

# THE JAZZ CENTRE **Centrepiece**

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**International  
Jazz Day  
at The Jazz Centre UK**

**+ FULL REVIEWS:**

**LET'S DO IT: by BOB STANLEY**

**IN THIS ISSUE • Buddy Greco in Southend • Peter Clayton • Jazz Impresarios  
• Derek Humble • Jazz and Poetry • Jazz Festivals 2022**



# Centrepiece



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THE  
**JAZZ**  
CENTRES

The Jazz Centre UK is open from Wednesday to Sunday 11am - 5pm.

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**OUR MISSION — TO PROMOTE, PRESERVE AND CELEBRATE THE CULTURE OF JAZZ MUSIC IN ALL ITS FORMS**

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# FROM THE DESK OF OUR CEO: Doing our Part in Partnership

**Wow! Another great edition that exemplifies how super individuals come together to create something not just great, but incredible! Being a wholly volunteer-led operation, I am always blown away by the incredible hard work everyone puts in to ensure The Jazz Centre survives and grows and when Phil tells me we have yet another bumper edition of Centrepiece and I get to see the final draft, this publication does it to me again and again.**

**F**or a small, locally driven organisation, we've proven not just by the fab book reviews, our live music programme highlights and using this mag for spreading the jazz word around town, but also that we are an organisation of NATIONAL significance, have the ability to attract UK-wide recognition and are now getting a place on the international jazz radar. This edition's cover pic features the audience-grabbing Aussie chanteuse Lily Dior performing at The Centre live on UNESCO International Jazz Day which featured on the globally significant UNESCO website . . . move over New Orleans, Southend City is now truly the New City of Jazz!



Lily Dior celebrates International Jazz Day with the Gareth Williams Trio; Gareth on piano and guitar, Geoff Gascoyne on bass, and Marc Cecil on drums.

As the world opens up again to live music, we present a fascinating piece on summer jazz festivals demonstrating how festivals are fast becoming recognised by many as safe, cool and fascinating ways to build and re-build communities. I was honoured to be asked to curate a brand new one in East London over the Platinum Jubilee weekend. That went down a storm with a nearly 2,000 strong audience, most of who were first timers, and here at The Jazz Centre UK, we're already gearing up to work alongside other local jazz organisations to support some festival developments in Southend too. Keep an eye on our website and social media pages!

The sound of jazz ain't just trumpets, clarinets or double basses as our improvised music supporting spoken word event deftly demonstrated. This somewhat evocative, aural mix of musicality widens the togetherness that poetry and music can bring, and

opens both genres up to new audiences —one of TJCUK's absolutely core objectives.

The significance of The Jazz Centre's location in the stunning Lower Atrium of an architectural icon, an arts and cultural hub, and in a City determined to showcase its cultural offerings to the world, isn't



Jon Newey, Jazzwise Editor in Chief, presents their publication *The 100 Jazz Albums that Shook the World*. Interviewed by Jazz Centre patron Chris Philips.

a coincidence. It's my absolute belief that working closely together with others in our own industry and alongside a wide range of like-minded individuals locally, regionally, and nationally, that we are a huge cultural asset to Southend. This ethos has been recognised by Jon Newey, Editor-in-Chief of *Jazzwise* magazine, and international recording artist, producer, and global jazz educator Orphy Robinson as they join our illustrious and invaluable roster of Patrons of our charity.

Those in business know that assets must be seen as an investment and, with some clever, often-out-of-the box investing, everyone can reap the rewards. Jazz is always about partnership and not territories. The Jazz Centre UK is not just about me or even us, it's about how we benefit the community we serve. The audiences, the performers and even the naysayers that just don't get jazz.

Jazz is more than just music; it's an art, a culture, a heritage, and having The Jazz Centre UK in Southend is a unique asset that is seriously worth looking after.

See you over the summer!

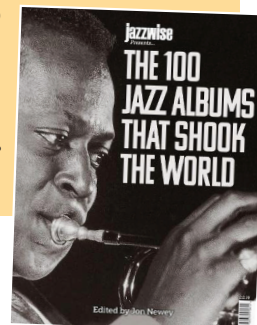
**Mark**  
Mark Kass CEO.  
June 2022

# Jazzwise: The 100 Jazz Albums that Shook the World



In 2022 Britain's best-selling jazz magazine, *Jazzwise*, celebrates its 25th anniversary. To mark the occasion they have published a 'bookazine'; *The 100 Jazz Albums that Shook the World*. On Saturday 2nd April The Jazz Centre UK was proud to host its launch with a presentation in our Media Centre by its editor Jon Newey. He was interviewed by Jazz FM presenter, and Jazz Centre patron, Chris Philips.

Jon started by saying a few words about the genesis of *Jazzwise*. In 1997, as a fan, he looked at existing jazz magazines and was not too impressed. To him they looked drab, backward-looking, with very little creative artistic design. The writing, articles and reviews, was excellent, but the overall design constrained. They compared unfavourably with rock magazines *Mojo* and *Uncut*. They were literally grey: photos were invariably monochrome.



For a new magazine, *Jazzwise*, he wanted "to marry the dynamics and visual punch of the best rock-oriented magazines, with the editorial depth of a jazz magazine." He wanted *Jazzwise* to get behind new, young talent as well as print retrospectives of jazz legends. "Jazz is serious listening" he said, "and demands serious reading." And he demanded colour photos, so an early task was to re-educate jazz record companies to replace the monochrome versions.

During his time as a jazz columnist for Tower Records' *Top* magazine, Jon was often asked for guidance on the best jazz albums. Rock journals often had polls on the best albums, and Penguin has published a Guide to Jazz on CD — 1,000 pages long. So the idea of the top 100 jazz albums was born; first in *Tower Records Jazz Guide* (1999), and then in *Jazzwise* (2006).

To make the list sound "a bit more punchy", to give it a "dynamic presentation", he called it *The 100 Jazz Albums that Shook the World*; music that changed jazz, not just a list of favourites, or Grammy Award winners, or best sellers. The albums are not listed chronologically, from 1920 onwards, but in historic importance.

Four jazz writers set out to list the 100, Jon, Keith Shadwick, Stuart Nicholson and Brian Priestley. Covid and lockdown complicated the process, and led to big phone bills. The 2006 chart was used as a starting point, to assess which albums stayed, moved up or down, and which were to be replaced by new recordings. Inevitably disagreements, sometimes rows, ensued. Occasionally Jon had to referee and push for a decision. It was "not easy to keep things on an objective level".

He gave an example; which Weather Report album was the most important? In 1999 it was *I Sing the Body Electric* (#26); in 2006 *Heavy Weather* (#21). The latter contained a big hit, *Birdland*, had Jaco Pastorius on electric bass, and was the best-seller. But in 2022 it was judged that "their fourth album *Mysterious Traveller* was the real game-changer", with extensive use of Joe Zawinul's synthesiser. Jaco's solo album, another game-changer for all electric bass players, came in at 91.

A lively Q&A followed the presentation. One question concerned the coverage of various jazz styles being taken into consideration. Jon replied that they were aware of genres, from New Orleans, through swing and be-bop, to

improv/free jazz, and the four "made sure there was wide representation". The same with women in jazz, generally represented as singers, but more recently as instrumentalists. So, as well as the obvious choices, Billie, Ella, Sarah, Betty Carter, and Abbey Lincoln, the great composer and arranger Maria Schneider with *Concert in the Garden* entered at 61. To a second question about who Jon thought might rise in any future 100, he singled out Cécile McClorin Salvant, currently at a lowly 97. Tubby Hayes was another (*Mexican Green* at 92).

The talk was punctuated with musical interludes from the 100 albums, culminating with the continuing number 1, Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue*. Jon rightly spoke of its eternal freshness, "even after 10,000 listenings". The "composiitons are unbelievably strong", he said. "If great jazz albums bottle the magic of jazz, then there was magic in the room that day at Columbia studios". Amen I say.

There is much more to the 'bookazine' than a mere list of albums; each has a brief review, and there are longer articles on *Kind of Blue*, on John Coltrane's *Giant Steps* (#2), and Charlie Parker's *Savoy Recordings* (#3). The book is beautifully produced, and reasonably priced (see this issue p. 23).

On a personal note, this reviewer went through the 100 and counted eleven British or British-based albums, led by John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra at 22, and Stan Tracey, (*Under Milk Wood Suite*, what else) at 47. In addition there are six albums from European musicians.

All 100 album covers make a superb art display in The Jazz Centre Heritage Museum.





# INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY . . .

# and LILY DIOR

Jazz music was incubated in the USA during early decades of the 20th Century. It did not take long to make an impact globally. By the mid-1920s jazz, or approximations of jazz, could be heard from South America to South Africa; in the far east from China—at least in that notorious open city Shanghai—to the Philippines and the Indian sub-continent; across the whole of Latin America and the Caribbean, and most dynamically across the whole of Europe. Often fusing with local musical cultures it blossomed into jazz spoken in many accents.

Around a hundred years after its American origins a man called Herbie had an idea. The man was jazz pianist Herbie Hancock, and in his own words: "I first proposed the idea for what would become International Jazz Day (IJD, 30 April) in 2011, shortly after being named a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Goodwill Ambassador for the promotion of intercultural dialogue."



UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock.

In November 2011 the UNESCO General Conference proclaimed 30 April as International Jazz Day; to "bring together communities, schools, artists, historians, academics and jazz enthusiasts" across the world to learn about "the art of jazz, its roots, its future and its impact."

Since that ambitious early statement International Jazz Day (IJD) has grown exponentially and had its central celebrations in New York (2012), Istanbul (2013), Osaka (2014), Paris (2015), Washington DC (2016), Havana (2017), St Petersburg (2018), and Melbourne and Sydney (2019). 2020 was tagged JazzDayatHome, and 2021 celebrated largely online.

IJD 2022 has resurfaced with an explosion of activities, centred in New

York, with a Global Concert hosted by Herbie Hancock, and streamed live. There is a website which lists countries participating on April 30—over 180, from Albania to Zimbabwe—and the musicians and organisations involved. Just a casual glance through the UK entry reveals radio broadcasts and multiple performances from Brighton to Kirkcaldy, from London (including in St Thomas' hospital), to Newcastle Upon Tyne, and includes Southend, at The Jazz Centre UK in partnership with Susan May and Spike's Place.

