

AmJazzIn™

The American Jazz Institute Newsletter

Winter 2002 • Volume 8

Spring concerts at CMC feature Jimmy Knepper, *Porgy & Bess* and special tributes to Gary McFarland and Jelly Roll Morton

With its musically diverse offerings, the Spring concert season at Claremont McKenna College promises to deliver plenty of surprises. New works essential to the growth of jazz as well as fresh arrangements of classic compositions will be performed by world-famed guest soloists and the AJI's repertory ensembles of renowned West Coast jazz artists.

We look forward to your joining us at these outstanding campus concerts.

An Evening with Jimmy Knepper and The American Jazz Institute Big Band

Saturday, January 19, 8:00pm • Admission Free
Pickford Auditorium, CMC campus, Claremont

Jimmy Knepper is a singular voice on his instrument. Few trombonists in the history of jazz have such an individual, identifiable sound. Born in Los Angeles in 1927, Knepper started studying trombone at the age of nine and began his professional career at fifteen.



Knepper first appears on recordings made in 1949

with Roy Porter's big band. After that, he worked with a number of big bands, including Charlie Barnet, Claude Thornhill and Stan Kenton. Wider exposure came through his work with Charles Mingus in the late 1950s. Knepper also performed and recorded with Gil Evans and the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

The list of artists Jimmy Knepper has performed and recorded with is staggering. It includes Steve Lacy, Benny Goodman, Lee Konitz, Kenny Burrell, Max Roach, Yusef Lateef, Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, Eric Dolphy, Pepper Adams, John La Porta, Shorty Rogers, Charlie Parker, Toshiko Akiyoshi and Miles Davis.

As a leader, Knepper has made numerous brilliant small group recordings. *A Swinging Introduction to Jimmy Knepper* (Bethlehem), *1st Place* (Blackhawk), *Jimmy Knepper in L.A.* (Inner City), *Just Friends* (Hep), *Primrose Path* (Hep), *Cunningbird* (Steeplechase), *Dream Dancing* (Criss Cross) and *The Jimmy Knepper Songbook* (Focus) are examples of his playing and compositional prowess.

"An Evening with Jimmy Knepper" is a presentation of the AJI, CMC and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies. The concert will feature Knepper in a performance of his own compositions arranged by AJI director Mark Masters.

THE GOALS OF AJI

- To advance and promote jazz music throughout the world.
- To maintain a repertory jazz orchestra to perform new and archival jazz music.
- To educate and expose the public to jazz by live performances and panel discussions.
- To physically house, archive and preserve jazz music: compositions, scores, arrangements, recordings, artwork, photographs, films and other jazz works.
- To seek and attract donations of jazz works with an emphasis on original compositions, scores, arrangements and recordings.
- To make jazz works available for research, study and education.
- To support charitable endeavors that promote and advance jazz music.

Board of Directors

Mark A. Masters, President
Audree Coke Kenton
Richard Douglas Brew

The American Jazz Institute is a tax-exempt non-profit organization pursuant to I.R.C. Section 501(c)(3). Contributions to the AJI are tax deductible.

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Billy Harper, above, and Tim Hagans.

Porgy & Bess ... Redefined!

**The American Jazz Institute Big Band
with guest soloists Billy Harper and Tim Hagans**

**Wednesday, February 6, 6:45pm • Admission Free
Cook Athenaeum, CMC campus, Claremont**

George Gershwin's masterpiece, *Porgy & Bess*, premiered in 1935.

Over the years, there have been many jazz-based interpretations of this classic score. For "*Porgy & Bess ... Redefined!*," the AJI brings together two of the most adventuresome talents on the current jazz scene. Tenor saxophonist Billy Harper and trumpeter Tim Hagans have made significant recorded statements as leaders, as well as lending their superb voices to the projects of many other prominent artists.

Harper is most widely known for his numerous recordings on the DIW and Denon labels, while Hagans has five discs on Blue Note Records.

A brand new, totally original approach to *Porgy & Bess* has been conceived by the AJI's Mark Masters to feature these two major improvisational talents. Featured with them in the environment of the AJI Big Band will be the distinguished Joe La Barbera (drums), Dave Woodley (trombone), and Gary Smulyan (baritone sax).

