

≡ LATEST POST

On the web since 1999



Jerry Jazz Musician

HISTORY. CULTURE. COMMUNITY.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[SUBMIT](#)

“A Viennese Story” — a short story by Matias Travieso-Diaz

August 20th, 2019

“A Viennese Tale,” a story by Matias Travieso-Diaz, was a finalist in our recently concluded 51st Short Fiction Contest. It is published with the permission of the author

Photo by [Brian Kraus](#) on [Unsplash](#)



A Viennese Story

by

Matias Travieso-Diaz

.....Being slight of build and juvenile looking was a mixed blessing for Alicia. On the one hand, people tended to be cloyingly condescending towards her – as if she were nine years old instead of seventeen. On the other, her apparent young age allowed her to get away with much that would be criticized in a

teenager, particularly in a backwater country like Ruritania. Also, she was able to maintain her child prodigy status far longer than her age warranted. So, on balance, being small and child-like was helpful though often an annoyance.

....Her breakout moment came in the spring of 2038, when her piano piece "Nostalgia," which she had entered in her Senior High School talent competition, was a surprise winner. As luck would have it, when she played it in the awards program, the music critic of the local paper (who had attended the show because his niece was a violin player) had raved about the piece, and written a column that compared "Nostalgia" to Sibelius' *Valse Triste* in its wistfulness and described the frisson of emotion that the bittersweet melody evoked. "Despite her tender years, this child is destined to be a musical giant, comparable only to Mozart and Mendelssohn in precocity." Later on, when he learned Alicia's true age, he had been too embarrassed to take back these comments.

....Another stroke of luck was that a new talent show – imported from abroad, like other bad habits – was being launched by a local TV station. "Ruritania Shines" promised to bring every week an alliteration of talents, such as daring dancers, jaunty jugglers, vapid vocalists, voluble ventriloquists, even canine coteries, all competing for fame and prizes. Alicia's mom was contacted by the producer of "Ruritania Shines," who declared that a genius of Alicia's magnitude must be displayed before the entire nation, nay, the whole world, and what better vehicle than the show to let her unique talents "shine for all Ruritania to see". Bursting with maternal pride, Alicia's mom gave her consent without even consulting her daughter.

....Alicia was nonplussed by the sudden attention. She had written *Nostalgia* to voice her adolescent angst, and even though she thought the piece was pretty good, she had no expectation that it would be the launch pad from which her fame would take off. And she felt she was only an adequate pianist, so she fretted about performing the piece before seasoned critics. The night the show was taped, she was so nervous her mother had to help her dress – in a short pink dress and matching bow that were more appropriate for an

elementary school child than a teenager – and had to give her a double dose of tranquilizers to get her steady enough to appear before the panel and the ready to adore audience.

....Later, she would not remember anything about the fawning introduction by the master of ceremonies, the low-ball questions by the panel, or even how the grand piano was ceremoniously rolled onstage. The banquette was too low, the lights too bright, and as she sat before the keyboard the gleaming black and white keys seemed like teeth threatening to rip her apart. Alicia swallowed hard, shook her head to clear her mind, and soldiered on.

....Next she knew she was standing in front of the panel of judges, where each of the “experts” took turns to grovel in admiration of her musicality, the beauty of her tone, and of course the haunting melody. The last one, an oxygenated matron who would never see fifty again, grasped Alicia in her arms, pressed the child to her bosom, and declared in barbaric French: “*Ma cherie. Tu es ravissant.*”

....Alicia was unanimously declared to have passed the preliminary phase of the competition and was invited to return two weeks hence for the “final contest.” Alicia took the news well, at least outwardly, but as she smiled and curtsied and offered her thanks in a very small voice her heart trembled with fear at the thought of having to go through the ordeal again.

....Her misgivings were amplified when, a day or two later, the producer of the show came to their apartment to check on things and almost casually suggested that the audience and the judges were looking forward to another performance, “perhaps of a new or different composition” by the child prodigy. This was the first, but not the last, time a chill ran up and down Alice’s spine, and an inexplicable dread positioned itself in her gut, never to be dislodged. For Alicia did not have other compositions to offer. Yes, she had composed other pieces, but those were student exercises, arid as sand dunes in the Sahara. What was she to do?

