

**Music at MIT Oral History Project**

**Herb Pomeroy**

*Interviewed*

*by*

**Forrest Larson**

**with Frederick Harris, Jr.**

**April 5, 2000**

**Interview no. 2**

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Lewis Music Library**

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### Note on timing notations:

Recording of this interview can be found either as one continuous file or as split up over two audio CDs. Timings are designated in chapter headings in both formats, with the timing on the full file preceding the timing on the CD version.

## Contributors

**Herb Pomeroy** (1930-2007) was the founding director of MIT Concert and Festival Jazz Bands (1963-1985). He was a noted band leader, trumpeter, composer, arranger and music educator, teaching at the Berklee College of Music from 1955-1995. In his early career he played with the Lionel Hampton Band and Charlie Parker. The Herb Pomeroy Orchestra was an integral part of the New England jazz scene. His later years were devoted to solo and small ensemble performances. Three interviews: 12/14/1999, 4/5/2000, 4/26/2000

**Frederick Harris, Jr.** has been the Music Director of the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble and the MIT Wind Ensemble since fall of 1999. He was a student of noted jazz drummer Alan Dawson. Herb Pomeroy was guest conductor of the FJE in 2000, 2003 and 2005. Beginning in 2008, the band has held an annual Herb Pomeroy memorial concert.

**Forrest Larson**, Library Assistant at the Lewis Music Library, has attended training workshops in oral history methodology and practice at Simmons College and by the Society of American Archivists, and is a member of the Oral History Association. He is also an active composer and violist.

Interview conducted by Forrest Larson on April 5, 2000, in the MIT Lewis Music Library. Duration of the audio recording is 2:02:02. Second of three interviews. First interview: December 14, 1999; third interview: April 26, 2000.

## Music at MIT Oral History Project

The Lewis Music Library's *Music at MIT Oral History Project* was established in 1999 to document the history of music at MIT. For over 100 years, music has been a vibrant part of the culture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This history covers a wide variety of genres, including orchestral, chamber, and choral musical groups, as well as jazz, musical theater, popular and world music. Establishment of a formal music program in 1947 met the growing needs for professional leadership in many of the performing groups. Shortly thereafter, an academic course curriculum within the Division of Humanities was created. Over the years, the music faculty and alumni have included many distinguished performers, composers and scholars.

Through in-depth recorded audio interviews with current and retired MIT music faculty, staff, former students, and visiting artists, the Music at MIT Oral History Project is preserving this valuable legacy for the historical record. These individuals provide a wealth of information about MIT. Furthermore, their professional lives and activities are often historically important to the world at large. Audio recordings of all interviews are available in the MIT Lewis Music Library.

## 1. Coming to MIT (00:00–CD1 00:00)

FORREST LARSON: This is an oral history interview with Herb Pomeroy. It's April 5th, 2000. Also Fred Harris, who is the Director of the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble and Wind Ensembles here, is in the room as well. I'm Forrest Larson, and this is in the MIT [Lewis] Music Library. So thank you, Herb, once again for coming to this interview.

HERB POMEROY: My pleasure.

FL: Now in the previous interview, we talked a little bit about when you first came to MIT, but why don't we just start with that, so even if we're covering ground again, that's fine.

HP: Sure.

FL: So just tell me about the circumstances about how you came to MIT.

HP: Got a phone call while I was teaching at Berklee [College of Music] in late winter of '63, from a gentleman with a very strong Germanic accent, and it turned out to be Klaus Liepmann, the Director of Music here, who—he and I had not met. And he said—I probably said it to you before, but I'll say it—he said, “We have a band here that is so bad, I told them to disband. We don't want them representing MIT.” At that point they were student led.

FL: And this was the Tectonians?

HP: They were called the Tectonians. “I told them, either disband, or get someone to upgrade this a little.” So he said, “Your name was the one that they asked for first. I believe they said if you couldn't do it, they would like to see if John LaPorta [1920–2004, clarinet, saxophone] could do it.” And he presented, “If you're interested at all, would you be willing to rehearse them for the remaining six Sunday weekly rehearsals that they have this year? And then if you're interested, you and I can then talk about terms.” I can remember he said it would be thirty dollars a rehearsal. I can remember even to this day, you know. And I had no reason to not say yes. I don't think at that point I knew any of the students in the band. They just knew me through reputation, because I had my band in Boston for, starting in 1955.

FL: Had you known anything about music at MIT? Was there something that seemed kind of interesting, even though you knew the band was not in particularly good shape?

HP: Well, my memory tells me that the only other association prior to my coming here was [Charles H.] Chuck Israels [b. 1936, MIT class of 1958], who then was a guitarist, a student here, a guitarist who later became a bass player, and was Bill Evans's bass player for a number of years. After the famous bassist [Rocco] Scott LaFaro [1936–1961] was killed, [William John] Bill Evans [1929–1980, piano] did not play for some number of months. When he re-formed his trio, he re-formed it with this young man, Chuck Israels, who by that time had left MIT. I don't even know if Chuck graduated here, but he was here as a student.

The reason I knew of him is he invited me and a couple of other fellows to come over and play at a couple of sessions. It was sort of a lecture hall, a very steep lecture hall—I don't know the number of it. And I remember playing—this was probably late fifties, early sixties. So I remember playing here once or twice with him, in that setting. I had played a concert with my own band here in 1958, at Kresge—and Kresge [Auditorium] at that point was very new. I had, you know, a booker and an agent, and they booked us doing a concert here. I had that contact. Unless I'm forgetting something, that concert by my band, which would have been in March of '58, and this contact with Chuck Israels, a student, was my only contact with musical activity.

I had heard, in my playing, generally, in Boston, I had heard about a student at MIT named Richie Orr [Richard Orr, trombone; MIT class of 1962], who was a trombonist, who would also do what we call general business work in Boston. And our paths did not cross on any general business job, but other musicians told me about, "Hey, there's this kid at MIT that can really play!" And Richie later on became the core of my band for three or four years, as a writer and a player, as he was getting toward a doctorate, because he was an undergrad back in the late fifties.

So that, I think, is about my only memories. I didn't know John Corley [conductor, MIT Concert Band, 1949–1999] prior to that. My musical life in Boston was very insulated: the Jazz Workshop [est. 1953, moved to The Stables club in 1954, unofficially a.k.a. Jazz Workshop] which was a club I worked from '55 to '62, and Berklee, where I taught from '55 to '95. So the period of time, the years leading up to my involvement here, my active involvement here, was very insulated—five days teaching at Berklee, six nights a week at the Workshop, leading my own band. And it was a period when my band was more active in the somewhat national scope of things than it ever has been since, in that we would be playing at New York places: the Apollo Theater, Birdland. We'd be playing the Newport Festivals. We were recording for major labels at that time.

And so I had very little time, or drive, to be a part of anything other, even though it was just right across the bridge from the club and the school where I spent most of my waking hours. So that's all that seems to come to mind prior to this late winter call from Klaus Liepmann.

FL: Hm.

HP: At that point, the Jazz Workshop had closed, I should say. It closed in October of '62. So when Klaus called me a few months after our closing, I was not working regularly at any one place; I was teaching full-time. So a call like this from Klaus—I think if it had come when I was working at the Jazz Workshop, I probably would not have had the energy to take it on, even in these six look-see rehearsals, let alone on a permanent basis. But I came here.

I don't remember, probably I told you before about the first rehearsal. They had just, the night before, done their spring concert, so I figured the band would be in pretty good shape. And it just sounded terrible! That's probably repeating things. I remember the arrangement, the tune they played, the three minutes. I think I told you all that. And in the three minutes, I made a twenty-two year decision for my life, and

something that's still going with Fred, that was continued with Jamshied Sharifi [MIT class of 1983; second director of the Festival Jazz Ensemble, 1985–1992] and Jim O'Dell [third director, 1992–1999] and now Fred. So it was sort of an important three-minute period there! [laughs]

FL: Yes, so tell me about that. What went through your mind, as far as making that decision?

HP: There was something about it, that I sensed an integrity on the part of the students. After Klaus had contacted me, then I had some contact with a saxophonist named Bill Richards [name & dates unverified], a student—wonderful young man! He and two or three other people were the key, the driving forces towards wanting to keep the band together and having this professional leader that Klaus was sort of offering to them if they and he together could find one.

And the sad footnote to this whole, Bill Richards, while still with the band, two years after this, April of '63 when I took the band over, he was a scuba diver and he drowned. And really, the worst thing is that the dear young man died. He was swimming right off of Gloucester, right where I lived.

FL: Wow!

HP: I had no idea that he was swimming on that given day. But I remember going to the funeral home in Gloucester, where—his parents were from, I don't know, Saint Louis or someplace. They came and had him buried here. And I remember going to the funeral home in Gloucester and thinking, "How strange, that this young man was very much a part of getting me into being a part of the MIT band." But anyway, I sensed a drive. There was a piano player in the band named [Michael] Mike Hughes [MIT student, Fall 1962–Fall 1963], who went on to do marvelous things musically, a guitar player named Carey Mann [MIT class of 1964]. The three of them stood out as among the better musicians.

It wasn't that this band [laughs] showed much promise musically! It's that they seemed like good young people, the kind of people that, if I spent some time and they spent some time, we could make something of it together. And I went into it thinking, after I did the six weeks and said to Klaus, "Yes, I'll take it on," and we talked a little bit of a contract. And it was just once a week at that time, just Sunday evenings, seven to ten. In the back of my mind I'm thinking, "Well, I'll try this for a year and see how it goes." It was a year-to-year contract that I had with Klaus and the music department here. So that led up to this taking it over.

FL: So when you were officially hired, what was the general terms of that contract, as far as, like, what was your title and stuff like that?

HP: Yeah, it was a relatively non-becoming title.

FL: Affiliated Artist?

HP: Oh, no! That came much later. It was, like—you know, I can't remember. Somewhere I have those contracts. It wasn't even instructor or band director. It was something that if I was thin-skinned I would have been offended by it! [laughs] I didn't even think about that stuff, you know. If there had not been a written contract,

if Klaus had said, “We’ll pay you a hundred bucks a month to do this for eight months,” I would have said, “Fine.” I trusted him and the organization. [laughs] But we did have a contract. I forget who the President was whose name—Paul G[r]ay[b. 1932, President, 1980–1990]? [Editor’s note: Julius A. Stratton, President 1959–1966] Anyway, it doesn’t matter. If I heard the name, I’d remember. But I don’t remember my title. At some point, I became known as something like Director of Jazz Bands, which sounded, after what I’d been called before, sounded kind of good!

FRED HARRIS: [laughs]

FL: Now the group that you formed was called the Festival Jazz Ensemble? Was it called that first?

HP: No, it remained the Techtonians for the first, maybe, year. No, wait a minute—longer than that [Ed. Note: at least through Spring 1966.]. [sighs] Around ’67 there was a fellow who became the student president of the band. His name was Glenn Reyer [MIT class of 1969], a trombonist, who was the first real go-getter as a student president. He brought the band up a real notch, as far as all the mechanics and the attendance at the concerts—the whole thing—to the point he put so much energy in it, he had to drop out of school for a whole year, and then start again, he got so far behind with his grades and the whole thing. But he was a factor. And I want to say it was probably the fall of ’67, of the ’67-’68 school year, that he came in. The same year is the year that we started having the second band. The first four years I was here we just had the one band. I have a feeling that we maybe did call—we got rid of the Techtonians maybe before Glenn Reyer in ’67, and we called it maybe the MIT Concert Jazz Band.

FL: Okay.

## **2. The jazz bands at MIT (10:58 – CD1 0:10:58)**

HP: The Festival idea came about once we had two bands and we wanted to distinguish. We didn’t want to say one and two, or A and B, or good and bad, or anything like that, senior-junior. It made all the sense in the world to call one band the Festival Band, and one the Concert Band because the second team, Everett’s band [Everett Longstreth, trumpet, bandleader], that’s all that they did; they played the fall and the spring concert, whereas the Festival Band was going to four or five collegiate festivals each year. So it was a very logical renaming of the first band and giving a name to the second band.

So the name Techtonians, I don’t know just how long it lasted. It may have been that by the time that I [laughs]—did I get into with you guys before how the band was so bad that the first year I had the band, I actually lied to them and told them I was busy on the nights of the concerts, and I wouldn’t be able to perform with them? Because, I’m thirty-four or something, and well, you know, sort of like you are. But I had an ego, I’m sure, and I didn’t want my reputation sullied by standing in front of this dregs of the world, musically! [laughs]

FL: [laughs]



HP: And I don't mean it in those terms at all. But I can remember, the '63-'64 school year, the band did its concerts, and I prepared them. We rehearsed once a week, on Sundays. But, either I took a job on the day of the concerts, which made it that I wasn't lying when I said [that], but I want to magnify how strongly I felt—that if I didn't have a job, I'm sure I said to them, "I'm sorry guys, I've got a job in New York tonight. I can't be at the concert." And I announced this in advance, early in the semester. The second year, which would have been the '64-'65 year, it started to improve, the first year—it started to get the second year to be better.

