

# AMERICAN MUSIC REVIEW

The H. Wiley Hitchcock Institute for Studies in American Music

*Conservatory of Music, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York*

Volume XLII, Number 2

Spring 2013

## “Live From The East”: Pharoah Sanders in Brooklyn

By Jeffrey Taylor, Brooklyn College, CUNY

Though for most jazz historians Brooklyn remains in the shadow of Manhattan, two previous articles in this journal have documented a robust tradition that can be traced back as far as performances by The Creole Band at Coney Island in 1915.<sup>1</sup> Though often paralleling musical developments across the East River, Brooklyn jazz has also been shaped by the unique dynamic of the borough’s ethnic and racial makeup, as well as the very special qualities of its many, often insular, neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup>

The historically black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant in central Brooklyn, or “Bed-Stuy” as it is more commonly referred to, has long been a center of jazz, with its “Golden Age” of the 1940s and 1950s seeing performances by first-tier jazz musicians, including Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, and many others. Though the popular imagination may now see Bed-Stuy primarily as a backdrop for Spike Lee movies, it boasts a black presence that goes far back into the 19th century, with the establishment of communities of freedmen in places such as Weeksville—now part of neighboring Crown Heights. With the construction of the A train in the mid-1930s, which connected Bed-Stuy with Harlem, the neighborhood became a cultural mecca that rivaled Manhattan’s larger and more famous African American community.

On 31 December 1969, The East Cultural and Educational Center opened its doors at 10 Claver Place in southwest Bed-Stuy. The enterprise was deeply rooted in the black nationalist movements of the 1960s, and had been founded primarily by educators who had lived through the New York Board of Education crises earlier in the decade, particularly the struggles for community control of schools and curriculum, such as those in Brooklyn’s Ocean Hill-Brownsville districts. Over the next ten years this modest three-story building would host meetings, rallies, classes for both adults and youngsters, and, most important here, some of the greatest musicians of the period, beginning with vocalist Leon Thomas, who was featured on opening night.

Some forty years later, in March 2010, Pharoah Sanders, a perennial



*Pharoah Sanders performs at the  
Portland Jazz Festival in 2010  
Photo by Siobhan Bradshaw, courtesy of The Oregonian*

### Inside This Issue

Invisible Woman: Vi Redd’s Contributions by Yoko Suzuki.....	5
A Long View of Adult Musicals by Stephanie Jensen-Moulton .....	10
The Harris Archive by John M. Kennedy.....	13
Always in Trouble: ESP-Disk’ and Free Jazz by Jeff Tobias.....	16
Brooklyn’s Classic Ragtimer by Edward A. Berlin .....	18
Welcoming Freedom: Teaching Improvisation by Tom Zlabinger.....	20
Institute News by Jeffrey Taylor.....	23

## “Live From The East”: Pharoah Sanders in Brooklyn (cont.)

favorite of The East community (which had dubbed him “The Reverend”) returned to play in Brooklyn. Though the building at 10 Claver Place was now an apartment house, and no activity related to The East had taken place there for decades, the nearby Boys and Girls High School served as proxy that night for the original center. A brief film made by an independent Brooklyn television station sums up the significance of the event, while introducing some major players in the creation of The East, and lingering over the many fond memories of community members who had been fortunate to live in Bed-Stuy during central Brooklyn’s jazz heyday.

### CLIP No. 1

<http://youtu.be/CXtQ0jfkRR4>

The late Jitu Weusi was the single most important force behind the creation of The East, and he offers important observations about it here. First, it was much more than “a club” as was claimed at the beginning of the clip. At a time when many in the neighborhood felt frustrated and powerless, it emerged as a galvanizing endeavor that would allow control over school curriculum (Uhuru Sasa, the school associated with The East, offered an Afro-centric program), control over businesses, as well as the nurturing of pride and self-respect in the pursuit of a community project. And this really *was* a community project; the building at 10 Claver Place, which had earlier been an artist studio, needed to be remodeled and rewired; a stage had to be built; a kitchen installed; a huge hole in the

to help out. Even the iconic sign over the door was made by a metal worker who had a shop around the corner. And once in operation, The East truly served the neighborhood. On weekdays dinner was offered for a nominal fee to all comers, food famously cooked up by Mama Lottie, who provided nourishing meals that became so well known locally that she and other women at The East started catering for other local schools and events in the neighborhood. The very experience of being involved with The East—which could mean something as simple as mopping the floors or washing dishes—was truly transformative because there was such a strong sense of working together with other African Americans on a positive community project. Basir Mchawi, another pivotal figure, stressed this legacy at HISAM’s “Celebrating the East” conference on 5 April 2011: “The East was actually a center for social transformation and cultural reclamation ... You became somebody else. People who came to the East were capable of reinventing themselves.”

### CLIP No. 2

<http://youtu.be/C7SZh7dxCBg>

The intricate and often splintered philosophies of black cultural nationalism during this time were manifested in the controversial decision made by the leaders of The East to allow only black patrons and musicians. This resulted in at least one confrontation, in which drummer Elvin Jones refused to play when two white friends were turned away at the door.

Jazz was viewed by many involved in the black nationalist movement as a way not only to build community but to inspire. Faced with the “assumption” that black people had turned their back on jazz in the 1960s in favor of funk, rock, and other genres, Weusi made a point of bringing the artistry of musicians such as John Coltrane, Freddie Hubbard and others into his classrooms, and he was not surprised by the result.

### CLIP No. 3

<http://youtu.be/XPqd921Aa1Y>

Which brings us to Pharoah Sanders. Very early in its history, The East inaugurated a weekend series called The Black Experience in Sound, which over a period of five years showcased some of the great



*Sign over door at 10 Claver Place, Brooklyn  
Photo courtesy of Basir Mchawi*

floor filled in, and so on. Members of the community volunteered time, coming by after full-time work days

## “Live From The East”: Pharoah Sanders in Brooklyn (cont.)

jazz artists of the time. These tended to be musicians especially drawn to the black nationalist project of The East, and who in many cases were willing to perform for far less than their usual fee just for the opportunity to play for a unique audience at a venue that did not serve alcohol, did not allow smoking, and admitted people of all ages. Of all the musicians who performed at The East, Sanders was the hands-down favorite, and his appearances were always special occasions. Some members of the venue literally rolled out the red carpet for Sanders, put plants by the door, and arrayed the interior with special Afro-centric décor. Much of this response had to do with Sanders’s own generosity of spirit, but his music of the time, steeped in African music and tradition, also gave a special voice to The East’s mission. At least at the outset, The East was non-sectarian, but “spirituality,” loosely-defined, was a central tenet of the Center’s take on black nationalism. As Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium (CBJC) member Jo Anne Cheatham noted in the clip above, Brooklyn is a borough of churches, and perhaps a half dozen encircle the block where 10 Claver Place stands. One may also note how CBJC co-founder Ahmed Abdullah speaks of the “spiritual bond” Sanders has with Brooklyn, and how publications director Jeff King was struck by how “spiritual” his first experience of Sanders’s music became. Sanders himself claims that “spiritualism”— the “spirit of the people”— is always fundamental to his art. Certainly, the artist’s continually heightening improvisations over a reiterated alternation of scales could bring about a kind of ecstatic response in the audience not unlike a church service, and it is likely many at The East left a Sanders performance feeling they had “had church.”

Something close to Sander’s performances lives on in the album *Live at The East* (Impulse!, 1972), a record which, despite its name, was not recorded at The East but at a studio with several members of The East audience invited to the session. The entire first side of *Live at The East* (the album has never been issued on CD in the US) is taken up with a 22-minute performance of “Healing Song,” which can be broadly broken down into the following four sections:

1. Long introduction in free rhythm announces the presence of Sanders and his fellow musicians, in a manner that reminds one of the opening of

Coltrane’s “A Love Supreme.” Sanders’s arresting sound, backed by vocalists, provokes applause from the audience and feels like a gathering of forces for a ceremony to follow.

### Example No. 1

<http://youtu.be/xPIFy2C1RZI>

2. After this opening the two of the greatest bassists in jazz—Stanley Clarke and Cecil McBee—lock into a groove that is also a dialogue, with one player repeating an ostinato and the other improvising around it. Gradually other percussion instruments are added in. This groove continues for much of the piece.

### Example No. 2

<http://youtu.be/5JAeeaKrBOI>

3. Approximately a third of the way through the piece, after a lengthy solo by pianist Joseph Bonner, Sanders performs the catchy, optimistic melody of the piece.

### Example No. 3

<http://youtu.be/kEU8Tm3hZCU>

4. Over the span of several minutes the piece gradually develops intensity, with trumpeter Marvin Peterson first soloing and then joining Sanders in building to an ecstatic moment in which the audience joins in. Though Weusi told me that this recording captures less than a third of the true excitement of a Sanders performance at The East, cathartic moments like this help clarify why these evenings were so deeply treasured by The East’s audiences.

### Example No. 4

<http://youtu.be/Vqw3yBrT8uc>

In my conversations with former members of The East about the center and Pharoah Sanders’s performances there, the concept of “synergy” often arises. There was something about the combination of the historical moment, the location, the multi-generational character of the audiences, the commitment of the musicians, and, perhaps, the solidly black audience



## “Live From The East”: Pharoah Sanders in Brooklyn (cont.)

that gave these events an almost mythic quality. And although The East, after moving to other locations, ceased to exist in 1986, its legacy continues to be felt in Brooklyn. What was once a street fair to benefit the graduating class of Uhuru Sasa school is now the International African Arts Festival. The festival, which since 2001 has taken place in Fort Greene’s Commodore Barry Park, attracts thousands of visitors from around the world each July in a celebration of African and diasporic arts. Whatever the controversies and challenges—and there were many—The East demonstrated the profound difference that can be made by dedication, vision, and the desire to improve the lives of one’s neighbors.



