

The www.pajazzalliance.org
Jazz Buff
Palo Alto Jazz Alliance Newsletter

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Ed Fox, Editor

FROM THE CHAIR

My old reliable addiction, the New York Times, recently had a report about how the New York Public Library has a machine that will digitize wax cylinders—the original sound recording system created by Thomas Edison in the late 19th century. This was the first device that made it possible for many to hear music who were unable to get to a live performance. You may have heard that Enrico Caruso, the famed Italian opera singer, who happened to be in San Francisco the night of the 1906 earthquake, made such a recording that allegedly sold over a million copies.

Upon reflection, I began to think about all the recording systems that have been introduced over the years and how each has played a role in the furtherance of music appreciation, especially jazz, which had a poor reputation for attendance at live performances due to some of the questionable sites where it was offered.

After cylinders came the shellac and easily broken three-minute 78s—little miracles at a price reasonable for the masses. Remember juke boxes where two-sided platters or discs were stacked? Then came the vinyl LPs—33 1/3—with their quality and mellow voices, later followed by CDs, which could include a number of tracks in a small, yes, compact disc—easily transported and stored. Many then tossed their LPs, which took up a lot of space. Only later did it become clear that CDs, for all their pluses, just didn't have the sound quality that vinyl offered. Now vinyl is back in style and new recordings are being made in this format.

By the way, if you are seeking some of the older classics, be it CD or vinyl, check out The Record Man shop in Redwood City, one of the last such resources in our area. There were other options in this recording history such as the cassette tape and the eight-track package. Now we have the digital world with I-Tunes, I-Pods, and streaming in one's computer or smart phone. Who knows what AI will offer? Will we all become composers?

Just think if these devices and platforms had never been created where would music stand in our culture? I would submit that all this exposure and experience, even though once or twice removed from the actual event, have been critical to making music an integral part of daily living, and are motivating factors to get to live gigs. As



Thomas Edison with an Edison Standard Phonograph

I have often stressed in this column, there is nothing like a live performance.

PAJA, of course, will continue to present live gigs, at reasonable cost—local opportunities for continued growth in the appreciation of jazz that was stimulated by the various recording devices. We PAJA folks know all this, but many out there do not and rarely attend live shows. Alas, due to the pandemic and our friend Covid-19, many of us haven't heard our music live for quite a spell. So, come out and bring a friend to our annual Free Member Party at the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto (corner of Louis and Embarcadero) on Saturday, June 3rd, starting at 2:30pm. Board member Dave Miller, pianist extraordinaire, and his trio, will back three young "rising star" vocalists for our pleasure, as we gain back some of the sociability aspect of PAJA that the pandemic has compromised.

And mark your calendar for the rescheduled Tierney Sutton-Tamir Hendelman concert—now August 13th at the Community School of Music & Arts in Mountain View, 2:30pm—a local opportunity to hear true jazz artists in their prime, in a hall with superb acoustics—and air conditioning and free parking. And home before dark. So, to quote a line from a now forgotten TV show—"Come on down"—meet old friends, make new ones, and hear some superb jazz—LIVE.

In continued appreciation of your support,

C. Stuart Brewster
Chair, Palo Alto Jazz Alliance