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YOUR FREE GUIDE TO THE NYC JAZZ SCENE

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THOSE  
GONE  
SILENT

# FREDDY RODRIGUEZ, SR. 1931-2020

Up until his death in March at 89, tenor saxophonist Freddy Rodriguez led the band at Denver's famed El Chapultepec jazz club, a gig he held for 40 years. At every gig Freddy would announce it was his birthday, which, at 89 years old, every day you'd want to celebrate as such! He'd also let everyone know he was playing the 'safe sax'... really a description of his mellow tone inspired by his heroes such as Dexter Gordon and Coleman Hawkins.

Musicians would regularly pop in and Freddy enthusiastically welcomed them to sit in. It might be one of the Marsalis brothers one night or Bono from U2 another night. In the early '80s, Jaco Pastorius sat in for a legendary set. But it was also always a delight to hear a young high school or college musician cutting his teeth and then see Freddy spending his break encouraging them.

Freddy grew up in Denver but, like many other hometown jazz musicians across America, did move away to 'the big city' early in his career to pursue more opportunity. In his case, he moved to Los Angeles and for a while had some success with the West Coast jazz scene. Denver was lucky to have him back in town. Freddy was a jazz icon in Denver. No, he was never featured in *DownBeat* and he didn't play the big jazz festivals, but his legacy will be just as important: one of the many hometown jazz musicians who perform throughout America, jazz evangelists keeping this great art form alive and accessible to Americans everywhere.

— ANDREW HUDSON, BASS

# WALLACE RONEY 1960-2020

I always felt Wallace and I had a special relationship. It started when I was playing with Philly Joe Jones (in Dameronia). We played a concert at Howard University, where Wallace was studying. Years later, Wallace reminded me that we first played together then, rehearsing some Tadd Dameron big band charts. We later played and recorded together in my second Superblue band and on the *Monk On Monk* CD project. Wallace also honored me by having me produce quite a few of his albums as a leader. The last times we were together were during his 2019 sessions at the Van Gelder Studio with my wife Maureen engineering. Wallace loved to record at Rudy's studio; he always said it was his favorite. It saddens me deeply that he won't be able to finish the last project he started at Rudy's.

We had so many other wonderful times together: him rehearsing at my NYC rehearsal studio with Tony Williams; us together at Mt. Fuji festivals in Japan. Of course, Miles was important to him, and he put Miles in a new perspective in my life. I remember Mr. Namekata (producer and creator of the Somethin' Else label in Japan) wanted me to record both "Round Midnight" and "Autumn Leaves", as a tribute to the original Blue Note *Somethin' Else* album that originally featured Miles. Naturally, I featured Wallace. His tribute to Miles in those two tracks is absolutely thrilling. But Wallace had his own compelling voice; he was all about music.

— DON SICKLER, TRUMPET/PRODUCTION

# HAL WILLNER 1956-2020

I was lucky enough to be around Hal for 30 years, often in the middle of the musical storm. Hal loved improvisation and things happening in the moment: a producer who wanted to embrace the unknown. He thrived on the chaos of creation. "What's the point if it's not dangerous?" So many incredible memories. Here are three classic "Hal moments".

1) Hal wanted me to write a big band arrangement on "Perfect Day" for Lou Reed to sing with the *Kansas City* band for a Jazz Foundation of America benefit, but also explained that this was not something Lou would necessarily want to hear (you dig). Lou was ill and running late. Hal said, "Bernstein wrote an arrangement of 'Perfect Day'...Lou says, 'alright let me hear it'...had just enough to time play it once...and, yes, we played it with Lou that night. 2) On a concert celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Solidarność movement, Hal had me arrange Sun Ra's "Watusa" to be played by a full orchestra as Lech Wałęsa walked onstage...talk about a meeting of the stars. 3) Hal bringing down the house with his hilarious monologue before performing Fear's "New York's Alright if You Like Saxophones" at Town Hall. He became an incredible performer in the last few years of his life.

Hal loved musicians, Hal loved music more than anyone I knew. But that was just part of him. He loved comedy, film, poetry...and puppets. He was a sponge for everything and was always ready to listen and help in any artistic situation.

— STEVEN BERNSTEIN, TRUMPET



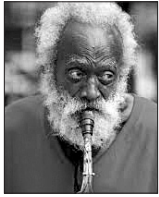
COURTESY OF ANDREW HUDSON



JONATHAN CHIMENE



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**\*GIUSEPPI LOGAN** (May 22nd, 1935 - Apr. 17th, 2020) The saxophonist was a part of The New Thing in mid '60s NYC, releasing two albums on ESP-Disk (quartet dates with Don Pullen, Eddie Gomez or Reggie Johnson and Milford Graves) and recording with Roswell Rudd and Patty Waters, then disappearing from music for decades, homeless and suffering from drug addiction, before suddenly rejoining the jazz scene in 2009, through the support of Matt Lavelle, and releasing a handful of albums for Tompkins Square, Mad King Edmund and Improvising Beings before falling out of music once more in 2012. Logan died Apr. 17th at 84.



