JAZZ
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Clark Terry

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OK, you are a trumpet player, I would love if you could tell me what inspired you to pick up this instrument, what was the particular music you heard or player or what was it about the trumpet that made you wanna play the trumpet?

Well, I was inspired to play the trumpet by Louis Armstrong, really. My oldest sister Ada was married to a Jazz tuba player in St. Louis, by the name of Sy McField, and Sy, uh,, used to allow me to hang around with him and go around to the rehearsals, and, uh,, the main reason I got really attracted to the trumpet was because one of the people in the orchestra in which my brother-in-law played was a candy store owner, and he used to bring his pockets filled with, uh,, caramels and Mary Jane's, my two favorite candies, and he'd always let me have one or two.

I knew there was a reason, that's great. Um, when you heard Armstrong, what was it about the way he played? … the sound he made the way he played, there was something very very special, can you help us? How did you feel when you first heard that music?

Well, when I first heard Louis Armstrong play I was more, I'd say electrified. I think he has the most, uh,, he had the most, uh,, natural way of, uh,, getting across his message, he was very warm, he was very personable, he was very very, uh,, he had a beautiful sense of humor, a fantastic smile. And he just had a way with people, uh,, he was like that throughout his entire life and being a little kid who wanted to play an instrument, uh,, after having heard him, that was it.

What was his message, what was the message, that he was - when you say getting across his message I don't think people today understand. What was his message?

Just, just love. Just good feeling, happiness and love...

And that came across in the music?

Right right, and as a young kid it was evil, it was easy to, you know, discern what was going on at that particular time, even so. As, you got older it became even more and more easy to understand.

Did you first hear on records or on the radio, do you remember?

On the radio, we used to have, uh,, crystal sets, uh,, which we would all gather around that one person's home and put the crystal set in the big mixing bowl, so as to make the sound louder. That was our entree into good sounds in those days. We didn't have the stereo and all the good equipment they have today, so we had to listen very closely and, uh,, the fidelity of the sounds was not the greatest but who cared?

I love that idea of these wonderful sounds kind of coming through the air, you know, that even may be coming from New York or Chicago or wherever you lived, that the sound was somehow magically coming into your house, that's such a - I think people today don't realize the force of radio, ... music, the relationship, that's very, it's really important, I think. I think every trumpet player or every musician has a special, I've been learning, has a special relationship with their instrument. I know Milt Hinton told me, or he said, he's never given away any of his basses, he's, he keeps them all - they're like his children. Do you have a special, is this horn?

Well, I do have a a couple of horns that I favor but I've- so I can't say what Milt said - I've given away hundreds of horns. As a matter of fact I like to do that, sometimes I go in pawn shops and buy horns and keep them and wait for an opportunity to run into a kid who's not in a position to to buy a horn, because my first instrument was a a horn from a pawn shop which the neighbors chipped in, uh,, twenty-five, fifty cents apiece and bought the horn for twelve dollars and fifty cents. So, I know how important it is for a kid to get an opportunity to get his hands on a real live instrument you know, so...

Lips are very important for a trumpet player...

Yeah.

Can you tell us, what do you - what happens if you get a lip problem, what is a lip problem?

Well, a lip problem could be a cold sore, it could be a the fact that you've been off for a long time and you're ...?... is more or less wasted or deteriorated or it hasn't been used enough to produce the buzz that's necessary to produce the sound. So, we have lots of problems that we have to face with our chops.

Chops.

Chops.

What are chops, what does that mean?

Well, chops in our case, we refer to our lips, because, uh,, years ago, I think Pops is one of the first people to created, uh,, he thought of his lips as, uh,, chops, you know. Like I don't know, veal chops or lamb chops or whatever kind of chops but, uh,, he thought of his lips as his chops, and uh,, it became a a word that became very, very, a part, um, part of the Jazz language, and uh,, as a matter of fact, uh,, colloquially speaking, it's the term that, uh,, other instrumentalists use who don't use their lips - uh,, if you're a drummer, if your - your capabilities in, in the, in the ability to manipulate and articulate with the sticks, those your chops. A piano, uh,, the way that they can, uh,, articulate on the keyboard (IMITATES SOUND) and so forth, that's the pianist's chops, you know, and, uh,, the bass player's chops are his ability to, uh,, pull the strings and, and, uh,, match uh,, uh, the strings, so chops, uh,, means - have different strokes for different folks.

That's great, that is great. Now since you brought Armstrong up, I saw you at Lincoln Center last year, at the Armstrong program that they had, and you did a great imitation as I recall.

Oh yeah.

And you sang like him, and you talked, and you played a little bit. Can you just tell us - I'm interested partly in his personally but also the singing, just before we get into the music. He loved to sing and I think you said something that he told you to sing.

Yeah, on one of my frequent visits to Pops' home, uh,, he told me, he said uh,, "Yeah, sit down, Daddy, I want to talk to you here." So he talk and... as a matter of fact, Dizzy and I used to go over and visit him quite frequently. We'd always tell him, we'd come to get our batteries charged, so he'd say, "Come on, sit down" and, uh,, he was just a beautiful person to talk to, so warm and never had an occasion where, uh,, he was fluffing people off. Uh,, so we sat down and he says, "Uh,, you know..." Uh,, on this particular occasion I'm there alone and he says, "You know, I like your playing, Daddy," he said, "but I have to tell you one thing, you got to start singing, you got to sing more, because this, the people, you could play all you want to play, but the people like to hear some singing." He said, "Besides it good for your chops." Which I, I, the way idolize is it means that after you play for a while, it's a good to get a relief from that, uh,, brass punching you in the chops, and, uh,, it gives a chance to let the blood come back, while you're singing, (LAUGHS) you know.

I love it. Every story I hear about him, I feel like I get a little bit more, a little piece of the puzzle to understand him, he's such - there's just so much there, trying to understand.

Yeah he was a beautiful man, Louis Armstrong.

He had a special relationship with that audience.

Yeah.

What can you - when you've seen him play, I mean - people just loved him, he loved the people - there was something really special going on with the audience. Can you help us?

