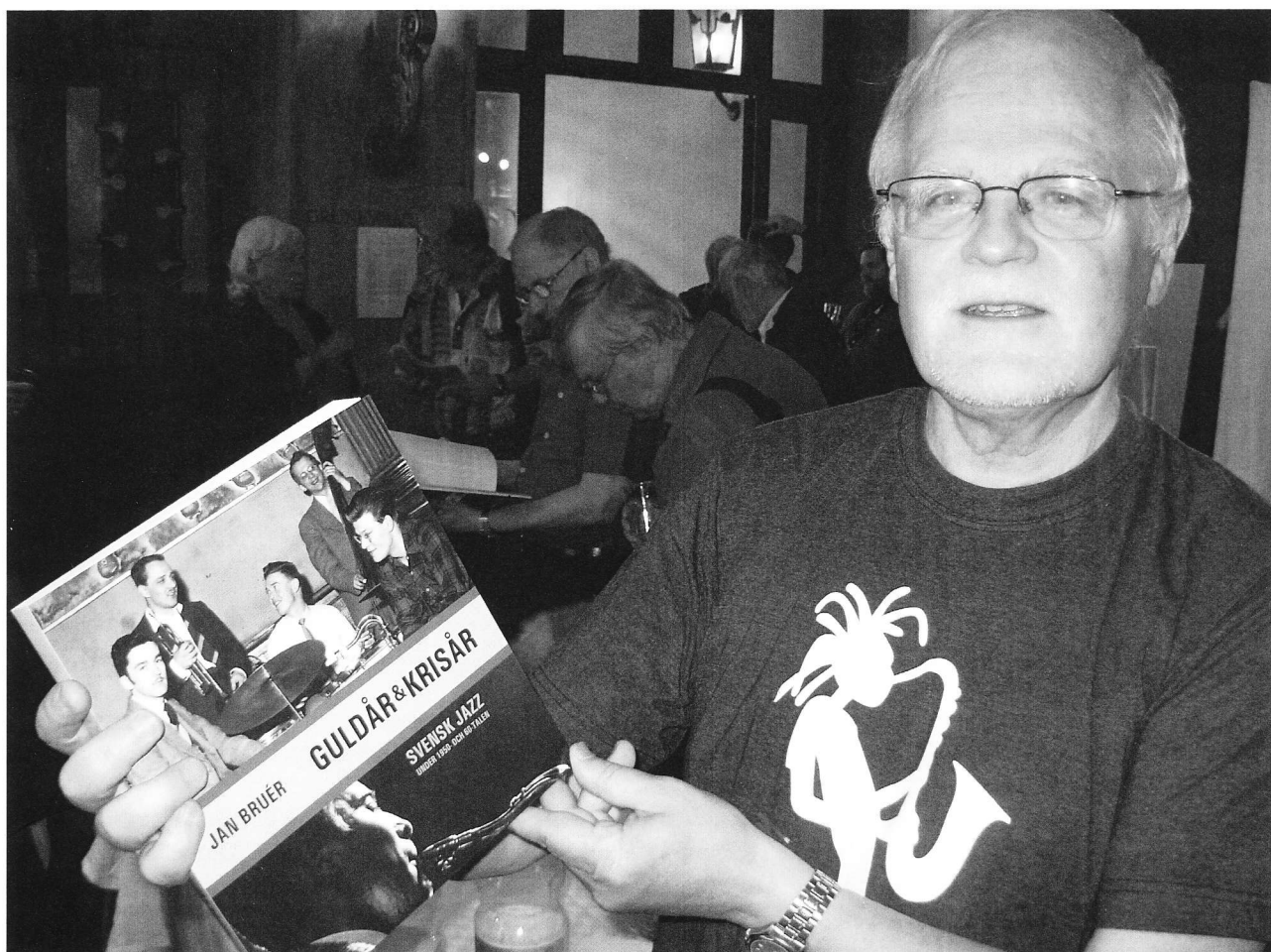




Duke Ellington Society of Sweden

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Jan Bruér presenterar sin doktorsavhandling. Foto: Leif Domnérus.

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Årets stora händelse i jazzvärlden skedde den 8:e juni då DESS-medlemmen Jan Bruér lade fram sin doktorsavhandling "Guldår & krisår: svensk jazz under 1950- och 60-talen" vid Stockholms Universitet. I detta nummer redovisar Åke W. Edfeldt sina intryck av disputationen.

Polarpriset har med all rätt blivit uppmärksammat och det förstärker Sveriges renommé utomlands. DESS fick vara med då Sonny Rollins var i Sverige i maj för att ta emot Polar-priset. I samband med detta så blev jag inbjuden till mottagningen för de två pristagarna Sonny Rollins och Steve Reich hos USA:s ambassadör Michael Wood och fick en pratstund med alla tre. Bengt Sæve-Söderbergh var också där som förbundsordförande i SJR, Svenska Jazzriksförbundet.

Ambassadören blev imponerad av att det finns en aktiv Duke Ellington-klubb i Sverige och bad om en inbjudan till nästa möte. Dessutom tog han villigt emot ett av de kuvert med DESS-bulletiner jag tagit med mig.

Den andre pristagaren, Steve Reich, citerade i ett tal Duke med orden: "There is real music worth to listen to

– and then the rest...". Reich kände ej till Dukes musik – utan var mer förtjust i "lite modernare musiker" som Miles Davis och John Coltrane. När jag berättade om Dukes skiva med John Coltrane så lyste han upp och sa att han skulle skaffa den.

Sedan fick jag en lång pratstund med Sonny Rollins, som ville ha det andra kuvertet med DESS Bulletiner. Rollins informerade att han tyvärr aldrig spelat med Duke Ellington – de hade bara träffats en gång på Newport-festivalen 1956. Men han sa att han ville upprepa Miles Davis ord: "Vi tackar högre makter varje dag för att Duke fanns, eftersom han gjort så mycket för jazzen för alla andra att ta lärdom av".

När jag sa att jag med förväntan såg fram mot konserten nästa kväll så avslutade Sonny Rollins: "Good, then I will change the program to include a solo with Duke Ellington's music". (Enligt en recensent blev det ett kort korus som påminde om Duke Ellington.) Samtalet avslutades med att Polars fotograf tog vidstående bild på Sonny Rollins och mig. Recensionerna av konserten var i stort sett positiva.

Den nyligen bortgångne store konstnären Ingmar Bergman älskade också musik. Han hade en sak gemensamt med Duke Ellington. Ingmar skrev sina texter för de skådespelare som skulle ha roller i fråga. Duke komponerade oftast för de musiker som skulle framföra stycket. I båda fallen skapades stor konst.

Till DESS Jan Falk



Foto: Patrik Österberg/Mediabild.nu

den andre pristagaren, Steve Reich, citerade i ett tal Duke med orden: "There is real music worth to listen to

Jazzkungar med glöden i behåll

I bortåt 40 år har de kamperat ihop om jag räknat rätt. Från Tomas Örnbergs Blue Five till The Swedish Jazz Kings och med på resan i stort sett samma mannar med trumpetaren Bent Persson, trombonisten Kaj Sifwert, gitarristen/banjoisten Olle Nyman och basisten Göran Lind som ständigt kretsande satelliter kring Örnberg själv och hans arsenal av rörlblås. För kvällen den 23 april 2007 kompletterade med den engelske pianisten Martin Litton på Sverigebesök.

