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The American Jazz Institute Newsletter

Winter 2003 • Volume 9

Spring concert series at CMC puts the focus on small settings: Mark Turner quartet, Steve Kuhn trio and Milcho Leviev solo

We look forward to your joining us for this fifth season of AJI concerts at Claremont McKenna College, again presenting musically diverse programs by world-famed guest soloists and renowned West Coast jazz artists. In February, we welcome tenor saxophonist Mark Turner, who the New York Times calls "a standard-bearer ... possibly jazz's premier player." In March, renowned pianist Steve Kuhn will be featured in a performance of Gary McFarland's third stream masterpiece, "October Suite." In April, composer and pianist Milcho Leviev will perform solo in what promises to well demonstrate why he is considered a giant in improvised music.

Mark Turner & Friends

Gary Foster, alto, Putter Smith, bass and Joe LaBarbera, drums

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

One of the main goals of every creative jazz musician is to develop one's own sound, a voice that is distinctive and immediately recognizable. All of the tenor saxophone icons -- Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Stan Getz and the top players around today -- have achieved this goal. Mark Turner was an original from the time of his recording debut in 1998, and he has continued to grow in depth through each of his albums. No one else sounds like him, and he has a tone and ideas that are unlike any of his contemporaries or predecessors.



Turner was born in 1965 and moved with his family from Ohio to California when he was four. He took up alto sax in high school, switched to tenor after two years and attended the famed Berklee College of Music in Boston.

The New York Times: "He is a standard-bearer. His music is intellectual and rigorously composed, defined by long, flowing, chromatically complex lines that keep their stamina and intensity as they stay dynamically even."

Mark Turner is playing strikingly original music with great warmth and constant creativity. His compositions feature quirky and unpredictable but logical melodies, close interplay with his sidemen and a fresh new musical vocabulary. He constantly demonstrates that he is one of the most original yet accessible tenor saxophonists of the early 21st century, a constantly inventive player who is fast realizing his enormous potential.

"Mark Turner & Friends" is a presentation of The American Jazz Institute, Claremont McKenna College and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies.

THE GOALS OF AJI

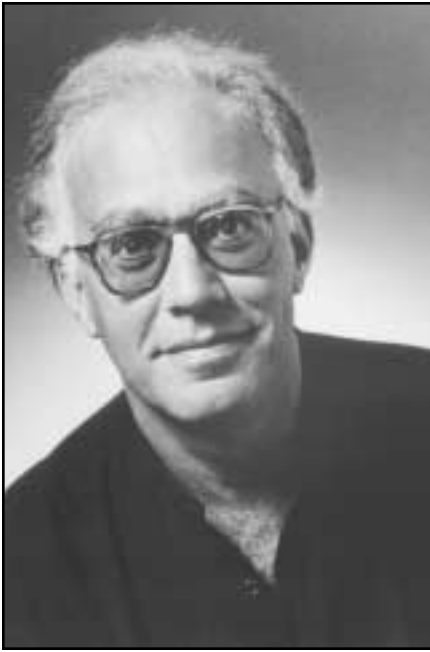
- To advance and promote jazz music throughout the world.
- To maintain a repertory jazz orchestra to perform new and archival jazz music.
- To educate and expose the public to jazz by live performances and panel discussions.
- To physically house, archive and preserve jazz music: compositions, scores, 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.

Please see page 6 for information or contact us:
PO Box 5716, Pasadena, CA 91117
Phone: 626-798-3127
Fax: 626-794-5453
E-mail: AmJazzIn@aol.com
Website: www.amjazzin.com



An Evening with Steve Kuhn

Steve Kuhn Trio with David Finck, bass, and Peter Erskine, drums
With string quartet, woodwinds and harp

In a performance of Gary McFarland's third stream masterpiece,
"OCTOBER SUITE"

Saturday, March 29, 8:00pm • Admission Free
Pickford Auditorium, CMC campus, Claremont

Brooklyn-born Steve Kuhn was fascinated with jazz early in life. In his early teens, he studied piano with the renowned Margaret Chaloff. Chaloff's son, Serge, baritone saxophonist for Woody Herman, hired the 13-year-old pianist to play in his group. Throughout his teens, he continued to play in Boston clubs with Coleman Hawkins, Chet Baker, Vic Dickenson and other famed passers-through.

After graduation from Harvard, Kuhn attended the Lenox School of Music. The faculty included Bill Evans and Gunther Schuller. Among his fellow students were Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, Gary McFarland and Freddie Hubbard. While at Lenox, Kuhn met trumpeter Kenny Dorham and began a two-year stint interrupted when he was asked to join John Coltrane's newly-formed quartet.