**"We're pleased to present the superb Australian jazz voice of Lily Dior . . . not just hands across the ocean, but hands across the globe!"**



Aptly for IJD, our guest was the Australian singer Lily Dior. Apt also because Lily's career has taken her around the world, performing not just in her home country and New Zealand, but as far afield as the USA (working with Mark Murphy and the Manhattan Jazz Quintet), Brazil, Japan, Shanghai, and Hong Kong, and latterly in the UK, now her base. She has a number of well-reviewed CDs in a variety of styles, from classic soul and rhythm and blues, blues and jazz. *Clear Day*, *No More Blues*, and *Let's Talk About It* are highly recommended listening on Spotify.

For her appearance at The JCUK Lily celebrated the music of Sarah Vaughan, a favourite of Lily's from her formative years. She was backed by the top-class Gareth Williams Trio; Gareth on piano and guitar, Geoff Gascoyne on bass and drummer Marc Cecil. Her albums on Spotify have readings of some classic songs associated with Sarah Vaughan—including *Misty*, *All of Me* and *Just One of those Things*, which gives a flavour of her JCUK gig. Our CEO, Mark Kass, generally records a song or two each Saturday to post on our Facebook page. On April 30 for Lily it was . . . *Whatever Lola Wants*. Not a song one would immediately associate with Sarah Vaughan. But a quick search proves it was a popular recording for her in 1955; one lives and learns.

Lily's introduction: "Would you call this a novelty song? Maybe. *Whatever Lola Wants*, *Lola Gets*, it is so much fun." It is just a brief clip, less than three minutes and incomplete, but exemplifies the engaging personality of the singer, the quality of her vocals and her backing trio. Her set was a small contribution to IJD but . . . *fair dinkum*.





# Buddy 'n' Me!

Digby Fairweather relates the story of the late, great Buddy Greco's sojourn in Southend



It was one sunny afternoon driving along the foreshore of Westcliff on Sea that the taxi-driver looked at me in his rear view mirror. "Digby, right?"

"Yes," I said. "That's me".

"Did you know there's a new jazz musician living in Southend? Buddy something or another?"

"No" I said. "You've got me."

"American," pursued my driver. "Pretty sure. He's moved near here. Into Palmeira Avenue I think. Just round the corner and up the hill."

"I know Palmeira", I said. "My grandparents used to live there years ago. In Hotel Kia Ora —long gone. But I haven't heard anything about an American jazz musician moving into town. At least not yet."

"Buddy!" said my chauffeur in a flash of inspiration. "Buddy! I'm pretty sure that's it! Buddy."

I kept on thinking. I didn't know any Buddies at all. Maybe a Billy? No. Benny? No again. After a while I gave up. That is until one day I took a call from Jo Adey, the wife of my great friend (and onetime GP) the late Colin Adey.

"Digby? We've got a friend we thought you might like to meet. Do you know Buddy Greco?"

**B**uddy Greco! So that was it. The American star who earned post-war fame as a singer-pianist, including his hip up-tempo *Lady is a Tramp* which had hit the charts in July 1960 and stayed there for eight weeks, had actually moved down to Westcliff, and signed up with my local doctor's surgery, just up the street from my own home in Westborough Road.

I might have known. Buddy Greco had actually spent quite a lot of his career commuting between America and the UK ever since 1949 when he arrived here with Benny Goodman, and —had I remembered— he had recently recorded for my old friend Alan Bates, for whom I had made my own first albums on Black Lion in 1979 before Alan had taken over the iconic American record label Candid. So I took up Jo's invitation; went to my doctor's house (appropriately called Bedside Manor) and there he was at the dining-table, looking at the most a healthy seventy, with tailored suit and an apparently permanent tan from the Las Vegas years. Knowing of his phenomenal career (rather like his close friend Nat 'King' Cole) as both jazz pianist and singer with endless albums to his credit I found myself (somewhat) at a loss for words. But the evening passed by with my co-hosts managing to talk to Buddy with apparent ease as an equal while I threw in the odd word or two. And that was, as they say, the start of a beautiful friendship.

But I was soon to find out that Southend's resident

superstar was actually much older than I had imagined. By now he was in fact in his mid-80s and less fit than he first appeared. And one afternoon he called me again; this time with urgency in his tone. "Digby! I'm on the way back from a concert, and I need a doctor right now! Book me into the surgery right away". Which I did and Buddy was prioritized for an appointment with his friendly consultant Colin Adey to receive the treatment he urgently needed.

I'm not sure what it was for but in a week or so he was, by all accounts, back to health and the phone rang again. "Digby! Come round and have lunch and we'll talk". So once again I accepted the invitation; walked to Palmeira Avenue and met Buddy and his attractive wife Lezlie Anders in their comfortable flat overlooking the street and complete, I noticed, with a brand new Yamaha upright piano. Together we ate a marginally eccentric snack: loosely-filled salad sandwiches (the contents of which occasionally surrendered to gravity on the carpet) and orange squash to which the beautiful Lezlie had inadvertently forgotten to add water (I was too polite to mention it) prompting an intense ingestion of undiluted Vitamin C and a great deal of sugar as well.

We talked about a lot more during that lunch date; about Buddy's autobiography (as told to Lezlie but sadly yet unpublished) and about the possibility of a show together. I was also privileged to view a video of my host



jumping out of a birthday cake to help celebrate Frank Sinatra's fiftieth birthday and hear a lot more about Buddy's history too. And these tales would form the basis of a Celebrity interview which I would host in November 2012 for the National Jazz Archive in Loughton.

When Buddy arrived I was worried; he was once again far from well, pale and tremulous and doubtful if he could make the evening at all. But once on stage, somehow the adrenalin kicked in and the old showman was back in town. He told stories of his childhood in Philadelphia and of taking up the piano at four years old ('before then' he admitted 'I didn't seem to have done much at all!'). Taught by a respected classical teacher Joseph

differently and so did I. And I was studying arranging with Chico O'Farrill, a highly contemporary arranger who later on wrote for Stan Kenton and Dizzy! So Benny would play his hits and then walk off the stand while we young guys took over and played the modern way. And I told Benny 'when you leave the stage, that 'BG' on the music stands for 'Buddy Greco'. And for that he fired me eleven times—but each time asked me back with a \$25 raise!"

It was with Goodman—the 'King of Swing'—that Buddy had first visited London to play the Palladium in 1949 but his later solo career from the early 1950s—including international single hits like *The Lady is a Tramp* plus a

**"Buddy Greco is leaving south Essex to move back to America, but says Southend is the best place he's lived. When Buddy does his shows, he says how he's lived in some of the great cities like New York, Chicago and Rome, but then he says he now lives in the greatest city of them all, Southend".**

From the Southend Echo May 2014

Cavalieri (and gifted with perfect pitch; the ability to recognize a note without seeing it on the piano) he had—quite remarkably—begun to learn to play on a dummy keyboard printed on the cover of a magazine before acquiring (equally remarkably in today's terms!) a Steinway piano for just \$40. More musical training was acquired at Philadelphia's Settlement House, a junior college for impecunious children where two fellow students included singers Mario Lanza and Al Martino. And it was during this time that Greco first heard Louis Armstrong and fell in love with jazz.

A few years later, in his teens and with his trio, Buddy had enjoyed his first hit record. "It was Benny Goodman's manager Elliott Wexler," he explained, "who heard us in Philadelphia's Club 13 in the mid-1940s and took us to New York where I signed with the Musicraft label. They had a lot of wonderful artists on their books then, including Dizzy Gillespie and the young Sarah Vaughan as well as other established artists including Teddy Wilson, Duke Ellington and Artie Shaw. And I had my first hit record with Musicraft; a song called *Oh looka there ain't she pretty!*". At this point, to his listeners' delight he spun round on the piano stool and sang it again. "I thought I'd be able to buy a house with the royalties," he explained ruefully after the

song was over—but when the cheque arrived it was for just forty-three dollars!"

Later Buddy talked at length about his years with Benny Goodman from 1949-52; a period when Goodman was experimenting with the modern jazz called 'bebop.' "Benny hated it!" he remembered. "But a lot of the younger musicians in Benny's band like Doug Mettome and Wardell Gray felt

discography of over eighty successful albums—provided a host of other stories of his many visits to Britain; this time to top the bill at the London Palladium in his own right and headline at more premier clubs including 'The Talk of the Town'. Greco's fulltime career in the USA lasted into the 1990s before he had signed with Candid and decided to move to Westcliff to 'live by the sea'.

"More recently," he told his audience, "I've often been billed as part of Sinatra's Rat Pack. But that's not really right! I was good friends with all the guys—Frank, Dean and Sammy—and of course we hung out together! But really I had my own musical thing going all that time. And of course for the past twenty years I've been married to another wonderful singer—Lezlie Anders! Currently she's helping me to complete my autobiography including my friendship with Marilyn Monroe. But you'll have to read the book to find out about that!"

After a break, Buddy and I played together with wife Lezlie plus Martin Roche (bass guitar) and John DeBrulais (drums). Greco's finale—a toweringly powerful presentation of Jimmy Webb's *MacArthur Park*—was greeted (as Jazz Archivist David Nathan noted) with a standing ovation. But somehow that was it. Buddy continued to play odd shows with Lezlie, with whom he had created the stage show *Fever! The Music of Miss Peggy Lee*, which met with critical acclaim at its London West End opening in 2010, and sometimes they would travel with guitarist Paul Sealey who later told me about the explosive rows that would ignite between the pair before they stepped on-stage, back in perfect harmony. Fame can be fleeting but Buddy's career survived over five decades after the rock set in and on New Year's Eve 2011, he had even made a guest appearance on Jools Holland's Hootenanny singing *Fly Me to the Moon*. But our own show never materialised. And the last time I saw my friend was when he sat-in at a pub in Leigh-on-Sea for Annie's jazz club, nodding 'hello' to me as he sat down at the piano. Soon after, it seemed, he was gone; back to Las Vegas where he died in June 2017 at the age of 90. But it was good to meet him, and now I have two fond memories of Palmeira Avenue to keep forever.

With special thanks (and happy Anniversary) to David Nathan, Archivist, National Jazz Archive.





# WORLD RE-OPENS FOR A JAZZ SUMMER

Normal service is resumed. Summer jazz festivals are emerging from the travails of the covid pandemic in surprisingly good shape. Ever more events are being announced, dates fixed and line-ups excitedly unveiled, from Europe to the US and the Caribbean, and beyond. Some had been cancelled for two years. Others had been held in circumscribed conditions, aided by zoom and videos. The buzz at being back is palpable.

No surprise. The summer jazz festival has experienced something of a golden age in recent years. Events have multiplied. For many towns and cities in Europe and North America it has become de rigueur to hold a jazz festival, often competing for top bands. Many are dedicated to particular types and styles of jazz, from innovative free jazz to the traditional, from smooth jazz to funk. Some include blues and soul; others, such as *The Eltham Jazz, Food and Wine Festival* in Australia, combine the music with other cultural elements.

