



# JAZZ NOTES™

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IN THIS ISSUE

From the Editor	3
President's Report	4
Letter to the Editor	5
<b>A Cross-Cultural Encounter</b>	6
<i>By Carol Sudhalter</i>	
<b>Joe Goldberg, 1932-2009</b>	7
<i>By W. Royal Stokes</i>	
<b>Photo Essay:</b>	
<b>Talmor-Swallow-Nussbaum</b>	9
<i>By Patrick Hinely</i>	
<b>News of Members</b>	11
<b>New Members</b>	12
<b>Book Reviews</b>	13
<b>Jazz</b>	
<i>by Gary Giddins and Scott DeVeaux</i>	
<i>Review by Tim DuRoche</i>	
<b>Mojo Snake Minuet</b>	
<i>by John Litweiler</i>	
<i>Review by Howard Mandel</i>	
<b>1959: The Year Everything Changed</b>	
<i>by Fred Kaplan</i>	
<i>Review by Tim DuRoche</i>	
<b>Jade Visions:</b>	
<b>The Life and Music of Scott LaFaro</b>	
<i>by Helene LaFaro-Fernández</i>	
<i>Review by Jerry D'Souza</i>	
<b>Deaths in 2009</b>	17
<i>Compiled by W. Royal Stokes and Ken Franckling</i>	

*Heralding our dean of jazz journalism at 80.*

## Here's to Dan

►► *By David R. Adler*

*Note: An earlier version of this article appeared in the November 2007 issue of Down Beat.*

MUSICIANS ARE OBVIOUSLY the lifeblood of jazz, but the importance of non-musician devotees like Dan Morgenstern is hard to overstate. Throughout his long career, Morgenstern has worn many hats: editor, journalist, critic, annotator, educator, scholar, archivist. He edited *Down Beat* during the late '60s and early '70s—a pivotal time in jazz's, not to mention America's, evolution. For the last 31 years running, he has served as director of the Institute of Jazz Studies (IJS), arguably the most important resource for jazz history and scholarship in the country. In January 2007, Morgenstern received one of the highest jazz honors the U.S. has to offer: being named a Jazz Master by the National Endowment for the Arts. The same year, *Down Beat* bestowed its Lifetime Achievement Award on Dan as well. Since Dan paved the way for all we do in the JJA, we thought it fitting to acknowledge the auspicious occasion of his 80th birthday on October 24, 2009.

"I was very pleased with the term the NEA came up with, 'jazz advocate,'" says Dan, the fourth recipient of the NEA's A. B. Spellman Award. "I've always thought of myself as an advocate first and foremost. From the start, I've wanted to do something for the welfare of the music."

In *Living With Jazz*, a 700-page compendium of his writings over the decades,



Ed Berger

Morgenstern describes his upbringing in poignant and sometimes harrowing detail. Born in Germany in 1929 and raised in Vienna, he personally witnessed the rise of the Nazis. Hitler's adoring crowds proved "one of the ugliest and most unmusical sounds I'd yet heard," he writes. He fled with his mother to Denmark, and after the Nazis occupied that country as well, to Sweden. In the midst of all this, he kindled a lifelong love of American jazz. He arrived in New York in 1947, in time to visit 52nd Street and see Charlie Parker and Billie Holiday in the flesh.

As editor of the school weekly at Brandeis University, Dan published his first jazz writings and received encouragement

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from Nat Hentoff, at the time *Down Beat*'s Boston correspondent, now a fellow NEA Jazz Master. "I didn't see myself becoming a professional jazz writer," Dan recalls. But after stints at the *New York Post* and *Jazz Journal*, Dan was tapped to become the last editor of *Metronome*. "By then I was bitten by the bug, and I knew I wanted to do it for a living."

Hired as *Down Beat*'s New York editor in 1964, Morgenstern moved to Chicago to become chief editor in 1967. Though he returned to New York in 1970, he retained the editor's post until 1973. "I still find it hard to believe that we managed to publish twice a month back then," he marvels. "This was before the Internet or even the fax. In those days the AACM was just coming into its own, and there were a lot of things going on in the jazz world around civil rights. After I returned to New York there was the Jazz and People's Movement. As the saying goes, 'May you live in interesting times.' Well, those were interesting times."

Following his *Down Beat* tenure, Morgenstern became involved in teaching jazz history. In 1976 he took his current job with IJS. Originally founded by scholar Marshall Stearns, who ran it out of his Greenwich Village home, the IJS collection moved in 1967 to New Jersey's Rutgers University, where it remains to this day. "It wasn't very prominent at Rutgers for some time," Dan recalls. "I was the first person with the title of director. By now, [associate director] Ed Berger, [head of technical services and sound archivist] Vincent Pelote and I have been together for 30 years. In terms of the jazz world, that makes us longer-running than the Modern Jazz Quartet. Maybe we should be called the Ancient Jazz Trio."

More than just a repository of vintage recordings, instruments and memorabilia, the IJS under Morgenstern is a visionary, ever-evolving force in the current jazz world. "We are living in the present and very much involved in furthering the music," says Dan. He mentions Rutgers' affiliated Graduate Program in Jazz History and Research, where he serves as a part-time faculty

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For a man who discovered jazz by winding up his mother's portable phonograph, Morgenstern seems unperturbed by new music technology.

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member. "We have the *Annual Review of Jazz Studies*," he adds, "which was the first English-language scholarly jazz periodical, and the series of books we've done with Scarecrow Press, over 50 volumes at this point. And there's also our radio show on WBGO-FM, 'Jazz From the Archives,' which marked its 30th anniversary this year."

While journalists and scholars scour the IJS for historic recordings, Morgenstern and his staff are adding more material all the time. "We need to keep up with everything that comes out," he remarks, "and now we're collecting ourselves out of space, which is good." Digitization and online accessibility are major current initiatives. For a man who discovered jazz by winding

up his mother's portable phonograph ("I had to work for my magic sounds," he writes in *Living With Jazz*), Morgenstern seems unperturbed by new music technology. "But we're not going to become a virtual collection," he clarifies. "We're going to hang onto the material aspect of all this."

From 1990 until 2004, Morgenstern served on the committee of the prestigious JAZZPAR Prize, administered by his former home country of Denmark. "I had a chance to visit Denmark every year and reconnect in many ways," Dan reflects. "I'm very emotionally attached to the country, not just because it's been so hospitable to jazz. I enjoyed my years there in spite of the bad times. And the Danish people saved my life and those of my relatives and friends."

With seven Grammys for Best Album Notes and two ASCAP Deems Taylor Awards under his belt, Morgenstern remains one of the most trusted voices on jazz—past, present and future. In a 1958 piece for *Jazz Journal* titled "Cats and Categories," he was critical yet appreciative of a bold new artist, Ornette Coleman. Musing on the album title *The Shape of Jazz to Come*, Dan wrote: "[T]his music is not the jazz of the future but a sincere and somewhat raw attempt to chart new tributaries. Eventually, the essence will be distilled and merge with the basic current of jazz. And that's more than enough for any new idea." Aside from being fundamentally accurate, this is pure Morgenstern: shorn of hyperbole, unsentimental, cutting to the core of the music's logic and still conveying warmth and enthusiasm for the art. There's no manual on how to write about jazz, but Morgenstern's example comes pretty close.



**TWEET, TWEET:**

Do you Twitter? When you hear great live jazz, tweet about it using the hashtag #jazzlives.

For details and updates see Howard Mandel's blog at [artsjournal.com/jazzbeyondjazz](http://artsjournal.com/jazzbeyondjazz).

Setbacks and triumphs in perspective.

# The Bright Side

IT'S NEVER MY intention to dwell on personal topics in this space, and yet they've had a way of piling on recently. Since the birth of my daughter in July, we lost both our dogs to cancer in just three weeks. The second loss was brutally unexpected. I have a good friend battling breast cancer and an ex-girlfriend and another family member battling leukemia. On the other hand, my wife climbed a huge professional mountain very soon after childbirth and now has a string of 10 letters after her name. Seeing her achieve this was, in countless ways, an inspiration.

Sometimes circumstances have a way of funneling the right message to your ear at just the right time. In early November I spoke briefly with saxophonist David S. Ware, who has returned to performing in the aftermath of a kidney transplant last May. Reflecting on the 2007 breakup of his famed quartet, Ware said: "That's the nature of this world. The world is relative, man. This is not an absolute world." Ware faced the facts, struggled valiantly with his medical condition and rebounded with *Shakti*, in my opinion the album of the year for 2009. Once again, an inspiration.