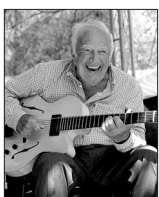
**\*ELLIS MARSALIS** (Nov. 24th, 1934 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The pianist and patriarch of one of jazz' first families (he and sons Branford, Wynton, Delfeayo and Jason were collectively named NEA Jazz Masters in 2011) was a champion of the music from his hometown of New Orleans via decades of mentorship and his own albums since the early '60s on AFO, Elm, Columbia, Spindletop, Somethin' Else, CBS and Verve and peppered his career with the occasional sideman date/guest spots with the likes of Nat Adderley (1962), Snooks Eaglin (1977), American Jazz Quintet (1987) Courtney Pine (1989), Harry Connick, Jr. (1992), Kermit Ruffins (1996) and, of course, his children. Marsalis died Apr. 1st at 85.



**JYMIE MERRITT** (May 3rd, 1926 - Apr. 11th, 2020) The bassist (possibly first to use the electric bass in jazz) started his career auspiciously with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in 1958, staying with the classic iterations of the band through 1962 and also recording with Sonny Clark, Bobby Jaspar, fellow Messengers Wayne Shorter, Curtis Fuller and Benny Golson, Chet Baker, Max Roach, Jimmy Witherspoon, Jimmy Smith, Will Bill Davis and Lee Morgan and leading his Forerunners in his native Philadelphia from the early '60s into the modern day. Merritt died Apr. 11th at 93.



**BOB MIELKE** (1926 - Apr. 17th, 2020) The Dixieland-style trombonist led his own band, The Bearcats, in the '50s, and in the late '40s-mid '60s worked with Bob Wilber, Sidney Bechet, Bob Scobey, Gene Mayl, George Lewis, Barbara Dane and Lu Watters. Mielke died Apr. 17th at 94.



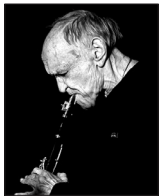
**\*BUCKY PIZZARELLI** (Jan. 9th, 1926 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The guitarist, who pioneered the use of the seven-stringed version in jazz (and father to fellow guitarist John and bassist Martin), amassed hundreds of credits since the '50s with Pee Wee Hunt, Rex Stewart, Bobby Donaldson, Al Caiola, Mat Mathews, Don Costa, Bobby Hackett, Sir Charles Thompson, Tony Mottola, Lionel Hampton, Carol Sloane, Gene Ammons, Etta Jones, Willis Jackson, Doc Severinson, Kai Winding, Wes Montgomery, Stanley Turrentine, Toots Thielemans, Gene Bertoncini, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, Oscar Peterson, Benny Goodman, Joe Venuti, Carmen McRae, Stéphane Grappelli, Warren Vaché, Zoot Sims, Bob Wilber, John Bunch, son John, Red Norvo, Cynthia Sayer, Peter Appleyard, Paul Desmond, Ken Peplowski, Ruby Braff, Scott Robinson, Scott Hamilton, Flip Phillips, Dick Hyman, Howard Alden, Frank Vignola and dozens of others to go along with his own numerous sessions since the '60s for Savoy, A&R, Choice, Monmouth Evergreen, Flying Dutchman, Stash, Groove James, Chesky, Concord, Arbors and many other labels. Pizzarelli died Apr. 1st at 94.



**\*JACQUES PELLEN** (Apr. 9th, 1957 - Apr. 21st, 2020) The French guitarist started out in folk music, particularly Celtic, then branched out into jazz in the '90s with Didier Squiban's various projects, Bruno Nevez, Peter Gritz, Jean-Marie Machado and others as well as his own albums for Caravan, Gwerz Pladenn, Silex (the latter a collaboration with Paolo Fresu and Erik Marchand) and Naïve. Pellen died Apr. 21st at 63.



**DIETER REITH** (Feb. 25th, 1938 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The German keyboard player had mid '60s associations with Svend Asmussen (albums for Victoria and Murbo) and Charly Antolini (the drummer's SABA album *Drum Beat*), his own albums across a range of genres for SABA, Center, Mondial, MPS, BASF, Intercord and Mons, library records made for Intersound and Sonoton and sideman dates with Maynard Ferguson, Knut Kiesewetter, Peter Herbolzheimer, Horst Jankowski and others. Reith died Apr. 1st at 82.



**HAROLD RUBIN** (May 13th, 1932 - Apr. 1st, 2020) The South African-born artist and clarinetist flouted Apartheid-era race restrictions by playing alongside black musicians in the '50s concurrent with artwork decrying the brutality of the government (the latter causing him to be arrested and charged with blasphemy), then emigrated to Israel, where he continued his political artwork and returned to jazz, co-founding the Zaviot quartet, being part of The Tel-Aviv Connection, releasing his own albums on Jazzis, OutNow and Hopscotch and mentoring younger generations of Israeli avant garde jazz players. Rubin died Apr. 1st at 87.



