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President's Message

Greetings everyone! As you can see, we are truly entering the age of instant technology. This is our first online newsletter and we hope that you enjoy the information that we bring you. The cost savings of doing it this way is certainly a factor, but we hope that you can pass this information along to friends and colleagues. Something I've discovered as of late is that many of our middle and high school directors are not members of IAJE. I'm hoping that all of us can pass on how important and helpful it is to be in the loop of what's going on around us here in our state, and also around the globe. When you run into colleagues and acquaintances, talk up what's going on with IAJE. As we enter our winter season, we look forward to a lot of activity in our IAJE chapter. Midwest is just around the corner. Don't forget to check out our booth there and also the jam session on Friday night! There'll be many wonderful clinics and concerts and exhibits to attend.

I'd like to thank our many friends who have contributed articles to this newsletter. It took time and energy to do it and we're grateful. As a matter of fact, we had quite a few contributors and may have to save a couple of them for our next newsletter. Don't let that stop you from sending me any material that you have. It will get published at a later time. I am assembling a board of advisors, including Janice Borla, Jim Kull, Jim Culbertson, Dan Gregreman, Ron Carter, Tom Tallman, and Rob Parton, with more to come, to help guide our decisions.

Our officers-elect for the coming 2005-6 term are President-elect Ron Carter, Vice-President-Reggie Thomas, Treasurer Doug Beach, and Secretary Roxanne Stephenson. Congratulations, and thank you for volunteering to each of you!

Please don't hesitate to contact me at any time with ideas and suggestions. I look forward to seeing you all at Midwest, and IAJE in New York. Have a wonderful and safe holiday season.

Mark Colby



**Come to the Jam
Session on
Friday night at
Mid West Clinic in
the Main Bar
area!
Bring your Horns!
10:00pm-1:00am**

ADD A VOCALIST TO YOUR INSTRUMENTAL JAZZ PROGRAM

By Janice Borla Director of Vocal Jazz at North Central College

Jazz combo leaders/directors, why not add a vocalist to your combo?

It is high time we taught vocalists how to sing jazz the same way we teach instrumentalists how to play jazz: by enabling them to actively participate in the musical experience within a small jazz ensemble.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not suggesting that singing in a vocal jazz ensemble isn't an excellent way to learn the sound and the style of this music, just as for a young horn player a large jazz ensemble is a great starting point, one voice within a section. But the jazz combo -- typically, a 3-4 piece rhythm section and 2-3 horns -- continues to be the definitive ensemble configuration in jazz since bebop, with solo improvisation at its core. And individual improvisatory skill remains one of the defining characteristics of any jazz player's distinctive voice and style.

Just as any jazz instrumentalist aspiring to become a "serious player" will seek as much experience as possible playing in a combo, so too should any jazz vocalist with similar aspirations.

How does one integrate a vocalist into a jazz combo as a full participant? It may be helpful to "think outside the box" here -- beyond the vocalist's traditional role of merely an "added feature," relegated to singing vocal standards.

Here's a suggestion: cast the vocalist in the role of a "horn" within the texture. Beyond the obvious similarities (both use air to produce sound, share the same concerns about tone, breath control, phrasing, etc.), the horn has always been an especially strong model for jazz singers, going back to Louis Armstrong and his first vocal offspring, Billy Holiday. Anyone who has heard Louis or Ella Fitzgerald or Jon Hendricks scat, or Bobby McFerrin vocalize "'Round Midnight," hears the overriding influence of horn sounds, figures, articulations and the like in their singing. Young singers are constantly advised to learn to sing like them, but not given any systematic way in which to learn how, apart from listening to their recordings.

As an ongoing member of a jazz combo's "front line," the young jazz vocalist has an opportunity to learn standard jazz repertoire side-by-side with the instrumentalists, as well as the vernacular of instrumental jazz style: phrasing, common rhythmic figures, articulations, formal structures, harmonic language, etc. He/she can sing melodic lines in unisons with other horns; be set as part of a harmonized line; take part in providing accompaniment figures for other soloists; and so on.

What about lyrics? There are many jazz compositions to which lyrics have been added over the years; but I contend that lyrics here are unnecessary. There is no reason why a vocalist should not sing a jazz melody as a wordless vocal, inventing syllables that fit the articulation of the melody, thus preserving its intrinsically instrumental nature. An added bonus of this approach is that a vocalist singing "instrumentally" can usually function comfortably in the original key without the need for transposition.