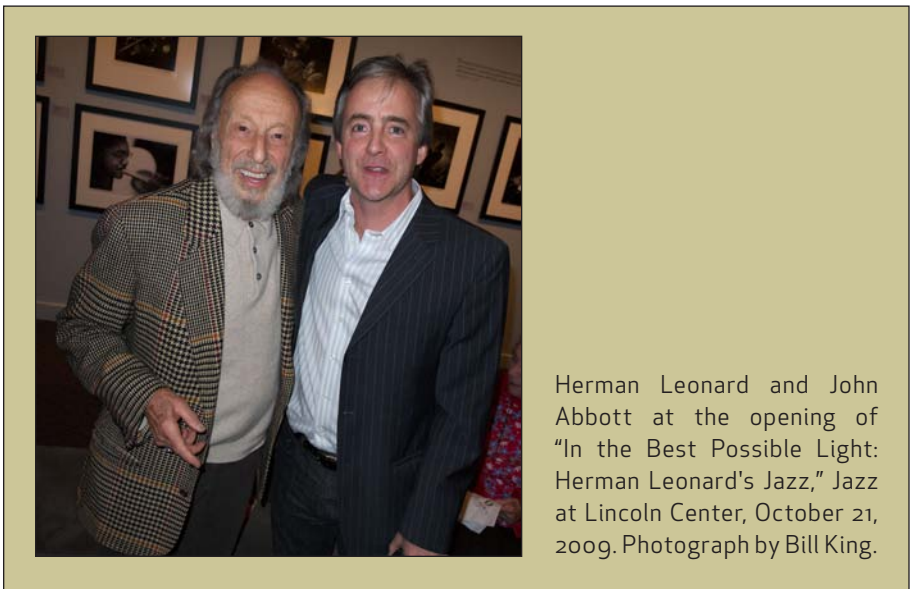


Neah Kalina

## From the Editor

**David R. Adler**

Now we've entered 2010, counting the painful losses as reflected in our annual R.I.P. list on page 17. We look back on a decade that saw the unraveling of the music and media industries as we knew them—a difficult turn for jazz journalists and yet very likely a dawning of unforeseen opportunities. All of us in the JJA are trying to make sense of these developments while plotting a hopeful course for the future. On behalf of the board, after another strong year in the music: Thank you for reading, thank you for joining and renewing, and let's always remember to count our blessings.



Herman Leonard and John Abbott at the opening of "In the Best Possible Light: Herman Leonard's Jazz," Jazz at Lincoln Center, October 21, 2009. Photograph by Bill King.

## JAZZ NOTES

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The Jazz Journalists Association (JJA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, promoting the interests of writers, photographers, broadcasters and new media professionals covering jazz. The JJA supports the creation and dissemination of accurate, balanced, ethical and informative journalism on all of jazz's genres; the growth, development and education of the jazz audience and the dissemination of information pertaining to jazz to the general public, by providing forums for the discussion of jazz-related issues and events, fostering the development of journalistic and presentation skills among new journalists and the continuing development of such skills in journalists already engaged in the field.

*Building on successes, asking more of the JJA and ourselves.*

# 2010 and Beyond

DEAR JJA MEMBERS,

**W**HAT DO YOU get for your Jazz Journalists Association membership dues (which we urge you to pay via credit card online at PayPal, a free service linked at the JJA's virtual Office at Jazzhouse.org)? It's a fair question to ask the principals of any organization, one that occurs to new members as well as our re-upping core.

We're a watchdog on professional interests. A network of contacts across the world pursuing common journalistic efforts. We provide unique training opportunities (for the first time, we've been offered a free two-day Web Journalism Workshop by New York-based Mediakite; details on this will follow via jja-announce). We share a website focusing on our particular issues, and publish a journal in which members can file reports on special topics. You full members get voting privileges (responsibilities) in what has become the best recognized Jazz Awards, presented annually, in the world.

In 2009, the JJA extended supportive consultation to member-writers who organized themselves during the rocky transition of ownership of *JazzTimes*. We've mentored student journalists and advised each other on the pressing complications of media transformation, the opportunities as well as challenges of publishing online. We launched a new website, [Jazzjournalists.org](http://Jazzjournalists.org), for promotion of the 13th annual JJA Jazz Awards, which was another industry-wide smash.

For the first time, we posted YouTube clips from the Awards of performances (by Charles Tolliver's Big Band and Jane Bunnett's Spirits of Havana) and presentations (to Hank Jones, Mark Murphy and Bruce Lundvall, among others). We welcomed SESAC, Absolutely Live, Arbors Records, BPR music, the Detroit International Jazz Festival,

Doxy Records, IPO Recordings, the Jazz Institute of Chicago, Resonance Records, Sunnyside Records and the Tanglewood Jazz Festival as new sponsors, and thanked *All About Jazz*—New York, Blue Note Records, Boosey and Hawkes, Columbia Legacy, George Wein, Half Note Records, *Hot House*, the Jazz Foundation of America, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Motéma Music,



## President's Report

**Howard Mandel**

North Coast Brewing Company and Zeph Studios for continued support. We honored (among dozens) Lee Konitz, Sonny Rollins, Anat Cohen, Esperanza Spalding, Kurt Elling, Arturo O'Farrill, Billy Bang, Terence Blanchard, SFJazz, two fine Seattle high-school jazz educators, musician-scholar-writer George Lewis for his fine book *A Power Stronger than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* and Paris resident Mike Zwerin for Lifetime Achievement in Jazz Journalism! Doug Ramsey, last year's honoree, handed the statuette to Mike's son Ben. At the Jazz Standard, we had the jazz party of the year.

Also: JJA members held Jazz Matters public panel discussions at festivals in Ottawa, Portland and Monterey, and in other diverse music convocations—in New York, of course, but also Chicago, Boston, Newport, Montreal, Detroit—strengthening bonds when we met as colleagues. We ought to do more

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of that. It only takes the willpower and effort of three JJA members to set up Jazz Matters meetings, really, and there are tangible benefits.

Among the JJA's other successes in 2009: the appointment of Jo Ann Collins, effective November 1, 2009, as Membership Secretary, charged with reorganizing and maintaining the JJA's organizational membership list—a big job that Jo Ann has the astuteness to conquer. Treasurer Eugene Marlow's first year in the position has proved to be a good one; and by the way, the JJA is solvent, due to the mostly volunteer labor of its most active members.

This year the JJA submitted ambitious proposals to three major funding organizations for projects including a profession-wide conference we hoped to hold in New York in January. All three proposals were turned down, but the rejections were accompanied by apologies, compliments on the grant writing and constructive comments encouraging us to revise and apply again. As an alternative, the JJA created its own programming around the second weekend of January—coincident with the Association of Performing Arts

Presenters (APAP) conference and the announcement of the 2010 NEA Jazz Masters at Jazz at Lincoln Center. Look for more about that successful and very worthwhile mini-conference, held in New York from January 8-12, in the next issue of *Jazz Notes*.

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The best way to get more from your dues is to contribute more — of yourself.

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Do these activities strike you as worth your membership dues? I hope not. The vision I have for the JJA is one that is much more productive. We should be holding continuous training sessions and roundtables on online jazz journalism. We ought to be outreaching to more music journalists for ideas and collaborative energies to get to more readers, viewers and listeners who dig jazz. We should be burning up our international networks to find out more about our work and the music we love

so much that we devote our professional lives to covering it. The JJA's members should be best informed and most central to all the debates, discussions, considerations and determinations about how our journalistic profession and aesthetic preferences can survive and thrive.

As it turns out, the best way to get more from your membership dues is to contribute more—of yourself. The JJA needs members to propose new programs that they themselves (though not they *alone*) will work to realize. JJA meetings can be localized. JJA websites and online documents can be used to greater potential. The JJA's network could be more alive and productive. How to do it? Pitch in! Be in touch about what you'll do so that all of us can help jazz journalism more than keep its footholds but perhaps even take steps forward in 2010. It may be uphill, but that's never stopped the greatest jazz musicians. I take this hint from them: Play along and look ahead.

Into the New Year,

PRESIDENT HOWARD



## Letter to the Editor

### The Legion of Honor

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TO THE EDITOR:

Concerning the October 16 Associated Press item on Wynton Marsalis being awarded France's Legion of Honor:

This was pretty straightforward in classic AP style, mentioning that other American recipients have included Renée Fleming and Barbra Streisand.

Fleming and Streisand are fine artists both, but: Am I the only who found unfortunate and glaring the omission of such names as, just from the last 20 years' worth of American recipients, Miles Davis or Quincy Jones?

I can only lament the lack of relevant context the AP provided—or, in this case, didn't.