.....She sat solidly at the piano for most of the next two weeks, playing idly with the keys, running scales, attempting to draw a fresh melody out of a brain that seemed as empty as her late father's bank account. Finally, in desperation, she set pen to paper and produced something she titled "Variations on an Original Theme" that was a collection of thinly modified versions of *Nostalgia*. Since there was no time to get it printed, she arrived at the taping of the final Ruritania Shines contest clutching the manuscript in her sweaty hands.

.....This performance she later recalled much better than the earlier one. In response to her complaints, they had provided a sufficiently high banquet, and when her turn came, after the ventriloquist and the dancing twins and the tumblers and the performing poodles, the lights were dimmed in the hall. This added an extra touch of suspense to the audience's anticipation, which had been heightened by the master of ceremonies hailing the debut of her new work as "a momentous occasion, comparable to the premiere of Beethoven's Emperor piano concerto in Vienna in 1812." Alicia had shaken her head in denial, which everyone interpreted as a showing of modesty, and the master of ceremonies had escorted her to the piano, paternally holding her slight shoulder.

.....The playing had not gone too badly, she decided. She had made a couple of mistakes sight reading her own manuscript, and the tempo in some places had been slower than she originally intended, but nobody seemed to notice. Later, the recording that was made from the soundtrack of the program would become the official version of the work.

.....Tumultuous applause broke the moment she played the last note and rested at the keyboard to catch her breath.

.....She got up slowly, faced the panel of judges, and curtsied prettily. The acclamation continued, growing if anything louder as the minutes went by. The chief judge, a curmudgeon who was the terror of contestants for his snide disassembly of most performances, cleared his throat and loudly demanded silence from the audience. Turning to Alicia, he said: "Our producers like to build viewer anticipation by delaying the announcement of the panel's decision

until the end of the program. We will not do so this evening. I have consulted with my fellow judges and am proud, indeed honored, to announce that you are the winner of this year's 'Ruritania Shines' contest. You play like an angel and your music is incomparably beautiful. I predict you will bring fame to yourself, and enhance Ruritania's reputation among the artistic capitals of the world. Congratulations!!"

.....The other judges attempted to embellish on this speech but their voices were drowned in the maelstrom of cheers, whistles, stampings of feet, and other expressions of acclaim. Alicia kept taking bows and even blew a few kisses at the audience. She felt this was her finest hour, and she was not mistaken.

* * *

.....The prize money from the "Ruritania Shines" contest was nice, but soon paled in comparison with other commercial opportunities that followed. There was a hastily produced album in which Alicia played "Nostalgia," the Variations on an Original Theme, a new but hardly novel set called "Second Variations," and old chestnuts by Liszt, Chopin, Debussy, Lecuona and others. In three weeks it reached platinum status and provided her with a nice stream of royalties for the following year. An international record company, bemoaning the dearth of new classical material, signed her up for a two year contract to exclusively record any new compositions that were sure to follow. A similar deal was struck with the TV network that produced "Ruritania Shines," guaranteeing a sizeable honorarium for her future appearances on the program. To cap all of it off, a famous British publishing house signed her up for a ghost-written autobiography provisionally entitled "A Nightingale Sings." The advance on that book would sustain her for many months thereafter.

.....The two years that followed were ones of continuous frustration for Alicia. Her status as a "child prodigy" had been burst by an expose in a tabloid

revealing to its inquiring readers the “long hidden secret” of her true age and had suggested that she might be trying to conceal her having an out of wedlock child. The flow of royalties slowed down to a trickle, and no more advances against future work were forthcoming, because Alicia had bumped into a seemingly unmovable obstacle: writer’s (in this case, composer’s) block. Hard as she tried, no new ideas came to mind, no ingratiating tunes dripped from her pen, no irresistible Caribbean rhythms were struck by her fingers as she pounded the keyboard. In a 2040 interview that became immediately famous, her erstwhile music teacher sought to defend the drying up of her production as only a symptom of people’s inflated expectations: “Everyone expected a Mozart, who could turn out masterpieces in less time that takes most people to have lunch. In reality, Alicia is like Beethoven, who carefully and painstakingly crafted his compositions, sometimes spending a couple of years before turning out an immortal work like the Eroica Symphony. We need to give our home grown genius more time to mature and enchant us with her art.”

