

FROM THE CHAIR

How does someone write something positive and hopeful at the end of 2012, especially after the horrific tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut?

Are we in a new Dark Age? One might well so conclude. Just look at the awful things being reported by the media every day. How does a low-key, all-volunteer activity such as PAJA survive and contribute in such times? Is it even important to do so, given all the problems facing the world?

Some years ago, I was exposed to the writings of L.S. Stavrianos, Professor of History at Northwestern University. One of his publications entitled "The Promise Of The New Dark Age" commented upon how the Dark Ages weren't entirely dark, that in reality a lot of creative ideas and innovations were getting started. In addition, various monasteries were preserving existing knowledge, as had the Arabic world with mathematics. He felt that now we too were in an era where lots of exciting and positive things are happening all over the world, that it is not all doom and gloom as it may appear. (I wonder what he would think of Facebook?) So, there was some light in the darkness back then, but due to lack of communications, many were unaware. Everything changed with the explo-

sion of these bits of creativity, combining with the old, into the Renaissance.

As I reflected on this topic, the pilot in my cranky furnace went out, as it does from time to time—usually on the first cold night. Relighting is no big creative challenge; it just takes a little patience. As I struggled, it occurred to me that here was a nice metaphor for PAJA and its role. We are a Pilot Light, keeping the flame of something important alive in a daunting time, encouraging new efforts just as some did back in the so-called Dark Ages. Our commitment to providing *live jazz music* concerts, reflecting both old and new styles, allows us to foster Jazz Education in a variety of ways, and I do believe that is important.

We must not be Pollyannish. The horror stories out there are real. But let's enter the new year with courage and hope as we strive to keep jazz a vital part of the world now, as well as into the future.

In appreciation of your support,
C. Stuart Brewster

FEBRUARY 16—TAYLOR EIGSTI AT WOODSIDE PRIORY

PAJA welcomes the return of local hero **Taylor Eigsti** and his trio, playing this time with special guest, saxophonist Dayna Stephens. Taylor nowadays is based in New York and his current trio consists of himself on piano, the talented **Harish Raghavan** on bass, and the brilliant drummer **Eric Harland**. This special



Taylor Eigsti

PAJA concert, arranged by Artistic Director Dr. Herb Wong, will take place at Taylor's alma mater, the Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley, at its beautiful venue, Rothrock Performance Hall. PAJA veterans will recall our last concert there—Piano Summit III in 2010, with Taylor, Denny Zeitlin,



Le Jazz Hot, the Quartet of the Hot Club of San Francisco, pose with promoter Bruce Powell at PAJA's November 11 Elks Club concert. 150 fans enjoyed the quartet's pulsating gypsy jazz./Andy Nozaka photo

Larry Vuckovich and Susan Muscarella.

And Peninsula fans will certainly be familiar with Taylor's special guest, **Dayna Stephens**, whose mellow sax riffs can be heard regularly at Dinkelspiel and Campbell Recital Hall at the Stanford Jazz Festival. Dayna is a Berkeley High graduate who is now also based in New York. This group will be performing in the L.A. area that week, and we're flying them up here for an exclusive performance—their only one in the Bay Area.



Dayna Stephens

Local fans will also recall that when Taylor was only 12 years old he played with **Dave Brubeck**, and he has considered Brubeck, who died last month, one of his mentors ever since. So, we can expect at least part of the concert to contain a Brubeck tribute. That's going to be something to look forward to.

So, mark your calendar—Saturday afternoon, 2pm, February 16, at Woodside Priory's Rothrock Performance Hall. Tickets are \$35 general admission, \$30 for PAJA members, \$15 for students. It's sure to be a sell-out, so order your tickets now from PAJA Tickets, c/o E. Fox, 294 Tennessee Lane, Palo Alto 94306.

Directions to Woodside Priory: From Rte. 280 take the Alpine Road exit and head west. Turn right at Portola Road (T-intersection with a stop sign). The Priory campus is less than a half mile from that intersection, on the right. Guest parking—directed by parking attendants—is available at the first parking lot, across from the administration building and close to Rothrock Hall.

MJF 2013 ALL-STARS

For 55 years, the Monterey Jazz Festival has formed an all-star touring ensemble, and the 2013 group has been announced. This year's edition is booked for 45 shows around the country and it will include Benny Green on piano, Lewis Nash on drums, Christian McBride on bass, Chris Potter on tenor, Ambrose Akinmusire on trumpet, and vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater—headliners all. Bay Area fans will have just two opportunities to catch the group: January 10 at Kuumbwa in Santa Cruz and January 19 at Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall. Full information about the tour is available on MJF's website.

FROM AL COHN

Q: It's been somewhat suggested that Stan Getz did not fit well with the other sax players [in Woody Herman's band].

Cohn: Stan's a special case. Like Zoot said about him one time, "He was a nice bunch of guys."

DR. HERB WONG'S WINTER CLASS

This term—Tuesday nights, January 22-March 5—Herb's class is entitled JAZZ VOCALIST Mel Tormé: Part 2. This is a continuation of Herb's review of the Velvet Fog's career and oeuvre. The classes run from 7pm to 9:30pm at Palo Alto High School (Room P10) and the fee is \$123. See the website paadultschool.org/classes to register and for more information.