In commiserating about this with a professional colleague far more knowledgeable than I about the workings of the newspaper-based press (Alex Jones of Harvard), he said it was probably a 22-year-old kid on the desk and that Fleming's and Streisand's were the first names to pop up on Google, deadline was looming, and what were the chances that he or she would know who Davis or Jones were, anyway?

Still, I have to wonder—and worry—that if even the AP, like too many print outlets, is losing editorial quality control in the current media climate, we are in worse shape than I already feared.

Or perhaps I should be impressed—or at least relieved—that the spelling of 'Barbra' was correct.

Sincerely,

PATRICK HINELY

# A Cross-Cultural Encounter

► By Carol Sudhalter

LIKE SO MANY other traveling musicians, I've had the opportunity to see things that hang way outside of my realm of familiar experience. Since 2002 I've traveled to Italy more than once a year to tour, playing concerts from Milan to Bari with local rhythm sections.

The question of the gypsy or "Rom" population came to mind early on. It started with a curious encounter in 2003 in the streets of Rome, a chance meeting with a sweet-looking Rom girl of about eight. Drawn by the sight of my sax case, she asked what it was. Then her eyes traveled to my necklace. "That's a pretty necklace," she said. "Thanks," I replied.

"Please give it to me."

Whoa!

"No, this is mine," I said, but the exchange got me thinking. How dare she presume my property could be hers? For this girl, perhaps, there was no ethical question, no guilt, no plotting. In fact, the idea of property may not have been instilled in her. But which of us had the property concept backwards? Then I began to wonder about the Rom: Who are these people I see everywhere and hear so much about? Are they really the thieves they are made out to be? How do they fit into society, and what do their youngsters, begging in the streets, think about? What has happened to their musical tradition, and why don't they seem to have decent instruments when they play on the subway? I started hearing more and more about the Rom in the newspapers and on TV, and often asked my Italian friends to share their experience, knowledge and opinions.

Through my secondary work as English translator for Iole Severi Silvestrini, a novelist in Rome, the topic unexpectedly came even closer. Iole, author of a recent bestseller *Il Tempo Di Arrivare*,

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When I played a few notes on my sax, the children all spun around.

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is also a doctor who treats women with unfamiliar names and languages from a rainbow of countries. She has set about collecting their traditional tales and fables, many in their original tongues, for publication, together with the music they have sung to her. At the same time, through her visits to a mobile clinic set up just outside the Rom camps, Iole has been working with the children of the camps, guiding them in the invention of their own tales and fables, which she helps them to write down. Through this work, they not only learn proper Italian, but also feel the catharsis brought about by the act of creating.

Iole often has me play at her book-related presentations. One of these, held at Albergo Eurostar in Rome in 2008, was a groundbreaking dual



Iole Severi Silvestrini coaches a Rom girl as she reads her story.

event: a concert of music by jazz quintet, alternating with the Rom children reading their own created stories. The jazz quintet was led by pianist Corrado Severi Silvestrini (Iole's brother), a jazz composer whose music has moved me deeply, to the point where I dedicate much time to playing and recording his works. Iole had mentioned that she was bringing the Rom children and planned to get them cleaned up and showered. She had even picked up some new blouses and shirts for them. I hadn't really understood the full impact of the project until that night, when she led them onstage all spiffed up.

The only adult among them was Naio, a poet, probably in his 20s and active in the struggle to help the Rom population. The next oldest was an attractive 18-year-old married woman (already with children of her own) who now wants to be a doctor. The rest were a group of children eight to 10 years old. They began to recite their work amid fits of giggling, but in perfect Italian. With the help of Iole, they did a beautiful job on this first public presentation, and the tales they had made up were stunning.

When I played a few notes on my sax, they all spun around. The curiosity was mutual and intense. In spite of the poverty and apparent lack of current musical activity in the camps, these young people probably have a profound awareness of their heritage. So the evening proceeded: the band listened to the kids, they listened to us and we all gained some insight about another type of life.

Not one Rom parent was present. This was a hint of a sad and hostile situation. One night, the wooden house used to shelter the children coached by Iole and her team was burned down—by *the Rom themselves*. It had been the chil-

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dren's only refuge during pouring rains that drenched the whole camp, where daily existence for many amounts to living in trenches and cardboard boxes. The incident was a glimpse into the Rom power structure, a kind of underworld within the camps, whose members don't look well on youngsters being educated, enlightened and possibly deterred from a life of begging, theft, drugs, crime or whatever else brings money to the bosses.

True, the Rom have their power structure, but outside the camps lies yet another problem: the elements of Italian

society that deeply hate and fear them. In 2008 and 2009 several large gypsy camps were raided nightly with Molotov cocktails and baseball bats, and some were deliberately destroyed by flames. The Rom couldn't return and had nowhere to go. In the north, where *Lega Nord*, a fascist-leaning organization, is a prominent political force, Rom have been evicted from entire towns, their very presence forbidden by ultra-conservative mayors.

This was only my small glimpse into a situation that has long existed and worsened and won't be resolved over-

night. Thankfully, Iole's work seemed to offer an alternative way of thinking to youngsters who have received a good bit of indoctrination. It offers them a choice. Maybe this little bit of exposure to the outside world—as active rather than passive participants—will lead them to decide to follow a profession, or fight for the right to do so, and perhaps to help their own people more effectively than any of us could do from outside. As for me, I hope to keep traveling, opening my eyes ever wider and learning more about what's left of a people with a rich musical heritage.

■ ■ ■

*Remembering a fine jazz author and a marvelous wit.*

## Joe Goldberg, 1932-2009

» By W. Royal Stokes

**J**OE GOLDBERG, ONE of America's leading jazz authors, died in Elkins, West Virginia on September 10, 2009. His legacy remains an inspiration for all of us in the JJA.

Joe's Russian-born father, Victor, came to the U.S. in the early 20th century when he was three or four. Trained here as a clarinetist and saxophonist, he joined the reed section of a Meyer Davis Orchestra in Hollywood, Florida, in the early 1930s. Several years later he got a gig playing in the resident dance band at Greenbrier, a resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Victor eventually settled in Elkins, where he took over the management of the family department store, L. Goldberg and Sons.

"I went to a prep school, Peddie School in Hightstown, New Jersey, for one year," Joe told BBC interviewer Jean Sneedgar in a 2007 conversation on West Virginia Public Radio. "I roomed with a real New York hipster.... He had the first Charlie Parker record I ever heard, the first Dizzy Gillespie record, and on and on and on, and I just took to it."

After graduating from Northwestern University as a Radio and Communications major in the mid-1950s, and a subsequent couple of years as a producer with CBS-TV in Chicago, Joe moved to New York to try his hand at becoming a writer, supporting himself by working at the original Sam Goody record store at 49th Street off Broadway. He began contributing to magazines, including *Jazz 'n' Pop* and *The American Record Guide*, and writing liner notes, his first being for a 1957 Sonny Rollins LP.

Goldberg's *Jazz Masters of the '50s*, published in 1965 as the final unit of a five-volume series spanning the 1920s to the '50s and edited by Martin Williams for Macmillan, remains essential reading. It includes early profiles of Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Charles Mingus, Cecil Taylor, Ornette Coleman, Art Blakey, Thelonious Monk, Gerry Mulligan, Ray Charles and others. Joe told me that the advantage he had over the authors of the earlier volumes in the series—Williams, Richard Hadlock, Rex Stewart and Ira Gitler—was that his subjects were still

playing and available for interview and he knew all of them personally.

Explaining his relocation to Hollywood, California, in 1967, Joe told reporter Jean Sneedgar: "Two things happened. John Coltrane died [and it] was also the year of *Sgt. Pepper's*.... One jazz club after another turned into a rock club. That was the end of liner notes for a while, too. The Beatles cost me my livelihood and I should sue them," he added, chuckling at this threat. "Friends of mine who had gone to Hollywood kept ... telling me how great it was and I went out to find out what it was like."

Joe spent 30 years in Hollywood, first at Paramount Studios and then 20th Century Fox, reading and critiquing submitted film scripts, including *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, which he gave a two-word thumbs-up, "Buy it!"

Fifteen years ago, while in his early 60s, Joe returned to Elkins, settling into the family home, where as a teenager in the 1940s he had listened to

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Joe Goldberg in 1967, being interviewed by Mary McPhillips on WOR-TV, New York, about his just-published book *Big Bunny: The Inside Story of Playboy*. Photo by Peter A. Gulotta and courtesy of Carol Underhill of the Joe Goldberg Estate.

