

# Benny Goodman at Carnegie Hall -The Story of the Session

By John McDonough



Eddie Parker had been around Carnegie Hall a long time. He started working there in 1927, and he'd seen a lot: Arturo Toscanini, Ignacy Paderewski, Jascha Heifetz, Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Leopold Stokowski. But in January 1978, Parker seemed puzzled. "It's this Benny Goodman thing," he mused, tugging his earlobe and arching his eyebrow. "It's amazing. In all my years here the only event that has created such a phenomenal ticket demand is the Horowitz 50th anniversary concert just nine days before. Even the 'concert to end all concerts' in 1976 with Stern, Horowitz, Menuhin, Rostropovitch and Bernstein didn't equal the demand this Goodman program has stirred. We've turned down literally thousands. It's amazing."

Parker quantified the world of music in terms of ticket sales, a standard he was eminently well situated to apply.

But Parker's amazement was nothing compared to Goodman's. It all began when he decided to do a 40th anniversary commemorative celebrating his most famous of all performances of January 16, 1938. He made the announcement at a small press party November 1, 1977, in the Rainbow Room at 30 Rockefeller Plaza.

The ink was hardly dry on John S. Wilson's

New York Times story before the phone began to ring. Everyone wanted tickets. Calls came in from California, Chicago, St. Louis, Florida. Then as the dawning sun spread around the globe, from Bangkok, Berlin, Sweden, Switzerland. They were from fans, acquaintances, friends cashing in small favors. Some insisted they'd attended the original in '38. One persistent caller to Goodman 200 East 66th Street office declared himself a representative of the Governor of New Jersey.

Muriel Zuckerman, Goodman's long time chief of staff and gate keeper, earmarked several blocks for press, family and friends. The rest went on sale at 9 am Monday, November 14. By noon Carnegie's cupboard was bare, swept clean to the bone in one of the most intense ticket stampedes anyone could remember, including the venera-

ble Mr. Parker. Nobody could quite believe it. For the first time in God-knows-when, the hottest ticket in America was for a Benny Goodman performance.

What the fuss was all about, of course, was that rarest of opportunities that comes to any given generation to briefly reconstitute a bit of the world as it once was and relive a defining moment of its youth, in this case with members of the original cast called back to duty. After 40 years, an acceptance of mortality has set in along with the inevitable corollary that such a moment might not present itself again.

The occasion was important because the original event was important, not merely in the wisdom of hindsight, but clearly and obviously in the original moment. Today in a time when jazz flourishes more in the august and protected sanctuaries of academic safety than the bar

rooms and ballrooms where millions once listened, it is often less remembered that in its early years jazz was plagued an awkward sense of cultural inferiority. Like all things born in the street, like hip hop today, it began as a folk dialect fashioned by persons often who cared little for the established rules of musical grammar and, for reasons of taste



and expression, invented their own order.

In the 1920s, things started to evolve, a process unheard of in most folk forms, which prefer to cling to the authority of their traditions. The first important soloists - Bechet and Armstrong - brought a large measure of virtuosity, discipline and emotional range to jazz that it never before had. Then came the intelligentsia, black but mostly white, to explain it all in the musicological terminology of Europe. Standards of criticism began to evolve. When Duke Ellington went to Europe for the first time in 1933, he played concerts, not dances. People listened and writers spoke of him as the new Delius or Ravel. When he returned home he started calling his pieces concertos and suites. The point: by the 1930s jazz was growing impatient with its low social status and was acquiring a taste for upward social mobility.

And just as education has been the traditional ladder up for immigrants, minorities and the poor, one's own musical technique was to be the bootstrap to legitimacy for jazz. By mastering technical obstacles, one earned one's place of peerage alongside the classical virtuosos. Or so the argument went as posited by such early critics as Otis Ferguson and Winthrop Sargeant. Certainly the sound of jazz changes strikingly during this period. It became professionalized for one thing, and that effectively ended the music's folk period. More important, technique liberated talent that had been boxed in by limited means of escape. Skill in the hands of youth stirred curiosity and demanded new problems to solve. The art of the jazz solo plunged into intricacies of rhythm, harmony and attack that would have been beyond the reach of the pioneers. Roy Eldridge, Harry James, Charlie Christian, Lester Young and Art Tatum cut innovative new routes through the old 12-and-32 bar-chorus forms that would have been impossible with anything less than complete technical fluency. Some confused virtuosity with slickness, concluding that a cultivated virtuosity corrupted an imagined Rousseauian purity - the distortions of artifice despoiling an ideal 'state of nature.' What they failed to understand was that technique never corrupts real talent. It liberates it.

In an era of great virtuosos, Benny Goodman had it all: disciplined temperament, a clarity of purpose that made him impervious to criticism, and a monumental endowment of sheer skill. Between the emotional connection he exhibited to his music and the high-brow craftsmanship of his technique, he became the ultimate clincher in any argument over the right to jazz to stand alongside serious European music. Largely on this premise (and beyond the obvious impact of his music) Goodman became the first real jazz musician to capture a mass bourgeois white audience in America. To a large extent, it was that assumption that carried Goodman to Carnegie Hall in 1938.

Consider for a moment a trash can full of garbage. In an alley behind a garage among other trash cans, it is what it is. But sitting in the center of empty room with white walls in the Museum of Modern Art on 53rd Street in New York, that same trash can suddenly becomes a work of great significance to be taken seriously, considered and judged. It's simple. The space in which it sits has authorized it to be art.

The stage of Carnegie Hall had much the same power in 1938. When Benny Goodman suddenly found himself occupying this enclave of European extra-territoriality, this space sanctified by Beethoven, Mozart and Bach and personally baptized by Tchaikowsky in 1891, it became an immensely symbolic event because the space was symbolic. It was a time when 'serious' American benefactors deified European music and felt ennobled when they sponsored trickle-down efforts to bring 'good music' to the masses, no one more than David Sarnoff, patron of the NBC Symphony formed in 1937 and its network broadcasts under Arturo Toscanini. On January 16, 1938,

Goodman turned that notion on its head and showed its opposite dynamic. To wit - good music didn't have to trickle down from above. It could well up from below and assert its own terms. Benny was out to make the American concert stage safe for American music.

## The Concert

Behind the authorizing power of space, of course, lies the authority of those who fill the space. The hierarchies of culture are created by the cultural arbiters who say what art is and what art belongs where. In the case of the Goodman concert, the arbiter in question was widely known as New York City's then-greatest impresario of high culture, Sol Hurok.