De här musikanterna har spelat sig samman årtionde efter årtionde och borde känna varandra utan och innan. Är det möjligt för dem att efter denna långa tid kunna forma annat än trötta stereotyper? Vad blev kvar av ungdomsårens upptäckarglädje och stomp- (eller stamp-) jazzens glada renässans, ekot från 20- och kanske också 30-talen som sågs som en guldålder av återupptäckarna?

Jo, glöden brinner alltiämt och professionalismen är påtaglig. Bent Perssons stabila Armstrongtrumpet är den klippa på vilken bygget står fast. Tomas Örnbergs sopran och klarinett skapar stundtals ett alldeles eget drama som febrigt bläddrar sig igenom de blå tonerna, Martin Littons kompetens behöver inte ifrågasättas och

det gäller också de andra, ingen nämnd, ingen glömd. En väl använd Dess-kväll tycktes vara den allmänna meningen.

Ändå väcks än en gång den gamla frågan till liv som ställer tradition mot utveckling. Detta är jazz gjuten i gamla deglar. Mycket förutsägbar och därför också mindre krävande och mycket lättlyssnad. För de djärva greppen stod en gång de gamla stilbildarna –framtidens formas av andra upptäcktsresande, vare sig vi gillar det eller ej. Nostalgin kan bli en tvångströja, pastischen en återvändsgränd. Jag känner personligen att jag måste distansera mig på ett försiktigt sätt. Alla Ellingtons vänner delar helt säkert inte den inställningen.

Ekot av "Black Beauty" lever kvar som ett lyckligt gnomminne efter denna kvällskonsert. Vilken utsökt vacker melodi! Och så väl tillvaratagen den blev. Ändå ständigt öppen för nya tolkningar. De svenska jazzkungarna förtjänade alla de förtjusta applåderna. Tack också till Bengt Nyqvist och hans roande berättelse om Ellingtons konsert i Malmö 1963. Tack för den utmärkta musiken. Och tack inte minst också till Bo Scherman för att han bringar reda i skivkaoset.

Bo Holmqvist

Cat Anderson – the Musician and the Man

by Alexandre Rado

The following is a transcription of a paper presented by Alexandre Rado at the Ellington '94 Conference held in Stockholm May 19-22, 1994.

Before starting to speak of one of the more specific and controversial trumpet players who has appeared in the world of Ellingtonia, I would like first of all to underline how much Sweden has been an important country for Duke Ellington. He composed a few pieces related to this country and it is not a surprise that the motto for the Stockholm Conference is "Smorgosbord And Schnapps". Or was it "Serenade To Sweden"? Quite a number of Swedish jazz artists had the pleasure to play with the Duke Ellington Orchestra and I would like to mention three of the unforgettable ones: Åke Persson, Rolf (or better Roffe) Ericson who perhaps was the only European musician to play in Duke's band on a regular basis and of course Alice Babs who had the nice idea to make with Duke a historical record in Paris and also grace with her talent the only concert of sacred music Duke gave in Paris in the Saint Sulpice Church. When listening to Alice Babs all Ellington fans are like Duke becoming somehow Swedish.

Before diving into a rather gloomy side of Cat's biography, I would like to cheer up this presentation with a couple of anecdotes. When we became friends in the late fifties, I was not sure he wanted to be called Cat but he seemed to enjoy his nickname. It had been said that his strong profile was responsible for it. I read also that in his younger days while fighting with other children they said he was fighting like a cat. When in much later years I ques-



Alexandre Rado. Foto: Bo Haufman.

tioned him he told me that in his childhood his nickname was given to him due to his eyes. As I expressed some surprise he moved his eyes from right to left and backwards and immediately I saw the child he had been, imitating a cat in a cartoon. He liked to be called Cat and titles of many of his compositions included his nickname. For instance, "Swinging The Cat", "Cats Boogie", "Cat's In the Alley" or for an album with a wave in direction of Tennessee Williams, "A Cat On A Hot Tin Roof". Some more can still be mentioned like "A Chat With Cat", with a French play of words with chat and cat, "The Cat In G-Flat", "The Cat Hums", "Cat Speaks", "El Gato" (the cat in Spanish) and even "Meow" which needs no translation. When he was recording I used to make him some proposals. I remember two he turned down: "Cat Man Do" which he found too Nepalese and "Cat As Cat Can" as there was too much wrestling in it for his taste.

We paid once a visit to a friend musician with whom he wanted to write some arrangements. When the door opened a beautiful cat was kindly meeting us in the entrance. Cat Anderson jumped back and rushed down the stairs. I followed him and met him downstairs. I asked: "What's the matter" and Cat replied; "I cannot stand cats. If I am five minutes in the same room with them, my face gets swollen". This is how I discovered that Cat was allergic to cats.

An awful childhood as a black orphan

William Alonzo Anderson was born on September 12, 1916 in Greenville, South Carolina, and his father and mother died while he was only four years old. He was therefore placed in the Jenkins Orphan Home School in Charleston. Psychologists usually state that the first years in a lifetime do have a significant importance for the rest of your life. Without having to call for help from old man Freud I think there are better conditions to start in life than to be a black orphan in South Carolina. I read one or two articles about his rather awful childhood and here and there Cat said a few words about it. I understood that he did not want to speak of those days and I never asked him questions about it. Several years after he left Duke's band, while we were chatting after hours like the people of the jazz love to do it, speaking of the good old time and exchanging latest news about friends, I can't remember how we came to speak of musicians from Carolina, but he suddenly talked about his childhood. What he said was not only dreadful but explained to a great extent the musician and the man he became. He told me how he fought daily with other boys and also what ill physical treatment he received. He was whipped regularly during several years. The orphanage had also as task to prepare the pupils of the school for a job once they had to be on their own. There were two main possibilities, the farm and the factory. Another one was music and many orphans, gifted or not, did their best to be accepted in one of the seven or eight bands which

were sometimes touring South Carolina and the nearby states. Cat Anderson started to play the trombone and tried also quite a number of instruments before choosing for good the trumpet. The teachers were also using the whip in order to help the pupils to make progress. Cat told me that he received his share more than other candidates because he was not gifted. As I expressed some surprise he repeated that he was not gifted and that he had to scuffle before playing in a rather satisfactory way. I could hardly believe such a statement because even those musicians who did not like him were praising his equipment and ease. Cat was really insistent on that point and then put an emphasis on the thoughts which entered his mind. He decided that all his strength of will should be concentrated in one direction only which he called "survive". Survive meant also for him "survive by all possible means if necessary".

A high note specialist

During his stay with Duke, Cat Anderson was mainly considered a high note specialist. Even today, I don't see anybody who could equal his performance in this respect. He told me that in the school he was competing with other fellows as he wanted to play better than all his neighbours. His efforts were not successful until he convinced himself to practice essentially the upper register. When he reached the point where he could play one octave higher than the others he thought that an important stage had been reached.

Cat Anderson was playing in the number five band and eventually this band became known as the Carolina Cotton Pickers, not because of the McKinney's Cotton Pickers but due to the fact that some of the members of the band were still sometimes working in the farm. The Carolina Cotton Pickers toured from 1929 onwards and during several years the East and the South coast as far as Boston in the North and Texas in the South. They did not meet much success. They certainly could not be compared with the best big bands of the thirties including the best territory bands. Very often they were left stranded somewhere and had to go back home as they could. The pay was of course at the lowest. The Carolina Cotton Pickers cut however a few records in Birmingham, Alabama, in March 1937. Cat's idol was Louis Armstrong and although he followed the various developments which occurred in the history of jazz, Satchmo remained all the time his preferred trumpet player. One can easily hear his influence in Cat's solo in "Deed I Do", the pianist and perhaps arranger being Cliff Smalls.

