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STEVE LAJOIE: I don't know. I thought about telling you a little bit of how I got into this stuff. But I grew up on Cape Cod, in Falmouth. And I had really no exposure to jazz at all. When I was a kid, other than the stray stuff that I heard here and there. But I did have a high school band director who was Maynard Ferguson. And I don't think he really liked jazz that much at all. I think he just liked the trumpet playing.

And so he would have us attempt to play these Maynard charts, which were way out of the range of most high school trumpet players. I remember listening to those records. And I played piano. And I also played drums. So I would learn the drum parts and the piano parts. I would accentuate the drums. And I remember, I guess it was a fortuitous accident I had. I got a hold of the Maynard chart on the internet.

And I saw that it was composed by this guy, Herbie Hancock. And I didn't know who Herbie Hancock was. But I noticed as I flipped through the record bins in the record store, which has bins, that there was a Herbie Hancock section. So I thought, well, it must be-- yeah, maybe it's the same guy. And maybe-- maybe I should check this out, see if there's a Herbie recording of "Chameleon," you know?

So I assume most people here have heard that record one way or another, and Head Hunters, yeah. So I didn't know anything about Head Hunters until probably 1975 or '76 or whatever. And so I brought Head Hunters home. And it was a revelation from on high for me. And so that was how I got into jazz, you know? And probably within a year or two of that, I remember getting a hold of some articles and books on Herbie.

And I remember reading this thing where he said, the way that he learned to play jazz was by transcribing and that he thought it was important to write down solos in order to remember them. So I remember, again, I had no clue. My high school band director didn't know how to guide me or anything like that. And I just remember thinking to myself, well, if this is how he learned, I guess this is what I need to do.

I guess I need to get a hold of some solos. And I figured, well, I'll start with some Herbie solos, which wasn't the easiest thing to do. But anyway, to make a long story lousy, over the years, it was how I learned how to transcribe. I was classically trained. But I didn't really have any jazz lessons. There wasn't anybody around that was teaching that stuff.

So in the course of, I guess, my development, learning about other, as we all do with jazz, we learn who played with who, and composed, and that guy. And who did that guy listen to? And go listen to that guy. So coming across Miles, and then Miles and then Miles and Gil things. And I guess somewhere in there, I always had a taste for, even way back in those Maynard Ferguson charts, had a taste for orchestration and instrumental combinations and stuff like that.

And when I heard the Gil Evans things, like a lot of people, I was just like, what is this stuff? And how do you get that sound? What is he doing there, you know? So that was the beginnings of me. By the time I seriously engaged with this stuff, I was pretty well into knowledge. I started trying to pick away at voicings. And you just quickly find, I'm not sure what instrument that is. And I don't know if I can hear that or not.

And so I remember reading this thing where Bill Dobbins talked about, for him, Claire Fisher was this benchmark. He would try to transcribe Claire Fisher charts. And he said, every year or so, I'd pull out a couple that I liked and try to pick them off. And I thought, OK, I'm not ready yet. I've got to go transcribe some of this stuff first, you know? Then he'd come back a year later.

So I guess the Gil thing was something like that for me, in the sense that the first two or three that I did was probably over four or five years. And sometimes, you come back a year later. And you've transcribed other things. You played more gigs. You've done other stuff and trained your ears more. And how could I not have heard that, you know what I mean? So that was also a natural part of the process, just revising things as I went along.

So I did that through, I guess that took me up through the mid to late 80's or so when I was in graduate school. I had a teacher who was really into Gil studied at University of Miami with Ron Miller, who was really into modal stuff Marcus mentioned, modal stuff. Ronnie's was unbelievable to me, that, if you're into the Herbie, Ron, and Tony Wayne group, Ronnie's explanations of that stuff are the most coherent and logical explanations of that music that I've ever seen or heard, to the point where I think everything else is just blind attempts at trying to explain what's going on in that music.

But Ronnie, one of the things that-- I was talking to him about transcribing Herbie. And he said, man, you got to go get Ravel's *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* and play that. You'll hear those early voices, you know? And so I went to the music library and signed out *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* and spent the next hour picking away at the first five bars of that. And every time I finally got a voice, I said, wow, that sounds like Herbie. Wow, that sounds like Herbie, you know? And you start hearing all this stuff. So that was some of my development, too.

With the Gil thing, so I guess it was just, initially, I wanted to play some of the ballads as solo piano things. And so it was figuring out most of what was there. And then, how could you crunch it down to fit it under two hands and still get the essence of the chart and the counter lines and that kind of thing? And of course, for me, anyway, I think for most people who are into Gil, the counterpoint is a big thing.

When I look back at the people that I really liked, whether it's Herbie or Clare Fischer or Gil or Alan Broadbent on the West Coast, all those players, later on, Jim McNeil and Maria Schneider, they all have all this counter stuff, all this counter, what's going on, even Oliver Nelson stuff that I remember listening to. So-- and Duke Ellington, of course, I had Duke in there. They all have that thing where they go beyond.

