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Great Lines: Marcus Roberts on Earl Hines and Bud Powell
Jazz at Lincoln Center Radio
Season 19, Program 19
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1) Background music: "Skip the Gutter", Hines/Armstrong, Hot Sevens

2) Pierce:

HE WENT TOE-TO-TOE WITH LOUIS ARMSTRONG IN 1928 -- AND SHOWED THAT THE PIANO COULD BE AS EXPRESSIVE AS ANY HORN.

HIS LEFT HAND PLAYED A STRONG STRIDE (*DUM CHUCK, DUM CHUCK)* RHYTHM, BUT WHERE RAGTIME HAD DENSE RIGHT HAND LINES, HE CREATED SPARSE, EXTENDED MELODIES. IT WAS PRACTICALLY A "TRUMPET STYLE" ON THE KEYBOARD -- AND IT MADE EARL ‘FATHA’ HINES A STAR OF THE SWING ERA.

2B) Background music: Tempus Fugit, BP

2c) Pierce:

15 YEARS LATER, BUD POWELL ADAPTED THAT MELODIC PIANO STYLE FOR THE JET AGE -- EXECUTING PASSIONATE IDEAS AT BREATHTAKING SPEED.

IN SPITE OF AN UNTIMELY DEATH AT 41, POWELL TRANSFORMED JAZZ PIANO FOREVER.

OUR FEATURED PIANIST HAS GRAPPLED MIGHTILY WITH THESE KEYBOARD GIANTS. WHEN HE PLAYS HINES AND POWELL, WE HEAR BEYOND THE ECHOES OF THEIR MUSIC -- A NEW VISION IN HIS OWN VOICE.

MARCUS ROBERTS AND HIS NONET BRING CLASSIC -- AND LESSER-KNOWN GEMS OF EARL ‘FATHA’ HINES AND BUD POWELL TO JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER. I’M WENDELL PIERCE.

3A) Music:

3b) Pierce:

AN ICON FROM JAZZ-RICH PITTSBURGH, HE MADE HIS NAME WITH LOUIS ARMSTRONG'S HOT FIVES AND HOT SEVENS.

WITH HIS RIGHT HAND DARTING UP AND DOWN THE KEYS, EARL HINES JUST MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE FIRST PIANIST TO GENUINELY INSPIRE SATCHMO -- AND MAKE THIS TUNE AN EARLY CLASSIC.

AT OUR ROSE THEATER, MARCUS ROBERTS AND A VIRTUOSO ENSEMBLE TAKE ON ARMSTRONG’S "MUGGLES."

4) Music: “Muggles” (12:17)

5) Pierce:

SMOKIN’… WITH *"MUGGLES"* -- FROM THE CATALOG OF LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND EARL HINES.

ON THE ROSE THEATER STAGE, RODNEY JORDAN PLAYING BASS, MARCUS PRINTUP ON TRUMPET, TED NASH ON CLARINET, STEPHEN RILEY PLAYING TENOR, AND RONALD WESTRAY ON TROMBONE, LED BY PIANIST MARCUS ROBERTS.

6) Background music:

7) Pierce:

THE MUSIC BUSINESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN TOUGH, EVEN FOR PROMISING JAZZ LEGENDS. IN 1927, ARMSTRONG AND HINES LOST THEIR REGULAR GIG -- WHEN THE MOB-CONTROLLED SUNSET CAFE CLOSED.

WITH THE DRUMMER ZUTTY SINGLETON, HINES AND ARMSTRONG BRIEFLY PRODUCED THEIR OWN GIGS AT CHICAGO'S WARWICK HALL, BUT GAVE IT UP AFTER A FEW WEEKS.

HINES WENT OUT ON HIS OWN AS A PIANIST AND BANDLEADER AND LANDED A ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLAR A WEEK GIG – NO SMALL THING. THE GIG WAS AT THAT SUNSET CAFÉ'S LOCATION – REOPENED AS THE GRAND TERRACE NIGHTCLUB.

FEATURING STARS LIKE RAY NANCE, TRUMMY YOUNG, AND BUDD JOHNSON -- HINES LED HIS BAND THROUGHOUT THE DEPRESSION, WITH SHOWS ON RADIO AND TOURS THROUGH THE SUMMER.

HIS EAGER LISTENERS INCLUDED THE YOUNG NAT KING COLE AND JAY MCSHANN. ART TATUM CALLED HINES HIS FAVORITE PIANIST.

IN 1932, BOOTLEGGER AL CAPONE SEIZED CONTROL OF THE GRAND TERRACE NIGHTCLUB, AND BOUGHT HINES A THREE THOUSAND DOLLAR PIANO. HE'D OFTEN TIP HIM WITH ONE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS – (MUST HAVE BEEN <u>HIS</u> FAVORITE PIANIST TOO). BUT THE MOBSTER DIDN'T WANT THE PIANIST TOURING UNDER HIS OWN NAME WITHOUT PERMISSION.

