

## FROM THE CHAIR

### Congratulations to Taylor Eigsti!

Great news. Taylor Eigsti has received a Grammy award in the category referenced as Contemporary Instrumental Album for his original work entitled "Tree Falls." Go to his web site, [www.tayjazz.com](http://www.tayjazz.com), for more background on the album and information on his career to date.

It has been heartwarming to have watched this artist develop from a pre-teen kid who could play with the best pianists of the day to now a mature performer and composer, moving off into his own special land of sound. The accompanying photo shows Taylor as that precocious 14-year-old who could fill concert halls with his jazz piano brilliance. Board member Shirley Douglas told her children (in the photo) that this was someone to remember and to watch him grow.

Taylor first performed for PAJA at our member party, October 1998. His most recent performance for us was at Woodside Priory, his alma mater, nine years ago. It was in January of 1999 when our co-founder Herb Wong took Taylor to a meeting of the Interna-

tional Association of Jazz Educators at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim. Herb, a former president of the association, had been nurturing Taylor's growth in a number of ways, and introduced him to such luminaries as Billy Taylor at that meeting.

Consequently, PAJA has to be numbered among Taylor Eigsti's first fan clubs. We watched him, still a teen ager, open for Dave Brubeck; we have seen him in countless gigs at the Stanford Jazz Workshop, where he is a teacher as well as performer; we have experienced his playing "Rhapsody in Blue" for the Peninsula Symphony. I personally have a special memory of being in Tokyo with Michael Griffin, the original editor of the Buff, and we went to an elegant jazz club—possibly The Blue Note—and who was performing, but Taylor. I don't know who was more surprised to see one another.

I took the liberty to write Taylor, in the name of PAJA, a note of recognition for this Grammy award. He responded: "I have deeply fond memories of the Palo Alto Jazz Alliance and all the concerts and events throughout the years with Dr. Wong, who I miss all the time. PAJA left a mark on me as a musician and a person throughout my journey for so many years. Please pass along my very best wishes to the Palo Alto Jazz Alliance."

There are a couple of opportunities to hear him this month here in our area. He is playing with Gretchen Parlato at the Black Cat in San Francisco, May 18 and 19, and at Kuumbwa in Santa Cruz on May 19.

So, here's a loud HIP HIP HURRAY for Taylor and the Grammy award, well deserved for someone who delighted us as a teen-age prodigy and has never stopped learning and growing, certainly now, at age 37, one of the major jazz pianists of the present day.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at our 30th Anniversary concert on May 29 at the First Congregational Church in Palo Alto.

In appreciation of your continued support,

C. Stuart Brewster  
Chair, Palo Alto Jazz Alliance



PAJA Board member Shirley Douglas shared this photo with us. Here is 14-year-old Taylor Eigsti, who was performing at the San Jose Museum of Art, posing with Shirley's daughter Caitlin and son Chesley, January 24, 1999.

## STAN KENTON AND THE FOUR FRESHMEN

*This is an excerpt from an article by Kathy Feese written for News Notes, published by The Four Freshmen Music Foundation, Inc.*

Kenton came to hear the Freshmen with a few friends after his own gig. After the show, Stan talked with them about their plans and encouraged them to aim high. After he had heard only a few sets of the Freshmen perform, he convinced them that they should tour on their own rather than sing with a big band and they should record some songs as soon as possible—then he made that possible. He used his own resources to get some demos made and used his influence with Capitol Records to get them signed to the label. . .

He gave them advice and helped them find bookings. . . He was the linchpin for getting this group off the ground. Stan was there in the studio with them when they recorded "It's a Blue World" and even helped map the basic arrangement. . .

From the very first Freshmen recordings, Stan had a hand in it. Pete Rugolo had been Stan Kenton's chief arranger since 1945. Pete helped the green singing group record their very first recordings at Stan's behest. He worked to bring in the right musicians. . . and later, it was Pete Rugolo who would arrange the songs for the Four Freshmen and Five Trombones album. . . The musicians he utilized were nothing but superb.

The 1962 Capitol Records LP *The Swingers* featured almost all Kenton band members, including Mel Lewis



The original Freshmen

on drums, Conte Condoli on trumpet and Frank Rosolino on trombone. Also, all five trombones on the original Four Freshmen and Five Trombones album were ex-Kenton players, along with Shelly Manne on drums, a Kenton band alumnus. They had all become part of the Freshmen family, giving their best to make them sound good and keep them forever fresh!

In the spring of 1962, Bob Flanigan (of the Freshmen) and Stan Kenton formed a club, after each had survived a painful divorce: The "Never Again Get Married Association." Stan was President and Bob Vice President. If any of its members began to think they wanted to get married again, they were to call one of the other members who would summarily talk them out of it! Of course, it didn't take long before they both remarried and the club disbanded—but they got over their blues and had some laughs together.