For all these sublime issues at stake, the origins of this coup were almost embarrassingly prosaic. It was essentially a publicity stunt, pure and simple, hatched by Wynn Nathenson, a press agent working for Goodman and the ad agency for R.J. Reynolds' Camel Cigarettes brand at the time, William Esty & Co., which produced Goodman's weekly radio show. But maybe we should not be too flip-pant about publicity. A really great publicity stunt is more than a fabricated media event. At its best, it can be a work of art itself. It senses related but unspoken concerns that are floating subliminally in the air. It distills their essence into a flash point event of high drama that becomes irresistible to the press and public. The secret of a great publicity stunt is assembling just the right symbols and staging them with flare.

"When the thing was first put to me," Goodman told me in a 1977 interview, "it came out of left field, so to speak. I was a little dubious about it, not knowing just what would be expected of us." True enough. Expectations were vague because precedents were sparse. Dance bands had been playing to sit down audiences for several years by 1938, but in theater between movies, not, for the most part, concert halls.

"In those days," Goodman said, "you had a trapeze act, a funny man, or a dancer for relief. It was like a vaudeville show. I couldn't see how people were going to sit still and listen to the whole damn thing for 2-1/2 hours if it was just the band. That's why I wanted Bea Lillie on the show to tell some jokes. Luckily, she was pretty smart. She wanted no part of it."

Off hand, I would say the first concert presentation of dance music might have been Vincent Lopez at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1923. Once over, the story goes, Lopez was billed \$240 [\$9,000 in 2006] for damaged to the carpet by agitated feet. It sounds a bit apocryphal, but maybe some part of it is true.

Surely the closest spiritual ancestor to Goodman as a concert performer was Paul Whiteman, who saw his bonding with jazz very much as a missionary sees his relationship to a non-Christian or secularist community. A product of Tin Pan Alley, Whiteman had an admiration

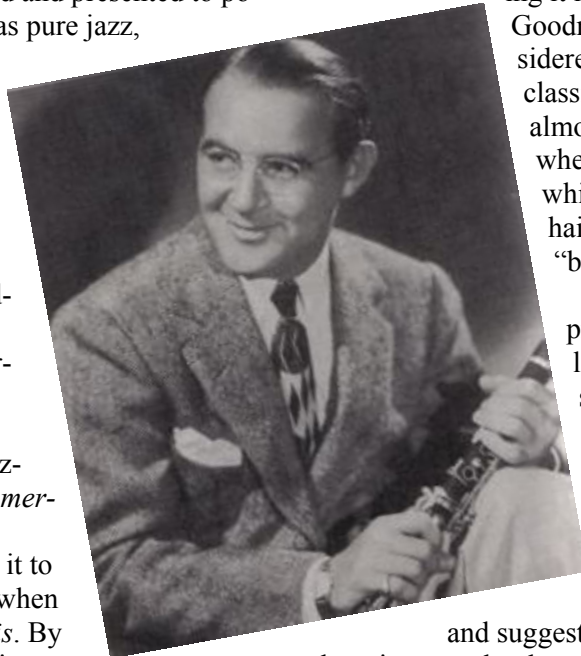
for jazz, a well-intentioned sense of *noblesse oblige*. Jazz was considered in the United States as an object of so-called primitivism, the white man's burden, something to be rescued from the saloon, civilized and presented to polite society in the concert hall. Not as pure jazz, of course; that was quite out of the question. On Lincoln's birthday in 1924 Whiteman and composer George Gershwin offered the ultimate in this Pygmalion approach to jazz, *The Rhapsody in Blue*. Written to make a debutante out of jazz, this 'experiment in modern music' turned out, against all odds, to be a magnificent and enduring work. Gershwin, a song writer with classical ambitions and some training, went on to produce the jazz-influenced *Concerto in F* and *An American in Paris*.

Whiteman himself finally made it to Carnegie Hall on October 7, 1928, when he debuted Ferde Grofe's *Metropolis*. By now the unveiling of a presumably important new work had become a ritual of such cross-over concerts, intended to prove the worthiness of jazz to the concert audience. Bix Beiderbecke is also said to have played *In A Mist* at that concert, which was attended by Sergei Rachmaninoff sitting in a front box.

With these precedents in place, Goodman wondered at first what obligation he might be under to use the stature of the occasion to point American music in some new direction. He decided he was under no obligation. There was nothing to be proved. Bea Lillie notwithstanding, he was immensely secure in his conviction that jazz owed no apologies to anyone. "When we understood that we could handle the thing in our own way," he said, "the proposition really began to mean something. If the stuff is worth playing at all, it's worth playing in any hall that presents itself. I didn't want to put across a message or anything like it. I was just satisfied to have the band do what it had always done."

Nor was there any thought of including a classical portion in the program, though there was no one better prepared to do so at the time. He had been rehearsing Mozart's *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings*, K 581, for some months with the Coolidge String Quartet, and would record it with the Budapest String Quartet in April 1938. And two days after Carnegie Hall he would perform it on his Camel Caravan radio pro-

gram. (Jazz Unlimited CD 201 2087.) Russ Connor, Goodman's biographer and discographer, says he was "thrilled by his acceptance into the classical field." But as far as doing it in Carnegie Hall: "Absolutely not," Goodman said in 1977. "It was never considered as far as I know." (Goodman's classical debut at Carnegie would come almost a year later, on January 9, 1939 when he performed Bartok's *Contrasts*, which he had commissioned. Critics hailed Goodman's performance as "brilliant.")



So the program would be a jazz program. But what? If it was to be less than a Paul Whiteman event, it should also be more than an evening at the Madhattan Room. Irving Kolodin, music critic for the *Saturday Review* and collaborator on Goodman's soon to be published autobiography, took at least one page from Whiteman's 1924 book and suggested a survey of jazz history. Somehow it seemed to have richer possibilities now that jazz actually had a history - something that could hardly be said in 1924.

John Hammond, who had been whispering generally good advice to Goodman for about five years, pushed for a jam session and went all out to deliver a bandstand of truly top level players. From the Count Basie band, then doing one nighters until opening at the Loew's State later that week, came Lester Young, Buck Clayton, Walter Page, Fred Green and Basie himself. From Duke Ellington's Famous Orchestra, who were also doing one nighters in the New York area prior to settling into the Cotton Club, came the cream of his solo core: Johnny Hodges, Cootie Williams, and Harry Carney. Hammond declined to invite Rex

Stewart, whom he considered an exhibitionist. Also, the two had fallen out when Stewart refused to play a benefit performance Hammond had once organized in support for the Scottsboro Boys, nine African-American young men who were falsely accused of sexual assault and had become defendants in a string of Tennessee criminal trials, 1931-1937. Many Left-leaning people helped support the boys' legal defense, including Hammond. The jazz record producer's relations were also chilly with Ellington, who was reported to have attended the concert that night, but *without* performing. He was not keen to participate in another performer's evening of such prominence and preferred to wait until he



The great Cootie Williams

himself was the star on the Carnegie stage. The musicians in the jam session first played together during a sound check and rehearsal before the concert, probably the afternoon before. Goodman was walking around the hall checking the balance, when, according to his autobiography, “the thing was jumping so much that I had to rush up and get in on it.”