What about improvisation? Tunes based on 12-bar blues, or which utilize a harmonic vamp for solos, are a natural place to start. Most vocalists can intuitively hear suitable note choices in these contexts, and can learn along with instrumentalists how to function over formulaic harmonic forms like "rhythm" changes.

But the most compelling reason for approaching the vocalist's role in this way is that, in so doing, the segregation of vocalist and instrumentalist that so often characterizes the state of jazz today can be eliminated, and vocalists and instrumentalists alike can simply regard themselves as *jazz musicians*.

Bio --

Janice Borla is Director of Vocal Jazz at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois and founder of the Janice Borla Vocal Jazz Camp and "Hot Jazz - 6 Cool Nites" Concert Series. Her new CD *Agents of Change* (Blujazz) has just been released. Visit Janice's website at www.janiceborla.com.



Finding the Sound

By Mike Smith
Chicago College of Performing Arts

The late cornetist Nat Adderley, a longtime friend and mentor, would often comment, as we listened to young players, “Boy, that kid can play –it’s too bad his sound doesn’t get past the stage lights.” Nat knew what a great saxophone sound was; his brother and playing partner for over thirty years was Cannonball Adderley. Cannonball Adderley had one of the most beautiful sounds—both rich tone and huge projection—in jazz. And though I am often amazed at the technical fluency and harmonic sophistication of many of the student players I hear, I am just as amazed by the lack of a good sound. No matter how well a student handles his instrument, without a distinctive and surging sound nobody seems to notice. And developing the right sound should be included in student curriculum, along with technique and clear harmonic thought.

My long tone exercise is based on all notes matching the quality of an open c#. Have the student play chromatically, both ascending and descending, always moving back to c# (example: c#-d, c#-d#, c#-c, c#-b etc.), throughout the entire range of the instrument. By always moving back to that open c#, working to match that particular note’s sound and timbre, the student better learns how to adjust his air-stream and embouchure to duplicate on any note the particular quality of open c#. Always use the tuner during this exercise. This also alerts the student to specific pitch problems of each note on his particular horn.

I feel that many students don’t blow *through* the horn, but blow *down* into it, leaving the air, along with their sound, in the bow section. In a typical lesson, whether it is a half hour or full hour, I have my students place a small towel or their neck bag in the bell of the saxophone for half the time. I then instruct the student to target a poster on the opposite wall, and focus on projecting his sound toward it. We proceed with our regular lesson work—scales, arpeggios, etudes, tunes we’re working on—with the student constantly prompted to mentally visualize his air stream as an arrow hitting the target poster. Allowances have to be made for pitch problems, and a limited range to low d.

After fifteen to thirty minutes of technical work, we remove the towel, and the student immediately feels the lack of resistance, and the freedom of his air stream flowing toward the target. The ear perceives this as a bigger sound, and the student seems to hear his sound as being fuller, both psychologically and acoustically.

Another problem I see is that many students don’t push the mouthpiece in far enough. They might be playing in tune, but they are pinching, biting up to the pitch. If the student’s mouthpiece shows excessive wear from the teeth, it’s a good

indication that he is biting down far too hard. To demonstrate the effect of too tight an embouchure and its effect on sound, pull your mouthpiece out from its normal position, biting to raise the pitch. The student should be able to clearly hear the lack of depth and projection that results from this playing error. To correct this, a tuner is indispensable. Have the student gradually push his mouthpiece deeper into the neck. As the student plays long tones, he will automatically loosen his embouchure to adjust his pitch to the tuner. Encourage the student to perform this regimen daily, because in the long run, there will be much less tension in the jaw, which over the years can have a damaging effect on both the teeth and jaw muscles.

A teacher needs to be familiar with the student’s set-up, how their mouthpiece and reed combination feels. So keep a bottle of mouthpiece spray and cleaner handy to disinfect the student’s mouthpiece and reed before you try it out. Many times students don’t have the necessary playing maturity or guidance when first purchasing equipment. The end result is a mouthpiece/reed combination that just doesn’t work. Nobody could play it. We all know that just any mouthpiece combined with just any reed doesn’t necessarily guarantee a comfortable, playable combination. Mouthpieces with uneven tables and tip rails make a great reed useless, and vice versa. Bad reeds can turn an incredible mouthpiece into a doorstop.

You have to know what the student feels when he blows into his horn. I find that once I know my student’s equipment is working, I can focus on breathing, air stream and the production of a sound that “gets past the lights.”

As they say, the saxophone is the easiest instrument to play, and the most difficult to sound good on. Listeners identify a player by his sound—his voice. No sound, no tone, no gig.