## ROGER GLENN AND FRIENDS AT BACH'S

A marvelous sunny day on the coast side at the Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society (Sunday, March 13). The beautiful Pete Douglas beach house—the perfect venue for jazz. I was there to hear Roger Glenn and Company perform Roger's "Vibes of March" gig, with emphasis on music provided by his first-rate band, which was terrific. Roger mostly played the flute, which he's good at. . . and he talked a lot. The vibraphone demands a certain amount of physicality, and these days it seems Roger would rather sit and talk, rather than standing to hammer his mallets.

Luckily, the rhythm section was more than able to keep us interested. Glen Pearson, the Basie band's pianist, was simply thrilling to hear. Why haven't I seen him before? The conga player Michaelle Goerlitz added to the mix, especially when the band played Cal Tjader tunes—to the audience's delight.

But the real stunner was Kyle Athayde, the youngest of Roger's four guest vibraphonists. Kyle, a local talent, plays mostly these days in the East Bay and he simply brought down the house with his inventive, energetic style. A young lion to watch, as well as to hear, he scored master points with his rendition of the Tjader tune "Wachi Wara".

A great way to spend an enjoyable afternoon. Pete Douglas's legacy is being well preserved. If you haven't been over to the coast in a while, put it on your calendar. Like other PAJA members in the audience—Karl and Theresa Robinson, Bonnie Ratner, Lee & Sue David—we'll all be back for more this spring and summer. Join us!/Michael Griffin.

## 30TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT — MARK THE DATE!

PAJA event chair Harvey Mittler has been collaborating with drummer Akira Tana to put together an outstanding Bay Area group for PAJA's 30th Anniversary Concert on May 29th. Akira has engaged the wonderful pianist Tammy Hall, guitarist Jeff Massanari, bassist Gary Brown, and on reeds—Bob Kenmotsu. The great Kenny Washington will handle the vocals.

It is fitting that Tana is spearheading this group. A teenager at Gunn High in Palo Alto, he was an avid KJAZ listener when our co-founder Dr. Herb Wong was on the KJAZ staff. The two met during the summer break after Akira's freshman year in college and they remained in touch thereafter. Herb was supportive through Akira's matriculation at Harvard for his undergraduate work, and then New England Conservatory as a grad student, and through Akira's career as a professional musician.

This concert therefore will be an apt opportunity to celebrate Herb once again and his contributions to PAJA and the jazz community at large. A sub-theme for the concert, suggested by Akira, is a tribute to the music of

the late, great tenor saxophonist Jimmy Heath. Akira had a significant working relationship with Jimmy, and this theme was performed and well received last May at the Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society, with pretty much the same group. Jimmy Heath composed and wrote lyrics for a number of jazz standards, and we'll hear some of them on May 29, along with tunes from the Great American Songbook which were staples of Jimmy's repertoire.

Event chair Mittler says, "The Jimmy Heath theme appeals to my concept of honoring Herb and his PAJA audience. A guiding factor in considering the programs we present has been adherence to my perception of Herb's ideals—two or three concerts a year featuring excellent musicians playing 'real' jazz. . . First and foremost, we want to present music that appeals to the PAJA audience and other community members; I am confident the Jimmy Heath theme, and this superlative group of jazz musicians, will pass that test."

Mark your calendar: Sunday, May 29th, 2:30pm, at the First Congregational Church in Palo Alto (corner of Embarcadero and Louis). This is a pleasant, shaded outdoor venue—a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon.



Akira Tana

## PALO ALTO JAZZ ALLIANCE 30TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT *Sunday afternoon, May 29th, 2:30pm* First Congregational Church of Palo Alto (Cor. Louis and Embarcadero)

- KENNY WASHINGTON, VOCALS
- TAMMY HALL, KEYBOARD
- BOB KENMOTSU, REEDS
- GARY BROWN, BASS
- JEFF MASSANARI, GUITAR
- AKIRA TANA, DRUMS



Kenny Washington

Live jazz in a beautiful, shaded alfresco courtyard setting.  
Plenty of free parking. Doors open at 2pm.

Akira Tana celebrates the music of Jimmy Heath, the Great American Songbook, and Herb Wong with an all-star group, featuring vocalist Kenny Washington

**GET TICKETS ONLINE:** [www.paloaltojazzalliance.org](http://www.paloaltojazzalliance.org) / \$45 general, \$35 PAJA members, \$15 students. **ORDER TICKETS BY MAIL:** (Until May 20th). Send self-addressed stamped envelope with your check to PAJA TICKETS, c/o Ed Fox, 294 Tennessee Lane, Palo Alto 94306. **AT THE DOOR:** From 2pm on. Cash or check only. No credit cards.