In some cases, the emphasis is on a more grass roots style of jazz, and the local musicians that play it — Afro-Cuban music at the *Havana Jazz Festival*; the township influences of the *Cape Town Jazz Festival*; and Caribbean rhythms of the *St Lucia Jazz Festival*, for example.

The larger festivals might take place across a dozen or more indoor venues or, alternatively, in some scenic outdoors location, such as high in Colorado's San Juan Mountains, where the *Telluride Jazz Festival* takes place, offering breathtaking natural landscapes along with the music. In the past, it would have been possible to hear jazz at the *Alfa Jazz Fest*, amid the Habsburg, art nouveau and baroque buildings of Lviv. In Asia, too, jazz festivals have proved a popular regular feature, notably in Tokyo, Jarasum in South Korea, and Jakarta, said to be the biggest in the southern hemisphere.

Such was the clamour for these events in earlier years that a sort of festival tourism emerged. Enterprising specialists produced lists of the top ten or top 20 'must see' jazz festivals, sometimes arranging tickets and accommodation as well.

Precisely how many of these events will occur in 2022 remains unclear. Smaller gigs are reportedly still struggling as a result of the current adverse economic conditions. But most of the well-established festivals look certain to go ahead. In North America, a score or more events have been scheduled for this year, from



the *New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival* and *Florida's Clearwater Jazz Holiday*, to the *Monterey Festival* in California, which claims to be the "longest, continuously-running jazz festival in the world." That event this September at the 20-acre oak-studded Monterey County Fairgrounds, will be the 65th.

However, competing for the title of granddaddy of American jazz festivals is, of course, the Newport festival. It was actually the first, starting in 1954 (the Monterey event dates from 1958), but it has a less complete linear history. It is now held at Fort Adams State Park, Newport, Rhode Island. Norah Jones is among the headlining performers at this year's three-day event at the end of July.

Elsewhere, Detroit, Chicago, Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles and many other cities regularly hold jazz festivals.

But it is the *Montreal International Jazz Festival* that is ranked by the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest anywhere on the planet. The ten-day event —this year from June 30 to July 9— set in the heart of the Quartier des Spectacles in downtown Montreal, is estimated to have entertained up to two million people in 2004.

Across the Atlantic, Europe is now equally well served by seasonal jazz jamborees. Travel Triangle, a holiday firm, identifies 16 European festivals that should be on any jazz lover's bucket list. Another operator cites almost 30 events, at venues across the continent, from Copenhagen and Riga to San Sebastian, in Spain, and from the *Jazz and Blues Festival* in Edinburgh, to the *Nišville Jazz and Blues Festival*, in Serbia (August 11–14). And, some countries hold numerous concerts each year, including France, Germany, Britain and Switzerland.

Among Europe's most venerable is the *Montreux Jazz Festival* in Switzerland, which was founded in 1967, and, before covid, was attracting some quarter of a million





people. Although jazz remains at its core, the festival's musical spectrum has been broadened out in recent years to include blues, pop and rock. The scenic setting, on Lake Geneva, the jazz cruises and late-night jam sessions have made Montreux one of Europe's most popular venues.

However, the festival that seems to have the strongest claim to be Europe's oldest is what is now called *Jazzfest Berlin*. Founded in 1964 at the height of the Cold War, this four-day concert was known until 1980 as the *Berliner Jazztage* (Berlin Jazz Days), and has always placed a heavy emphasis on innovation. The avant-garde is a cornerstone of the festival programme, claim the organisers. According to one musician, "the further out you played, the better the audience liked it."

By comparison the *London Jazz Festival*, inaugurated in 1992, is a relative late comer. Other major British jazz events include the *Cheltenham Jazz Festival*, which resumed in late April-early May, after a two-year break; *The Love Supreme Jazz Festival*, a three-day, green-field event held on the first weekend of July in Glynde Place in the South Downs of East Sussex; and the *Brecon Jazz Festival*, a two-week event in mid-Wales each August.

Like so much other live music, the *Brecon Jazz Festival* was a casualty of covid in 2020 and 2021, and its resumption is creating a considerable buzz in the charming Welsh town which, in addition to the main event, is planning the usual alternative free music in the local pubs, hotels, galleries and cafes. The festival has been popular among musicians and fans since it started in 1984 with a line-up that included Humphrey Lyttelton, George Melly and Bruce Turner. Melly, it seems, had a house close by at the time.

Melvyn Westlake

@thejazzcentreuk

## One Night in Berlin

There have been many notable jazz festivals over the years, when circumstances —a balmy evening, a storming band, an animated audience— contrived to create something special. With luck they are successfully recorded, or captured on video. Other times, not. But, in any case, many jazz enthusiasts will have their own fond memories of that special occasion.

One such, still referenced affectionately by aficionados is the 1970 *Berlin Jazztage* (now known as the *Jazzfest Berlin*). The Berlin jazz festival is not actually a summer festival as it is held in November. It has taken its own very singular path since it was founded in 1964, in what was then West Berlin, and opened with a speech from Dr Martin Luther King, who declared that "jazz speaks for life." It is "a triumphant music."

The 1970 festival programme claimed that the annual Berlin event had "constantly given greater exposure" to what it called "New Jazz" than "any of the other big international jazz festivals."

That year's festival included a galaxy of top-flight musicians and five big bands. Charlie Mingus, Oliver Nelson, Buddy Rich, Dizzy Gillespie, Sun Ra, Bill Evans, Anita O'Day, Earl Hines, Gerry Mulligan, Dave Brubeck, were just some on the star-studded cast.

Whether such a cluster of talent could be mustered today is doubtful. The *Jazzfest* line-up for 2022 (3-6 November) is still a closely guarded secret. After two difficult years, the organisers clearly want to maintain a sense of anticipation, before unveiling the billing later this summer.

What may have changed over the years, however, is the temper of the Berlin audience, which was described by Brubeck as "reputedly the toughest in the world." And, according to a New York Times report of the 1970 festival: "Berlin's boozers, present and vociferous at every performance of anything west of the wall, used their privilege of dissent in a singularly ill-mannered way to indicate their disapproval of the smooth, smog throated vocalism of the queen of cool, Anita O'Day."

Given this inauspicious backdrop, it is all the more surprising that a mid-night performance on the third day of the 1970 festival by the relatively mainstream partnering of the Dave Brubeck Trio and Gerry Mulligan, proved such a barn storming affair that electrified the audience for three toe-tapping hours. As jazz commentator and radio presenter, Geoffrey Smith was later to write: "excitement was on the boil non-stop in Berlin, from the very first tune."

Fortunately for those not privileged to be there, the set was recorded, and released by Columbia as *Dave Brubeck Trio & Gerry Mulligan – Live at the Berlin Philharmonie*. Parts of it can also be found on YouTube.

Brubeck's partnership with baritone saxophonist Mulligan produced a very different vibe to that of his previous, long-standing quartet that included Paul Desmond on alto sax. That quartet had been disbanded in 1967. Although never formalised, the subsequent association between pianist Brubeck's trio (with Jack Six, bass and Alan Dawson on drums) and Mulligan lasted six years.

Their performance that night was "an example of Dave and Gerry at their most empathetic and swinging," concludes Geoffrey Smith. The concert was supposed to end with *St Louis Blues*, but "the Berlin crowd weren't having any of that," writes Smith. "You can hear the commotion that eventually squeezed out not one, or two, but three encores: first *Basin Street Blues*, then the almost obligatory *Take Five*, and finally, after what amounted to a full-blown demonstration with cheers, whistles, rhythmic hand-clapping and stamping, the lilting *Lullaby of Mexico*."

The lullaby was intended as a hint to the audience that even the best times must come to an end. As Brubeck was to recall the scene, many years later, "the quartet played their last number at 3:00 in the morning to an ecstatic crowd which had piled on to the stage, even lying under the piano."

#thejazzcentreuk

# A Pretty Good Day in Southend

It was a generally quiet Thursday in The Jazz Centre. I was standing outside the Media Centre, next to the pianola, when the Marigolds appeared. Greg Racey, John and Eileen Peck from the Marigolds Jazz Club came bearing gifts. From the boot of their car we loaded a dozen or more beautifully framed photographs. The work of jazz club member and architect Graham Smith, they feature musicians appearing at the Marigolds gigs in the Victoria Hall venue. On this page they are seen holding two of Graham's photos; of alto saxist Alison Neale, and pianist Ted Beament (with Simon Spillett in the background?). As with many of Graham's photos he uses the coloured lighting set-up to great effect.

The downside to The JCUK acquiring the photos is the reason why Marigolds are unable to keep them. For many years their gigs were held in Old Harlow's Cricket Club. Post covid that venue is no longer available, so they have had to move to the Victoria Hall Theatre. As the theatre puts on a wide variety of events, Marigolds is unable to on a regular basis. So, at the time of writing they have the Harvey-O'Higgins Project on Friday 6th May, followed by Lily Dior on Friday 1st July.

This is clearly a set-back for the jazz club founded in the spring of 2003 by Greg Racey, Bob French, and Vince Dunn. It has built a solid reputation as a friendly, low-cost venue featuring the best in British jazz. They diversified in 2008, creating Marigolds Blues Club promoting a monthly blues gig. But the Marigolds is soldiering on despite the horrors inflicted by the pandemic lockdowns.

## A Great Day in London

But to return to the Marigolds visit. One of the frames, on close inspection, contained not a photo but what looked like a double page picture from a magazine. But what a picture it is. So here follows a bit of background.<sup>1</sup>

In August 1958, in Harlem, a freelance photographer named Art Kane, working for Esquire magazine, took what is probably the most famous group shot of jazz musicians, certainly one of the best-known. At 10am on Sunday 12 August he managed to assemble 57 of them at 17 east 126th Street in Harlem, New York. This photo (of which we have a reproduction in The Jazz Centre), inspired numerous copycats in US cities, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit; and around the world; Paris and even Haarlem in the Netherlands. It took four years for London to follow suit.

A Great Day in London was organised by Queen magazine; a society and fortnightly fashion publication. It had a reputation for modern art layout, and reflecting the swinging 60s. It also had a jazz column, written by Kingsley Amis. For reasons unknown Queen decided in 1962 to emulate Art Kane. The call went out and 39 hardy jazz musicians assembled in Trafalgar Square one rainy, windy Thursday afternoon. Peter Vacher quotes pianist Brian Dee that the lure was "a free drink after at Ronnie's."

Queen handed this assignment to Terence Donovan, a young photographer more known for his fashion shoots,



John Peck, Eileen Peck and Greg Racey.

and portraits. A contemporary of David Bailey and Brian Duffy, three photographers who helped create the Swinging London scene of the 1960s. What Donovan produced this day in London was quite stunning.

