Mrs. S. Vedula, Princeton, NJ  
Michael Wacks, Millburn, NJ  
Mr. Stephen M. Yee, New Brunswick, NJ

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New Jersey Jazz Society
You can find jazz all over the state in venues large and small. Here are just some of them.

**Somewhere There’s Music**

Listings alphabetical by town. We continually update entries. Please contact editor@njjs.org if you know of other venues that ought to be here.

**Allamuchy**
RUTHERFORD HALL
1646 County Road 517
908-852-1894 ext. 335

**Allentown**
JAZZ VESPERS AT ALLENTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
20 High Street
609-259-7399
1st Saturday February-June

**Ashland**
ROCCO'S ON MAIN
20 N. Van Brunt St.
201-227-1030

**Atco**
JEFF & BETSY'S SUPPER CLUB
42 New Jersey Ave.
609-228-2563

**Atlantic City**
JAZZ VESPERS AT HADDONFIELD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
29 Warren Rd.
Fri-Sat, 9-11:30 pm, full bar and tapas menu

**Bernardsville**
BERNARD'S INN
27 Mine Brook Rd.
908-766-0002
Monday – Saturday 6:30 pm

**Boonton**
MAXFIELD'S ON MAIN
713 Main St.
973-588-3404
Music Wednesdays through Sundays

**Cape May**
VFW POST 386
419 Congress St.
609-884-7961
Cape May Trad Jazz Society
Some Sundays, 2 pm

**Carteret**
ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH HALL
712 Roosevelt Ave.
908-541-6955
Somerset Jazz Consortium
Usually 3rd Monday, 7-9 pm

**Chatham**
CONCERTS ON MAIN – OGDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
286 Main St.
973-635-5567

**Cliffside Park**
VILLA MALALFI
793 Palisade Ave.
201-886-9626
Piano Jazz Fridays & Saturdays

**Creskill**
MUSICLAB - TEMPLE BELI
221 Schraalenburgh Rd.
201-768-5112

**Deal Park**
AXELROD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
100 Grant Avenue
973-531-9108

**Dunellen**
ROXY & DUKE'S ROADHOUSE
745 Bound Brook Rd.
732-529-4464

**Edgewater**
MITCHELL'S FISH MARKET
541 River Rd.
201-840-9311
Jazz with a skyline view, Thursdays 6-10 pm

**Edison**
THE COFFEE HOUSE
591 Amybo Ave.
732-486-3400

**Englewood**
BERGEN PAC
30 N. Van Brunt St.
201-227-1030

**Ewing**
VILLA ROSA RESTAURANTE
41 Scotch Rd.
908-882-6841

**Fairchild**
CALANDRA'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILL
118 U.S. Highway 46
973-575-6000
Piano – Fridays & Saturdays

**Florham Park**
PELUSO'S BRICK OVEN
162 Columbia Turnpike
973-822-0800
Accordianist Eddie Montero with drummer Buddy Green, Wednesdays, 7-10 pm

**Gladstone**
GLADSTONE TAVERN
273 Main St.
908-234-9055

**Green Brook**
BONESFISH GRILL
215 Route 22 East
732-926-8000

**Hackensack**
SOLARI'S RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE
61 River St.
201-487-1969
Big band swing first Tuesday of the month

**Hackettstown**
MAMA'S CAFE BACI
240 Mountain Avenue.
908-852-2820
Saturdays, 9:30 –11:30 pm, no cover charge

**Haddonfield**
HADDONFIELD METHODIST CHURCH
29 Warren Rd.
Tri-State Jazz Society
Some Sundays, 2 pm

**Hoboken**
PILSENER HAUS & BIERGARDEN
1422 Grand St.
201-683-5465
Live music Thursdays, 8-12 pm, no cover charge

**Hobong**
PAVICCI RESTAURANT
453 River St.
973-770-4300
Big Band, 3rd Tuesday of the month

**Hopatcong**
LIVE MUSIC THURSDAYS
8:30 pm – 10 pm

**Jersey City**
JEFF & BETSY'S SUPPER CLUB
42 New Jersey Ave.
609-228-2563

**Jersey City**
BRIGHTSIDE TAVERN
141 Bright St.
201-435-1234
Jazz jam every Monday

**Kinnelon**
MADAME CLAUDE BIS
390 Fourth St.
201-876-8800
Gypsy Jazz Tuesday & Thursday, 7:30 pm to late

**King of Prussia**
MOORE'S LOUNGE (BILL & RUTHY'S)
186 Monticello Ave.
201-332-4309
Fridays open jazz jam, open to all musicians, vocalists, dancers and spoken word artists; hosted by Winard Harper and Rosalind Grant
8:30 pm – midnight
First Sundays 6–10 pm
Featuring Winard Harper and special guests, $10 cover