AND WORRIED THAT RIVAL GANGS WOULD TAKE A SHOT AT HIS MAN, CAPONE SENT TWO BODYGUARDS WITH HINES ON THE ROAD,

LIKE JIMMIE LUNCEFORD, DUKE ELLINGTON AND OTHER MUSICIANS WITH SALARIES SET BY GANGSTERS, HINES LEARNED TO BITE HIS LIP, AND LET HIS FINGERS DO THE TALKING.

MARCUS ROBERTS PLAYS HINES' 1928 "BLUES IN THIRDS."

8) Music: "Blues in Thirds" (9:59)

9) Pierce:

A NUMBER THAT EARL HINES MOST FAMOUSLY RECORDED IN 1940 WITH SIDNEY BECHET AND BABY DODDS -- "BLUES IN THIRDS."

MARCUS ROBERTS AT THE PIANO, WITH ALPHONSO HORNE PLAYING TRUMPET, RICARDO PASCAL ON TENOR, AND TED NASH ON CLARINET.

10) Background music: ”Rosetta”

11) Pierce:

EARL HINES MADE GOOD MONEY DURING THE DEPRESSION, BUT IF HIS TRIUMPH WITH ARMSTRONG SUGGESTED THAT HE WAS A MAN OF A BYGONE ERA, THE NEXT 50 YEARS WOULD ONLY BURNISH HIS REPUTATION AS A FLUID PIANIST, A BELOVED BANDLEADER AND A MUSICIAN WITH A VERY FINE EAR FOR UP AND COMING TALENT.

BILLY ECKSTEIN, DIZZY GILLESPIE, CHARLIE PARKER, AND SARAH VAUGHN ALL PASSED THROUGH WHAT HINES AFFECTIONATELY CALLED HIS "ORGANIZATION."

HINES WAS ALSO DETERMINED TO MAKE HIS MARK AS A SONGWRITER. A CHANCE MEETING IN KANSAS CITY IN THE 1930'S, LED HIM TO HIRE AN ARRANGER NAMED HENRI WOODE.

HINES LIKED WOODE'S WORK, BUT WAS ANNOYED WHEN HIS NEW SCRIBE ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE OFF WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND ROSETTA. FINALLY, HINES OFFERED TO PAY FOR THE GIRLFRIND'S FOOD AND DRINK IF SHE WOULD HANG OUT WITH THE BAND. WOODE TOOK AN IDEA FROM A HINES SOLO AND STARTED WORKING ON A TUNE. THE TWO POLISHED THE RESULTS INTO JAZZ IMMORTALITY; THEY CALLED IT "ROSETTA."

12) Music: "Rosetta" (7:03)

13) Pierce:

EARL HINES' AND HENRI WOODE'S "ROSETTA" – WHICH BECAME THE THEME SONG FOR BOB WILLIS AND HIS TEXAS PLAYBOYS -- AND AN ICONIC JAZZ STANDARD.

WE FEATURED RONALD WESTRAY ON TROMBONE, MARCUS PRINTUP ON TRUMPET, TED NASH ON CLARINET, AND JASON MARSALIS ON DRUMS WITH PIANIST MARCUS ROBERTS LEADING THE BAND AND THE MUSIC. WE'RE EXPLORING THE ROOTS OF MODERN JAZZ IN THE FINGERS OF EARL HINES AND BUD POWELL.

13) Pierce: (continues)

YOU CAN HEAR OUR JAZZ PIANISTS WHENEVER IT SUITS YOU. FIND MORE FROM MARCUS ROBERTS, JASON MORAN, BRAD MEHLDAU, BILL CHARLAP – I COULD GO ON -- BUT SO CAN YOU: AT J A L C (DOT) ORG. (SLASH) JAZZCAST. BRING HOME THE SWING.

IT'S JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER. I'M WENDELL PIERCE.

14) Midbreak: music:

15) Pierce:

IF EARL HINES TRANSFORMED EARLY JAZZ PIANO WITH A HORIZONTAL TRUMPET-LIKE LINE, BUD POWELL RE-IMAGINED IMPROVISATION IN THE EXPLOSIVE LANGUAGE OF BEBOP. THIS WAS MORE THAN TRANSLATING CHARLIE PARKER LICKS TO THE KEYBOARD. HE SPUN OUT ELABORATE, SYNCOPATED LINES IN A HARMONIC LANGUAGE ALL HIS OWN.

THE LATE PIANIO MASTER TOMMY FLANAGAN:

16) Vox:

It's a rhythmically strong statement that he makes, you know, in his compositions. There's no place to breathe. Take a deep breath before you start one of Bud's phrases. He could think that way. And he could write that way.

17) Pierce:

ONSTAGE AT THE ROSE THEATER, MARCUS ROBERTS AND THE NONET TAKE ON A BUD POWELL VERSION OF THE GEORGE SHEARING TUNE "CONCEPTION."