Duke Ellington 78s. He soon resumed his career writing about jazz, for *Billboard*, *The Wall Street Journal* and other publications. He also began writing liner notes again, for Concord, Prestige and others. Among his many magazine and newspaper pieces in this period were interviews with Frank Sinatra, composer Jimmy Webb, drummer Paul Motian and opera singer Renée Fleming, who released a jazz album in 2004.

I'd had Joe's *Jazz Masters of the '50s* on my shelf for three decades when I first met him upon moving to Elkins three years ago. I encountered him at the local public library, where he was seated at a computer posting articles and liner notes. "This is the office!" he said. It was his routine several days a week to settle in at one of the library's computers. One day we found ourselves exchanging anecdotes about musicians. He recalled that some years ago he had been assigned an interview with Keith Jarrett. Phoning the pianist and outlining his project, Joe was greeted with, "Not interested!" And with that, Keith hung up. A little later, Joe was asked to write a review of a Jarrett boxed set.

The publicity material that came with

the LPs cited two of Jarrett's traits, his "mastery of the keyboard and his bluntness in person-to-person contact." Joe quoted this passage in his review, observing, "Of the former I am skeptical but of the latter I can well attest." Joe winked at me, adding, "Don't ever fuck with a writer, Royal!"

I last saw Joe in March at a concert here in Elkins. Saxophonist and flutist Carol Sudhalter had brought a sextet from New York, and during the intermission Joe and I chatted. He remarked that Carol's "Over the Rainbow" on baritone was the most moving rendition of the tune he had ever heard. A moment later Carol appeared at our side and I asked Joe to repeat the compliment. Needless to say, Carol was deeply grateful to hear this from a critic of Joe's standing.

A delightful example of Joe's wit is "The Symposium," a 1959 parody of the writing styles of Martin Williams, Whitney Balliett, Nat Hentoff, Ralph J. Gleason, Gene Lees, John S. Wilson, Leonard Feather and Ira Gitler. First published in the short-lived *Jazz Review* circa 1960, it's also included in *Jazz Panorama: From the Pages of the Jazz Review*, edited by Martin Wil-

liams (Crowell-Collier, 1962; Da Capo reprint, 1979). Joe's mock critiques are centered on the fictional Ansel Jones, who plays a copper trumpet fashioned from melted-down pennies. Here are two excerpts:

Whitney Balliett: *In a typical solo, [Jones] will start with a sort of agonized laziness, as if he were awakening from a dream caused by having eaten too much welsh rarebit the night before.... His pianist Porter Smith, a torpid ellipse of a man, lays down a firm, inky foundation that anticipates the leader's meanderings with the precision of a Seeing Eye Dog weaving its way through a Coney Island beach crowd on the fourth of July.*

Martin Williams: *[Jones's] compositions are five-strain rondos with the fourth strain omitted (ABACAE), and in using this approach, he might seem to incorporate the sense of form that had previously been notable in only the work of, say, a Jelly Roll Morton, a Duke Ellington, a John Lewis, a Thelonious Monk.... (A strain, it should be explained at this point, is an identifying feature of the work of Morton, roughly corresponding to a riff in the Ellington band of the forties, an episode in the work of John Lewis, or a theme in the compositions of Thelonious Monk.) Omitting the fourth strain now seems an amazingly simple step to have made, but it takes an Ansel Jones to make that step.*

More seriously, Joe's knowledge and critical acumen are splendidly displayed in "It Don't Mean A Thing," his 2001 critique of Ken Burns' *Jazz for The Threepenny Review*. Check it out online at <http://bit.ly/65Yz95>.

*Requiescat in pace, Joe.*





# OHAD TALMOR STEVE SWALLOW ADAM NUSSBAUM

Text, captions and photos by Patrick Hinely

All images this and next two pages ©2009 by Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®

Rehearsal: September 4, 2009

Officially formed last year, the trio of saxophonist Ohad Talmor, bassist Steve Swallow and drummer Adam Nussbaum does not tour often, and U.S. performances are especially rare. Part of the original plan for this one-night-only gig in New York over Labor Day weekend 2009 was to celebrate the band's debut album (*Playing In Traffic*), but alas, the release was delayed by the gradual rhythms of Italian summer. The gig was also to serve as a warmup for a European tour starting later the same month, and this it did, in splendid fashion.

Swallow and Nussbaum are widely known to jazz audiences, of course. Talmor, born in Israel and raised in Switzerland, works mainly as a composer and arranger, and more in Europe and Brazil than the U.S. He collaborated with Swallow on *L'Histoire du Clochard: The Bum's Tale*, an album of Steve's tunes arranged after the style of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*. Talmor also leads the band Newsreel and has collaborated extensively with Lee Konitz.

The trio gig was at Cornelia Street Café, which has long presented an array of live music and poetry, befitting its West Village location, always as a restaurant with a performance space rather than as a club with food. The cellar space doesn't seat many, and while the room is comfortable, it is hardly as sumptuous as the cuisine upstairs. The audience was there not just to hear any live music, but to hear these particular guys converse and explore.

With the years I have come to feel that rehearsals offer more photo-opportune situations than performances, so a majority of these images come from the warmup for the warmup gig, which took place at Nussbaum's home, about halfway between Talmor's Brooklyn abode and Swallow's upstate estate. Drums being more trouble to haul about than bass guitars or saxophones, this worked out well.

While we have long seen a lot of very well-executed performance imagery of jazz artists, what we haven't seen so much is depictions of those same people going about living life and being human beings, doing the 95 percent of what they have to do to make that other five percent possible on the bandstand. To my eye, the potential for the kinetic or even the poetic exists equally off the stage as on it.



Left to right: Steve Swallow, Ohad Talmor, Adam Nussbaum.



Early on in the rehearsal, Steve contemplates a chart.



Rehearsal host Adam, with the family dog, Sly, on snare.

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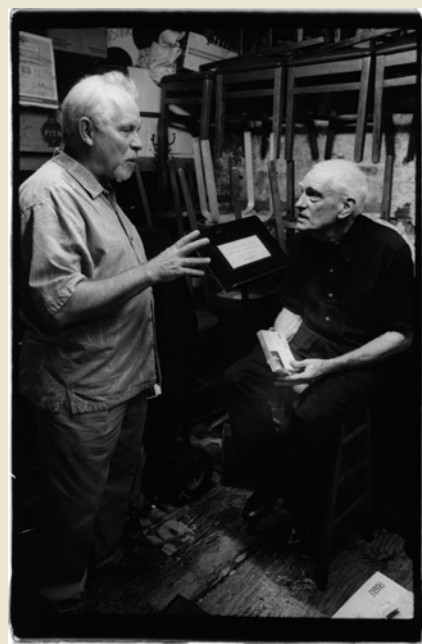
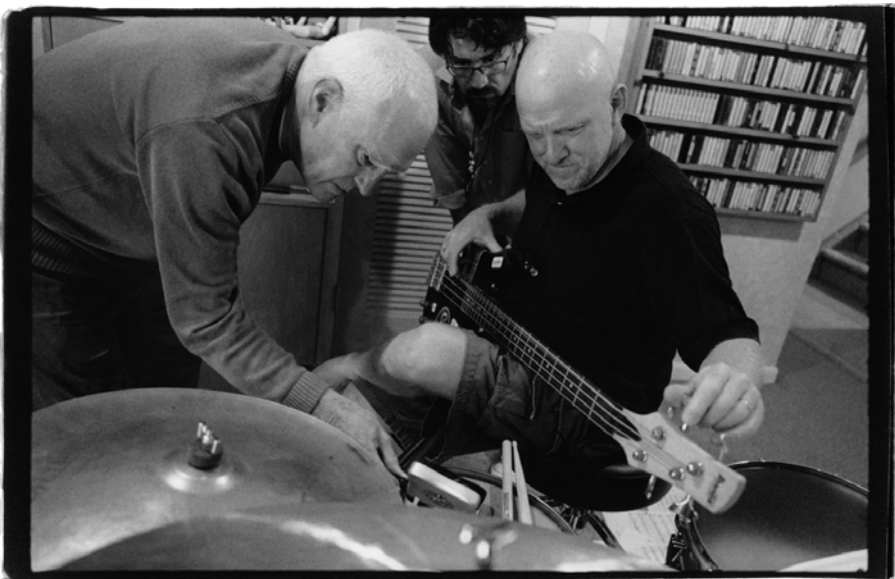


### Rehearsal: September 4, 2009

**ABOVE:** During a break in the rehearsal, Ohad burns the first copies of the band's then-forthcoming debut CD for his colleagues.