On the road east and south

A few months later Cat left the Carolina Cotton Pickers. He received several offers and taking the best paying one he joined the Hartley Toots orchestra in Florida. Toots was a guitar player and his band was not really better than the Carolina Cotton Pickers. After having played with Toots in New York's Apollo, Cat preferred to try his luck in the Big Apple. He joined Claude Hopkins, and afterwards the Sunset Royals, who became later Doc Wheeler and the Sunset Royals. This time he met a good band including musicians like Reunald Jones, Robert Smith, Raymond Tunia and Al Lucas. The two outstanding soloists being

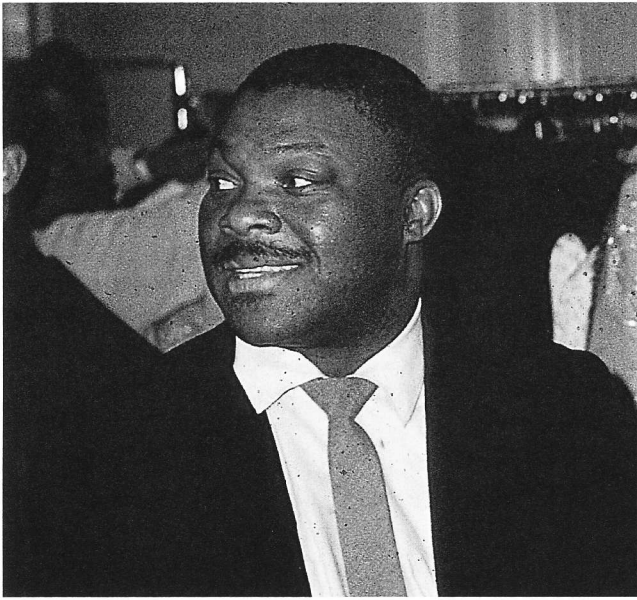
Sam "The Man" Taylor and Cat Anderson himself. This orchestra was specialized in pieces with a vocalist holding a dialogue with the whole band, a gimmick soon imitated by Tommy Dorsey and many others. An interesting piece composed by Cat Anderson is "How About That Mess?" which later became "Swinging The Cat". When listening to him one can understand that he was expected to play one day with Lionel Hampton. His high notes ability is also shown in "Big And Fat And Forty-Four" after Doc Wheeler's vocal about a lady who apparently disappointed him.

Doc Wheeler's Sunset Royals cut some 10 titles in 1941 and 1942. Cat Anderson left them just after the last session because he was enrolled in a Special Service band as war had started. Afterwards he played in quite a number of bands as his reputation had grown. He was known also as an excellent lead trumpet. He told me that from then on he replaced in his own philosophy "survive" by "live". He was ready to jump from one orchestra to the other as long as more attractive conditions were proposed. He played within two years with Lucky Millinder, Erskine Hawkins who did not like to be overshadowed by him in the upper register, Lionel Hampton, Sabby Lewis, before joining again Lionel Hampton. A few titles remain from his Hampton period of 1944, like "Loose Wig" showing his high notes capacities. Out of the many "Flying Homes" there is one where he follows another Ellingtonian to be, Al Sears. His solo shows Cat searching his way in a rather unsettled style, partly post-Armstrong and partly modern *ma non tropo*.

Duke Ellington proposed him several times to join his orchestra but he turned these offers down. In fact, he knew more about the Ellington band from records than from shows or concerts. Cat, as he told me, was used to play in jump bands where the members of the trumpet section before playing were moving their instruments in rhythm or let them turn in their hands. He was not like so many musicians who were dreaming to play in Duke's band and sometimes waited 10 or 20 years before succeeding, not to speak of those who never reached that goal. Cat was just enjoying himself in trying to make his best for a living and that's it! This state of affair changed however by end August 1944. He confirmed to me the story which has been several times reported. Lionel Hampton was playing in Chicago and Cat discovered that the band would leave by train to the West Coast but that no sleeper had been booked. He called Duke who was playing one-nighters en route from the West to the East Coast. Duke said he would shortly be in Chicago in order to engage him. Cat's first appearance with Duke's band happened on September 1st, 1944, at the Earle Theatre in Philadelphia. He told me that during the rehearsal Duke decided to give him all the lead parts. Once in the theatre he discovered that seven trumpet players were on the stage which can be explained by the fact that during the war musicians were often drafted on the spot and the bandleaders engaged sometimes several substitutes, notwithstanding those musicians who rather unexpectedly were coming back.

In the upper register with Duke

Anyway, Cat had no stand and placed the music on the



Cat Anderson in Stockholm 1966. Photo: Leif Jönsson.

floor. When the concert started, most of the lights went out and Cat in the dark could hardly play a note. After the show, Duke came to him smiling, gave him a slap on the shoulder, and said: "Cat, you really played wonderful tonight". From that day on, Cat explored a new world like all newcomers did. He felt lost during a few weeks. As usual also Duke soon found out how to make the best use of the incredible ability Cat was permanently showing in the upper register. He wrote for him the part called "Coloratura" in the Perfume Suite. He also included him in the wonderful arrangement written by Mary-Lou Williams on "Blue Skies" before transforming it in a five trumpets concertino, developed by degrees with a matchless performance by Cat Anderson at the end. The soloists in the Musicraft session were: Taft Jordan, Harold Baker with bridge by Ray Nance and Harold Baker again, Francis Williams, Cat Anderson with bridge by Ray Nance and Cat Anderson again.

Very soon, however, Cat became unsatisfied to be utilized mainly as specialist in pyrotechnics. On the other hand Duke was facing the well known problem of having so many stars in his band which meant that each of them had to get his part of exposure. Among his qualities Cat had a fabulous capacity to memorize music. In later years I saw him learn quickly the book of a big band and play his part the same day as if he knew it since weeks. He was also a great listener and in Duke's band he very soon memorized all the solos of his trumpet partners. This was for Duke an advantage because in case of sickness he had a substitute on the spot. For his colleagues it also meant a danger. If someone was late or in bad shape, Cat was always there to take the business over. Let us face it: Duke could be mischievous from time to time and call one of his soloists to take a solo which was practically someone else's property. If Duke for instance was calling Paul Gonsalves to take one of Johnny Hodges' solos, you could see how Paul was reluctant just in the way he walked to the mike. As far as the music was concerned he played the notes straight and with no embellishment. In a similar case Cat gave the impression that he was taking advantage of the opportunity. He did so once when Rex Stewart was late

and they did not speak to each other for 15 years. Rex Stewart had added in the forties to his numerous qualities a tendency to play in the high register. The arrival of a phenomenon like Cat Anderson was of course not of real help. Rex, however, was such an incredible and original soloist that he offered resistance, for instance when playing after Cat in "Stomp Look And Listen" from a broadcast in the 400 Club, New York.

As I stated it earlier, Cat wanted to show other sides of his talent and in order to persuade Duke to give him a chance he proposed compositions of his own like "A Gathering In A Clearing" where you can hear him playing with a mute.

