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# Jazz Anecdotes: Second Time Around



## Synopsis

When jazz musicians get together, they often delight one another with stories about the great, or merely remarkable, players and singers they've worked with. One good story leads to another until someone says, "Somebody ought to write these down!" With *Jazz Anecdotes*, somebody finally has. Drawing on a rich verbal tradition, bassist and jazz writer Bill Crow has culled stories from a wide variety of sources, including interviews, biographies and a remarkable oral history collection, which resides at the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University, to paint fascinating and very human portraits of jazz musicians. Organized around general topics--teaching and learning, life on the road, prejudice and discrimination, and the importance of a good nickname--*Jazz Anecdotes* shows the jazz world as it really is. In this fully updated edition, which contains over 150 new anecdotes and new topics like Hiring and Firing, Crow regales us with new stories of such jazz greats as Benny Goodman, Chet Baker, Ravi Coltrane, Buddy Rich and Paul Desmond. He offers extended sections on old favorites--Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, and the fabulous Eddie Condon, who seems to have lived his entire life with the anecdotist in mind. With its unique blend of sparkling dialogue and historical and social insight, *Jazz Anecdotes* will delight anyone who loves a good story. It offers a fresh perspective on the joys and hardships of a musician's life as well as a rare glimpse of the personalities who created America's most distinctive music.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for the previous edition "Guarantees up to a thousand laughs...recommended without

reservation."--Los Angeles Times"Read this somewhere where you're not afraid to be seen laughing out loud.... Everyone should be able to find something to like in this rich collection."--Library Journal"When Bill Crow's book was published in 1990 it became an instant classic. Now I am in pain with sore ribs from reading its [expanded] successor. There's something hilarious from every corner of jazz and all the accounts are vivid and lucid [due to] Crow's elegant and erudite style of writing. I know from experience how difficult it is to re-write anecdotes that others have told. Crow does it admirably and masterfully. It would be impossible not to enjoy the book. It has the unintended function of serving as a great reference work, too. My compliments to the chef."--Steve Voce, Duke Ellington Music Society

Bill Crow is a free-lance musician in the New York City area. He writes a monthly humor column for *Allegro*, published monthly by Local 802, American Federation of Musicians.

I had to read this book for my intro to Jazz class. Ill admit that when the professor told me I had to read another book on top of my textbook I wasn't all that thrilled especially when its 300+ pages. However I am so glad I did read this book. I'm a huge music fan who enjoys watching documentaries about artist and shows like behind the music. This book is an intensive collection of stories from all aspects of Jazz to specific musicians. If you enjoy good stories or Jazz you will enjoy this book. Glad it was a mandatory read, my only knock on the book is that perhaps it could've had a longer chapter on Louis.

The best collection of jazz stories ever, expanded and updated. If you don't already have this memorized, jump on it. Bill was there, and tells the stories right.

Everyone knows who Armstrong is. Not everyone knows who Zoot is. But if you read *JAZZ ANECDOTES* you will learn that Zoot is Zoot Sims. Besides being a superb but underappreciated tenor sax player, Zoot was a fun-loving, witty character - as were many jazz musicians. *JAZZ ANECDOTES* collects hundreds of examples of the humor, high-jinks, and humanity of the jazz community - from the famous (such as Louis Armstrong), to the not-so-famous (such as Zoot Sims), to the now almost forgotten (such as Wingy Manone). (Wingy got his nickname after he lost one arm as a boy in a streetcar accident in New Orleans; Joe Venuti once gave Wingy one cufflink as a birthday present.)The entries are arranged in chapters, either according to topic (e.g., "On the Road", "Cutting Contests", or "52nd Street") or individual musician (e.g., Bix Beiderbecke, Charlie

Parker, or Dizzy Gillespie). They are connected by unobtrusive but intelligent commentary by Bill Crow, the long-time jazz bassist who compiled the compendium. JAZZ ANECDOTES makes for fun and informative light reading for jazz fans. It is perfect for the bathroom or the bed-side table. Here are a few brief samples: \* Shortly after Louis Armstrong's long-time valet Doc died, someone asked Louis what had been wrong with Doc. Louis looked at him with a sad face and said, "What was wrong with Doc? Man, when you die, EVERYTHING is wrong with you!" \* Lester Young had to hire a fill-in drummer for a gig. The fellow wasn't fitting in well. During a break, the drummer, trying to make conversation, asked, "Say, Prez, when was the last time we worked together?" "Tonight", sighed Young. \* George Shearing, now 91, is the among the last in a distinguished line of blind jazz pianists. Late in his career, he, like many performers, offered CDs for sale in the lobby. He would pump them from the stage: "Remember, profits from these sales will go to help the blind. Not many of the blind, mind you." Shearing once defined "endless love" as "a tennis match between me and Ray Charles." \* A bum once accosted Al Cohn at the bus terminal and asked for a dollar to buy a drink. Al reached for his wallet, but then said, "Wait a minute. How do I know you won't spend this on food?" Al, of course, understood full well the yen. When a bartender asked him, "What'll you have?", Al would reply, "One too many". \* Between an all-day recording session and a night-time club date, Zoot Sims was sitting in a bar, complaining that he was exhausted and yet he still had a whole performance to get through. A woman offered him a Dexedrine spansule and, because she thought they were pretty strong, she suggested that he do what she did and "open one up and pour some of it out". "Pour some of it out!", exclaimed Zoot. "Are you crazy? Don't you know that there are people SLEEPING in Europe?"

Bill Crow is a wonderful storyteller and his two books show tremendous insight into the lives of jazz musicians from back in the day. All stories are good clean fun and they're great to read over and over again. His other book, From Birdland to Broadway, is equally good and recommended if you like this one. I used to have the first edition from the 90's and this one has a few new anecdotes but it doesn't matter. The original ones he had to share are wonderful as he's all about showing the human side of jazz musicians. If you really like his books then you can follow him on Facebook where he's been posting great photos of musicians, i.e. Zoot Sims playing pool etc. Classic book.

I'll keep it short and sweet. I needed this book for a class I was taking and so I honestly didn't think it would be a very interesting book. I cracked it open and started reading it a bit and I was laughing after a few pages in! Some of the anecdotes are very, very hilarious and interesting! It is one thing

to listen to the music of these influential musicians but it is something else to actually hear what jazz was to them and the very interesting situations they would get in to because of it! Even if you're not a jazz enthusiast, like me, you can definitely enjoy the contents of this book. I would definitely recommend.

If you're interested in the history of jazz, this has lots of old familiar stories as well as new ones with some very obscure references as well. Crow has spent some time researching the archives. I enjoyed how different folks reflect on a well known figure with contrasting assessments of their character. And now I have a couple of new anecdotes to pass on to my mates... have you heard the one about 'screw it... let's play in four!"

Endlessly entertaining because you can read through and then if you start again, you get a whole new perspective on life as a jazz musician in the Golden Age.

If you remember the big names in jazz of the 40's,50's & 60 's you will enjoy this book. A ton of funnystories and happenings in the jazz scene.

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