Please join the AJI for this special event and what promises to be a truly memorable program.



"Porgy & Bess ... Redefined!" is a presentation of the American Jazz Institute, Claremont McKenna College, the Marian Minor Cook Athenaeum and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies.

Mort Sahl to host *Porgy & Bess* and Gary McFarland concerts

For forty years, Mort Sahl has been telling audiences what is on his mind. Lauded for his unique brand of political satire, Sahl was the first humorist on the cover of *Time Magazine* and the first to perform at colleges, the first non-musician to win a Grammy, a screenwriter, speech-writer, best-selling author, and host of the inaugural Playboy and Monterey jazz festivals ... just to scratch the surface!

Sahl's approach to stand-up humor is much like a great improvising jazz artist -- totally spontaneous. The AJI is pleased to welcome this quite serious jazz fan as host of our February 6 and March 9 concerts.



Pickford Auditorium and the Marian Minor Cook Athenaeum are conveniently located on the campus of Claremont McKenna College in the Southern California community of Claremont an hour east of Los Angeles off the 10 or 210 freeways.

Pickford Auditorium is in Bauer Center, South Building, at 500 East Ninth Street. The Marian Minor Cook Athenaeum is at 385 East Eighth Street.

For further information, please call the AJI at 626-798-3127.

**Coming this Spring!
AJI is building a valuable
resource for jazz enthusiasts
at www.amjazzin.org**

Many thanks to Don Armstrong for all the concert photos in this issue. Designed and edited by Scott Evans.

The Gary McFarland Project

The American Jazz Institute Chamber Ensemble
with guest soloist Gary Smulyan

Saturday, March 9, 8:00pm • Admission Free
Pickford Auditorium, CMC campus, Claremont

Gary McFarland (1933-1971) was one of the brightest young stars of the jazz scene in New York during the 1960s. Recognition of his talents came quickly after studying at The Lenox School of Jazz and The Berklee College of Music, where he met bandleader Herb Pomeroy and subsequently wrote a number of scores for Pomeroy's band.

Bob Brookmeyer has said that McFarland was "a complete original." In liner notes to the CD reissue of McFarland's Verve LP, *How to Succeed in Business*, Bill Kirchner writes that he was influenced by Ellington, Strayhorn and Gil Evans, and "though one can hear all of them in his writing, one primarily hears a musician with a very personal melodic gift and a unique sense of orchestral color and texture."

"*The Gary McFarland Project*" came to fruition after a conversation between baritone saxophonist Gary Smulyan and AJI director Mark Masters. Ultimately, McFarland's most memorable compositions were arranged by Masters to feature Smulyan in front of the nine-piece AJI Chamber Ensemble.

Gary Smulyan is critically acclaimed as one of the major voices on the baritone saxophone. In 1978, Smulyan was invited to join Woody Herman's Thundering Herd. After two years with Herman, he moved back to New York and joined the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. He has performed and recorded with Freddie Hubbard, Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Charles, B.B. King, Tom Harrell, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Bob Brookmeyer, Lou Rawls and many other major names. Smulyan has five CDs as a leader for the Criss Cross label (Holland).

"The Gary McFarland Project" is a presentation of the American Jazz Institute, Claremont McKenna College and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies.

Jelly Roll Blues

*The music of Jelly Roll Morton
arranged by Jack Montrose*

The American Jazz Institute Brass Ensemble

Wednesday, April 3, 6:45pm • Admission Free
Cook Athenaeum, CMC campus, Claremont

Jelly Roll Morton (1890-1941) is regarded by many as the first important jazz composer. During his formative years, Morton incorporated into his music the elements of ragtime, blues, hymns, spirituals and popular songs. The melding of these idioms was to become known as "jazz." Morton's fusion of spontaneous improvised jazz and his rehearsed orchestral approach to ensemble jazz rank him with the likes of Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk and Charles Mingus.

"*Jelly Roll Blues*" is the fruition of a concept originally proposed to renowned tenor saxophonist and arranger Jack Montrose more than forty years ago by Lester Koenig of Contemporary Records. The AJI Brass Ensemble (seven brass, piano, bass and drums) is extremely proud to premier the Montrose arrangements of these truly classic Morton compositions.