And we actually, in the end of the second year, did go to a couple of festivals. And I did appear at the concerts. And I do remember debating; they all wanted me to play in the band. And I've always been one who believed that it was not the place of the leader to play in a band. But I also knew that I wouldn't be able to play very well standing in front of the band [laughs] because of the level it was. So I did not. They asked that I play; I did not play, I just led the band.

I kind of got off the track on the naming. Techtonians, yes, when I took it over; pretty quickly, if we could come up with a program in the archives, on the '64 fall, '65 spring concerts, I have a feeling it might have been called Concert Jazz Band by then. And by the fall '67 and spring '68, now that we had the second band, we did the Festival/Concert thing, for the two different bands.

FL: So that second band, that was led by Everett Longstreth?

HP: Everett Longstreth, yes.

FL: So how did that come about, the idea for a second band?

HP: Well, I would see—you ask gloriously ordered questions. You're asking the things that are in my mind, that probably should be the next things I should say. Great organization of the questions. I noticed, probably starting in the fall of '65, starting in the third year, when we would audition—when I would audition the new people, the incoming freshmen, or occasionally an incoming grad student, that there would be quite a few musicians who were freshmen who were maybe equal to a junior or a senior who'd put in a couple of years with me, who for me, there would be a greater investment if I took them as freshmen because I'd be getting more time to work with them. But I realized it was not fair to the juniors and seniors that had been with the band a couple years with me, or maybe even longer. So I would say to them, "There's somebody in this particular chair," for whatever instrument, "please come back next fall and audition again. But right now there's an upperclassman ahead of you, and it is only fair that—" maybe I'd be nice and say, "and I think you play about equal to that person, but they've been there, so seniority gives them the chair."

Most of those people would never come back again. As far as jazz—I would see them maybe Wednesdays because I was going out of my rehearsal, and John Corley's rehearsal—maybe they'd play in the Concert Band. But as far as—I would say the percentage was very small—it doesn't matter, but ten, fifteen, twenty percent of those students who would come back as sophomores, or as second year at MIT people, and re-audition. So I'm saying to myself, "I'm losing some people that two or three years, if I took them, would really maybe be even stronger than the people I've got here now." Plus, not only was I losing some of my own feeling of building

the band, they were losing the opportunity to play in something they were interested to do when they came here as freshmen, and now they've been discouraged by not being a part of it.

And there seemed to be, literally, to the best of my knowledge, no jazz activity on the campus other than our band. You'd never hear about, like, a quartet or quintet of musicians outside of our band getting together. Later on, that would happen, in the seventies and eighties--but way back there in the early mid-sixties. So these were people who were losing the opportunity to do something they wanted, and people that could have made the product be a better product—the project, or whatever we want to call it.

So after seeing that for a couple of years, I spoke to Klaus, and I said, “You know,” I told him just this. I said, “There are people that are coming and we're losing them. They don't come back.” I said, “If we could form a second band, and have the first band rehearse twice a week, instead of rehearse once a week,” I said, “the difference between one rehearsal and two rehearsals is much more than a hundred percent gain. Much, much more! Because when you rehearse on Sunday, and you come back and whack them again three days later on Wednesday, they'll retain the thing. The understanding is so much better than waiting week to week.” And Klaus, you know, went along with that, totally. So that fall of '67 we formed the—am I right? I think it was fall of '66. I think the '66? No, it was '67. I'm sorry; it was '67, fall of '67. He went along with it. He said, “We have the funds to hire another director, and we can pay you for being here twice a week.” [Ed. Note: First band given as Concert Jazz Orchestra in MIT Music Section of 1971 Annual Report.]

So, at that point, we had the second band created, and the first band made a giant step forward. Plus, I can't remember them over the entire twenty-two years, but the first few years it's easy to remember. There have been cycles in the band, where this first band that I took over in '63 sort of culminated in the spring of '67, especially when we went to Notre Dame that year, the Band Fair. We didn't win, but we fared very well. And that was, from this fall of '63, quite a step up the ladder for this band. Most of that band just happened to leave, through graduating, or whatever their reasons for leaving. So the fall of '67 is strong in my mind as another starting point for a new cycle, the two rehearsals of the first band, the Festival Band, which it became then, and the starting up of the second band.

And then my reason for choosing Everett as a director, I had known him since 1955. He'd been a student at Berklee when I started teaching there. He played trumpet in my band, starting with the first band I formed, in '55, my professional band. He played in that band, wrote for that band. He had, for me, the perfect personality for the leader of a second band. I don't feel any need to turn this off when I say this. As the leader of the first band, I didn't want a leader in the second band who was of the same drive, spirit, and at the same place with the kind of music I liked to play with a band. I wanted somebody who would work at a more basic level and who would leave it be with these people, that once they move from that band to the first band that I was leading, that they would feel that it was a step up. I didn't want a Phil Wilson, a John LaPorta—another person of equal experience and name as myself to be the leader of the second band. I thought that if that happened, John and Phil

being people of such strong musical personalities that I myself was at that point, that would be the wrong thing to do. I wanted somebody who was fundamentally sound, who was comfortable working with the incoming people, some of whom, as freshmen who we put in the second band, were not that good, but who would be—relative, to say any professional is comfortable when you're working with some freshmen who aren't that good, but who would take it in the proper frame of mind, the proper attitude.

For me, he was the best guy in town. And he knew me, musically; he knew what I wanted. I didn't want him to come in and gas these kids with the hippest arrangement of the day. I wanted him to bring in relatively simple music that he was teaching them how to feel the horns are there, how to play in time, how to play in a section and listen to each other—the basics of playing in a jazz ensemble. And he was just perfect for it. I would get flack occasionally from students in the band who, maybe because they thought I was in charge of the two bands overall—and I guess I was—would say, "I don't like this guy leading the second band. He doesn't excite us enough." Or once somebody would get in the band I was leading, after a year or two in the Concert Band, they'd sort of quietly say, "You know, it was kind of tough working under Everett." Because he was very basic. He demanded things. He's a lovely human being, but he's sort of cool about things. There's not a lot of—

FL: Yeah.

HP: —outer energy coming off of him. But the inner energy is that he loves music, and he has a great integrity about people and music. I would trust my wife, my children, my home—he's one of those special people you look in the eye and you know you can trust him. So he just was the guy for me. There's no such thing as the perfect guy because for some of the kids, they wanted to be playing hipper music. But for me, for the purpose of the existence of the second team, he was perfect; he really was.

FL: So finding musicians and recruiting didn't seem like a big problem. There was a real interest among the students.

HP: There was. The student president and a couple of his assistants would set up posters all around the campus that week when people came in ahead of the business. And we would often have as many as fifty people to come to audition. And Everett would take the brass, the trumpets and trombones. I would take the saxes and the rhythm on the first Sunday rehearsal. And we'd start this rehearsal much earlier. Whereas the regular rehearsal was seven to ten, we'd probably start around five-thirty and go till ten because what we wanted—we wanted to audition everybody individually, but we also wanted to audition them in a collective playing situation. So he would go downstairs in A or B, and I'd stay up on the stage because with the rhythm players, it was easier to audition on the stage. And we would probably give everybody five to seven minutes. And if you're a pro in this thing, you don't need five to seven minutes—that, you're being polite to the students. You know in the first minute whether you've got something. As soon as they start putting air through the horn, you know whether there's a sound there. And as soon as you ask them to play a melody, which is much more important than can they read music! Can they play a

melody and make music? And then have them read some simple little jazz syncopations.

Then of that fifty, let's say ten, we could tell, "Thank you for coming by. Come by next fall, but at this point the band is at a higher level than you are. I hope you work with it and play on your own." You know, a polite way of saying it. The other forty or so we would put into two bands, and Everett would take one, and I'd take one, and we could then start to weed it out some more. And by that time, maybe another, oh, five or ten were weeding themselves out. They didn't like me; they didn't like Everett. They didn't like the band; this wasn't what they thought jazz was—this sort of thing.

So we'd probably get down to maybe about thirty of these fifty. This is not counting the returnees from both bands, you know. So we've got quite a few people: thirty new people and maybe twenty-five returning from the two bands. And we would have the new people play, not by themselves, but individually with the already established bands of the previous years to see how they functioned there. Then we'd, I would spend time after the whole thing was over, after ten o'clock, with the people—which weren't very many—who had solo capabilities. And maybe there'd be four or five that I'd spend another hour, and have them play blues in a couple keys that I can play a little bit of piano by the chords, and play a couple tunes and meet a couple chord changes.

And then we would—very often, Everett and I would, by the time we left there on that Sunday night, would have pretty much formed the two bands, with everybody being told that your chair, including returning people in the first band, "Your chair is not your chair. You've got to maintain—" and because it may be through our auditioning that we missed the ball. Maybe somebody doesn't audition well, but in rehearsal situation without the pressure of being an individual, plays better. Or in the first concert maybe we've got performers here who don't rehearse that good, but perform. So, I made very clear, "It is not etched in stone that this is your chair. It is your chair for the time being." And then we took it from there.

FL: How many of these students had jazz experience?

HP: Very few. They would say, you know, I would ask the question, "Did you play in a high school jazz band?" "Oh, yes!" [laughs] Oh, my God! Once in a while there would be somebody come in, you know, who had already got their master's degree somewhere—you know, somebody who was maybe in their mid-twenties, who really played! This fellow Richie Orr. I had a saxophone player from Notre Dame, a black fellow who ran Olympic races for our country. He always called a rehearsal a practice because being an athlete, it was a practice. "I've got a track practice because tomorrow I'm running in Nicaragua on Olympic trials," and things like that. His name was Bill Hurd [William Charles Hurd, S.M. 1972, MIT]. Now I had heard him—I had him in a student band when he was in high school, back in the mid-sixties, in the summer. I used to do the summer jazz band clinics, the things that were then called the Stan Kenton Band Clinics. Then it became the Summer Jazz Band Camps, and now it's Jamey's thing, Jamey Aebersold [Ed. Note: Summer Jazz Workshop]. And Bill had been in one of those bands with me.

Then he—I heard him playing with the Notre Dame band, out at Notre Dame. And all of a sudden, I think it was the fall of '69, in he walked. And I said, “Ooh-wah!” Because, it’s funny when you go to festivals. If you’ve got two hot soloists, and Richie Orr, the trombonist, and this fellow—they were professional-level jazz players—you can take a mediocre band, and the judges are so overwhelmed by these two soloists that your band—matter of fact, at Notre Dame that year, we were one of the—they named four winning bands, and it was the first time we’d ever won at Notre Dame. And these two guys, this Bill Hurd and Richie Orr—they both won the award for the best jazz saxophone, the best jazz trombonist. So—but that was a rare thing.

A fellow came in named Eliot Jekowsky [Ph.D. 1976, MIT], a tenor player, oh, maybe in the early seventies. And he just had to play two notes, and I said, “Ooh, heavens! This is going to be something!” He was just—he was too good for the band, and he already had his master’s and he was going for his doctorate. And he didn’t have time, and when he heard the band, he just—he was from New York; his Dad was a professional musician. He had gotten his bachelor’s and master’s at Columbia and had been very active playing in New York professionally. And it was right for him that he didn’t take part in the band. But that sort of thing was definitely not the norm.

The norm, the plus kind of norm, was a freshman would come in who you could hear had talent but had never had anybody molding them. They really played their horn very well, beautiful sound. Whether they could read music, it didn’t matter because we rehearsed for months and months. They would learn to read because they’re so good with the mathematical part. I could bring seven-eight things over here, and these kids could read them. The Berklee Recording Band could stumble all over!

FL: [laughs]

HP: Because they could do so well with the numerical subdivisions and all that, you know.

FH: [laughs]

HP: But it’s this freshman who had some promise, who would stay here for six years. And by the time they were getting their master’s, I could see, having been a part of the band, devoting themselves to it, and with what I had to offer them, became really pretty good professional level players, playing with the band. But there was a lot of interest. It waned to some degree, and I can’t pinpoint where that interest—the number of bodies. It would get so that Everett would have to go outside to fill up—did you play in the band for him?

FH: At one point, yeah.

HP Yeah, at one point you did. And you were going to Boston Conservatory?

FH: Yeah, exactly.