Relations with Duke difficult

In January 1947 he left Duke's band, victim of leaderitis. He wanted to have his own band but it was just not the right time to make of such dream a reality. This band lasted two years and Cat played then mainly in the Boston area with Sabby Lewis and Jimmy Tyler's bands. He came back to Duke's orchestra by the end of 1950. From then on till 1971 Cat played with the Ellington band but I would say in and out as he left the band and came back probably more than any other of his members. He had a rather difficult relationship with Duke too and money was sometimes a crucial point in their disputes. I remember Cat leaving Duke's orchestra in Paris and next night playing with Johnny Griffin in Paris' Blue Note. He knew very well that he was not too popular in his circle and quite often when I asked him whether he played with so-and-so the reply was: "No, he doesn't like me".

Mostly good-humoured

I do not wish, however, to paint a gloomy picture of Cat Anderson. Most of the time he was good-humoured. He was not the kind of person who remained in his corner. He liked to socialize with people and was at ease in his relationship. I never had a quarrel with him, but I was not a trumpet player. I would not like either to appear as a barrister trying now to persuade you of the innocence of my client but I would just state that seen from the outside there was something of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in Cat Anderson. As far as good-humour is concerned I would like



Cat Anderson in Stockholm 1966. Photo: Leif Jönsson.

to mention something which could be a scoop for some of you, that is the quotation of Rossini's "Wilhelm Tell" in "Just Squeeze Me". Most critics and discographers prefer not to commit themselves about the author of this quotation and those who usually do propose Taft Jordan, Ray Nance or Harold Baker. Take my word, Cat was the joker and he confirmed it to me. I even like to imagine that in his subconscious mind something remained of Rossini's cat duet "Il Duetto Di Due Gatti", when Cat played the aforementioned "Meow" which you can hear for instance in a recently issued version of a Paris concert in 1965.

There are only a few musicians who do not always control their emotion when they play. For instance, when you listen to records made by Ben Webster you can often feel whether he was that day angry or in a sentimental mood. Here and there, Cat was showing his personal feelings as in a "C Jam Blues" from another Paris concert in 1969 where in excellent shape he follows Archie Shepp playing with Paul Gonsalves' instrument. There are obviously extra comments in the way he quoted La Marseillaise.

No real style of his own

The importance of Cat Anderson as a musician can nowadays be evaluated historically. He certainly could do all what he wanted with his instrument. His range of expression was exceptionally large. As a master of high notes he had no real rival. He could play in a remarkable way in an Armstrong influenced style, which was his true basis. He also could express himself in a style inspired by Harry James. He mastered the half-valve technique which made partly Rex Stewart's reputation and played "Boy Meets Horn" in a convincing way. I know only one musician able to play Rex's showcase as well. That is Gordon "Chris" Griffin. Cat also played very effectively with all kinds of mutes including the plunger. He also could adapt himself to many different surroundings. He played with boppers, hard boppers and toured Europe with Charlie Mingus. In fact, he was a real all-round trumpet player. With such a honours list one should have expected him to be ranged among the greatest trumpet players of all time. If it is not the case it is partly because as improviser he did not show an imagination comparable to a Louis Armstrong, a Dizzy Gillespie or a Clark Terry, and also because as Goethe would have said, he had the vices of his virtues of his vices. He wanted to be better than all trumpet players he was meeting and with this ambition he did not really take the time to create a true style of his own.

Less aggressive getting older

In his post-Ellington period the old warrior gave up the main part of his aggressiveness. As he told me after "survive" and "live" he decided he should "live old" and consider the world in a more quiet way. He performed with many bands, made records even with musicians of whom he earlier said "they don't like me", was conductor of the orchestra accompanying the Ice Capades show, played for a Super Bowl, meeting the hugest audience he ever faced. He became a teacher and enjoyed having pupils. He also constantly toured, specially in France where he was very popular. On several occasion he lived in Paris for some three or six months. Through the years I think he made more records under his own name in Paris than in USA,

having the opportunity to show the different facets of his personality. In France like in the other Latin countries his bravuras in the highest register were enthusiastically received. Ole! Elsewhere, opinions were more balanced. People sometimes were arguing about the pure musical value of his performances or discussed his taste to decide whether it was good or bad. Duke himself knew that Cat Anderson was irreplaceable and that he was, like other stars an inimitable Ellington soloist. This is the reason why he called him back so many times.

High notes mostly psychology

When I talked with Cat, I regularly discussed with him his feats which were to say his signature. I was amazed not only by the high notes he could reach but also by his ease when playing them. Usually which was one of those Cat played when he was starting an ascent. Once, during a recording session I saw him playing the theme one octave over the trumpet section with one hand while conducting the band with the other one.

He always emphasized that the main point for playing in the upper register was purely psychological. I first had doubts that this was true, but through the years he almost convinced me that, as he said, with some will and autosuggestion it was after all possible to reach those peaks. A part of mystery still remains nevertheless.

As things are, I produced one of his last records. He came several times to my home to listen to records. As one of my sons was learning to play guitar he gave him some advice about the way he should play the blues and at his last visit he taught him "Sweet Georgia Brown" saying that they would play it together when coming back.

On returning to Los Angeles he felt faint in the taxi getting him home and was immediately taken to hospital where a brain tumor was diagnosed. After a while he was sent home. I spoke to him on the phone a few times and then one day I had to explain to a youngster at home that he had to find another partner for "Sweet Georgia Brown". For the Paris session I mentioned I asked him whether he would agree to play "Lush Life" and when he entered the studio he showed me the original adaptation Billy Strayhorn wrote for him. His interpretation remains one of the most moving ones ever made of this piece.

"Duke made me"

I remember one of the last talks I had with Cat. After having listened to quite a number of Ellington records he commented them with great accuracy and depth. For almost one hour he explained how his musical life has been completely changed by Duke Ellington and all what he learned from him. He also praised the playing of the other musicians who were his neighbours during his very long association with Duke. As he was a great listener the opinion he expressed carried an unexpected weight. He also had a sound way to explain the qualities and details of Duke's and Strayhorn's arrangements. All of a sudden he stopped speaking, remained silent for a while and then said a few words which other musicians could have said but which coming from Cat Anderson were sounding like the end of a confession. "Duke" he just said, "he made Cat Anderson possible".

Transcription by Bo Haufman.

En ren jazzdoktor förmodligen den första i Sverige

Danmark är som vanligt före oss där också, i varje fall med en klar doktor, Erik Wiedemann: *Jazz i Danmark* (1981) och en på gång, dvs. Fabian Holt, författaren till *Genre in Popular Music* (2007).

Nå, men varför kallar jag nu Jan Bruér "ren" jazzdoktor? Jo, för att här finns en ren och obruten jazztrend i hela Jannes liv. Redan under gymnasietiden i Sundsvall fungerade han som anmälare av jazzmusik i lokalpressen. Med ett presskort från denna verksamhet tog han sig också in på arenor långt hemifrån. Jämfört med andra jazzdiggare, som jag känner, tror jag inte att det är någon, som redan från början har haft en så god tillgång till och därmed också överblick över det bästa, som efterkrigstiden kunde bjuda på ifråga om jazz.