*Pharoah Sanders receiving SAM’s highest award from SAM President Katherine Preston  
Photo by Michael Broyles*

### Notes:

An earlier version of this paper was delivered at The Society for American Music meeting in Sander’s home town of LITTLE ROCK, AK in March 2013.

<sup>1</sup> See Jeffrey Taylor, “Across the East River: Searching for Brooklyn’s Jazz History,” *American Music Review* Vol. 38, No. 2 (Spring 2009), 6; Robin D. G. Kelley, “Brooklyn’s Jazz Renaissance,” *American Music Review* Vol. 33, No. 2 (Spring 2004), 4.

<sup>2</sup> For my current work I acknowledge the work of Kwasi Konedu, whose book *A View from the East: Black Cultural Nationalism and Education in New York City* (Syracuse, 2009) ties together a series of interviews to construct a narrative of the institution and its legacy, and my colleague W.S. Tkweme, whose dissertation contains a very insightful chapter on The East. See “Vindicating Karma: Jazz and the Black Arts Movement” (U. Mass. Amherst, 2007).

### The H. Wiley Hitchcock Institute for Studies in American Music

**Jeffrey Taylor**, Director

**Ray Allen**, Senior Research Associate

**Stephanie Jensen-Moulton**, Research Associate

**Michael Salim Washington**, Research Associate

**Whitney E. George**, Graduate Fellow

**Matt Carter**, Administrative Assistant

**Jennifer CHJ Wilson**, Website Manager

**Lisa Lombardo**, Archivist

#### *Advisory Board:*

**George Boziwick**, Chief, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

**Janet Cox-Rearick (Hitchcock)**, Distinguished Professor *emerita*, the Graduate Center, CUNY

**Richard Crawford**, Distinguished Professor *emeritus*, University of Michigan

**George Cunningham**, Chair, Department of Africana Studies, Brooklyn College

**Samuel A. Floyd, Jr.**, Director *emeritus*, Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College Chicago

**Ellie M. Hisama**, Professor of Music, Columbia University

**Tania León**, Distinguished Professor of Music, Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center, CUNY

**Carol J. Oja**, William Powell Mason Professor of Music, Harvard University

**Ursula Oppens**, Distinguished Professor of Music, Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center, CUNY

**Katherine Preston**, David N. & Margaret C. Bottoms Professor of Music, The College of William and Mary

**Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr.**, Edmund J. and Louise W. Kahn Term Professor of Music, University of Pennsylvania

**Judith Tick**, Matthews Distinguished University Professor, Northeastern University

American Music Review  
Volume XLII, Number 2

ISSN 1943-9385  
Spring 2013

*Editors*.....Ray Allen and Jeffrey Taylor

*Managing Editor*.....Whitney E. George

*Contributing Editors*.....Benjamin Bierman

Ellie M. Hisama

Stephanie Jensen-Moulton

Carol J. Oja

*Production Assistant*.....Matt Carter

AMR is published in the Fall and Spring. Copyright 2013 by the H. Wiley Hitchcock Institute for Studies in American Music, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, 2900 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11210.

Tel: 718-951-5655

Email: hisam@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Website: www.hisam.org

# Invisible Woman: Vi Redd's Contributions as a Jazz Saxophonist

By Yoko Suzuki, University of Pittsburgh

The story of alto saxophonist Vi Redd illustrates yet another way in which women jazz instrumentalists have been excluded from the dominant discourse on jazz history. Although she performed with such jazz greats as Count Basie, Max Roach, Dizzy Gillespie, and Earl Hines, she is rarely discussed in jazz history books except for those focusing specifically on female jazz musicians. One reason for her omission is that jazz historiography has heavily relied on commercially produced recordings. Despite her active and successful career in the 1960s, Redd released only two recordings as a bandleader, in 1962 and 1964. Reviews of these recordings, along with published accounts of her live performances and memories of her fellow musicians illuminate how Redd's career as a jazz instrumentalist was greatly shaped by the established gender norms of the jazz world.

Elvira "Vi" Redd was born in Los Angeles in 1928. Her father, New Orleans drummer Alton Redd, worked with such jazz greats as Kid Ory, Dexter Gordon, and Wardell Gray. Redd began singing in church when she was five, and started on alto saxophone around the age of twelve, when her great aunt gave her a horn and taught her how to play. Around 1948 she formed a band with her first husband, trumpeter Nathaniel Meeks. She played the saxophone and sang, and began performing professionally. She had her first son when she was in her late twenties, and a second son with her second husband, drummer Richie Goldberg, a few years later. It was in the 1960s that Redd's popularity as a jazz saxophonist/singer peaked.

The *Los Angeles Sentinel's* coverage of her musical career starts in August 1961, when she had a weekly gig with Goldberg and an organ player at the Red Carpet jazz club. In the same year, Redd appeared at the club Shelly's Manne-Hole. In 1962 she performed at the Las Vegas Jazz Festival with her own group.

The *Los Angeles Sentinel* reported, "Another first for the Las Vegas Festival on July 7 and 8 is achieved when Vi Redd, an attractive young girl alto sax player, becomes the first femme to be one of the instrumental headliners at a jazz festival. As a matter of fact, Miss Redd, may well be the first gal horn player in jazz history to establish herself as a major soloist."<sup>1</sup> Here, Redd, a 34-year-old woman with two young children, is described as an "attractive young girl." Moreover, as is often the case with any male dominated field, being the "first" female is emphasized. A few months later the *Sentinel* wrote, "Vi Redd, first woman instrumentalist in participating in the recent Las Vegas Jazz Festival is jumping with joy as she was placed 5th in the *Down Beat* critics poll," confirming her status in the jazz scene.<sup>2</sup>



Vi Redd (saxophone)  
and Mary Osborne (guitar) June 1977  
Photo courtesy of [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com)

In 1964 Redd toured with Earl Hines in the U.S. and Canada, including engagements in Chicago and New York. The *Chicago Defender* reported on their appearance at the Sutherland Room: "Featured with 'Fatha' Hines in his showcase are Vi Redd, a sultry singer who also plays the saxophone as well or better than many male musicians."<sup>3</sup> In 1966, she played at the Monterey Jazz Festival with her own band, and the next year she traveled to London by herself to play with local musicians at the historic Ronnie Scott's jazz club. She was initially invited there as a singer and was scheduled to perform for only two weeks, but due to popular demand her performance was extended to ten weeks. Typically, Ronnie Scott's featured an instrumental group with a lesser-known vocalist as an opening act. Bassist Dave Holland, who played with Redd, recalled that she both played and sang and was enthusiastically accepted by the London audience. Prominent jazz critic Leonard Feather, a prominent white male jazz critic/producer, wrote "Booked in there [Ronnie Scott's]...only as a supporting attraction...she often earn[ed] greater attention and applause than several world famous saxophonists who appeared during that time playing

## Invisible Woman: Vi Redd's Contributions as a Jazz Saxophonist (cont.)

the alternate sets.”<sup>4</sup> Jazz critic/photographer Valerie Wilmer echoed that sentiment in *Down Beat*, noting that Redd “came to London unheralded, an unknown quantity, and left behind a reputation for swinging that latecomers will find hard to live up to.”<sup>5</sup> Redd’s London appearance was clearly extremely successful.

The summer of 1968 was another high point in Redd’s music life. She made a guest appearance with the Dizzy Gillespie Quintet at the Newport Jazz Festival in early July. This performance caught the eye of writers and critics who attended the Festival, including photographer/writer Burt Goldblatt:

At one point he (Gillespie) introduced female sax player Vi Redd as “a young lady who has been enjoyed many times before...” Later while she warmed up with pianist Mike Longo, Dizzy interjected, “That’s close enough to jazz,” convulsing the audience once again. But despite all the male-chauvinist-inspired humor she encountered, Vi fluffed it off and played a fine, Bird-inspired solo on “Lover Man.”<sup>6</sup>

In the accompanying photograph, Redd was wearing a very short dress, fishnet stockings, and high heels. Pianist Mike Longo remembered the concert very well. According to him, Redd sat in with Gillespie’s band on many occasions whenever they toured California. “She always sounded good and she was very cool as a musician and a person.”<sup>7</sup> More interestingly, he denied Gillespie’s chauvinistic attitude mentioned in Goldblatt’s history of the Newport Festival book. “That was a routine joke Dizzy made every night. Vi was tuning up with me and Dizzy said that’s close enough for jazz, meaning it doesn’t have to be as accurate as Western classical music. Dizzy was one of the very few people who hired female musicians like Melba Liston. He had so much respect for Vi.”<sup>8</sup>

Two renowned jazz critics, Stanley Dance and Dan Morgenstern, also reported on this performance in *Jazz Journal* in the UK and *Down Beat* in the US respectively. Dance wrote, “[Gillespie] provoked loud guffaws from the crowd by introducing ‘a young lady who has been enjoyed many times before.’ Vi Redd seemed to take this gallantry in her stride ...”<sup>9</sup> Despite Longo’s statement, Gillespie’s introduction of Redd

and the audience’s reaction do suggest a chauvinistic atmosphere. Dance’s description of Redd’s saxophone performance is neutral, mentioning only that she is “Bird-influenced.” Morgenstern, on the other hand, called Redd a “guest star” and states, “Miss Redd sings most pleasantly...and plays excellent, Parker-inspired alto. To say she plays well for a woman would be patronizing—she’d get a lot of cats in trouble.”<sup>10</sup> Certainly, that Redd was a female saxophonist wearing feminine clothing evoked male-female tensions on the stage in these writers’ minds. However, as suggested in Longo’s statement, some open-minded musicians actually did not care that Redd was a female saxophonist, and did not let it affect their professionalism.