Keep swingin’ – Mike Smith
saxbop@aol.com



Understanding Your Rhythm Section

Jack Mouse is the Coordinator of Jazz Studies and Drum Set Instructor at North Central College

Over the years I have received many inquiries from public school music educators about how to deal more effectively with their young rhythm sections. This is not surprising, since jazz band directors typically have background as brass or woodwind players, and may not understand why their rhythm section appears to struggle while the rest of their band is functioning well.

The first step is to understand the distinct differences between the rhythm section and the horn sections and the unique challenges the rhythm section faces.

To begin with, the members of each horn section are all playing the same instrument – ie, everyone in the trumpet section is playing a trumpet, everyone in the trombone section is playing a trombone, and so on. Thus there is a certain musical (and psychological) empathy of each player in the section for one another, as they share similar challenges in playing their respective instruments. In contrast, the members of the rhythm section are playing instruments totally different from one another --piano, guitar, bass, drums. They do not share the same kind of instrumental common ground. The individual members of an inexperienced rhythm section can, as a result, feel very much alone in their early attempts at ensemble playing.

Their insecurity is exacerbated by the musical charts put before them. The wind players are given musical scores which are intended to be played quite literally. They recognize the notational marks they find on their musical scores as the same notation they have used since they began taking lessons on their respective instruments and participating in concert band, marching band, etc. Once the articulations have been clarified they are ready to play.

In contrast, when the rhythm section members receives their parts, they are presented with a set of “hieroglyphics” which may be totally foreign to them. Their parts must not only be read, but interpreted. The pianist and guitarist are given a chart with time slashes and chord symbols, from which they are expected to create tasteful voicings and comping rhythms. The bass player is given a similar chart and expected to invent a suitable bass

line from the chord symbols. The drummer in turn is given a chart that tells him/her what everyone else in the band is playing, but doesn't tell him/her specifically what to play. In effect, the rhythm section is the only section in the band that is constantly improvising. Nothing like a little more added stress! So, from the very first day, the rhythm section typically lags behind the horns in playing the charts, thereby gaining an image of themselves as substandard readers -- when in fact they really have to start learning to read all over again.

Lastly, the rhythm section is the only section in the band that is almost constantly playing. Whereas the horn sections have built-in places in the music where they can put down their horns, collect their thoughts and prepare for their next entrance (solos, solis, etc.), there is no similar physical or mental rest for the rhythm section. They are expected to provide constant support.

By identifying some of the unique challenges facing the young rhythm section, I hope to have provided some insights that may help to more effectively deal with them. In future articles we will explore various techniques and methods which will further enhance the functioning of your rhythm section.

Bio-

Jack Mouse is the Coordinator of Jazz Studies and Drum Set Instructor at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. He is a staff artist/clinician for Yamaha, Sabian, Aquarian and Vic Firth. His recent recordings include *Agents of Change* (Blujazz) with the Janice Borla Group and *The Truth of the Matter* with the Dan Haerle Trio (Seagull). Visit Jack's website at www.jackmouse.com.



Mary Jo Papich IAJE Ex. Board- Treasurer

Fall greetings to all of you jazzers! Just wanted to share with you that YOU need to reserve your spot NOW to attend the IAJE conference in the Big Apple Jan. 21-24!

Remember it is LATER this year...one week before IMEA All State. According to the IAJE office in Manhattan, Kansas advance registration is ahead of schedule and that is good news (especially to a treasurer)! Get your rooms booked now!

THE LARGEST JAZZ CONFERENCE IN THE LARGEST JAZZ CITY!!!

Why attend the IAJE conference in New York City? I spent a week with fellow board members in the city in August and came back the night before the blackout (thank goodness!). Yes, you will find the NY attitude a bit more sober and tempered, but the jazz life is as strong as ever! New York City is still a magnet for talented ambitious musicians from all over the world!

According to Ted Panken, writer for Downbeat, Jazzis and many other publications.....NYC remains the jazz mecca for the world. Musicians from Latin America, West and North Africa, Japan, Australia, and every country in Europe bring from their cultures and traditions a vast array of rhythms scales and melodies, adapt them to jazz, and invigorate the vocabularies of both! Jazz now functions on a worldwide playing field and multiculturalism is the new mainstream.

We have a diverse and exciting line up of world-class artists and clinicians including

*Jazz at Lincoln Center Afro-Latin Orchestra

- Take 6
- Dave Holland Qt.
- Maria Schneider Orchestra
- Nicholas Payton
- New York Voices
- Heath Brothers with Clark Terry
- Saxophone Summit (including Michael Brecker, Dave Leibman, Joe Lovano and others)!
- And 125 clinics and workshops!!!
- Record number of exhibits!!!!

