

joefiles 145:

jazz shrines went so improv they aligned in precision

jazz define

the
collective
jazz
voice
is
made
of invisible
swaths
of
air
that
gave
this
country
sound
when
the
silence
wasn't
enough.

david amram

speeding
in a
NYC train
composing
thick
words
over a
cell phone
in a
talk full
of laughter
as he
mused over
the music
talent
in KC
and
talked of
an award
he would
get
that
night
for
being alive long
enough
and
full of cool
to
orchestrate
a
Kerouac
semi-colon.

bergonzi

he said
he didn't
think
about
yesterday
in
large
Boston
cool
as another
monumental
snow fell
to earth
while
warm
stories of Brubeck
and
life
on the road
heated over
the
phone receiver
the
way
a
good
tune
can
call
each of us
forever
&
ever.

amram

after he explained
the
fascination
Kerouac
had
with
life
talking
to a janitor
at a BYOB
party
in
50's
NYC,
his hip
verbal
swagger
assured
me
that
dizzy gillespie
and
louis armstrong
were fast
pals
contrary to
history etchings
and it
was then in my attic high
over Missouri
i saw 3 stealth
fighter planes fly by in
one dark line booming
with
sound
as mr. amram
just
kept
talking his
hep words.

weston

his
worn,
yet wise brooklyn voice
explained
how all of africa
pepetually
swang.

the trees,
elephant trunks,
gifaffe tails,
all the
life
just
moved in swing ..

and it was then that
his old jazz voice said
that
is how the africans
brought
jazz to america
and
the massive velvet
curtain
parted
in a way
i never
imagined
it
could
ever move

showing
me the
birth
of jazz.

rollins

sonny
said
plainatively
that
he was hoping
his
next album
would be
his
finest
yet
and in all
the jazz
saints
he gave
birth to
and the easy
cool
he made the
streets of
jazz flow,
i just
let
mr. rollins
explain
his
humble wisdom
over
the
clean
and
clear of his
collosus
legacy.

the prodigy

justin k. spoke
with a smooth,
content glide about
how the jazz cats of
the world are
so grounded becuase
they are all borrowing
the song
as the
piano prodigy
chuckled with
tales
of quincy j.
and clark t.

he also said
that sounds didn't
intensify after
losing his sight
and
the main thing
is the
beautiful noise
of jazz that hits
the
crowds ears
as the
young wonder
is now
a man
speaking
like an old
jazz vet

ready to educate
the
world
the only
way
he
was
told
by
the
wise
old
jazz jedi council.

gee glee

on an accidental
chance
with the
great count
in his basie,
george
with his gee
spoke of how
he is going
to descend swing
onto
all continents
of this planet
in his cool cat glow
while
musing over memiors
he needs to write
and the
movie of his life
that may play
out
better than anything
even
a legend could assume
and
as the phone line
cut loose after
i thanked him for his
time,
i called back
and he picked back
up where the band
left off
dazzling
the ear
with more improv
made of NYC
echoes melded
with the finest
sound
today
can
make.

hot sardine

miz elizabeth
hummed in a
dignified
jazz growl
that if
there was a
jazz delorian
to go back
in time,
she would
catch sinatra
in the heyday
of unironed collars
and girls dreaming
of something sweeter than
finding a new universe.

then,
she said seeing
armstrong
and the old crooners
of the day
would round out a
nice fictitious
trip through the bell tower
of another
stack of jazz
ghosts
as
her hot sardines
were waiting
in the
tour bus
with
another anonymous
tip on how
to survive
better
with
life
on that long,
cool jazz trip.

the lake

he goes
by oliver
and his
world
is a
lake of artistic
wonder
and in that aged,
tempo jazz soul
of his
he spoke
like a poet
that
never went to formal
school
and
a painter
that
decorated your dreams
at the apex of night,
but he spoke
of how
the horns
changed his life
and the gallery was
the best home
he could
find in this life
as the old landline he
spoke into
crackled
like a warm
fire
getting hotter
by his words

...another
small element
of his creative
arsenal
heating up
everyone
that
drifted by.

mcperson cool

in the middle
of a mingus tale,
charles stopped me
in his old jazz man
cool to say
politely he
needed to
switch the oars
on his phone waiting
and he'd return.

after less than a minute,
he said in that
golden san diego sunshine
that a
neighbor was in a
life threatening
fix but
his wife was on
the way to help

and just as quickly,
he said 'where was i .. "

then,
it was back into mingus
and the metaphor
for the mcperson
tale that would
unfurl into
a long,
rich story of
wonder fueled
by the
horns,
books,
mentors
and the outer reaches
of eons of universes
that is
the folds of his
wise brain
going on
and on
like a jazzy
sagan cosmo.