Finally came January 16th and the time was at hand. That afternoon Georges Enesco conducted the New York Philharmonic in a performance of Saint-Saens' *First Violin Concerto* and Mozart's *Haffner Symphony*. It was broadcast at 3 pm as part of the weekly Philharmonic series on CBS. After 5 pm the hall was quickly cleared and set up for the evening performance. Tickets for the Goodman concert had been sold out for several weeks. But among the last minute customers to patronize the scalpers was Goodman himself, who paid several times list when members of his family decided to come in from Chicago, including his mother, Dora, and sister, Ida Winsberg. A ring of seats was added on stage to accommodate the overflow. Prices were scaled from \$2.50 [\$75 in 2006] on down. A seat in the gallery sold for 85 cents [\$25 in 2006]. The lines for standing room began queuing up at the box office late in the afternoon. By dinnertime they were joined by another line - fascist pickets. Hitler and Stalin's proxies were fighting the Spanish Civil War at the time, the first European conflict to catch the political radar of American activists. It polarized a small number of left wing anti-fascists who favored the Loyalist coalition, which had won a slim electoral majority of the Spanish Republic, and right-wing, often pro-fascist isolationists who supported Franco. Among the latter was the leadership of the Catholic Church in America and its most powerful spokesman, New York's Cardinal Francis Spellman. Goodman's moderate liberal sympathies had been aroused by the Loyalist-Republican cause and he had performed at one or two fund raisers for the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the group of American volunteers who went to Spain as Republican fighters. The people who picketed Goodman at Carnegie Hall that night were mostly Catholic pro-Franco sympathizers. But the demonstration was peaceful and few gave it a second thought.

Inside and backstage, the anticipation was getting nerve wracking. Everyone fortified himself in his own way. For Babe Russin, it was with a half gallon of black-berry wine. Chris Griffin feasted on lobster and whiskey.



Johnny Hodges and his soulful alto sax

Gene Krupa simply kept going to the bathroom all day. In a curious sort of way, it was the big showdown between the ‘cats’ of swing and the ‘hounds’ of tradition. One or the other would be bloodied and slain in the battle. “Many fans are holding their breath and fearing the worst,” Gama Gilbert wrote in *The New York Times Magazine* the Sunday of the concert. “They foresee the same fate for swing as was suffered by symphonic jazz.”

It may seem hard today to imagine a time when Benny Goodman was a controversial figure. But he was. And at no time was the controversy he personified more intense than in January 1938. The idea of Goodman walking into Carnegie Hall was inciting to the guardians of high culture. “Two extremes of opinion, both mainly inspired by snobbism, are most to the fore,” *The Times* reported. “The first is held by those who, unable or unwilling to see any merit in swing, regard it as an unregenerate racket whose sole function is as an outlet for the uncouth energies of the proletariat; the second, by the cultists, who exalt swing to supreme artistic heights.... Self-appointed guardians of public morals see in swing neither uplift nor inspiration, but only undisguised eroticism and rampant vulgarity. Spengelites, no doubt, hail swing as a fitting dance macabre for a society tobogganing to its grave.” Obviously to some the controversy went beyond mere music; with the future of western civilization in the balance, no wonder people were nervous!

Shortly after 8 pm the doors swung open on 57th Street and the audience started weaving into the shallow lobby and up the stairs into the hall. Swing music journalist George T. Simon, pen and paper in hand, was there for *Metronome* magazine. So was John Hammond, mostly for himself. So was a young Goodman fan still on his way up, Jerry Wexler, future head of Atlantic Records. Albert Marx and his wife Helen Ward enjoyed prime seats, as did Marx's brother Lawrence. Albert sat in what must have been the first row snapping off black and white pictures with a 35 mm Leica under available light. Bill Savory, who would play such an important role a dozen years later in production of the concert record album on Columbia, was also there.

There were also many Carnegie Hall regulars there, and not all of them were smug about jazz at their favorite venue. The Viennese harpsichordist Yella Pessel, who had so often admired the way Teddy Wilson played Bach on the harpsichord in her home, was there. "Such clarity of line," she explained. "So much nicer to hear swing played well than classical music played badly." Saul Goodman (no relation to Benny) was the tympanist of the New York Philharmonic and he took a special interest in Gene Krupa. "There isn't a drummer I know that has the feeling for rhythm that Gene has," he said that evening. "Even when he set into a chorus cold, he seems to have some subconscious idea of a pattern that is perfect for what's playing." Metropolitan Opera star Rose Bampton was in the audience. And from violinist Nicholas Moldavan of the Coolidge String Quartet came this unequivocal assertion: "I consider Benny Goodman one of the great musicians of our time." It was high praise from high places.

Critic Deems Taylor, who was inclined to regard jam sessions as "one long cadenza," was there too, apparently willing to admit that anything is worth trying once, even a swing concert in Carnegie Hall. On the famous quiz program "Information Please in 1942," Taylor, who in those days was every middlebrow's favorite highbrow, was asked to define the phrase "hep cat." He said he had never heard it. When told it was a musical term related to swing, he insisted swing was not music. Paul Whiteman couldn't be there, but dashed off a telegram:

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR CORONATION!  
AND REMEMBER SON, A CLARINET SOUNDS  
JUST AS GOOD TO A LORNETTE.

Curtain time was 8:45. "The papers in Goodman's hand," reported *Down Beat*, who had a reporter backstage, "were shaking like the lullaby of the leaves." Pale as a ghost, he gathered everybody into the wing off stage right. There was a press of photographers, stagehands, journalists and old friends. Ivy Anderson, vocalist with Ellington, was there to bring her team-mates some luck.

No one wanted to be the first one out. Krupa asked in mock seriousness if there was anybody in the house. Benny called for the Ellington and Basie men. They should stand by and be ready to come out after *Sometimes I'm Happy*. Finally, someone shoved Chris Griffin onto the stage and the applause started to spread around the house and gather critical mass. With a touch of pomp and circumstance, a valet leaned down and whisked a brush across the tips of Goodman's shoes. Benny then followed his men on stage, and the show was underway.

### The Music

In the manner of a typical Carnegie Hall concert, the music started without announcements or remarks from the conductor. That was what printed programs were created

for. No Let's Dance radio theme either. *Don't Be That Way* was an original that Edgar Sampson had written for Chick Webb, who recorded it at a considerably more brisk tempo as a transcription piece in 1936. Nothing much happened to the tune until Goodman unwrapped this debut version at Carnegie Hall. No one knew what to expect. The band had not even recorded it yet. When he did record it in February it would become one of the biggest hits of his career. Mitchell Parish added words that Mildred Bailey and Bing Crosby also recorded in 1938. "Benny beat off *Don't Be that Way* a bit too slow," wrote George T. Simon. "Suddenly though, Gene Krupa emitted a tremendous break on the drums. The crowd cheered, yelled, howled. Gene's hair fell into his eyes. The band fell into a groove." It was a real twister of a solo.