Well it, it, his charisma was so beautiful, till it would just penetrate, uh,, an entire audience. He could just walk out on on stage and smile and say, 'Good evening everybody.' And the people would just melt all over the place you know? And, it didn't matter what, what caliber of people he was dealing with, he always managed to get across, the heads of states, kings, queens, commoners, or whatever you know? He was just a very well-liked person. As a matter of fact his old cronies - his old buddies who, uh,, uh,, weren't as successful as he - he used to meet every time he'd play the Apollo Theater up in Harlem, and to go through the block, 126th Street, and pass out 20 dollar bills to his old buddies. And, uh,, when he would come home in Corona, which is where a lot of us lived, uh,, all the kids in the neighborhood, from the block, from the other boulevard, all the way, the way back to, all the way to his house which is on close to ...?... he'd pass out two's and three's, "Here get some ice cream, here baby, a little ice cream, it's warm." You know? He was just a beautiful man.

Ah, I wish I could have known him, I really do. He - what you said before - he liked to talk to younger players and give advice, I mean, he really was trying to keep the music alive.

Oh yeah, yeah he really did, and, uh,, they talk about the history of Jazz, he was the history of Jazz, so all he had to do was just talk. (LAUGHS)

Do you have another favorite before we move on to his music which I want to ask you about, do you - a favorite other - favorite stories about things, just, you know, a funny story about him?

About Pops?

Yeah.

Oh, uh,, all, all, all the stories about Pops are just so warm and so beautiful to - I could go all night if I could think of the things, you know?

Well, you think about it, we might come back to it before we finish, because I - I would like to talk about that a little bit more. There was something when he first started playing and first recorded, I mean, there was something in the way he played, that was different than what anybody else had done before. In regular terms, just so that I can understand, can you explain what he was doing different with the, and you can show us if you want, if there's...

Well, uh,, I'm having a problem with my horn here. The valve is sticking and I'm afraid if I - if it doesn't come up you'll understand why.

OK.

But Pops had a a way of just, uh,, phrasing and playing a melody that was just beautiful and warm and very understandable, nothing too complicated. For instance, he had certain, we used to say, 'clichés' or or crips, which meant something that you were known to play, that you became known by, you know. Pops would play things like, (PLAYS HORN) little ...?.. up with the, with the, the, uh,, very very, uh,, warm approach, and a sort of a moving upwards or moving down, up to a note or down from a note, he just had a warm way of, of delivering, you know? And his tone was crystal clear and he was just a, just a phenomenon. And here's a man who, uh,, back in those days - none of the people who were indulging in giving vent to their feelings, which in those days they called, "Get Off" because this is long before the terminology of improvisation was created. It simply meant that you'd play a melody the first time - the second time you would use that, uh,, given melody as a guide wire to extemporaneously initially compose a melody against, uh,, that one of your own you know?

OK, you were talking, when we so rudely interrupted you, about improvisation and Armstrong, and what it meant before they even had the term, he was doing it before they even had a name for it.

Right, well, the guys, uh,, used to gather on Congo Square in New Orleans, which is now known as Louis Armstrong Park, and they used to sit around and converse and figure out ideas and ways and means of giving vent to their feelings. In those days it, uh,, people who were able to play a melody, and then as the term goes today, improvise under the melody, this was before the term was created, they used to call that, 'Getting Off' a cat, would mean - which would meant, meant that he could play a melody, and then the second time around he would get off the melody, using the melody as a guide wire to extemporaneously superimpose another melody of your own, giving vent to your own feelings. So, this is known as 'Get Off'.

Would you like, since we're on the subject, would you like to show us how you would do that...

OK.

If you took a regular tune we could recognize and then improvise it?

Yeah I'll take an old tune, like years ago they used to play a tune called, 'Dinah' (PLAYS HORN) - so forth, and then the second time around they say... (PLAYS HORN) - so forth, and so on, you know? The second time around they would just use that melody, sound like, a sort of, like a variations of a theme, the Carnival of Venice just like that (IMITATES HORN) and so forth, and so on, you know?

Can you help us understand - when you're actually playing a gig, and you are going to do your solo, and you're improvising - what is really going on in your mind? Can you tell us?

That, that's a question that ten thousand people have asked and there are ten thousand different answers, (LAUGHS) You are inspired by uh,, many things - many times it's the rhythm section, with which you playing, uh,, the people by whom you're surrounded. The conditions of the, uh,, venue, uh,, where you're performing, the audience, the appreciation of the audience or the lack of appreciation of the audience, or the attention you're getting from the audience or the lack of attention. So, all these things motivate you or or hinder you from, uh,, doing whatever it is that you giving vent, try to do, which is give vent to your feelings. If you got, uh,, as they say, the audience in the palm of your hand, and you feel like you, you really doing good, uh,, that feeling uh,, the empathy that you're going to feel there is going to give you more of an incentive to try harder, you know. But, if you got an audience where you got the first row is, uh,, three guys talking, 'Why don't we seal that contract that's a hundred million dollar contract which we got.' And, uh,, you trying to play a ballad, you don't give a damn, you know? (LAUGHS)

How do you feel about the difference between playing a club or playing, let's say playing for an audience, people that are dancing. I mean this music grew up around people dancing, and at some point...

Yeah, well, uh,, the difference between, uh,, playing for an audience that just sits uh,, and listens and an audience that uh,, feels the emotions and music and gets up and gives vent to their feelings and dances, its a little happier feeling I think and this is what we used to uh,, years ago, when I first got invalved involved, with uh,, playing one nighter's uh,, half of the bance the dance floor would would uh,, usually be occupied with people who wanted to just come up and listen you know? Yet there was uh,, the other half, that really wanted to move about. And of course when you were in the clubs and all uh, you got a much more sophisticated audience they are totally aware of what you're doing most of them and they know if you're going to make a mistake, they know when you make a mistake. They know if you play the right changes and they know what to anticipate, they say, 'Oh oh, watch out, he's getting ready to do the ...?... and so forth.' So, it, uh, it's two different factions all together, and uh, the big band playing the dance, sometimes it doesn't matter too much, uh, how intricately you get involved with the being correct, you know, but uh, when you're playing with, for, at a small venue, a small Jazz room with a real hip Jazz audience, you better have done your homework. (LAUGHS)

I hear you. OK I want to talk a little bit about Ellington, you spent a lot of time with Ellington and I'd love to talk, I heard you said it was the University of Ellingtonia, when you were in the group. Tell us what did you learn, what was he doing?