i said, 'hi karen .. '

she came back
and
simply said,
'karrin'

and i said, 'oh,
i'm sorry.'

several times.

but,
sometimes you
sorta recover
from
missteps with a
veteran
and other times
you
just
get stuck
in the shadow
of
star
and
kid reporter.

and in that
proverbial transit
between the moon
and new york city
& back to kansas city
stood there
like the
dark haired step
child itching for
a
good
story

if he
could just
get

the names
right
in the allyson
of it
all.

basse

david
in the
tenor
of
his
basse
told
me
about two curious
musicians that
wanted to meet
the titan
miles davis one
day.

so,
they went to his hotel,
found his room
and
nervously knocked on his
door.

he opened the door
naked,
looked at them wordlessly,
and went back to bed.

the two musician kids in
adult bodies looked on
in wonder
as the bebop hero
went back nude to sleep
in his rented bed.

when miles woke,
he walked to close
the door and saw the kids looking in
and said,
'you motherfuckers still here?'

at this,
they said 'yessir.'

and mr. davis tossed them
a wad of cash and said to
buy them some

sandwiches.

they did
and ate with the king of
jazz.

after they finished their
sandwiches,
he said,
'you motherfuckers still here?'

they replied,
'yessir.'

so, he told
them to come with him to
the place he was going to gig.

they followed.

at the gig,
closer and closer to their dream.

he put them up front in the audience
and practiced a bit.

then,
looked out at them again and said,
'you motherfuckers still here?'

at this,
miles in his cool,
invited them on stage
to play.

and there,
the best dream in
one lifetime
and every country in
the jazz map
was

achieved
motherfuckers.

sam
in his
newsome
sort of approach
to living the jazz
dream
took me
under his wing
briefly
and led
me
through the
streets of jazz story
that wound into
one
about how donald byrd
would speak
continually on
one such jazz venture
and the oratory was
so amazing,
sam and all the jazz
cats in the car
got
a
years load of education
from the mouth of
a master.

including the tale
of philly joe jones
running a trolley in
philly before he was
big and would stop
off at clubs during
his route
to bang out tunes in
gigs on the skins
then hop back out onto
his trolley
like nothing happened.

just a bit of magic
in the club,
much
like
sam
doing in
words

as
the
story
wound around
like intricate
avenues of brain
squeezing together
in perfect hemispheres
filled
with
every
possible
jazz

note
you
could
imagine.

mighty fred

he survived
9 days
in a coma
and said he
could hardly
move
when he awoke and
his brilliant
jazz fingers
trained by
a prodigy cloud
around him
couldn't even
grasp a pillow ..

but,
he relearned the
world
and his
jazz instrument
to get back into
the villiage
vanguard to see
the face of coltrane on the wall
and the invisible notes
of bill evans
wafting around
and through the tables
like the coma dreams
fred would retell
in his
unique sort of way

as his voice captured
the song his
keys
slightly touched
in yet
another jazz story
avoiding the traffic jam
to tell you
how the world
ended
and began again.

dejohnette

jack
spoke so
low
i had to press the
microphone harder
towards the
phone unsure if i
would capture
dejohnette
eating some
fruit or
bread
as
he
went over the
mystifyingly cool
beginnings
of
his life in a
chicago jazz town
slightly before
the miles
davis train would
come through and
whisk him
into a legendary
storm cloud
us bougeoisie
can only
imagine
in our jazz loving
brains
as jack the jazz
drummer
wipes his mouth of the food
and continues on
dishing out
the
audio food
almost silently
in
the loudest
scream
he could muster.

woods

he
seems to
be the hunter s. thompson
of the jazz
world
and
it was
when
phil woods
began
speaking to me
in initial pleasantries,
it was
loud,
precise and skeptical.

but,
once we started going over
the horn his uncle gave
him as a boy
and the first gigs
that
moved him into the
cool racket of
bebop legacy,
i saw the
skepticism
become
smooth,
cool shapes of
the finest music

i had
ever heard
just like
him laying down
the best he
had in
the
greatest jazz
juke
joints this world has
ever heard.

the kc jazz foundation

she told
me that a paranormal
crew had
been in
the very room
i was standing
the week prior
and confessed
that they never
felt
the spirits
as
powerfully
as they did
in the
oldest
jazz house
in kansas city.

with this
in mind,
i sifted my eyes around
and
imagined teams
of ghosts that
were armed with
jazz horn
from the KC heydeys
jamming into
the moments the sun would
rise once
again and
the world again was
getting
pregnant
with a new
hangover
of tasty jazz
and the best gin on
the planet.