He grouped the thirty-nine jazz musicians around the base of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. They occupy the two sections of the column's plinth, and around the base. As in the original Great Day in Harlem he manages to capture the majority more-or-less looking at the camera. In front centre is the wonderful, typically-smiling Dudley Moore; to his left a young Michael Garrick, also looking straight ahead. But this is a jazz photo, not one of those school-assembly-in-the-playground-photos, so some are chatting away with their neighbour, some smoking. Third from the left top row Al Fairweather, after a late-night gig perhaps, is yawning; to his left, Tony Archer is staring at his feet. In an attempt at some sort of composition, spaced apart in the middle row, Dick Heckstall-Smith and Peter King are both posed sitting with their feet resting on saxophone cases. If this was an attempt at group composition, then the bunching at bottom right clearly shows it failed; trying to herd jazz-cats?

Up front a group around Vic Ash seem amused, or startled, by a pigeon taking flight; seen as a blur in the photo. There are, apparently, two versions of this photo, one with and one without the pigeons. Once again I recommend the Peter Vacher article from April 2021, reproduced on the Musicians Union website. It contains interesting biographical detail of the musicians, and includes the original "tongue-in-cheek perhaps" Queen caption.

1. Most of the information in this article is taken from an article by jazz journalist Peter Vacher, written for the Musicians Union. The link: <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/news/a-great-day-in-london-the-1962-terence-donovan-jazz-musicians-photograph>





### The 1962 Terence Donovan Jazz Musicians Photograph

**Top:** Bruce Turner [as]; Tony Milliner [tb]; Al Fairweather [t]; Johnny Birch [p]; Don Rendell [ts]; Tony Archer [b]; Tony Russell [tb]; Les Condon [t], Gus Galbraith [t].

**Middle:** Brian Lemon [p]; Brian Prudence [b]; Sandy Brown [cl]; Dick Heckstall-Smith [ts]; Coleridge Goode [b]; Wally Fawkes [cl]; Wally Wrightman [b]; Peter King [as].

**Front:** Laurie Morgan [d]; Dave Davies [Dobells staff]; Herman Wilson [tb]; George Melly [voc]; Chris Staunton [b]; Alan Buzz Green [d]; Tony Kinsey [d]; Peter McGurk [b]; Dudley Moore [p]; Mike Garrick [p]; Maurice Gawronsky [d]; Vic Ash [cl, ts]; Gordon Beck [p]; Brian Dee [p]; Graham Bond [as]; Jimmy Deuchar [t]; Allan Ganley [d]; Tubby Hayes [ts]; Benny Green (writer); Stan Robinson [ts]; Bill Eyden [d]; Colin Purbrook [p].



Art Kane's 1958 photo of A Great Day in Harlem.

"New Orleans, Chicago, New York —all of them, swinging cities. But London? On the whole, not. Yet Trafalgar Square was perhaps a little less square than usual one Thursday afternoon last month. At the request of Queen magazine, 39 jazzmen, blinking in the unaccustomed daylight, turned out to pose for this epic panorama of the London jazz scene. Twenty-two different jazz groups are represented in the photograph, which includes 14 leaders, one jazz vocalist (George Melly) and several yards of stone slab.

One critic—Benny Green— came along for kicks: he's the one hiding his face with his hand. None of the two-chord hicks who happen to own instruments and call them themselves Trad musicians was invited. Most of the men here play modern jazz, but Mainstream is represented by Al Fairweather, Sandy Brown, Wally Fawkes, Bruce Turner, Tony Miller and Brian Prudence. Joe Harriott turned up 10 minutes after the session was over, and they all went to Ronnie Scott's club for drinks."

Quoted from the Peter Vacher article, we reproduce it on this page.

The photo captures an important moment in British jazz history, a mix of established, mainstream musicians, together with modernists like Michael Garrick, about to create the world-class British jazz of the 1960s and '70s.

I don't know if Terence Donovan was a jazz fan, but apart from this beautiful artistic work, he did take a couple of superb portraits of American jazz musicians. One is of Roland Kirk, festooned with tenor saxophone, manzello and stritch. The second is of bassist Eugene Wright, when a member of the Dave Brubeck Quartet; the group also photographed by Donovan.

The Terence Donovan Archive was contacted to find out if an original print was available. It can be purchased, but the cost of £2,000 remains beyond the current budget of The Jazz Centre.





# Live at The Jazz Centre UK



Saturday 2 April: Snowboy, Graeme Culham, Ben Hearn, Dan Banks. A joyous performance from four musicians who had never performed together as a quartet before; spontaneous as only jazz can be.



Left: Saturday 28 May: Alex Garnett with the Leon Greening Trio. A superb set courtesy of Susan May's Spike's Place. Dave Chamberlain on bass and Matt Home on drums.



Saturday 7 May: Harrison Dolphin. A welcome back to a JCUK favourite son. A rising star on guitar, with Lorenzo Morabito (bass) and Matt Fishwick (drums).



Photos by Fred Morris.



Saturday 30 April: A perfect choice for International Jazz Day; Australia's Lily Dior singing the music of Sarah Vaughan. Accompanied by the Gareth Williams Trio: Gareth (piano and guitar), Geoff Gascoyne (bass) and Marc Cecil (drums).



Saturday 9 April: Jazz825 presents Torus with Gary Plumley on tenor sax, Jonathan Gee (piano), Sam Hollis (bass) and Trevor Taylor (drums). A return to live performance for the band following lockdown.



Right: Saturday 16 April: Alan Barnes, Dave Newton. Two ever-reliable veterans of the British jazz scene; Alan on multiple saxophones and clarinet.



Saturday 23 April: A day to celebrate Louis Armstrong. Following a presentation in the morning by Digby Fairweather, Enrico Tomasso's playing reminded us of the towering historical importance of Satchmo. His set was enhanced with personal anecdotes about the great man.





Saturday 9 April: Jazz825 presents Torus with Gary Plumley on tenor sax, Jonathan Gee (piano), Sam Hollis (bass) and Trevor Taylor (drums).

Saturday 30 April: Spike's Place presents 'Lily Dior Sings the Music of Sarah Vaughan'; with Gareth Williams on piano and guitar, Geoff Gascoyne on double bass, and Marc Cecil on drums.



Sunday 3 April: Dawnette Fessey 'No Good Woman' and the Kingsnakes.



Saturday 23 April: Louis Armstrong Celebration Day at The Jazz Centre. Enrico Tomasso accompanied by the versatile Tim Huskisson on piano.



Saturday 16 April: A welcome return of Alan Barnes to JCUK, this time accompanied by the wonderful David Newton on piano.

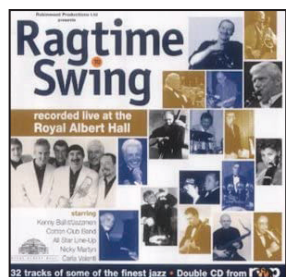


# A Second Peter Clayton

It was 2pm on Saturday 23 April in The Jazz Centre. At front of stage in the Lecture Theatre, Digby Fairweather was about to introduce Enrico Tomasso and his *Salute to Satchmo*. He paused as a group of latecomers entered the theatre. Then he recognised one of the group; "Peter Clayton", clearly an old friend and a completely unexpected arrival. A hug, then Peter and company took their seats in the front row, and the afternoon's entertainment proceeded.

So immediately behind Peter and company, a frisson of nostalgia was experienced by this correspondent, and my neighbour, Jazz Centre volunteer and drummer Glyn Morgan. This was Peter Clayton, legendary radio and TV jazz presenter, journalist and author. Peter's *Sounds of Jazz* radio programme every Sunday at 10pm was essential listening for UK jazz fans. Immediately following the gig a photo opportunity presented itself, Digby and Peter together, and not a bad portrait if I say so myself. And, as editor of our journal *Centrepiece* a definite page for the next issue.

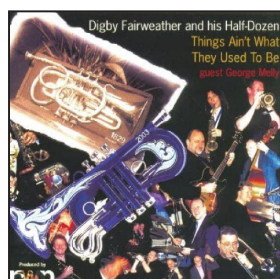
Back home I googled Peter Clayton jazz presenter, only to discover he had died in 1991. Quick on the uptake, it was clear this was a different Peter Clayton. An exchange of e-mails with Digby, and he explained. This Peter Clayton was a successful south London builder, "with music in his heart, and a new company called Robinwood Productions" (Digby Fairweather in *On the Road with George Melly*).



An avid jazz fan and adventurous businessman, in 2000 Peter proposed to Digby that they should organise a jazz and dancing concert at the Royal Albert Hall. Overcoming an initial skepticism that such an event was possible, Digby came on board. On September 23rd that year 3,000

turned out for the *Ragtime to Swing* concert. The musicians featured were the cream of British traditional and swing talent; Keith Nichols and his Cotton Club Band, Kenny Ball and his Jazzmen, Carla Valenti, and Digby fronting an All-Star group which included Dave Shepherd, Tommy Whittle, Roy Williams, Roger Nobes, John Pearce, Len Skeat and Ronnie Verrell. The proceedings were recorded and are available on a double CD from Robinwood Productions.

Following that success Peter followed up with a proposal to record George Melly with the Digby Fairweather Half-Dozen. This was done over a period of three days at Derek Nash's Clownsprocket Studios in Bexley. The full story of the now-without-problems recording session can be read in the aforementioned tome *On the Road with George Melly*. The resultant album, *Singing and Swinging the Blues* was a critical success for George late in his career. The studio had been booked for six days, so Peter suggested recording the Half-



Dozen in the remaining three. The resultant album, *Things Ain't What they used to Be*, was again a musical and critical success, voted one of the five Records of the Year in *Jazz Journal International*.

Although not again recording with Digby or George, Peter Clayton and Robinwood Productions continued to produce jazz albums; notably *Mainstream Giants of Jazz*, with Scott Hamilton, Danny Moss, John Pearce, Martin Drew, Dave Cliff, and Len Skeat. In particular, one extremely ambitious and adventurous production was *Words Alone - The Music and Lyrics of John Ryan*. Peter had relocated to Florida, heard John Ryan in a local club, flew him to London, and financed his stay and recording with a big band of top US and British jazz musicians. The CD was an expensive failure.

Apart from music production, Peter diversified into the world of film and theatre, raising finance for and producing in both mediums. It was during his Florida sojourn that he wrote and produced, with Trevor Preston, the musical drama *Louis Armstrong's Wonderful World*. It features singing and dancing with a nine-piece on-stage band. It premiered at the Aladdin Theatre, aka the Cocoa Village Playhouse, Florida.