**LEFT:** Ohad on tenor at the rehearsal.

**BELOW:** During another break in the rehearsal, Adam borrowed Steve's tuning device to tune his son's bass, with some help from Steve.



### Performance: September 5, 2009

**TOP:** Men at work/play — the performance in progress.

**ABOVE:** Bass is the place — among the visitors Swallow received backstage after the gig was fellow bassist Cameron Brown, a fellow performer of duets with Sheila Jordan.

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**Performance:  
September 5, 2009**

A band that works together only occasionally makes every gig — even more so this one in the U.S. — an occasion, so embrace is the place before hitting the late-night road home.



## News of Members

**JOHN ABBOTT** and **BOB BLUMENTHAL** are collaborating on the book *Saxophone Colossus: A Portrait of Sonny Rollins*. The book will be published by Abrams on September 7, 2010, Rollins's 80th birthday.

**DAVID R. ADLER** wrote front-page arts section stories on Sonny Rollins and Christian McBride for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and a feature on bassist Linda Oh for *JazzTimes*. His feature on Matthew Shipp appears in the January/February issue of *JazzTimes*. He is writing a *JazzTimes* cover story on Pat Metheny for April 2010.

**STUART BROOMER** has just published *Time and Anthony Braxton* with The Mercury Press. He has also provided liner notes to Anthony Braxton and Joëlle Léandre's two CD set *Duo (Heidelberg Loppem) 2007*, just released on Leo. Stuart's column "Ezz-thetics" appears regularly at [Pointofdeparture.org](http://Pointofdeparture.org), with recent editions including an interview

with trumpeter Peter Evans and a piece on Derek Bailey's last works. Stuart also writes regularly for *All About Jazz—New York*, *Musicworks*, *Signal to Noise* and *Toronto Life*.

**BRETT DELMAGE** has launched a new website about jazz and improvised music in Canada's capital region: [OttawaJazzScene.ca](http://OttawaJazzScene.ca). He is joined by editor Alayne McGregor, who started reviewing jazz after attending the JJA writers' clinic held at the final 2008 IAJE conference.

**ENID FARBER'S** academic life has been busy, leaving little time for hearing live music—except when those necessary bread-and-butter gigs come along like her recent shoot of the "Justice for Jazz Artists!" rally. In September some of Enid's hand-painted jazz photos were featured in a group exhibition at SUNY's Empire State College in Brooklyn. Enid was also one of five students in the metro area to win the contest for

best academic paper; she was subsequently invited and sponsored to present at the Student Academic Conference in Syracuse. Her presentation on October 17 was "My Journey as a Jazz Art Photographer," and her intention was to inspire students of all ages and backgrounds to claim "never give up" as their mantra.

**GARY GIDDINS'S** Jazz Legacies series of public conversations at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (Fifth Avenue at 35th Street) began its third season with George Wein on October 29. For the November 2 event, the tables were turned as Graduate Center President William P. Kelly interviewed Gary about his new book, *Jazz*, written with Scott DeVeaux. On November 19, Gary interviewed ECM Records founder Manfred Eicher. In previous seasons, Gary's guests have

*continued on next page* »

included Sonny Rollins, Jason Moran, Cassandra Wilson, Joshua Redman, Bruce Lundvall and Joe Lovano. All events take place at 6:30 p.m. and are free of charge, open to the public.

**JAMES HALE** will be serving as Media Specialist for the 2010 TD Canada Trust Ottawa International Jazz Festival—the festival’s 30th anniversary. James is also writing five sets of liner notes for reissues of music by John Lee Hooker, Chuck Berry and other American blues artists.

**TAD HENDRICKSON**, Jersey City-based journalist, has a new weekly column at AOL’s Spinner music site (Spinner.com). Early items include a think piece on Terry Teachout’s controversial *Wall Street Journal* story, a live review of Paul Motian/Joe Lovano/Bill Frisell at the Village Vanguard, profiles of Wayne Wallace and Joe Morris and an album review and Q&A with Ben Allison. Tad continues to program jazz and blues stations for AOL Radio as well. His writing has also recently appeared in *The Village Voice* and *Relix*.

**MARCIA HILLMAN** (producer) and Lenore Raphael (host) collaborate on the weekly online program “Lenore Raphael’s Jazz Spot,” featuring jazz musicians and vocalists in an hour-long interview and performance format. The show is broadcast on Sundays at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. EST and Fridays at 11 p.m. EST on purejazzradio.org.

**THOMAS JACOBSEN** published a review of the new CD by Eddie Daniels and Roger Kellaway, *A Duet of One*, in the September issue of *The Clarinet* magazine. Thomas is also currently acting as the representative of the Onward Brass Band of New Orleans. For further information about the band and its schedule, contact Thomas at twj@tulane.edu.

**SANFORD JOSEPHSON** was interviewed on October 15 by Gary Walker of WBGO-FM (Newark, New Jersey) about his book *Jazz Notes: Interviews Across the Generations* (Praeger/ABC-CLIO).

**BILL MILKOWSKI** is now working with

Wolfgang’s Vault, which recently obtained George Wein’s incredibly rich audio archives from the Newport Jazz Festival (circa 1955–1976). Free streaming and downloads for purchase are now available on wolfgangsvault.com. Bill’s concert summaries will be posted on the website, which also allows online access to the archival material from the Newport Folk Festival, Bill Graham’s Fillmore East and the Ash Grove in Los Angeles.

**ARNOLD JAY SMITH** was a guest speaker at the National Arts Club Medal of Honor presentation to Paquito D’Rivera. The other speakers were James Moody, David Amram and Jon Faddis. Arnold’s column “The OctoJAZZarians” appears on *Jazz.com*.

**W. ROYAL STOKES** wrote liner notes for Frank Roberscheuten and Shaunette Hildabrand’s 2009 CD *Hiptet* (Hip). In March he was profiled in the *Charleston Gazette* (wvgazette.com/News/200902230611); that same month he was interviewed on West Virginia Public Radio (<http://bit.ly/5wmuXG>). He is currently preparing for publication a fourth volume of profiles based on his interviews with jazz and blues musicians, and is also readying a family history and personal memoir based on a trove of letters and documents going back a century and a half. His novel *Backwards Over* will see publication in 2010. He is seeking a publisher for a follow-up volume to his *Swing Era New York: The Jazz Photographs of Charles Peterson* (Temple University Press).

**CAROL SUDHALTER** (saxophonist, flutist, bandleader, journalist and translator) performed in concert with her sextet for the Randolph County Community Arts Center in Elkins, West Virginia, in March and also presented a workshop at West Virginia Wesleyan College. Carol’s 10-piece Astoria Jazz Band presents special grant-supported concerts such as “Women Composers of New York,” “A Jazz History of Queens” (formerly narrated by the late bassist Leonard Gaskin) and the music of upcoming Italian jazz artists. Anent the

latter, the band performed at Flushing Town Hall in May 2009, a grant-funded tribute to the poetry of the late poet Mimmo Cervellino, with compositions and arrangements by his son Antonio and dancing by daughter Francesca Cervellino. Carol’s forthcoming CD on Alfa Music (Rome) features an array of gifted Italian artists such as Hammond organist Vito Di Modugno and 18-year-old piano prodigy Carlo Barile, along with New York-based artists such as female drummer Kaori Yamada and vocalist Marti Mabin. In addition, Carol has translated and published articles for the Jazz Ascona Festival through their press office. She also translates for novelist Iole Severi Silvestrini in Rome. Her websites are [sudhalter.com](http://sudhalter.com) and [myspace.com/carolsudhalter](http://myspace.com/carolsudhalter).

**JOHN R. TUMPAK** appeared on Horace Heidt, Jr.’s “America Swings” radio show on August 1 and 8 to discuss the careers of bandleader Kay Kyser and vocalist Jo Stafford.



## New Members

**PETER HUM** is Assistant Editor, Arts and Culture, at *The Ottawa Citizen* and a prolific jazz blogger ([jazzblog.ca](http://jazzblog.ca)).

**SUZANNE LORGE** of New York is “VoxNews” columnist for *All About Jazz*.

**CAROL SUDHALTER**, saxophonist and bandleader based in Queens, New York, is the translator/editor for the novels of Italian author Jole Severi Silvestrini and a former columnist for the *JazzAscona Gazette*.

**STEVE BELKIN** is a music business consultant, author of the ebook *The Six P’s to Success*, owner of Open All Nite Entertainment and an artist manager and partner with Left Coast Music Group.