Later in the summer of 1968, Redd traveled to Europe and Africa with the Count Basie Orchestra as a singer. She performed publicly at several prestigious clubs and jazz festivals, attracting writers’ attention and eliciting passionate reaction from audiences, especially in Europe during the late 1960s. Around 1970, she started to perform less in order to stay home with her children and teach at a special education school. About five years later, at the age of forty-seven, she gradually resumed her performing career. In 1977 Redd was appointed as a Consultant Panelist to the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities in Washington, DC. For the past thirty years she has been working as a musician and educator, giving concerts, touring abroad, and lecturing at colleges. In 2001, she received the Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Award.

Regardless of her exposure at public concerts during the 1960s, she did not have many opportunities to be recorded. In his 1962 *Down Beat* article, Leonard Feather offered an anecdote revealing how difficult it was for female jazz instrumentalists to get recorded. “Redd sat in with Art Blakey, who promptly called New York to rave about her to a recording executive. The record man’s reaction was predictable: ‘Yes, but she’s a girl...only two girls in jazz have ever really made it, Mary Lou Williams and Shirley Scott...I wonder whether to take a chance....’”<sup>11</sup> This story demonstrates that female jazz instrumentalists, with the exception of a few keyboardists, did not fit into the dominant gender ideology of the period’s jazz recording industry.

Redd’s two recordings as a leader were produced



## Invisible Woman: Vi Redd's Contributions as a Jazz Saxophonist (cont.)

by Feather, who discovered Redd through the recommendation of drummer Dave Bailey. Bailey explained, "I met Vi probably at a jam session in LA around 1962. Everyone told me that she sounded like Bird. When I heard her play, I was blown away. I thought she deserved attention, so I mentioned her to Leonard."<sup>12</sup> After his experience at the Red Carpet, Feather helped Redd sign with United Artists, produced her two records, and wrote glowingly about her for *Down Beat*. He also paved the way for her to perform at Ronnie Scott's as well as booking her for the Beverly Hills Jazz Festival in 1967.

On her first album, *Bird Call* (United Artists, 1962), Redd recorded ten tunes: five were instrumentals, one was a vocal, and she both sang and played on four others. When she was asked if she "had control over what [she] wanted to play" on the record, she answered that Feather had the idea of recording Charlie Parker related tunes.<sup>13</sup> Her second album, *Lady Soul*, was released in 1963. On this record, Redd sang on the majority of tracks; out of eleven tracks, three were vocal tunes, two instrumental, and six combined vocals and saxophone. Even on these six tunes, her saxophone solos were limited. Interestingly, four tunes were blues. Jazz critic John Tynan reviewed *Lady Soul* in *Down Beat*'s "column of vocal album reviews" and wrote, "A discovery of Leonard Feather, Vi Redd may be more celebrated in some quarters as a better-than-average jazz alto saxophonist than as a vocalist. In *Lady Soul* Miss Redd the singer dominates on all tracks excepting two instrumentals, 'Lady Soul,' a deep-digging blues, and the ballad 'That's All'."<sup>14</sup> Dave Bailey, who played drums on this recording, recalled, "I think Ertegun, the owner of Atlantic, selected the tunes we recorded. I think they were trying to get her more recognized as a singer."<sup>15</sup> Leonard Feather confirmed in his liner notes for *Lady Soul* that Nesuhi Ertegun had suggested the inclusion of "Salty Papa Blues" and "Evil Gal's Daughter Blues," both written by Feather and his wife. The change from the more instrumental album to a

more vocal and bluesy approach hints at their effort to follow traditional gender categories in the recording industry. In fact, Redd herself did not like the second album, only mentioning that "it wasn't the right thing to do."<sup>16</sup>

As a sidewoman, Redd participated in several important recordings. For example, she performs on two songs, "Put It on Mellow" and "Dinah," on trombonist Al Grey's *Shades of Grey* (1965), with a large ensemble of musicians featuring many members of the Count Basie Orchestra. Sally Placksin wrote that Redd considered these two instrumental songs to be her best recorded performances.<sup>17</sup> "Put It on Mellow" is a slow ballad, in which Redd demonstrates her saxophone's "raw, gutty quality,"<sup>18</sup> for which she was frequently praised. Her rendition of "Dinah" showcases Redd's ability as a well-rounded jazz instrumentalist. Though this old popular song is often played in a medium to up tempo, on this recording "Dinah" is a ballad that features Redd's alto saxophone. Backed by a richly textured harmony of tenor sax, trumpet, and three trombones, Redd beautifully embellishes the melodies with her distinctively resonant and silky sound. After the first chorus, she improvises on the bridge section over the rhythm section's double time feel. Toward the end, Redd creates an emotional and climactic moment with a fast ascending phrase and a repeated two-note figure in the high register, demonstrating her technical mastery and expressiveness.

In 1969, she joined the recording session of multi-instrumentalist Johnny Almond's jazz-rock album, *Hollywood Blues*, playing alto sax on two tunes. Her last recording was on Marian McPartland's *Now's the Time*, which was recorded immediately after Redd resumed her performing career. McPartland organized an "all-female band" for a jazz festival in Rochester, New York. On this live recording album, Redd played alto sax on several songs.



Vi Redd's first album *Bird Call* (1962)

## Invisible Woman: Vi Redd's Contributions as a Jazz Saxophonist (cont.)

Redd's singing can be heard on three CDs: *The Chase!* by Dexter Gordon and Gene Ammons, *Live in Antibes, 1968* and *Swingin' Machine: Live* by the Count Basie Orchestra. *The Chase!* is a live album recorded in 1970 (reissued as a CD in 1996) on which Redd sings "Lonesome Lover Blues." Count Basie's *Live in Antibes* was recorded when Redd toured Europe with the Count Basie Orchestra in 1968. The first two tunes display her excellence as a blues singer: resonant and husky voice, shouting, bending, and twisting notes, melismatic singing, story telling, call and response with the band, and the delivery of bluesy feeling. The last song, "Stormy Monday Blues," however, stands out because she also plays a two chorus saxophone solo.<sup>19</sup> She skillfully improvises using both bebop and blues inspired melodies.

One wonders why Redd had more opportunities to perform in public than to record. It is possible that musicians recognized her excellence as a saxophonist and invited her to sit in with them. Who gets recorded, however, is not necessarily determined by recognition and reputation among musicians. In the end, Redd's two recordings as a leader were made with the help of Feather. Strangely, she did not have the chance to record as a leader at the peak of her career in the late 1960s. Moreover, most of her recordings went out of print and became collector's items.<sup>20</sup> Both recording opportunities and reissues reflect traditional gender norms in the recording industry. Redd has been obscured and forgotten precisely because she did not have those opportunities.

In an extensive interview with Monk Rowe of the Hamilton College Jazz Archives, Redd explained how she joined the Count Basie Orchestra: "They needed somebody that could sing the blues, and I mostly sang rather than played, those guys had some problems with me playing."<sup>21</sup> Further reflecting on her experience with the Basie Orchestra, she said, "He [Basie] didn't let me play [alto saxophone] much because Marshal [Royal, the lead alto player for the Basie band] didn't like it. When I was singing, they were happy, but as soon as I started playing, they didn't like that."<sup>22</sup> Clearly she was accepted more as a singer than as a saxophonist.

Feather stated "she [Redd] has too much talent. Is she a soul-blues-jazz singer who doubles on alto saxophone? Or is she a Charlie Parker-inspired saxo-

phonist who also happens to sing?"<sup>23</sup> There are mixed views on whether her main instrument was saxophone or voice. When pianist Stanley Cowell recalled Redd performing in London, his impression was that Redd only sang. This is possibly because he thinks that she was a better singer than a saxophonist. Cowell lived in Los Angeles from 1963 to 1964, where he saw Redd performing at local jazz clubs. He suggested, "She was a good saxophonist. But too many great saxophonists were around. And she could really sing."<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, Mike Longo stated, "I didn't know she was a singer. I always thought she was a saxophonist because she always came to sit in with us and only played saxophone."<sup>25</sup> It is difficult to imagine that Redd never sang with Gillespie's band until the Newport Jazz Festival. Longo continued, "You know, gender doesn't matter to music. It doesn't matter who plays."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Longo's gender-neutral attitude led him to recognize Redd as a jazz instrumentalist more than others.

Dave Bailey recently recalled, "She could have made it either way. She could play as good as the guys. And she was an awesome singer."<sup>27</sup> He compares her to men only when he describes her saxophone performance, suggesting the saxophone's specific association with male performance. Bailey does not hesitate to say that "women don't associate themselves with the instruments."<sup>28</sup> Although Redd was raised in an exceptional environment—family members, neighbors, and classmates were established musicians — even her father was unwilling at first to hire her in his band. Redd said, "I guess he had his chauvinist thing going, too."<sup>29</sup>

Cowell also recalled that Redd played very strongly "like a man, and that was what I liked about her."<sup>30</sup> Although Redd demonstrates sensitivity and elegance in her beautiful ballad playing, it is her strength and gutsy blues feeling that seem to be most appreciated as a talented saxophonist. Cowell continued, "She was tough, soulful, and culturally black. She could curse you out, cut you down with her words."<sup>31</sup> His description fits a stereotypical image of black womanhood, particularly a blues performers. As Patricia Hill Collins contends, blues provided black women with safe space where their voices could be heard, and in the classic blues era, more women than men were recorded as singers in the idiom.<sup>32</sup> Redd's strong connection with the blues, however, was sometimes



## Invisible Woman: Vi Redd's Contributions as a Jazz Saxophonist (cont.)

taken negatively among musicians. Cowell stated, "Some young musicians weren't willing to work with Vi, because they thought her music was not progressive enough."<sup>33</sup> Cowell also thought that Redd did not develop her musical style adequately and remained within the comfortable realm of the blues. Indeed, the blues might have remained her comfort zone not only musically but also culturally and socially.