And if that is not enough...you can pick up a "Village Voice" or "Hot House" for jazz listings in the city...or stroll down the street to Iridium on 51st and 7th, or Birdland at 315 W.44th St. or the Village Vanguard, or the Blue Note.....and on and on!!!

Our location is the BEST! If you need a break from jazz (I can't imagine it) you can head down to Broadway and see a musical or head off to one of the many museums!

And did I mention the FOOD? Just within walking distance (head 2 blocks west to 9th Ave.) your choices include Brazilian (did I tell you I went to South Brazil this summer? What a fantastic time!), Greek, Turkish, Zen-Asian, Japanese, Thai, Korean, Vietnamese, Peruvian, Dominican, Mexican, Jewish Deli, American Diner.... and that is within a ten minute walk!!!!!!!

While you are booking your reservation please make every effort to attend the LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE on Wednesday, January 21st. I am assisting in the planning of this worthwhile event that will include meeting with others in your region and constituency group. Get there by Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. Show your support and have a great time at the IAJE GALA BENEFIT Wednesday night with Wynton Marsalis and Nancy Wilson.

Sisters in Jazz – Illinois Unit will meet Friday, January 30th at 5:00 pm in the Bradley room of the Pere Marquette in Peoria at IMEA for a little networking.

Keep Swingin'

Mary Jo Papich

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Highland Park High School FA

CD Reviews

by Tom Tallman College of DuPage

Albums reviewed: Gerry Mulligan: *The Gerry Mulligan Songbook* (Blue Note/Pacific Jazz CDP 7243-8-33575-2-9) and *Gerry Mulligan and the Concert Jazz Band at the Village Vanguard* (Verve 314-589-488-2)

Two recent re-issues of music featuring the playing and writing of saxophonist Gerry Mulligan give us all a chance to bathe our rehearsal rooms and offices in some great sound. Mulligan has surrounded himself on both occasions with the best of the best, and the results are some of the most effortless, swinging music on record.

From two December, 1957 sessions, **The Gerry Mulligan Songbook** is an opportunity to hear some unexpected blowing, such as Zoot Sims and Lee Konitz trading alto saxophone solos (“Crazy Day” and “Disc Jockey Jump”), Al Cohn and Mulligan each taking baritone saxophone choruses (“Four and One Moore”, “Crazy Day” and “Turnstile”) and, new to this package, Mulligan performing with Vinnie Burke’s string ensemble on Horace Silver’s “The Preacher” and “May-Reh”, as well as Tadd Dameron’s “Good Bait.” Drummer Dave Bailey keeps things moving in both settings, and the four tracks with strings work well, but it’s the saxophone section material that jumps off the disc. This is no doubt due to the additional solo voices of Konitz, Cohn, Sims and Allan Eager (heard here on both tenor and alto), but arrangements by Bill Holman and guitarist Freddie Green in the rhythm section don’t hurt.

Closer to a traditional big band, the *Concert Jazz Band* serves as a great example of how spontaneous and subtle a big band can be. Drummer Mel Lewis is quoted in the liner notes of **Gerry Mulligan and the Concert Jazz Band at the Village Vanguard** as saying “Every time we play something, it’s different from the last time...that’s the way it’s supposed to be. This is a real jazz band.” Simple head arrangements like “Let My People Be” and “Blueport” become minimal blues frames that accent solo turns by Mulligan, valve trombonist Bob Brookmeyer, tenor saxophonist Jim Reider and Clark Terry who, in December of 1960, was in the middle of a 35-year peak of creativity. The choruses split by Terry and Mulligan on “Blueport” are a joy; as they get more conversational, a discussion of U. S. geography takes place, and fragments of “Back Home Again Indiana”, “Way Down Yonder in New Orleans”, “Broadway”, “Chicago” and “St. Louis Blues” have some in the band cracking up. Arrangements by Brookmeyer (“Let My People Go”, “Body and Soul”), Mulligan (“Come Rain or Come Shine”) and Al Cohn (“Lady Chatterley’s Mother”, “Blueport”) remind us all of what constitutes a great jazz chart: idiomatic writing for every part and plenty of space for every soloist.

Sierra Music has made many of Gerry Mulligan’s arrangements available (“Walkin’ Shoes”, in particular, has a nice tuba part), and any library without at least one of them is incomplete.

Next time: two recordings from Bill Frisell.