Fletcher Henderson's silky arrangement of *Sometimes I'm Happy* was among the first he did on commission from Goodman, who purchased a block of existing Henderson charts in 1934 thanks to funding from NBC Radio and the Let's Dance show's sponsor. Henderson created a strikingly original vision of the tune, and voiced it in simple but fluffy reed lines that swung with remarkable softness. In the first 16 bars of the last chorus he virtually unfolds a new melody to replace the old. The song dated from 1923, when it originated under the title *Come On and Pet Me* for a show called *Mary Jane McKane*. But it was dropped. Irving Caesar later wrote a new lyric titled *Sometimes I'm Happy* for a 1925 show that never reached Broadway. Finally in 1927 it emerged in the show *Hit the Deck* and became a standard.

*One O'Clock Jump* was the only 12-bar blues played in the concert. Familiar today as a swing era anthem and theme of Count Basie's Orchestra, Basie had not yet adopted it as his signature, which was still *Moten Swing*.

Basie then used *Blue and Sentimental* briefly before turning to *One O'Clock Jump*, certainly by the summer of 1938. As Jess Stacy approaches the final resolution toward the end of his third chorus, you can hear Benny say, "Take one more," clearly an unexpected cue requiring Stacy to shift his planned trajectory. Benny takes six -- two rugged and tough, three that run from introspection to subtle tension, and a sixth that has nice interplay with Stacy. Though Basie is thought of as the tune's composer, the fact is virtually everything about it comes from uncopyrighted blues figures which had been floating around for years. The familiar sax riff in the rideout, for instance, originated with Fats Waller in the '20s and found its way into the 1929 Chocolate Dandies record of *Six or Seven Times*, credited to Waller and Irving Mills. Where the blues are concerned, there often is no clear title.

## Twenty Years of Jazz

In 1938 you could still tell a history of jazz of sorts in five numbers and not have to worry about accommodating bop, cool, modal, fusion, and the free jazz as if they were all equal chapters in the same story. But this 'Twenty Years of Jazz' concert format proved a popular feature and became a staple of future Goodman performances later that year as more hitherto classical venues opened up to swing. 'Twenty Years of Jazz' was played in August when Goodman became the first jazz artist to play Ravinia, in Highland Park near Chicago, and later at the Hollywood Bowl. It may also mark the very beginning of the jazz repertory movement as a concert concept, i.e., the idea of musicians accurately reproducing historically important jazz records. I remember sitting in Carnegie Hall in January 1988 when Bob Wilber played his remarkable recreation of the entire original Goodman concert. When he came to Twenty Years of Jazz, it was like seeing a picture within a picture -- a recreation of what was originally a recreation.

The survey begins in 1917 with *Sensation Rag*, by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, then, in 1938, enjoying something a fleeting revival. Bobby Hackett had come to New York from Boston in 1937 stepping over the rose pedals which Boston critic George Frazier had strewn in his path. He managed to collect 46 votes in the first *Down Beat* Readers Poll that year and was just short of his 23 birthday when Goodman brought him to Carnegie Hall to recreate Beiderbecke's *I'm Comin' Virginia*. Frazier wrote of his performance, "It was regrettable that [stage fright] had to vitiate [Hackett's] debut into the really big time." Simon on the other hand said "he strode coolly on and off the stage sandwiching a fine imitation of Bix between his entrance and exit."

As legend had it, Goodman began his performing career imitating Ted Lewis, a showman and vaudevillian who fancied himself a clarinetist in much the way Jack Benny was a violinist, but without the essential mitigating element of self deprecation. By 1931 Goodman's child-

hood clowning had become a paying gig. Lewis used him on a number of record dates, often as an unbilled stand-in. There is a Lewis record called *Ho Hum* (April 15, 1931) where a voice shouts over a clarinet solo of incandescent perfection, "Play it, Ted, play it!" In paying tribute to Lewis here on *When My Baby Smiles at Me*, Benny does everything but haul out the old top hat. The crowd took it all in good fun. Brevity, no doubt, helped. The role of Hackett's supreme idol, Louis Armstrong, went to Harry James, who plays the opening cadenza to *West End Blues* and segued into *Shine*.

Bringing the jazz story up to date, Duke Ellington's three star soloists - Cootie Williams, Harry Carney, and Johnny Hodges - play *Blue Reverie*, recorded almost a year earlier by an Ellington small group fronted as Cootie Williams & his Rug Cutters.

The band then returned with a rousing rip through *Life Goes To A Party*, named for the weekly feature in the popular new-and-pictorial *Life Magazine* that had spotlighted Goodman & company at the Madhattan Room in its November 1, 1937, issue. *Down Beat*, the major swing music magazine of the era (rather than a jazz magazine per se) dismissed this version as an "anti-climactic mediocrity." But don't believe it! The band is at its thundering best with Krupa offering a basic primer in how to kick a band. Composer Harry James had recorded it with a small group of Basie sidemen six weeks before for Brunswick in the first session to be released under his own name.

The jam session on *Honeysuckle Rose* was also undervalued in the original overnight reviews. The disappointed *Down Beat* called it a "fizzle," while the usually charitable *Metronome* writer George T. Simon pronounced it as "uninspiring." Even Goodman went on record later calling it "unfortunate," proving that Benny was often the least reliable judge of his own work. Only *Time Magazine* seemed pleased: "A blaring success," it said, a judgement that almost makes one forgive the anonymous reviewer for thinking that *Honeysuckle Rose* was a blues. Like all jam sessions, this one is a procession of often luminous, free-standing moments more than a brilliant whole. Lester Young never played a better solo, though, of course, in those days he never seemed to play a lesser one either. I've always loved Clayton too, and the way the saxes make such a lovely cushion for him in his second chorus. The surprise is the incisive third chorus he launches into after a couple of rim shots from Krupa, deleted in the original 1950 edit of the concert to tailor the music to fit onto two LPs. Harry Carney's missing turn is also restored, as is the rare solo by Freddie Green. Turk Van Lake, himself a fine guitarist who played with Goodman, made much of Goodman's "insensitively" in asking Green to solo on this occasion. In his notes for the 1999 Columbia/ Legacy release, he argued that Green's instrument was not suited for solo work, suggesting that if Benny didn't know it, he should have. Van Lake's insight is useful and certainly authoritative. But on the other hand, Green is such an un-

known quantity as a soloist, one can hardly bring any real expectations to this long-deleted, two-chorus interlude. Harry James takes the last in the sequence of solos, demonstrating why he was, along with Roy Eldridge, the most exciting and edgy trumpet voice to emerge in the 1930s. There was no one like him - a variation on the Armstrong model that was a complete original. After James' flash solo, the men seem to be looking for a way out for a couple of choruses, they wrap it up in rousing form. Again, *Time Magazine* seemed to get it right: "In the best and truest sense, the joint was actually rocking."