Kuhn next joined Stan Getz's band, which included bassist Scott LaFaro. The innovative bassist and virtuoso pianist were planning a group of their own when LaFaro was tragically killed in an automobile accident. Kuhn continued with Getz and later joined trumpeter Art Farmer. He then formed the Steve Kuhn Trio with drummer Pete LaRoca and bassist Steve Swallow. It was during this period that he recorded "October Suite" with composer Gary McFarland.

Kuhn's next four years were spent in Europe where he toured widely with his own trios. After returning to the United States, he continued to tour extensively. In the mid-80s, he formed the highly-acclaimed All-Star Trio with bassist Ron Carter and drummer Al Foster. Since the 90s, he has led the Steve Kuhn Trio with bassist David Finck and drummer Billy Drummond. He is well represented on CDs and performs regularly in Europe, Japan and the United States.

"An Evening with Steve Kuhn" is a presentation of The American Jazz Institute, Claremont McKenna College and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies. For directions, see page 4.

Milcho Leviev, Solo Piano

Saturday, April 12, 8:00pm • Admission Free
Balch Hall, Scripps College campus, Claremont

Born in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, in 1937, Milcho Leviev discovered jazz in his teens. "I started listening every midnight to "Voice of America," Willis Conover's jazz radio show. What turned me on to jazz first was not the big bands or bebop but the later, cool stuff -- Miles and Gil, Bill Evans and especially M. J.Q."

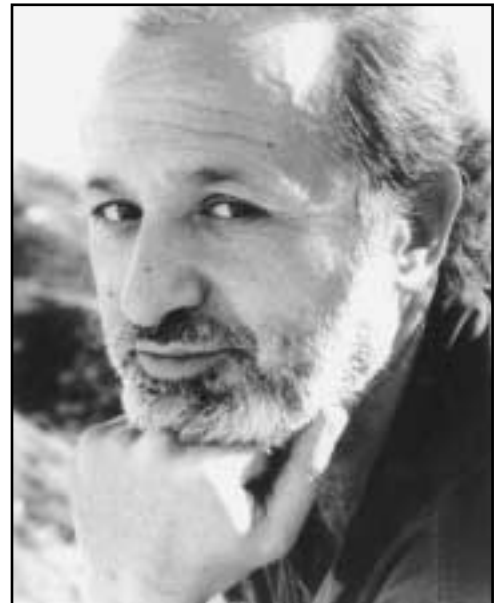
Leviev graduated from Bulgaria's State Music Academy in 1960 and moved to Los Angeles in 1970. In 1971, he began a memorable stint with Don Ellis. "His orchestra was the first jazz group I saw in America, not only saw but had the pleasure to occupy its keyboard chair for seven years. His musicality led him to new, unexplored things with the time elements in music. He studied the folk music of India, Turkey, Bulgaria, and achieved the highest results in terms of swinging and grooving on odd meters. So imagine what this was for me: a dream come true. I not only played, I wrote for the band."

Leviev has worked with numerous major artists, among them Roy Haynes, Ray Pizzi, Charlie Haden, Ray Brown, Oscar Brashear, Mundell Lowe and Gerald

Wilson. With his bop-inspired quartet that featured Art Pepper, he recorded the superb albums "Blues For The Fisherman" and "True Blues." From 1990-95, Leviev performed solo in Europe and in 1995 received an honorary degree and award from the Paris Academie Internationale des Arts. Milcho is currently leading the highly acclaimed trio, Lesentu, with Pat Senatore on bass and Kevin Tullius on drums.

The piano artistry of Milcho Leviev ranks him among the major jazz innovators of our time

"Milcho Leviev, Solo Piano" is a presentation of The American Jazz Institute, Claremont McKenna College and The Gould Center for Humanistic Studies. For directions, see page 4.



Preserving the Voices of Jazz: The LA Jazz Oral History Project

One essential component of jazz preservation programs is the systematic collection and archival storage of oral histories. In year 2000, the American Jazz Institute and Claremont McKenna College joined to organize a joint research program called The LA Jazz Oral History Project. This preservation effort involves students and faculty of the several Claremont Colleges in a process of inviting highly respected jazz personalities to campus to 1) present live jazz performances, 2) meet with students in classroom question/answer sessions, 3) facilitate informal discussions with students, and 4) conduct in-depth, video-recorded interviews.