SIX SETS A NIGHT UNTIL 3 IN THE MORNING

"But the truth is that jazz was never all that popular in the first place. Musicians such as Charlie Parker, Thelonius Monk, John Coltrane, Zoot Sims—among the most dedicated and skilled craftsmen in the history of American music—were relegated, in the so-called golden age, to basement clubs with 75 to 100 seats, where they played six 45-minute sets per night until 3 in the morning. Today, you can hear Chet Baker or Miles Davis playing muted trumpets in the Pottery Barn or Restoration Hardware, and these stores sell coffee-table books with pictures of jazz musicians in smoky bars. But those bars were hell-holes, and the musicians, especially Afro-Americans, were jerked around." From *The Jazz Loft Project*.

SAN FRANCISCO JAZZ CENTER TO OPEN

The first concert hall of its type in the Western U.S., the SF JAZZ Center will have its first concert on January 23, a sold-out affair hosted by Bill Cosby and featuring the likes of McCoy Tyner, Bobby Hutcherson, Joshua Redman, and Mary Stallings. This fund-raising concert has brought in more than \$1.5 million for the Center, the total cost of which was \$65 million. Located at 205 Franklin Street (near San Francisco's Civic Center), the 35,000 square foot building was designed by award-winning architect Mark Cavagnero. The main auditorium will have up to 700 seats. A ground-level café will be operated by Charlie Phan (The Slanted Door). Fans can get a good look at the Center at the free open house on January 21.

SOME QUOTES FROM DAVE BRUBECK OBITUARIES/TRIBUTES

Dave Brubeck
Dec. 6, 1920 - Dec. 5, 2012



"In his seven-decade career, Dave Brubeck was both an artistic and a commercial success, a pianist and composer who expanded the musical landscape and who crossed other borders as one of the world's foremost ambassadors of jazz. . . He was an American original." Matt Schudel, *Washington Post*.

"'Take Five' epitomizes what one might call JFK jazz: laidback yet intense, aloof yet engaging. . . Mr. Brubeck played a crucial role in the transformation of jazz from a broadly popular, if little respected, genre that was viewed mainly as dance music to one accorded greater intellectual respectability and listened to for its own sake, albeit by a markedly smaller audience. . ." Mark Feeney, *Boston Globe*

"Throughout the 1950s jazz grew in popularity with students and young professionals, and the Quartet's whole style of presentation was designed to appeal to them. Its members looked the part, especially Brubeck, with his professorial horn-rimmed glasses, while over the proceedings there hovered the unspoken suggestion that here was a new, superior, more intellectual form of jazz." *The Telegraph*.

"'When you start out with goals—mine were to play polytonally and polyrhythmically—you never exhaust that,' Brubeck told the Associ-

ated Press in 1995. 'I started doing that in the 1940s. It's still a challenge to discover what can be done with just those two elements.'" Pat Eaton-Robb, *Huffington Post*.

"Starting in the mid-1950s, he emerged as a symbol of jazz in America, and well beyond, gracing the cover of Time magazine in 1954 and selling more than a million copies of 'Take Five' in 1960. . . Beneath the popular acclaim stood a brilliant, uncompromising composer-pianist who challenged conventional jazz techniques, brought the music to American college campuses and helped break down racial barriers through a music uniquely suited to that task." Howard Reich, *Chicago Tribune*.

"Columbia executives blocked its ["Time Out"] release for nearly a year—until label president Goddard Lieberson intervened. They said, 'We never put out music that people can't dance to, and they can't dance to these rhythms that you're playing.' Brubeck recalled in 2010. He also wanted a painting by Joan Miro on the cover, something else the record company had never done. 'I insisted that we go with something new,' he said. 'And to their surprise, it became the biggest jazz recording they ever made.'" Charles J. Gans, *Seattle Times*

"Dave Brubeck wrote more than 250 pieces of music, toured concert halls from California to the Far East and performed in front of four US presidents—a huge workload for someone who, after all, told the rest of us to Take Five." *BBC News*

"The jazz-loving American comedian Mort Sahl once remarked of American cold-war foreign diplomacy that 'After John Foster Dulles visits a country, the State Department sends the Brubeck Quartet in to repair the damage.'" John Fordham, *The Guardian*.

"After the Time magazine cover story and the Dave Brubeck Quartet's elevation from obscurity and near-poverty, the sniping began. They had committed the sins, unpardonable in some quarters, of popular success and solvency. It's an old story, familiar to Cannonball Adderley, for instance, and to The Modern Jazz Quartet and , more recently, Diana Krall; if you are in demand and making money, you sold out." Doug Ramsey, *All About Jazz*.

SOME OF MY FAVORITE MEMORIES OF DAVE BRUBECK

By Herb Wong

Buff editor Ed Fox suggested that I recall some of my personal shared experiences with Dave Brubeck.