Well, uh, if you were ever with the Ellington Band you'll find that just through the process of osmosis so many things rubbed off on you that you, that you were totally unaware of until the time came when you needed it, uh, for instance. Say, what your situation would go, 'What would Maestro have done here? Say, 'Oh yes!' Then you push your little computer and it's there. 'Oh yeah, I think he would have done this.' He taught us so many things about, uh, communicating with, uh, the with the band, but handling the band members and establishing a rapport between the bandstand and the audiences you know? Uh, he was just a marvelous person, he knew how to psychoanalyze everybody, he knew how to psyche you into to doing what he wanted you to do, and just too nice being nice and, uh, in a, just a warm person. For instance, give you an idea, we did an album once called, 'A Drum is a Woman' and uh, he said to me, 'Sweetie, you gonna portray the role of Buddy Bolden.', now this is a -Buddy Bolden is a, was an ancient, uh, trumpet player, and I said, 'Well Maestro, you don't even know that much about Buddy Bolden,' I said, 'what do I know about Buddy?' He said, 'Oh, sure you know about Buddy Bolden,' he said, 'he was suave.' And he demonstrated as he went, as he went along, 'He was debonair and he was dapper and he was always, uh, accompanied by charming ladies.' He said, 'And as a matter of fact he's had such a big fat sound, when he tuned up in New Orleans, he would break glasses across the river in Algiers,' and said, 'he was fantastic with diminishes and bent, oh man, could he bend a note and diminishes...' So he say, 'Play me some bent notes.' So I play a few bent notes, I just something like this (PLAYS HORN) that's what we call a bent note when you vary the pitch, go from the center below, or above. He say, 'That's it, now play me some diminishes.' I was (PLAYS HORN) He said, 'That's it, you are Buddy Bolden.' And I thought I was Buddy Bolden there for a minute. (LAUGHS) So what you heard on the record of 'A Drum is a Woman' is what he actually extracted from me through is uh, psychology. (LAUGHS)

That is fascinating, because I think - people, one thing we know about him is that he was able to get the out of his, his, his musicians. And some people played better for him than they ever did, anywhere else and he sort of... um, but I heard he had some problems with some, you know, sometimes discipline, he wasn't too good on, uh,...

Well, he would tell you in the beginning, 'I'm not a disciplinarian, I surround myself with the qualified and capable people who are, uh, able to do what I want done with my music and uh, as far as the dis- uh, discipline is concerned, that's not my bag you know?' So he just expected you to do what you were supposed to do and you did it. If you didn't somebody else would. (LAUGHS)

'Cause not, not everybody did. I mean, I - some, some musicians gave him kind of a hard time...

Yeah well some people you know, some people give themselves a hard time. (LAUGHS). But he had a few people who tried to give him a hard time and in turn gave themselves a hard time whom he loved and uh, he just stuck with them and uh, rode the waves, because he knew that they were capable when, when they were in the condition to do so, they were capable of uh, interpreting his music in the proper fashion. So that's all he wanted, you know?

He had very big goals for his music, he was trying to say something very important I think, can you help us? What did he, how did he communicate that to you what he was trying to say with the music?

He was just as stern and staunch about his beliefs in music and uh, he didn't particularly go by the book, he went by Ellington, he, he wrote his own book. And he believed that he was, that's the way he was about everything, about style, uh, everybody was wearing cuffless trousers and he started, had some suits made with three inch cuffs, you know? And he had some idiosyncrasies, uh, which he lives by, for instance, uh, he didn't like buttons - he would never wear a shirt with more than one button, and it would be hidden up under the collar - he didn't like some of the old show biz things. He didn't like, uh, peanuts in the dress - he didn't like whistling in the dressing room, he didn't like, uh, things of that sort, safe- uh, safety pins... And, one particular occasion, he had written a suite and he was coming down on the elevator at the Roxy with this beautiful music in his, in his, under his arm, and uh, the elevator stopped and the jolt of the elevator, uh, made the bulb from the light above fall out and it fell down onto his hands somehow, cut his hands and he blamed that on the fact that the yellow music paper on which the his suite was written was the cause of his problems so, he came down and he said to Tom Willy, 'Take all that music on yellow paper out of the book.' (LAUGHS) So he didn't like yellow.

He also, he composed a lot using the names of colors for a lot of his compositions.

Oh yeah, 'Terribly Blue', 'Mauve', uh, 'Mood Indigo' things of that sort, yeah.

He saw the world in colors? The music somehow? I mean is that something that we can explain?

Well, it's very difficult to see, to explain how he saw the world, but uh, we are very very happy to listen to the results of the way he saw the world. That's the only thing I can say to that, but he was a marvelous man. And our kind a our kind, huh,?

Can you tell me a little bit about his routine on the road, I know he worked at weird hours, he sort of kept his own schedule, he was always doodling with something, was he...

Yeah, he always liked to continue to stay busy, not one to take vacations. He made a trip from California to New York, and uh, he uh, sat next to a gentleman who was uh, a Texan, you know? And you could tell from his speech you know, what part of the country he was from, so they never said a word to each other, they never said a word when the plane landed in New York, it landed about sundown so, this gentleman broke the silence and said to Duke, 'Duke, you know twilight time's the lonesomest time of the day, ain't is?' So Duke says, 'Yeah yes.' You know? And...

You were telling a story about, Ellington was on a plane and when the plane landed...

Yeah, right and this Texas next seat and they up in first class of course, and it's spacious and not too many people, and it's quiet and the gentleman didn't uh, interrupt, uh, they didn't interrupt each other's silence and peace and quiet for the whole trip, until the end of the trip and they were about to land and the Texan said to Duke, 'Duke, twilight time is the lonesomest time of the day isn't it?' And Duke said, 'Yes as a matter of fact it is.' Duke was so impressed with that, uh, quote till he got off the plane went home and wrote a tune, 'Twilight Time it the Lonesomest Time of the Day', and he only wrote (IMITATES SONG) and he voiced it beautifully, passed it out and the band played it and he said, OK, played it and he tore it up. (LAUGHS) But I've never forgot the melody. He did a suite for the, the queen, a whole suite, and played it and burned the score.

Was it because he was only interested in the process of making music?

He just, he likes, that's why he liked to have his band on hand and have a, a qualified, uh, group of people to interpret his thoughts. He just wanted to hear them, and after he'd heard them, that was the satisfaction to him, you know?

He kept his band together in the early '50's when there really wasn't... it was hard, I mean, there weren't that many...

It was very difficult absolutely.

Did he talk about that, why he was keeping the band going?