Peter has always been a huge fan of Louis Armstrong; "my idol since the 1950s, when he played in England", and that is clearly reflected in its reception in Florida.

Theatre director Anastacia Hawkins-Smith said: "It is not just the music of Louis Armstrong, which would be wonderful enough, but a real play that tells his story through vignettes from his life". The show's narrator, Joseph Robinson remarked: "I have learned about so many aspects of his life. . . it really (signified) the birth of jazz, and you see his music, and him, in everything from movies to cartoons. Louis Armstrong is legendary."

Peter is on record as saying he would love for it to be produced in the UK, in London's West End. "I'd like it to go to educate people around the world," he said. "I believe Louis Armstrong's talent came most of all as an ambassador, for jazz, for music, for people. He really was the father of jazz. He is the man who made it happen."

So, a mistaken identity, some internet searching, a chat with Digby, and we found the other, or rather a second Peter Clayton, with a fascinating story. As our new columnist Michael Deakin says elsewhere in this issue, there are eight million stories out there, this is just one of them.

Phil W.

There is an interview with Peter Clayton on [Soundcloud](https://soundcloud.com/user-939830138/peter-clayton-louis-armstrongs-wonderful-world), where he talks about the Louis Armstrong musical. <https://soundcloud.com/user-939830138/peter-clayton-louis-armstrongs-wonderful-world>





# Ken Lodge: Promoting Jazz in Essex

How do you make £1million out of jazz? Start with £2million. So runs the old joke and it is still true but it never deters that brave band of jazz promoters who just keep doing it for love of the music.

One of these was Ken Lodge, who began organising jazz concerts back in 1946 while stationed in the Middle East with the RAF. At that time he was a trumpeter himself and, despite later turning his attention to promoting other musicians, he retained his membership of the Musicians' Union throughout his life. During the '70s he helped organise events with Michael Webber, who at that time was Britain's top promoter of jazz concerts on the South Bank.

It was while working at Kelvin Hughes, a manufacturer of precision maritime instruments located in Hainault, Essex, that Ken began running a series of monthly concerts in the works canteen and from these unlikely premises he assembled line-ups of some of the finest swing and mainstream musicians to be heard in both the USA and the UK.

An easy-going and affable person and well-liked by the musicians, Ken had impeccable musical taste and was able to take advantage when the Americans were touring the UK to lure them out to Essex, initially at Kelvin Hughes, and then at North East London Polytechnic in Barking, a larger and better-known venue, which became known as *Jazz at the Poly*. Every concert was accompanied by a programme for which Ken wrote an introduction highlighting forthcoming concerts plus a potted biography for each of the players. Incidentally, in one of these Ken apologises for having to charge £4 instead of the usual £3!

Some of these programmes remain and a random sample of three yielded line-ups we can only dream of today. The first consisted of that wonderful trumpeter Billy Butterfield; pianist and bandleader Jay McShann, who

gave Charlie Parker his first big band gig and with whose band Jimmy Witherspoon began his career; the Digby Fairweather Quartet featuring British pianist Fred Hunt; plus a house

band consisting of Kenny Baker, Dave Shepherd, Danny Moss, Roy Williams, Brian Lemon, Len Skeat and Kenny Clare.

The second programme featured drummer Oliver Jackson leading a trio consisting of bassist Leonard Gaskin and pianist Cliff Smalls. These three formed the rhythm section of the Sy Oliver Orchestra and according to programme notes were reminiscent of the Nat King Cole Trio. Baritone saxophonist Cecil Payne shared the bill, accompanied by some of the UK's finest —Kenny Baker, Peter King, Tommy Whittle, Eddie Thompson, Len Skeat and Jack Parnell. Completing the line-up were



**A JAZZ GALA**, on Thursday 29 September, has been especially devised by director and compère **Ken Lodge** to raise money for the **Save The Children Fund**. One of Britain's finest-ever groups, the **Dave Shepherd Sextet** (with the extraordinary **Brian Lemon** on piano) provide the musical backbone of the evening, joined by special guests including **Kenny Baker** (one of the star soloists of this spring's visit by the re-formed **Ted Heath Band**), **Danny Moss**, **Roy Williams**, **Johnny Barnes** and **Kenny Clare**. As a finale everyone will be joining together in a giant 'jam session', and early booking is strongly advised for what is sure to prove the Craig's brightest night of jazz yet!  
**£3.00, £4.00, £5.00**

the Pizza Express All Stars —Johnny McLevy, Dave Shepherd, Danny Moss, Roy Williams, Brian Lemon, Len Skeat and Stan Bourke.

The final programme was a one-off concert at the Town Hall featuring just one band of US musicians —but what a band! Tenor players Scott Hamilton and Al Cohn, trumpeter

Michael Webber is delighted to be associated with this concert and asks you to note two dates in your diaries:

**Two More "SOUTH BANK SWING SESSIONS"**

**Saturday 11th December, 1982**  
THE BRIAN LEMON TRIO  
with Colin Smith (trumpet) and Al Gay (saxophone)

**Saturday 5th February, 1983**  
THE EDDIE THOMPSON TRIO  
with Special Guest Star Rosemary Squires

Tickets from:  
The Box Office, Royal Festival Hall, London SE1 8XX  
One month before each concert.  
Prices: £3.00, £3.50, £4.00 Enclose S.A.E.

**Ken Lodge**  
KEN LODGE, ex-trumpeter, had his first taste of promoting jazz in 1946 when still in the RAF, presenting a series of Jazz Concerts for servicemen in the Middle East. Works mainly with Britain's finest Musicians when presenting his promotions, such fine players as Jack Parnell, George Chisholm, John McLevy, Kenny Baker, and Tommy Whittle work frequently on his shows as do The Pizza All Stars. Occasionally Stage Managers for Michael Webber and is now responsible for the Jazz at the Poly Series of concerts.

**Michael Webber**  
MICHAEL WEBBER is Britain's premier promoter of jazz concerts on the South Bank. His first big promotion was in July 1970 when he presented the "Louis Armstrong Salute to Satchmo" Concert, which he has produced at the Royal Festival Hall.

**FROM DIXIELAND TO SWING**  
DKM PRESENT  
**A GALA CHARITY CONCERT**  
in aid of the  
L.T.B.A. for W.D.  
in the presence of  
**H.R.H. Princess Alexandra**  
**Monday November 15th 1982**  
Queen Elizabeth Hall

Warren Vaché, pianist Dave McKenna, guitarist Cal Collins, bassist Bob Maize and drummer Jake Hanna.

Other upcoming concerts mentioned in the programmes included artists such as Kenny Daverne, Bob Wilbur, Jimmy McPartland, Dick Wellstood, Buddy Tate, Al Grey, Peanuts Hucko, Red Norvo, Al Casey, Wild Bill Davison and Ralph Sutton.

These were just three of the many, many concerts Ken promoted. As well as Jazz at the Poly there were others at Ilford Town Hall, but wherever they took place they always featured the very finest musicians and the best of jazz.

Sue C.

North East London Polytechnic  
Faculty of Arts  
School of Education and Humanities

**JAZZ AT THE POLY**  
Longbridge Road, Dagenham, Essex

The K & H Jazz Club and Chameleon Records  
in Association with the Music Centre  
present

**BILLY BUTTERFIELD**  
**JAY McSHANN TRIO**  
**FRED HUNT**  
**DIGBY FAIRWEATHER QUARTET**

KENNY BAKER DAVE SHEPHERD  
DANNY MOSS ROY WILLIAMS  
BRIAN LEMON LEN SKEAT KENNY CLARE

Friday 13th February 1981  
Programme 25p

North East London Polytechnic  
Faculty of Arts  
School of Education and Humanities

**JAZZ AT THE POLY**  
Longbridge Road, Dagenham, Essex

The K & H Jazz Club and Chameleon Records  
in Association with the Music Centre  
present the

**OLIVER JACKSON TRIO**  
**CECIL PAYNE**  
with  
Kenny Baker Peter King Tommy Whittle Eddie Thompson Len Skeat Jack Parnell

**PIZZA ALL STARS**  
featuring  
Johnny McLevy Dave Shepherd Danny Moss Roy Williams  
Brian Lemon Len Skeat Stan Bourke

Friday 13th March 1981  
Programme 25p

# Impresarios - Exploiters or Risk Takers

**Impresarios are scary. Skim through the films in The Jazz Centre archive and there they are: rich guys (always guys) with big cigars and too many nieces. A plot crisis occurs when the impresario makes life impossible for the poor, hardworking jazz genius (Conflict admission —this writer has three nieces and has showered presents on them for forty years. Well, maybe “dripped”)**

Impresarios get a bad press. Early impresario organisations grew from the ambition of the “Lone Star Comedian”, **Sherman H. Dudley**, a vaudeville performer who set up a string of theatres to employ African-Americans. After becoming manager and treasurer of the Coloured Actors Union (around 1911), setting up his own Theatrical Enterprises, which bought theatres around the Washington and Virginia areas, and extending the Dudley Circuit into other states, his efforts led to the 1921 Theatre Owners Booking Association (TOBA), which employed Ma Rainey, Ethel Waters and Josephine Baker.

Sounds good? TOBA was accused of poor pay rates and its touring arrangements required performers to pay their own accommodation. To performers, TOBA meant “Tough on Black Asses”. Jazz impresarios have never recovered their reputation

And yet, in UK they were surprisingly ordinary chaps —very much in the “former performer” pattern of Sherman Dudley.

Jack should have been a mill worker. When he was born in 1892, son of a cotton Machine Minder and a schoolteacher, booming Bolton was a high-quality cotton town, where 6,000 children between seven and twelve were “half-timers” working in its two hundred and sixteen mills from 5.30am to 12.30pm before going to school. It was odds on Jack would end up working in one of those mills. But Dad was also a singer at his local Labour club, and the young sprog accompanied him on the piano. When Dad ran a pub, Jack accompanied him and sang.

At age seventeen his musical talent landed a job as musical director of a touring pantomime company. After three years on the road, he moved to the 400 Club in London, initially as a relief pianist, singing with various bands and playing for silent movies. During WW1, he directed the Band of the 20th Hussars, and became part of the Army Entertainment Division.

After military service, and following an unsuccessful attempt to partner Tommy Handley, **Jack Hylton** emerged to become a “music publisher”, writing, printing and selling his own songs in Blackpool at 6 (old) pence a sheet —which he advertised by dropping leaflets from a plane over Blackpool Tower during Lancashire’s Wakes Week holidays. He returned to London to be a song plugger, and to lead The Queens Dance Orchestra, playing at the Queens Hall roof garden. When the band imported a recording by Paul Whiteman’s Orchestra, Hylton transcribed the music so successfully that his employer started buying US jazz records for him to transcribe and record as Jack Hylton’s Jazz Band. With touring dance bands of up to twenty members, he became the UK’s King of Jazz in the 1920s, selling some three million disks out of a total UK market issue of twenty million.