In addition to black women's association with the blues, the stereotypical dichotomy "men are instrumentalists, women are singers" continued to persist throughout the jazz world of the 1960s and 1970s. Because of these cultural constructions, Redd was perceived as a vocalist more than a jazz saxophonist, despite her considerable talents and contributions as an instrumentalist. Vi Redd's career path exemplifies how the music of female jazz instrumentalists remains largely invisible to jazz history.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> "Vi Redd Headlines Jazz Bash," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 28 June 1962, C1.

<sup>2</sup> "Gertrude Gipson... Candid Comments," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 9 August 1962, A18.

<sup>3</sup> "Last Chance to See 'Fatha,'" *The Chicago Defender*, 29 August 1964, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Leonard Feather, liner notes for Vi Redd, *Bird Call* (1969 Reissue, Solid State 3518038).

<sup>5</sup> Valerie Wilmer, "Caught in the Act," *Down Beat* Vol. 35, No. 4 (1968), 34-35.

<sup>6</sup> Burt Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History* (New York: The Dial Press, 1977), 154.

<sup>7</sup> Mike Longo, personal communication with author (6 May 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Stanley Dance, "Lightly & Politely: Newport, '68," *Jazz Journal* Vol. 21, No. 9 (1968), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Dan Morgenstern, "Newport Roundup," *Down Beat* Vol. 35, No. 18 (1968), 34.

<sup>11</sup> Leonard Feather, "Focus on Vi Redd," *Down Beat* Vol. 29, No. 24 (1962), 23.

<sup>12</sup> Dave Bailey, personal communication with author (1 June 2005).

<sup>13</sup> Vi Redd, interview with Monk Rowe (13 February 1999).

<sup>14</sup> John Tynan, "Vi Redd-Lady Soul," *Down Beat* Vol. 31, No. 4 (1964), 33.

<sup>15</sup> Bailey, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Vi Redd, personal communication with author (5 September 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Leonard Feather, liner notes for *Lady Soul* (Atco 33-157, 1963).

<sup>18</sup> Sally Placksin, *American Women in Jazz: 1900 to the Present* (New York: Wideview Books, 1982), 259.

<sup>19</sup> Redd is credited only as a singer in the liner notes. Therefore, people who are unfamiliar with Redd's playing may not realize she played the saxophone solo.

<sup>20</sup> Her two recordings as a leader have gone out of print. The first album was reissued by Solid State (a division of United Artists) in the late 1960s. One tune from the second album was included on a compilation album titled *Women in Jazz: Swing Time to Modern, Volume 3* in 1978. However, these albums also went out of print soon thereafter.

<sup>21</sup> Redd, interview with Monk Rowe (13 February 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Vi Redd, 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Leonard Feather, liner notes for *Lady Soul* (Atco 33-157, 1963).

<sup>24</sup> Stanley Cowell, personal communication with author (15 May 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Longo, 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Bailey, 2005.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Redd, 1999.

<sup>30</sup> Cowell, 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 105.

<sup>33</sup> Cowell, 2005.

# A Long View of Adult Musicals through 1970s Culture

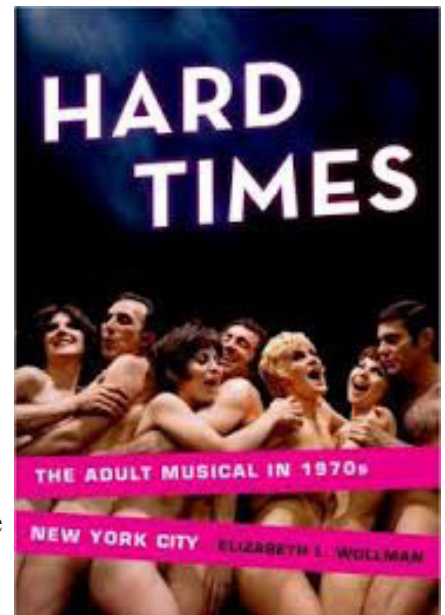
By Stephanie Jensen-Moulton, Brooklyn College, CUNY

When we think of adult themed musicals, *Hair* (1967) is usually the one that comes to mind. Elizabeth Wollman acknowledges this in her superbly written and expertly researched monograph, *Hard Times: The Adult Musical in 1970s New York City* (Oxford University Press, 2013). Like the genre itself, Wollman's book drops its figurative robe on the first page, opening the door for frank discussion of sex, an essential element of the 1970s adult musical. The musicals Wollman covers in her nine-chapter work have been influenced by aspects of the sexual revolution, and the related feminist and gay rights movements of the era. Despite these somewhat left-leaning underpinnings, all of the musicals discussed in *Hard Times* were aimed at mainstream audiences, on and off Broadway. Wollman takes a comprehensive approach that examines not only the hit shows, but also Off Broadway musicals, straight dramatic plays, and influential films. This holistic perspective also includes extensive research on the contentious political climate into which these shows emerged. In her introductory remarks, Wollman recognizes that those who participated in the creation of these musicals may not reflect upon them with kindness or pride, and therefore, the research materials have not always been preserved with care, nor have interviews been consistently easy to procure. Nevertheless, Wollman has taken up the false floorboard and revealed a stash of treasures that have been hidden away for decades.

In her first chapter, Wollman ventures Off-Off-Broadway to explore some of the roots of the adult musical in straight plays and burlesque. Within a year of *Hair*'s opening, two very early adult musicals opened which bore the hallmarks of the revolutions off the Great White Way. *We'd Rather Switch* (1969) is essentially a burlesque show-within-a-show with all of the gender roles reversed. Kenneth Tynan's *Oh! Calcutta!* (1969), with its "encounter group" sessions to facilitate the actors' comfortability with nudity and simulated sex acts, would be one of the most-remembered adult musicals of the era, and one of the longest-running. In spite of, or perhaps because of, its extremely rigid views of human sexuality, *Oh! Calcutta!* found a way to speak to audiences that the other, perhaps more radical early adult musicals did not.

Wollman's second chapter is remarkable in that it treats in full a cultural interpretation of Bobby, a character in Sondheim's *Company* (1970). She interprets him within the context of other stage works of the time, particularly the brand of post-Stonewall gay theater that erupted out of a Greenwich Village coffee shop, the Caffe Cino. Wollman traces a trajectory from the important early gay play *The Boys in the Band* (Mart Crowley, 1968) through *Company* and other early gay musicals. As she so astutely points out, much of the cultural work that subsequent gay musicals did was to dismantle the erroneous notion of gay depression through the joyous expression of gay life on stage. Wollman suggests that Bobby's role in *Company*, with his sexual ambiguity, was a centering figure for gay men of the 1970s, who flocked to the musical, seeming to identify with him. She even includes a section of dialogue cut before the New York premiere that alludes to a possible sexual connection between Bobby and his friend Peter. The closeted gay characters in musicals and plays at the beginning of the decade would soon strut their way out into the open via the gay musical of the mid-1970s.

Chapter 3 opens the door on a rich tradition of gay musicals which, until Wollman's book, have been largely unknown. With titles such as *The Faggot* (1973) and *Let My People Come* (1974), these stage works brought to mainstream audiences the novel idea that life as a gay person could be wonderful but sometimes heartbreaking; in other words, like life for everyone else. Al Carmines's *The Faggot* reveals both these sides of gay life in one of the longest-running



Hard Times: The Adult Musical in 1970s New York City

## A Long View of Adult Musicals through 1970s Culture (cont.)

musicals—more than 200 performances after the run was extended—to come out of the Judson Poets' Theater. The racier but less socially forward-looking *Let My People Come: A Sexual Musical* was created by composer/lyricist Earl Wilson Jr. and director Phil Oesterman, who felt that *Oh! Calcutta!* was a peep show worthy of their parents' generation. They wanted to create a musical that explored a variety of sexual experiences, including contemporary gay life. Other musicals with gay content such as *Lovers* (1974), *Sextet* (1974), *Boy Meets Boy* (1975), and *Gay Company* (1974) wove different stories of human sexual relationships. But as Wollman asserts, despite their diversity of content and style, they were united by spectators who “were eager to be entertained but not averse to also being educated about contemporary gay men. The most successful musicals of the bunch were less angrily preachy than they were gently, persuasively inclusive.” (p. 87) This, Wollman asserts, proves to be the uniting theme for the entire era of adult musicals and their reception.

Chapter 4 carries the thread of “gentle inclusivity” to its logical extreme: second wave feminist musicals. The first musical to explore the women's movement of the 1970s in depth was Myrna Lamb's *Mod Donna* (1970), which Wollman couches in the context of *Hair*'s dependent female characters and the heterosexual politics of *Oh! Calcutta!*. *Mod Donna*, however, did not connect with mainstream audiences because of its overly aggressive representations of blaming, bra-burning lesbian feminist women who wanted to tell men a thing or two about patriarchy. The reviews varied widely according to the political views of the critics, and in the end the show closed after a brief six week run.