Mark was telling me, some of the stuff they studied, they go beyond that basic four-part block harmonization thing. And at least some of them, they're still dealing with bar harmonization. But there's lines within that that are moving. Others have more overt counter lines that move at different rhythms and stuff like that-- and a true counterpoint.

But I guess part of what interested me in Gil's music was not only the sound combination, but also that counterpoint type of thing. That was a big thing. I don't know if somebody consciously thought of that at first. It's just, like a lot of us, probably, oh, that sounds cool. I want to figure that out. And then, later on, you come to the reason why you thought of this.

So anyway, in the last 15 years or so, I started transcribing more and more of these things. And as I did my doctoral work at NYU, and in short, I was studying with Jim McNeely and came to doing my dissertation. And everybody was writing 12 tone pieces for orchestra and analyzing them. And I kind of thought, I'm not sure the world needs another 12 tone piece for my analysis of how I compose.

So I wanted to do something that I thought would be a contribution that other people can learn from and wanted to do something of value beyond just me getting a degree, you know? And I actually had to jump through a few hoops. But the book was my doctoral dissertation. That's why the thing is so thorough, methodical and stuff. And I was very, very fortunate that I met Hans Gruber at an IAJE conference.

And Ronnie Miller, my former teacher, had just published with him. And Jim McNeely did. All right, so show him your manuscript. And I was hearing all these stories of guys trying to get books published. And it takes years and years and years. And you never hear back from publisher submissions and stuff. And I said to Ronnie, it's not even done. I want to get the first couple of chapters. Well, show it to him anyway.

Maybe he can tell you what you need to do to make it a little more commercial when you're done, you know? And I'm still not getting it I said, well, man, I've kind of been thinking about that already. I think I'm good with that. Go see him anyway! So I went to see him. And he made an appointment with me. And we finally sat down like a day later. And he looked at it for about 10 minutes and didn't say anything.

And finally, he looks up and says, I'd like to publish this. And I said, it's not even done. It's halfway done. He says, well, here's my email. Here's my address. You let me know when you finished it. I've always wanted to do a book on Gil Evans. And so I went through none of the-- blessed to not have gone through any of the baloney that everybody told me you would go through to get a book published.

And then I'm sure I would again because since then, Hans has passed away. And that company is not really-- he was a musician's guy and really wanted to spend money on copyright permissions and stuff like that. That was the thing. And I know the people who have taken over now have backed off of that. They don't really want to sink that kind of money into the book now.

So I don't know where he would go. But I was fortunate to get that book. And when I published it, I had put so much time in that I didn't want to edit out all that stuff that I did for the methodology, go back through and say, what can go? So he published it as it was, which I was glad for.

So in the course of doing my research, I happened to-- I'm trying to think of how it even came about now. I guess I used to go down to King Brand and buy score paper. And I mentioned to one of the guys there that I transcribed Gil's stuff. And they were doing a concert for Bill Russo's Chicago Jazz Orchestra. They were doing Sketches of Spain.

And so he said, you got any Sketches of Spain stuff? And I said no. And he said, oh, we really need it three weeks from now. Can you do one? And I show him some of my other stuff. So yeah, I'd do *Will 'O the Wisp.* I did it for them. And then in the course of that, King Brand, they had to contact with Anita Evans, who was Bill's second wife, this.

And so they put me in touch with her. And so when I went to do the dissertation, I went and met with her. And they supplied me with a couple of sketches that I have in the book, the *Will O' the Wisp* sketch and actually one from *My Ship* and another one for *Bess You is My Woman,* which, I can't remember if I put that sketch in the book or not. But I know I did the *Will O' the Wisp* for them.

But some of them, if you looked at the book at all and you saw the *Will O' the Wisp* sketch, it's really skeletal. The *My Ship* one and the *Bess* one were kind of a grand staff piano chart with a few instruments marked in, some counter lines. And actually, I guess that gives me a good place to start with *My Ship.* What surprised me at first was that Gil had written the lyrics of the tune across the top of the grand staff chart. And over the years, I was always a guy who read a lot of stuff.

And I always thought it was important to find out about musicians' lives and what they did and how they developed and how they lived day to day. And I remember reading this Lester Young thing where he said, when you play a ballad, you should know the lyrics to the tune. You should think about the lyrics while you play. And it always struck me that, when you listen to Miles play ballad, that he had to know those lyrics because-- and I was fortunate to, again, that I had a good teacher in that regard in grad school, Fitz Amagio down in Miami.

He was an excellent vocal coach, in addition to being a good pianist. And he used to talk to the vocalists about, that when you sing a melody, that-- I think it's just-- the meaning of the blues or something, that you don't sing, [SINGING] da, da, da, the meaning of the blues. You would say, you emphasize meaning, or you emphasize blues. But you don't emphasize, of. And when that goes to an instrumentalist, if you're a tenor player or a trumpet player playing a ballad, you think of those lyrics.

And you don't play, [SINGING] doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo doo because you're emphasizing the word, of. And if anybody is singing along with you, you're distorting the meaning of the lyric, you know? So that was always-- between the Lester Young thing and what Vince had taught me, that was always in the back of my head.