**VITOR MEDEIROS** is a photographer based in Porto, Portugal.



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# Book Reviews

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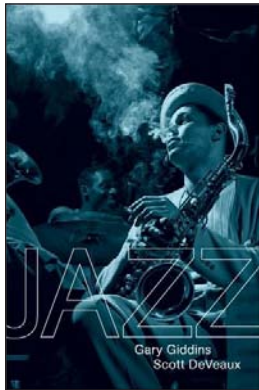
## Jazz

By Gary Giddins and Scott DeVeaux

W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2009;  
704 pages; \$39.95 hardcover

► Review by Tim DuRoche

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FOR MANY YEARS, good one-volume histories of jazz were something of a rarity. We had our choice of James Lincoln Collier's *The Making of Jazz*, Grover Sales's *Jazz: America's Classical Music* and Joachim-Ernst Berendt's *Jazz Book*, to name a scant Django-handful. Generally, overviews disappointingly devoted the lion's share of their page-counts to jazz before 1960, and hurriedly, efficiently (omitting

right and left) tying up the remainder 40 years in a chapter or two.

The last 10 years have seen an uptick in serious scholarship and well-wrought primers (including, among the better entries, Ted Gioia's *The History of Jazz*, Alyn Shipton's *A New History of Jazz*, and Bob Blumenthal's *Jazz: An Introduction to the History and Legends Behind America's Music*). The challenge has always been not only to put the music in historical context, but to establish its sociocultural moorings and portray it as an evolving grammar and living art form.

Joining this shortlist is *Jazz* by Gary Giddins and Scott DeVeaux. Published initially as a textbook or "college edition" — one with great stylistic flair, but a textbook nonetheless — *Jazz* was adapted by the authors as a general trade edition. The book navigates jazz's story from prehistory in the African diaspora to now, through compressed biographies of major figures, thoughtful listening guides (a four-CD accompanying set is available separately) and sensitive considerations of jazz in the continuum of art and culture, history and entertainment. What the trade edition sacrifices in terms of pedagogical and musicological rigor it makes up for in momentum, tone and concision.

Beginning from a wonderful frame of empathy, the authors steep the reader in active listening, providing a well-balanced compass for charting jazz's cultural, musical, political, social, economic and historical context and doing what so many find hard to do: establish a foundation for understanding and stewarding a collective efficacy for jazz — this is *our* music. This comes across with particular mastery in the latter chapters (Chapter 18, "Historicism: Jazz on Jazz,"

and the succeeding chapter on "Jazz Today," which pivots on a portrait of Jason Moran).

Following an undercurrent that focuses on the implicit place of jazz in American culture, Giddins and DeVeaux allow the reader to ask valuable questions. How do we simultaneously understand the music as a one-time dominant community-based cultural force; a listener's music, rigorously modern, but disconnected from the general public; and an art form defined and cowed by its classical status — on the one hand plagued by the anxiety of influence, contingent largely on academic and institutional support, on the other struggling with the taffy-pull of historicism and a yen for radical recombination and generative jazz grammar?

Although the authors seem to have divvied up the work — with Giddins largely focused on the narrative and DeVeaux tackling the listening guides/musical examples — they purportedly embraced a collaborative writing process. Still there are sections that are clearly one or the other: a foray into jazz's crisis of historicism ("Hegelian dialecticism") has the whiff of academe, and I'm suspecting DeVeaux's fingerprints; and a somewhat toned-down version but still buoyant taste of Giddins's sweeping wit and literary, often chewy prose. Since Whitney Balliett's passing, Giddins is jazz writing's greatest stylist — by turns our William Hazlitt or a slightly more swinging Dwight Macdonald. Together the authors of *Jazz* cut an informative, entertaining Fred-and-Ginger rug, melding insightful historical scholarship and dyed-in-the-wool journalistic perspective.

*Jazz's* descriptive and relatively jargon-free listening guides constitute for all practical purposes a comparable kissing cousin to the *Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz*. There may be fewer cuts (75 to Smithsonian's 95), but *Jazz's* rich, well-focused and representative array invites either the novice or experienced student to listen and understand jazz's history and its peripheral musicological sources from the inside out.

We can all quibble about this cut or that (I, for one, miss the libidinally charged "Blue Horizon" by Sidney Bechet from the Smithsonian collection — a tune that goes a long way in suggesting why middle-class America considered jazz a "syphilis of the ears and hips"). Will everyone agree with the characterization of jazz as folk music (one of jazz's Three Faces of Eve, alongside art music, America's Classical Music and popular music)? Probably not. But by and large, DeVeaux and Giddins nailed it.

While *Jazz* shares with Alyn Shipton's history a strong dose of political context, Shipton fares better in casting the music as vividly global. On a lighter note, jazz writers and musicians, in particular, will probably enjoy the dismissive flick given to "smooth jazz" ("There are many things to dislike about smooth jazz — for example, everything"). Perhaps not the most ecumenical exegesis, but a widely shared one.

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Ultimately, does *Jazz* break new ground and tell us something startling new about this great four-letter word? Not entirely. Should we all have it on our shelves next to our Marshall Stearns and Otis Ferguson? Absolutely. While *Jazz* follows a familiar theme and variations of historical progression—it really is intended as a primer and overview for the non-initiate—what it does extremely well, especially in its latter chapters, is frame many of the field’s ongoing conversations about, counterarguments against, and obstacles to keeping the music fluid, reflexive and changing.

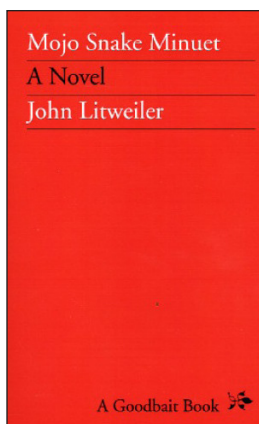


## Mojo Snake Minuet: A Novel

By John Litweiler

Goodbait Books, Chicago, 2009;  
197 pages; \$15.00 paperback

► Review by Howard Mandel



**I**N 1492 A Mandingo vessel crossing the Atlantic from Africa was attacked by three ships manned by European savages, captained by Christopher Columbus. The Africans sank the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria. In 1496 they staged their first invasion of Europe, the success of which leads to the setting of John Litweiler’s debut novel, *Mojo Snake Minuet*.

It’s a late 20th-century alternative Chicago, and dominant African-American culture’s irrepressible (only *sometimes* politically correct) love of dirty white music—opera, lieder, hayseed minstrel shows, orchestral and chamber compositions—is a curse afflicting Yakub Yakub, third-string pop critic.

He’s a sad case, clueless and vain; his overnight reviews depend on the adjectives “accessible,” “layered,” “profound” and the transition “In other words.” Yakub plays a bit of tenor sax, of course, but classical icons like Pres, Hawk, Bird and Trane are rather beyond him. He’s still hung up on Aisha Salim, the investigative reporter who took a sabbatical to volunteer in the white civil rights movement, and who now dogs his every step while working for a rival newspaper. That’s bad, since Chief Daniyal Kaida XVI, publisher of the *Chicago Messenger*, has sent Yakub on a wild goose chase after a priceless McGuffin—er, *mojo*.

Outrageous characters derail the hunt, vivid scenes ensue—but solving the mystery isn’t the point of Litweiler’s satire, which joins those of Christopher Buckley, Carl Hi-

aaßen and even Ishmael Reed as able to sustain fantastic premises with a straight enough face to keep readers clucking and chuckling to the end. The farce of racially or ethnically based social hierarchies is the author’s point, of course, one he’s made overtly and covertly throughout his 40-plus-year career as a Chicago-based jazz journalist. In publications including *Down Beat* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*—and his breakthrough books *The Freedom Principle* and *Ornette Coleman: A Harmolodic Life*—Litweiler has always taken seriously the high aspirations and exposed the transparent pretensions of musical scene-makers. He typically respects creative musicians for their poses as prophets and visionaries, but is willing to say when their wits and instruments fail to validate their boasts.

Litweiler is fairly merciless in *Mojo Snake Minuet*, skewering Yakub, his boss and would-be femme fatales as well as recording industry gangsters, academically cozened theoretical provocateurs, “Zombie”-seeking spiritualists and of course Chicago’s crooked cops, often with economically turned phrases. “Authority is despicable, Yakub knew, and he wanted some,” the author writes; also, “Since hatred shared is joy multiplied....” He spoofs Faulkner with long sentences in long paragraphs compressing luridly dramatic history, and offhandedly nails the baseless faith that’s the lifeblood of his own profession: “There’s nothing more socially significant than being a critic, because when the public’s appreciation of fine art rises to higher levels of sophistication, it’ll inevitably lead to creating a better world.” He knows what he’s doing: “[T]hey died as they lived. Like characters in a lousy novel or a third-rate B-movie. A movie with bad wisecracks for dialogue, with a stolen gimmick, with an over-complicated plot, with dark shadows and weird camera angles, with shady ladies and sleazy men and other absurd characters, with too much violence, with mindless sex. Well, okay, mindless, but not much sex.”