Yeah, because of that same purpose, ... he always wanted to be surrounded with people that could uh, interpret his music at any time, whenever or wherever, you know? And uh, as a matter of fact he was a a successful composer enough at this time to afford to be able to afford uh, the salaries of these guys through the medium of his ASCAP earnings, you know, so he was a a notch above uh, most of the people at that time, you know?

But he actually spent his own money, his royalties to pay the band to keep it going. I heard he played, you know, you played things like, sometimes an Ice Capades or something like some kind of shows that wouldn't have been what he would have been used to earlier, and what did he say about, I mean I heard some, you know, how did he describe, 'Well, I'm doing this.' I mean.

He just wanted to keep the band together and keep uh, sometimes he would have to break the band off and they used to work up at the top of the of the uh, Radio City uh,...

Rainbow Room.

Rainbow Room, and he would take the key members of the band and go up there and play dance music and uh, of course it wasn't really what he enjoyed doing but he wanted to make sure that he kept these men intact, at least his key men, and when he got ready to hit again, he's just surrounded with the some of the people who were still waiting or some new ones, but he always had his key man.

I want to talk a little bit about the Newport Jazz Festival in '56, that was such an important moment in a long long career. Do you remember what happened when he came on-stage, and tell us briefly, what was the scene in Newport?

Well, we were playing a, the, the normal concert, uh, that we usually played, and we had two numbers back to back that we used to call 107 and 108, the numbers in the book, it was 'Diminuendo in Blue' and 'Crescendo in Blue' so after we got past the, the mediocre part of it, it built all along and all and as it began to build, some gorgeous voluptuous lady, uh, in the audience uh, decided that she was being moved to the point where she couldn't no longer contain herself, so she jumped up on the stage and started to uh, allowing herself to uh, be uh, flounced around a bit. (LAUGHS) And Ellington uh, kind of enjoyed that and it inspired him and he in turn inspired the band and the band was uh, and Sam Woodyard, was u the drummer and he started pounding a little heavier, so things begin to build up to a real frenzy and uh, that was the result of it. (LAUGHS) Paul Gonzalez played longer than he usually played you know he I think he played about 27 choruses on the Blues you know. So, its all history, huh,, there are a lot of people who claim that they were responsible for it for instance, Joe Jones, people say Joe Jones was standing backstage with uh, with a Daily News and he was tapping on the on the edge of the bandstand with this newspaper. No, he says that he was the one who inspired it. (LAUGHS)

And what happened to his career after that? I mean what you know all of a sudden people sort of were reminded, 'Oh Duke Ellington.' I mean a wide audience, huge hits, that record that...

Well, it was... it was just that the, there was a younger crowd at this particular thing at this time and uh, heretofore the band had pretty much performed for the elite you know, upper echelon and the older people, well at this festival uh, as as the kids would say, 'They got down.' (LAUGHS) Yeah.

That's great, that's great. Can you tell me what was the relationship with Billy Strayhorn, his arranger, I mean they had a really interesting collaboration. Do you remember seeing them together, how they would share idea?

Yeah they were they were just uh, two inseparable people they were really the uh, Strayhorn was a sort of an extenuation of uh, Ellington you know? And, uh, Duke hired him originally as a as a lyricist, uh, he was a any anytime you find a kid 15, 16 years old who can come up with lyrics like he had in uh, 'Lush Life', 'Come what may places, twelve o'clock tales, sullen faces, relaxin' on the axles of the wheel of life, to get the feel of life..' and things of this sort and this is a 16 year old 15 year old kid who had concocted these lyrics so, after having been around Ellington for a while uh, Duke found out that he could write too, you know, so it reached the point where they would really just play games with each other, on one occasion, Duke was in the middle of writing something for uh, a film in Hollywood, so he reached the point where he hadn't decided uh, which direction to go, he could go right or he could go left so he calls uh, uh, Sweetpea, he said, 'Hey Strays,' he called him Strays, we always called him Sweetpeas or Peas, uh, so he say, 'Hey, Strays uh, I'm at this point right here in this composition, bling bling bling...' and he plays it and he say, 'What would you do, would you go, bling bling over here or would you go blang blang?' So, Strays said to him said, 'Well Edward uh, you would know that much better than I, however if I uh, were to do it think I would do such and such a thing.' Which is exactly what Ellington wanted him to say, you know? He got him to commit himself and I don't know whether he deliberately went the opposite direction or whether he went that direction, but uh, they they played little things like that with each other. They were very very beautiful people to work for, when you write when you when they wrote, most people who right will write an arrangement and uh, they'll write it, the first trumpet, second trumpet, third, fourth and... lead alto, third alto, tenor, bass, baritone and so forth, but they didn't write that way they would write for the individuals in the ensemble, which is why Ellington hand picked all of his people, uh, for instance the the saxophone part that fit John Hodges would have 'Rab' on it which is his nickname, 'Rabbit' because he had ears that looked like a rabbit and uh, the vocal uh, they'd have a 'Toto' on his he was a nickname of uh, Otto Hardwicke who had put, who Russell Procope replaced years ago so they called him 'Toto' on his music you see Toto, on Paul Gonsalves' music uh, you'd see uh, Paul or Pablo, uh, Harry Carney's you used to see Carney and all of it and Jimmy Hamilton, uh, Jimmy and uh, on uh, trumpet it would be Ray Nance uh, which 'Root', his nickname was 'Root', Root and Cat, Cat Anderson, and Shorty Boo, Shorty Baker and me 'C.T.' and uh, so forth Quentin Jackson was Butter, and uh, Juan Tizol the valve trombone, he was uh, Duke called him Juanito, so Juanito would be on his music, so then Britt Woodman whose Britt, and he used to in fact they wrote tunes that these called, 'Britt and Butter', Butter was uh, Quentin Jackson, Britt Woodman was uh, the ...?... So, all these pieces of music would have names on them and when you pass them, and they pass out a new piece of music you'd play it and afterwards you'd, naturally it would be beautiful and enjoyable, and uh, we'd walk up to Peas and say, 'Hey Peas man that sure was a beautiful piece of music.' And their reply, uh, he and Duke would be, 'Did you enjoy your part? Now who else would write a part for the individual. (LAUGHS)

How did you feel the first day you got there, or as soon as you had music that had your name? I mean, here's Duke Ellington writing music for you to play.