And so by the time I saw the sketch for *My Ship* and I saw the lyrics at the top of the page, I thought, man, this is it, right here. This is what Miles is doing when he's playing a ballad. He's got this in his head. And that's why it sounds so sweet when he plays these things, and so logical, even when he takes off and does something that isn't part of the original tune. It's still this thing where it just makes perfect sense, you know?

And I guess the other thing along those lines, I guess for me, I'm a big believer in, I guess, believing in what you're doing. And there's a great interview with Bill Withers, of all people, on a Marcus Miller CD. And Bill Withers says, the way that I judge a tune is whether I wish I wrote it or not. And I think that was, for me, I was like, man, I wish I thought of that. I wish I was the one who did that.

Even though you can't be, you're that passionate about it. And this is part of, I think, even those guys' playing it. And then when they played it, they've got that-- they're making that tune their own thing, you know? And in that sense, when they pick the tunes, when you read about how they picked the tunes for Miles Ahead or whatever, as you'll find out later, some of these tunes were dog tunes to begin with.

But they saw something in that tune or heard something in that tune that nobody else heard. And they were able to make that tune their own, in a way that even the original composer didn't necessarily hear. And I think that's one of the key things with Gil's writing and Miles's playing, is that they were able to see or hear something in this music that transcended the original form or structure of the music, some expressive level that hadn't been brought out.

So anyway, when we get to *My Ship,* I got a few copies of this. You're going to look on with each other, right? So I think we can pass a couple back. Anyway, we can share. These are concert key scores. So I think the next couple of minutes we can go up there and--

MARK HARVEY: Here we go. I guess that's part of the reason. You want to sit?

STEVE LAJOIE: One of the things that I did, this was actually the third one that I had ever transcribed. And back in the 80's, they had reissued this CD. But some of the tapes were in stereo, some were in mono. So they had reissued it in stereo and hadn't used some of the original tapes to splice together all new stuff. And then, later on, George Avakian put out another version that was all in mono, saying, well, we can't find the stereo master for the original piece of the original tapes, you know?

And so then, it sounded like there was one bass clarinet line in the TO version. And there was a different bass clarinet line in the Avakian version. It wasn't until they were starting to do the box set and put together a lot of the research-- and the guy from King Brand was involved in that. He was getting these tapes here and there as they put this together. And he showed me some of the session lists of who played what.

And I knew that there had been bass clarinet. But actually, three of the woodwind players at various times played bass clarinet. I think on Miles Ahead, it was actually three bass clarinets going at one time. So on this tune, it's, Lee Konitz played alto. He played alto all the time. And then there were three woodwind players that, the first chair is a flute oboe clarinet chair and some F I think, also.

And the second chair is actually the most work. I think he does flute, alto flute, oboe, clarinet, and bass clarinet. I'm talking across the whole album now, all 10 tunes. And the last chair, it was the fourth chair here, was all bass clarinet, except, when I got hold of Gil's scores for a couple of the later tunes, apparently, only some guys could play alto flute.

So he flopped a couple of-- having the last guy play alto flute on something so that another guy could play bass clarinet or something like that. It was an instrumentation change somewhere in *The Meaning of The Blues/Lament.* But really, it was only necessary because the particular people that they had on the session. So there's four woodwinds, Miles in the lead role, two horns, five trumpets on this.

The fifth trumpet kind of acts like a renegade. Sometimes he's double. In the first part, sometimes, he's cut loose. Sometimes he's playing the first part but with a different mute than the first player has. In the case of *My Ship,* I'll show you that in some pages later on. And there's four trombones, tuba, string bass, percussion. It's obvious that Miles and Paul Chambers and Art Taylor were the weakest readers on this section by the way they fluffed stuff.

And when there's written parts and stuff like that, they don't always-- on the other hand, especially Paul Chambers, even when he totally blows something, what he plays instead is sometimes even better than what Gil wrote. And you just kind of shake your head and think, man, I don't how he couldn't read that figure. But on the other hand, what an ear this guy has. *Blues for Pablo* is like that.

I've seen the score for that. And you look at the part. There's times when there's little octave things going from B flat to F to a high B flat. And he's actually playing the wrong B flat both times. He's obviously trying to fake the line. But what he fakes is actually even better than what Gil had written in there. So they were good like that.

So anyway, actually if you look at the intro, you can see, in this case, it's second trumpet that has harmon mute. And all the others are in cups. And this is an octave unison line, basically two cups on the top box, two cups on the bottom. And then harmon is doubling the top. Again, if I went back 15 years, I'm sitting there thinking, gee, it kind of sounds like harmon, kind of.

And I remember also thinking, well, they must have only had four guys play on this chart because I can only hear four voices. But this is what it is. And I learned that when I saw the *Blues for Pablo* chart. I hadn't seen the score from *My Ship.* But when I saw *Blues for Pablo,* I saw that originally, most of the ensemble passages were muted and cups.

And the first part was doubled sometimes by second, sometimes by fifth, in unison but with harmon. And when you go back and you listen, in the box set, you listen to the very first take of *Blues for Pablo,* it's all muted. It was obviously a second take. They must have said, hey, let's try these without mutes. But you hear the guy in the harmon still in the harmon, along with the open four part section.