Self-reflective though the description might seem, it encapsulates the ploy that drives the book: Litweiler’s clear-eyed but subversive critique of bias and self-delusion, whatever its source. This is a great theme and a jazz theme, to the extent that jazz righteously blasts past b.s. to get to fresh thinking that resounds with everybody. Litweiler is not the first or only jazz journalist who’s resorted to fiction to trumpet this wisdom: Rafi Zabor in *The Bear Comes Home*, James Sallis with his Lew Griffin/New Orleans mysteries, Bill Moody in his Evan Horne series, Skoot Larsen’s California semi-hardboileds and I think Nat Hentoff, too, have touched this chord. That it rings so true in *Mojo Snake Minuet* via its central conceit, the easy-to-propound, hard-to-realize reversal of the cultural mirror, attests to Litweiler’s acute critical perspective. That his novel keeps us in gasps and guffaws proves he’s also a very funny man.



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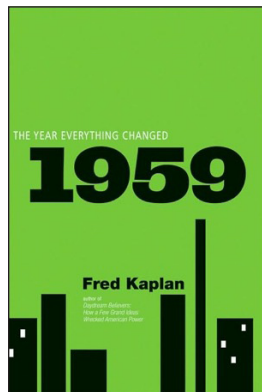
## 1959: The Year Everything Changed

By Fred Kaplan

Wiley, Hoboken, New Jersey, 2009;  
376 pages; \$27.95 hardcover

► Review by Tim DuRoche

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FRED KAPLAN'S *1959: The Year that Changed Everything* is intended as “a revisionist history of previously unnoticed linkages,” orbiting one single, influential year. With a broad stroke, Kaplan, a journalist who writes on U.S. foreign policy for *Slate* and blogs on jazz for *Strepophile*, lovingly attempts to collect, catalogue and elucidate the revolutionary bursts that occurred in jazz, art, science, technology

and power during this last year of the 1950s. Set against the Cold War and an escalating space race between the U.S. and Russia, the book is a vibrant portrait of flux and new frontiers—from Fidel Castro’s takeover of Cuba to the development of the microchip to Miles Davis’s *Kind of Blue* and Coltrane’s *Giant Steps*, to NASA’s Mercury Astronauts, the founding of Motown Records, censorship of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and William S. Burroughs’s *Naked Lunch* and so on.

The velocity of change that occurred in U.S. culture in general (and in jazz particularly) in 1959 is staggering, symbolic in both its many ends and beginnings.

For jazz, it’s indeed The Year Everything Changed. In 1959 came the deaths of Lester Young, Billie Holiday and Sidney Bechet. The founding of Motown Records helped further bury jazz as popular music. But out of the ashes there was change everywhere: *Kind of Blue*, *Giant Steps*, and Dave Brubeck’s *Time Out*; Ornette Coleman’s arrival in New York followed by the rapid-fire release of *Tomorrow Is The Question*, *The Shape of Jazz to Come* and *Change of the Century*. In addition, Charles Mingus recorded *Mingus Ah Um* and Bill Evans formed his trio with Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian.

I totally buy Kaplan’s alternate take on 1959 as supplanting the later ’60s as a watershed cultural moment. That’s not at issue—what doesn’t quite work are the disparate odds and ends merely linked by diachronic happenstance. The Motown hook isn’t quite there. The year 1959 began, Kaplan writes, “with simple curiosity. Several years ago, it occurred to me that many of my favorite groundbreaking record albums, books, and movies— [*Kind of Blue*, *The Shape of Jazz to Come*], *The Sick Humor of Lenny Bruce*, Norman Mailer’s *Advertisements for Myself*, Philip Roth’s *Goodbye, Columbus*, François Truffaut’s *The 400 Blows*—were all released in 1959.... The more I looked into it, the more it struck me that

1959 really was a pivotal year—not only in culture but also in politics, society, science, sex: everything.”

Kaplan is witty, with a broad cultural knowledge and wonderfully catholic tastes, but I wanted a deeper conceptual underpinning, more synthesis or conjecture on the simultaneous big bang of that year. I wanted to understand the interconnectedness of that renaissance more—I wanted to see the “everything” he mentions.

If anything can explain what Kaplan refers to as 1959’s “distinctive swoon [and] creative energy,” it’s the powder burns, lipstick traces and cultivated cool that jazz put into the atmosphere of the late-Eisenhower era. While *1959* is not a jazz book strictly, jazz does make intermittent and strong cameo appearances. Kaplan has chapters on George Russell, *Kind of Blue*, Ornette—but jazz ends up feeling like the sidekick (the Thelma Ritter, as it were) instead of the leading lady, just another one of the laundry list of Happenings. The connective tissue that explains the new frontiers and the breaks in the gravitational field of 1959 can be underscored by connecting jazz even more to the larger cultural ethos of that time.

Are there overarching connections linking Cold War containment, the introspection of Bill Evans, the development of the microchip and Volkswagen’s “Think Small” ad campaign? Were Robert Rauschenberg’s combine paintings sympathetic birth pangs linked to the escape velocity being charted by Ornette Coleman or William S. Burroughs? Could one make the case that the sonic contours of *Kind of Blue* and Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim are simultaneously emblematic of the time? As America hit its adolescent stride, did the sounds of Mingus and Coltrane echo citizens’ attitudes toward authority, civil rights, a fledgling conflict in Vietnam or Castro’s Cuban revolution?

Kaplan writes: “The truly pivotal moments of history are those whose legacies endure.... As the mid-forties recede into abstract nostalgia, and the late sixties evoke puzzled shudders, it is the events of 1959 that continue to resonate in our own time.” Kaplan’s challenge for *1959*, that these many ideas, events and actions would resonate with readers, is entertainingly met. Not a vivid prose stylist by any means, Kaplan nevertheless strings together an engaging and compelling snapshot of a vital moment in American art, socio-cultural and political history.



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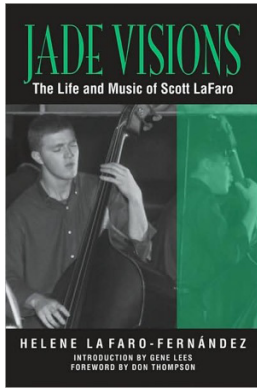
## Jade Visions: The Life and Music of Scott LaFaro

By Helene LaFaro-Fernández

University of North Texas Press, Denton, Texas, 2009;  
352 pages; \$24.95 hardcover

► Review by Jerry D'Souza

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**D**URING HIS SHORT life, Scott LaFaro set a new standard for the bass, changing the ensemble dynamics of the instrument, defying convention and etching his name as one of the most influential players of all time. Now his sister, Helene LaFaro-Fernández, has documented his life and work, and in this first biography of LaFaro she writes with the adulation of a younger sibling. Her narrative

style is down-to-earth and succinct, and she adds substance by giving those who met and interacted with him a large say, balancing the personal and musical sides and drawing listeners into both the calm and the vortex that was his life.

LaFaro began learning the piano in the sixth grade and later moved to the clarinet and bass. He traveled extensively, and it would have been natural for him to direct his own children, Scott and Helen, toward music, but he wanted to give them the childhood he did not have.

LaFaro's passion was in constant surge as he probed new ways to play the bass. His fingering and sense of harmony changed the instrument and gave it a more dynamic group presence. He practiced incessantly. His gift came to be recognized and he made his way through several bands, including those of Stan Getz, Ornette Coleman and Bill Evans. In the book we read about the day that Thelonious Monk listened to Scott and came back with, "Nice talking to you." LaFaro went on to play with Monk at Town Hall on November 28, 1959.

LaFaro and Evans developed a symbiotic relationship born of practice, interlocution and interjection of ideas. This comes

to life on the near 23-minute rehearsal take of "My Foolish Heart" on *Pieces of Jade*, a companion CD to the book, put out by Resonance Records.

The CD also carries a 1966 interview with Evans by George Klabin, in which Evans recalls meeting LaFaro at a rehearsal with Chet Baker. At first Evans thought Scott was overplaying, trying to get out everything that was inside him. But his playing was unique. As circumstances unfolded, the two ended up making some of the most exquisite music in jazz history.

While Evans reminisces about LaFaro on the CD, the book includes a wealth of input from other musicians including Charlie Haden, Don Friedman, Gunther Schuller and Gary Peacock. Each brings a different perspective, enriching the chronicle.