Well, I was extremely flattered although it takes it takes a little while because the, they used to say, 'You don't put your laundry in for the first ten years.' (LAUGHS) So after I had gotten my laundry in he finally wrote a piece for me from left hand corner, which he called 'Juniflip on the Fluglehorn' this is in 1957 when I first started playing uh, the fluglehorn, and uh, he decided that uh,, 'Well see I like that sound, let's keep that in.' So he wrote a piece for me.

What was it like - compare Basie and Ellington.

Well, I usually refer to my stint with the Ellington Band as a period during which I attended the University of Ellingtonia and the period with the Count Basie Band is the period that was a prep school in preparation for enrollment at the University of Ellingtonia.

OK we're asking everyone, we've decided, with your help, with you suggestion, to play for us, 'When the Saints go Marching In.' Can you play it the way you would like to play it?

Alright, well, I tell you a little secret. You know I'm having you see that?

Yeah.

I'm having a little problem, but when you've been around the horn long enough you know how to pick a key where you won't have to use that valve, so I'm going to play 'The Saints' in the key of F. (PLAYS HORN) See I didn't have to touch that valve. (LAUGHS)

That makes me think of a very important question which probably nobody can answer, but you can help us to begin to understand, when you play something is swinging. What does that mean? I mean when you're swinging, what does that mean?

When you're swinging it means that it's emotional enough to be felt and uh, enjoyed by yourself as well as those who you're surrounded by and uh, the people who are paying you to do whatever it is that you're doing. You know if it doesn't swing and you can also feel that too. And Ellington once made a very profound statement, 'It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing'. And that still hold true.

I think many generations are trying to figure out exactly what that does mean, we're still working on that.

Tell us about how musicians communicate with each other by talking through their instruments, tell us what that what that really means.

OK if you remember we spoke in earlier about Ellington surrounding himself with people that were qualified to do whatever his ideas were about giving vent to his feelings, and his music? Well, he had a gentleman in his original band by the name of Rex Stewart who was a very very stellar attraction to the band, marvelous trumpet player and uh, he had a marvelous vocalist by the name of Ivy Anderson and to create a bit of uh, light frivolity and fun during performance uh, he had a little bit Rex would discuss things with Ivy and he would do it through the medium of what we refer to as a cocked valve or semi-suppressed valve and it make made the sound like a voice, you could do it much better on a trumpet than you can on a fluglehorn this is a fluglehorn, its a derivative of the old German bugle and it uh, conical shaped uh, its in the coronet family, if it were straightened out into one piece it would be a long ice cream cone, so uh, its you can do it better on the trumpet because of the sm- uh, more similar tubing throughout but it the idea is this (DEMONSTRATES ON HORN) Duke we did an album once uh, we're we did the Shakespearean suite and I had to portray the role of uh, Puck, the court jester and he said that uh, you have to recite uh, the bit that Puck said, 'Lord what fools you mortal, these mortals be.' And I have to say (PLAYS ON HORN) (LAUGHS)

Amazing, totally amazing. We are trying to figure out in this film, for let's say a ten year old kid, they're going to tell them they say, 'Mr. Terry, what what is Jazz what is this music that you make?' Can you explain in a way... You can tell us there's no answer, tell us from your heart, is there any way we can define what this music is?

What Jazz is. There's ten zillion different explanations as to what Jazz is. There's ten different reasons for ten thousand different reasons for ten thousand people supporting it getting involved with it and appreciating it and playing it. That's a small sphere of people, even at that but uh,, uh, what his name the piano, Fats Waller once made a classical statement, he said, 'If you have to ask about it , you don't need to know about it.' (LAUGHS) But you can't possibly tell this to younger uh, people who are getting involved, Jazz I I uh, my uh, trite explanation to it is its a way of life, its an appreciation for giving vent to your feelings uh, music wise and uh, hoping that uh, others will understand uh, on the same level.

There is something we're doing the film because we're interested in everything about America and there's something unique, Jazz was created in this country with these particular circumstances. Is there anything you can help us understand why is Jazz America's music? Is there anything about America that's in the music that you can relate to?

Well, Jazz is the only indigenous art form in America and it's a widely appreciated all over the world, because everywhere else you go in the world, they've given all artistic approach uh, they've already done that so they can they they will appreciate uh, uh, when you go there and play Jazz uh, basically because they were not exposed to it in the beginning they didn't create it, they don't know anything about it uh, in New Orleans where where the people used to sit around the Congo Square and decide over what tunes and how to get involved in Dixieland and they used to play the funerals and after the funerals the second line would raise it up and Jazz it up and they'd come back feeling happy, its just just basically it was happy music, is is uh, spin-off of what they used to refer to as Ragtime and uh, the Scott Joplin type of of approach to music and uh, its just uh, a its a its an extremely difficult thing to pin point and say its this one thing, its a way of life its its a matter its a a its a form of appreciation of a a form of giving vent to one's feelings a form of uh,, uh, trying to communicate with certain people on a certain level.

And no one could have said it better than you. That was very helpful. We're going to work on it when we find out the answer we'll let you know.

There, there will never be an answer. (LAUGHS)

I know that's what's great about it though. Um, I read somewhere, someone a writer that I was reading about said he thought that Count Bassie could make one note swing.

Oh yeah, well, Count Basie uh, became very very very popular uh, through the medium of the notes which he didn't play more so than the notes which he did play, basically because he was uh, uh, well he started out in Kansas City, with a swinging little group and his rhythm section was was the most fantastic rhythm section ever, he had Joe Jones on drums, he had uh, Walter Page, who we used to call 'Biggun' so he got Pappa Joe and Biggun and little ..?.. uh, Claude Williams that uh, for a while and then a little later came uh, Freddie Green so with these guys playing and he developed this habit through the medium of his socializing in Kansas City, the the The Cherry Blossom uh,, the little club that they played in was a place with uh, maybe the size of this living room with tables all gainum gingham table cloths all around there and everybody was very intimately arranged you know? So from so and so to Bassie's piano is right next to a table here you know, so he would uh, have friends and naturally everybody's in the place is his friend so, he has a little taste over here and the the rhythm section is playing, (IMITATES RHYTHM SECTION) Biggum's pulling away and Joe Joe's... you here the guitarist, 'chum chum', so all he has to do is say, 'sprink', and he goes over here and say, 'Yeah baby you know it's good to see you man I haven't seen you.' And he has a little taste over here. Meanwhile the rhythm section is still going he comes back, (IMITATES) he goes over here, ' Yeah you know we was talking about it before the so and so and so.' And he has a little taste over here, so his uh, his uh, habits of a social life kind of contributed to his uh, sparse indulgence in the keyboard on the keyboard.