# NOODLING *Thoughts on jazz* By Michael Burman

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## PERCHANCE TO STREAM

Two years ago I wrote an article for The Jazz Buff entitled “Listen!” (Indeed, that was not only its title but its final word.) To address that topic from a different angle, what are you listening to now? Take the question specifically (i.e., at this very moment?) or generally (i.e., these days?). How did you decide what to listen to? How do you decide?

Such a decision usually depends on some combination of luck and judgment, recommendation and opportunity, education and inertia.

We’re all jazz fans, and we each came to the music in our own way. My own first step on the slippery slope (see “luck” above) came when on BBC radio I stumbled upon a version of “Things Ain’t What They Used to Be” featuring Johnny Hodges with Duke Ellington’s orchestra. Eager for more, I listened to all the jazz I could find, the core of which was the two hours (not a typo) of jazz broadcast by the BBC each week.

Those two hours a week were for me what passed for “opportunity”. Comparing the austerity of those days with the opulence of today inevitably reminds me of the chasm separating Monty Python’s Four Yorkshiremen’s claim “We lived in a paper bag” from British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan’s statement “[You] have never had it so good”.

Indeed for over six decades those of us living in the Bay Area really have never had it so good. We’ve had 24x7 jazz on FM radio since the launch of KJAZ in August 1959. Twenty-five years later, in the early 1980s, KCSM began to feature jazz overnight, and by the mid-80s was programming jazz from noon through 6pm, too. In 1994, very soon after KJAZ went silent exactly 35 years after its launch, KCSM picked up the jazz baton and, eventually bolstered by the library of the defunct KJAZ, increased its jazz programming until it was broadcast 24x7. And so it remains today.

Some years later, thanks to technological advances, it became unnecessary to be physically in the Bay Area in order to hear KCSM. Now, like just about every other radio station in every country regardless of genre, KCSM streams over the Worldwide Web. So the little college radio station that used to have a 20-mile listener radius now reaches fans as far away as

Norway and the Philippines. And so we have KCSM 24x7 reaching all over the world with “just jazz” (unlike almost all of those which claim to do so—no traffic and weather, no news and information, no “All Things Considered”, etc.—just all jazz, all the time.

But things weren’t so good they couldn’t get better, and—for certain values of “better”—better they did get. Nowadays you no longer even need a radio

station: there are now streaming services galore. In principle—albeit at a price, i.e., for a monthly subscription—you can have access to literally tens of millions of tracks, on demand.

You can’t argue with success (or can you?). Surely this situation is better? Compare and contrast the following. On the one hand, radio, where you control both which station you listen to and the time of day and the day of week you listen, but have no

control whatever over what you hear; on the other hand, a streaming service where you have a level of control that’s absolute (subject, of course, to their total inventory), but now the decision is yours and your alone.

As an old boss of mine frequently used to ask, “Isn’t this great?!” Or, contrariwise, is it in fact a case of “Ay there’s the rub”? (This dichotomy reminds me of my going up to university, for the first time in my life. I could do whatever I liked, and whenever I chose; the downside was that if I didn’t choose, then nothing whatever happened.) To reiterate, the decision is yours, and yours alone.

Streaming services address the issue of what to hear next via suggestions; they suggest to you that if you like A, then you’ll like B. The technology behind this, the neural networks between artists drawn in advance, is astounding, and is certainly the “obvious” way for those services to choose. But while it may be that if you like Benny Goodman then you’ll probably like Jimmie Lunceford, it might not follow that



JOHNNY HODGES

if you like Count Basie then you'll like Duke Ellington. And if you do like Benny, then will you like Artie Shaw?

A counterpoint in favor of radio is frequently made by one particular KCSM listener: "Where else can I hear what I didn't know I'd like?"

We announcers and jazz programmers know that you can't please everyone, so you've got to please yourself. That said, we can't push that personal boundary too far in public. (My radio mentor and good friend, KJAZ and KCSM announcer the late George Hughes, used to relax by listening to Cecil Taylor. I myself thoroughly endorse Orrin Keepnews's comment: "Cecil Taylor is hard to listen to and hard not to listen to", but I can't imagine relaxing to his music.) While it's nice to show how catholic are your tastes, it's nonetheless the case on the radio as on the bandstand, that if we stray too far from what the audience expects, then just as the live music audience votes with its feet, the radio audience votes by turning the dial.

Another contrast between radio and streaming is the matter of "education". We radio announcers try to frame at least some, perhaps most, of our selections in some context (e.g., the background of the artist or perhaps the songwriter), something totally lacking with streaming.

I myself rather dislike suggestions unless they come from a source I respect. Whenever I watch Netflix, I find it irritating to have to scroll first, past rows of "may also like" (a phrase which I find especially irritating) suggestions, and then past categories irrelevant to me before I arrive at the two or three series I'm currently in the middle of. Gene Lees reports Charlie Haden thus: "People are taught by the mass media what they should like, what to wear, what they should listen to. And then they are sold these things."