Det lär nog inte heller ha varit någon tvekan om att det var just i musikvetenskap som Janne skulle skriva sin trebetygsuppsats, och inte heller att den skulle handla om jazz den gången, dvs under höstterminen 1971, när han tillsammans med sin utmärkta akademiska lärare, Ingmar Bengtsson, valde att skriva en kunnig och nyanserad essä om Duke Ellington's nya typ av konsertstycken, så som dessa tar sig uttryck i *Black, Brown and Beige* och *In the Beginning God*. Visst har det sedan 1971 kommit ut både nytv-givningar och tidigare okända Ellington-inspelningar, men Bruér's framställning känns lika komplett i dag, som vid min första läsning 25 år senare.

Till och med till de på sidorna 30 och 31 berörda problemen, hade vi under GSJ:s just avslutade historiska CD-serie anledning att återkomma. Helt kompletta kan väl aldrig historiskt framtagna musikmaterial bli, men Jan Bruér's ambitioner har alltid varit och är fortfarande att få fram bästa möjliga approximationer på totalitet – dock utan att minska på kvalitetskraven - så var det då vid början av 1970-talet och så är det i dag med GSJ:s stora historiska återutgivningsprojekt, som återfinns som grund för Bruér's doktorsavhandling.

Låt mig genast, så kortfattat som det bara kan bli tal om här, tala om hur det kunde komma sig att alla inblandade parter var överens om att detta var en fullt godkännbar, ja snudd på utmärkt, doktorsavhandling i musikvetenskap. Med "inblandade parter" menar jag förutom respondenten själv, också opponenter (professor Olle Edström, Göteborgs universitet), examinatorn (professor Holger Larsen, Stockholms universitet) och betygsnämndens tre ledamöter (varav en från England) samt ett antal närvarande emeriterade professorer. För att få till detta "kortfattade svar", måste jag emellertid börja med att citera Jannes eget "Till sist" från sidan VII i avhandlingens förord:

"Jag har ibland undrat över varför det finns så förhållandevis få musikvetenskapliga arbeten om svensk jazz. Musiken är ofta av hög klass, spännande, intressant och känsloladdad, precis som de musikanter som skapat den

– ibland med inslag av tragik, uppblandad med en hel del mer eller mindre galen humor. Detta gäller i nutid som i dåtid. Uppslagsämnen torde vara legio!"

Svaret på Jannes fråga är enkelt att prestera, nämligen att ingen kan se någonting alls, förän någon har tagit på sig det okristliga jobbet

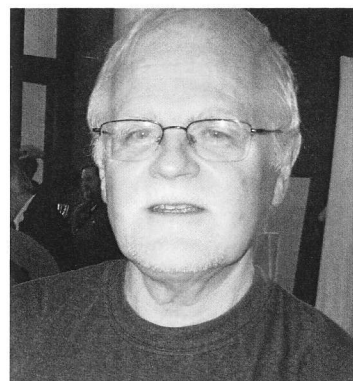
att sortera upp i röran, så att man äntligen ser skogen och inte bara en massa trån. Nu när detta sorteringsjobb är klart, kommer det att bli oändligt mycket lättare för andra att se, hur man kan använda Jannes material för en mängd olika ändamål.

Men hur skall man då använda ett material som detta? Jo, precis så som Janne själv har anvisat. Man tar sig upp högt, högt över materialet och står där och ryttrar på vingarna. Man låter uppvindarna lyfta sig sakta uppåt varv efter varv. Och plötsligt när man har kommit tillräckligt högt upp, ser man klart vad det är som faktiskt finns långt där nere. Då ser man klart och tydligt, om det går att skilja ut "guldår" eller "krisår" eller kanske varken/eller, utan i själva verket något helt annat. Om man kan göra detta tack vare en korrekt induktiv forskarinsats, så gör det mindre vad man ser, så länge man bara klart och otolkat kan beskriva för omvärlden, vad det är man faktiskt ser och varför.

Om man däremot med detta material skulle ha försökt göra samma resa åt andra håller, dvs nedåt, närmare och närmare sitt studieobjekt, för att till sist med hjälp av en deduktiv ansats försöka "känna igen" vissa skeenden eller fenomen - t. ex. "guldår" eller "krisår" - som man från början antagit skulle finnas där nere; ja då skulle resultatet med all sannolikhet ha blivit en underkänd avhandling. Så enkelt blir det om man förmår att följa, alternativt inte följer det vetenskapliga spelets handlingsregler.

Nu gäller emellertid samma sak för Janne som för västvärldens alla andra doktorsavhandlingsskrivare. Man blir världsbäst på sitt eget material. Ett vettigt sätt att utnyttja både Janne, hans material och inbyggda kunskande, kan därför aldrig vara att tvinga honom att till pensionsåldern producera nya turnéer för unga jazzband. I stället borde vi tillsammans ordna så att Janne får föreläsa på högskolenivå – inte minst för blivande musiker, musikvetare och musikpedagoger – och såsom ett led i detta ta initiativ till och handleda unga musikvetare till fältinsatser och/eller skrivbordsstudier i sann Bruérsk anda och med utgångspunkt från hans eget material.

Åke W. Edfeldt



Jan Bruér.



Jazzin' DUKES

Redaktionen för Bulletinen har fått ett intressant brev från Erling Torkelsson, Jazzin' Dukes orkesterledare, med kommentarer till Bo Holmqvists recension efter deras framträdande på SAMI i våras. För att få plats med brevet återges det med en viss redigering. (Se också hemsidan <http://hem.fyristorg.com/jazzin-dukes>)

Varför trumlöst? – Ett intressant kapitel. Det finns flera förklaringar. Kanske ekonomin är avgörande. Dock tror vi att vi klarar akustiken bättre i kyrkorna (där Jazzin' Dukes ofta spelar, red. anm.) utan trummor. Dessutom har jag en idé om att försöka åstadkomma god rytm med enbart toninstrument. Trummor är ett "bullerinstrument".

Åter till ekonomin. Gagerna är låga, grupperna måste vara små. I mitt tycke behövs både rörblås, trumpet och trombon när man spelar Ellington. Classe Brodda t.ex. tänker annorlunda med fullt komp (piano, vibra, trummor och bara ett blås). I en liten grupp tjänar man variation och klang genom att ha toninstrument i stället för trummor. Bas, gitarr och piano ska räcka för att få sväng.

Nästa skäl är praktiskt. Vi har en orkesterbuss, en för-

längd VW Caravelle, som rymmer oss och all utrustning om vi inte har trummor. Trummor ryms inte om vi vill åka tillsammans i bussen. Och det vill vi. Det var det om trummor. Naturligtvis är det svårt att tänka bort Sonny Greer, och de flesta skulle argumentera mot mig. Kanske skulle en trummis göra susen som Bosse H skriver. Dock har t.ex. Thomas Driving i sina inhopp menat att vi absolut ska fortsätta trumlöst.

Tempon – Vi har reducerat Dukes hetsiga fart och spelar Ring Dem Bells i lite gungigt mediumtempo. Vi börjar alla våra kyrkframträdanden med den låten. Innan våra sista klanger tonar ut kommer kyrkklockorna igång. Gudstjänsten/konserten inleds alltså med att Ring Dem Bells uppmanar kyrkklockorna att vakna och ringa. Till det ändamålet är vårt tempo suveränt, och låten får en integrerande del i Gudstjänsten. Drop Me Off spelar vi snabbare än Duke som Bosse H påpekar. Det beror på att vi använder den som processionsmelodi när präst och kör etc. går in. Då passar det lite snabbare tempo.