HP: Yeah. Everett would say, “Is there anybody in your band playing fifth trumpet that can now play third trumpet for me? Because I don’t have enough trumpets—you know, who’s got the attitude?” And occasionally, there would be that person who

would play in both bands, to help out. Or he would say, “You know, the last four weeks I’ve only had one trombone.” So he’d go outside and get a couple of Berklee kids or conservatory kids. So that interest, once the band—once students who were here knew about the band through reading about it in the newspaper, coming to the concerts, word of mouth, that this band was trying to do well. The first time we went to—the only time I took the band to Europe [Montreux Jazz Festival, 1970], the next year, coming back from having played the Jazz Festival in Montreal, things of that nature, and winning at Notre Dame, the word of mouth among people that might be interested, now, “Oh, this might be something I’d like to be a part of.” And so that was a strength there. And not that the band didn’t remain strong; I just think musical interests became broader and broader.

There were all sorts of—occasionally I would find a very fine rock guitar player, a rock bass player, that couldn’t read a note of music, but I could see had a great rhythmic feel and were interested in playing jazz. And we had a player for two or three years who really—he just was playing most of the things by ear, but what a spark he put in the band, you know! But he was really a rock player. So there was more interest in rock playing, I think, through the seventies. We wouldn’t get quite as many people.

FL: Yeah, we’ll get into that. I have a question about that later. Was the Festival Jazz Ensemble always a big band arrangement? Was that just your basic idea you were always working with? Or did that ever change?

HP: No. Well, the band itself always existed as a big band, but if we were in an era, a cycle, a period of time, when there were a couple of good horn players, we would always have a small group within the band. Because it was so—the weakest thing in this band always was rhythm section players and soloists. You, Fred, I—anybody who has a love of this, and some experience, can take the three horn sections, and if they all get a sound out of their horns, we can make them sound pretty good, telling them what’s long, what’s short, what’s loud, what’s soft. Here’s the rhythmic feel. You should play while you sing the phrase over. Because that is almost a musical fact you’re teaching them. The concept of playing improvised jazz and the concept of what to do in the rhythm section are just that—they’re concepts. And you can say a lot of musical facts to them that will lead, hopefully, that the concept will be gained.

But at any festival that I ever go to as a judge, high school or college, the band as a collective unit always sounds better than the rhythm section and the soloists—in most cases, unless maybe it’s a band like from Berklee or Eastman [School of Music] or someplace, where there’s a strong emphasis on jazz. But I always, I would say, always there would be a small group within the band of some kind. Whether we would put that on for three tunes in the middle of our concerts, or whether they would just be in the woodshed, for the sake of what they did in the band being a little jazzier because of the small group activity.

But generally we would have the second—in our own concerts here, we’d have the second band, Everett’s band, play, oh, twenty-five minutes. Then we’d have the small group play for maybe twenty minutes, an intermission, and then the band would do a forty-five minute set. That would sort of be the shape of the concerts that

we would do. And that was very important to me because I felt that the people who were here, the better people jazz-wise, both in the rhythm sections and the one, two, or three horn players, needed that, wanted that. It would keep them interested in being a part of the band because a good—there's nothing more boring for a good piano player to sit at a band rehearsal, you know. I used to tell Ray Santisi [b. 1935] in my band, "Ray, come to the last half-hour of the three-hour rehearsal, and whatever's new in the book today you can learn in that half-hour, and you'll be very grateful." Or somebody whose interest is more in soloing than in big band playing, as far as the horns go, who you need as one of your good soloists, to keep them interested in being part of the band, have them be part of this little small group.

So there was a strong—as strong as the personnel would permit, I would have a small group within the band. And these small groups would often appear at the festivals, too, under their own—they always did it on their own. I didn't ride herd on that. I would let them do it on their own. If they asked me to come to a rehearsal to listen, or make a comment, of course I would. And I didn't lead it at the festivals; it was definitely the more individual thing for the players.

FL: Did you often have vocalists?

HP: Never!

FL: Never!

HP: I don't think. I mean, I hope I'm not lying.

FL: That's very interesting. Hm.

HP: I have no memory of it. And with my Berklee band, for forty years I had one, and I don't even remember why I allowed him to sing. He'd got an arrangement featuring himself on *Caravan* [by Tizol and Mills].

FH: [laughs]

HP: I mean, he was a Swiss fellow. He sang very well. And I'm sure all my fellow faculty buddies must have said, "What is happening to Herb?" you know! [laughs] The most beautiful instrument is the human voice, in my opinion, okay? We, as wind instrument player—any instrument—are playing in imitation of the human voice, I hope.

FL: Yeah.

HP: Okay? And so many people felt, "Oh, let's scat sing! Let's sing to play like a horn." [growls] I hate that! I can't stand scat singing. Just to give you an idea, I don't think that there could have been anybody who would have come along who I would have felt would have added to the band. Maybe, you know, sometimes you go out and judge, and there's some young girl with a skirt up to here and [hoots]. Maybe some leaders of bands thinks, "Oh, that's good. The audience will love us." Do you know Seb [Sebastian Bonaiuto], over at BC [Boston College]?

FH: Yeah.

HP: Yeah, you know, Seb has his girls out front, and all that. And that's fine, and they do it well! Except it's not my cup of tea!

FH: Yeah.

HP: And probably I am known for that, both historically at Berklee, and here, for the people that, you know, “Don’t even think about asking Herb if you can sing with the band.” So I never did. Or, never is such a strong word—I have no memory of doing it, which means I don’t think I did.

FH: And no regrets? [laughs]

HP: No regrets. I mean, I don’t like most singers.

FL: Mm-hm.

HP: I love the human voice. Billie Holliday [1915–1959] to me is the greatest singer I’ve ever heard in my life, of any kind of music. If I put a Billie Holliday record on and then somebody else, I can’t listen to somebody else. I have this idea about singing, it’s supposed to be such a non-specific event, both in pitch and in rhythm. And too many singers, you know, they nail the note to the wall! They nail the note to the beat! I want wrongness from singers. I want warmth. I love Louis Armstrong [1901–1971]. I think he’s one of the all-time great singers of all time.

I worked in a gas station as a kid in Gloucester, and all these bookmakers and guys would hang around the gas station. I was about eighteen or so and very much into jazz and Louis. And one day a radio was playing something and Louis was singing, and these guys, “They call that singing?” [laughs] You know! And I just shut my mouth; I didn’t want to get in an argument with them! Because singing has nothing to do with the trained voice. It has to do with expression. I didn’t mean to get windy, Forrest, about why I didn’t have—those are not reasons. I just had enough on my hands.

### **3. Sound, arrangements, and repertoire (35:38–CD1 0:35:38)**

FL: Yeah! What about some of the less common instruments found in jazz, like violin or French horn? Did you ever get—?

HP: Yes, we had a fellow named Bill Grossman [William Grossman, MIT class of 1971; d. 2010] played—I see him occasionally. He lives in New York. He was very active here at MIT. I don’t know how he ever graduated.

FH: [laughs]

HP: He just was involved in everything! Played French horn in John [Corley]’s band [MIT Concert Band led by John Corley 1948-1999]; I imagine in the symphony—I’m sure he did in the [MIT] symphony. He played piano his first year with the jazz band, the first year he was in the jazz band. And then a fellow came in and auditioned who played better than him. And Bill knew it. When the returning members would come to the auditions, and occasionally some hot whippersnapper would come in, I could see the look on the face of the instrument that that person might take their place. Bill said, “I know what you’re going to do, Herb.” He was a great guy. He said, “You know, I play French horn, too.” I said, “Oh, great!” Because, see, I’ve always been a



three trombone man, not a four trombone man. That's a whole other cup of tea, or subject matter.

But I was playing a great deal of music then out of my own band. The band that I had from '55 to '62 was exactly the instrumentation of the band that I took over here at MIT. And I played a lot of the less difficult music of that, my '55 to '62 band, with the MIT band, as the band grew to be good enough. And it was a three trombone band. Yet, as other music came to us, some of them had four trombone parts. So I said, "Bill, why don't you play French horn," once he told me, "and you can play the second or the third of the four trombone parts, when music comes in for four trombones." So he started playing French horn, part-time in the sense that he didn't play on every tune, but he was a full-time member. He was there for every rehearsal. And it added a nice color.

But the people that started to write for the band from that point—not music that I was playing that had been written in the previous decade or so, but music that was being written, like Alf Clausen. You know the name Alf Clausen, Berklee student? He's musical director and does all the scoring for *The Simpsons* [television cartoon series].

FH: Oh!

HP: Yeah. He played French horn in the Berklee band. But he was writing for the Berklee band, including French horn parts, for himself. So then I had Bill. And then it evolved into we had two French horns. It started to get gargantuan on me!

FH: Like [Stan] Kenton [1911-1979, bandleader, pianist].

HP: Don't say the word in my presence!

FH: [laughs]

HP: I ended up—there I am with four trombones and two French horns. And I strongly believe that when a band doesn't swing because of sheer weight, that where that weight is, is in the tenor section of the ensemble of horns. And the trombones and the French horns and the tenor saxophones—if you've got four trombones and two French horns and two tenor saxophones, you've got eight people. And if the baritone is at all high on the horn, it's in the tenor register. If the altos get low enough, they're in the tenor register. And you can sometimes have twelve horns in this tenor register, which sounds like a bunch of dead rhinoceri floating down the Nile, you know!

FH: [laughs]

HP: It's just—aaah! It's so heavy you'd never get it off the ground rhythmically! So this period into the early seventies, I had two French horn players. We started with Bill and a fellow Jim somebody—who was a better French horn player; he played first. And by then I had four trombones, and this middle row stretched halfway across the stage, you know. And then, it actually went—I kept the line up; there was another cycle of two more French horn players. A fellow who's [laughs]—the strangest thing! What a weird memory I have! The fellow who played first French horn in this second cycle of French horns in the band—so this is mid-seventies—his name was Harvey Boles, B-O-L-E-S [probably Howard Boles, MIT class of 1977]. But for

some reason, I called him Harvey Bowels! [laughs] If you'll pardon that. Maybe you'll want to erase that off the tape, you know!

FL: [laughs]

HP: But I then eased this thing out. I said, "Oh, Herb, you're losing it, you know. It's too heavy." See, I believe even in a big band that you can hear the sound of each person's voice. The last professional band I had, which was the smallest professional band I ever had—and I had that size for economic reasons, but it was for also musical reasons—it had only eight horns: three trumpets, one trombone, and four saxophones. When those eight horns played, I could hear the individuality of each person's sound, much like the Ellington principle. I could hear the individuality, because it was somewhat transparent. There was some space between.

When you start putting all these people together in that register from about G above middle C to G below middle C on the piano, the heaviness that gets in there is just atrocious! As soon as you start doubling people—Forrest, I asked you this before and you answered me. Are you a musician? Are we talking—Yeah. Then, if you start doubling people in the perfect unison, rather than the octave unison, then those people doubled in the perfect unison—like, let's say, a trombone and a tenor saxophone—you are going to lose some of the individuality of each person's sound, and you're going to begin to only hear a note, a pitch, in somewhat the reedy quality, somewhat a trombone quality. But getting beyond just reed and brass quality, getting to individual quality, you're going to lose it, if it's doubled at the perfect unison.

So, for this reason, I loved—I used to have other musicians come to me and say, "The sound of the ensemble is transparent." And I'd say, "Oh, thank you for noticing," you know. But I could hear Dave Chapman's [alto saxophonist, clarinetist] sound, in the ensemble. I could hear Paul Fontaine's sound playing third trumpet. And I only had one trombone in that band, you know.

FH: I went to one—I can attest to that because I went to one gig in Beverly.

HP: Oh, at Sandy's?

FH: That was the band you're talking about, right?

HP: Yes, yeah. Oh, at Jazz Haute, maybe?

FH: Yeah, yeah. That's the same—?

HP: That was the last year we had the band.

FH: Yeah, and it was fantastic!

HP: Yeah, of all the bands I had from '55 to '93, it was the one I was most proud of because I didn't bow down to: you've got to have a big, big band. Economics, partly, was the reason why. But I've always wanted that—I don't call it a small big band. What I call it is a big small group. It has a small group concept of the individual.

FH: Because the band from the seventies, early eighties, that band—

HP: On those records, yeah.

FH: Yeah, is very individual. But this was a whole other level, you know.

HP: It was, it was.

FH: Sorry.

HP: That's all right. So what was the question, Forrest, that I took us from?

FL: I was asking about some of the unusual instruments.

HP: Oh yeah, French horns.

FL: How about any jazz violinists or anything like that?