(LAUGHS) But whatever whatever the reason we always uh, uh, say that Bassie was a person who taught us all, uh, beginners and old timers alike the very very important uh, lesson, and that is the importance of the utilization of space and time, in Jazz.

Can you explain what that means, space and time?

Sp-by by by by time we mean by being able to to motivate yourself to the point through the medium of the rhythm section to having the the same the the beat fall in the same place at all times, 'bing bing bing bing bing' that's time, and space is when you don't put you've seen guys who play and they'll say, (PLAYS HORN) you know play all the notes they know and uh, people will instead of going away saying, 'Did you hear that kid play?', they say, ' Did you see that kid play?' So, space, you hit a note (PLAYS HORN) all that space that's happening in between is is very very very very much uh, very conducive to you're solo, if you might play one note in the whole twelve measures of the Blues, but its still your solo. (LAUGHS) because you're utilize utilizing space and time.

That was college course for me. OK. Riffing. Can you tell us what is a riff ...?

A riff is is simply a Jazz statement. Uh, it's as simple as that.

OK uh, what was Basie like to work for - what was, what he like as a human being to work for, how did he work with the band?

He was a marvelous person, very very very down to Earth, he was like one of the one of the cats you know? Anything that we got involved in, he was involved in it just as well, I have some funny stories about about Basie I don't know if you got time for all of them or not but uh, some real funny ones.

Count Basie, you plated with him for a long time, he was quite a character it sounds like, do you have a favorite story?

Oh he was he was he was a beautiful person, such a fun loving guy, he was always one of the gang. Whatever we got into, he was always involved himself. Uh,, one particular case, I got three funny stories, one's uh, several years ago he was forced to break the big band up and form a small group, so as to work himself out of debt. So, we were working in Toronto and uh, we had uh, been working for a long long time and we had the same uniforms had become tattered and torn and raggedy and smelly, you know? So we wanted him to buy us some new uniforms, so he wouldn't do it, 'Oh, no body cares about this that what the what the heck.' You know ...?... there's always some undercurrent to some to say when they ask him something. So, which meant nothing so uh,, we say, 'OK Base' uh, one day Marshal Wall(?) and I took our uniforms and cut them into shreds and took them to his door of his hotel and hung 'em on the outside, tied them up on the outside of the doorknob and some paper and lift the bottom of them and set them on fire then banged on his door. And, he heard this noise and smelled the smoke, he come, 'Ahhh!' ...?... he was jumping up and down. (LAUGHS) Putting out the fire. That's one story. Another story is uh, several years ago, uh, I was riding home with him and uh, he he didn't do too much driving but his wife Catherine, she was driving, so while she was driving we were reminiscing, at this particular time I was with Ellington's band but we were working uh, Ellington's band was up at the Bandbox, which is upstairs and they were down in Birdland, which is down in the hole, uh, both on 52nd and Broadway.

So, I would catch a ride home with Bassie, because they pass right by my house and we uh, all the way in we uh, talked about different things that happened when I was with the band, say yeah you remember so and so? Oh yeah yeah. So then he uh, I said, 'You know what, what I had for dinner today?' He said, 'No.' Now his favorite was ham and cabbage, I said, 'I had ham and cabbage.' 'What.' 'Delicious, man it was so good', said so I said, 'I'm gonna', when we got to the house, 'I'm gonna go upstairs and uh, and uh, jump into this ham and cabbage, you know.' So I said, 'OK.' He said, 'OK.' So it was kind of uh, just before daylight and I got out on the cross street from my house, cause they had to continue and I walked out, I said, 'Goodnight Holy.' "We called him Holy, Holy had the connotation of being something that was very special to you" so I said, 'Goodnight Holy.' And his wife was Catherine and I called her Katie, 'Goodnight Katie.' 'Goodnight.' So, I noticed he didn't say anything so I walk up, pretty soon I heard it, 'Bup Bup Bup' his little hard heels walking across the street. I said, 'What do you, do you got to go to the bathroom or something?' He say, 'Bathroom my eye, you think you going to go up there and eat that ham and cabbage by yourself you're crazy.' (LAUGHS)

So he came up and ate ham and cabbage and put his feet up on the coffee table and leaned back on the couch and went to sleep. (LAUGHS) The third story, which I think is the funniest one, was several years ago when we had the small group, we were uh, this was during the period when uh, things were not too kosher as far as uh, um social life was concerned with the races you know? So, we were relegated to living in the homes of uh, various people when we would travel.

So, this particular day we were, let's say we were in Miss Jones' house, well Miss Jones say, 'Well, I can take two, but uh, one has to sleep in a small bed up against the wall and uh, ...' I said, 'Oh.' Bassie said, 'Alright.' So everybody was accounted for except, me and Holy. So, we had this room way up in the attic and he had a great big bed and I had a little slab up against the wall. So uh, um, problem was that the Bassie could never go to sleep with the light out and I couldn't go to sleep with the light on. (LAUGHS) So, I knew I said well I got to figure out a way to get to circumvent this, But I knew that he read comic books every night and he always slept with this with the no top on so I said well I think I'll just wait until I hear the comic book hit his belly, then that'll be my cue to go over and pull out the light. So. I should preface this by saying that uh, almost invariably when guys go to bed they take off their, empty their pockets ordinarily put it on the dresser or in the dresser drawer. Well, we didn't have a dresser drawer, so we had to put all of our things on top of the dresser so my stuff was piled here, his stuff was piled there. So, we go to sleep and he's reading his comic book, 'Rah Ha Ha Ha!!!' I mean his literature was very important to him, so he's reading and finally it uh, reached the point where he was getting sleepy and pretty soon I heard the book say (CLAPS AND MAKES SNORING SOUNDS) I said, 'Ah, now's my chance.'

So I sneaked over from my slab, and reached over to pull the chain on the light and he sat straight up in the bed and said, 'Put it back!' Now (LAUGHS) I don't know what he meant the the light or what he thought I had absconded with his belongings so, but it was funny, straight up in the bed.

Sounds like he was a real character.

Oh yes he was beautiful.