Next comes a sequence of small groups. The trio's *Body and Soul* had been polished in numerous performances since 1935. When I was discussing this concert with Goodman in 1977, I asked him why he continued to stick to the old formats in his present concerts instead of creating new ones. Example: the descending scales that concluded *Avalon*. "You can't develop special material and head arrangements," he said, "when you work together only three or four times a month. You have to be together all the time, play together, and do a hell of a lot of woodshedding as well." Although there was always room to stretch and accommodate the unexpected, the trio and quartet developed a number of riffs, sequences and devices, not all of them as obvious as on *Avalon*. Listen to the first bridge of *The Man I Love*, for example, and note of Krupa's brushes drop out, giving Teddy Wilson a suspended, almost ethereal feel before he resumes in the 24th bar. It was a nice creative touch for a drummer on ballad, where the drummer is usually beside the point. Krupa once offered this advice to young drummers caught in a slow tempo: "Close your eyes and look dreamy; it's all you can do."

Intermission followed the explosive *I Got Rhythm*. Basie and his men said their farewells and headed to the Savoy Ballroom, for a much publicized appearance with Chick Webb's house band. Many of Goodman men would soon follow.

During the break, one critic clocked his time from Row G in the first balcony to the men's room and back at seven minutes. In the time he had to spare before the music resumed, he also confirmed that a paper airplane thrown from the gallery could cross the orchestra seats and land on the stage. By around 10:10 p.m. the concert resumed.



Among the more than 200 arrangements Fletcher Henderson wrote for Goodman after 1934, Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies* was one of the more popular and enduring. His brother Horace insisted later on that it was his work. Bill Savory considered this, said it could be true, but pointed out that there is a Camel Caravan program from this period (September 13, 1938, from Chicago) on which Fletcher actually explains how he wrote the *Blue Skies* chart, describing how he intended the opening dissonance to represent a clearing storm. Walter C. Allen, Fletcher's bi-

ographer, suggested that the score could have been done by Horace for his brother. But when Goodman took over the book, he may have assumed it to be Fletcher's.

Martha Tilton, who as of this writing in the summer of 2006, is the only known surviving member of the Carnegie Hall personnel, living today in Southern California north of Los Angeles, must have taken much satisfaction when the Columbia/Legacy edition of the concert came out in 1999. She clearly was the one who stopped the show with her performance of *Loch Lomond*, so much so that Goodman found it necessary to reassure the crowd that she would return. George T. Simon said she "garnered tremendous applause that held up the proceeding for almost a full five minutes. The ovation apparently helped settle the band, for it dug itself a nice groove behind Benny on in Fletcher's arrangement of *Blue Room*, which

was the only one Goodman com-

mission specifically for this concert. (Curiously, Simon also observed that Tilton "appeared to sing sans a mike," a detail contradicted by photographs of her.)

Jimmy Mundy originally wrote *Swingtime in the Rockies* for Earl Hines, who recorded it in 1933 under the title *Take It Easy*. It passed to Goodman in 1935 and was recorded under the present title a year later. It begins with a kind of compressed intensity, with the reeds soft but with bite. Goodman moves to the brink of catharsis, then pulls back. Then Ziggy Elman strikes a sudden flash fire that stirs the band to one of its wildest climaxes on record. Krupa seems so wound up, he keeps on spinning to the end. Elman could dominate a group when he wanted by sheer force of sound. By concentrating tremendous energy into small spaces, by leaping at climaxes from his first notes, he could take listeners by surprise. His directness could be jarring, and this is a bone-rattling example. For another,

search out *Gin For Christmas* done with Hampton in 1939. Elman returns for his patented Fralach-in-swing solo on *Bei Mir Bist Du Schön*, which also brings the Liltin' Tilton back on stage.

*China Boy* gets a rousing treatment from the trio. A Paul Whiteman hit in the 1920s, it became a favorite of young jazz musicians in Chicago, of which Benny and Gene were two. You hear lots of shouts of "take one more" on *Stompin' at the Savoy*, as the quartet peels off climax after climax through four rocking, stop-time bridges. When I was in 7th and 8th grade my pal Dave Danforth and I used to go crazy over Krupa's drum solo with its ka-boom, ka-boom, ka-boom ending.

*Dizzy Spells*, to be recorded by the group later on in March, is something of a Goodman milestone, having the distinction of being the first original non-blues piece in the Quartet repertoire. Almost without exception, every piece the trio or quartet had played was a standard or pop tune. (A broadcast performance of *Killer Diller* from December 1937 is the only previous home grown title in the record.) The pattern of developing new and original small group material would grow and culminate in the sextet, which produced a wealth of jazz standards (and also got Goodman into the publishing business).

*Sing, Sing, Sing* entered the Goodman book early in 1936 as a vocal feature for Helen Ward. But by the time it made it to commercial record status, it had evolved into an epic, and slightly hypnotic, running dialog between the band and Krupa's tom toms. It was a combination other bands soon took up, most notably Artie Shaw in pieces like *The Chant*, *Man From Mars*, *Serenade to a Savage*, and *Jungle Drums*. After the riveting drum overture by Gene, the first chorus is simply Louis Prima's familiar tune. Then a second theme is interpolated by the trombones; we know this as *Christopher Columbus (A Rhythm Cocktail)*, originally created by saxophonist Chu Berry for the Fletcher Henderson band of 1936. Horace Henderson wrote an orchestration around it, and Fletcher began using it as his radio theme in Chicago at the Grand Terrace Café. In part two James and Goodman play superbly, but the solo everyone remembers is Jess Stacy's little piano sonata. This is what Stacy said about it when I talked to him in 1977: "Carnegie Hall was the first time Benny ever gave me a solo on *Sing, Sing, Sing*. I don't ever recall taking a solo after Carnegie. He always hogged the solos anyway. Actually I wish I'd never taken the damn thing in the first place. It causes hell. People still suppose that Teddy Wilson took it." [*Time Magazine* did indeed attribute it to Wilson, though confusion is rare today.] Normally, the piece was built to end after Goodman and Krupa's free form duet. "Jess had been playing his ass off all night," as Goodman recalled 1977, "so I figured, what the Hell. Let's see what he can do." Jess decided immediately that he would not try to compete with the night's fireworks. Instead he would seek an entirely different mood. "So I took the A-minor chord that *Sing, Sing, Sing* is built

around," he told Whitney Balliett in a *New Yorker* piece, "and turned it this way and that. I'd been listening to Edward MacDougal and Debussy, and I think some of their things got in there too. I didn't know what else to do. I guess it worked out pretty well."