So that's what clued me in. It must be why I'm only hearing four voices in *My Ship* and why I can't decide whether that first part is cup or harmon because it's actually both. And you're hearing that blend of the two, you know? So he was really innovative with things like that, just orchestrational things, not only using instruments that weren't common in a jazz ensemble at that time, but also instrumental combinations and mutings and woodwind and mute combinations and stuff that are really hip and very, very subtle, you know?

And once I saw a couple of those things, then I'd start to listen for things along the way. And you start noticing. But you train your ear, in that sense, by first getting clued into a couple of things and then starting to notice, OK, it sounds like this, or this must be a similar thing, similar compilation.

The intro itself is actually from-- the tune is from a Kurt Weill musical called *Lady in the Dark.* The intro is from the original score. Really, what's Gil's in the intro is the pedal tone and the tuba and trombone. And the case clarinet counter line is his also. And I think, in some ways, it really kind makes the intro, to hear that counterpoint climbing up from the bass clarinet.

And especially, you put some bass clarinet. Sometimes, the bass clarinet in Gil's music is doubling the bass line. And it gets that sinister kind of sound. But other times, he's got it amped up here, climbing up into an extreme high register. And it takes on almost a flute-like quality to it, you know? And to me, that was an interesting sound, too.

The bass clarinet does get softer as it goes up, unlike most instruments. But it also has a real different sound than that high register that it plays down low. You want to play-- I brought the Broadway version for them to check out. And then we can maybe read through the score. And then if you have some questions, you can ask those, I guess. I'll tell you what track it is.

It's track six. I think this recording was from the early 90's. It's a Broadway cast from *Lady in the Dark.* So you're hearing the tune in its original form as it is in the Broadway score.

One of the interesting form things is it's an A, A, B, A tune. But Gil has three eight sections out front. And the first one is the ensemble without any bass. And sometimes, you hear, as a texture change, you hear ensemble without drums. But to me, the ensemble without the bass takes on this real orchestral kind of quality and really brings out the counterpoint in the bass line here. The bass clarinet and bass trombone and tuba are playing the bass line.

And the way, even though they're moving, except for the second bar and the last bar of that section, they're moving same rhythm as the ensemble, it's a lot of contrary motion. And then the second and 8 bars is a lot of actual counterpoint in the bass line there. And it's really cool how those voicings move. And even the spacing of those voicings is also very interesting. And it's along the lines of a Bill Evans style re-harm, where there's a chord under every melody note, rather than the original changes of the tune.

Then, at what I labeled B1 in the chart, that's where the more conventional, the original chord changes of the tune are sitting under Miles's. And miles is playing two eight sections with that. And then the bridge, which is letter C, page five, that's where Gil has a little double-time melody that he's abstracted out of the original theme of the tune. And that, to me, is classic Gil.

I mean, he does this cool stuff with coming up with boppish lines that still imply, if you don't know the tune, if you listen, on the original recording, listen to the bridge melody and then try to remember that when you hear his double-time figure, it's a cool little bop line that you could envision Diz 'n Bird playing. And yet, it encompasses the melody.

The same type of thing happens in *Bess.* If you checked out my analysis of *Bess,* there's a couple bars in the middle of the chart there where he's got this double-time thing that's a real boppish line. But the peaks and valleys in the line are the original note.

Part of the changes that Bill made, besides the obvious one, the bridge that I pointed out, he used the intro as the ending. He comes back to the intro. And I always liked the idea that Miles never comes back to the tonic at the end of that. He just leaves that, leading tone hanging. And it's resolved more through the harmonies that he'll place in the outro.

And the other thing, to me, there's a lot of-- in that version, there's a lot of ebb and flow to the tempo. But sometimes, to me, sometimes, it's over-dramatic. Sometimes it misses the point dramatically. I think them playing a steady tempo in Gil's chart, between how Gill rhythmically moves certain chords and how Miles delays certain notes, I think it actually adds more drama to the piece, too. So I think that's something also to listen for.

In this version, I've got Miles's exact playing transcribed there. I also do a version of when I did a concert at CCRI. And in that case, I just gave the trumpet player the original quarter note shift melody with the lyrics under it. And I gave it to Miles Price to study. But for the concert, I had to just read off of a straight version of it and improvise its own thing. Do we want to go ahead and play that, or--

MARK HARVEY: Track four, right?

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, track four.

It's really kind of 2, 5, 2 and squeeze. So they're all separated. So there's no real resolution chord. It's the d-flat chord at the end is a tritone, so it sets up Miles' head, which is in C. So--

MARK HARVEY: Steve, can I just make a couple of straight comments? Because we've done a little bit with counter line. But we need to do a lot more. But this is a great-- obviously, that bass clarinet. But if we could look at page D, whatever, where letter D is, page 6 and 7. And maybe you can say more about this. But if you look at this, the-- I don't know.

STEVE LAJOIE: Where the horn comes in and has the climbing thing there?