Um, that reminds me of something that Gary said, last night and I think it's a great idea, about, you know, you have a lot of time when you're with a band when you're not actually on stage. You're traveling, you're waiting around, you're on call. And you pass this the time by telling jokes. I heard you kind of, you were the jokester. You're the big joke teller, but what kind of things would you guys do to pass the time and who would tell the jokes?

Oh we got buckets full of jokes. Then one of the things that we used to do to pass away the time is uh, in strange places look through the audiences and point out a person and say, 'Who's that?' And everybody say yeah, it looks like somebody else from another place you know? So we used to play that game and uh, it was fun, you know? But the joke telling time was uh, that was always important.

It kept everyone together.

Yeah yeah.

You mentioned about segregation, now I want to talk a little about it because I think people today don't necessarily really understand what it was like. But we don't want to talk about in the point of view of how terrible, even though it was terrible, but in - I think the more important point is that you found a way to do your job, and to get around what you had to do and I think that's - people should know that. I mean, you had to stay

in people's houses, boarding houses, whatever, I mean - do you know the Green Book people had to, you know, the Green Book - did you ever have that?

The Green... oh you mean for finding accommodations for people?

Yeah.

Oh I don't think there was any such thing in those days, not not not for black people in those days, that was way way back, where...

And you had to play in for segregated audiences in the South.

Yup. We had to play uh, the certain venues where half the the the the floor would be divvied off with a rope and uh, and uh, white people dancing over here and the black people dancing over here, then some occasions where you'd play and the Caucasians would dance on the floor and the blacks would sit in the audience in the stands and then it was reversed sometimes the white people would dance and and the black people would be in the, in the stand. So it was, it was a very very stupid situation, really.

No kidding. Quickly I want to ask about Miles Davis, who I know you inspired and worked with and grew up with. When he was a kid, I mean. Not many people we know knew him as a kid, and he wanted to play. What was he like as a kid, was he - what kind of kid was he?

Well he was a, when he was in high school, when I first met him, his teacher was uh, Elwood Buchanan(?) and Buke used to always tell me, he'd say, Buke and I used to be great beer drinking buddies, he said, '...?... you gotta come over to the school...' over in East St. Louis where he taught, ' You gotta come over the school and meet this little Dewey Davis I got, man Dewey Davis, man he's fantastic.'

So, he talked about him so much that I went over to the school one day and met him, and I met this little thin kid. He was thin as a rail then, if he had to turn sideways the teacher would have marked him absent, he was so thin and he was very shy, he couldn't look you in the eye, he would talk down like this to you and uh, and from that point on uh, I started to you know tried to keep up with him, and then shortly after that uh, we were playing down in Southern Illinois, in Carbondale, Illinois with a band called uh, Benny Reed, who was a peg leg uh, dancer that uh, I have to tell you a funny story about him by the way. Uh,, we used to live in a rooming house down there where they fed us breakfast and uh, Benny could eat uh,, everything in sight you know and uh, we used to hide his leg uh, and run downstairs and eat as much and we could and hear him hopping around, 'All right where's my leg?' (LAUGHS) So they... cause we had to do that because if he got down there first then forget it, so anyhow we were playing there Benny Benny Benny

Reed's group and it was for uh, Maypole Windy Affair cause you know the other kids, uh, it was an interscholastic thing where the kids came down from different schools into the university area and Miles came down with his high school band, and I'm playing professionally with Benny Reed's. So, Miles this little kid comes up to me and said, 'Hey mister can you please to show me something uh,...' Show him something I said, 'Aw, get out of here no body wants to talk about no trumpet now, all these pretty little girls running winding the may pole flag and you want to talk about trumpet.' So, I sort of fluffed him off. Then, shortly after that I was uh, uh, frequenting one of our favorite watering holes for jam sessions which was the Elks Club. It had a long flight of stairs and as I was approaching the the top of these stairs, I could hear a new horn, (IMITATES HORN STYLE) I said wow I never heard that horn so I ran up there and I ran up to the bandstand and Eddie Randall was uh, it was his band and here was this kid sittin', this little thin kid sittin' there say, 'Hey man aren't you?' He say, 'Yeah, I'm the cat you fluffed off in Carpendale. (LAUGHS) So we we used to laugh about that many times after that, yeah.

We want our audience to feel what it was like to be on 52nd street when it was at its height. Can you put yourself in time, close your eyes for a second and think about what was going on when you walked down the street there? Paint us a picture.

Well, it was uh, if you've ever been to uh, like a fair or a carnival, it had sort of an atmosphere of that sort because every club, one behind the other uh, one next to the other uh, they were very small clubs but they all had name Jazz people performing there, I remember when George Shearing first came over he was there and during that same period is when I made my first trip to New York, I was in the Navy and I went to New York on on leave because my cousin uh, Scotty lived in New York so I went to visit him and uh, that must have been uh, '45, if if you know when President Roosevelt passed it was I was on the train...

That was '45.

I was on the train coming back when after having visited the 52nd Street. And when I went down um 52nd Street I decided I was going take my horn and just see what was going on. I never played in New York City before so I went in and with my sailor suit on and uh, trumpet bag under my under my arm and Tony Scott, uh, was a very famous clarinet player in those days, he was working at the I don't know whether it was The Three Deuces, Onyx to The Spotlight, or one of those clubs, uh, there were tons of them one next to the other. So, I was standing at the bar having a beer and uh, Tony spotted me, he said, 'Hey there's a sailor out there with a with a uni- with a trumpet under his arms.' He say, 'Can you play that thing?' I say, 'Well, I'd like to try.' He said, ' Well, come on up.' So, that was my introduction to to the scene in New York. And, Tony liked what I was doing, as a matter of fact uh, uh, two days later he had a gig at the Eight Forty Five Club up in the Bronx, and he hired me for it so that was my first gig in New York. Yeah.

That's great, I love the picture of you in the sailor suit. Dizzy. Tell us a little bit about - do you have a funny - I know he was a very guy and a great great great musician. Do you have a favorite story about Dizzy?

