

On September 7, 2024, Dan Morgenstern died at the age of 94. Dan was a celebrated jazz writer/scholar and historian, and Director of the Institute of Jazz Studies (IJS) from 1976 to 2011. Before coming to the Institute, he served as chief editor of *DownBeat* magazine from 1967 to 1973. Dan's accomplishments are many and just to name a few let's start with the eight Grammys awarded to him for his incisive liner-note essays. He elevated the art of writing album notes to a level that few have been able to match. In 2007 he was named a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master and received three Deems Taylor Awards for excellence in music writing from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), two of them for his books *Jazz People* (1976) and *Living with Jazz* (2004). He was involved—as a writer, adviser, music consultant and occasional onscreen authority—in more than a dozen jazz documentaries. He never considered himself a "jazz critic" and detested the title. He preferred to think of himself as a jazz historian. Nevertheless, he was influential and highly respected among jazz critics and almost universally beloved by the musicians who played the music he loved (a rarity). He was possibly the last jazz historian who knew and befriended some of the jazz greats like Hot Lips Page, Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge among others. Which might explain why his insights into the music and the musicians have been accurately described as empathetic.

Dan Michael Morgenstern was born on October 24, 1929, in Munich, Germany, but grew up in Vienna, Austria. His father was Soma Morgenstern, the son of a Hasidic Jew and a prolific novelist, journalist and playwright, and his mother was Ingeborg (von Klenau) Morgenstern, whose father was the Danish composer and conductor Paul von Klenau. Dan's story about his escape from Nazi occupied Austria with his parents has been written about in numerous obituaries so I won't repeat it here. Needless to say, in April 1947 a teenage Dan found himself in New York and working as a trainee in the mail room at *Time-Life*. After a brief stint in the Armed Services in 1951 he attended Brandeis and published his first piece in that school's newspaper, *The Justice*, on saxophonist Stan Getz. Other gigs followed after he left Brandeis including a job at the *New York Post*. While at the *Post* he resumed his nightly excursions to the myriad jazz clubs and hangouts in Manhattan and surrounding boroughs. He served as the last editor-in-chief of the revered *Metronome* magazine and the first editor-in-chief of *Jazz* magazine (which later became *Jazz & Pop*). He reviewed live jazz for *The New York Post* and records for *The Chicago Sun-Times*, as well as publishing over a hundred and forty record reviews while an editor at *DownBeat*.

Dan came to the Institute of Jazz Studies during a transition period. The previous director, Christopher White, had departed and a young librarian named Edward Berger (who would eventually be the Institute's Associate Director) was hired as curator to keep the library open on a part-time basis until a new Director could be hired. Dan was hired in 1976 and guided the

Institute and made it the premier archive/library for jazz. Dan fully understood the importance of making the collection accessible to researchers and others interested in the music and his efforts cemented the Institute's reputation as the place to go when doing any jazz projects.

I came to IJS in 1978 as a cataloger on a two-year National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant and I had the pleasure of working with Dan until he retired in 2011. One anecdote I have goes back to my first meeting with him. I was in awe of him because as a record collector I read numerous album notes penned by him and purchased many albums based solely on his liner notes. I also was quite aware of his reputation as former editor of *DownBeat* magazine. When I met him, I introduced myself and I addressed him as Mr. Morgenstern. He immediately said, "Call me Dan." That instantly put me at ease, and we went on to have a marvelous conversation about jazz and I consider myself so fortunate to have had many more such conversations with him over the 33 years we worked together.

Dan's legacy is prevalent in IJS holdings, programming, facilities, and publications. He served as one of the editors of the Institute's *Journal of Jazz Studies* as well as an editor of Scarecrow Press's *Studies in Jazz* monograph series. Dan's towering status as a thought leader in jazz history and criticism and the extensive aforementioned publication record that he leaves behind further demonstrate his impact on the field of jazz; the music he has loved since his teens.

On a personal note, as great as Dan was as a writer and preeminent eyewitness and earwitness to jazz history in the second half of the twentieth century he was my boss at IJS and my friend. Dan, Ed Berger and I were the decision-making team at IJS for decades. Away from the job the three of us attended numerous jazz performances and other events. I had the pleasure of attending the bar mitzvahs of both of his sons, Joshua and Adam. Dan was an avid hockey fan, and I witnessed his elation when the Rangers won the Stanley Cup in 1994. One of my fondest memories was attending a Mets game with him at Shea Stadium. We both loved the Mets and we both were on cloud 9 when they won the World Series in 1986. My last conversation with him was about the 2024 Mets's surprisingly successful season. Those were just a few of the personal memories I have of the man I called "boss." I feel blessed to have known Dan Morgenstern and like the rest of the jazz world I learned so much from him and will miss him greatly.

Vincent Pelote