"Jelly Roll Blues" is a presentation of the American Jazz Institute, Claremont McKenna College, the Marian Minor Cook Athenaeum and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies.



Gary McFarland in 1964, above, and guest artist Gary Smulyan.



Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers (among them Kid Ory, Johnny St. Cyr and Barney Bigard) are captured in this Bluebird reissue of 1926-27 recordings considered to be the ultimate performances of the New Orleans ensemble style. The CD's title, "Birth of the Hot," proclaims Morton's status as one of the most significant influences in the history of jazz, just as Miles was to do a generation later with his "Birth of the Cool" sessions.

Memorable moments of the Fall 2001 season at Claremont McKenna College

September: Ellingtonia 2001

The AJI's Repertory Ensemble kicked off the Fall season in grand style with *Ellingtonia 2001*, a splendid cross-section of compositions by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn performed for a packed and enthusiastic audience in CMC's beautiful Pickford Auditorium.

Baritone saxophonist Gary Smulyan was featured on Strayhorn's *Agra* (from the *Far East Suite*) and on a 1957 arrangement by Ellington of his *Sophisticated Lady*. Ellington alum Bill Berry lent his warm sound to Clark Terry's *Launching Pad* and to Duke's theme, *Take the 'A' Train*. Other soloists included Sherman Ferguson, Don Shelton, Milcho Leviev, and showing their propensity for Duke's plunger mute trademark were trombonists Phil Ranelin and Garnett Brown. The entire ensemble was on display for Strayhorn's treatment of *Mood Indigo*.

Another heartfelt "thank you" goes out to Jerry Johnson for making this wonderful evening a reality!

October: Lee Konitz & Friends

With Lee Konitz unable to appear for this tribute to his remarkable career, Conte Candoli graciously stepped in to assume the role of featured soloist.

Disappointment for the overflow audience at the Marian Minor Cook Athenaeum quickly turned to joy as Candoli took the first solo of the evening on a blues by Konitz, *Cork 'n' Bib*. Among the many loudly-applauded soloists were Pete Christlieb, Jack Montrose and Ron Stout on *Palo Alto*, trombonists Andy Martin, Dave Woodley and Bob Enevoldsen on *Thingin'* and Gary Foster on *Gundula*.

With the exception of *Lover Man*, all of the music for this memorable concert was composed by Lee Konitz and arranged by AJI director Mark Masters.



In an unplanned, unrehearsed departure from the concert program, Carl Saunders and Conte Candoli duet on "My Funny Valentine" and provide an eloquent highlight of an historic evening.



Mark Masters, Gary Smulyan and Jack Montrose



Bill Berry



Mark Masters, Conte Candoli and Dr. Ron Teeple, CMC professor and founder of the school's jazz studies program.



George Harper



Mark Masters interviews Bill Berry for the AJI/CMC oral history project archiving the personal stories of jazz greats at the Claremont College's Honnold Library.



Gary Foster and Bob Enevoldsen

Conte Candoli

July 12, 1927 - December 14, 2001



With the Jack Montrose Septet at Claremont, January 27, 2001

With the AJI Big Band at Claremont, October 15, 2001



I had the pleasure of knowing Conte Candoli only a short time, about ten years, but long enough to know him as a warm and personable gentleman. Obviously, his playing has been in my consciousness for many years. The first time I heard him on record was his feature with the Stan Kenton Orchestra, *Portrait of a Count*, a beautiful composition written for Count by Bill Russo. His impressive playing history has been well documented -- with Woody Herman, Stan Kenton and countless recordings with the finest musicians in Southern California and beyond. Conte was a mainstay with *The Tonight Show Band* and could often be seen in the trumpet section on Frank Sinatra's TV specials in the 1960s and 1970s.