as ms. dixon
retold the story
of the
local 627
and the
charlie parker

tales
and everything minced
in between,
i could sense
the jazz spirit
was soaring
around like
lost notes from
a worn horn
that made
everything make
sense via
music at one time.

and as i walked
out of
the jazz shrine,
i felt
a
bit
cold,
alone,
vastly
different
from the kindred
now of the inside
where warmth
and
jazz
live
for
absolute
ever
off
a
little
street
in 18 and Vine

in
that
Kansas City
town of
ours.

the best jazz tale

reggie
pondered
hard for a minute
to conjure
the
best jazz story
he ever heard

and in a sudden 'oh'
it hit him.

his old boss,
the great maynard ferguson
moved to LA
to become a musician
for major
movie studios
and during
his tenure
in the land of dreams
and sunshine,
he got himself
some lover girl
that made his horn the better.

apparently,
this girl
was one of sinatra's gals,
as well.

and the dame war was
to begin.

one afternoon while
at home in the hills,
maynard got
the knock on the door
from a massive
mafioso style dude
with a maynard LP and
pen in hand.

when the door flew open,
he asked for
his autograph.

after the ink was
beginning to dry,

maynard said
'what the fuck? you didn't come here to
get my autograph.'

at this,
the man cut through the
quick
LA air of warm
and said
that he needed
to leave Frank's girl alone.

at this,
maynard to him to tell
frank to go fuck himself
and the
door
slammed hard
into the wood frame.

time went on and
nothing got strange
until one day months
later frank and maynard
were on the same lot
to do some anniversary TV show filming.

frank was in the spotlight,
maynard was in the band.

at one point,
they passed each other and
frank merely said,
'you got some balls, kid'

at this,
reggie and i laughed
so heartily
that
we forgot
what time
it was
here in
jazz story land.

mintzer

it took
20 minute or so
of
routine calls up
to a 5-star
chicago hotel
room in the middle
of a warm midwestern
day to
see
if
i could
have
a bit of time
to speak
with the
journeyed cat
known as
bob mintzter.

and when the receptionist
at
the hotel
finally
got me an alternate number
after sending me
to his room
many times,
i got ahold of
a
club owner that was going to
feature bob
that night

and he had
no idea
where his
mysterious whereabouts were.

and with that,
i knew that
another day
and another way
was going to transpire.

as i hit the road,
my phone rang
hard and

it was bob
apologizing
to me for
not being around
and
being trouble.

and it
was me erasing that blank
of saying
it's fine,
fine,
fine like a jazz improv
solo ..

the legends and
stars have such
a humanity
that it's odd to
hear an apology,
but it
only
adds to
their
soul

cool

and
metered approach
to
mastering the
best

jazz
we
can
all
possibly muster.

wilkins

the deadpan
overtures
of his meter
were spiked with
levels
of greatness
as he
spoke through
the
invisible pages
of his jazz history.

then,
he
finished all
of the eloquence
and
memory of days
in his brooklyn voice
by saying
that he didn't care
what his legacy was
or if anyone thought about it.

he
explained his case
in a short
explosion of monotone
words
with the sounds of
simultaneous sinatra
songs playing somewhere

and the lore
of old jack wilkins
was
solidified in my
book

and that legacy
is larger
than
he would
ever admit.

al

they call
him al
and his canadian
jazz cool
oozed
through
the phone receiver
here into
the middle
of america
as his entire
lineage
was
ringing with
'i've got nothing to lose'
and 'the whole world is cool'.

as the canadian
winds roared
and the american
trumpets began
somewhere in this
kansas city town,
mr. murihead
hung up the phone
and continued to
walk his
mark
right up
the international jazz
road
into
a
sun
that
will never set.

mr. heath

as jimmy
wove down all the
intricate
and tall
stories of
jazz history,
he had to pause
in a composer's lurch
on the legacy and
history of coltrane.

he explained in
detail
how coltrane spent hours
in that philly fog
and sunshine
practicing that
horn until he
literally had to sleep or
gig.

the constant
sound of the horn
and the
tiny pin prick portal
into the legacy of a champ.

and as jimmy heath
went on about
miles and the rest
of the cool cats
that made jazz
what it is today,
he just
went on as though
he was telling me about
his family
into some
dusty recorder
so the world

would know
once and for all
how it all
fuckin' really
went down.

cobb truism

in the many
studio takes
that rolled down
the miles davis
sweat river,
it was the man
behind the
drum kit
that told me
the truth
about that
kind of blue
set of days that made
the finest
wax ever
spun on a
record player.