When Jack was sacked by his own band in 1922, he added a sideline as impresario, eventually responsible for bringing Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and others to UK in the early 1930s.

**Geraldo**, another UK band-leader-turned-impresario, booked UK jazzmen onto transatlantic liners, which meant they were able to get first-hand experience of American Jazz on their shore leave in US ports during the Visa Ban of 1933-55. According to the book by Kenny Harris (who played on the Mauretania and Queen Mary) Geraldo’s Navy involved over two hundred British musicians, including John Dankworth, Ronnie Scott and Benny Green. The entrepreneurial tradition was continued by Ronnie and his business partner Pete King, who took a key role in arranging the earliest exchange bookings between US and UK jazzmen following the end of the Visa Ban.

UK jazz impresarios were great contributors, But what of impresarios in the home of Jazz and Showbiz?

Norman had a first career on the Los Angeles Stock Exchange. Born in Los Angeles in 1918, of Jewish–Moldovan parents who had arrived in US around 1905, his Dad worked in the retail clothing industry. Young Norman showed no interest in music or culture, busying himself with business and “progressive causes”. Then, when he was twenty-one, he heard Coleman Hawkins playing *Body and Soul*, and that sparked his obsession with jazz. Setting aside his stock exchange duties, he started to arrange small jazz jam events around his local neighbourhood, and soon met Nat King Cole, who was beginning to make a reputation. Cole showed him backstage life, and introduced him to Lester Young, Count Basie, Art Tatum, Billie Holiday and Roy Eldridge.

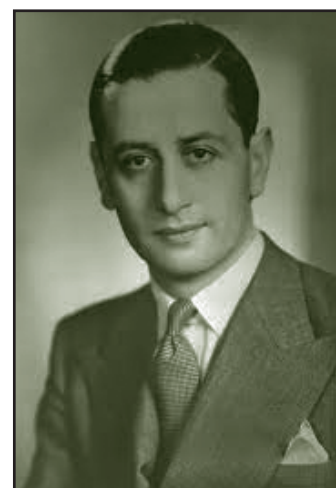
Exposure to such worthies made him aware of the poor pay and conditions that many musicians had to endure, and he was appalled by the segregation operated in LA nightclubs. In 1942 he did a deal with management at local club



Sherman H. Dudley



Jack Hylton



Geraldo



Trouville, to allow a three-hour jam session on its “closed” day, with free entrance to any comers, in return for door money. In associated “enabling” deals, he negotiated for the local musicians’ unions to set fair pay rates for all. This experiment in racial integration, supported by appearances from Lester Young and Nat Cole, generated a handsome reward for the Trouville and launched **Norman Granz**: impresario.

Driven by searches for bigger venues, “Integrated jam sessions” took off more widely around Los Angeles, which became a regular tour stop-over for major jazz figures. By 1944 racial tension was again running high, following the Zoot Suit riots of 1943 and a murder at The Sleepy Lagoon. Norman decided to organise a massive jam session concert to raise money for the defendants in the murder trial, based on the Los Angeles Philharmonic Hall, and in July 1944 Jazz at The Philharmonic (JATP) was born. Over the following fourteen years, supported by Parker and Young, JATP made seventeen national tours, and eight European tours.

To maximise revenue, in 1946 Granz founded the Clef record label, specifically to market JATP, causing a huge war over ownership of past JATP master disks. He discovered that he felt most at home in the recording studio, and began to focus most of his attention there, finding and signing many jazz artists and creating new labels Norgran (1953) and Verve (founded in 1956 as a special vehicle for Ella Fitzgerald’s music).

In the late 1950’s the US political climate was moving against overt connections with suspected communist organisations, and Granz experienced inconveniences, which contributed to him moving his main residence to Switzerland. Although he continued to organise concerts, his main impresario days wound down. Often described as “The Man Who Helped to Create the Music Biz”, “The Jazz Advocate” and “Jazz Genius Behind the Scenes”, Norman Granz is arguably America’s greatest jazz impresario.

Impresarios come in all sizes. Were they key risk absorbers and employment arrangers, or exploiting talent? As the narrator of *Naked City* said, there are eight million stories in the big city: this has been one of them.



Norman Granz



### The Michael Deakin Column

Centrepiece welcomes a new regular columnist. Michael is a volunteer at The JCUK with a passion for rooting in the byways of jazz myths and anecdotes. He’s a firm believer that “history is just one thing after another”, while the real world happens randomly in the background. His playlists cover the whole range of recorded jazz, and can be heard (and interrupted) at our regular monthly Jazz Appreciation Group and Hits & Myths sessions.

Over future issues his writings on a variety of topics are expected to escape, possibly including *The Saxophone Impact on Jazz*, *Jazz Opera* (a Holy Grail?), and *Jazz Track Titles* (an Unholy Mess?). But stories make themselves . . .

## Jazz at the Sands

Jazz Centre volunteer Pat Harle was at the opening night of a new jazz venue in Southend

The opening night last Thursday at Sands by the Sea with Digby Fairweather Presents was a great treat. Joining him were the resident Rat pack trio as he quaintly describes them of Tim Huskisson (piano), Roger Curphey (bass), and Alan Clarke (drums). To top the great line up he was joined by Dominic Ashworth and Julian Marc Stringle.

This was a great seaside setting for some fantastic music, the venue was packed and fish and chips to enjoy; and, of course, a pint.

Digby as usual was a great front man to the band, the banter and the singing were fun, as was the vibe. The venue faces out to sea, and is lovely, as are the staff; and I can see this becoming a very popular venue for great live music, especially as the summer beckons. Look out for the next events! You won’t be disappointed!



The line-up: Tim Huskisson, Julian Marc Stringle, Digby Fairweather, Roger Curphey and Dominic Ashworth. Alan Clarke on drums hidden behind Julian Marc Stringle.



David Price, Mike Hogg, Alan Clarke, Digby Fairweather, Roger Curphey, Robert Fowler, Alan Bradley.



Carol Braithwaite and Digby.

## Jazz at the Sands 2

A little piece of Chicago visited Southend Thursday 26 May via Digby Fairweather’s All Stars tribute to Eddie Condon. A series of songs associated with Condon and his colleagues was interspersed with Digby’s verbal portraits of the Chicago gang.

The band was not as programme advertised, with last-minute replacements on trombone and piano, but the solid backing of the superb guitar-bass-drums rhythm section held it all together and two rousing sets ensued. For this reporter the first set highlight was Robert Fowler’s Coleman Hawkins inspired solo feature on *If I Could be with You (One Hour Tonight)*. As for the second set standout, it had to be *Sweet Georgia Brown* and *All of Me* sung by Carol Braithwaite. The band’s joyful interpretation of *La Vie en Rose* — a big hit for Louis Armstrong — was an unexpected addition to the repertoire, and the evening finished with an impromptu blues in Bb.

Jazz at the Sands; Thursday 30 June will feature Alan Barnes with Digby and the Resident Rat Pack Trio.

# A Poet's Guide to the Instruments of the Band

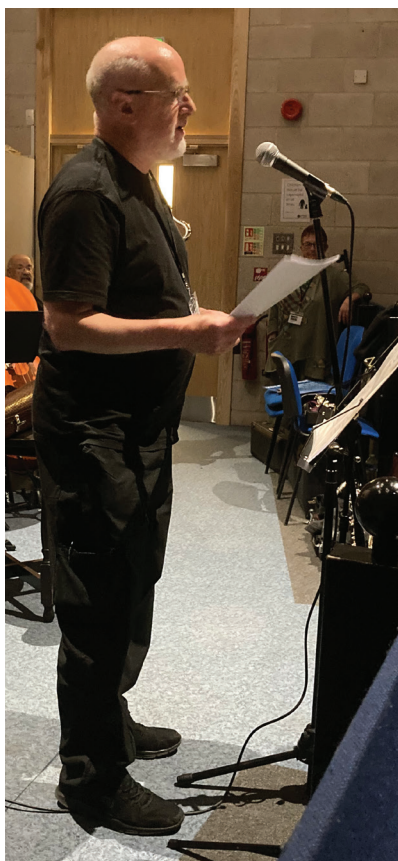
**Zak Barrett** (tenor sax); **Dave Jago** (trombone); **Tony Gooderham** (piano); **Geof Harris** (bass);  
**Trevor Taylor** (drums); **Bryan Styles** (percussion).

On Saturday 14 May The Jazz Centre UK held a third Jazz and Poetry day. **The Poetry of Jazz** maintained the tradition of the spoken word enhanced by jazz, dating back to the Beat Generation of the 1940s and '50s in the USA.

Two poets were featured on the day. Adrian Green read from his two books, *Chorus and Coda*, and *All that Jazz*.

Shephali Frost's work combined South-Asian Ghazals, Nazms and ancestral Sufi songs, **Poetry of Love and Dissent**, composed and read in Punjabi, Urdu and English. The poems were augmented by her beautiful, often haunting vocals.

In this issue of Centrepiece we want to concentrate on one set of poems by Adrian Green, those compositions inspired by the instruments of the jazz band. Following the reading of each poem, the pertinent instrument took a brief solo.



## String Bass

Some like to dominate,  
others caress  
a voluptuous rhythm  
on pliant strings.

This pulse drives life  
through wanton counterpoint,  
the heart and harmony  
of things.



## The Tenor Man

Pottering around the stage,  
a hyperactive ancient in his own backyard—  
independent of the band it seems.

Disrhythmic shuffling of ashtray,  
beer, a pack of cigarettes,  
adjusting microphones,

then in the middle eight  
he draws, exhales, and catches breath,  
stoops forward to the mouthpiece

and blows,  
a tumbling counterpoint,  
scales soaring from his horn.

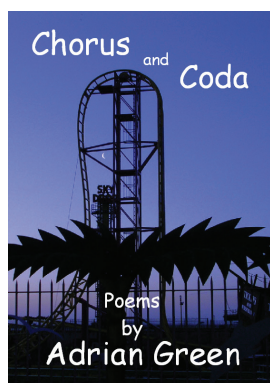
The melody flows

until the break,  
and then he shoulders arms,  
a truce between the music and his ailing lungs.

Between choruses he sits apart  
to light another cigarette,  
a sideman counting out the bars  
until he rises for the coda—  
this Lazarus of swing.