.....Others, however, were less charitable. A strident article in an entertainment magazine called Alicia a “One Hit Wonder” and pejoratively dubbed “Nostalgia” *the* “*Volare*’ of the 21st Century.” The refutations that flew from every quarter did little to reassure Alicia, who in her heart of hearts tended to agree with the harsh assessment.

.....Thus stood matters as 2041 rolled in. It was an important year to music lovers worldwide: in December it would be the 250th anniversary of Mozart’s untimely death, and hundreds of special events were planned to commemorate the occasion. Mozart’s music filled the airwaves, bringing further desperation to Alicia by reminding her of her artistic (and by now personal) failure. She was twenty years old, unemployed, nearly broke, and unloved. She had shed most of her childhood friends and the rest had deserted her. Her mother and main supporter had died the year before, leaving her daughter alone in an apartment that was too large for a single woman and too full of mementos of her meteoric rise to be comfortable.

.....In April, as spring warmed the Northern Hemisphere, Alicia made a momentous decision: she closed her apartment, emptied her bank accounts, collected some monies people owed her, and set out for Vienna. If she could not find inspiration in that most musical of cities, she would hire herself as a piano teacher or a secretary, or whatever.

* * *

.....Vienna in 2041 was of course much different than it had been in the days of Mozart. Its population had grown from less than 300,000 people then to over 3 million. Its denizens lived in relative luxury compared to the population in less prosperous countries like Ruritania, and enjoyed a relaxed lifestyle that made Vienna a desirable place to call home. However, with affluence comes a high cost of living, as Alicia learned almost immediately. She realized that her limited funds would not last past the end of the year unless she made a drastic change in her ways. After much searching, she found a guest house where she could rent a garret at a less than ruinous rate. The accommodations were basic – the bathroom was at the end of the hall – but in most respects Alicia was not your typical tourist. She was there to soak up inspiration, to breathe the air that had nourished the talents of scores of great musicians like Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Mahler and Schoenberg. In short, she went to Vienna to waken her dormant muse. She found a studio that would let her use a piano for a few hours a day and began sampling the cultural opportunities that the once capital of the Habsburg Empire had to offer.

.....She visited various museums, went as regularly as her means allowed to the Wiener Musikverein to hear the Vienna Philharmonic and to the Wiener Konzerthaus to hear the Vienna Symphony. She visited the former houses and apartments of Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, and Haydn. She went to the collection of composers' graves in the Zentralfriedhof, the main cemetery of the city, and reverently visited the tombs of Beethoven (his third), Brahms,

Johann Strauss Sr. and Jr., and Schubert. She went to the St. Marx cemetery near the Musikverein to visit the alleged tomb of Mozart and found the little graveyard an oasis of calm in the noisy city. Mozart's grave was tucked away, under a short white column with a simple inscription on the pedestal: "W.A. Mozart, 1756-1791," next to which was a statue of a fat little angel. A bed of tiny red flowers was the tomb's only other decoration. It was a pretty but uninspiring place.

.....Spring led into summer and then to fall, and Alicia was not making any progress in her quest. The city, however, was becoming more and more alive as the 250th anniversary of Mozart's death approached. As was the case in 1991 on the occasion of the 200th anniversary, Vienna was commemorating the composer with concerts, recitals, opera productions, symposia and other events. Large crowds were descending on the city to visit exhibitions that featured manuscripts, pictures and diverse memorabilia assembled from all over the world. Hardly a day went by without a concert of some sort, often including the performance of one or two of his operas, a concerto, his string quartets and piano sonatas, and so on. The relentlessness of the musical assault was leaving the locals oversaturated but happy with the extra income, and was grating on Alicia's nerves since the overexposure was doing nothing to revive her art.

.....The Requiem was scheduled to be performed on December 5, the anniversary of Mozart's death, in St. Stephen's Cathedral. The event was oversubscribed and Alicia did not try to get tickets. As the gloom of winter descended on Vienna, Alicia stayed more and more in her tiny room, contemplating in lonely desperation how all her hopes of glory turned to dust. Starting on the last week of November, she only ventured outside to go to the bathroom, or to get some pastry and coffee at the bakery next door. She was thinner and weaker by the day, and increasingly delirious.