Feminist musicals that emerged later in the decade were more “palatable” to audiences because, as Wollman asserts, the women's movement was well underway and therefore not as threatening to the general public as in 1970. In Chapter 5, Wollman pairs Eve Merriam's *The Club* (1976) with Gretchen Cryer and Nancy Ford's *I'm Getting My Act Together and I'm Taking It on the Road* (1978), exploring two vastly different approaches to musical theater. While *The Club* is a cross-gendered, turn-of-the-century-style burlesque play-within-a-play, the Cryer/Ford piece is

an intimate, autobiographical show featuring a popular music aesthetic. This chapter accomplishes two scholarly goals: we learn about two more important but overlooked examples of musical theater, and also hear about work composed by, for, and about women, a triumvirate that rarely occurs even now. Yet, while both of these musicals were sexy, neither of them was particularly sexual. Wollman's next chapter connects the overt sexuality of the “porno-chic” movement with the convenient “conflati[on] of the women's movement and the sexual revolution.” (p. 129)

As the author explains, a significant prong of the women's movement in the 1970s connected intimately with female sexuality, which had been transformed with the advent of the birth control pill in the 1960s. Dueling narratives disseminating popular conceptions of women's sexuality could be found in *Playboy* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines. While the former exploited and objectified women's bodies, the latter empowered women to claim their bodies and to enjoy sexuality—albeit within heterosexual relationships, and within androcentric models of “acceptable display.” (p. 133) These issues come to a head with the rise of porno chic, a brief but intense movement that surrounded the release of the successful porn film *Deep Throat* in 1972. Wollman takes a moment in this chapter to explain the quickly changing climate surrounding obscenity laws in the United States, and how these would affect the distribution of mainstream pornography. What makes this film particularly relevant is its focus on female sexuality: the entire premise of the film is the strange location of the female lead's clitoris in the back of her throat. *Deep Throat* thus polarized the debate: was the film about the possibility of women's sexual satisfaction, or about fetishization of the male organ? And was it the catchy soundtrack that made the film sell? Whatever the reasons, *Deep Throat* succeeded at the box office, spawning a myriad of other porno chic wannabes. The trouble with musicals that took porno chic as their cue was that they often embraced a patriarchal model of sexuality. In *Let My People Come*, the songs about gay life feature fully clothed men, whereas the one about lesbians asks the women to appear nude and in position for oral sex. According to Wollman, the song “Come in My Mouth” presents a typical pornographic scenario of fellatio, but in the context of a musical the “money



## A Long View of Adult Musicals through 1970s Culture (cont.)

shot” of the eventual orgasm is lost because the woman’s climax is invisible. This, in a nutshell, encapsulates the feminist debate of the time.

It was a small step from porno chic musical to hard-core pornographic film musicals. Wollman discusses two from the latter genre. While *Alice in Wonderland: An X-Rated Musical Fantasy* (1976) and *The First Nudie Musical* (1976) could not have been more different in character or conception, they each featured so much distracting nudity that any would-be feminist narratives were lost. For instance, Alice, originally an uptight librarian, learns many different modes of sexuality while in the fantasy world. But in the end, she returns to heteronormativity and patriarchal propriety by giving it up for her boyfriend, the one who told her she was repressed in the first place. *The First Nudie Musical* took its cue from early film, using a film-within-a-film model. One might almost think, given its madcap plot, that the film had been made in the 1930s, except that all of the women are fully nude. In one dance number, the women wear only dinner jackets and shoes, while the men are fully clothed. Despite these discrepancies, the author points out that the women in the film are generally empowered, taking the lead in saving the day and making the men around them look foolish and bumbling. Wollman also takes note of one hardcore stage musical, *Le Bellybutton* (1976), that tried to be a spoof of *Oh! Calcutta!*, but failed at being either a successful musical or a successful package for the delivery of pornography.

In Chapter 8, Wollman details the complexities of changing laws surrounding the use and distribution of pornography in New York City. This is obviously relevant, given that many of the musicals mentioned herein featured nudity, and several featured simulated sex acts. The authorities began to draw the line when Lennox Raphael’s musical *Che!* based on the life of Che Guevara, began its previews in 1969. While the acts of nudity and sexuality performed in *Che!* brought nothing new to the jaded eyes of New York theatergoers, it was one detail that proved problematic for the production team: they encouraged the actors to actually perform the sexual acts, rather than simulate them, whenever possible in the staging. Wollman succinctly addresses the New York State and City obscenity laws and how they related at the time to the repeated clos-

ing and fining of *Che!* for obscenity—regardless of its venue. *Let My People Come* was deemed “lewd” but not obscene, but nevertheless had some of the same troubles as *Che!* in finding and staying in a venue, particularly since its run was exponentially longer.

Wollman’s final chapter juxtaposes *Let My People Come* with *I Love My Wife* (1977), a musical featuring two heterosexual couples who are really afraid to be swingers. These seemingly strange musical bedfellows—one that lets audiences face their fears about the sexual revolution and their potential role in it, the other, a nudie lewdy favorite that reads like a live, staged porn film—allows readers to understand the complexity of the artistic climate between the 1960s and 1980s on and off Broadway. Wollman takes a topical, non-linear approach rather than applying chronological methodology, thereby illuminating her subject matter through the context of other musicals of the time. As she concludes, mainstream audiences found the adult musicals of the 1970s a “curiously comfort[ing]” way to experience at least some part of the sexual revolution of this tumultuous era on their own terms.

## The Harris Archive

By John M. Kennedy, California State University, Los Angeles

In this age of the digital download, with journal articles available 24/7 and virtual libraries, the physical or analog archive holds a unique place as one of the most important resources for studying important source material which has not yet been digitized or scanned, giving the researcher a true “feel” for the works. The John F. Kennedy Library of California State University, Los Angeles houses many such collections of materials relating to local and state government, education, science and the Arts. Within this latter group of collections is the *Roy Harris Collection of Musical Scores and Personal Papers*, aka the “Harris Archive.” American composer Roy Harris (Leroy Ellsworth Harris, 1898-1979) was born in Oklahoma and at a young age moved to the Southern California region bordering on the campus of CSULA known as the San Gabriel Valley. After a long and distinguished career as composer and university professor, Roy Harris accepted a position in the music department of CSULA. In 1973 he donated his papers to the university, which “consist of approximately 3,000 leaves of original manuscripts and sketches, copies of published and unpublished works, 15,000 letters and other memorabilia, commercial and noncommercial recordings of the major portions of Roy Harris’s works, and the complete holdings on microfilm of Harris papers owned by the Library of Congress.” The same source states, “In 1987, Mrs. Johana Harris added approximately 70 linear feet of documents bringing the total to approximately 180 linear feet.”<sup>1</sup>

Among these documents are many scores annotated in the composer’s hand. Harris was known to revise many works extensively and even borrow from earlier works. These annotated documents tell the history of a composer known for not composing any piece without a commission, and often needing to call on previous muses to meet his deadlines. In the archive is a bound copy of a choral setting of Whitman with re-harmo-

nizations and re-orchestrations notated throughout the score. Through these annotations, one can see the evolution of his harmonic language and perhaps even the borrowing over time of pre-existing compositions. In these pages, Harris’s process is clear, though some aspects need deciphering, and the development of his language can be traced in a single staff. In addition to these bound score copies, which include all the symphonies of Harris, are boxes of loose manuscript paper. This is the most fascinating part of the collection, which ranges from sketches of a few bars of keyboard harmony to entire sections of large chamber and symphonic works.



Roy Harris  
Photo courtesy of Cal State LA University Library

Shortly after his death in 1979, the Roy Harris Society was established to raise awareness of Harris’s music and to create interest in financial support of the archive. Though the organization was short lived, the work of these individuals was significant and helped produce important articles on Harris’s music. A key figure in the early days of the archive and the society was Dan Stehman, Professor of Music at Los Angeles Valley College and Roy Harris scholar. Among Dr. Stehman’s most significant works were two books, *Roy Harris: An American Musical Pioneer* (1991) and *Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography* (1991), and his article for *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980). Well into the 1990s, Dr. Stehman continued his work and defense of Harris with his Letter to the Editor in *Musical Quarterly*<sup>2</sup> responding to Louise Spizizen’s *Johana and Roy Harris: Marrying a Real Composer*.

Southern California is known for many things, not the least of which are historic seismic events. In 1987, around the time Johana Harris donated the remaining papers to CSULA, the campus was devastated by the Whittier Narrows Earthquake.<sup>3</sup> The JFK library suffered the brunt of the damage and though no items

## The Harris Archive (cont.)

from the archive were lost, the entire collection was thrown from the shelves during the main quake and series of aftershocks. The bound scores, filed materials and recordings were easily placed back on the shelves, but what remained were sketches, untitled manuscripts and letters strewn on the floor of the archive. These materials were carefully placed in boxes and stored. When originally donated to the library, the loose manuscript paper was not well organized, and at the time, were in need of archival work to catalog and verify the relation between certain boxes of sketches and periods of Mr. Harris's career. After the 1987 earthquake, these marginally organized boxes became problematic as many of the original boxes with labels were either discarded or packed with manuscripts with little or no regard to the relation between the material and the dates on the box. Since then, volunteers, librarians and other researchers have done a remarkable job at organizing these materials, but much work remains. In 2010 acid free archival storage boxes were purchased for the safe storage of these materials.

Through all of this the archive has maintained an active role in the research goals of scholars and performers. In the mid 1990s, the New York Philharmonic was in the midst of a series of performances of Harris's symphonies, and the archive filled several requests in support of those performances. A decade after the earthquake the archive assisted British scholar Malcolm D. Robertson as he prepared a two-part essay on the symphonies of Roy Harris for *Tempo* magazine commemorating the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth.<sup>4</sup> American pianist Geoffrey Burtleson visited the archive in 2008 to research Harris's piano music. What he found while searching through the archive were unpublished works and small orchestration. These works found their way onto his 2010 Naxos recording, *The Complete Piano Works of Roy Harris*.<sup>5</sup>

In the austere times California public higher education has faced through much of the past twenty years, university special collections have suffered. The current CSULA University Librarian has been at the forefront of promoting all special collections in the JFK Library and assisting development officers in securing grants to preserve and maintain the Harris archive. In 2010 the archive received a grant from the GRAMMY

Foundation for creating a plan to preserve the 300-350 sound recordings in the archive. The Foundation stated in a press release at the time, "These personal recordings are of high historical value, showing the process of composition, and may include previously unpublished works." With this support, an audio archivist was hired to begin the necessary work on these valuable private recordings of Mr. Harris.