MARK HARVEY: Yeah, so the trombones are doing one little idea. They're all together. But then the first trombone in the third part moves a little bit independently. Then the horn comes in. Then the clarinet comes in. Meanwhile, the trombone is leading. So you're building this thicker texture.

STEVE LAJOIE: Absolutely.

MARK HARVEY: But everything fits. Everything is, like, perfect. And then you get on the next page, page 7. And the bass clarinet, they're starting out double-jointed, which is a really nice effect. Do you have any more--

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, well, I mean, it is a great effect. And actually, some of those things, if you look at how he does it, the trombones back in D start with a fairly stock voicing kind of thing, nothing that would really-- it sounds good, but nothing that would blow you away from a theory point of view. And then Mark said, all of a sudden, the first bone is moving, places in there where second or third trombones is moving in quarter notes.

And somebody else is holding half notes. So there's these shifting lines against at least part of a chord. In the meantime, the horn is added in. The clarinet is added in. The way that those are added in, it's almost like, you notice it after the fact, rather than them-- I know when I first transcribed it, I'm like, wait a minute. I have to sound like just trombones. Now I'm hearing four voices. And that can't be the bass trombone coming in. And it can't be everybody shifting up one note in the voicing because you lose the sense of all those lines, you know?

And then the same thing, when you look on page 7, like Mark pointed out, the three clarinets, they start with this very tight voicing. The first two clarinets are a second apart from each other. But that voicing gradually spreads out. And by the time you get toward the end of that, the trombones, if you look at the clarinet voicings, it's really an incomplete voicing.

What's happening by the second bar of that is the trombones are carrying the body of the chord. And the clarinets are filling in some color tones that provide interesting melodic content. But they don't form a complete chord by themselves, you know? And so it starts out as a clarinet choir. And then when the bones come in, it becomes this whole combination clarinet and bone thing woven together harmonically.

So it's a really cool effect. And that's, to me, the climax of the-- dramatic climax of the chart right there. And he just takes everything away, except the bass line after that. There is bass clarinet and Bassbone on it. But it's just them and the string bass way down, with Miles way up. It's like, the middle just falls out after that climax. It takes it way, way down, you know? So the whole thing is a really nice effect, a beautiful piece of arranging.

MARK HARVEY: I just want to emphasize this because I've talked about, this is why, when we get to Gil Evans, this stuff, this is why we call it the Jazz Orchestra, for real. This is the real deal. And just one other quick question because this is something that amazed me. Did anybody hear, even though you're looking at this, when that opening introduction came, did anybody here think they were hearing something else? It's hard because the cat's out of the bag.

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, yeah, once you see the score, you don't know what's--

MARK HARVEY: I was putting this together to put on our syllabus. So I was listening. So I thought, oh, isn't that nice with those flutes. There's no flutes anywhere!

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah.

MARK HARVEY: It's that combination of the mute and the trumpets.

STEVE LAJOIE: Right, right. Yeah, there's definitely-- the Ellington *Transblucency,* when you play that for them, Duke and Gil seem to have that thing where, sometimes, they put a certain combination of instruments together. And you'd swear that you're hearing another note or another instrument or something like that. I think that's what Mark's driving at, that there were definitely times in this where I'm like-- and you know what the other one is that's like that?

Actually, this is what made me realize that this passage was in hat mutes in *New Rhumba* on the same album, when they play that little figure behind Miles, so [SCATTING] it's kind of a little variation melodically each time. But it's pretty much the same chords and the same lick. And sometimes, he does it, harmonies and flutes, like in a choir, where they're doubling each other, sometimes, he does it with trombones and tuba.

And sometimes, it sounds like Miles and French horns and bass clarinet. And I sat there for days, listening to that thing and thinking, there's only two horns listed on the record. It sounds like there's four horns. This is driving me crazy, you know? And I saw some jazz catalog. And it said, oh, there's this-- I knew that they had done the television show in 1959, the Robert Harris Theater.

They played some pieces from Miles Ahead. And I saw this jazz catalog. And it said they had a video of Gil Evans and Miles Davis from 1959. I thought, oh, they played *New Rhumba* on there. Maybe in the video, you can get a handle on what's going on.

And Gil was set up in a horseshoe. And the brass were in a big row over here and the woodwinds and horns over here. And drums and bass are here. And Miles and Gil are out front there, you know? And so you see it in the studio pictures. And you see it, it's in the panning. In the record, the woodwinds are hard right. And the brass are hard left. And the rhythm section and Miles are in the middle. It's very early stereo kind of thing, you know?

And so, anyway, in the video-- I had the video. I turned it on. And some woodwind stuff that you couldn't see because they're panning around the horseshoe. But I don't know, if I didn't see, there's the trombones with half mutes mounted on the stands. And when the French horn thing comes along, two bones just put their instrument down. And two other guys lean into the hats.

They're playing with the French horns. And then they back right out. And the four bones are playing the lick together. And I'm thinking, damn, I spent days trying to figure out what was in that voicing. And it never would have dawned on me if I hadn't seen it on the video. But once I saw it on the video, then you realize, oh, how is he getting this balance, three bones and one horn? The hat mute is the answer there.