Oral history interviews have dual educational goals. First, they immerse students in the history of jazz from the point of view of the individual participants, emphasizing human dimensions of both successes and failures, and illustrating the complex interweaving of numerous jazz careers and the incredibly diverse influences that alter jazz contributors' lives. Second, the interviews are a practicum project for students. In part, they learn jazz history indirectly through their hands-on practice at creating historical records: preparing interview backgrounds, gathering, organizing and eventually archiving data records for use by future researchers.

During the past two years, The LA Jazz Oral History Project has conducted 15 oral history sessions. The collection currently contains contributions from the following prominent jazz artists and individuals:

- Bill Berry: cornet
- Bobby Bradford: cornet, composer, arranger, educator (contributed a formal lecture titled "A Short History of Free Jazz in LA")
- Ray Drummond: bass, composer, educator
- Tim Hagans: trumpet, composer, arranger
- Billy Harper: tenor saxophone, composer, educator
- Audree Kenton: AJI director, widow of Stan Kenton
- Lee Konitz: alto saxophone, composer, educator
- Joe LaBarbera: drums, composer, educator
- John LaPorta: clarinet, saxophones, composer, arranger, author, educator
- Jack Montrose: tenor saxophone, composer, arranger
- Sam Rivers Trio: Sam Rivers, tenor sax, composer; Doug Matthews, bass; Anthony Cole, drums
- Mort Sahl: humorist, jazz fan
- Gary Smulyan: baritone saxophone, composer, educator
- Kristian St.Clair: producer of Gary McFarland documentary film

Each interview session is videotaped and the audio portions transcribed. Later, a printed transcription and DVD copy of the interview, frequently with added concert performance clips, are prepared for archival storage in Claremont's Honnold research library.

Another valuable source of jazz oral history comes from recorded radio broadcasts. Scott Ellsworth, a central figure in LA late-night/early-morning jazz radio, conducted hundreds of on-air interviews as MC of "Scott's Place" on KFI radio. He fortunately had most of these lengthy interviews taped, and he has magnanimously donated the tapes to AJI as source material for The LA Jazz Oral History Project. Fifteen of the Ellsworth tapes have been digitized so far and are in the process of being transcribed. Among the initial interviewees are Woody Herman, Gerald Wilson, Clare Fisher, Jimmy Rowles, Sonny Criss, Harry Mills, Marty Paich, Shelly Manne, Sarah Vaughn, Bobby Troupe, Billy May, Nelson Riddle and Frank Rosolino.

As this important project moves forward, the "voices" of our interviewees will again be made available. They will speak far into the future, making useful contributions to the understanding of anyone interested in Jazz History and American Culture in the 20th Century.



Mark Masters interviews Joe LaBarbera.

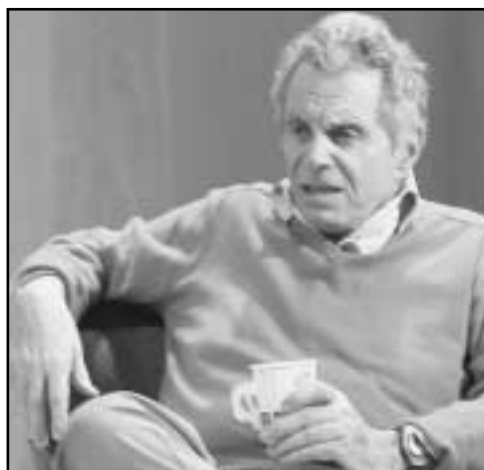


Audree Kenton



Billy Harper

Mort Sahl



Memorable moments of the 2002 concert season at Claremont McKenna College

With its musically diverse offerings, last year's fourth season of AJI concerts at Claremont McKenna College attracted over 2,000 students and jazz fans. New works essential to the future of jazz as well as fresh arrangements of classic compositions were performed by world-famed guest soloists and the AJI's repertory ensembles of renowned West Coast jazz artists. Here's a sample.



January '02: An Evening with Jimmy Knepper

One of the greatest singular voices on the trombone is Jimmy Knepper. His work with Charles Mingus is legendary. Knepper has also recorded and performed with many jazz luminaries, including Gil Evans, Claude Thornhill and Lee Konitz. While Mr. Knepper was unable to attend due to health reasons, the great Bill Watrous was a last minute substitute in this special tribute to Knepper's playing and composing skills.

Bill Watrous joins the AJI Big Band for an evening honoring the artistry of Jimmy Knepper.



February '02: *Porgy & Bess* ... Redefined!