**RON RUBIN** (Jul. 8th, 1933 - Apr. 14th, 2020) The British pianist/bassist was active since the mid '60s with recording credits under Sandy Brown, Bill Coleman, Mike Taylor, Tony Coe, "Snub" Mosley and George Melly and regular live performance with his countrymen and visiting Americans. Rubin died Apr. 14th at 86.



**RICHARD TEITELBAUM** (May 19th, 1939 - Apr. 9th, 2020) The keyboard player and composer began his career as part of the ex-pat American improvising collective Musica Elettronica Viva (alongside longtime members Alvin Curran and Frederic Rzewski), which released albums on Polydor, BYG, Mainstream, Horo, IRML, Matchless and Victo, and had partnerships with Anthony Braxton (in groups ranging from duets to participation in Braxton's large ensembles), George Lewis (late '70s-early '80s albums on Black Saint and Lovely Music) and Andrew Cyrille (a 1997 duet on Silkheart and a 2014 Cyrille ECM date) and collaborations with/credits under Leroy Jenkins, Carlos Zingaro, Joëlle Léandre, Steve Lacy, Sven-Åke Johansson, Marilyn Crispell, Tanya Kalmanovitch and others to go with his own albums for Denon, Lumina, hatART, Moers Music, Tzadik, New World and other labels. Teitelbaum died Apr. 9th at 80.



**LES TOMKINS** (Oct. 31st, 1930 - Apr. 26th, 2020) The British jazz journalist was a fixture on BBC Radio 2, wrote for *Melody Maker* and *Jazz News*, edited *Crescendo International*, wrote liner notes for numerous albums and, in the winter of his life, took up amateur jazz singing. Tomkins died Apr. 26th at 89.



**JOE TORRES** (Nov. 29th, 1943 - Apr. 13th, 2020) The Puerto Rican-American pianist (nicknamed Professor) had credits under Bobby Valentín, The Latin Dimension, Rubén Blades, Hector Lavoe, Celia Cruz, Milton Cardona and, most notably, Willie Colón from the mid '60s into the '90s (especially albums *La Gran Fugu* from 1970, *El Jucio* from 1972 and *The Good, The Bad, The Ugly* from 1975) on Fania, Columbia and Vaya. Torres died Apr. 13th at 76.



**LOUIS VAN DIJK** (Nov. 27th, 1941 - Apr. 12th, 2020) The Dutch pianist/keyboard player had dozens of releases since the early '60s on Philips (an EP made when he was 19 and had won the Loosdrecht Jazz Concours in 1961), Artone, CBS, Polydor, Keytone, Blue Mouse, Organon, RCA, Columbia, Quintessence, Challenge and other labels, either as a leader or in collaboration with countrymen like Chris Hinze, Rita Reys, Thijs Van Leer and Pim Jacobs, as well as a periodic partnership with Belgian Toots Thielemans. Van Dijk died Apr. 12th at 78.



**SANNE VAN HEK** (Nov. 4th, 1978 - Apr. 7th, 2020) The Dutch trumpeter had a 2004 album as a leader (the self-released *Ask me later*), membership in the Magic Malik Orchestra, The Black Napkins, Network of Stoppages and SpermChurch and credits under Kleefstra|Bakker|Kleefstra and Guus Janssen. Van Hek died Apr. 7th at 41.



**IAN WHITCOMB** (Jul. 10th, 1941 - Apr. 19th, 2020) The British multi-instrumentalist had a charting pop hit, "You Turn Me On!" in his early 20s but then moved away from then-modern music to concentrate on ragtime and music hall styles, recording through the last millennium for Tower, United Artists, Argo, Warner Bros., First American, Sierr Briar, Stomp Off, Audiophile, Premier and Rhino. Whitcomb died Apr. 19th at 78.



**JOAN WILDMAN** (Jan. 1st, 1938 - Apr. 8th, 2020) The pianist/keyboard player, composer and respected educator at University of Wisconsin-Madison helped build the school's jazz program, founded the non-profit arts presenting group Madison Music Collective, wrote articles on music theory and history, released a handful of albums (including the 2015 duo effort *Conversations* with Joe Fonda) and collaborated with fellow UW-Madison professor Roscoe Mitchell, playing on his *Four Compositions* (Lovely Music, 1987) and *Numbers* (RogueArt, 2002-10). Wildman died Apr. 8th at 82.



**\*HAL WILLNER** (Apr. 6th, 1956 - Apr. 7th, 2020) The producer had hundreds of credits since the late '70s across a wide array of genres including jazz with albums by Beaver Harris, Gary Windo, David Sanborn, Spanish Fly, Gary Lucas, Bill Frisell, The Jazz Passengers, Jun Miyake and others and was also famed for his work on the soundtrack to the 1996 Robert Altman film *Kansas City* and the tributes he organized to Nino Rota (Hannibal, 1981), Thelonious Monk (A&M, 1984), Kurt Weill (A&M, 1985), Carl Stalling (Warner Bros., 1990), Charles Mingus (Columbia, 1992), Raymond Scott (Basta, 1998) and Howard Arlen (Sony Classical, 2003). Willner died Apr. 7th at 64.