To purchase copies contact  
[adrian@greenad.co.uk](mailto:adrian@greenad.co.uk)



My poetry is not abstract. Some would say it is not jazz poetry, but poetry about jazz. It is certainly the product of a lifetime listening to jazz, much of it written while listening to jazz, live or on record, and much of it taking a sideways view of the music and the places where it is played. There are other poems as well, so take the words, hear the music, and allow your imagination to do the rest.

Adrian Green April 2022.





## Consequence

We are the consequence of melody  
brought together with  
broken chords  
and fractured counterpoint  
resolved in dance-floor harmony.

That late night  
piano in the lilting room,  
the smooching key  
and lazy cocktail swing—

the sounds of midnight  
in a tinkling glass  
and mellow saxophone.

This dance is evensong  
and morning glory,  
the tune of ever after.



## Tailgate Trombone

No soaring lyric here,  
but tailgate rasp of joyous sound  
beneath a crackling cornet line.

The ghosts of  
Dutrey, Ory, and Johnson  
lend their muse again—

a legacy of street parades  
and trailer bands in carnival,  
as dancers jive

to rhythms of a delta hue—  
another good old  
lovely number from the twenties repertoire.

These New Orleans echoes  
remembered in a fading  
Essex seaside bar—

all brassy brash and thrusting—  
slide glissando through  
counter-pointed horns

and drive towards the coda—  
their ensembled energy revived  
from harmonies a century  
and world away.



## Time Lord

Often first on stage  
with pliers, mats and cases  
heaved into place, components  
for assembly like some glittering  
Meccano kit  
before the audience arrives.

He hides behind the cymbal stands  
and hanging toms,  
checks his hi-hat pedal, tensions  
skins and muffles buzzing snare  
before retiring to the band room,  
or the bar.

And when the music starts—  
a metronomic groove, a shuffle,  
bossa-nova rhythms, working  
with the bass to underpin  
those front-line solo fantasies  
the audience applauds,

until the final number  
when the drummer gets a solo,  
roams around the kit  
with brushes, sticks, bare hands,  
and all the while foot-pedalling  
the hi-hat and the kick-drum  
with a beat to ground the whims  
of syncopation from his hands.

Then when the audience has gone,  
the trumpet and the saxes packed away  
and sound crew finished  
taking down the rig,  
the time-lord's left alone on stage  
to deconstruct his kit,  
his rhythm safely cased  
for transport to another day.



# Review: **Let's Do It: The Birth of Pop**

by **Bob Stanley** *Faber & Faber* £25 656 pages

**'A Great Forgetting', suggests Bob Stanley, was indulged in by the boomer generation, in the late sixties and onwards. Specifically, he means that the vast and varied catalogue of popular music in the preceding decades was consigned to the dustbin of history, in the minds of many younger listeners. It is, of course, the eternal dilemma of popular music: isn't it meant to be ephemeral, briefly enjoyed, then passed over in the insatiable quest for a new sound, a new rhythm, new voices?**

**I**n this fine book, he seeks the very origins of popular music (and that includes jazz, at least until bebop, in his view, turned instrumental jazz into an art music); he goes further back even than the invention of recording, to identify the origins of the short song form. These were days, around the beginning of the 20th century, when popularity was measured by sheet music sales, and by the simple ubiquity of a 'hit' song in the mouths of variety performers and whistlers in the street.

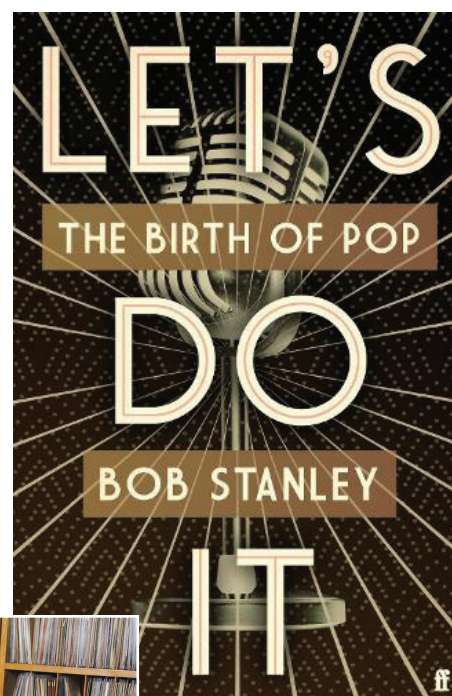
In the process he explores a huge variety of formative influences: the advent of recording, and its many subsequent technical innovations; the music halls, bars, bordellos, and Broadway; the evolution of record companies and record buyers; and later radio, film and TV. The book traces the confluence of operetta, ragtime, blues, folk, hillbilly and most other known styles; it explores how and when and why people listened, and who drove the market for popular music.

All this (and much more) may make the book sound dry and academic; far from it! The miracle is the deft touch, the wit and concision with which Bob Stanley navigates these waters, weaving in the personalities, lives and achievements of important figures, both the acknowledged and the less celebrated (Earl Bostic, Ina Ray Hutton, Helen Kane, Vaughan De Leath) He's particularly keen on unjustly neglected women —as he should be. If it's popular, and it sold, then the premise of this book is that it deserves some thought: at the end of his journey, *Strawberry Fields* is praised, for example, but what interests Stanley even more, perhaps, is the record, and performer, that kept the Beatles' masterpiece at no 2 in the charts. (A clue: the artist's real name was Gerry Dorsey ...)

What might have made the navigation even more difficult—but doesn't—is the book's movement between what was happening in America and what was going on here in Britain: our music hall and folk traditions, and the heavy hands of the BBC make the story of British popular music, of course, distinct in many ways from America's. Stanley gives due attention to our homegrown stars and could-have-beens, from Bert Ambrose and Al Bowlly to Petula Clark and Pete Atkin.

The book ranges from the 1890s to the 1970s; it's addressed, essentially, to those who have lived through the popular music of at least the last thirty odd years, it seems to me. There's often reference forward to some reasonably contemporary figure, to reinforce a point about

an earlier one; Morrissey and Bowie crop up, for example, and you're expected to know who they are and what they stand for, which can't, I thought, be taken as read for the youngest likely readers. But Stanley fortunately avoids that dreaded trope which recommends a past performer



solely in terms of their influence on some contemporary one; the 'without X there'd be no Y' formula, where X might be Muddy Waters or Gil Scott-Heron and Y could be the Stones or Kanye West.

In fact, the sensitive sketches and assessments of figures whose appeal is hard to understand now is one of the great strengths here (think Jolson in blackface). Stanley understands the context, and seems able to hear things as both a 2020's listener and as one to whom those performances were fresh. A great example is the bewildering moral panic —of greater than Sex Pistols proportions— surrounding the advent of crooning. Rudy Vallee, underminer of all things decent and moral? Bing Crosby as subversive? You'll understand when you read this book.

For this reviewer, one of the biggest revelations in this book is Bing Crosby. There could not have been, I felt, watching my parents' TV in the sixties and seventies, a



less interesting singer/performer than this dreary, jumper clad 'entertainer'. Bob Stanley staggered me with the sheer scale of Crosby's success (nearly 400 hit singles!), his careful unpicking of Crosby's impact on listeners in his time, and equally of the reasons why his appeal has not endured. And then there's his pivotal role in the development of post-war recording technology . . . who knew? Well, not me.

Another joy of this book is the author's love of a good anecdote, a gossip aside, or an unexpected connection between disparate figures; he performs miracles of concision in covering figures like Ellington or Sinatra, but there's always room for the detail that entertains. Many older readers —of the type who turn out at the JCUK, at least— will have read much more searching volumes on many of the figures who feature

here, but I guarantee they'd still be intrigued by the way they are woven into this context. What a challenge, over nearly six hundred pages and nearly a century of music, to maintain discrimination, freshness of judgement and the turn of phrase that sums up a performer, a style, a song, a mood, a connection so aptly . . . This, for example, on two great singers:

'Billie Holiday numbed the pain with narcotics, and she's a legend. Mildred Bailey chose chocolate eclairs, and she's forgotten. History can be a mean judge.'

After fifty years of listening to pop, rock, jazz, blues and all the rest, your reviewer would like to think that he could plead not wholly guilty of the 'Great Forgetting'.

It's a little harder to forget with jazz: you don't get far as a jazz listener without the monumental presence of the past looming over it all. How long before you work out that you've got to hear Parker, Trane, Monk, Ellington and Armstrong, to understand what you're hearing here and now? Though perhaps that all belongs in the music world of the 20th century, when people used to read sleeve notes, and weekly music papers. In the world of streaming, the Great Forgetting gets easier by the week: no-one knows if the record they're listening to was recorded in the UK or the US, last week or last century, never mind what label it's on, who produced it, who's playing bass etc.

Perhaps the greatest strength of this marvellous book is that it makes you hungry to hear both the seminal records and the one-off gems that Stanley writes about so vividly: in fact, I take it all back about streaming, because there's no better companion to this book than Apple music (or the like). Take three months to read this book, and follow up the references in

each chapter with an evening's listening; it's the cure for memory loss.

A.S.C.



Bing Crosby in 1951.



Billie Holiday.



Mildred Bailey.

## Gracie and Avril Love Jazz

Even after six years volunteers quite often meet visitors who express surprise that there is a Jazz Centre in Southend. That happened frequently with the Walter and Harold Steggle and East London Group art exhibition in the Beecroft Gallery. Visitors see our Heritage Centre in the Lower atrium and decide they should pay us a visit. Pleasantly surprised they invariably promise to advertise our existence to friends or relatives. None of them have been inspired to write thanking us for the visit. Until now.

The charming thank you letter on this page is from mum and daughter, Gracie and Avril, following their recent Wednesday day out in Southend. Volunteers John, Colin, and Alfie were on duty and they gave the visitors a guided tour of the Centre. Young Gracie (aged around 7), was especially intrigued by the Alan Skidmore and Spike Robinson saxophones. Even more captivated by Tommy McQuater's trumpet, she attempted to play it. Sadly, not one note poured forth; perhaps the valves need oiling.

All visitors to the The Jazz Centre UK are given a warm welcome; Gracie and Avril taking time to thank us for our efforts is something special. Thank you Gracie and Avril.







# YouTube Jazz on Film

Continuing our selection of jazz on YouTube. We try something a bit different this issue, concentrating on different aspects of jazz in the UK. Starting with a documentary celebrating Ronnie Scott's club. An episode from the series Jazz Britannia follows exploring the post-war popularity of Traditional New Orleans jazz. Jazz625 was a long-running series on BBC TV, we have chosen a hour-long compilation featuring a host of international jazz talent. 'The Street' is

a 30 minute film about Archer Street, the place to pick up gigs in the '40s and '50s. We round up with Jazz at the Philharmonic, 1967 at the BBC studios, and Loose Tubes a youthful and unexpected big band of the 1980s.