Trumpeter Tim Hagans and tenor saxophonist Billy Harper joined The AJI Big Band for the performance of a new treatment of George Gershwin's classic opera, "Porgy & Bess." Along with Harper and Hagans, Joe LaBarbera (drums), Ray Drummond (bass), Gary Smulyan (baritone sax) and Dave Woodley (trombone) were featured on newly written orchestrations by AJI Director Mark Masters.



Guest soloists Tim Hagans and Billy Harper, above, are joined by Gary Smulyan and Ray Drummond, near left. Far left, Mark Masters conducts the AJI Big Band.



Pickford Auditorium and Balch Hall are conveniently located on the campuses of the Claremont Colleges in the Southern California community of Claremont an hour east of Los Angeles off the 10 or 210 freeways.

Pickford Auditorium is on the Claremont McKenna College campus in Bauer Center, South Building, at 500 East Ninth Street.

Balch Hall is on the Scripps College campus at 1030 Columbia Avenue, adjacent to CMC on the north.

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

AJI is now on the web!
We're building a valuable
resource for jazz enthusiasts at
www.amjazzin.com

- * Concerts and events schedule
- * Oral histories
- * Photo gallery
- * And of course THE MUSIC!

March '02: The Gary McFarland Project

"The Gary McFarland Project" was a showcase for the considerable improvisational talents of stellar baritone saxophonist Gary Smulyan. The project, with Smulyan featured in front of the nine-piece AJI Chamber Ensemble, was based on Gary McFarland's prodigious skills as a composer of lyrical thematic material. Eleven of McFarland's most memorable compositions were specially arranged for the nonet by Mark Masters.



Gary Smulyan playing, Mark Masters conducting.

April '02: Jelly Roll Blues

The music of Jelly Roll Morton arranged by Mark Masters

The AJI Brass Ensemble, with featured guest Jack Montrose, performed a number of Jelly Roll Morton's most notable compositions. The new arrangements paid homage to Morton's musical ideas while expanding the opportunity for Montrose and the other soloists to explore musical territories in a current vernacular.



Jack Montrose was honored for a lifetime of accomplishment in jazz on the West Coast with the AJI LEGEND OF THE WEST AWARD, presented by renowned jazz DJ Chuck Niles. Joining in the congratulations are AJI Director Mark Masters, left, and Dr. Ron Teeple, right, CMC professor and founder of the college's jazz studies program.



As published in LA Jazz Scene

Jelly Roll Blues featuring Jack Montrose and The AJI Tentet

by Ken Jennings

It was another great outing for The American Jazz Institute. This time the tentet paid tribute to Jelly Roll Morton (1890-1941), America's first great jazz composer. The presentation was titled "Jelly Roll Blues: The Music of Jelly Roll Morton." The concert was held in the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum on the campus of Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, California.

The event featured legendary composer and tenor saxophonist Jack Montrose. Lester Koenig of Contemporary Records proposed the concept of "Jelly Roll Blues" to Jack more than 40 years ago. The AJI Brass Ensemble (3 trumpets, 2 trombones, French horn, tuba, piano, bass and drums), along with the great Montrose, did an outstanding job of premiering the arrangements of some of Morton's classic compositions.

From the opening number of "Deadman Blues," we knew the audience was in for a rare treat. Montrose and Mark Masters wrote very harmonically interesting arrangements and Mark conducted the unusual instrumentation brilliantly. Along with "Deadman Blues," we heard "New Orleans Blues," "Black Bottom Stomp," "Cannonball Blues" and Morton's classic, "King Porter Stomp."

Masters explained how important the tuba was in early jazz and his arrangements continued that concept. Bill Roper had plenty of inspiring tuba solos throughout the evening. Other great soloists included Ron Stout on trumpet, Les Benedict and Dave Woodley on trombones, Putter Smith on bass, Tom Ranier on piano, and the always great Joe LaBarbera on drums. The rest of the ensemble included Scott Englebright and Les Lovitt on trumpets and Stephanie O'Keefe on French horn.

Masters controlled the pace of the music effectively. He interspersed the mostly blues arrangements with the incredible solo piano styling of Tom Ranier. Ranier, without the aid of the rest of the rhythm section, played difficult traditional ragtime and stride piano along with his unique modern approach.

Masters also likes to have the featured performer play with just the trio and that too, was most enjoyable. Montrose chose "I Thought About You" and "Back Home Again in Indiana" as his featured tunes. Masters said it best, "Jack never sounded better."