18) Music: Conception (8:09)

19) Pierce:

GEORGE SHEARING'S "CONCEPTION," IN A VERSION RECORDED BY BUD POWELL. WE HEARD SOLOS BY TED NASH ON FLUTE, MARCUS ROBERTS ON PIANO, AND RON WESTRAY ON TROMBONE.

20) Background music: “I’ll Keep Loving You” BP

21) Pierce:

BUD POWELL’S ENERGETIC STYLE MIGHT SEEM AT ODDS WITH A SENSITIVE JAZZ BALLAD. “GRANTED HE COULD SWING” WROTE OSCAR PETERSON BUT POWELL LACKED THE “BROAD, SPACIOUS TOUCH” FOR SLOW, ROMANTIC TUNES.

TROMBONIST RONALD WESTRAY MAKES THE CASE FOR BUD POWELL’S BALLADRY. WESTRAY TRANSCRIBED POWELL’S 1953 VERSION OF THIS CLASSIC BALLAD AND WROTE THIS ARRANGEMENT. “POLKADOTS AND MOONBEAMS”

22) Music: Polkadots and Moonbeams (8:18)

23) Pierce:

POLKADOTS AND MOONBEAMS – BY JAMES VAN HEUSEN AND JOHNNY BURKE. RON WESTRAY’S ARRANGMENT – BASED ON BUD POWELL’S 1953 RECORDING.

24) Pierce:

BUD POWELL SPENT MUCH OF HIS LIFE COMBATING BOTH ALCOHOLISM AND MENTAL ILLNESS -- SOME OF WHICH MAY BE DUE TO A BEATING HE GOT AT THE HANDS OF PHILADELPHIA POLICE IN 1944.

YET, DURING HIS GREATEST YEARS BETWEEN 1947 AND 1953, POWELL COULD FLY OVER THE KEYBOARD -- ROLLING OUT UNPREDICTABLE, YET PRECISELY ARTICULATED LINES – AT BREATHTAKING SPEED.

AS THE 50S WORE ON – HIS PERFORMANCES BECAME MORE ERRATIC – AND POWELL’S STRUGGLES WITH HIS TWIN DEMONS WERE TAKING THEIR TOLL.

IN 1959, HE FOUND WARM WELCOME IN PARIS, PLAYING WITH THE GREAT DRUMMER KENNY CLARKE AND BASSIST PIERRE .

26) Music

BUD POWELL RETURNED TO NEW YORK IN 1964, BUT ALREADY SUFFERING FROM ALCOHOLISM AND MALNUTRITION, HE SUCCUMBED IN TO TUBERCULOSIS IN 1966.

27) Music: "Parisian Thoroughfare" (6:30)

28) Pierce:

IN HONOR OF THE FRENCH CITY THAT EMBRACED BUD POWELL, WE'LL CLOSE WITH A SONG HE WROTE BEFORE HE EVER MOVED THERE. MARCUS ROBERTS LEADS OUR OCTET ON "PARISIAN THOROUGHFARE."

29) Music: "Parisian Thoroughfare" (6:30)

30) Vox: Tommy Flanagan
I think all modern jazz piano has to come through Bud Powell.

31) Pierce:
AGAIN, PIANIST TOMMY FLANAGAN

32) Vox: Tommy Flanagan
You could tell his tunes and you could tell his touch. I really do think he was some kind of genius.

33) Pierce:

BUD POWELL'S "PARISIAN THOROUGHFARE." WITH STEPHEN RILEY AND RICARDO PASCAL ON TENOR, TED NASH ON FLUTE, ALPHONSO HORNE AND MARCUS PRINTUP ON TRUMPET, RON WESTRAY ON TROMBONE, RODNEY JORDAN ON BASS, JASON MARSALIS ON DRUMS, AND MARCUS ROBERTS LEADING AT THE PIANO.

FROM EARL HINES AND BUD POWELL TO MARCUS ROBERTS AND JASON MORAN, HEAR THE PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE OF JAZZ --ONLINE – AT J A L C DOT ORG.

33) Pierce:

AND LOOK FOR OUR NEW JAZZ STORIES PODCASTS INCLUDING VIJAY IYER AND JOHN LEWIS – ONLINE AND ON I TUNES.

ANYWAY YOU DO IT -- MAKE SURE TO BRING HOME THE SWING.

34) Pierce: continues

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER RADIO IS PRODUCED AT MURRAY STREET. THIS EDITION WAS WRITTEN BY ANDREW ROSENBLUM.

OUR PRODUCERS ARE DAVID GOREN, ALEXA LIM AND STEPHEN RATHE.

THE RECORDINGS WERE MADE BY ROB MACCOMBER AT THE ROSE HALL XM STUDIO. THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER IS WYNTON MARSALIS. CAT HENRY SUPERVISES THESE BROADCASTS. WITH ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS AT AUDIOWORKS BY JEFFREY TALBOT.

AND I'M WENDELL PIERCE.

THANKS FOR JOINING US – COME BACK NEXT WEEK.