.....The night of December 4 Alicia lay in bed, tottering between wakefulness and a sleep that was more of a trance. As she lay there, she dwelt on the misery of her life and how fortune had turned from friend to implacable foe,

and what was she going to do with herself when she had to return to Ruritania. She was not religious; however, in a fit of self-pity, she raised her thoughts (and perhaps her voice) heavenwards and prayed to the man whose life and works were being celebrated: "O, Mozart, please help me. You are the greatest genius that mankind has ever known. Please come to me, whisper in my ear, sow a few ideas in my barren mind so that I can regain my self-respect and my place in society. Please, I beg you..." She swooned.

....She woke up with a start as something told her she was no longer alone. She cautiously opened her eyes and was astonished to find a very plain, short man standing at the foot of her bed. He was a little pudgy, was bewigged, and dressed in a tomato red topcoat, a gold waistcoat and white linen breeches, and wore a large lace neckerchief. He seemed utterly out of place yet comfortable with his surroundings. Before she could say anything, he greeted her in heavily accented Italian (a language that Alicia's mother had insisted she learn): "Good evening madam, actually good morning. I am sorry if I startled you, but I am answering your call. My name is Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart, though my friends call me Wolfgang, or even Wolfie. How can I assist you?"

....Alicia was at a loss for words. Was she dreaming? Had an insane person broken into her room? Was this to be the tragic end of her career? She collected her wits and said in a tremulous voice: "Look, I have no money. You can take my purse, right there on the table, but please don't hurt me."

...."As I said, madam, I am here to help you, as you requested."

....Seeing that the strange little man did not appear aggressive and remained immobile at the foot of her bed, Alicia calmed down somewhat, and asked, less shakily: "Are you really Mozart, or is this some charade?"

...."I am, or better said, I once was, Mozart."

...."But that is impossible. You have been dead for two hundred and fifty years."

.....“Exactly. While I was alive and was a man of means (only for a short time, I assure you) I did a number of good deeds, helped sick and destitute people, and things like that. As a reward, my spirit is allowed to return to the world one night every ten years, on the anniversary of my death. On that night, like this one, I roam through Vienna and revisit the places I knew and loved and those that have been erected since my death: the Schönbrunn, the Hofbrau, the Belvedere, even my own Mozarthaus. I go through Theater an der Wien, the Staatsoper and the Volksoper. I amble through the boulevards and the alleys and the beer halls and churches and the parks and the Vienna woods and even the Danube, which is hardly blue, as one of my successors imaginatively dubbed. In short, I can go everywhere I please, but as morning rises I must leave for another decade. And I am expected to help anyone I can during my brief sojourn. This visit is a difficult one, for there are a number of people in town that are trying to channel me, and in just every case the channeler is doing so for trivial or illegitimate purposes. I have ignored all those demands for my attention but I could not help noticing that your plea was genuine and you were seriously in need of my help. So, I ask again, how can I help you?”

.....This was a disconcertingly long speech and Alicia did not understand parts of it, but she captured the essential message: Mozart was really before her and was offering to help her. So she sat on the bed, squared her shoulders, and declared:

.....“Herr Mozart, I hardly need to tell you that my admiration for you and the music you wrote knows no limits. Like most educated people, I am familiar with many of your works, which are perfection itself, for the gracefulness of the melodies, the originality and logic of the structures, the drama that pervades from the simplest sonata to your great operas. But unlike most people, what astonishes me the most is the speed with which you composed your works, the fact that they were produced with almost no second thoughts or corrections, in an unending stream as if the angels dictated the music and you wrote it. I have struggled in vain over the years to create something beautiful, something that will transcend my existence and will provide

enjoyment for generations to come, like you have done. However, unlike you, I have no ideas, I sit before the piano for hours on end and nothing comes to me. Can you help me?" There was undisguised desperation in her question.

.....Mozart's specter was silent for a moment and then inquired: "Have you written anything?"

....."Oh, yes, three years ago I composed a short free-form piece, like a rhapsody, entitled "Nostalgia," which was very well received and caused me to win prizes and achieve notoriety in my country and abroad. But I have done nothing of significance ever since."