HP: The first bass player with the band, Stu Schulman [Stuart Schulman, MIT class of 1968; violin, fiddle, electric bass, piano, arranger], played violin. He was the bass player through that first cycle, through the spring of '67, with that good band we took to Notre Dame in the spring of '67. He played bass in the band, but he played very good violin. He played violin in the symphony; he might even have been concertmaster in the symphony. And I hope I'm not exaggerating, but he was a fine violinist. He was a violinist who played acoustic bass, one of those things. He wasn't a bass player who dabbled with this. And we had a few pieces where he would put the bass down. We wouldn't even bring in another bass player. We would just, for color effects or something, use him. He was the only violinist I remember.

FL: Could he solo and stuff?

HP: Oh, yes. He was a good jazz bass player, yeah.

FL: Good.

HP: Yeah, and we had a small group, that he was playing violin in, and Richie Orr the trombone. It was very unusual. I don't know that we ever had a double-reed instrument of any kind. After a while, occasionally we would get a half-decent flute player. Rarely did you get a good clarinet player. It seemed in that period of young, high school, college age musicians, the clarinet doubling was getting pushed further and further down. You'd get a better flute doubler than you would a clarinet doubler, if you got any doublings at all. Let's see. Vibes [vibraphone] we had occasionally. A good vibe soloist—maybe we had, over the history of the band, two good vibe soloists, and their function, except for an occasional arrangement where an arranger would write something for our band, and use the vibes in a coloristic sense, their function would be primarily just one of soloing. And if an arrangement came in and there was a trumpet solo in it, and I didn't have a good trumpet soloist that year, it would become the vibe player's solo, that sort of thing. But generally, except for the French horn, very, very little of that sort of thing.

FL: Yeah, mm-hm. How often did you have guest soloists and artists come and play with the band?

HP: That's another one of those nevers, I think. I don't think we ever did. I felt about that the same way I felt about my own playing with the band, that this band was for these young people to play, and that there was no need. This is not some showcase, where we create—we're the background for Clarke Terry [trumpeter and flugelhornist] or Bob Mintzer [saxophonist, clarinetist, arranger], or whatever era we're talking about. It was for the kids to play. They used to complain to me, some of them very validly,

that I didn't play with them, that they would just like to have played with me. But I still believed it strongly.

And I believed it partly because I saw some of my comrades at Berklee who did just the opposite. They would do concerts with their student band, and the concert was really just a showcase for their ego. And these are people that I love; a few played in my own band, even. I felt—how do I want to put it? It's the same kind of thing: when I would go on a GB ["general business"] gig—Sydney Hill Country Club, playing a bar mitzvah or something like that, the non-jazz musicians, if it was a sextet, maybe three horns and a rhythm section, maybe trumpet and two saxes and alto and a tenor, the non-jazz musicians in the group, all they wanted to try to do on the bar mitzvah gig is play jazz. Even to the point of sometimes not playing the job itself. And I, my idea of why I was there was to play the melody. And they said, "How come you're not soloing here?" And I'd say, "Hey, the purpose of this gig is not for us to get our jazz jollies off, so to speak. It's to play the gig."

Well, I felt that same way about the band. The purpose of the band wasn't for me to solo. Now, I think I was lucky, in that through my twenties and early thirties I had this Jazz Workshop gig for seven years. I played four nights a week in a quintet and led my own band two nights a week, and I was getting my professional band—I hate to use the word jollies; it's sort of a crass word, but it seems a fitter for me—I was getting my band jollies, and I was getting my own trumpet solo. So when I came to something else, I wasn't in any way trying to do my own thing, other than, I'm sure, the music I chose for the band to play was music I chose. But I did not want to force my personality on this thing; I wanted to bring out their personalities. I don't mean to make it out that I'm some wonderful person for having done this, but I believed it then, and I believe it even more now, thirty years later.

FL: Mm-hm. Can you talk about some of the repertoire that the group played? You had a particular philosophy behind the repertoire that you chose. Can you talk about that?

HP: Yeah. The source of it originally was, when we first started the band, was some of the standard printed material of the early sixties, which wasn't very good, actually. That's what the band had been playing primarily before I took it over. Then I began to bring the things from my own book. I had a sixteen-piece band from '55 to '60, and then we cut that down to thirteen-piece. Well, the '55 to '60 band, which was the same instrumentation as the MIT band, I would bring stuff, the easiest stuff from that, and gradually work that in. But what was a wonderful thing was that Klaus [Liepmann] gave us a little bit of a budget to commission things.

And my memory is that we would commission things at a hundred dollars, and if you chose to write your own parts, you made the hundred. If you wanted to hire a copier for twenty-five to copy it on your own, I would not be responsible for getting the parts copied. They would bring me a score and the parts, and they'd get a hundred dollars for it. So we would maybe have, let's say, five hundred dollars a year. This actually is one of these things that this fellow Glenn Reyer started. He started so many of the good things that made this organization ascend.

And we were so lucky to have Berklee faculty members or the best of the Berklee students here in town, and that I was associating with regularly and knew

how well they wrote, knew what style they wrote in if they were students of mine or faculty members that had written for my band. Knew their ability to write down to, and not have it sound like you're writing down to, because you want to write something that challenges, but they can achieve the challenge. You don't want to challenge them and have them miss, and you sure don't want to write down to them. So I had writers that were skilled in the craft of writing and knew the kind of—okay, let's challenge them.

And I would say that ninety percent of the time, they met the challenge. Very rarely did I miss in my description of the band, or the writer of the band came to a couple of rehearsals and listened to the band. Did the fellow who writes make it sound like some sort of pablum that, you know, any old high school band could play? Or that they wrote things that the band could just never achieve. I can't remember spending a semester on a piece—by that I don't mean that we didn't rehearse them, but you know, twenty minutes at every rehearsal per semester to get some hard piece together that the band wasn't able to perform it.

So I had these writers, and as we would go to the festivals starting in—the first festival we went to was Villanova [University] in '65. That was the second full year of the band's existence. More and more—and judges would come to me and say this to me. They'd say, "You know, we sit here for two or three days and listen to bands, and it sounds like one long medley until your band comes on. Where are you getting this music?" I said, "Aha! We have this glorious reservoir of writers in Boston who are either faculty members or they're top-level students. And we have a small budget, and that's why the music sounds like us." It doesn't sound like—you would go to a festival, even the Notre Dame, which was thought of as the leading festival in the country at that time, and I think it was the first one to start. I think it started in '59; we didn't start going until '66. We'd go to this festival, and you would hear maybe fifty percent of the bands playing the same arrangement. It was the current hit, Bob Lawrence, the current hit, Bob Mintzer, of that era, whoever the guys were writing back then, you know.

Whereas we had this source, with a small budget. And then there would be people who were not quite as—not up to the point as writers, who I would take a hundred dollars out of our five hundred dollar budget, who would say, "Can I write for the band just for the pleasure?" And maybe one out of every three of those would work very well. So we had these writers who were writing to hide the weaknesses, to showplace the strengths of the band, to write within the range limitation of the brass section, the doublings. They wouldn't come up with five flutes in something when you only had one flute player; it was written specifically for the bodies we had present.

FL: How would you describe, musically, the styles of some of these pieces?

HP: Well, as Fred alluded to, I was never a fan of Stan Kenton. I would like to think—although I don't know that I succeeded there—I was going to say I like to think that the black influence was strong, but maybe it wasn't that much because maybe with the musicians we were working with I just couldn't pull that off. But for me, the Ellington and the Basie and the Jimmie Lunceford-type bands [1902–1947,

bandleader, saxophonist]—I heard more warmth from those bands than I did from the white jazz bands, especially the Kenton-type, but even Woody’s. Maybe Woody’s bands—Woody Herman [1913–1987; clarinetist, saxophonist, vocalist, big band leader (1936–1946, *The First Herd/Band That Plays the Blues*; 1947, *The Second Herd/Four Brothers Band*; 1950–1956, *Third Herd*; 1959–1987, *New Thundering Herd*)]—over the years—were the only white band that I would hear—not every band, every one of his herds, as he called them—but some of the herds would sound very black. But I have always strongly related myself to the black jazz bands. So I guess I’m saying more that I was anti-Kenton, and the bands that came out of Kenton, like Maynard Ferguson’s [1928-2006] band was very Kenton-oriented. And I was more black-oriented, the Count Basie and Duke Ellington. I didn’t have the horses to pull off Ellington at that point—or, I never did, to really pull off Ellington. And I didn’t want to go as far back as Basie for these people. I felt that was taking them to an era that they did not live through, as I did.

You know, that’s something that Everett [Longstreth] would do. Everett would play record copies of current Basie things—that’s some of the things that the young people object to. It was pretty eclectic, really. Because I would allow these writers to be their own personality. Like, I would play in a concert something that Greg Hopkins [b. 1946; trumpeter, composer, arranger] had written, something that Tiger Okoshi [b. 1950; trumpeter, composer]. Now, Tiger wrote some of the most magnificent music!

FL: Hm.

HP: Do you know who he is? A Japanese trumpet player who had a group called Tigers’ Baku? He may still have it. A superb jazz trumpet player!

FL: I’ve heard of him.

HP: Also, understands how to bring rock into jazz! Also, understood his own ethnic music! And he would write pieces that we would play at these festivals that incorporated rock, jazz, and the Japanese ethnic that were just—and he would bring an original in, and the kids in the band—he wouldn’t have a title. And the kids in the band would [laughs]—I remember we had one called *Godzilla Goes to Tokyo*. And they played that! [laughs] And he would—he was such a great—he’d laugh and joke with that. But he wrote things that had these—the rhythm section’s cooking with a rock groove. I’m hearing this jazz harmony thing, and I’m hearing these Japanese sort of ethnic—! And the judges would say, “Where is this coming from?” “Well,” I said, “in Boston, we’ve got a lot of people that not many people know about.” So Greg Hopkins was, and still is, and gloriously, an arranger who writes music that is magnificent, but it’s very difficult. Now, he played and wrote for my band for years, and he now has the Berklee band. He took over the band that I had. Is he going to be, is that band going to with us?

FH: Yeah, they’ll be with us.

HP: Yeah, Greg. One of my favorite, I think he’s one the most creative jazz trumpet players and creative writers I’ve ever known of, let alone known personally. He would write music for us, and it would be hard. And he would write music for my own band, and it would be hard. This is the second edition of my big band; this is the

'76 to '83 edition I had, where I had the same sixteen-piece instrumentation. He was a trumpet player in that band with me. And I kept saying, "Greg, please learn to how to write something that is just as effective but easier for the players!" With my professional band, we'd rehearse a piece for six months before I'd play it on a gig!

FL: [laughs]

HP: It was so difficult! But, it was valid musically; it was just that it was so difficult! So I had something by him, and something by Tiger, and then this Mike [b. 1950; trumpeter, composer], who I mentioned was the first piano player in the band, who was the musical director of the show *Hair* that I played for a year at the Wilbur Theater [Boston, MA]. And Mike was the piano player and musical director for that, and he's now on the coast. He wrote some jazz-flavored rock music in the late sixties and early seventies that was powerful, just powerful! And sort of multi-metered things, and just very strong.

I'm trying to think of some of the other people who wrote a lot for the band, whose writing had a lot of character to it. Well, Hal, Hal Crook [Harold E. III, b 1950]! Hal wrote a lot of music for that. Hal Crook, while writing for this band, went from being a guy with a lot of chops and a lot of talent, but hadn't figured out how to put it down, into being a marvelously skilled jazz arranger. And it happened around 1974. He wrote four pieces—I commissioned him to do four things: a thing called—what did he call that? *Tiger something*. And *Moosup Valley*—he lived in Rhode Island near the Moosup part of northeastern Connecticut corner. And uh—four things, anyway. And all of a sudden he'd hit the thing right on the head. What had been too difficult, and not totally constructed, this man now was—put it together.

Now Richie Orr wrote a lot for the band, when he was with the band, and after he left the band. He didn't write music that was at all unusual, just very good, strong music. Some of it I still use. He wrote a thing on Wayne Shorter's tune *Tom Thumb* that I still use when I go to Europe and places, and he wrote that in the early seventies. He was the most talented writer within the band, and writers within a band are glorious. If you take two musicians who are equally talented as writers, and one is a member and one is a non-member, the member is always going to write better because he's sitting in the midst of this band and knows, again, strengths and weaknesses, what can be done.

I wish I could remember some of the other people. Jaxon , a trombone player from California who was at Berklee for a number of years, wrote marvelous music. He could write old Dixieland tunes. He did a thing for the band on *Wolverine Blues* [by Ferdinand Joseph "Jelly Roll Morton" La Mothe (a.k.a. Lemoth, La Motte/La Menthe), b. 1885 (some records, 1890) – 1941], the old Dixieland tune, in a contemporary way, that was very exciting. There was some wonderful writing, just some wonderful writing done for the band!