Several times during the past ten years, Conte was a guest on some jazz event that I was a part of and he was always positive and ready to make music. This past year, he was at Claremont McKenna College for a January concert with Jack Montrose and as recently as October filled in as featured soloist when Lee Konitz could not make the trip west due to illness. When I called him several days before the job, Conte told me that he wasn't feeling one-hundred percent but said "I'm sure that I can help you." The night of the concert, when it was announced that Lee would not be playing and Conte Candoli would be filling in for him, there was a sigh of relief because so many people in the audience knew Count and his playing. From the first downbeat when Conte began a blues chorus, we all knew that everything would be fine. Conte's feature on *Lover Man* and his choruses on Lee's originals based on *All the Things You Are*, *Strike Up the Band* and *You Stepped Out of a Dream* elicited the same reactions from Pete Christlieb, Gary Foster, Bob Enevoldsen, Joe La Barbera, Carl Saunders, Ron Stout and Andy Martin that they have felt for so many years: sheer wonder.

Sadly, this concert on October 15, 2001 was Conte Candoli's final performance. The very next day he was hospitalized and never regained his health. Fortunately, we were able to have a long conversation which I will always treasure. Count passed away on Friday, December 14, 2001. It is truly the end of an era for jazz in Southern California and for the jazz community everywhere.

-- Mark Masters

College teaching political, economic lessons through history of jazz

by Rick Mortensen, Staff Writer

Like documentarian Ken Burns, Claremont McKenna College economics professor Dr. Ron Teeple believes the story of jazz should be told to everyone ...

CMC specializes in business and politics. Teeple started the jazz history course because he believes the history of jazz teaches important political and economic lessons.

"Most history of jazz courses are offered by music departments of various colleges because the emphasis is on students that play an instrument or are interested in composition," he said. "I wanted a social science/historic approach to jazz, so we understood it as a component of American cultural history rather than music per se.

"To every art there is a business and a political side," Teeple said. "I want the students to be fully conversant with the history of jazz so that they will understand the economic and political issues that it has engendered."

To teach the class, Teeple recruited Dr. Reed Gratz and Mark Masters, an acclaimed jazz arranger, conductor and president of the American Jazz Institute in Pasadena.

The course includes a series of ... free concerts ... which will feature ... the American Jazz Institute orchestra and Masters' arrangements ...

The course also includes a practicum in which students and professors collect the visiting artists' oral histories on film.

"We're focusing more each time on the regional jazz of what's called West Coast Jazz and the history of jazz in Southern California," said Teeple. "Southern California is out of the mainstream of the main jazz developments but all of the principal artists -- like Charlie Parker and so forth -- played in Los Angeles and ... jammed with all of the guys who played here."

Still, many big name jazz artists settled in Southern California in the late 1940s, and Mark Masters said there was a burgeoning scene.

"A lot of the guys who had been on the road with big-name bands had passed through California," Masters said. "You can only stay on the road so long, and a lot of these guys found the climate and the pace of life very attractive in Southern California. A lot of them stayed here and bought houses.

"The other part of Southern California that was attractive was the film industry. These guys settled here and became part of the jazz scene, be it in Hermosa Beach or Central Avenue ... They assimilated themselves into all these different facets of jazz in Los Angeles."

For decades, these facets were divided on racial lines. For example, the Central Avenue scene was black,

while the movie studio musicians and other bands were mostly white. Masters acknowledged some rancor in the jazz scene over segregation and said it manifested itself in a lack of acceptance of white musicians in the Central Avenue scene.

The role of race relations in jazz is an issue Teeple hopes the CMC course will illuminate, and he's glad the Burns documentary (*on PBS last year*) addresses it head on.

"This ... program by Ken Burns is really an extension of his concern about the perception of African-Americans in U.S. history," Teeple said. "Jazz is a premier contribution of the African-Americans to world history and world culture."



Left to right: Mark Masters (AJI director), Ray Drummond (bass), Sherman Ferguson (drums), Reed Gratz (CMC instructor of "History of Jazz in the 20th Century"), and Dr. Ron Teeple (CMC professor and founder of the school's jazz studies program). Drummond was featured soloist with the AJI Chamber Ensemble in the February 2001 concert celebrating the music of legendary bassist and composer Charles Mingus.



AJI's Mark Masters and Audree Coke Kenton with Tim Hagans, guest soloist with the AJI Big Band for "Sketches of Spain," the March 2001 homage to Gil Evans.

AJI goes to college:
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