Alas, according to a contemporary account, the spontaneity of the solo may be something of a mythic distortion. In a profile of Stacy published in the *New Republic* of November 24, 1937 - nearly two months before Carnegie Hall - the astute critic Otis Ferguson wrote this:

"About the best of all is the way he used to eat up the choruses on *Sing, Sing, Sing*, getting higher with each one and beyond himself, truly wonderful piano. [Benny would stand beaming and silent through all of them; but when they recorded it, somebody was wrong, because there is everything on the double-sided twelve-inch release except that perishable triumph.] The first time I heard it was at the New York Paramount Theater, and when I began cheering afterward backstage, all Jess would say was: 'Oh, you mean that old A-minor thing.'

Ferguson was killed on a merchant ship in the Gulf of Salerno in 1943, too early to know that Stacy's "A-minor thing" would one day return to become one of the most famous piano solos in jazz history. In 1955 Stacy recorded a Goodman tribute LP for Atlantic, and one of the tunes he played was an original, *Blues for Otis Ferguson*. In 1978 when Goodman was organizing his 40th anniversary Carnegie Hall concert, he urged Stacy to come east and be part of it. Benny wanted him to play *In a Mist*. Stacy delayed and then finally declined, complaining that Goodman refused to pay for a first class plane ticket. But the modest Stacy, though only 73, was retired by then anyway and had grown unused to at performing at such a high profile event with a man with whom he was uneasy. Retired or not, though, nearly four years later in later 1981 he turned in a more than credible recital with his friend Marian McPartland on her syndicated National Public Radio program, Piano Jazz, often making unnecessary apologies for his technique and at one point playing a brief variation on his most famous solo. (The entire program is available on a Jazz Alliance/Concord CD, TJA 12017). Perhaps Stacy thought he might have made Goodman's 1978 concert memorable. We'll never know.

After the dust settled, fans shouted requests from the audience. Goodman chose to calm things down with his then-most-recent record, *If Dreams Come True*, by Edgar Sampson and the ever-present Irving Mills. Goodman's name was also on as co-composer, Benny having added the clarinet ensemble line that answers the brass, an element of the tune not part of the original version Sampson did for Chick Webb early in 1934. The concert concluded with Horace Henderson's *Big John's Special*, a number already recorded by Fletcher Henderson in 1934 and The Mills Blue Rhythm Band. Stacy comes back for another delightful chorus. After Elman's short interlude, the band goes into a pianissimo final chorus. A gentle rim shot from



Krupa, and the brass lays into the final two-bar coda that ends the event with the finality of an exclamation point!

## The Reviews

Monday the retrospectives began rolling off the presses. Few writers were able to resist the lure of portraying it all in terms of the going cliché - a war of cultural civilizations between the values of jazz and classical forms. To them Goodman & company “invaded” or “took possession” or “conquered” Carnegie Hall, conjuring military images of Visigoths sacking Rome in the fifth century. (For the Visigoths who could not get Carnegie tickets, the Paramount Theater ran an ad the next day promising Benny and the band “at regular Paramount prices” starting January 26.)

The daily papers were caught in a dilemma. None had regular jazz critics on staff, a practice that wouldn't change until *The New York Times* hired John S. Wilson when the Newport Jazz Festival got rolling in the 1950s. The concert was announced as a jazz concert. But it was also in Carnegie Hall. Who should cover it? The night club critic? The theater critic? Most editors believed the venue was supreme and opted to send their classical music critics, who were clueless. They seemed to expect Goodman to honor the Whiteman tradition and throw some new bridge across the gulf that yawned between classical and swing. When he didn't, the classical establishment not only felt disappointed but put-upon for having to waste their valuable time on such a non event. “We may be a hopeless old timer stuck in the joys of Whiteman jazz,” said *The Times'* Olin Downes. “But there is hardly any attempt at beauty of tone and certainly none at the construction of melody. Nor did we hear a single player invent one original or interesting musical phrase. The tone of the brass, almost continually overblown, is hard, shrill and noisy. The other instruments swell the racket.” Downes ended his review in a prediction: “Rhythm can get an audience wild, and it did. But it did not seem to be able to generate music. Swing of this kind will quickly be a thing of the past.”

It was a provocative review, embarrassing in a way for its lack of intellectual or emotional awareness to the music. It certainly provoked a batch of angry mail objecting to a gross miscarriage of judgment. So in a virtually unprecedented shift, the question of Goodman at Carnegie Hall was moved on Wednesday from the amusement page to

*The Times'* editorial page. “There seems no middle group who like swing music a little,” the paper wrote, tossing its hands up in some frustration. “One either loves it to the point of distraction or takes to the

hills to get away from it. It is of no use to argue about it.” Such was the nature of the cultural wars in 1938.

## The Records

It would all have been either forgotten or canonized into vague legend if it weren't for one man - Albert Marx. In 1938 he was a producer for Brunswick Records and the son of wealthy parents who

owned Robert Hall Clothes, a chain of menswear, and other interests. He was the one who arranged for the concert to be recorded, quite unbeknownst to Goodman or anyone else on stage that night.

Back in 1977 when Columbia Records was planning to re-master and reissue the concert to commemorate its 40th anniversary, I was asked to prepare the album notes for the project and tried to look into the details of how it was actually recorded and rediscovered. Irving Kolodin's original notes were less than specific on some key issues. He said, for example, that two sets were made, one going to Goodman and the other to the Library of Congress, an assertion that sent several hapless representatives from Columbia sleuthing fruitlessly around Washington, D.C. In 1968 John Hammond offered another version to radio presenter William B. Williams on WNEW, a major AM station in New York City. A man called Zeke Frank had made the records at Marx's request, according to Hammond, using the facilities of Carnegie Hall Recording on the 4th floor of the 56th and Seventh Avenue corner of the building. But Hammond later admitted he was wrong. Zeke had bought Carnegie Hall Recording soon after, in September 1938. Frank had then been in place to record Hammond's *Spirituals to Swing* concert that December, a fact that led Hammond simply to assume that he had recorded Goodman as well. In 1977 I spoke to both Marx and Goodman, each of whom had somewhat different recollections. About that, more momentarily.

First, let us understand how the technology was actually set up then. Because CBS broadcast the New York Philharmonic every Sunday, CBS had a permanent wire installed at Carnegie Hall. CBS kept a few Western Electric 618-B dynamic microphones on floor stands around the stage, according to Bill Savory, who was familiar with the situation. There was also an RCA 44-BX suspended about



Everyone delights in what Cootie Williams has to say in this Albert Marx photo

20 feet above the stage apron. All were patched into a console that was linked by phone wires to CBS master control at 485 Madison Avenue.