jimmy cobb
explained that
it was no big deal
at the time,
the group just played
their buns
off under that
expert eye
of the hero
known as miles.
and that was it.

no special
kentucky fried ingredients
or aura that needed dispelled.

just the magic
of jazz wizards
getting their
human minds moving
in a way
that was
kind,
blue
and
timless.

sweet lou

his answering machine
popped on
in a haze of old tape
with a bluesy sax
wailing and a voice
telling the people what to say
to his legendary
phone box of recordings.

i could only assume
it was lou donaldson,
and it was confirmed
some hours later
when the man
had called my phone
to wonder who the hell was
playing at the
big charlie parker festivities
in KC that summer.

and it was then that
he tossed me the jersey
in the coke ad with a
mean joe green flick
saying he had 10 minutes before
tee time to talk.

and in that 90 seconds or
so before i put the mic on
and decided what i was
going to ask on
the fly,
i knew that he was going
to sound better than
that answering machine
and have some stories
of bird
and the world
of jazz
that would finally
bring that
holy grail
to light
and make
the jazz phoenix
come straight
back to life.

weather jazz

he slightly mentioned
that he was
the man
in the 80's
that played
that tasty
jazz collection
on the weather channel
as our collective
eyes figured out
what to wear,
and dreamed of that
hot spot on the map
that blotted out
the bleak winter cold,
it was lenny marcus
in some studio
that
provided the
soundtrack of
our weather
lives
set to
his eternal
jazz
making sure
that no matter the
weather,
it was going
to
be
jazz ..

and that's
the
best kinda
forecast legacy
lenny
could
have
given
each
and all
of us.

bobby
spoke in
a laugh
as he said
he huddled over
in the corner with
the cool new york guys
as the
utlimate hipster from
the jazz skins
known as the
art blakey
took his old bones
onto the european disco floors
and danced
with sweat
flying like jazz keys
through
the early morning
piercing eyes
that
became the only thing
on that
dancing
liquor haze
as
the
world
of
every music genre
melted

and it was
art's wide smile
ensuring
that
jazz
was
never
ever
gonna die,
baby.

the EE pointer

a local
jazz man
specializing in
zen cool
had one more
story in the 2nd floor
of a rainy day coffeehouse
to tell me
before we would
waltz away from
our jazz hour.

he said one night
he went to get his wife
some ice cream
and pulled up to
the shack
seeing a cherry red cadillac
with
a distinct license plate.

as he climbed out and
to the window with the sweets
his wife needed
in her pregnant state,
he saw
chuck berry loading up on
a flavor caravan of
ice cream.
in a nervous flush,
EE said he
talked to chuck for a minute or so
and said
he was the coolest cat
he's
likely ever met.

the earth was flat
and as chuck drove off
and mr. pointer had
his coveted sweet ice cream,
he thought
he
had

entered
desert nivana
of purgatory
as
the st. louis night
lost a bit more light,
but gained a few
more stars visible
in the
skies above.

molly jazz

i called
to new york.

i called to
los angeles.

and left messages
to talk
to the daughter
of a california
jazz hero.

she just released
a new album of
tasty jazz vocals.

something the world
never expected,
but the tiny venues that
caught her
act would
never forget it.

and it's with this
tiny
plea,
that i keep the 16th candle
going

and imagine
that one day

you will interview
in jazzy pink,
mrs. molly ringwald.

the laws

before the
real questions were
to begin,
he said that
he went to the car wash
earlier that day
and explained to a
man detailing his car
that he hit
that point in his
life where
he was giving it away.

there was no need to
hold all the words, cash
and richness of soul within.

it was time to give it away.

and as
the legendary hubert laws
laughed
the old,
strong
wise laugh
chiseled by all
the hours he
has experienced
this show down here,
i understood
that in his own way
he
gave me
everything single thing
in that one quote
that all
the stories of
ensuing jazz
were just trying
to catch up to
like
a scorching flute
solo
when the crowd was still
in the parking lot
ready to
witness magic.

pender cool

he was driving
down the 405
of LA sunshine
while his darkened glasses
glittered
under his signature bald
head
of trumpet cool.

and he went on to
tell me that while
he was on the road
playing the horn
in the 80's with
bruce springsteen
that he was singing
marvin gaye one night
in the hotel
and
the words 'love man'
came
out in such power
that
steve van zandt
dubbed mr. mark pender
the love man
and the
nickname stuck.

and it was with that
story,
before the real jazz story would begin,
that he was
entered into
the official hall of
cool

permanently ..

forever.