Hälsningar Erling Torkelsson

Supper Table Talk

It was about midnight in a lounge in downtown St. Louis, Mo., last week. The noise level was relatively low for that time of night. Then over the recorded music came a girl's voice from the bar:

– Who's Duke Ellington?

I glanced around at the speaker, then looked away. Then, curiously, my eyes ran over the other faces at the bar. Three men sat together, having a quiet drink. And the man in the center looked exactly like Duke Ellington. I've admired Ellington for years as probably the greatest jazz composer-bandleader-musician t h i s country has produced. I found it hard to believe he was there—then. So, I walked over and said,

– Pardon me, but are you Duke Ellington?

He turned with a smile and said he was. When I introduced myself, he shook my hand and presented his companions. On his left was Harry Carney, a great baritone sax man who has played with Ellington since back in the 1920's. On the other side was Paul Gonsalves, a fine tenor sax man who is a "newcomer" to the Ellington clan, having been with him only some 12 or 15 years. I found an empty seat beside Carney and we kept talking. They had just finished a concert in St. Louis and were due in Chicago the next night.

They answered my questions graciously. Johnny Hodges, alto sax, was back with the band after several years on his own. Most surprising was the news that "Cootie" Williams, one of the finest swing trumpet men, was back after an absence of 20 years. Rex Stewart, cornet, was still away and at last report was on a European junket. Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet, was still in the fold.

Then the discussion turned to some of the Ellington classics. I asked about a song of which I couldn't recall the title, and that hit a surprising twist. The song was one in which Ellington used a singer's voice without words, as a musical instrument. Both Carney and Ellington suggested Creole Love Call. No, I said, Adelaide Hall did the vocal on Creole Love Call. The one I was searching for was recorded about 1930 and used a burlesque singer undistinguished before or since. Her name was Baby Cox and the number was built around the growling trumpet of the late Bubber Miley and the equally growling voice of Baby Cox. And, guitarist Lonnie Johnson had happened to be in the studio the day of the recording and he sat in on the session. Everybody scratched his head, then gave up. Nobody could remember the name. It took me a good 24 hours to dredge it from my memory, although I have the recording. It was The Mooche.

After awhile, Ellington excused himself to make some phone calls and Carney and I sat talking for an hour more, of music and musicians, past and present. For me, jazz listener for many years, it was a memorable experience. These people came from the bandstand and from the recordings to become warm and human—happy to find someone who appreciated their artistry. The next time a girl asks,

– Who's Duke Ellington?

I hope someone is

By Leonard Duckett

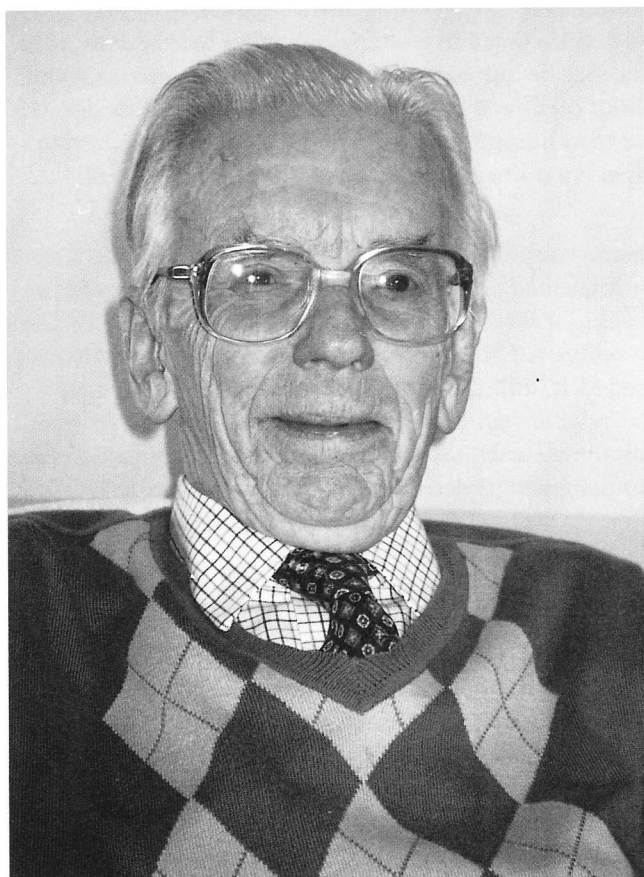
From: Port Arthur News, Texas. 19okt66.
Thanks to Arne Neergaard

I jazzens kvarter 1944

Alf Lavérs upplevelser i New York vid krigsslutet.

Vad kan en ung man få uppleva i New York i mitten på 40-talet? Om man heter Alf Lavér hittar man snart till jazzens kvarter. DESS-veteranen Alf tillbringade några år av sin tidiga ungdom i New York. Närmare bestämt rörde det sig om två perioder. En första period 1940/41 och en andra period 1944/45. Om man råkar vara en jazzentusiast så har man ju verkligen hamnat i jazzens Mecca och under en dag i maj 2007 fick vi förmånen att höra Alf berätta om sina jazzupplevelser under dessa år.

Den allmänna jazzsituationen i New York på den tiden var den bästa tänkbara. Jazz förekom i överflöd. Det var bara att studera dagens tidning för att finna ut var de kända banden spelade. Det vanligaste och billigaste



sättet att avnjuta jazz live var att frekventera någon av det talrika *theatres* som fanns i New York: Paramount, Capitol, Loews State, Roxy m.fl. En theatre var en flottere biograf som redan på förmiddagen började med att visa en aktuell film och när den var slut så framträdde en av de kända orkestrarna som t. ex. Tommy eller Jimmy Dorsey, Casa Loma, Benny Goodman eller kanske rent av Duke Ellington. Film och orkester varvade sedan varandra under resten av dagen. Entréavgiften var endast 50 eller max 75 cent. På de mindre jazzklubbar kunde man ta en öl för 50 cent och den kunde man låta räcka resten av kvällen. Därutöver fanns möjlighet att besöka någon av de mera exklusiva restaurangerna som Astor

Roof, Rainbow Grill, Hurricane m.fl. för att lyssna eller dansa till något känt band.

En dag som han inte glömmer i första taget var söndagen den 2 december 1944, då Alf bestämde sig för att göra en runda på Manhattans jazzställen och samtidigt konstatera hur mycket man kunde hinna med på en dag.

Tidig söndag morgon

Redan kl. 10.00 besökte han radiostationen WJZ Columbia för att höra Paul Whiteman direktsända över nationen. Whiteman hade ju passerat sitt zenit men hade fortfarande ett mycket bra band med bl.a. Arthur Rollini på tenorsax.

Alf: "Sedan letade jag upp Capitol Theatre för att njuta av Jimmy Dorsey och hans orkester. Bland orkestermedlemmarna återfanns Nate Kazebier på trumpet, Sonny Lee trombon, Milt Yaner altsax och Herbie Haymer på tenorsax. Vid detta tillfälle firade Jimmy Dorsey tydligen något slags jubileum för både före och under programmet besöktes Jimmy av kända och mindre kända företrädare för branschen. Filmen som sedan visades kunde man snart glömma."

Steket var inte långt till Paramount Theatre för att lyssna på Glen Gray och hans Casa Loma Orchestra och därmed också Clarence Hutchinrider, som spelar klarinetsolot i *Smoke Rings*, få beundra trumpetaren Grady Watts, och inte minst Murray McEchern på både altsax och trombon. Bandet spelade en elegant och välpolerad jazz med en viss anstrykning åt schlagerhållet noterade Alf.