There was a third element in this broadcast party line, the custom transcription studios. The networks and stations had modest facilities for recording reference air checks for their own purposes. The lion's share was done by independent operations. They thrived because a lot of people needed such recordings. Ad agencies, advertisers, performers, band leaders, writers, producers and others all needed air checks too. They would contract with an independent recording studio to do the job. Setting up a studio was relatively easy. You bought the necessary equipment, then subscribed to direct lines into the master control facilities of the local stations, and you were in business. When an air check was required, the studio would simply open the circuit to the appropriate station or network and take the feed. Technically, it was not an "air check," since the signal was taken directly off the line wire.

This is why Goodman's Carnegie Hall concert could be recorded so routinely. It was not broadcast, of course. But it was easy for an independent studio simply to phone CBS master control, request the circuit to Carnegie Hall to be opened, and take the feed that way. CBS master control became a kind of switchboard through which any private studio could be connected to any hotel or concert hall with a CBS wire.

Marx commissioned the recording of the concert to Harry Smith, a close friend who had equipment in a studio at 2 West 46th Street known as ARS (Advertisers' Recording Service). A few minutes before show time, a switch at CBS was flipped and Smith's monitors fluttered with the murmur of pre-concert crowd noise direct from Carnegie. He used two 78 rpm turntables and took it all down on 28 12-inch discs, according to Savory, some recorded on both sides and all bearing a plain white label with the song title hand lettered in pen. He believes that one set - not two - was made at a cost of about \$250 [about \$7,750 in 2006].

I found two versions of what happened next. First, Goodman: "A week or so after the concert I ran into Albert, and he asked me if I wanted an air check of the concert. I said, 'Gee Albert, I don't want any more of those God damn things cluttering up my rooms. I've got everything from the Pennsylvania Hotel and every arrangement done 20 times. I know how we play them. The only thing new was the 20 years of jazz and the jam session. Then I thought for a minute and figured it might be fun to have the thing anyway. So I said, 'What the hell, sure.' I thanked him and he sent me a set." Next, Marx's recollection of events. "After I picked up the records from Harry Smith and had them home for a few weeks, Helen got a call from Benny. He wanted to know if he could borrow the records, and would I mind. Being friendly with Benny, I said yes. I never offered him a set. He asked to borrow them through Helen. Anyway, he had them for a couple of months and then returned them."

Putting aside the matter of who approached whom first, perhaps what happened was this. Benny almost certainly took Smith's originals to Universal Studios, an independent owned by the Warnow brothers, Mark and Harry (a.k.a. Raymond Scott). There he likely had a set dubbed off, returned the originals to Marx, stored his away somewhere and forgot about them. Twelve years went by. In 1950 Goodman was preparing to move from 1155 Park Avenue to 200 East 66th Street. The Park Avenue apartment was a huge layout of 14 rooms which rent control held to a very attractive \$250 a month as long as Goodman held the lease. With Benny moving, his sister-in-law Rachael made him a proposition. He would keep the lease and continue to pay rent, but she would move in and reimburse him monthly. A few weeks after the Goodman's left, Rachael moved in and discovered the left behind tin box containing the soon-to-be-famous discs in a rear closet (not his daughter, Rachael, as Benny maintained at the time).

"She called one day to tell me about these records," Benny said in 1977. "Holy Christ, I thought. Here they are again. They've been following me around for years. You know how an heirloom is. It's never important enough to be used for anything. But it's never worthless enough to throw away. So it follows you everywhere you go. I figured I ought to listen to it and see what the hell it sounds like. Might get a laugh out of it. Well Christ! The music came out like gangbusters. I was scared we might wear them out listening to them, so I took them to Reeves Sound Studio and had them transferred to tape. I'm no dead ass fool. I knew exactly what I had there. I knew I had a God damned blockbuster on my hands."

And he surely did. "Benny played the acetates for me," John Hammond said, "and I was mightily impressed. Benny was excited too. He knew there was money to be made." An audition tape was prepared by Bob Fine of Fine Sound and offered to a record company - perhaps Capitol, with whom Benny had just concluded a three year association. It was turned down. "Enough of that," Goodman thought. So he took the tapes to his old friend Ted Wallerstein, the man who had sponsored him at Victor in 1935 and brought him to Columbia in 1939. In 1950 Wallerstein was president of Columbia and riding high with the first success of the long playing record. When he heard Goodman's tapes he knew he had a shot at a big winner. The purchase of the discs was arranged by George Avakian, and the project was assigned to the Masterworks unit under senior producer Howard Scott. "Howard was the logical choice to oversee the project," Avakian recalled recently. "He had supervised the incredibly complex job of transferring 78-rpm classical recordings or their safeties to 33-rpm microgroove discs for the initial release by Columbia of 100 classical LP albums (June 1948). It was a nightmarish assignment."

Scott was a pianist from the Eastman School of Music and like most people at Masterworks had limited knowledge about jazz, although he had produced several of

Goodman's classical sessions for the label and enjoyed his respect and trust. So Bill Savory, who was then assistant head of Columbia research & development and had a reputation as someone knowledgeable about Goodman, became involved. He worked under Scott as chief engineer along with Paul Gordon and Frank Bruno. The fact that Savory had attended the original concert was useful too. "I did all the editing taking out two numbers that were unfortunately too low in level, *If Dreams Come True* and *Sometimes I'm Happy*. I also cut Harry Carney and part of Walter Page's bass solo out of the jam session, since they were almost totally inaudible and couldn't be brought out with the technology as it then existed. I used my original [printed] program to make sure the original order was maintained. There were also a few spoken introductions that were cut. There were also some pauses as Benny set tempos that we cut."

Savory remembered that the discs he worked with bore Universal labels, not the labels characteristic of Harry Smith's operation in 1938 - thus the conclusion that a dub of Smith's discs might have been made, perhaps by Benny, as Marx suggested in 1977.

The discs for the Columbia release were mastered on September 25, 1950. All musicians were compensated on the basis of session scale then in force for every 15 minutes of music. RCA Victor made a last minute effort to enjoin Columbia from releasing the records. Victor's claim was based on the fact that Goodman was an exclusive Victor artist in January 1938, a claim that might have been binding had the concert taken place after revisions in AFM contracts in 1941. But the effort came to nothing. The concert hit the market on November 13, 1950 as a two-LP box set. It was everything Goodman hoped it would be and helped trigger a revitalization in his career. In 1956 it was reissued on Masterworks with new packaging and at the same time broken into three individual LPs for release on Columbia CL pop line. Avakian maintains that the sound improved when spread over three LPs and not compressed onto two. One way or the other, it would never be deleted from the Columbia Records catalog. In January 1968 Goodman marked the 30th anniversary of the concert by a private party in his apartment. Though private, the event attracted considerable publicity. Goodman hired a PR firm, Solters & Sabinson, to manage the press contacts. All the members of the 1938 band were still living and many came to the celebration, including Lionel Hampton, Gene Krupa and Jess Stacy, who entertained guests with a midnight jam session. It was

recorded by myself and Russ Connor and filmed in part on 16 mm color film by CBS News.