The American Jazz Institute invites your membership

Supporting jazz is what The American Jazz Institute is all about. We need your support to continue presenting outstanding jazz programs such as *The Kenton Era* festival in 1997, *California Cool* festival in 1998, *Kenton's West Side Story* concert in 1999, *The Ellington Effect* concert in 2000, *Kenton Sound* concerts in 1998, 1999 and 2000, and the unique series of concerts jointly presented with Claremont McKenna College.

Your tax deductible membership in any amount comes with the deep appreciation of AJI and the jazz artists that perform for your enjoyment. We hope you'll consider the special benefits of Patron and Artistry Circle membership levels.

AJI Member

\$25 Annual Membership

- AmJazzIn newsletter: AJI news and schedules of upcoming concerts and special events
- Souvenir AJI coffee mug
- Advance announcements of upcoming AJI events
- Discounts to AJI events

AJI Patron

\$50 Annual Membership

- AmJazzIn newsletter: AJI news and schedules of upcoming concerts and special events
- Video of AJI's "*California Cool*" 1998 jazz festival
- Souvenir AJI coffee mug
- Advance announcements of upcoming AJI events
- Discounts to AJI events

AJI Artistry Circle

\$75 Annual Membership

- AmJazzIn newsletter: AJI news and schedules of upcoming concerts and special events
- Video of AJI's "*California Cool*" 1998 jazz festival
- Souvenir AJI coffee mug
- Souvenir AJI "*California Cool*" T-shirt
- Advance announcements of upcoming AJI events
- Discounts to AJI events
- Invitations to special "meet the musicians" receptions and other pre-event functions

The American Jazz Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated solely to the enrichment and enhancement of the appreciation of jazz music. From its humble beginning in New Orleans at the turn of the century, jazz evolved into one of America's enduring world contributions, a "universal language" understood by all.

Continuing in this spirit, AJI seeks to preserve this national treasure as well as expand upon it by spotlighting America's great jazz composers, arrangers and musicians -- both firmly established and newly discovered, and from traditional to avant garde.

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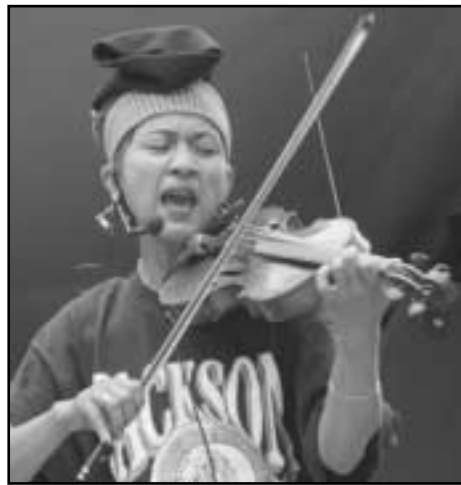


October '02: Joe LaBarbera Quintet

The Joe LaBarbera Quintet (featuring Clay Jenkins, trumpet, Bob Shepperd, sax, Bill Cunliffe, piano, and Tom Warrington, bass) opened AJI's Fall concert series in Pomona College's Bridges Hall of Music. This brilliant LA-based group is a well conceived unit whose mission is creating an environment for ensemble and individual excellence. Each member of the quintet soloed with startling inventiveness.



October '02: Luluk Purwanto & The Helsdingen Trio



The U.S. tour of Luluk Purwanto and The Helsdingen Trio made a stop at CMC for an afternoon of fascinating cross-cultural music. Luluk Purwanto is a skilled jazz performer incorporating her Indonesian roots and Dutch sensibilities into her truly unique performance. A highlight of the afternoon came when Rene Van Helsdingen, her husband and pianist, narrated a story of Indonesian cultural life while Luluk used native instruments to provide an aural picture of her native country. The concert was a special and most welcome addition to the AJI/CMC schedule.

November '02: The Sam Rivers Trio

The Sam Rivers Trio (Sam Rivers, tenor sax, Doug Mathews, bass, and Anthony Cole, drums) were in Claremont for a rare West Coast appearance. The trio members are all outstanding multi-instrumentalists, yet the focus always remains on the playing and compositional prowess of the legendary Sam Rivers. Much of the evening (a one hour and forty-five minute set) was devoted to 'free' (unstructured) playing. The trio is so skilled and so adept at this format that the music never once was anything but improvisation of the very highest order. We look forward to Sam's return visit to Claremont to perform music written for a large ensemble.



Many thanks to Terry Lewis and Ron Teeple for the photos in this issue. Designed and edited by Scott Evans.