**Lambertville**
DEANNA'S RESTAURANT
54 N. Franklin St.
609-397-9857

**Lebanon**
HASKELL'S ON MAIN
216-234 Route 46
973-575-6500

**Livingston**
ALVINO'S ON THE SQUARE
174 Main St.
973-543-7300

**Loxahatchee**
PETER'S CAFE & DELI
118 Us Highway 46
201-768-5112

**Mamaroneck**
ALONGQUIN ARTS THEATRE
173 Main St.
973-528-9211

**Mendham**
BLACK HORSE TAVERN
1 West Main St.
973-543-7300

**Metuchen**
NOVA'S NEW & PEARL STS.
732-549-5306
No cover

**Milford**
ALBA VINEYARD
269 Regettiel Warren Glen Rd.
908-995-7800

**Montclair**
DLV LOUNGE
300 Bloomfield Ave.
973-783-6988
Open Jam Tuesdays

**Morristown**
PUBLIO'S JAZZ RAISE THE ROOF
131 Southen Ave.
973-353-5595
Free jazz Monday, 8 pm – midnight

**Newark**
27 MIX
27 Hollywood St.
973-648-9643

**New Jersey Performing Arts Center**
80 Park Place
973-355-5595
Free jazz Monday, 8 pm – midnight

**North Jersey Performing Arts Center**
3 Center St.
888-466-5722

Since music offerings frequently change, we recommend you call venue to confirm there is live music at the time you plan to visit.

November 2017 Jersey Jazz
Tell them you saw it in Jersey Jazz!

We want to include any locale that offers jazz on a regular, ongoing basis. Also please advise us of any errors you’re aware of in these listings.

TASTE VENUE
47 Edison Pl., 2nd floor
973-642-8400
Jazz Mondays 8:00 -11:00 pm

THE PRIORY
233 West Market St.
973-242-8012
Fridays, 7 pm, No cover

New Brunswick

DELTA’S
19 Dennis St.
732-249-1551
Saturdays, 7–11 pm

DUE MARI
78 Albany St.
732-296-1600
Saturdays, 7–11 pm

New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Fridays
6:30-9:30 pm

THE HYATT REGENCY NEW BRUNSWICK
2 Albany St.
732-873-1234
New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Thursdays, 8 –10:30 pm,
INC BAR AND KITCHEN
302 George St.
732-640-0553
New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Wednesdays 8:00-11 pm

STATE THEATRE
15 Livingston Ave.
732-246-1600

GARDEN STATE ALE HOUSE
378 George St.
732-543-2408
New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz & jam session, Tuesdays, 9:30 pm

Newfield

LAKE HOUSE RESTAURANT
611 Taylor Pl.
856-694-5700

Newton

THE NEWTON THEATRE
234 Spring St.
973-383-3700
Occasional jazz concerts – contact venue for schedule

North Bergen

WATERSIDE RESTAURANT
7800 6 River Rd.
201-861-7767

North Branch

STONEY BROOK GRILL
1285 State Highway 28
973-725-0011

Oak Ridge

THE GRILLE ROOM
(Bowling Green Golf Course)
53 Schoolhouse Rd.
973-679-6688

Orange

HAT CITY KITCHEN
459 Valley St.
862-252-9147

Pennington

HOPEWELL VALLEY VINEYARDS
46 Yard Rd.
609-737-4465

Pennsauken

GREENWOOD INN
4457 Marlton Pike
856-663-9868
Blues open mic Weds.

Phillipsburg

MARIANNA’S
234 Stockton St.
908-777-3000
Fridays

Princeton

MCCARTER THEATRE
91 University Pl.
609-258-2787

MEDITERRA
29 Hulfish St.
609-258-9220
68 nassau st.