Det var sedan dags för ett snabbbesök på Roxy Theatre för att höra Mildred Bailey som en del av en stage-show med stor orkester ledd av Paul Ash.

"Inte så långt från Roxy låg Hotel New York där jag fick lyssna till Artie Shaw-kopian Jerry Wald med orkester. En fin klarinettist men inte särskilt välkänd".

Alf skyndade fram mot kvällningen vidare för att passa en kabaret på den exklusiva Ziegfield Theatre. Där gav man en tämligen vanlig revy betitlad *Seven Lively Arts*. Men det fantastiska skedde mellan numren. Då spelade Benny Goodmans sextett som vid detta tillfälle bestod av Teddy Wilson, Red Norvo och de två basisterna Sid Weiss och Slam Stewart samt Morey Feld på trummor. Alf fick här avnjuta fantastiskt fin jazz – en höjdare!

Ellington på Apollo

"Så var det dags för något som vi i DESS skulle anse vara höjdpunkten. Besöket på Apollo Theatre på 125:e gatan i Harlem. Där var Duke Ellington det stora dragplåstret. Det var det stora bandet och det lät fantastiskt. Ställets karaktär och att framträdandet annonseras som 'revue' förklarar varför vokalisterna fick stort utrymme. Jag skulle hellre vilja höra mer av orkesterns solister. Bland de solister som framträdde kan nämnas Ray

AL. HAMILTON. MT VERNON
IAM. CHESTER. RIVERSIDE
' & 'LAST RIDE'
FRANKLIN
airbanks, Jr. 'ACCUSED'

OFFETT 'MY PAL, WOLF'
s FAIRBANKS, Jr. 'Accused'

RYN MOFFETT • JILL ESMOND
MY PAL, WOLF'

Benny GOODMAN & Band
Linda DARNELL • Jack OAKIE
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AMATEUR SHOW TONIGHT

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B'WAY at 89 ST. CHAS COBURN
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Tom'w. I. Dunne, F. MacMurt
Happiness' A. Menjou "Thank

Dale JEAN ARTHUR
IMPATIENT
231ST. at B'WAY 'EVER SINCE

Nance, Johnny Hodges och Al Sears som alla tre delade på *It Don't Mean A Thing*. Av övriga melodier hördes t ex *Frankie And Johnny*. Al Hibbler sjöng den egna kompositionen *Fat And Forty*. En bra melodi men inte så bra falsettsång."

Vid detta tillfälle var inte mindre än tre kvinnliga vokalister engagerade. Joya Sherrill, Marie Ellington och Rosita Davis hette de tre. När det sista namnet nämndes trodde vi att Alf menade Kay Davis men han stod på sig och vid en kontroll i diskografierna så hittade vi faktiskt en Rosita Davis som medverkade en kort tid i bandet. "Det var inte riktigt den Ellington som jag hade velat höra, men detta var mera en stage-show som var sammansatt för att tillfredsställa publiken på Apollo."

Detta var, tro det om ni vill, faktiskt Alfs enda tillfälle att få höra Duke live eftersom bandet mer eller mindre ständigt befann sig på turné över kontinenten och inte alltför ofta hade engagemang i New York. "Men det var kul med Ellington på Apollo för där är alltid rätta stämningen när det gäller jazzmusik på den här teatern."

Muggsy Spanier på Nick's

Denna välfyllda dag hade ännu mer att ge och fick därför avslutas med en tunnelbanefärd ner till 4:e gatan för att besöka jazzklubben Nick's. Där spelade vid detta tillfälle en enligt Alf helt fantastisk Muggsy Spanier i sällskap med Miff Mole, Pee Wee Russell och Gene Schroeder.

Under sin tid i New York bodde Alf centralt på Manhattan och hade nära till de jazzställen han ville besöka. Tunnelbanan på den tiden kostade endast 5 cent. Det var lätt att ta sig ner till södra Manhattan för att gå på Nick's, eller också kunde han ta sig till Harlem och besöka Savoy Ballroom för att lyssna på Al Cooper's Savoy Sultans, Cootie Williams eller Lucky Millinder med Rosetta Tharpe. Vad Alf särskilt kommer ihåg är de möjligheter som fanns att besöka radiostationerna när dessa hade direktutsändningar från sina studios med kända band. En publik behövdes alltid och entrén var billig om den ens existerade. Vad Alf speciellt uppskattade vid dessa framträdanden var att få höra orkestern värma upp och uppleva den fria atmosfären. Dessutom fanns det tid att prata litet med medlemmarna i banden.

Timme Rosenkrantz fixar inträde

När en populär orkester eller artist uppträdde på något kändare ställe kunde det vara svårt att få tag på en inträdesbiljett. Köerna till biljettluckan kunde ofta sträcka sig runt ett helt kvarter. Men Alf hade en god vän som alltid kunde fixa inträdet – den danske baronen Timme Rosenkrantz. Visserligen betydde det inte alltid en sittplats, men en ståplats i orkesterns närhet var guld värd för en entusiast som Alf. Om Timme hade Alf en hel del att berätta men det kanske inte lämpar sig att återge i denna artikel.

Alf besökte ofta Apollo Theatre uppe i Harlem när något intressant band skulle ingå i föreställningen. Han



upplevde det aldrig som osäkert att ta sig till Harlem även om han ibland var den ende vite besökaren på Apollo. Apollos underhållning bestod oftast inte enbart av jazzmusik utan även av sketcher med humoristiska inslag, ofta med sexuella anspelningar. Stämningen var oftast på toppen bland den mycket krävande publiken. Varje onsdag, sent på kvällen, hade man en amatörtävling. Ella Fitzgerald upptäcktes tack vare en sådan amatörtävling. Men Alf har bevittnat hur många amatörer blivit utbuade och avbrutna i förtid av en kräsen och hånfull publik. Benny Carter hade återkommande engagemang på Apollo och var mycket populär. Intressant är att han på den tiden trakterade trumpeten lika mycket som altsaxen. På tenor hade han den kapable Bumps Meyers. När Nat King Cole var engagerad på Apollo var det alltid svårt att få tag på en inträdesbiljett.

Danspalatsen hade fin jazzmusik

De kända danspalatsen Roseland och Arcadia besöktes också av Alf, kanske inte så mycket för att dansa utan mer för att lyssna på de fina orkestrar som spelade den jazzinspirerade dansmusiken.

"Band som leddes av George Paxton och Jimmy Palmer hade utmärkta solister. Muggsy Spanier ledde faktiskt ett storband på Arcadia som var bland de bästa. Under sin första sejour i New York spelade Tommy Dorsey på Arcadia och hade Bunny Berigan på trumpet. Emellertid misskötte Bunny sig så att när Tommy fick engagemang på Roseland så tvingades han ersätta Bunny med Ziggy Elman."

Cotton Club som hade flyttat från Harlem till 42:a gatan besöktes inte så ofta av Alf eftersom det var ett relativt dyrt ställe, men en gång avlyssnade han Cab Calloways orkester därstädes. På Biltmore Hotel spelade Boyd Raeburns orkester som Alf hörde vid några tillfällen. Det var ett för den tiden mycket modernt band, så modernt att publiken på hotellet hade svårt att dansa till musiken och Raeburn fick av den anledningen inte förlängt kontrakt.