A pocket theme will give you the same sort of effect, except that clips on. And so the problem becomes the logistical thing. If you're going back and forth between open and muted real quick, like in *New Rhumba,* the pocket theme is useless, you know? And the hat mutes, instead of holding it the way you'd hold the plunger or something like that, he's actually got it clipped on to the stand. And they're leaning into it.

I don't know about you. But I always found, when I play any big band stuff, if you wrote stuff for half mutes or whatever for the brass players, you'd think that you were asking them to march from here to Los Angeles with 100 pounds on their back, you know? So after a while, I don't carry that. I don't know an A. So I would just-- I bought for half mutes for trombones. And I just bring them to gigs.

MARK HARVEY: See, yeah, just bring it. Bring it, just bring it.

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, but-- right? I don't know if you--

MARK HARVEY: I don't even know. Do you guys even use buckets and hat mutes and--

AUDIENCE: We use hat mutes.

MARK HARVEY: Hat mutes. This is a very bad drawing, as you know. But it's an egg, frying an egg. But it's literally like a dirty--

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, yeah.

MARK HARVEY: And it was big in the swing era.

STEVE LAJOIE: Yes.

MARK HARVEY: And-- I mean, yeah.

STEVE LAJOIE: For that reason, it's out of style. It's considered really un-hip. And so you wouldn't wear it if you wanted it on a pick.

MARK HARVEY: That's what I was saying. You'd have it here on a stand. And so what you could do is you can easily just put your horn, trumpet, and trombone towards it. And so it makes it-- sometimes, you'll see it written on the score, in stand. If you try to get the same effect, here's a music stand with the paper. So you push the bell up.

And it gives a little muffled quasi-French horn if you're really good sort of idea. This is a really good, let me say. But it literally looks like-- it's like an old hat. You know Jackie Kennedy, the hat she used to wear, a pillbox?

STEVE LAJOIE: Pillbox, yeah.

MARK HARVEY: Bigger. She would never have worn this-- bigger. And it has these little clips on the side so that way, you're saying, you have to clip it on. I don't even own one. So that was pretty far off. And I know Ronnie didn't that have those.

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, when I was younger, the only time I ever saw a hat used was, it was in the Glenn Miller stuff. And it always struck me like they were trying to have a polite version of the Ellington Plunger thing because people would use it for the "wa wa" sound. But it wasn't nearly as nasty as the Ellington, the growl and plunger thing, where you really get that dirty sound, you know? And with the hats, using them that way, it was a very polite society kind of thing. So I knew why brass players didn't want to carry that mute because it was, you don't want to sound like that. That's one this album.

MARK HARVEY: Actually, if you're really interested in this, which I don't know why you would be, there's a guy named Lawrence Welk.

STEVE LAJOIE: Oh, yeah.

MARK HARVEY: Just gone out to his reward. But they still show his band, the tape is on the channel, I think it's New Hampshire Public Television. And there they are. And they got their little damage-- frankly, polite. And the thing about the Welk band, and I'm going to shut up, is that he would allow his people to improvise, although it was very frightening improvisation. And this is what I heard, was that, if you were going to improvise, you had to submit the improvised solo written out ahead of time so they could approve it. Well, that's exactly the problem.

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, yeah, ah, we could have one or two conversations.

MARK HARVEY: But you'll see these, you know--

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, so what the hats do is basically quiet the trombone down so it can balance under the French horns.

AUDIENCE: How many horns in there-- how many because they are--

STEVE LAJOIE: The hat is mounted on the stand. And so they're leaning into the hat.

AUDIENCE: But the rest of the train goes past the horn?

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, so they basically have to stand off to the side, yeah, yeah. I know what I did was, I wound up taking, you can buy at Home Depot, the pipe clamp stuff. You can use that stuff because you can shape it. And you can put a bolt in it, you know? And another thing that I did, actually, that worked pretty much just as well was taking a coat hanger and make it so you can wrap it around the body of the hat.

And then you clip that with a couple of real strong-- again, like at Home Depot. You can get a couple of strong clamps, clamp that-- little clamps, the squeeze clamps that you can clamp that on to the stand. And then you just lay the hat in there. And so they just get a read on the side. And they pick which side they're going to read on.

And usually, the time we did the Miles Ahead concert, everybody quickly finds out, like, OK, we all need to read off the same side because my hat is on the right side. And yours is on the left. And there's not enough room, you know? So these logistical things like that. But you can do it. And guys get used to it. The guys who played, when I did the Miles Ahead concert, which was I guess three years ago, we had Jeff Galindo play lead on it.

But then there were some other-- I'm trying to think of who else was in there. Some South Shore guys played on it. But I remember a couple of them just looking at the charts. And one of them looks at me. And he says, teach me, baby. Just teach me, you know? Because there's so much stuff that you learn from this, even just how to play them, that it would just never occur to you as a player, you know?

But then, even just seeing one tune, you start realizing how much thought and planning went into this, you know? So yeah, all those voicing things that Mark mentioned with the hat mutes, basically, what you do with the hat mutes is you gain four French horns. You can orchestrate for what amounts to six French horns, at least that kind of sound.