Regarding what we should listen to, surely we should listen to what we know we enjoy? Ernestine Anderson was fond of the tune "Never Make Your Move Too Soon" (she recorded it twice), and in the narrative of her superb 10-minute live performance of the tune at Culver City's "Alley Cat" (check it out on YouTube) she comments "The older you get, the more you know what to do with your time." In the



ERNESTINE ANDERSON

same vein, a record producer told me recently "As I grow older, I want to hear melody, and not noise."

Is there some compromise? Other than by direct request by telephone to the announcer ("I'd like to hear X"), can listeners influence what's aired? It turns out that the answer may be affirmative. Jeff Williams became president of WBGO radio in Newark, NJ, about two years ago. (WBGO broadcasts jazz for mostly 24 hours every day, to the New York City and northern New Jersey areas.) WBGO participated, together with four other NPR stations which emphasize jazz, in market research funded partially by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Williams learned that WBGO's audi-

ence recognition had fallen below 50%. He is quoted as saying "Longtime members exhibited more conservative tastes and favored straight-ahead jazz. . . Focusing solely on that loyal audience at the expense of more casual listeners, who are more open-minded about different genres and represent the most growth potential, was one reason why WBGO lost nearly half of its audience in the last year." Each of the five participating stations has made changes they consider appropriate. These changes can be summarized in my opinion by Marshall Fields's dictum "Give the lady what she wants."

But there is a limit to how much change to an object, of whatever type, can be made before its essence is destroyed. Hypothetically, were a jazz station to accede to the requests from some of its audience for more classical music, then while the whole audience could experience, perhaps for the first time, the exuberance of Beethoven, the elegance of W. A. Mozart, and the deceptive simplicity of J.S. Bach, would it any longer be a jazz station? For our second quote from "Hamlet", "To thine own self be true."

OK, enough noodling from me. What shall I myself listen to right now? How about Louis Armstrong's "Potato Head Blues"? Perhaps Ben Webster's "All Too Soon" with Duke Ellington in 1940? I know: Sonny Rollins's "Blue Seven" from 1956's "Saxophone Colossus". All three are available on YouTube: happy listening!

*Michael Burman hosts "The Weekend Jazz Oasis" Saturday evenings on KCSM Jazz 91.1.*

# THE JAZZ PERISCOPE

Selected gigs for May and June 2022

## YOSHI'S OAKLAND [www.yoshi.com/oakland](http://www.yoshi.com/oakland)

5/11	Tommy Igoe.....	8pm
5/24	Brubeck Brothers Jazz Quartet.....	8pm
5/27-29	Stanley Clarke	
6/21	Melba's Kitchen (all-women big band).....	8pm

## SF JAZZ CENTER [www.sfjazz.org/center](http://www.sfjazz.org/center)

5/5-6	Miguel Zeno.....	7:30pm
5/26-29	Artemis (Rosnes, Cohen, Miller, Jensen, et al.)....	7:30pm
6/6	Pacific Mambo Orchestra.....	7:30pm
6/8	Gregory Porter (at Paramount Theater, Oakland).....	8pm
6/11	Christian McBride.....	7:30pm
6/17	Kim Nalley (Herbst Theater).....	8pm
6/18	Jane Monheit (Herbst Theater).....	8pm
6/19	Lavay Smith & RH Skillet Lickers, with Rickey Woodard (Herbst).....	8pm



Brubeck Brothers Jazz Quartet

## BACH'S DANCING & DYNAMITE SOCIETY, EL GRANADA [www.bachddsoc.org](http://www.bachddsoc.org)

5/8	Chris Potter Trio.....	4:30pm
5/22	Jane Bunnett & Maqueque.....	4:30pm
5/29	Brubeck Brothers.....	4:30pm

## KUUMBWA JAZZ CENTER, SANTA CRUZ [www.kuumbwajazz.org](http://www.kuumbwajazz.org)

5/7	Joey Alexander Trio.....	7pm
5/9	Chris Potter Trio.....	7pm
5/14	Gretchen Parlato.....	7pm
5/23	Benny Green solo piano.....	7pm
5/31	Artemis.....	7pm
6/2	Dayna Stephens Quartet.....	7pm
6/10	Christian McBride.....	7, 9pm
6/27	Tierney Sutton, with Tamir Hendelman, etc. ....	7pm



Chris Potter Trio

## SAN JOSE JAZZ [www.sanjosejazz.org](http://www.sanjosejazz.org)

5/6	Kristen Strom Quartet.....	8pm
5/7	Cava Menzies, vocalist.....	8pm
5/8	David Lechuga, guitarist.....	8pm

## PAJA [www.pajazzalliance.org](http://www.pajazzalliance.org)

5/29	Akira Tana & Friends, with Kenny Washington.....	2:30pm
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