....."I remember my first pieces, three little piano sonatas that I whipped up when I was five. I started composing nonstop from then on. In some ways, I wish I had not been so prolific."

....."Why? I would kill to be able to do that."

....."Well, when you are so prolific and write so fast, people tend to value less your effort. Look at that man Beethoven who came just after me. He was uncouth and his music was atrocious, but he wrote so slowly that he got the publishers and the public to eagerly await every morsel he dropped on their laps, whenever he got around to finishing it. But I digress. So, if I understand your problem, you once wrote something that was very good and have not been able to follow up on it for several years. Am I right?"

....."Yes."

....."Have you heard of what I understand people in your generation call 'one hit wonders'" I mean, artists or composers that produce one very successful musical effort and are unable to match it for the rest of their lives?"

....."Yes, of course."

....."Isn't it true that the work continues to be enjoyed even if the artist fades into obscurity?"

.....“Yes.”

.....“Listen, there was this minor composer just before my time called Johann Pachelbel. He wrote a short piece called ‘Canon’ which drove me crazy because it repeated its simple melodic line continuously for I don’t know how many bars. Everyone loved it, everyone thought it was great. Herr Pachelbel never wrote anything else of any note, and yet I bet his ‘Canon’ kept on being played long after his death. Do you know what I am talking about?”

.....“Yes, Herr Mozart. I know the ‘Canon.’ It is played at many weddings, and it is still quite popular among music lovers.”

.....“Well, there you have it. You may be another Pachelbel. My recommendation is that you enjoy what you have accomplished, and if you cannot produce any other great works, change your field of endeavor.”

.....“No, no, no. I was born to be a composer, and will die that way.”

.....“Well, I am sorry for you. Talent can’t be forced, and it is best to be a one hit wonder than no wonder at all. Please try to be happy with what you have accomplished.”

.....“You say that because everything came easy to you. If you had written only those three little sonatas at the age of five and then nothing else, you would be singing a different tune.”

.....“Perhaps. But I was also a great violinist and the best pianist of my generation. I would have made ends meet, somehow.” Mozart’s specter closed arms around his chest, seeming annoyed.

.....“I am sorry, I didn’t mean to be disrespectful. I was only disappointed that you could not help me.”

.....“Well, perhaps there is one thing I can do. Do you have music paper handy?”

.....Yes, quite on top of my desk.”

.....“Pull out a sheet or two, and I will dictate something for you.”

Alicia did as ordered, and Mozart's specter directed: "This is going to be a Rondo in D Major for piano. Ready?"

.....Mozart's specter called out the notes and at the same time hummed the melody, in a weak but pleasant tenor voice. He dictated so fast that Alicia thought she would have trouble keeping up with him, but somehow she managed. A few minutes later, she and Mozart were done. "It is very difficult" she concluded plaintively. Mozart shrugged his spectral shoulders and declared: "It is one of several pieces that were floating in my head as I lay dying. I was trying to finish the "Requiem" and never had time to transcribe it. But this is pretty much finished, trust me." Then, after a sigh, he thrust his arm out in a wide, grandiose arc and told the astonished girl: "Use it well and in good luck."

.....The first light of the morning shone through the garret's window, and Mozart's specter became dimmer and disappeared without waiting for Alicia's thanks. No sooner was he gone than Alicia dropped back in bed and fell into a stupor.

.....When she regained consciousness hours later, she was disconcerted to find several sheets of music scattered on the floor. As she picked them up placed them in some order, she tried to remember where these came from. It was a manuscript for a piano piece which she had clearly penned, but she could not for her life recall when or how she had come to write this music. She silently read the score and marveled at its complexity. How could she have written this? She was musically trained, but this was a cut above anything she had ever produced. Was her creative drought over? Was it time to give fame another try?

* * *

.....Two weeks later Alicia returned to Ruritania. She had made minimal structural changes to the score, slowed the tempo a bit, and tried as best she could to make the work sound like her former compositions. She contacted "Ruritania Shines," now in its fourth triumphal season, and was invited to appear in the next taping session, two weeks hence. That left her enough time to find a modest apartment, rent a piano, and leave word with her agent and the record company that she was back in town and had some new material that she expected would be well received. Somehow the news got to the local press and the taping of "Ruritania Shines" was accompanied by a great deal of speculation and the presence of several reporters among the packed audience.