And when you put the tuba with that, you can have this real soft mid and low brass section that's real dense. Plus, if you want the classic big band brass section, you still got the open bones with the open trumpets that you can-- but yeah, so I think that's the other thing, is with the old stuff, you move away from just the brass sax, brass sax kind of thing.

It is, like Mark said, more like an orchestra, where you really have all kinds of combinations that, some of them may be close to each other, but just this real subtle kind of thing where you can shift columns and stuff like that. And yet it's still within a fairly limited instrumentation in terms of the total number of people that you've got going at. Anybody have any questions at all?

AUDIENCE: Is it relatively common for there to only be one sax in these?

STEVE LAJOIE: No, well, in Gil's thing. But I think part of it I think was a combination. There's a funny history where they had, Lee Konitz and Gil, they worked in the Claude Thornhill Orchestra. That group had had French horns and tuba and some clarinet work and stuff. And then, of course, out of that came the birth of the cool stuff, which was Lee and Gil and Miles.

And it was actually-- Miles had an interest in the Claude Thornhill thing. And Gil had an interest in Charlie Parker's music. There's a couple of Claude Thornhill charts. I got them on there. But we probably don't have time to get into that stuff, the Yardbird suite and anthropology. And according to Gil, Gil approached Miles and said-- Miles said he was interested in Claude Thornhill's things. So he gave Miles, I forget the score to what Claude Thornhill chart.

And Miles gave him a lead sheet to Donna Lee. And Gil eventually did an arrangement to Donna Lee for the Thornhill Orchestra. And out of that, when the big band era kind of crashed and the bands weren't working and Thornhill band wasn't working, that's when the discussions for Birth of the Cool started. The Birth of the Cool thing, I mean, if you could put it into one sentence, was what's the smallest band you can have that would still get the Thornhill sound, you know?

Then, when Miles was signed to Columbia, he was still signed to Prestige at the time, right? And so Columbia was looking for something that was going to make him different and make his Columbia recordings different than the Prestige, small group ones. And by that time in the 50's, Nat Cole was recording with Nelson Riddle, and so was Sinatra, recording with Gordon Jenkins and Nelson Riddle.

And there was this thing where you take a soloist and wrap him in an orchestra. So it was Avakian, George Avakian that had the idea, what about doing an instrumental version of that? Have Miles wrapped in an orchestra-- and then became, well, who do you want to write for you? And that's where Gil came in. And Avakian said, well, I could take Birth of the Cool and blow that out to a bigger instrumentation.

But, of course, Birth of the Cool was just doing the Thornhill sound. So it was a funny thing sort of thing, making it smaller and then making it bigger again. And I think, to make a long story lousy, the Lee Konitz thing was that you had a lead alto that could function as a lead alto in a section. But you had-- there's times when that alto is down in the section, there'd be a couple of clarinets and alto and bass clarinet functioning as a four piece clarinet section because the alto-- and the Duke does harmonies like that, with the altos and the third voice in the staff.

And it basically sounds like the clarinet choir. There's other times where he acts more like a lead alto. There's also, in the Duke and other places, a three part harmony with Miles and Louis and Frank Rehak on the lead trombone. And there's a three horn trio there, a three-part harmony thing going on. So that lead alto, the scores I've seen, he always put it as the top, the way you would in a big band thing. But it doesn't always literally function as the lead voice. Sometimes it's functioning as a third voice.

MARK HARVEY: Especially in Miles's playings.

STEVE LAJOIE: Right, right. Well, it may lead the counter lines when Miles is playing. But it may also be buried in a stack, too, you know? So it really kind of depends what sound you're going for. If you're looking for clarinet choir sound, then the alto is going to be buried in that stack, depending. Or if it's only three voices, then, like here in page 7 of *My Ship,* it's not even getting used.

But if you had four part harmony, then maybe alto would be in that stack somewhere, you know, but basically hidden, as if he's another clarinet, you know? So those are things that it seems like you'll have a really bad batch. There's never a real traditional sax section sound. The closest he comes is having a clarinet choir.

But again, I think it's kind of, between the muting and the clarinets and then also the same two flutes and bass clarinet, it kind of sounds like a flute choir, too. So you can wind up with a lot of different sounds in there, even though you don't have the traditional big band sax section. Any other questions on that one at all? All right. Yeah, so then--

MARK HARVEY: Just so you know, we've got about 20 minutes.

STEVE LAJOIE: OK, all right, all right. Yeah, I brought-- well, maybe I'll skip*Maison Denis,* even though that's an interesting thing. I brought *I Don't Want to Be Kissed.* And I thought maybe we can take a quick look at that, and then maybe finish with a couple of gones, and if you have questions along the way, just ask. So that way, I'm not just talking the whole time.

Maybe what we can do is play them-- you want to just play them, maybe parts of the two versions, and then we'll play the whole Miles and Gil version, and then go over it after so they can hear the evolution of it?