RICHARDSON AUDITORIUM
IN ALEXANDER HALL
68 Nassau St.
609-258-9220

SALT CREEK GRILLE
1 Rockingham Row,
Forrestal Village
609-419-4200

WITHERSPOON GRILL
57 Witherpoon St.
609-924-6611
Tuesday night jazz,
6:30–9:30 pm

Rahway

UNION COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
1601 Irving St.
732-499-0441

Randolph

THE CORNER BISTRO
707 Route 10
88 Riverside Ave.
Every 1st and 3rd Thursday

Red Bank

COUNT BASIE THEATRE
99 Monmouth St.
732-542-9000

Jazz Arts Project presents live jazz and specials

Stanhope House

45 Main St.
973-347-7777

Succasunna

ROXBURY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
201-722-8600

Teaneck

JAZZ HAVEN
984 Washington Ave.
732-842-9000

Somers Point

GREGORY’S RESTAURANT
11 South Broadway
732-525-0014
Blues Jam

South Amboy

BLUE MOON
114 South Broadway
732-525-0014
Blues Jam Thursdays

South Orange

PAPILLON 25
25 Valley St.
732-765-5929

RICALTON’S VILLAGE TAVERN
19 Valley St.
732-765-1006
Tuesdays

South Orange Performing Arts Center
One SOPAC Way
732-235-1114

South River

LA TAVOLA CUCINA
701 Old Bridge Turnpike
South River, NJ 08882
732-238-2111
open jam session Thursday,
7:30–10 pm
No cover, half-price drink specials

Stanhope

STANHOPE HOUSE
45 Main St.
973-347-7777
Blues

Stevenson

ROBBIN’S RESTAURANT
88 Riverside Ave.
800-221-1372

SuzyQue’s barbecue
34 south Valley Rd.
973-731-3463

Trenton

AMICI MILANO
202 Bayard St.
609-396-6300

CANDLELIGHT LOUNGE
24 Passaic St.
609-695-9612
Saturdays, 3–7 pm

Union

SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFE
(Towleny Presbyterian Church)
829 Salem Rd.
908-686-1028

VAN GOGH’S EAT CAFE
107 Stuyvesant Ave.
908-810-1844
Sundays 8 pm, $3 cover

Woodbridge

BARRON ARTS CENTER
562 Rahway Ave.
732-634-0413

Wood Ridge

MARTINI GRILL
187 Hackensack St.
201-939-2000
Live jazz Wednesday through Saturday

West Orange

HIGHLAWN PAVILION
Eagle Rock Reservation
973-731-3463
Fridays

SUZYQUE’S BARBECUE & BAR
34 South Valley Rd.
973-736-7899

Westwood

BIB’Z LOUNGE
234 Center Ave.
201-722-8600

Jersey Events Jazz

For the link to each venue’s website, please visit www.NJJS.org, and click on “Jazz Support”

Also visit
Andy McDONOUGH’S njjazzlist.com

The Name Dropper

Recommendations may be e-mailed to editor@njjs.org.

CURTIS LUNDY ENSEMBLE – The noted bassist’s group includes the outstanding Columbia/Juliard program pianist Ben Rosenblum. Every Thursday, 7:30-10:30 pm, at Orama Restaurant. Fine dining with a fine view of the NYC skyline on River Road in Edgewater. Call 201-945-2020.

RUSS KASSOFF TRIBUTE TO FRANK SINATRA – A tribute to ‘Ol’ Blue Eyes by one of his later career pianists. Shanghai Jazz on Nov. 2 at 7 pm. With vocalist Catherine DuPuis and bassist Jerry Bruno (no stranger to Mr. Sinatra himself.) No cover, $25 food/beverage minimum.

BICKFORD BENEFIT ALL-STARS – A great band for a good cause led by Bickford favorite Dan Levinson. With Jim Fryer, Jeff Barnhart, Mike Davis, Brian Nalepka, Stéphane Sèva and Molly Ryan. Proceeds support the jazz series and other programs. Bickford Theatre. Nov. 13 at 7:30 pm, $22/advance and $27/door.

THE DALTON GANG’S THANKSGIVING EVE BASH – The Jersey stalwarts celebrate their 38th anniversary (!) with their annual pre-holiday stand at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair on Wednesday, Nov. 22. Sets at 8 pm and 9:30 pm. Music charge and minimum, call 973-744-2600 for information/reservations.

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