.....She came onstage wearing a simple dress, making no attempt to disguise her age. Not that doing so would have been an easy task: she was looking gaunt from her months of privation in Vienna, and her thinness and the hollowness of her cheeks made her look even older. Gasps of surprise and a murmur of commiseration provided a background to the master of ceremonies introduction: "Ladies and gentlemen, our own star, Ruritania's most beloved artist, has finally returned. She has been a tireless ambassador of our country in the capitals of Europe and has brought honor and recognition for Ruritania wherever she has appeared. But now she is back with us again." (Deafening applause, whistles and stomping of feet).

....."She will be playing a new composition that will again fill our hearts with awe, with joy, with patriotic pride. Please give Alicia a warm round of applause." (More clapping and shouting).

.....Alicia bowed soberly twice, sat at the banquette, and announced in a firm, self-confident voice: "This work is a modern homage to the Western musical tradition from which our own arises. It is a piano piece entitled 'Rondo in the Classical Style.' I wrote it in Vienna, under the shadow of all the great masters who worked there." And then she played.

.....When she finished, her performance was greeted with polite applause instead of delirium. Puzzled, she got to her feet and took a bow. The applause got no louder; in fact, it diminished somewhat and had almost vanished when

the panel's chief judge commented: "Well, that was *interesting*. I am no expert, but I found the piece somewhat lacking in the tropical fire that made your earlier works so delightful. It sounded a little stiff and out of fashion, like the three-piece suits that men used to wear last century. Let's see what my colleagues have to say."

.....The other judges were kinder in their words, but their message was essentially the same: Alicia's new composition was surprisingly lifeless, particularly for a rondo, and without expressly saying it they declared it a bore.

.....Later in the evening, the panel determined that a ballad singer, a flaming torch juggler, and an acrobatic dance troupe were being invited to the final round of competition. Alicia did not make the cut.

.....Her disappointment grew in the next few days when reviews by musical experts began to file in. One brought up the fable of the mountain giving belated birth to a mouse. Another declared that sabbaticals don't work for everyone. The cruelest of all reviewers reminded readers of Mozart's proclivity for playing practical jokes and suggested that, had this been possible, Alicia could have been the victim of the immortal's heavy-handed sense of humor.

.....It took Alicia many months and hours of psychotherapy to recover from the humiliation. She still hurt from the failure, but reveled in the satisfaction of being a latter-day Pachelbel and having at least one solid hit under her belt.

.....She also realized that one must learn to live with one's limitations. She enrolled in paralegal school and in a couple of years had secured a well remunerated position with a major law firm, where she spent the rest of her working life. She continued to play the piano, but no longer performed in public. And she never set foot in Vienna again.



Matias Travieso-Diaz is a retired Cuban-American attorney who, after retirement, redirected his efforts towards creative writing. He has recently authored over three dozen stories of various lengths and genres. One of his stories was published in March 2019 in the *New Reader Magazine*; another in June 2019 in the *Dual Coast Magazine*; and others have been accepted for publication in the near future by the *Night to Dawn Magazine*, the *Lite Lit One Journal*, and *Jitter Press*.

Share this:



Tags: [matias travieso-diaz](#), [short fiction](#)

In This Issue



“The Jazz Photography Issue” features an interview with today’s most eminent jazz portrait photographer Carol Friedman, news from Michael Cuscuna about newly released Francis Wolff photos, as well as archived interviews with William Gottlieb, Herman Leonard, Lee Tanner, a piece on Milt Hinton, a new edition of photos from Veryl Oakland, and much more...

On The Turntable



This month, a playlist of 18 recently released jazz recordings by six artists -- Joshua Redman, Joe Lovano, Matt Brewer, Tom Harrell, Zela Margossian, and Aaron Burnett

Short Fiction



"Crossing the Ribbon" by Linnea Kellar is the winning story of the 51st Jerry Jazz Musician Short Fiction Contest

Poetry



Seventeen poets contribute to the Summer, 2019 collection of jazz poetry reflecting an array of energy, emotion and improvisation

“What Are 4 Or 5 Of Your All-Time Favorite Blue Note Albums?”