And then Jamshied, when he came with the band as a piano player—and he was only with the band two years, his junior and senior year—he immediately gave the band a new voice: very contemporary rhythmically—contemporary in all ways. So good that one year when we went to Notre Dame, he had written a forty or forty-five minute piece that was his thesis when he graduated from here in music. Whether

he was the first or one of the first persons to graduate in the music department where the thesis was, he put on a concert of his own. And this one piece was the centerpiece of this concert, and it was about forty minutes long.

So I had him cut it down to twenty-five, and we played it with the band as our—it was a long twenty-five minute piece at Notre Dame, and it tore the place up; it was magnificent. It's a glorious piece of music! That's why I was so comfortable in turning the band over to him because I'd had him in this band. He knew this band. And he went to Berklee and took all my courses at Berklee and wrote for my Berklee band, so he knew—he and I knew each other. And there was nobody in Boston—there were people with better-known reputations, but for knowing this band and knowing where I was at, and being able to maintain it, I was just totally comfortable. I know I've jumped ahead some there.

FL: That's okay. I want to ask you a little bit more about some of the pieces written for it. Any of them in kind of a non-tonal or avant-garde style?

HP: Occasionally there would be, and it didn't work with the band. When we get into things that tonally are not as the usual tonal thing, the level of players we have, they can't find the center to their sound. They find it more difficult to play their notes in tune because of the sounds around them. And as soon as you can't find where to place a note pitch-wise, then you lose the center of your sound. So, we would try things. Occasionally within the band there would be somebody who would be really not a skilled writer, not skilled with the craft, but who was very musical, who'd write something in that sort of style. And we would—what the heck. One fellow wrote something about, "Scene for a Rodent" or something like that.

FL: [laughs]

HP: And you know, we worked on it, and we'd perform it. I wouldn't play it at a festival, but we'd play it. In my own head, it was sort of a throwaway we were playing at one of our own concerts here, you know. But I guess primarily because my taste didn't go that way, and I guess I was imposing my taste, in a way.

FL: So it was Everett's group that did some of the earlier styles, like—?

HP: Yes, like Benny Goodman, Count Basie, things of that nature.

FL: Yeah.

HP: Yeah, and those were things that in most cases, he was great at copying records, and he had a large library of his own and often would sell arrangements, copies of records. He was very good at that. And my memory, if he played five tunes with the band here, most of them would be arrangements he had written—five tunes in a single concert. And that's where he is, really. He's back in the forties and fifties band, swing music—still is. He leads a band now called the Benny Goodman Band, which they travel with the band. Not on the regular, you know, fifteen (fifty?) weeks a year but occasionally goes to Hawaii on the ships there. And he will go with his library to other cities in this country, and he'll put a pickup band together and do a few dates. So, he's totally honest in that idiom. He knows the idiom; he likes it. He brings not an effervescent enthusiasm, but inside, a nice enthusiasm to it, that sort of thing.



FH: Hm. I'm sorry, if I could just make—?

HP: Sure.

FH: I think it's fair to say that at a certain point, you were never using any purchased—

HP: No.

FH: Yeah, it was all—

HP: No. The first year that I took the band over, that I would refuse to play the concerts with them, we played some purchased, some things out of the—there was a Berklee Series back then, and there was a series that had a few John LaPorta things other than Berklee. But no, by the second year, we were playing all stuff out of my book, or stuff that people were writing for the band at that point.

FL: Did you do much arranging yourself?

HP: For the band, no, I never did—not one thing. I did—over the years I probably only wrote, oh, twelve or thirteen things for my own band, maybe a little bit more than that. I just, I never found the time to write. I was always frustrated. I always felt that with both my own professional band and with the MIT band—not so much the Berklee band because there were so many students writing for that band—but with my professional band and the MIT band, which I knew those bands so well, and I knew how to write, that it was a bit of a failing on my part not to have been writing. But it was totally time. I was just totally saturated at that point in my life.

#### **4. Working with MIT students (1:02:28 – CD1 1:02:28)**

FL: To pick up on an earlier theme, talk about working with MIT students, and how they're different from other, traditional music students.

HP: The two areas where I have had the most contact, naturally, are Berklee and here. Spirit-wise, it was a very different experience for me, working with the Berklee band, if we can say they are more typical music students because they are studying music and involved with it every day. So comparing Berklee and the MIT, for the MIT students it was an outlet to get away from the studies they were involved with. For the Berklee students it was their everyday, bang, bang, bang, over and over, and hoping they'd get a gig, finally, in this very difficult business to get a gig with. So there, they did not bring the enthusiasm and the spirit to what they were doing that the MIT students did because for them it was a way to get away from the day-to-day grind.

I used to really be impressed with how many of them would have an open book in their lap when we were rehearsing. And if I was rehearsing the brass section, the saxes would be reading a book. If we opened up a section of an arrangement for soloist who'll play three chords, somebody else, other people, would be studying from their book. They were that intense! Or what was demanded of them was that intense that they, when they came to our rehearsal, if they weren't directly involved they would be studying. And I found that very admirable.

I traveled quite a bit with them and they were just—they were a credit to themselves. They were a credit to the Institute, and they were a credit to their family. I mean maybe—I can't say that every student ever in the band was just a totally gentlemanly person but ninety-nine percent were, and I don't have in my head right now a particular person who wasn't. It's just I hate to get superlatives going here. But they were superb young people, they really were!

And once they said that they would be here—I would make this very clear at the beginning of the year. I'd say, "I don't want to invest time in you, and I don't want the rest of the band to invest time in you, and in February you come to me and say, 'I'm sorry, I'm not interested. I'm sorry, I'm too busy.' I want a year's commitment from you, and preferably, as long as you're going to stay here at MIT. But I demand a year's commitment from you because we all are investing time in each other." And rarely would somebody drop out in the middle of the school year, unless maybe there was an illness or they were really—their grades were in dire shape, or something like that. So the integrity they brought, as far as being part of something and staying with it for at least the term of one school year, was great.

Generally, they were as individual musicians not as good as the average good musician in a music school. They didn't have time to practice like a student in a music school. That time—not practicing your instrument—but that time spent thinking about music, away from the act of playing your horn, away from the act of rehearsing or performing, just sitting and thinking about music, I'm sure that these young people here didn't have very much, if any, time for that.

FL: Now, when you had some of these musicians, there's an artistry about them that's striking.

HP: Yes. You're talking about the student musicians here?

FL: Yeah.

HP: No question! No question.

FL: I've always been struck by that. Do you have any thoughts about that? Because this is a school that—it's obviously more than just science and engineering.

HP: Yes, it is.

FL: But it's a different kind of school, and yet there's, every year there's new music students who come in or students involved in music here who have that quality, that just strikes me.

HP: Yes. I found that. Around, I'll say '70, just to take a round number, I was beginning to notice that the quality of students who were auditioning were getting better and better. And there was a dean here—I don't remember when he was a dean here but I knew him a little bit, named Dick Douglas [Richard M. Douglas, MIT Professor of History, d. 2005; chair of humanities department, 1962-1973]. And I bumped into him one day and I said, "Gee, the last two or three years the level of players that have come in to audition have gotten better and better!" And he said, "Well, something that we're really striving for here at this point is we're not looking for the student that spent their entire life prior to here with the head buried in the book and got A's in

everything. We're looking for a C student, who when they go out into the world will become a very contributing citizen. So we're being broader than just—" Now, how much that had to do with this thing, I'm not sure. But it probably did because there are certainly kids in high school, if they're going to spend a lot of time on music, probably can't maintain those A's, and probably is going to have some C's in there, but generally they're broadening their own scope as a person.

FL: Mm-hm.

HP: I'm trying to think of particular people that really—very often it would be the person who wanted to be the student president of the band, who would just knock me over with the energy and the drive that they could bring to a project. For instance, when we went to Montreux in 1970, that had always been just a professional jazz festival in Switzerland. And they advertised, let's say, in the fall of '69, in trade magazines and *Downbeat*, things like that, that they were going to invite three American college jazz bands to go. It would be an audition process: submit a tape. And the student president of that year was a fellow named Fred Jacobs [Frederick Jacobs, MIT class of 1972], a very good jazz trumpet player, who has gone on to continue playing, and continue playing jazz. And he said to me at the beginning of the year, "If I can pull this off, will you go, and can we take the band?" And I said, "Sure, if you can pull it off, as far as auditioning." I said, "Once we get accepted, then we have the next thing to pull off: how are we going to—are we going to have a cake sale, or what are we going to do?" [laughs]

So, he brought a drive and an energy that was just amazing. And we worked real hard that year, and we submitted the tape. It was a good tape. And the first three American college jazz bands to ever go there, in '70, because that was the first—was North Texas State, which over the years was a big, gargantuan, Stan Kenton-type. What they did, they did very well, but it was white, west coast—I could go on and on and be a bad person for saying all these things. The other band was a band from Kent State, Ohio, which had a music department that it came out of, I forget whether it was two thousand—and Bill Dobbins was the student piano player-director. There was a faculty director over, but Bill really ran the band. This is a man who has become famous, and deservedly, and a marvelous writer. And our band! [laughs] Whew!

FL: My goodness!

HP: Yeah. Not Eastman, not Berklee, not New England Conservatory. Now this fellow put so much energy into this thing! And then once we were accepted, then we flew Icelandic Airlines, which then was two hundred fifty dollars round trip, and they'd drop you off in Luxembourg. And then we'd rent cars, you know. And we went to Klaus and said, "You know, we're having trouble raising this money." And he said, "Well, I'll tell you what. I can find some money for you, and what we'll do—". I think we needed about five thousand dollars to get the show on the road. And my memory is he said—and we only had about, let's say, two at that point. And he said, "Well, maybe I can find three thousand dollars. What we'll do, the next three years we'll have your budget repay that, with no interest," or something, which I thought was just lovely, you know.

But we had a band budget, as you do, I'm sure, and we would go to the festivals in this country and we would fly, and we would then rent cars. And these other bands would show up from all over the country in these old 1920s Reo buses, and they'd tell us about, literally, the cake sales that they had to raise money to come! And they would sort of, you know, "You guys from Boston, MIT," you know. So we were treated very well by Klaus and other people who followed him, as far as having the band appear like a good representative. I mean, I know they were pleased with the level, both musically that the band achieved, but the notoriety that the band got.

FL: Mm-hm.

HP: So there were people like—and there were these students, this Glenn Reyer fellow, and then this Fred Jenkins fellow. And then, well, Jamshied Sharifi was just—talk about a spirit, you know! A special, special person.

**[01:11:34—CD1 01:11:34—END OF CD1]**

FL: So when you had students in the band who had professional aspirations and you felt that were professional quality, how did you counsel them as far as staying at MIT?

HP: You know when it always happened? Midway in the sophomore year. It was just automatic! You could see it coming. I don't have any conscious memory of somebody coming with this "I want to leave here now and go to Berklee. I've got to get into music right now" that it wasn't in the break between the fall and spring semester of their sophomore year. And oh, it was just a stock answer. I'd say, "Look," let's say we're talking in January of their sophomore year. I said, "You're two years plus a couple months away from graduating from this place!" More than fifty percent stayed, but there were a few who didn't. They just, they had to follow their—this piano player Mike Hughes, who wrote for the band, who was musical director for *Hair* [Broadway rock musical, 1967]. He left, and he became very successful.

There was a fellow who played in the band; he came into the band in the fall of '65. His name was Sam Alongi. He was crippled; I think it was from polio when he was very young. He was on crutches, short, stocky, and the top part of his body was enormously strong! He played trumpet, and he played the trumpet that way. He could play lead, and he played great jazz. Matter of fact, when he went to Notre Dame the first year with us he won the award of best new talent at the thing, or something like that. And he came to me, at that very time, and said, "I want to go to Berklee." And I got a letter from his mother, and it was a very sad family story. The father had left her early on with two sons; she raised them alone, and Sam had developed polio. And I think, the way it sounded—more than one letter, and I met with her personally once here, too. It sounded sort of like Sam was her hope, because he was very bright, and got in here. And I don't know how much it had to do with that he was disabled or what. But he got in the school and was doing very well—a very bright guy, and played wonderfully. And the letter I got from the woman when he'd presented to her he wanted to leave, you know. And, she called me, "What can

you do?” And I said, “Well, I’m counseling him to stay here for a little more than two more years and have his degree, and then fly musically as you want to.”

And I think he stayed through his sophomore year, and then he left and he went to Berklee. And it’s a very sad case; maybe every ten years I get a call from him, and he’s had nervous breakdowns, mental breakdowns. And at one point I heard he was playing his trumpet on a street corner in Saskatchewan somewhere, with a tin cup, you know. It’s a sad ending to the story. Well, I don’t know the ending; I don’t know if the man is alive or dead now. But—so when you mention people who want to leave, that’s the story that comes to mind first, and this fellow Mike Hughes. Occasionally they would leave, but more often than not they would stay. They’d see the wisdom, but not just because I said it, of, “You’re so close. You’re just a little more than two years away,” you know.