My enthusiasm for Dave's music began in 1949 when I was a student at a UC Berkeley jazz course conducted by Dave. Dave played piano while his wife Iola handled the commentary, as Dave, at that time, was too shy to speak. Their warm, affable personalities made it easy to be friendly. They were undergoing financial struggles at the time and Dave asked me for a loan of five dollars. I was happy to oblige. Years later, Dave and I were backstage at the Monterey Jazz Festival. Somehow I tongue-in-cheek mentioned that I had lent him five bucks five decades before, and Dave asked, "Gosh, did I ever remember to pay you back?" "Oh, no," I said. "I don't want to be repaid, otherwise I'll lose the chance to tell this story."

The MJF stage has other Brubeck remembrances for me. We had two specially programmed one-and-a-half hour conversation sessions between Dave and myself, events scheduled four years apart. The first was a biographical profile; the second focused on Dave's early 60's "The Real Ambassadors" and Dave's review of its genesis and results. Both conversations were interspersed with some of Dave's historic jazz recordings.

The legendary trio: Brubeck on piano, Cal Tjader on drums, Ron Crotty on bass. Influential support was provided by deejay Jimmy Lyons who promoted the Brubeck Trio on his popular radio broadcasts. Jimmy also was instrumental in Dave's recording debut on Coronet Records (pre-Fantasy), a disc which featured "Blue Moon," "Indiana," "Tea for Two," and "Laura." Dave's growing popularity led to a regular gig at the Burma Lounge on Lakeshore Avenue in Oakland. I was there opening night and recall the joint was packed with sailors who had heard Lyons' broadcasts.

After the Burma Lounge, it was San Francisco's famous Blackhawk at Turk and Hyde Streets. Dave's electrifying gigs there, with standing room only performances, helped get the word out across the country that something special was brewing in the Bay Area.

My visits to Dave's family residences remain very special to me. In the 50's, as Dave's success grew, he and Iola were able to build an innovative residence in Montclair in the Oakland hills. This collaboration between Dave and noted architect Beverly Thorne integrated nature and architectural sensitivity. Its focal piece was a huge boulder, and two impressive I-beams stretched out toward Heartwood Drive.

Wilton, Connecticut, became the permanent family estate. I was impressed by the handsome entrance approach, and the interior—a multi-story environment tailored to Dave's musical needs and family activity, combining indoor and outdoor settings above the extensive river property. Dave's piano was set in a specially designed, concert hall-like space.

I have many other personal highlights connected to Dave and his music. Go to the Brubeck Institute at the University of Pacific for more information on this jazz genius and wonderful human being.

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UPCOMING JAZZ

Some recommended gigs within driving distance...

BACH'S DANCING AND DYNAMITE SOCIETY, El Granada

The Pete Douglas Beach House—one of the best venues anywhere for jazz. Sundays at 4:30pm

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| January 13 | Bach D&D Fundraiser. Larry Vuckovich and a dozen local stalwarts. \$50 |
| January 20 | Marcus Shelby Orchestra—Blues and the Pursuit of Freedom. 15-pc big band celebrating MLK Jr birthday. A fabulous presentation by Shelby. \$35 |
| February 17 | Vocalist Tierney Sutton, with Michael Forman on piano, Kevin Axt, bass. \$35 |

YOSHI'S SAN FRANCISCO

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| January 10 | Roberta Gambarini. Wow. |
| January 16-17 | MF Productions Latin Jazz All-Stars: Turre, Escovedo, O'Farrill, etc. |
| February 12 | Renee Wilson with Marcus Shelby Trio |
| February 21-23 | Cassandra Wilson |

YOSHI'S OAKLAND (Jack London Square)

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| January 9 | Wesla Whitfield, with Mike Greensill Trio |
| January 24-16 | Joe Lovano/UsFive, with Esperanza Spalding, et al. |
| January 31 | Stanley Jordan (solo) |
| February 1-3 | Tower of Power |
| February 9-10 | Allen Toussaint |
| February 12-14 | Doctor John |
| February 15-17 | Manhattan Transfer |
| February 24 | Chris Potter |

KUUMBWA JAZZ CENTER, Santa Cruz

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| January 10 | Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour: Bridgewater, Green, McBride, et al. |
| January 21 | Freddy Cole Quartet |
| January 28 | Joe Lovano/UsFive, with Esperanza Spalding, et al. |
| February 11 | Allen Toussaint |
| February 21 | Scott Hamilton/Harry Allen Quintet |
| February 25 | Chris Potter |

SAN JOSE JAZZ SOCIETY

All SJJ gigs are free

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| January 16, February 6, February 20 | Jazz Jam at the Hedley (Hedley Club, Hotel DeAnza), 7:30pm |
| January 18 | Anton Schwartz and Laila Smith. San Pedro Square Market, 7pm |
| January 25 | Shawn Constantino, San Pedro Square Market, 7pm |
| January 30 | South Bay Guitar Summit, with Rick Vandivier, et al. |
| | Affinity Restaurant & Bar, Hilton Hotel 7:30pm |
| February 1 | Doug Ellington, trumpet San Pedro Square Market, 7pm |

For complete SJJ lineup, go to www.sanjosejazz.org



Roberta Gambarini

Happy New Year from the Palo Alto Jazz Alliance