## Ronnie Scott and All That Jazz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrG4LfQBr28>

An 18th February 2012 Documentary celebrating the founding of Ronnie Scott's Jazz club in 1959. Scott, a rising young saxophone player, opened a club where he and his friends could play the music they liked. Over the following years, the club had its ups and downs, reflecting the changes in attitudes to jazz and the social life of surrounding Soho. Now Ronnie Scott's is known throughout the world as the heartbeat of British jazz. In this tribute, Omnibus talks to some of Ronnie's greatest admirers including Mel Brooks, the Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke MP and writer Alan Plater. It features rare archive footage of some of the club's historic performances by Zoot Sims, Sonny Rollins, Dizzy Gillespie and Ella Fitzgerald.



## "The Street"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2Esuz5CnAc>

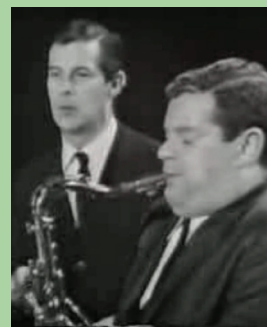
Archer Street, Soho, was THE place in London for musicians to hang out and pick up gigs in the 1940s and 1950s. This thirty minute film features some wonderful 8mm archive footage of Soho, shot by musician Denis Rose, and with commentary —and jokes— from musicians who knew The Street well including Ronnie Scott, Laurie Morgan, and Bennie Green. A nostalgic and humorous look back at a lost world.

## Jazz 625:

**Tubby Hayes, Ronnie Scott, John Dankworth, Bill Le Sage, Tony Kinsey**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTuARrIMJ6M>

Jazz 625 is a BBC jazz music programme, featuring performances by British and American jazz musicians, which was first broadcast between April 1964 and August 1966. This one-hour compilation broadcast presents vintage 1960s British jazz from the BBC's archives, presented by Steve Race. Performances by the Steve Race Orchestra; Bill Le Sage and The Directions in Jazz Unit; Cleo Laine and John Dankworth; Victor Feldman Trio; Johnny Scott Quintet; Tubby Hayes Big Band; Annie Ross with the Tony Kinsey Quintet; George Lewis and Acker Bilk; Ronnie Scott and the Victor Feldman Trio; Tony Kinsey Quintet; Johnny Scott Quintet.



## Jazz at the Philharmonic 1967

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-WwhDh894g>

Norman Granz Presents an all-star line-up recorded by BBC TV. The full 95 minute concert stars James Moody, Zoot Sims, Dizzy Gillespie, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Teddy Wilson, Bob Cranshaw, Louie Bellson, and bluesman T-Bone Walker.

## BBC Trad Jazz Britannia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnUy-8sVjwA>

An episode of the superb BBC documentary series on the history of jazz in the UK. This episode describes the odd post-WWII phenomenon of New Orleans Jazz becoming a popular fad. The documentary traces, through interviews and archival footage, the music's rise and demise.



## Loose Tubes —Bath International Festival 1986

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8r-oBWRDew>

The 1980s saw a renaissance in British jazz, but nobody expected a core group would turn out to be a big band. Nonetheless Loose Tubes took the jazz world by storm, recording half a dozen glorious albums between 1985 and 1990. It proved a launch pad for multiple individual careers. The concert is 50 minutes of uninhibited joy.



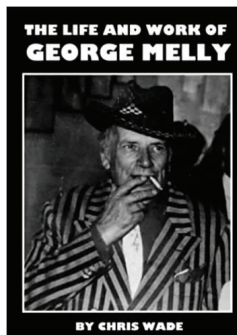
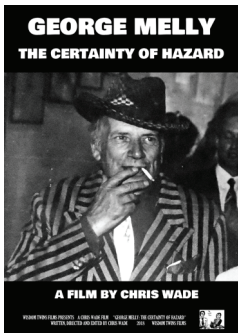
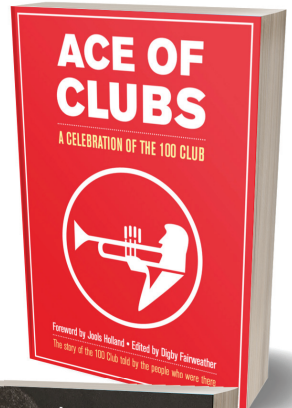




# All That's Jazz at The Jazz Centre UK Shop

## Ace of Clubs: A Celebration of the 100 Club

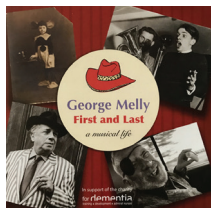
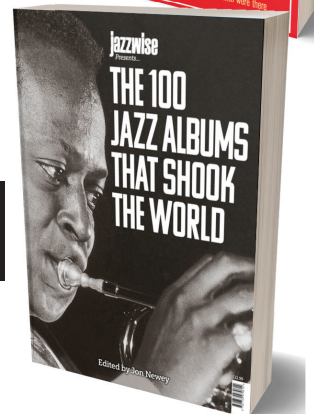
*Ace of Clubs* compiles oral history interviews from over fifty performers at Britain's oldest jazz club, 'The 100 Club'. Retailing at £12.95 + PP, and published by Brewin Books, this high quality, full-colour edition is a must-read for music fans. Only limited stock is available, to begin with, so get in quick whilst stocks last!



## Jazzwise presents: The 100 Jazz Albums that Shook the World

This publication is the first time that a fully-annotated, top 100 album countdown of the most important and influential jazz recordings, ranked from 100 to No 1, has been produced in book form. £12.99 + PP.

The two books are also available to purchase direct on The Jazz Centre website: <http://www.thejazzcentrueuk.co.uk/shop>



## George Melly Special Offer

*The Life and Work of George Melly*

by Chris Wade £5

*George Melly: The Certainty of Hazard*

DVD by Chris Wade £5

*George Melly: First and Last, a Musical Life.*

CD £5

Jazz Centre special offers: Any 2: £7.50 All 3: £12.



**The Jazz Centre UK T-shirts**  
For now only one size fits all, and one colour, white. £15.



## Jazz on Vinyl and CD

What's a shop without recorded jazz! The Jazz Centre UK has a permanent sale on all CDs and vinyl; currently priced at £1 per item.

Our stock is constantly being replenished, so regular visits mean regular bargains.



## Jazz Prints and Postcards

Kay Whittaker was the artist in residence at The Jazz Centre before moving abroad. She left us with a selection of her Limited Edition Jazz prints: including Humphrey Lyttelton and Billie Holiday. Each print, £45, is numbered, titled and signed by the artist, with a certificate of authenticity. A wider variety of greetings cards are on sale at £2.50 each.



# The Forgotten Ones

## 3. Derek Humble

Brian Robinson looks back at the career of this versatile saxophonist.

**D**erek Humble first saw the light of day in Livingston, County Durham on the 6th May, 1931. He learnt and started playing the alto saxophone and clarinet in his childhood, and turned professional in his mid-teens.

His early career was very much that of the peripatetic jazzman. His first real job was with the Teddy Foster band, which he joined in October 1948, lasting only eighteen months.

In 1950 he joined Kathy Stobart's group, and in March 1951 moved to the Vic Lewis Orchestra for a year, before taking a chair in Jack Parnell's band where he spent a further year. He then became a member of Ronnie Scott's much-admired nine-piece group in 1953, where he stayed for three years. Finally spending a few months in Oscar Rabin's outfit. He certainly got around.

In the late 1950s he moved to Germany and started a long-term relationship with two European based big bands. The first, under the leadership of Kurt Edelhagen, is perhaps best remembered as a middle-of-the-road dance band. Although much of its recorded output and live performances were in that mode, it was also a very high-class jazz band, and Derek Humble leading the sax section was a vital component. Ample evidence of this can be found in the recent re-issue of the 3-CD WDR Recordings 1957-1974. His solos are a prominent feature, and Disc 2 includes a reading of the old be-bop standard *Shaw 'Nuff*, by the Derek Humble Quartet. Band members the likes of Benny Bailey, Herb Geller, Carla Bley, Sahib Shihab, Dusko Goykeovich, Jimmy Deuchar, Shake Keane, Kenny Wheeler, Tubby Hayes, among many, many more is an indication of the band's quality.



The better-remembered band Humble played in, —between 1961 and 1968— the iconic Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band, was in many ways a continuation of the Edelhagen outfit, with much overlap in membership and arrangers. Humble on alto was part of a world-class saxophone section alongside Ronnie Scott, and Sahib Shihab, and which at times included Johnny Griffin, Herb Geller, John Surman, and Tony Coe. His German residency meant appearances with the band in many German TV shows, including a 1966 TV special *Nicht nur ein Schlager-Clown*, and several movie soundtrack recordings.

Outside of his big-band work, Humble was a welcome player in the modern jazz scene throughout the fifties and sixties. Highly regarded as a side-man, his appearances in the studio included Jimmy Deuchar, (*Pub Crawling* and *Pal Jimmy*), Victor Feldman, (*London Vol 2 Big Band* and *Suite Sixteen*), Mark Murphy, (*Midnight Mood*); and Ronnie Scott, (*Presenting the Ronnie Scott Sextet*). Sadly, he was never

called upon to record under his own auspices.

Consulting several jazz history books, his name appears only in passing, generally listed as a member of another leader's group. His entry in *The Guinness Who's Who of Jazz* is limited to a single paragraph. It does, however, mark him as "A gifted player with a direct, passionate solo style, Humble was one of the outstanding alto saxophonists of his generation"

Sadly, in 1968 he was the victim of a mugging in Cologne, and was seriously injured. Following this he returned to England where his last regular job was as co-leader of a quartet with drummer Phil Seamen. In February 1971 he travelled to Easington, County Durham to visit his mother, where on 22nd February he passed away. So, Britain lost another scion of the jazz scene..

This writer was able to see him on numerous occasions. He was an accomplished improviser with a clear, but not over-forceful tone. He never attracted the esteem his ability deserved, his lengthy stays in Germany and Europe limiting his exposure in his country of birth.

Researching for this article a website listing all the recorded versions of *Shaw 'Nuff* was discovered. It included alto sax luminaries Art Pepper, Charles McPherson, Phil Woods, Greg Osby, and many more not so well known . . . but not Derek Humble. One of the forgotten men of British jazz indeed.

**You can hear Derek Humble on Spotify featured in the Arnold Ross Sextet (*In Sweden 1962*), with Jimmy Deuchar, and Ronnie Scott.**