## **5. Working with the band (1:14:44 – CD2 0:03:10)**

FL: You mentioned that you’re really in the Duke Ellington Orchestra tradition. How did that affect your being bandleader here at MIT, as far as ideas?

HP: That’s a very good question. I don’t think that that affected me too much because the Duke Ellington thing is, you have to have a bunch of very developed musical personalities. And then, you have to have the skill that Ellington and [Billy] Strayhorn had to write music that would extract from these personalities more than they knew they were capable of. I mean, that band was so much more than the sum total of the parts. And I did not have that sort of horses. Plus, in the early takings over, in the early period that I took the band over, I was not that into Ellington as I became later on. I did not understand it as well then as I did fifteen, twenty years later. And I think, but the most important thing: I did not have people to make that work. You have to have people very developed in their sounds, their vibratos, their individual way of phrasing.

So I didn’t try to impose my concept of—I would do it in my Berklee band and with my own professional band. I don’t mean I would impose it, but we would play Ellington-ish music, and given my idea of how to extract it and their abilities, we would come, you know, we’d make some sort of pretty decent approach to it. You’re never going to—I mean, to work in the Ellington way is not to have it sound like Ellington because Ellington first of all let these people be themselves. So what you do is you take your group of people and let them be themselves. You can have a few scoring techniques, and a few voicings and all that, but you can’t take Ellington’s music and put sixteen generic, excellent musicians playing it and have it sound like Ellington. It just doesn’t work.

FL: Right, right. Was there a particular sound that you were working for with the band? What were some of your basic ideas you were working with?

HP I did not have a single concept of a sound in my head that I want this band to sound like because where I was working with a number of different style of writers, and I asked the writers to write and be themselves, other than writing for the abilities of the band it was really eclectic. Yeah, I don’t really think I had a sound, a band kind of

sound, a personality of a band sound. I just would let the arranger take the band where he chose to.

FL: Mm-hm. Now, you've talked about, or mentioned, developing the band to where it had some degrees of success. What were some of the things you did to motivate them, and just, your development, things you did to develop the band?

HP: I have to think about that. [pause] I demanded a lot of them, in the sense of time, in the sense of concentration. I hope that I never have as a leader asked anybody to do something that I wouldn't do. You know, sort of the military principle: if the general won't go out there on the horse ahead of them, then why should they follow? So I've always put a great deal of myself into whatever—. Once I say I'm going to do something, then I will, to the point with my family it's almost a fault, that I have, you know, probably sacrificed certain aspects of fatherhood, and husbandhood, or whatever the word is there. [laughs] Husbandry? That's not the word. Because of the amount of myself I will give to something.

And I felt, sometimes I resented it. On a Sunday night, when I would like to have just collapsed, six-thirty, get in the car and drive from Brookline over here, I resented it. I know I did. I would be not honest if I didn't say so. But once I got here, once I was in the presence of the people who, we all collectively have said we were going to do something, and because of my love of the music we were working with, then I would snap right out of that and really give as much as I knew how to give. Hopefully—no, I know they saw that; they saw that they were a part of something where the person who was in charge of it was giving all they had to give. And I would think anybody with the integrity that I believe these people would have, they would have been a little embarrassed inside themselves if they didn't return that. Because it's the way things should be, as far as I'm concerned.

So as far as the psychological way, although it wasn't a planned, you know, my psychological approach is to give them my all—which that's the way I felt about it, I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it. Challenging them with the music, and the music that I hoped I could see that they could achieve, was one of the ways we achieved this growing process, rather than to say to the writer, "These guys aren't very good, so why don't you write some, you know, class three or class—don't give me a grade six; give me a class four or three or something." So that challenged them.

Talking to them a lot individually about the music. Not that I—I'm not making out that I gave more than my five hours a week, the three hours Sunday and the two hours on Wednesday, outside that five hours—but before a rehearsal or after a rehearsal, or occasionally if I was playing somewhere and someone would come to hear my band. I felt very close to these people. I, over the years, felt closer to these musicians than I did to the Berklee musicians. And I would spend more clock hours with the Berklee musicians, in the sense of a given calendar year. Now in the sense that I had one person who played fifteen years in the MIT band, Greg Olson [Gregory Olson, MIT class of 1969]. Do you know the name, the guy who played lead trumpet? In the sense of a long period of time, I spent more time with him than I did with a Berklee student who was only with me four years, even though I was with the Berklee student five days a week. I felt closer to these people, as people, than I did

the Berklee students. They seemed to open up to me; I seemed to open up. Berklee was more of a job to me, and this was more—I don't know what label I would put on it. I don't want to say avocation. I didn't do this for financial reasons.

FL: Mm-hm.

HP: It was helpful. It put orthodontia on the kids, you know. I had a wife—we're getting to the personal side—who eventually took her life, who was in and out of mental hospitals. It took care of her psychiatrists. It was money—we bought a summer home up in Gloucester that now is my home; I've had it winterized. These extra things that, if I were just teaching at Berklee and just playing the trumpet, might not have happened, because of this extra whatever—I don't even remember what it was, but just some number of thousand dollars a year—did a lot of these things. But I didn't need it. It wasn't a case of, "I better take this job, if we're going to have shoes and have Christmas," you know, that sort of thing. It was something that had more my imprint on it than did Berklee, my activity at Berklee, have my imprint. Because at Berklee the level of the musicians more put their imprint on it. So here, because I was pulling these guys up, it was more my thing here. At Berklee I was just one of many faculty members. Here I was the only person—well, Everett was doing it his way—the only person doing this kind of thing. I had an immense sense of pride in this group, more pride than I did in the Berklee band, maybe because what we accomplished here—we came from a further point to achieve this thing. I don't know if these are answering the questions.

FL: Yeah.

HP: But it's how I felt about what I was doing was very strong. Certainly when we traveled together, I got very close to some of the people. They all seemed so much older than their years—no question. And with this fellow—by the way, Mike Strauss [Michael Strauss, MIT class of 1979] called me. He can't be here.

FH: Oh.

HP: Which is a shame. He played in the band for eight years, a trombone player—glorious player. Over the years, some of these people I've had occasion to see, who have stayed in the Boston area. And I just feel very, very close to them. I'd like to think that the personal approach, more than the musical approach, is what allowed us, collectively, to create what we did create. And it was really fun to watch it develop in any given year, or where you'd have almost the same group for two or three or four years, and see them develop. We had a fellow that came in the band; he'd been in the service. He was a captain in either the Army or the Air Force. His name was Don Murphey [Donald Murphey, MIT class of 1974]—not a great lead trumpet but a good high-note lead trumpet, which in these bands often you don't have a high note player. Now, he was the perfect guy! [laughs]

Let's say he'd been in the band a year. At the beginning of his second year, we had to decide, voting for the president, the vice president, the treasurer, the concert chairman. Then we had a travel guy, a guy who was [unclear] when we travel. I knew he would be the perfect guy to have be the travel person, you know. We were all saluting him. Colonel, we called him Colonel, Colonel Murphey, you know. We'd be at a rehearsal, maybe we'd be rehearsing, having a little warm-up

rehearsal in a function room at the motel we were staying at before we'd go to the thing. And the way he would order the guys around was just like he was still a captain in the Army! [laughs] But I became very close to this guy! Because he came out of the Army very Army-ish, and being with this band, and being with me, a fellow adult—he wasn't as old as I, but he was a lot closer to my age—I really loosened this guy up. I'd give him, "What is this nonsense with this Army routine?" You know, "Come on, Don!" I have all these memories of people things that are so good, so good.

FL: Wow! I also want to talk to you about rehearsal techniques and various matters. Some of these questions are quite broad, and they might seem naïve, but bear with me on it. Are there certain kinds of core issues with groups, like at the beginning of the school year. Are there certain things that always kind of came up, and are there certain issues that you worked on, as opposed to specific things within pieces or charts you were working on?

HP: Yeah. I would try and combine. I would try to—two birds with one stone. I would try to be growing, have the pieces grow, while I'm having these concepts, these core ideas grow. I feel that most wind players, saxophone, trombone, and trumpet players, of that experiences and/or age level, don't really know how to put air into their horns, so they get thin sounds. And I would spend a lot of time on talking about blowing from the diaphragm, opening your sound up, playing the note and just imagine it getting bigger and rounder, without doing anything. Just think it into being a bigger and rounder note.

And I would talk to them about how your sound is your voice. If you don't have a sound, no matter how much you think you're playing, as far as intricate, involved, wonderful, exciting things—if your sound isn't there, then you have no voice to express yourself with. And make examples, about when we're talking, if we don't have a voice to talk to each other, we're not going to express ourselves. I would work a lot in the wind section on opening up, rounding this. I would talk to some of them about, "I hear holes in your sound. I hear this periphery, and I hear no center to your sound." Or I'd talk to them about, "Your sound is flat, and I don't mean that you're playing flat in pitch, but you have a flat sounding sound, sort of boring." I mean, myself, I like to play with a dark sound, but dark and flat are different things to me. There's expressive darkness. So I'd work a lot with the horns on sound.

We'd have section rehearsals. Often on the Wednesday rehearsal, I wouldn't have the whole band. I would have the brass section, or the sax section, or the rhythm, individually, for the two hours. Or, we'd rehearse with a section for one hour, and then have the whole band come in the second hour. And in those sectionals I would really scream and holler about, "Open up your voice. I need to hear a sound." I worked with them a great deal on vibrato because most young people—and even back in the late sixties and seventies—they didn't know how to play a vibrato. Most of them had grown up playing in high school bands. If there were jazz bands, nobody knew how to talk about vibrato. If they played in some sort of marching band or concert band, the vibrato was not involved the way it is in jazz music, and the expressiveness of vibrato.



And I would talk to them about— so many people will not play the full duration of a note. If it's written as a half note, they'll give you a dotted quarter, they'll give you a beat and a half, and will die. And I would say, "Every note you play that has any duration—not a percussive "bah, bah"—any note with duration, the way you're playing it sounds like the arranger has put a diminuendo onto every note! I don't hear the intensity of the air stream going right to the point of release of the note." So I'd get very basic with them on the sound—not the harmonic sound, the instrumental sound they got.

FL: Now you were working with a sound concept that's different than if you were directing a classical or concert band?

HP: I never have directed one in my life. So Fred? I guess we do, in jazz?

FH: I don't think so.

FL: You don't think so?

FH: Because it's not a jazz-centric thing. He's talking about basic expressivity. And it's used in a different way, maybe, in jazz.

FL: I'm wondering, though, how is it that a sax section in a big band sounds different than a sax section, if you just had them playing chords? Why—there's something different in the way that they're thinking, in the way that they're—?

HP: Well, certainly the vibrato use. In a concert band, do you use any vibrato?

FH: Not as—it's maybe not as prevalent. You maybe use it a little more selectively. I think a lot of it has to do with the music, though.

HP: It does, yeah.

FL: But thinking even of a basic jazz trumpet sound. Say there's a passage where they're not using vibrato. They're still, even though the sound has a center to it, it's still different.

HP: Well, that is true.

FH: Yeah.

HP: I don't know; it's hard to put your finger on the difference and describe it verbally.

FL: I just wondered if when you were working, particularly if you had students who hadn't had a jazz background—?

HP: Yeah, which we would.

FL: —but you were working on that, and a year later they would sound like a jazz musician.

FH: Yeah. My guess would be that part of it is that, I think Herb, what I know of his work is that he gets into the character of the sound. So that that might mean, say, for a trumpet section, they might do something that has a little, what we'd say a little edge on it, it's a little edgier. There might be one thing, whereas another part of it might be very warm and very vibrato. So that it's the character of the music. And maybe it's fair to say, in jazz, where you're dealing with a medium that's generally shorter time

spans of music, that maybe you have to—the variety of the character happens quicker than maybe a longer wind ensemble piece or orchestra piece. I don't know. That may not make sense, but something is in there.

HP: It makes sense, but I find it hard to verbalize. I used to say to the brass players—let's see we were on the stage of Kresge—"You see the back wall? Try to hit that wall with your sound." Because it sounded like so many of the brass players—we'd get there and it sounds like they would play a note and the sound would drop right off the end of their horn! Like it does with the best of us, playing outdoors. I can't stand playing outdoors! You make sound and it dies! But in a hall, I'd say, "You see that back wall? Hit it." Because we used to do that when I was with [Lionel] Hampton's band and Kenton's band. We would play these long ballrooms that would be—they seemed like a hundred—they were probably fifty yards long. And we'd always say, "Okay, see that spot right there? We're all aiming at that spot." And we'd try to project our sound to that spot. I don't know if in concert band there is that idea of projecting down a long hall or across a long auditorium; it very well may be. But there is a different sound. It's a fact. [laughs]

For me, it's, I have a magic place that lasts for about two weeks, between clean and dirty, in the horn, okay? I call them the green animals in my horn, in the mouthpiece and in the horn. And when my horn is clean, I don't sound as jazzy as I want to sound. It then gets dirty to the point that it feels good and it sounds jazzy. And for a couple of weeks, every gig I'd go out and say, "Ooh!"