In an effort to raise awareness of the archive and the music of Roy Harris, the Pacific Contemporary Music Center of CSULA joined forces with the University Library, establishing the annual *Roy Harris Lecture on American Music*. The focus of this lecture series is primarily the work of Harris, but also draws from topics relating to his students, and American art music of the mid-twentieth century. The inaugural presentation in 2012 was a lecture-recital on the piano music of Harris, presented by Burtleson, Professor of Piano at Hunter College, CUNY. In 2013, Dr. Susan Kane, Director of Opera at CSULA, presented a lecture and demonstration of two radio operas, one by Menotti, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, the other by Barber, *A Hand of Bridge*. The forthcoming lecture in 2014 will return focus to Harris with a lecture by Dr. Beth Levy, Associate Professor of Music at the University of California, Davis and author of *Frontier Figures — American Music and the Mythology of the American West* (University of California, 2013).

The Roy Harris Collection of Music Scores and Papers welcomes inquiries from scholars and musicians the world over. Inquires about the Roy Harris Lecture on American Music should be sent to Dr. John M. Kennedy, chair, Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, CSULA: john.kennedy@calstatela.edu. To receive more information on the archive or to schedule an appointment contact Christine Gladish at (323) 343-2015 or via email cgladis@calstatela.edu. General information on the policies for the archive can be found at <http://calstatela.libguides.com/content.php?pid=187706&sid=1575674>.

The Pacific Contemporary Music Center and the CSULA University Library is interested in working with independent scholars and institutions on collaborations, research initiatives and grant applications that will promote research and scholarship on the music of



## The Harris Archive (cont.)

Roy Harris. All inquiries should be sent to Dr. John M. Kennedy at the address above.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup>“The Roy Harris Collection of Musical Scores and Personal Papers,” California State University, Los Angeles. <http://calstatela.libguides.com/content.php?pid=187706&sid=1576267> (accessed May 2013).

<sup>2</sup>Stehman, Dan. “Letter to the Editor,” *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 637-639.

<sup>3</sup>“Historic Earthquakes: Whittier Narrows, California,” United States Geological Survey. [http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/states/events/1987\\_10\\_01.php](http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/states/events/1987_10_01.php) (accessed April 2013).

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, Malcolm D. “Roy Harris’s Symphonies: An Introduction,” *Tempo* 207 (1998): 9-14.

<sup>5</sup>Burleson, Geoffrey. *Roy Harris: Complete Piano Music*. Naxos 8.559664, 2010.

## Always in Trouble: ESP-Disk' and Free Jazz

By Jeff Tobias, Brooklyn College, CUNY

...we wanted to have a corner on this music.  
We wanted people to come after it. We figured:  
deprive them of it, and they'll come after it.

-Roswell Rudd (p. 161)

That was, to put it in legendary trombonist Rudd's term, the "psychology" of the musicians responsible for birthing the free jazz movement in the mid 1960s.

Rudd was describing the policy of the New York-based Jazz Composer's Guild, who at that time had put a moratorium on releasing any recordings. Had this hermetic self-censorship remained in place, who knows what we as a culture might have lost. That is how close we came to never hearing some of the most crucial avant-garde music of the last century. That is how we almost had a sonic vacuum. But instead, we have the glorious, powerful music held within the discography of ESP-Disk', the first American label to document this distinctly American music. Though literature on this venture is not extensive, Jason Weiss's new book, *Always in Trouble: An Oral History of ESP-Disk', the Most Outrageous Record Label in America* (Wesleyan, 2012), examines ESP-Disk's chaotic approach to disseminating this chaotic music.

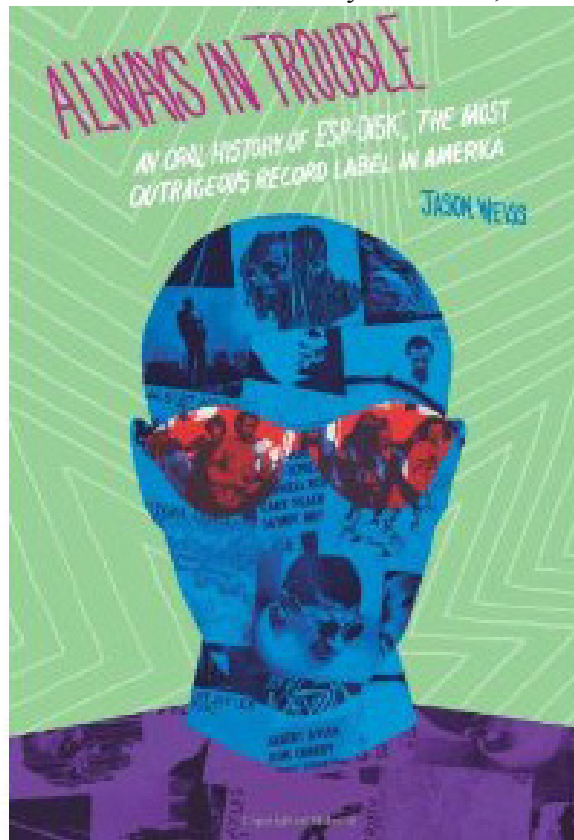
Free jazz—or, as it was called around the time of its advent, "the new thing"—was the revolutionary front of what was already the purest American art form. Musically, it was the sound of innovators reclaiming their own invention. At its outset, jazz emerged as the sound of danger and dance halls and the underclass. The music became accepted as entertainment for the wider culture before the performers became accepted as human beings. Watching this progression (or lack thereof) with alarm, many jazz players pushed back against the genre's limitations. If their

government could write laws seeking to control the freedom of their movements, finances, and romances, it could not control the freedom in their music. Stripped of limitations placed on harmony, and given to emphatic cries straight from the soul's depths, free jazz made use of careful group dynamics, explosive performances, and the most extended of techniques. By the 1960s, this music was in full ecstatic force, and, as evidenced by Rudd's quote above, its progenitors were protective of it.

In 1965, music business lawyer Bernard Stollman decided to see who would "come after" this music. In a fit of both iconoclastic eccentricity and misguided opportunism, his label's leadoff release, *Ni Kantu En Esperanto* (*Let's Sing in Esperanto*), was apparently the first album recorded in that failed attempt at an international language. But by the second release—tenor saxophonist Albert Ayler's blistering *Spiritual Unity*—ESP had landed upon what would be its most significant calling card: free jazz. Over the next several years, ESP introduced the public to then-obscure, exceedingly innovative artists including Ayler, Pharaoh Sanders, Sunny Murray,

Milford Graves, and many others. Stollman's role was simply to reach out to the players, get them into a studio, and issue the resulting wax. ESP's motto was: "The artist alone decides." (p. xvi)

Stollman quickly demonstrated a proclivity towards the divisive, releasing important albums by shock-folk act the Fugs, as well as hippie-baiting spoken word LPs from Timothy Leary and William S. Burroughs. Interviews with Stollman, published in Weiss's book, reveal a man whose stolid squareness belies an often startling weirdness. Describing a Sun Ra concert that ESP-Disk' staged on New York's South Street Seaport in 1968, Stollman talks about how the event attracted



Always in Trouble: An Oral History of ESP-Disk',  
the Most Outrageous Record Label in America

## Always in Trouble: ESP-Disk and Free Jazz (cont.)

the attention of a nearby Portuguese military training vessel. “The captain of the ship allowed the cadets to join the crowd on the pier, and they danced with the local girls,” Stollman recalls. “The captain saw our concert as a salute to Portugal, an observation shared by Portuguese journalists who were present, and ESP has since enjoyed a highly favorable reputation in that country.” (p. 30)

So Stollman built the ESP-Disk’ catalog, but did anyone actually “come after” this music? By 1974, the company was completely out of business. How the label came to fold is convoluted: Stollman blames overall poor sales, distrustful pressing and distribution partners, and government harassment (listed here in declining order of plausibility). This music was so unconventional that when John Coltrane and Eric Dolphy began to adapt much of the musical vocabulary pioneered by Albert Ayler (one of ESP’s most important voices), *Down Beat* ran an article entitled “John Coltrane and Eric Dolphy Answer the Jazz Critics” wherein the besieged geniuses were kindly asked to justify their genius. So slow sales were to be expected for this music. Moreover, many of the free jazz players were part of a larger Black Arts Movement of activists who were actually monitored, infiltrated, and psychologically brutalized by the U.S. government. For Stollman to also use such harassment (due in particular, he claims, to the Fugs’ song “C.I.A. Man,” among other countercultural inclinations) to excuse his label’s inability to pay out royalties to his already-meagerly paid artists seems dubious at best, and perhaps a paranoid assumption. “My real sense is that he was abducted by aliens, and when he was probed it erased his memory of where all the money was,” posits Tom Rapp, singer for another one of ESP’s flagship folk acts, *Pearls Before Swine*. (p. 129)

This complaint of owed royalties is a bitter refrain throughout the interviews, and alto saxophonist Sonny Simmons colorfully regales readers with an anecdote wherein he came very close to sending Stollman through a window. While much of his roster variously fled to the halls of academia to support themselves or became mired in poverty, it would be absurd to suggest that Stollman ever did anything with the money made from ESP records other than put it back into the label. (Following the label’s closure, Stollman left the

music business altogether to work as an assistant New York Attorney General throughout the 1980s.) Furthermore, many of the interviewees admit that without the limited exposure that ESP’s recordings provided, the spirit of free jazz would have spread more slowly, if not had been lost forever to the dusty lofts of their origin. “Look, ESP publicized us all over the planet,” says drummer Milford Graves. “Nobody was recording us in the ‘60s other than ESP! And the pay that maybe you didn’t get from Bernard, it neutralizes itself because if you had to hire a public relations person, you were going to have to pay him. So you’re still going to come out to zero.” (p. 117) Graves nails it: ESP-Disk’ is another example of the sad fact that in the realm of art, it rarely pays to be quite so ahead of the curve.