Den berömda 52:a gatan

Distriktet 52:a gatan var naturligtvis ofta besökt. "Jag tittade gärna in på Onyx Club för att avnjuta Coleman Hawkins med komp eller Art Tatum med trio." Man blir en aning avundsjuk!

"Klubben Famous Door låg också på 52:a gatan och där spelade bl.a. Count Basie, Will Bradley och Hot Lips Page med orkestrar som man gärna ville höra. Denna klubb var minst sagt liten. Ytan var inte mycket mer än en ordinär tvårummare och den skulle då rymma ett storband plus publik. Tala om trängsel."

"Under den period vi talar om, d.v.s. 1944/45 började Woody Herman göra sig märkbar med sitt band som skulle komma att kallas **The First Hird**. Jag besökte och blev närmast chockad av Woodys nya attityd till storbandsjazz. I bandet fanns redan Bill Harris och Flip Phillips. Trumpetsektionen var en sensation med Pete Candoli i spetsen, - han gjorde sina musikaliska gags utklädd till Stålmannen. Det var visst hans fru som sytt upp kostymen åt honom."

Den här perioden besökte Alf även andra ställen för att lyssna på Count Basie, Les Brown, Ella Fitzgerald



med sin ärvda Chick Webb-orkester och Eddie Condon. På New Jersey-sidan fanns även ett rikligt utbud av jazz och på jazzstället Meadowbrooks fick han för första gången avnjuta Harry James' fina orkester och även Tommy Dorsey.

Formidabel jazzmusik

Vilken jazzhändelse gjorde störst intryck på Alf? Vi väntar oss naturligtvis att han skall säga Duke. Men icke så. I stället hänvisar han till söndagen den 2 december, relaterad ovan, då han fick höra Benny Goodmans sextett på Ziegfield Theatre.

"I salongen hade man på väggarna sju jättetavlor av Salvador Dali på temat *Seven Lively Arts* som var temat för kabarén denna säsong. Benny började sitt framförande med Carl Maria von Weber's *Clarinet Concertina* men sedan återkom Benny med sin sextett och dom spelade helt formidabelt. Sällan har jag hört ett bättre svänggång. Morey Feld måste vara en av jazzens bästa trummisar som kunde driva de övriga till stordåd."

Alf har senare besökt New York på 60-, 70- och 80-talet och jazzscenen har naturligtvis förändrats med åren. Men vad Alf speciellt kommer ihåg från sina senare besök är Maynard Fergusons Dream Band på Birdland. Vi vet ju från skivutgåvor att det var ett fint band, men tänk bara att få höra det live. Man önskar att man hade fått åtfölja Alf på åtminstone några av hans jazzexkursioner.

Bo Haufman noterade och Sven Eriksson bidrog med bilder

Ellington in Oakland and San Francisco

By Thomas C. Fleming

We in the West had been listening to Ellington's broadcasts from the Cotton Club in Harlem, where he gained an international reputation starting in 1927. He made the Cotton Club famous, and the Cotton Club in turn made him famous.

Ellington would leave the Cotton Club at periods during the five years he was playing there, and would go on tour. He would broadcast from wherever he was playing. He went into the big hotels more than any other black. Sometimes he'd come on the radio once a week, and sometimes three or four successive nights. I watched the schedule every day in the newspaper.

Starting around 1920, the big bands made Oakland a city where they played one-night stands. None came to San Francisco for any dates, with the exception of Ellington, who played at the Orpheum Theater on Market Street about 1931. The ads read: "Duke Ellington and His Aristocrats of Modern Music." The reviews in the newspapers were glowing in their praise. He was supposed to play for a week, but the crowds were so immense that they held him over a second week. That's the first time they had done anything like that. I went both weeks to see him.

Ellington first played Oakland on that same trip, performing for whites at Sweet's Ballroom, and the next night for blacks at the Oakland Auditorium, which was owned by the city. It could seat 6,500 or 7,000 people, but they did well if they got a thousand in there that night to see him. This was before Bill Sweet, owner and operator of the ballroom, decided he would have a two-night session for black entertainers who came to Oakland. The first night would be allocated for whites only, and the second night for blacks. That went on until after World War II. The policy was only for black bands; I don't think any blacks wanted to hear the white bands because they didn't play hot enough.

Sweet's was the mecca for jazz devotees in Oakland. It was the only place where the famous big bands played, such as Ellington, Armstrong, Lunceford, Andy Kirk, Earl Hines and some white bands. Fats Waller came once alone, and used a local drummer and a few others to accompany him. Sweet's wasn't a nightclub. It just had dances -- no floor shows. When these bands played worked the clubs in Los Angeles, they stayed anywhere from a week to maybe four weeks.

Ellington came back to Oakland every year for about a decade, then not quite so often during World War II. After the war, he never played another Oakland engagement, but always in San Francisco, as clubs here began to sign him and other big bands for dance dates. I went to hear him on his first visit to Oakland, and after the show, at the 16th Street depot, I was introduced to him by a man I knew, Tex Allen. We were all waiting for the train; the band was going to its next engagement. Every time Ellington came after that, I'd go up and talk to him.

I called him maestro. And he was always very gracious; he spoke well and met people very easily. He had that manner about him. The Duke was a sharp dresser. He was almost as well known for that as for his music. That's how he got his nickname, from the other students when he was at high school in Washington, D.C.

The next time Ellington came through Oakland he had his father with him, and I got to meet him. He called his father Uncle Ed, and so did everybody in the band. The old man seemed all excited, and didn't know what to make of it. I guess Ellington wanted his father to see the United States, which I thought was wonderful. Then about 1937 or 1938, when they were playing one-night stands all over the country, he brought his son Mercer, who was only about 18. Duke remained close to his family all of his life. After he became successful, he moved them from Washington to New York -- his mother, father, and younger sister Ruth.

I went to see Duke every time he came to Oakland. I never had enough money to take a date, and I very seldom danced. I tried to get as close to the bandstand as I could, and stood there all through the two and a half hours they played, watching those wonderful musicians. About half of the people who came did the same thing. There were a lot of women, and I imagine most of them paid their way too. When he played at the nightclubs in San Francisco, he'd be here maybe a whole week, and there were generally three or four shows every night, so I'd see him more than one time. In some of the places, those tables were packed around so much that there wasn't space to dance. People mostly came to hear, anyway. There never was any color bar when he played in San Francisco. You could talk to him at the clubs. People would rush up when he left the piano. He signed autographs. He once asked me for my business card, and I didn't have any with me that night, so I wrote my name on a piece of paper. But he probably threw that away. People who were close to him said, "He'll send you a Christmas card."

One night, when Duke came through San Francisco, he stopped at Jack's Tavern and saw a local bass player, Junior Ragland, playing in a group. Duke hired him for his band. I was there the first night he got up and played bass with Duke, at Sweet's Ballroom. Ragland stayed with Duke for three or four years.

I think Duke's 1938 band was the best, the Blanton-Webster band, with Jimmy Blanton on bass and Ben Webster on sax. The last time Blanton came through here, tuberculosis had him pretty bad. Duke took care of him until he died -- paid all his bills. I didn't see any period where Duke's band declined, because I was buying their records steadily, all the time. Of course I could have been blinded because I didn't think there was anybody like him. The last time I saw him was at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco in 1973.

Credits: The Free Press via Bill Egan.