FH: [laughs]

HP: Then, the dirt can usually accumulate, and it gets harder to play, more plugged up. I have to work harder; the diaphragm's starting to ache. But I know that I have yet got to the point—it's still okay, and I don't want to clean the horn or the mouthpiece because when I do that I go back to vanilla, Caucasian city, back here somewhere, okay? So I keep letting it go and finally it's getting so dirty, when I clean it it feels like I'm playing somebody else's trumpet for the first two weeks. Now, I don't know that I can apply that thing to any other brass player, but I do think, for my own personal jazz sound, that the horn's got to have some what I call green animals.

FH: [laughs]

HP: I used to play—do you know the name Lenny Johnson [Leonard "Lenny" (a.k.a. "Lennie") Johnson, trumpet], historically? Played lead with my band, big black guy?

FH: Okay, yeah.

HP: He weighed three hundred fifty or more—monstrous! Played lead with Ellington, played lead with Basie, played lead with Hampton, Quincy Jones, my band. And when my horn would get dirty, I would say to Lenny, "Lenny, my horn's dirty." And he'd say, "Give me the horn." And he would just go [blows]. And he would blow through the trumpet so strong that these silver dollars' worth of green guck would come out! [laughs] So one night we were playing at the Surf Supper Club at Revere Beach. This goes back to the sixties some time. And I think it was like, we were playing shows. There were three saxes and three brass, and the brass were on a riser above the saxes. [laughs] And I said to Lenny, "My horn is dirty." "Good, good!" he

said, “Give it to me.” [blows] And right on the saxophone player’s music in front of us this green, silver dollar [unclear] lands! [laughs] So, this may be getting kind of mysterious, but the totally clean horn sometimes isn’t a jazzy sound. The manner of attacking—there is not as sharp a “tah” as there is a “tu,” a “tu.” Naturally, when we play certain percussive passages, we’ve got to “tick tick-a-tick,” but we went “bop bop-a-dop.” There’s a broader attack sound going on. And part of why it sounds different probably is that the harmonic voicings are somewhat different in character.

FH: That’s true.

HP: But that doesn’t—we can make real good arguments on why that isn’t it.

FL: Yeah! It’s—people are going to be debating this thing for centuries.

FH: Yeah, I know. It’s a good question.

HP: The Ellington trumpet section, in a certain period, almost through the entire fifties he had four trumpet players who were distinctly different. I mean, very different. He had a fellow named Willie Cook [John “Willie” Cook, 1923 – 2000, trumpet], who played lead, who had played lead in Dizzy Gillespie’s band and was a real bebop trumpet player. He had Ray Nance, who also played violin magnificently, who was a very Louis Armstrong-derived trumpet player. He had Clark Terry, who is still alive and kicking at age eighty, who had a very distinctive style—not like the bebopper, not like the Louis Armstrong. And then he had Cat Anderson, who was a high note player, a very thin sound, very piercing sound. All of them would play lead at different times. Depending on who was playing lead, it sounded like a totally different trumpet section, as Duke would align these, he’d put Louis here on this voice, and then he’d put Cat Anderson on the top, and then put Cat on the bottom—different alignments of these four personalities. But they would sound like a jazz trumpet section, I’ll tell you!

FL: Wow. When you’re working with—well, I’m thinking particularly of the MIT group, how do you rehearse and teach improvisation?

HP: Well, within my—

FH: Hm, I’d like to know the answer to that!

FL: [laughs]

HP: I’ll start out by saying I didn’t. But, such a good question, such a question that if I had a good answer, I’d be happy.

FH: Yeah.

HP: I worked more with the band in the ensemble playing, and worked with the rhythm section, because more than the solo—if I had two or three good soloists, I probably did not spend as much time as I should have with the next level of soloists who wanted to solo. It pretty much got that there would be maybe one member of the rhythm section—I often had a good guitar player. It was funny. I was very fortunate over the years to have a good jazz guitar player. So within the rhythm section I usually had piano and guitar, and occasionally a good bass soloist.

I would say that the solos in our big band here were not as balanced as they would be in a professional jazz band, in that many rhythm section player solos, piano, guitar, and bass. And if I had two or three good horn soloists, that would be a good year. If I had all three rhythm players, other than the drummer, who can solo, and three—and it doesn't matter if it was one trumpet, one trombone, and one sax—just some three, even if they all three were in the sax section—then we'd have the solo aspects of the arrangements directed at these six people. Which was, in a sense, unfair to, if we wanted to classify within the band's abilities, the class A guys, the class B soloists, then you have the class C guys that, okay, you're not going to play. You just play your third trumpet part.

But the class B solo ability guys were not given a fair shake. And there would be guys who would play some jazz with the second team and when they got to the first band thought maybe they would keep doing it, and that level the first band was at, their jazz wasn't. And I would have rumblings from them, and always justified. I did not concentrate on the teaching of jazz improvisation. I concentrated more on the whole effort and the rhythm section. I would spend long periods of time in section rehearsals with the rhythm section.

FL: So when some of these players were developing their soloing skills, it was more on their own?

HP: On their own. Already, when they got here, you could see that they had a pretty good concept, and then on their own. It would be the guys that would form small groups on their own. It would be the guys that would be going out to the clubs and listening to the jazz, not the guy who would like to play jazz but really never—you have to give a lot of time to it! And some of the students who liked it, and wanted to, weren't able, for whatever their personal reasons, to give this time.

FL: Yeah. Did they ever come to you for suggestions? Would you sit down with them and play chord changes with them and—?

HP: Sure, very definitely.

FL: —work on them? Yeah.

HP: Yeah. Often, even with the better soloists in the band, the better horn soloists, I would sit for, you know, five, ten minutes and just play over and over a certain eight-bar phrase, to get the sound of it in their head, and then have them play it. We'd play it as slow as a ballad, so they could hear each—I'd even play it rubato, like a series of fermatas. I'd play a C minor seven and they'd play it, and then I'd play an A-flat seven and they'd play that, as if they were playing a cadenza on a tune.

So, that, how to teach to improvise probably was the least area that I was working on with this band. And it had to do with I would look at the whole picture and say in September, "Okay, come next spring when we go to these four or five festivals, and play our own spring festival, we want a good band. What can I work on, what can I not work on, to bring the total effort up to that thing?" And usually it would be, well, the soloists who can play, play pretty good, let's hope they do it on their own, and the soloists that don't play very good, I don't have time for them. It's not a terribly nice way to put it, but some people lost there. You would definitely

hear the gap between the good soloists over a year, or if you had the same group of people two or three years, the good soloists would get better, and the class B guys would not, or they'd just forget about it. And they're still in the band, but they're just an ensemble member of the band.

FL: Now with this particular group, when you're rehearsing, obviously there are charts. You've got the whole band playing. You've got places where there are solos.

HP: Yes.

FL: How do you—were you concentrating mostly on the written out stuff and leaving the solos, like, for the dress rehearsal, where you'd run it? Or do you actually, would you be rehearsing the sections?

HP: It's a great question. I believe that the first time I improvise on a tune in a twenty-four hour period of time is the best I play on that.

FH: Hm.

HP: That if I'm in a recording session, if I'm the leader of the group or band, I offer the license to all soloists: you don't have to solo until the engineer's got the room ready, until the band's got the arrangement down, and we think this is the take. It's so interesting—the younger the person that you offer the license to and the older. The older person wants it to be that way, says thank you, and will only solo when it's time to record. The younger person wants to play every time! And I understand that, all right? [laughs] So with our band, I would only ask the soloists not to solo if I needed to hear the written material behind it clearly. Then I would say, "Not that you don't play good, and I don't like listening to you." You know, I was always jiving with them in that way. "But I've got to hear B9 with the trombones and saxes, where the trombones are playing voicings, and the saxes are playing a counter line." I would justify why I didn't want them to solo. I'd say, "There are these places that this active sax counter line and these percussive trombone voicings come together rhythmically. I can't hear what's right and wrong if you're soloing." So I would give them some shtick like that.

But generally, we were at the level, even with our better soloists, that the more they played, the better it got! [laughs] But I know if I'm on a gig and we play three sets—a small group gig—and I play a tune in the first set, our collective choice: "Let's play such and such," and then a customer asks for the same tune in the third set, generally you grant that. I never play it as well the second time. And I know that when I'm in a recording studio, if I am playing on more than one take, my best solo is the first take. And after that, I'm re-examining this split-second spontaneity thing. I'm re-examining, "Well, I just played it like this. Let's look for something else."

The funny thing for me is that I have twenty-four-hour rejuvenation of the improvising freshness, and I have forty-eight-hour chop thing. If I could find a gig that went Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, one week, and then the next week went Monday, Wednesday, Friday! But of course, there are no gigs around like where you play every other day. But my physical structure comes back best in two days, and my creating thing in one day.

FL: [laughs]

HP: It's kind of strange, you know.

FL: Wow!

HP: Weird!

FL: Now you mentioned earlier some of those students who did, who wrote for the band and did arrangements.

HP: Yes.

FL: Did you do much in the way of teaching that?

HP: No, generally what I would do there would be minor surgery. We would rehearse it on a given day, and then I would say to myself, "As it stands, I would not perform this in public." And then I would go to the writer and not say that. I would say, "You know, there are a few little places where I think we need to do a little change." And sometimes the minor surgery didn't require the writer taking it home and rewriting it. It's just that I would say, "Let's not repeat this. Let's take this background out here. Let's put a repeat on this section. Let's open it up for the soloists here."

You know, Woody Herman, who really had one of the great series of jazz bands in the history of jazz, and for my taste maybe the best white jazz band, if I'm allowed to say that—I knew a number of people who wrote for his band. And I would ask the question, I would say, "How is Woody at rehearsing a band?" I began to ask this question more after—the more it would get answered, the more I would want to ask it, because they'd say, "You know, he doesn't really know how to rehearse a band. He has the writer rehearse the band. But what he is, is an excellent editor. And he knows what his band can do. He knows what he needs for the audience he plays for." After the writer had rehearsed the music so it was in good shape, he would then come in and cut it all up, Scotch tape it together: leave this out, repeat this, put the D.S. here, and leave the saxes out here, make this unison instead of harmonize. And they would say invariably, his editing would make it a better piece.

So I, with the student arrangers, would try to have it be that in the rehearsal I couldn't even do this without offending the writer and without taking a lot of time. At other times I would say, "This is great, except the bridge on the second chorus. You've got to fix the voicings. They're just not right," or whatever. So, I would never sit with them, that I can remember, and sort of give a lesson. I would try to have it be some reaction that I was having to the music that they had written, with little suggestions on how to make the craft of it be a little better.

FL: Mm-hm. Boy, there's a lot of questions here to still get through.

HP: I'm free till five-twenty-nine.

FL: Okay, well on this tape here we have fifteen more minutes, and I'll have to change tapes.

HP: I'm comfortable.

FL: Okay.

HP: We have a five-thirty rehearsal?

FH: Yeah.

HP: What time do you need to be there?

FH: I probably need to around five-ish. And I'd be happy to get you some little—we could grab something, too.

HP: Yeah, just grab a small something. I don't need a meal, just grab a something, yeah. So we could go fifteen minutes more, Forrest, if you want to finish this tape.

FL: Okay, let's see.

HP: Your questions—I don't know if I've ever been interviewed by somebody who has done your homework before like you have. [laughs] Every new question, I'm saying, "Ooh, this is a good question!" Some of them I can't answer, but they're good questions! That thing about improvising—I just don't know what to do with. I guess the longer I live, I believe you can't teach it.

FL: Yeah.

HP: It is something that each person, through their musical environment, it becomes a part of them and they spit it out.

## **6. Concert schedule (1:46:00–CD2 0:34:26)**

FL: So I have some basic questions as well. Besides the gigs on campus, the regularly scheduled concerts, and going to festivals, did you play locally at other functions?

HP: We did a number of exchange things with colleges in the area. We would—what we would do—at our two concerts, a fall and a spring concert, we would usually invite—we would have four bands. And when we would do this, usually our small group did not get to play. Everett's band would play twenty, twenty-five minutes. We would then invite a college band in—two college bands, one that would play the second spot, and then there'd be an intermission, another one that would play the third spot, and then we would be the anchor guys at the end. And we had this—this went on for a number of years. Lowell State had a man. You know Nat Paella, the trumpet—?