Dianne Reeves, Nate Chinen, Gary Giddins, Michael Cuscuna, Eliane Elias and Ashley Kahn are among the 12 writers, musicians, and music executives who list and write about their favorite Blue Note albums

Pressed For All Time



In an excerpt from his book *Pressed for All Time*, Michael Jarrett interviews producer John Snyder about the experience of working with Ornette Coleman at the time of his 1977 album *Dancing in Your Head*

Art

Drawing of Bird at Billy Berg's, finishing a plate of taquitos



before walking through the crowd, full, and playing "Cherokee."



"Charles Ingham's Jazz Narratives" – a continuing series

Poetry



Poetry by John Stupp and Michael L. Newell

Art



Jerry Jazz Musician regularly publishes a series of posts featuring excerpts of the photography and stories/captions found in *Jazz in Available Light* by Veryl Oakland. In this edition, Mr. Oakland's photographs and stories feature Art Pepper, Pat Martino and Joe Williams.

Interviews



Maxine Gordon, author of *Sophisticated Giant: The Life and Legacy of Dexter Gordon*, discusses her late husband's complex, fascinating life.

Cover Stories With Paul Morris



In this edition, Paul writes about jazz album covers that offer glimpses into intriguing corners of the culture of the 1950's

In The Previous Issue



Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records co-founder, is interviewed about his successful career as a jazz producer, discographer, and entrepreneur...

Coming Soon



An interview with Nate Chinen, director of editorial content at WBGO Radio, former *New York Times* jazz writer, and the author of *Playing Changes: Jazz in the New Century*.

Contributing Writers



Carole Ackelson



Richard Beattie

R. Bremner



Mary Burns



Patricia Carragon



Ed Coletti



Arlene Corwin



Victor Craven



Steve Dalachinsky



Frank De Canio



Diane Dees



Lia Di Stefano

Salvatore Difalco



Hannah Draper



Victor Enns



Molly Ertel



Dan Franch



Freddington



Anggo Genorga



Brian Greene



Robert Harris



Bob Hecht

Charles Ingham



Lawrence J. Klumas



John Jack Cooper



D.R. James



Arya Jenkins



Anisha Johnson



Sophie Jonas-Hill



Charles Joseph Albert



R.J. Keeler



Linnea Kellar

Erren Kelly



Mark Kerstetter



Michael Keshigian



John L. Stanizzi



Michael L. Newell



J. Lee Strickland



Aurora Lewis



David Lohrey



Alex Louloudis



Douglas Malan

Paul Morris



CJ Muchhala



Robert Nisbet



Kimberly Parish Davis



Robin Ray



Shan Richardson



Ed Ruzicka



Fred Shaw



Roger Singer



Dan Smith



John Stupp

**Susandale****Phyllis Wax****Michael Yellin****Alan Yount**

[LEARN HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK](#)

Site Archive

About JJM

Jerry Jazz Musician is a non-commercial website whose mission is to explore the culture of America with jazz as the centerpiece. We focus on publishing content geared toward readers with interests in jazz music, its rich history, and the culture it influenced – and was influenced by.

Featured Link

[David Crosby talks jazz](#)

In an NPR review of his 2017 album *Sky Trials*, David Crosby discusses his interest in jazz. *“My older brother turned me on to ’50s jazz – Dave Brubeck,*

We regularly publish original interviews, poetry, literature, and art, and encourage our readers to share their own perspectives.

Chet Baker, Gerry Mulligan, that period. And of course once you start listening to that stuff, all roads lead to [John] Coltrane and Miles [Davis]."

MORE ABOUT US

Recommended Websites

- [Brain Pickings](#)
- [Doug Ramsey](#)
- [Gary Giddins](#)
- [Institute of Jazz Studies](#)
- [Jazz Profiles](#)
- [Jazz Wax](#)
- [The Joys of Jazz Podcasts](#)
- [Louis Armstrong House](#)
- [Mosaic Records](#)
- [Terry Teachout](#)

Today's Music

I'll Go Mine



Joshua Redman plays 'I'll Go Mine,' an inspiring, hook-filled tune from his new album 'Come What May'

© 2012 – 2018 Maita Marketing Group, LLC All rights reserved.