Very funny guy, but but a very - Dizzy was a very very beautiful person and a great friend of mine, and one of the most fantastic musicians that ever came down the pike, he was a thorough musician, he knew his chords, backwards as a matter of fact he he he's the one who really got Miles into playing uh, with the real hip changes and hip chords and uh, I have a funny story about Dizzy. Dizzy at this particular time the Board of Education was uh, really zeroing in on the ways and means of teaching younger students and Dizzy has a habit of right to his last uh, breath of puff, he puffed his cheeks out tremendously, Harry James used to do the same thing, and Fats Navarro and a lot of the guys who played the ...?... puff out the cheeks. Well, the Board of Education had the started this uh, program to try to correct young musicians from uh, to keep them from getting involved in that thing. So, Dizzy uh, Harry James stopped his immediately, he just went ...?... and played like nothing ever ever happened. But Dizzy found it a little difficulty he said, 'Man.' When he came to St. Louis, he said, 'Man, can you take me downtown and introduce me to Joe Gustav(?)?' Joe Gustav was the first trumpet player with the St. Louis Symphony and he taught a lot of people, he taught Miles' teacher, Miles' teacher taught the same principles to to Miles, Buchanan. So, uh, he ask uh, uh, me to take him down to meet, Dizzy asked me to take him down to meet Gustav. So, I took him down to St. Louis Band and introduced him and uh, Gustav was a very domineering strong personality person and he was very intimidating just to look at him, he would intimidate you so, he said to Dizzy, he says, 'Take that instrument out.' So, Dizzy already scared to death, so he took his instrument out and he said, 'Play something!' So, Dizzy start that, (IMITATES DIZZY PLAYING), so Gustav was walking away so he wheeled around he said, 'Do that again.!' So Dizzy played something even more fantastic so then he says uh,, 'Play me some eight notes.' So Diz plays some eight notes and he changed the (IMITATES DIZZY PLAYING) you know? So he says, 'How long you been doing that?' So, Dizzy very reluctantly answered, 'Well, uh, all my life.' He said, 'Well you just keep doing it and get the hell out of here.' (LAUGHS)

Tell us about your song 'Mumbles'. Uh,, can you, can you sing it?

Well, 'Mumbles' is a take off of uh, uh, the places uh, the places, refreshments uh, dens of iniquity or whatever you want to call them, in St. Louis. Any other way they were just bars with sawdust covered floors and a piano. And each piano each bar had a piano, which was triply laminated to withstand the weight of several steins of beer and uh, if you bought the piano player a beer, which was a nickel a dipper in those days, he would play for you to sing. And it didn't matter how obnoxiously one sounded nor what you were singing about, the idea was to get the fun and the merriment uh, floating around the room and then the sawdust would start popping bouncing off the floor from the foot tappin' and then the finger popping and the as Ellington would say the earlobe tilting and uh, the fun and merriment was most important. The guy might have decided he wanted to sing about his bacon and eggs in the morning uh, so the piano player would make an introduction, usually in the key of F Sharp, the raised keys because they were all untaught piano players you know? And uh, so he'd make an introduction and you'd start sayin', 'I got my eggs in the morning you know...' After the first uh, utterance of uh, the first measure everything was highly unintelligible and it didn't matter because of the fun and merriment. And that's was my put on of those old blues singers back in the joints in St. Louis in those days.

Scat singing is a very important part of Jazz. How, can you demonstrate a little bit how it's done, and talk about how it started?

Well, in the beginning uh, scat singing uh, no body really knows who was the first one to do it but we like to think that it was Pops, and it happened uh, through the medium of his having forgotten the lyrics. He was singing the song, '(MUMBLES) ... forgot the lyrics oh'... and so forth, and that became the utterance of uh, sounds that uh,, so Pops used to s- sort of say, (SINGS SCAT), and stuff like that and then uh, a little later on Bom Bom Turnell(?) and uh, the other people who used to sing with Jan Savett, and all down the line uh, people got a little more involved until it reached uh, the Bee-Bop era and Dizzy started to uh, singing uh, and then people associated with Diz like uh, uh, Carol, uh, and uh, Pancho Haggard(?) and people they would they sould sing a actual hip lines you know with the progressive chords. (SCATS) and things of that sort you know and uh,, I decided to to put the this this play on uh, the Blues singers that we talked about and that's how we created uh, the 'Mumbles' thing you know? So uh, uh, we may not have time to sing a whole song of mumbles but I can recite a little poetry of mumbles. (DOES SO). (LAUGHS)

That was great. And now I want to ask one more question which is a sort of complicated question, which I hope you can help us try and make sense of. This music was certainly begun by African Americans in this country, but white people have played it too and have loved it and been an audience for it, and it's a very complicated questions around that I think, especially today when our society is polarized along these lines. I mean I've heard interviews with some musicians saying, 'Well white musicians are good but they're never going to be as good as black musicians.' I mean, can anybody play, or is there

something - tell me from your heart, really - we really need to know - what is, what is, what do you feel about this?

Well, my feeling on that is that piano keyboard has white keys and it has black keys. Music pa- music paper is white and the notes written on it is black, anybody that has uh, the perseverance to indulge in living the music, learning about the music and being a part of the music, they can give vent to their feelings and they can play. And they can give vent their feelings they can play Jazz. And a note, a note doesn't give a darn who plays it as long as it plays it well.

Thank you very very much. That's great thank you.

Women, why have there not been more women....

Well in the past there was a very very difficult situation for women traveling uh, the buses, they had no toilets on the buses and uh, very often you have to stop and attend to your wants along the side of the bus and it could be very embarrassing for a woman and uh, as far as the places to uh, to stay you know sometime, in those days everybody had to double up in the unless a women was uh, desirous of doubling up with some particular person, it could have been a difficult situation for her. Then it was uh,, always uh, uh, frowned on uh, by the older guy- by the musicians that uh, a woman should be home in the kitchen, but I've never uh, thought that way, I've always thought as a matter fact, my current drummer is a little girl by the name of Sylvia Quinker(?) and she really plays beautifully. And I remember Melba Liston(?) who was a trombone player in the Quincy Jones Band that was there's Vai Red, and there's uh, big Tiny the trumpet player, there's there's a number of uh, fantastic uh, uh, girl musicians and a I'm just uh, happy to see my my cousin a Lisa is a violinist, uh, she plays beautiful violin and I'm very happy to see the time come where women have reached the point where they say, 'Why not, if you can do it I can do it do it too.' We made a record years ago for Leonard Feather(?) called 'Cats Versus Chicks' and it the title to the title tune was, 'Anything you can do I can do better' and that was a crux of the thing and so the guys would play and then the chicks would play, the cats would play and then the chicks would play, and it was a beautiful album, you know?

The End