FH: Sure.

HP: Yeah. Nat had the band up at Lowell State for years. So we would invite his band here, and then he would invite our band to go there. And then Tom Everett's band at Harvard, we would do exchange things with. And then there was a band at Westfield State that Don Bastarache [b. 1937, Jazz Studies creator, Director of Jazz Studies, Chair of the Music Department 1976–1982 and 1994–2002, Westfield State College 1963–2002, trumpet]—you know Don, I'm sure—Don had the band out there. Does Tim Atherton [Adjunct Professor in Low Brass and Jazz History, Director of W.S.C. Jazz Ensemble 1985–2002, Westfield State College, trombone] have it now?

FH: I think so. I really don't know.

HP: Yeah. Anyway, Don had this band at Westfield State, so Westfield would come here, and we would go out to Westfield. And we had one other band. What the heck was

- it? There were four bands we regularly invited. Oh, Tufts! There was a band at Tufts [University]. And then we'd go to that Cohen Auditorium at Tufts and play there.
- FH: Oh!
- HP: So we, in addition to our own two concerts, we'd usually have four more outside concerts in a school year, and then occasionally the guys, you know how the guys can be, they'd arrange for a concert at Wellesley or something, at some student center or girls' lounge, and I would love to watch the action that would go on there! And we would play other concerts, occasionally for a small stipend, maybe five hundred bucks, which we would then use for music, you know. I remember playing at Beverly High School with the band. I don't want to say that except for the exchange concerts we'd never go outside and play unless we got paid a little, because when we went to Wellesley we wouldn't get paid. But I would say that during the course of a school year, apart from the festivals we traveled to, we would maybe play ten performances: the four exchange, our two own, and maybe—maybe not as many as four others—maybe two others, at other colleges or schools.
- FL: Did you ever play at clubs or anything?
- HP: [pause] I don't think so. I don't think so. And then we used to—we would average about four festivals a year. The Notre Dame we would do every year. There was one at Quinnipiac [University] that we would do every year, and there was one at Villanova. That only lasted three or four years at the beginning. And where else did we go? We went—my brain is not working. We went to some of the festivals here in the eastern part of the country.
- FH: New York, or something?
- HP: I can't remember. I don't remember. You know, going back—and this is not to do with the question you asked—well, it is in a way. What made me think of it is these other college bands. This fellow Glenn Reyer, he organized a festival here one year, and I would say it was around '68 or '69. And he and one other fellow ran it. It was a two-day festival, and bands came in from all of New England and New York and Pennsylvania, college bands. And there were judges hired and the whole thing. And this was one of the things that caused him to, you know, not flunk out of school, but have to drop out after a year and then come back. So there was that one attempt at having, you know, like a Notre Dame-type—not at the magnitude or scope of what the Notre Dame Festival became—but there was one year there was that. But as far as the playing, yes, we did more than just our own concerts and the festivals.
- FL: Can you talk about the student audience for jazz at MIT when you were here? What was that like, and how that changed as rock and roll became the popular music? Or did that affect it?
- HP: It was interesting about the audiences. There was a period here where we filled Kresge for two or three years at every one of our concerts. And there was a concert manager named Paul Husby [MIT class of 1975] who was the reason. He color-coded things and kept track of how many—he would send fifty tickets to every high school music department and college in the greater Boston area, all different colors,



okay. And if they all came—I'd say, "Paul, what if they all show up?" He'd say, "Eh!" We lucked out. We would fill the house! And he would keep these color-coded things and get the stubs from the guys that took the tickets to find out what schools were kicking the more people in, and then so he'd put more in theirs. He did—I was just amazed at what this guy did!

But he filled it. He was concert manager, let's say, for two years, and then he was still in the band one more year and handed his packet of how he did his thing to somebody else. So for about three years—this was in maybe the early seventies, middle seventies—he filled this joint! I call all clubs and concert halls joints. He filled this place. I would say that the majority of the people that came to the concerts were not MIT students but from these other schools, these other high schools, these other colleges. I would see a lot of Berklee students come, because we posted all over Berklee, who were interested in seeing what was going on over here. They'd hear about MIT this, MIT that. And then, you know, friends and family of the guys in the band. I don't think we drew a large portion, or even fifty percent of the audience, from the student body here. I didn't sense that. I know the guys would have the little booth somewhere—is that in Lobby 7?—wherever they do that.

FH: Yeah, yeah.

HP: You know, and they'd do that. They'd be playing the tapes of the band of the previous year, and all this stuff, to try to get interest going. But I don't—I just didn't have a picture. I would see a lot of adults come, who I would know from knowing them in professional situations I would play.

FL: Another question that's a big, open-ended question: when jazz was first being taken in at the university level, it was controversial in a lot of music departments.

HP: Sure.

FL: What was that like here at MIT? Was it different here?

HP: Well, Klaus had no idea what we were doing, musically, but he would show up at every concert. And after the concert he'd come backstage and congratulate the kids, and speak to them, which I thought was very nice. Because he was totally a classically-oriented musician, just totally!

FL: Yeah, yeah.

HP: Some of the other faculty members—I can remember people like John Harbison [Professor of Music, 1969-] and different people coming—oh, I can't remember the names of some of them. John Buttrick [MIT Professor of Music]?

FL: Mm-hm.

HP: Yeah, I remember these people coming to the concerts, which I thought their very presence was very supportive. Because John [Harbison] was a classical pianist, I believe, wasn't he?

FL: John also has a jazz background, too.

HP: Does he really?

FL: Yeah!

HP: Yeah, that's great.

FL: I've heard him. When he plays piano, he sounds like a jazz player trying to play classical!

HP: Oh, that's wonderful! Well, these people would come, and people like Roy Lamson [Professor of Literature, 1958-1973].

FL: Yeah.

HP: They would all come on a fairly regular basis and talk to the kids. They didn't just—I'd spot them in the audience; they'd sit up close. But then they'd come back after the concert and talk to the kids. In no way did I ever feel that we were something they were putting up with because a group of students wanted it to exist. I have a feeling that—I used to hear that MIT had sports at the varsity level more than any other college in the country, at some point. And I often wondered if they weren't pleased that their music department was getting more varied.

FL: Mm-hm. So jazz itself wasn't an issue then, like it was at some schools, where it would really tear a—?

HP: I guess they were confident enough and strong enough in their own thing to not feel that we were challenging them.

FL: That's really wonderful.

HP: Isn't that wonderful? I mean, I could be wrong, but they never gave us any grief. At least, I never got it. Maybe the student president got it and decided he'd keep me as a happy camper or something. But I never noticed that.

FL: Because even when I was in college at Ohio State University, they had a jazz program there, but it was still, in the early eighties, there were still rumblings about why do we have—

HP: Was Ladd MacIntosh leading it then? Did you know that name? Because Ladd, I used to see that band every year at Notre Dame with Ladd McIntosh as the leader. He started as a student leader, and then I believe he became some sort of faculty.

FL: That must be before my time.

HP: Yeah.

FL: But they had quite a good—

HP: Yes, that band was always excellent! Yeah.

FL: But there were still rumblings about why—

HP: Yeah, that was one of the schools that, when I talk about they show up at South Bend in their old bus, and we flew in with our rented cars, that they'd say, "Hey!"

FH: I think what you just said, though, is funny. You said something to the effect of everyone was secure with what they were doing, so that you didn't have to do this kind of infighting.

HP: Yeah, they didn't feel challenged by us.

FH: And I just heard another faculty member just a few days ago talking about that very issue. There's not all the issues that you find in schools of music, sometimes—probably not Berklee—but everyone has their little kingdoms.

HP: They're there at Berklee; they're there.

FH: Here, it's different. It's not a school of music, but yet there are good people working and everyone's supportive.

HP: I was amazed when I first came here at how much music was going on, even back then, in the mid-sixties, here at a school that was not [laughs] really a music school.

FH: Right. Interesting.

FL: Was it ever a problem for you that, at least when you were here, that the students didn't get credit for being in the band? Was that ever an issue?

HP: Has that changed?

FH: It has. I think it changed, well, maybe even during—

FL: 1989 was the first year.

HP: Okay, that was Jamshied then?

FL: Yeah.

HP: Yeah, yeah. It was a little bit of an issue. You know, a couple of the kids would mumble and grumble about it, but I don't recall—maybe somehow I was insulated from things that, maybe I'm drawing too rosy a picture. Maybe because I was older, maybe an established professional with some degree of name, that the students didn't want to—you know, the students in charge didn't want to burden me and had respect for me and figured they'd keep me happy. I could be wrong about this. But I was not aware of that kind of problem about not getting credit. I always wished that they did, felt that they deserved it, and was pleased when, I guess it was Jamshied, told me that that had come about. I don't know how much Jay [Samuel Jay Keyser, MIT Professor of Linguistics] was involved in that, but he might have been involved, yeah.

FH: Yeah, he might have been.

FL: Wow, there's a lot of other, just big, broad questions in the remaining—well, there's three minutes left on the tape here.

HP: Would you like me to sing for three minutes? [laughs] [sings] "I'm in the mood for love."

FL: [laughs] One question I also wanted to ask you about was, and this is not just at MIT, but kind of a jazz education question. Now, with jazz being at the university level, and for so long—and it still has this quality of being not legit.

HP: Yeah.

FL: How has that changed jazz, now that it's being kind of institutionalized? Can you talk about that?

HP: Well, it sounds kind of hypocritical on my part, but I don't believe in jazz education.

FL: That's what I was wondering, yeah. You don't strike me as—

HP: Yeah, twenty years at Berklee—

FL: You don't talk the talk of a jazz educator.

HP: No. I'm afraid most jazz educators aren't jazz musicians. I'm afraid. I think that's one of the reasons that I've had whatever degree of success that I've had at Berklee and here, that everything I was talking about I was doing, full-time, my whole life. And my life was devoted to the music, not the administrative part of being on the board of the IAJE [International Association for Jazz Education], or not being the chairman of a music department at some school who liked jazz, so let's start a little jazz band. I still think that this is a street music. You learn it seat-of-the-pants; you learn it on the bandstand. And I don't think of myself as a jazz educator here. I think of myself as the director of the jazz band, is what I was here. And I know that IAJE would say, "Well, that's in the broad umbrella of being a jazz educator."

FH: Right.

HP: I'm even in their Hall of Fame. I received that thing, whatever that means. You know, I've got a big thing this high at home. [sighs] Most of the—most is too strong—an awful lot of the people who are under the heading jazz educator are full of you know what. Now maybe I sound like a guy who's going to be seventy in a couple weeks. Maybe—but I don't feel frustrated. I feel that I did my thing in the main part of my adult activity, you know, as a musician, as a bandleader.

But I don't like it being institutionalized. It's not the kind of music that you can keep a set of rules and it's going to happen. And I feel that in the younger, even the younger good playing musicians, a lot of the personality aspect of playing it's been lost. I don't hear personal sounds; I don't hear the warmth. I mean, some of them maybe, especially the young black ones, are still making some sort of a social statement with some of the violent noise I hear coming out the of the ends of their horn. But I'm [laughs] sort of a real rebel on this thing; I suppose I shouldn't be.

I get very itchy when I go to the festivals that I judge at; I really do. Some of the people that I—I can go hear a band like yours, when you were at Belmont [High School, Belmont, Mass.], or Steve Massey at Foxboro, or Jeff at Lexington, and maybe two or three others, and I'll say to myself, you know, "Those are the same kids that are in this band, and yet this band sounds terrible! And these bands sound very musical." And so usually it's the fault—or the reason, if it's a good thing—the reason or the fault of these directors, who don't know—I mean, you heard about the situation in Brockton, with Vinny [Macrina]?

FH: Yeah.

HP: Yeah. For thirty years now he's been asking, "What do I have to do to make my band win these festivals?" I remember Tom Pranty [name unverified] had a band in Waltham one year, and George Rambilla and I—you know George?

FH: I know the name.

HP: He and I were the two judges. It was down in Hyannis, high school thing. And it was Brockton and Waltham, and Tommy's band played magnificently musical, and this band came out and just loud, and high, and fast, and horrible! And he thought he'd

wipe them off the map! And George and I both voted that this would be the winning state band. And he was so shook up, and mad! He just doesn't have a concept of music; he has a concept of, this sort of would be like a football game, or something like that, you know. Anyway, don't get me going on this, for crying out loud!

FL: [laughs] Wow! I think we'll call it a day on this. I want to thank you again very, very much!

HP: Oh, it's my pleasure. Probably made a few enemies here and there.

FH: No, no.

[End of Interview]