## Brooklyn's Classic Ragtimer

By Edward A. Berlin

Among ragtime aficionados, “The Big Three of Classic Ragtime”—Scott Joplin (ca. 1867-1917), James Scott (1885-1938), and Joseph F. Lamb (1887-1960)—are among the most highly esteemed, and Brooklyn was the home of the last named of this trio. All three were published by John Stark, in Missouri and New York. But for Lamb, unlike the other two, music was primarily an avocation given that his career as a professional musician lasted less than a year. Lamb made his living as a manager in a major dry goods and finance company, composing music purely for personal satisfaction.

Born in New Jersey, where he was taught piano by two older sisters, he began composing and publishing as an adolescent while attending a Catholic prep school and seminary in Canada. He finished school at sixteen (in 1903) and, putting aside his plans to attend college and study engineering, returned home to New Jersey and commuted to Manhattan where he found employment as an office boy. He continued composing, and being in New York afforded him the opportunity of buying sheet music directly from publishers. He frequently visited the office of John Stark, and it was there, in 1907 or 1908, that he had his momentous meeting with his favorite composer, Scott Joplin. The meeting led to friendship and Joplin, impressed by the young man's compositions, prevailed upon Stark to publish him. From 1908 through 1919, Stark brought out a dozen rags by Lamb, these forming the basis of his renown.

In 1910, Lamb had his only regular employment as a musician, working for ten months as a song plugger and arranger for a small publisher. He afterwards continued as an arranger on a freelance basis. He married in 1911, moved to Brooklyn, and soon found employment in the dry goods and finance industry, where he remained the rest of his working life. In the early 1920s, when Stark's publishing business was winding down, Lamb submitted another dozen or so piano pieces to Mills Music, but they were never published and were presumed lost.

For the next quarter-century, music remained a hobby for Lamb; he entertained his friends and composed for church minstrel shows. In 1949, he was lifted from obscurity by Rudi Blesh and Harriet Janis, who were researching the ragtime era and locating surviving figures from the period. They were surprised Lamb was not a black Midwesterner, but a white, Irish resident of Brooklyn; Lamb was astonished that anyone was interested in the ragtime he had composed decades earlier. After publication of the Blesh/Janis book *They All Played Ragtime* (1950) Lamb enjoyed a fame unlike anything he had experienced during his more active ragtime years. Ragtime aficionados visited and corresponded with him, interviewed and recorded him, featured him at festivals, and urged him to return to composing ragtime. He loved the attention.



Joseph F. Lamb

In 1964, after Lamb's death, Belwin Mills came out with a folio of thirteen rags, consisting of new pieces and unpublished rags from earlier years. More recently, additional rags and non-rags, supplied by his family, were published by Ragtime Press. Amazingly, three pieces that he had sold to Mills Music in the 1920s have recently been discovered among boxes of discarded manuscripts. At the time of this writing, more than sixty of Lamb's piano pieces and songs have been published.

Carol J. Binkowski, a church organist and author of several books on music, became fascinated by Lamb's music and concluded there was a need for a biography. Others had approached the subject before her: Marjorie Freilich-Den had written the master's thesis “Joseph F. Lamb: A Ragtime Composer Recalled” (Brooklyn College, 1975), and Joseph R. Scotti wrote the Ph.D. dissertation “Joe Lamb: A Study of Ragtime's Paradox” (University of Cincinnati, 1977). Scotti passed away before he could convert his dissertation to a book, but his widow gave Binkowski access to his notes. In addition to these academic works, Binkowski had the active cooperation and encourage-

## Brooklyn's Classic Ragtimer (cont.)

ment of Lamb's children and other family members and friends, and access to extensive correspondence between Lamb and ragtime enthusiasts. The result, *Joseph F. Lamb: A Passion for Ragtime* (McFarland, 2012), is an impressive and meticulously researched work. She depicts the complexities of his personality, traces the details and minutiae of his life, and reveals his collaboration with obscure lyricists and the small, long-defunct music publishers who issued his early compositions.

Binkowski focuses on Lamb's life, the circumstances of his compositions, his responses to music, and his reactions to hearing his music performed by others, ranging from amateur piano renditions to street and park band concerts. While she writes enthusiastically about his life and influences, she falters when discussing Lamb's music. As his music is the reason for our interest in his life, we are struck by the absence of a single music example. Binkowski cites titles, dates, and circumstances of composition. In some cases she identifies prominent features of the music, but never shows us why a feature is worth mentioning. She speaks of his early pieces and of the interesting syncopation that foreshadows his eventual move to ragtime, but the absence of an illustration leaves us wondering whether the context supports her opinion. She refers to a letter in which Lamb discusses why some band performances of his music succeed and others fail, and why certain rags lend themselves to ensemble arrangements whereas others are less adaptable. This potentially rich subject, dwelling on his perceptions of ragtime and its performance, is abandoned after only seventeen lines. She is convincing in her appraisal of Lamb's harmonies, but the reader should have a sample of the evidence. Insufficient attention to the music is also responsible for a minor error: she dates a photo of Lamb and two friends to 1908, but the published sheet music visible on the piano in the background, and more clearly on the book's glossy cover, is Lamb's *Top Liner Rag*, from 1916.

This book is, by far, the most complete and authoritative account we have of Joseph Lamb's life. The scrupulous research documents and highlights significant features that might have been overlooked by a less thorough biographer. Readers might appreciate greater attention to the actual music, but this short-

coming does not negate the substantial accomplishment in charting the life of one of ragtime's greatest composers.

# Welcoming Freedom: A Personal Evolution in Teaching Musical Improvisation in New York

By Tom Zlabinger, York College

Every year since 2008, my students and I have had the honor to be invited by Patricia Parker to perform with other student ensembles as part of the international Vision Festival in New York, which she produces every summer. The Vision Festival is rooted in the music of Albert Ayler, Cecil Taylor, John Coltrane, and others whose music developed into the loft scene in New York during the 1970s. To connect this music with younger audiences and feature younger improvising ensembles from around New York City, Parker has presented a Saturday afternoon performance every year that showcases educators and their ensembles. Because of these experiences, my outlook on the teaching of improvised music has shifted from a widely-accepted model to one based in free improvisation. I offer here my personal story on how my thinking about improvisation and education has changed.

After moving to New York City in 2000, and taking a teaching position at York College in 2003, I evolved from student of jazz to educator. In the beginning my approach to teaching was very traditional: learn the repertoire, analyze chord structure, and apply the appropriate chord scales. In addition to transcription and listening to both recordings and live performances, this was how the process of learning to improvise had been modeled for me by my own teachers. Yet after the initial excitement of working with students and sharing my knowledge, I became frustrated with the method. Though I found it hard to articulate at the time, what had originally seemed to be a process of illuminating possibilities and exploring options had transformed into the enforcing of sonic dogma.

On 13 April 2007, the club Tonic on Manhattan's Lower East Side was forced to close (now one of many to do so in recent years), a result of real estate development in the area and the rising cost of rent. Since the venue opened in 1998, Tonic showcased music nightly that represented more adventurous improvised music. Over the years, I had seen many of my most favorite shows at Tonic and attended the final official performance at the venue, hosted by John Zorn and featuring many famous downtown improvisers. The following Saturday morning, I attended a protest of the club's closing and with many others occupied

the building illegally. Musicians associated with the venue including cornetist and composer Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris, pianist Matthew Shipp, guitarist Marc Ribot, wind player Ned Rothenberg, and others gave impromptu performances while people outside carried signs that read "Save Our Music," "NYC in Cultural Crisis," and "Condos ≠ Culture." By early afternoon, the police arrived and asked us to vacate the premises. In an act of civil disobedience, Marc Ribot refused to



*The York College Creative Ensemble at Vision Festival 2012*

leave the stage and continued performing the classic labor song "Bread and Roses" until he was arrested and taken away in handcuffs. The arrest was reported in several newspapers and blogs. Most importantly a discussion about the changing creative music landscape began around the shuttering of Tonic, which, sadly, remains closed and unoccupied six years later.

As powerful as it was to see a musician I admired protest the changing cultural landscape, it was the performances that morning which changed my mind and heart most. Though I did not participate myself as a musician, I witnessed many different groupings of artists come together and instantly make music. Until that moment, I had wrongly assumed that making freely improvised music of consequence was only arrived at through chemistry between musicians who had been working together for extended periods of time. Granted, the strongest improvisations come from those who have been improvising the longest and have established a relationship with other improvisers. But a new picture was painted for me as unestablished



## Welcoming Freedom (cont.)

groups of people performed together. Most impressive was a conduction by Butch Morris. Using a set of hand gestures that were explained at the time to represent certain instructions (long tones, repetition, dynamics, and development), he created a mesmerizing performance with only his baton and the musicians who just happened to be there that day.

It was at Tonic's closing that I first met Patricia Parker. She and others organized a press conference at City Hall the following Tuesday where many downtown musicians spoke to the press. (These speeches and other footage surrounding the closing of Tonic are easily found on YouTube). As a result of these events, Patricia Parker founded an organization called Rise Up Creative Musicians and Artists (RUCMA). The group began to have meetings about everything from arts advocacy to artist housing to PR campaigns and, most important here, education. The following year performances by student ensembles began at the Vision Festival.

Largely because of the experience of that Saturday morning in April, I have over the past six years aligned myself with the extended downtown community and performed mostly free music professionally with some of the most important artists in the genre, including Marshall Allen, Roy Campbell, Daniel Carter, Jason Kao Hwang, Matt Lavelle, Sabir Mateen, Butch Morris, Ras Moshe, and William Parker. The experience served as the apprenticeship that I did not have through traditional education.

I returned to the classroom that spring feeling pulled in two directions. I would perform freely improvised music in the evenings, but would ask my stu-

dents to apply certain scales to certain chord progressions in rehearsal. I was still convinced that one must learn jazz basics before moving to freely improvised music. The process takes time and cannot be rushed. Then I began participating with my students in the Vision Festival and my pedagogical approach slowly began to change.