Jump forward now to late 1977. Goodman had announced that he would perform a 40th anniversary Carnegie Hall concert with Hampton and Martha Tilton among the returning alumnae, producing the huge ticket demand that surprised so many. Meanwhile, as I wrote my notes for the planned 40th anniversary edition, complete with the missing portions restored and polished with the latest technologies, Columbia went to its vaults to retrieve the original lacquers. But it found nothing. They were missing!

A frantic search began for what Goodman was now calling, with amused detachment, "the holy grail," and Bill Savory, by now retired, returned to help co-ordinate the hunt. It was a search that would last 22 years and wind through often conflicting and fading memories and was to

be complicated by secrecy, duplicity, divorces, possible larceny, endless intrigues and mutual suspicions. If the Maltese Falcon had been a recording instead of a black bird, this would be it. What finally emerged was the stuff that dreams are made of.

"Shortly after they were discovered missing in 1977," Savory said in 1999 in a story I did for *The Wall Street Journal*, "we went up to Connecticut to meet with Benny. His original contract said loud and clear that the instantaneous discs comprising the complete Carnegie Hall concert by Benny Goodman are owned in perpetuity by Columbia Records. Benny didn't know where they were. He thought Columbia did." Under

the circumstances, whoever had them, had reason to keep quiet.

The 1977 search shifted to California and Albert Marx, who was then in the middle of a particularly bitter divorce and under a court order not to go near his Palm Springs home where the bulk of his record collection was kept. Columbia producer Michael Brooks tried to arrange for a neutral party to enter, but Marx's discs were never found. In 1978 Columbia sadly abandoned the project and 20 years passed.

The search went into hibernation for 20 years. Goodman died in 1986, two years before he might have presided over a 50th anniversary concert. The occasion was marked by a superb recreation of the original performance, flawlessly led by Bob Wilber and an excellent band of musicians. Harry Goodman, brother of Benny and bassist in the original orchestra, sat smiling with delight in the audience.

Then in 1996 producer-archivist and jazz radio DJ Phil Schaap entered the picture. Born five months after the concert was first issued, he had been asking questions and sift-



Sony's 1999 full issue No. 26GVY

ing facts about the records on his own since 1968. In 1997 Columbia/Legacy handed him the resources of the parent company, Sony Music, to unravel the mystery for good and prepare a definitive edition.

He approached D. Russell Connor, Benny Goodman's bio-discographer. "Frankly, I didn't know," Connor said. "I had an educated guess but wasn't about to release that." Almost concurrently, Connor said, he received an unexpected letter from a record collector he had once known. He claimed to have acquired the original discs years before and now wanted to sell them. He asked if Connor would serve as a go-between, keeping his name anonymous for money and tax reasons. Connor agreed and contacted Schaap in the fall of 1997 who reported the news to his boss at Sony, Steve Berkowitz. Berkowitz okayed purchase of the discs, all of which bore Universal labels, and by early 1998 Schaap had prepared the first complete master of the concert ever assembled. Sony never asked the identity of Connor's secret contact. In January 1997 NPR's All Things Considered, interviewed Schaap and played parts of the newly mastered concert. But it was never released.

Soon after the NPR interview, former Columbia producer George Avakian said Schaap phoned him saying he suspected the discs were copies and did he know anything? Avakian did indeed know something. He said he knew who had the originals but was not at liberty to name names. He said he might be able to identify him if Berkowitz would be willing to cut a deal. He was. When the owner finally arrived at Berkowitz's Sony office with the black bird in hand, he turned out to be none other than Howard Scott, producer of the original Carnegie album. The discs he carried were the ones Goodman had sold to Columbia in 1950.

After Schaap verified the goods, a letter of agreement was drawn up in which Sony acquired for an undisclosed but not particularly enormous sum all musical content and Scott kept all the records. As a veteran producer who may have wished to produce again, he spent two days watching Schaap and his engineer like an eagle make a digital master, never letting the lacquers out of his sight. "I was a fly on the wall," he said. The final Columbia/Legacy CDs would be a composite of the two disc sets plus other surviving secondary sources.

The touchy question on everybody's mind was how did Scott come to have the discs? He said that Goodman gave them to him as a gift in 1950, a claim he repeated in a telephone interview for the *Wall Street Journal* story. "He gave me the lacquers for doing such a great job," Scott said. "That's why they're mine. And they're going to stay mine until I die." He pulled the box from a shelf and dropped it on his desk. "There it is," he said with pointed satisfaction, "and there it's going to stay."

Others familiar with the long search, including Savory and Connor, rejected Scott's gift explanation, noting that Goodman himself didn't know where they were in 1977. But Sony and Columbia/Legacy were unconcerned.

The rarity had been located. They were not interested in asking embarrassing questions about an object of history without clear title or in rattling legal sabres over old wrongs that make no difference now. "They understand that it all has a happy ending," Schaap told me for an article I wrote for *The Wall Street Journal*. "All the rest, I think, they're willing to let go. Scott has his discs, fine. Connor's client remains a secret, fine. We can deal with all that. I think their perspective is like mine: Thank you all for letting us get involved at this late date before it was too late, and for letting us get this treasure out to the public. Everyone should be happy."

But everyone was *not* happy. Yes, for the first time, we had the most historic single jazz concert of the century complete in real time exactly as it was played. But the sound had a liberal tolerance for full-frontal pops, ticks and hiss. It delivered a penetrating edge to the brass and reeds, but unfiltered by noise suppression. To many who had grown up with the LP version, it sounded shrill and shallow, cluttered with excessive surface scratches and abrasions that could have been avoided without compromising the music. To them, and especially Avakian who might have produced the definitive version, Schaap and Columbia had botched the job.

The release on Jasmine JASCD 656 is a re-mastered version of the concert that answers the shortcomings of the 1999 Columbia/Legacy issue. It is the result of 18 months and close to 200 studio hours of work by Björn Almstedt, who used CEDAR and countless hard disc edits to restore the warmer sound of the original Lps, but without all those clicks. It was offered to Swedish Sony, which was eager to release it but could not get clearance from Sony in New York. It was subsequently made available by Almstedt to Jasmine for release as a two-CD set. We have no doubt that anyone within an interest in the seminal jazz concert will want both the Columbia/Legacy and the Jasmine versions.

John McDonough writes for  
*Down Beat* and *The Wall Street Journal*.