MARK HARVEY: That's on the other side. [AUDIO OUT]

STEVE LAJOIE: So yeah, it's basically an orchestrated version of Ahmad's thing. And what is really interesting on this, I've only seen a couple of pages that have survived of Gil's sketch of this tune. And he literally wrote out four bars of Ahmad's solo. And then he and Miles change it, and then four bars of Ahmad's solo.

And when you listen to the recording, miles kind of plays his version of Ahmad's, and then four bars of what he wants and comes back to it. And the recording process on these things, sometimes, Miles had trouble in the original session. So he laid out for certain parts. In this master tape, he actually played the Ahmad licks at the original session and then did the four bar things on the overdubs three months later.

So it's like him trading chords with himself. It's a neat little thing, you know? So there's cool stuff in there. And then the way he's got the whole ensemble orchestra. You take the piano parts. It's really cool. And the other thing, if you know Miles Ahead, the there's a quote from the Varga Violin Concerto that starts, *The Meaning of the Blues.* It's a 12 tone thing that comes out of--

[PIANO PLAYING]

That kind of thing. And that starts it. And at the end of *I Don't Want to Be Kissed*--

[PIANO PLAYING]

I forget the wood. But it comes to the 5. Ernie Broyles is on the lead. And he comes down the pyramid, the same 12 tone pyramid, at the end of-- [PIANO PLAYING] and so on to that, the one chord. Sure, like that.

Yeah, yeah, so it's really-- but it's from the Varga Violin Concerto. And he uses it as an intro to the eighth tune the way Varga used it. And then he does the whole better thing upside down at the end of this chart, which Ahmad didn't do that. That's Gil's insertion.

MARK HARVEY: Should we go for it?

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, sure, go ahead. Anybody have any questions on that one? New Rhumba is also-- the structure of *New Rhumba* is basically an Ahmad trio thing that's orchestrated out for the full band like that, with some of Gil's stuff put in there.

What was always amazing to me, and I don't have time to play these for you, but he was really good at, I guess it's that Stravinsky saying, when he says, good composers borrow. Great composers steal. He always seemed to have a knack for putting the most unusual things together. But they really fit together really well. You had a question, or?

Do I have time to do the Cohens because we had talked about doing those. If I got time, I'll gladly do it.

MARK HARVEY: Real quick.

STEVE LAJOIE: Yeah, yeah, this one is from Porgy and Bess. And actually, this is the Gershwin one arranged, basically. I got four copies. I don't know if you made any more awards or not.

MARK HARVEY: This gone? Or *Gone, Gone, Gone?*

STEVE LAJOIE: *Gone, Gone, Gone,* is that-- we can pass them both out because I think we'll just go right to one sort of variation on the other, kind of. So, anyway, *Gone Gone Gone* is the Gershwin thing from Porgy and Bess. It's actually, in the opera, it's called *Where is Brother Robbins?* And it's basically a preacher and congregation kind of thing.

It has a real gospel kind of thing to it in terms of a call and response thing. And in the original, it's a lead singer and a chorus answering, where is Brother Robbins? And then everybody's saying, he is gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone. And it's set up like a preacher congregation thing.

Gil's arrangement of it is pretty straightforward from the original. It's just that he's got Miles in the preacher role. And then the orchestra is in the congregation kind of role. I did bring-- I don't know if you, time-wise you can decide whether we should listen to the Porgy and Bess version, or you want to just go straight to the--

MARK HARVEY: I think we should just--

STEVE LAJOIE: All right, OK, on that one, I'm going to forget who does it, actually. So this is track four on this one . The instrumentation on Porgy and Bess is a little different. There's three horns instead of two. And there's a little more variation in the woodwind section, where there's I think one more alto flute that's available and used a little more often. Sometimes the bass clarinet isn't used as much.

And there's only four trumpets instead of the five that there were in Miles Ahead. So sometimes, the fourth trumpet is playing that renegade role. Sometimes it's just for a straight section kind of thing. I'm not quite sure why they made that change. But it seems like, in *Sketches of Spain,* they went to, I think it was three horns.

And they only went to two trombones. It seems like he was moving away from big band, straight ahead instrumentation, and more into orchestral colors and stuff. All right, so the track four is *Gone, Gone, Gone.*

So it's basically taken the Gershwin thing and turned it like, sort of a Bach piece. And really, only two instrumental choirs there. What's at work there more than anything is the rhythm, changing the rhythm of the melody, and then having Philly is kind of unusual. But it's obviously set up as a drum feature kind of thing, to feature drums. And Miles-- I always found it interesting, there was an article in the 60's where Gil talked about-- if I ever live long enough, I'll do this stuff.

But he said, it'll be great to have a version of this band where an orchestra plays Herbie's parts. And you still have Miles and Wayne and Tony and all that. And in a way, I think of Gone, it's an older band. But it's the same type of thing. It's taking a small group, the Miles small group thing, and basically giving a feature for the small group to work within the larger ensemble format. It would have been really interesting to see if the money had been there to have them be a touring band, you know, how much small group stuff could have or would have been worked.

MARK HARVEY: Let's give Steve a round of applause.

[APPLAUSE]