I conduct two big bands at York College: the York College Big Band and the high school-level York Col-

lege Blue Notes. For the first three years at the Vision Festival, I brought the younger group. The first two years we performed music composed by Charles Mingus as the music seemed most appropriate for the festival. But after the second year, Patricia Parker mentioned that I did not give my students enough freedom. At the time I was very offended. The students had worked hard on the music of Mingus and performed it in the unconventional and often chaotic tradition of this great musician and composer. But the anger was short-lived.

In 2009, an alumnus of the high school ensemble who became a student at the college passed away tragically at the age of nineteen. In his memory, I constructed a performance entitled *Without Answer: a Requiem for Shamar Olivas (1990 – 2009) for Soloist, Big Band, and Decision Maker*, which the York College Blue Notes premiered with Roy Campbell as a guest soloist. The piece was a multi-movement work compiled from a set of written-out options and suggestions. In each of the five movements (Before / With / Without / Answer / Acceptance), various members of the ensemble (saxes, brass, bass, drums), or soloists or combinations thereof were given a sequence of simple

### WE ARE ALL COMPOSERS!!!

constructed by Tom Zlabinger  
revised 6/1/11

Premiered at Vision Festival 16, Abrons Arts Center, New York, NY, June 11th, 2011

*The piece emphasizes the cooperative effort of an ensemble, challenging the division of composer and improviser. The musicians are encouraged to embrace or ignore the written suggestions, but the overall message is engagement!*

#### A) Opening - NO PULSE

BASS: low E bowed throughout w/o interruption  
C: Em6 / Bb: F#m6 / Eb: C#m6 drone  
*chord tones only / non-pitched sounds encouraged*

#### B) Awakening - FREE SWING 4/4

CONDUCTION (hand symbols to be explained)

#### C) Dance - AFRICAN 6/8

F7 bass vamp

#### MELODY (conducted)

C: ||: Ab F | Ab F Eb | Ab F Eb B | Bb Ab :||

Bb: ||: Bb G | Bb G F | Bb G F Db | C Bb :||

Eb: ||: F D | F D C | F D C Ab | G F :||

#### D) Arrival - ???

*Score for WE ARE ALL COMPOSERS!!! by Tom Zlabinger*

## Welcoming Freedom (cont.)

instructions (punches, riffs, freeze sound, silence, and others) written on paper. Every member received the same sheet so he or she knew what the entire ensemble was performing at all times. The instructions were mostly suggestions and musicians could choose harmonic content, granted they continued to listen and contribute to the larger sound of the ensemble at that moment. But some instructions were more specific (for example, D vamp, E-flat drone, or 6/8 groove). At one point, all horns and soloist were instructed to play a sequence of five notes that were repeated and cued rhythmically by me the “decision maker” known as “Boogie’s Theme.” (“Boogie” was Shamar’s nickname.) Shamar’s parents attended the deeply-moving performance. This would be the beginning of a pedagogical shift in my teaching. In composing a piece in honor of Shamar, I had also created a construction and performance that healed wounds for both me and the audience.

I brought the college ensemble to the Vision Festival the following year, and constructed another multi-movement piece for large ensemble entitled *WE ARE ALL COMPOSERS!!!*, emphasizing the co-compositional aspect of group improvisation. Although the high school ensemble was successful with their performance the previous year, there was something different about the experience with this construction and its performance by the older ensemble. I had previously believed that one must slowly progress to free and more adventurous improvisation. These slightly older students had a confidence that translated into even more powerful results. Whereas I felt the younger students needed encouragement to freely improvise, the slightly older students were eager to break down barriers. And this is where a key concept arises: ownership of improvisation. I suggest that as older musicians they have a greater wealth of performance experience and listening history that could be applied to making decisions in a freer performance. As a result, these students felt the music performed was “theirs,” because they constructed it together in the moment in contrast to a performance that was based more on written-out music of a more traditional big band.

Shortly after the 2011 performance, I began experimenting with a satellite ensemble of the older big band originally called The Beyond... Band. The group was

not restricted to big band instrumentation, as it did not always require the traditional five saxes, four trumpets, four trombones, and rhythm section lineup. The group usually maintains the horns plus rhythm section architecture, but has also included non-traditional big band elements like soprano saxophone, tabla, and a second set drummer. The ensemble performed at a few gallery openings on our campus. Sometimes I would do conceptions. Sometimes I would just play bass or trombone in the band. In February 2012, Patricia Parker invited us to participate in a performance with other college ensembles from the New School (directed by Reggie Workman) and Brooklyn College (directed by Salim Washington) and I decided to change the name of the group to reflect the occasion. The York College Creative Ensemble was born. Since the performance was the day before Valentine’s Day, we based our performance on John Coltrane’s *A Love Supreme* riff. Later that spring, the ensemble gave a presentation as part of the college’s annual Student Research Day entitled “What is the York College Creative Ensemble?” Students and faculty were allowed to ask questions about what the ensemble was doing and how it contrasted with the big band. The members of the ensemble were eager to talk about the freedom to more accurately express their emotions. Since the Creative Ensemble’s beginning, students have been eager to be involved. For the last two years, the group has been enthusiastically received at the CUNY Jazz Festival at City College.

The success of the Creative Ensemble surprises me. I hope to conduct more formal interviews with my students about their experiences and observations. But in the meantime, I know from casual conversations they love the immediacy and challenge of freely improvised music. This spring I taught a Jazz Improvisation class and though I discussed traditional jazz practices, I found my students leaned more and more to the freely improvised music. Our final concert included more free improvisation than traditional standards. And some standards were deconstructed and treated more as departure points. Students were engaged in the decision making process of building ensembles and discussing strategies on how to improvise. One student even included a freely improvised piece as an encore to his senior recital.

## Welcoming Freedom (cont.)

Clearly, my students greatly benefit from the process of free improvisation when taught at a certain point in their development. Two students in the Jazz Improvisation class who resisted the free playing initially thanked me profusely at the end of the semester, claiming they could hear better as a result of looking for moments of creation and opportunity. The process of playing freely made them feel like stronger musicians in general and also sharpened their ears when playing more traditional music.

On 11 May 2013, I was invited by the Music Educators Association of New York City (MEANYC) to present the workshop “Beginning Improv...Have No Fear!” at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) headquarters in Manhattan. I based the workshop on my ideas about teaching improvisation to a group of educators (most of whom were classical musicians). We began with free improvisation and concluded with a conduction. While we talked, I even suggested that I had recently changed my approach and would have previously given them exercises to rehearse blues scales and thus overloaded them with information. The improvisations improved during the short time we had together. As educators, they began to see the advantages of free improvisation and how a culture of ownership could begin to build a foundation to develop improvisers.

After all these experiences, I now firmly believe that young musicians should be asked to improvise freely more often and over time build their own vocabulary and phrasing, much like language acquisition. I appreciate my long evolution to this point in my teaching career, and delight in sharing it with others. The earliest musicians improvised long before music was notated. And we cannot forget that great composers like Bach, Mozart, and many others improvised. As music educators, we should do more to follow this trajectory in musical evolution. We owe our students the time to hold the music completely in their own hands and ears. Making spontaneous music primarily through intuition can be profoundly rewarding and contribute to a deeper understanding of the art to which many of us have devoted our lives.



## Institute News

By Jeffrey Taylor

Last fall the Hitchcock Institute produced its first all-electronic version of *American Music Review*. For many of us accustomed to seeing the blue and white masthead in our mail the change signaled the end of an era. But the feedback from readers about our move to cyberspace has been universally positive, and as always we welcome suggestions on how we can improve the e-version of our journal. The current issue gives even more extensive examples of how our online version can facilitate the study of American music, and we will continue to work on the multimedia aspect of *AMR*. At the same time, we will always have paper copies in the office available on request, though these will naturally lack the interactive quality of our online version.

With a strenuous debate raging about a Common Core among CUNY campuses, and the adoption of a new University-wide computer system, this has been a turbulent few months on Brooklyn College's campus. The Institute, however, has continued to offer exciting programming. On 11 April, **Jorge Arévalo Mateus**, who spoke eloquently about his work with the Woody Guthrie Archive last fall, returned to give a presentation about the evolution of new musical styles by Columbians currently living in New York. On 18 April the Institute again collaborated with the Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium on its annual Brooklyn Jazz Festival, co-sponsoring **A Latin Jazz Reunion** with guest composer & trombonist **Papo Vazquez** and pianist **Arturo O'Farrill** with **The Brooklyn College Jazz Ensemble**. In a packed house, O'Farrill, who currently teaches at Brooklyn College and leads the jazz ensembles, joined Vazquez for duets, small group performances, and big band numbers. Compositions by both artists were showcased. The entire event was filmed by Brooklyn College's Department of TV and Radio for later broadcast on CUNY-TV. Finally, on 2 May **Patrick Rivers** and **Will Fulton** brought in turntables and vintage samplers to demonstrate a history of the development of hip hop beats, using familiar tunes such as The Jackson Five's "Want You Back" to show how producers dissect and reorganize brief musical sections to create fresh musical statements.



*Jitu Weusi (1939-2013)*  
Photo courtesy of Amsterdam News

We are delighted to introduce another member of the HISAM family. **Matt Carter** started this past fall as our new College Assistant. A musicology student at the CUNY Graduate Center, he is planning a dissertation on issues related to improvisation. Matt also performs and teaches jazz guitar.

Finally, The Institute wishes to acknowledge the recent passing of Jitu Weusi who was an educator, community organizer, and first Director of the Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium. I first met Jitu many years ago when he was a student in my jazz history course. New to Brooklyn, I had no idea who he was; it was only later that I learned of his community activities, especially his cofounding of The East Cultural and Educational Center in the late 1960s (see my article in this issue). Jitu became an enthusiastic friend of the Institute, and played an important role in our fruitful collaboration with the CBJC. Our thoughts are with his family and many close friends.