LaFaro-Fernández devotes three chapters to an in-depth analysis of her brother's music. The first chapter includes reminisces by the likes of Peacock, Eddie Gomez and Rufus Reid. The second has detailed analysis of several LaFaro solos by Jeff Campbell, along with several transcriptions. The third offers transcriptions of LaFaro's Village Vanguard solos by Phil Palombi. Not all of this will appeal to the average reader, but it is of concrete value to those seeking a clearer look at the music itself.

An extensive discography details all the sessions on which LaFaro played, along with album titles, a listing of tracks and personnel—an invaluable reference. In addition, the CD presents five previously unheard tracks from 1961 with Don Friedman on piano and Pete LaRoca on drums, which bring more insight into LaFaro's approach. The trio has an empathy that elevates the music and makes it a welcome addition to the bassist's recording history.

LaFaro began composing only in the last year of his life and had two finished tunes, "Gloria's Step" and "Jade Visions." He died in a car crash at the age of 25. But he had accomplished more than many musicians could hope for. His skills and innovations drew him like a magnet to musicians as diverse in their attitude toward jazz as Benny Goodman, Stan Kenton, Hampton Hawes, Coleman, Monk and Getz. He fit in, no matter the style. Genius rises and speaks for itself.



**“WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF JAZZ, EVERYBODY WHO MADE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THAT MUSIC NEVER REALLY SAW IT AS A *KIND* OF MUSIC. ANYBODY WHO CAN SHED THAT PRECONCEPTION OF WHAT JAZZ IS OR IS NOT, OR SHOULD BE OR SHOULDN'T BE, AND CAN JUST APPROACH IT AS *HUMAN ENDEAVOR*, I THINK WILL FIND SOMETHING TO RESONATE WITH HERE.”**

**—VIJAY IYER**



# Deaths in 2009

Compiled by W. Royal Stokes and Ken Franckling

DAVID “FATHEAD” NEWMAN • GEORGE RUSSELL • RASHIED ALI • LES PAUL • JOE MANERI • HALE SMITH • LESLIE CAROLE JOHNSON • STACY ROWLES • MICHAEL JACKSON • LEONARD GASKIN • HANK CRAWFORD • BLOSSOM DEARIE • LOUIE BELLSON • ART D’LUGOFF • BUD SHANK • SIRONE • DAVID “POP” WINANS • JULIE CORYELL • KOKO TAYLOR • KENNY RANKIN • LAWRENCE LUCIE • CHRIS CONNOR • JOE GOLDBERG • JUANITA BROOKS



Bandleader, singer and composer Tina Marsh

Trumpeters Agustin Caraballoso, Irving Bush, Rubin “Zeke” Zarchy, Mike Serpas, Nicholas Capezuto, Teddy Washington, Steve Hawdon, Eddie Preston; trumpeter and writer Ian Carr; trumpeter, bandleader and arranger Jerry van Rooyen; trumpeter and bandleader Sonny Bradshaw; trumpeter, flugelhorn player and singer Stacy Rowles

Cornetists Jim Goodwin, Harry Roland

Trombonists Randy Purcell, Joel Helleny, Bobby Pring, Arch Martin, Joel Helleny

Saxophonists Leroy Cooper, Sam (Leroy) Parkins, Jean-Claude Fohrenbach, Ron Stallings, Pee Wee Moore, Jack Nimitz, Charlie Mariano, Carmen Leggio, Aubrey Simani, Luther Thomas, Ray Beckenstein, Winston Mankunku Ngozi; saxophonist, composer and bandleader David “Fathead” Newman; saxophonists and bandleaders Hank Crawford, Charlie Kennedy, Bob Thulman; saxophonists and flutists Gerry Niewood, Hart McNee; saxophonist, flutist, composer, arranger and bandleader Bud Shank; saxophonist, singer, arranger and bandleader Sam Butera; saxophonist, clarinetist, composer and educator Joe Maneri; saxophonist, clarinetist, bandleader and composer Gianni Basso; saxophonist and educator Larry McCrorey

Clarinetists Nick Jerret, Charly Höllering

Pianists Mike Mancini, Artie Jenkins, Muriel Havenstein, David Hill Phelps, Gugge Hedrenius, Hans Otto Jung, Earma Thompson, Eddie Higgins, Morris Nanton; pianist and arranger Dick Katz; pianist and trumpeter Billy Hall, Jr.; pianist, bandleader, composer and educator Günter Hörig; pianist, singer and songwriter Eddie Bo; pianist and vibraphonist Buddy Montgomery; pianist and conductor Shep Meyers; pianist, writer and broadcaster Steve Race; pianist, bandleader, composer and arranger Ed Metz, Sr.

Organist Lyman Woodard

Accordianist Mat Mathews

Vibraphonist Fats Sadi; vibraphonist, keyboardist, singer, composer, arranger and bandleader Edward Burn

Guitarists Coleman Mellett, Fred Rundquist, Victor Lewis, Andy Masters; guitarists and singers John Martyn, Snooks Eaglin; guitarist and *cuatrista* Edgardo Miranda; guitarist, singer and composer Kenny Rankin; guitarist, singer and educator Huey Long; guitarist, banjoist and composer Robert Degen; guitarist, inventor, bandleader and arranger Les Paul; guitarist and educator Lawrence Lucie

Banjoist Buddy Lee

Bassists Leonard Gaskin, Sirone, Leopoldo Fleming, Sr., Orlando “Cachaito” Lopez, Fred Williams, Wayman Tisdale, Lianne Butts, Jeff Clyne; bassist and writer Whitey Mitchell; bassist and singer Joe LaCaria

Drummers Rashied Ali, Vince Bilardo, Buddy Christian, Tony Hannan, Craig Oakley, John Thomas Smith, Lothar Scharf, James Bochetta, Wilby Fletcher, Jr.; drummers and bandleaders Klaus Weiss (late 2008), Antonio Luis Alves de Souza; drummer, bandleader, composer, arranger, educator and writer Louie Bellson; drummer and author Jim Chapin; drummer and educator Eddie Locke; trumpeter and jazz promoter Bob Anderson

Percussionist Ricardo “Papin” Abreu Hernandez; percussionists and bandleaders Gilberto Miguel Calderon (“Joe Cuba”), Manny Oquendo; percussionist, composer and educator Falleció Jesús Alfonso Miró; percussionist and singer Frank “Pavo” Valerino-Hernandes

Singers Jillian Omsberry, Caridad Hierrezuelo, Nancy Overton, Julio Barreto, Greta Woodson, Chris Connor, Juanita Brooks; singer, pianist and composer Blossom Dearie; singer, actress and educator Anne Brown; singer and actress Beverly Roberts; singer and saxophonist Henry Butch Stone; singer and actor Al Martino

*continued on next page* | »

Singer, dancer, composer, choreographer, actor and producer Michael Jackson

Dancers Frankie Manning, Ernest Brown; dancer choreographer and educator Pedro “Cuban Pete” Aguilar

Storyteller, improviser and performer Hugh Morgan Hill (a.k.a. “Brother Blue”)

Blues, R&B, soul, zydeco, gospel, etc. performers Rev. Claude Jeter, John (Crawlin’ Snake) Mac, John Cephas, Willie King, Uriel Jones, David “Pop” Winans, Rev. Timothy D. Wright, Eugene Smith, Koko Taylor, Barry Beckett, Fayette Pinkney, Willy DeVille, Jim Dickinson, John E. Carter, Marie Knight, Wycliffe Johnson, Haydain Neale

Composers Jack Lawrence, Vic Mizzy, Aaron Schroeder; composer, arranger, producer, conductor and trombonist Billy VerPlanck; composer, theoretician, pianist, educator and bandleader George Russell; composer, pianist, arranger, educator, editor and consultant Hale Smith

Writers Konrad Heidkamp, Alfred Appel, Jr., Vasily Aksyonov, Robert Hilferty, Joe Goldberg; writer, educator and jazz institute president Susan Meyer Markle; writer and producer Gordon Whitey Mitchell; writer, manager, singer, actress and songwriter Julie Coryell; writer, editor, broadcaster and jazz society executive Don Farwell

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Editor and writer Janet Cook

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Recording executive Hal Gaba

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Artist managers Allen Klein, Jackie Tracey

Impresario, manager and author Werner “Josh” Sellhorn

Club owner Art D’Lugoff

Arts presenter Suzanne Fiol

Concert promoter Richard Nader

Patron of composers Betty Freeman

Comedian, actor, radio/TV personality and host and jazz aficionado Soupy Sales

— R.I.P. —



## JAZZ JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION

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