

The Trygve Hernæs "Story"



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My interest in jazz started around 1950. We had got a new radio in 1947 (the old one was confiscated by the German Army during the war), and I started to search across the waves. On medium wave, there was one station with good sound that caught my attention. They broadcasted some wonderful, polyphonic music, very different from what I usually heard on our local Norwegian station. Being born on December 1st, 1943, I was a young boy, not knowing any English, but that was no problem. The music was great. I was listening to BBC Jazz Club on the "Light Programme".

I come from a rather poor working class family, and a record player was out of the question, so the radio became my best friend. As you understand, I was infected by the jazz virus at an unusually early age. In later years I became aware of which bands I used to listen to: Humphrey Lyttelton and Mike Daniels; later Ken Colyer, Steve Lane, Cy Laurie, Sandy Brown, Chris Barber, Eric Silk etc, etc. I was not only infected by jazz, but by British jazz. At the same time, I was given a trumpet by the school's symphonic band, and started a short but chaotic career as

the band's most problematic trumpet player. I tried to syncopate on all kinds of music and on the marches in particular. And I had a very loud tone, with a lot of vibrato.

Then it happened that my four year older sister got a Philips record player as present for her Confirmation, but no records were bought. I was now 10 years of age, still having to stick to my good friend; the radio.

I remember the first record we got. It was a Decca 78 by Little Richard, with "Tutti Frutti" on one side, and "Long Tall Sally" on the other. I liked it very much, but it was not the jazz I loved.

At 14 I got a spare time job in afternoons, and earned money enough to buy my first records. I can recall an EP by Chris Barber on Nixa from the LP "Echoes OF Harlem". I liked it very much, and still do. It is one of the finest ever by Barber.

Then I got hold of a 10" LP on HMV by Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers, and later the great Philips 12" LP with Louis Armstrong's Hot Seven. Then it was done. I had become a jazz fanatic.

After 10 years at school, I got my dream job; only 16 years old, I began to work in a record store! I did not waste any time, and started to import jazz records from all over the world. I can recall Agate & Co in London, where Ken Colyer's brother Bill worked; Swaggie Records in South Yarra, Australia; Jack's Record Cellar in San Francisco, and Storyville Records in Copenhagen, where the late Karl Emil Knudsen (who later became a close friend and associate in music), originator of Storyville Records, held the fort.

My home town Trondheim became the Mecca for jazz lovers in Norway. I specialized in the traditional styles, but also listened to the hard Bop of the 50's. Sonny Rollins, Thelonius Monk and modern West Coast jazz became some sort of favourites.

From Australia I got the most sensational records by Len and Bob Barnard; Frank Johnson with the great clarinettist Geoff Kitchen, and of course: Greame Bell's Australian Jazz Band with the inimitable Ade Monsborough. From Agate & Co in London, Bill Colyer supplied all the British jazz I wanted. Ken Colyer

became my favourite European musician. It is love or hate with Ken, and I love him. To my humble understanding, he is the greatest New Orleans style musician not being born in New Orleans. Clarinet players like Bernard "Acker" Bilk, Sandy Brown, John Barnes and Wally Fawkes also became favourites.

The Storyville label brought us Danish jazz of very high quality: Henrik Johansen, Theis Jensen, Adrian Bentzon, Finn Otto Hansen with Arne Bue Jensen's New Orleans (Viking) Jazz Band, to name a few.

Storyville Records also started to release recordings from Bill Russell's American Music catalogue, material which later should become very important for me in the way of understanding the New Orleans music. Bunk Johnson, George Lewis and Baby Dodds showed me the real thing.

Then there was Jack's Record Cellar in San Francisco. From him I got all the GHB/Jazzology stuff and everything we wanted from the US. I got hold of jazz records in any style that no other shop in this country could show up. I worked in the record store for 11 years, before one of the major Norwegian distributors in Oslo asked me to start working for them. Arne Bendiksen's record company in the Sonet Group produced their own material, and distributed labels like Sonet, Storyville, Pye, Island etc. I became a sales rep, but displayed my special interest in jazz, and got some producer jobs. It was at an international sales meeting for the Sonet Group early in the 70's (think it was in 1971) I first met Karl Emil Knudsen.

Norwegian ragtime/jazz pianist of fame, Morten Gunnar Larsen, was one of the first highly skilled musicians I worked with, and we made an album (now on Herman HJCD 1016) that was rewarded "Spellemannprisen" in 1975, the Norwegian Grammy Award. This was the "kick off" for me as a record producer. In 1976 I was in the studio when Magnolia Jazz Band with Morten Gunnar Larsen recorded their famous LP for Philips. We have found original tapes, and these, including previously unissued material have been released on Herman HJCD 2002.

Sammy Rimington visited Norway in 1977 with his quartet of English/Danish mixture. Sammy, clarinet and alto sax; Andy Finch, piano; Ole Olsen, double bass and Søren Houliind on the percussion kit. I travelled with them on the

whole tour, and we ended up in Oslo, where the idea came up about doing a recording session. I called the company, asking for a loan of the studio, and hired a very good engineer, who was working in the AB studio.

We should meet at 11 am on Sunday, after an all night session on Saturday. Oh boy, it was hard. I can recall Andy Finch having problems staying awake, and Sammy's usually quick fingers were quite the opposite. Fortunately, the studio was supplied with a refrigerator containing two cases of beer. It did the trick, and it ended up with one of the finest Sammy sessions ever (HJCD 1001).

I continued to record both Norwegian and foreign visiting groups, mostly live sessions, but always booked studio settings for professional use. For Arne Bendiksen I produced more Morten Gunnar Larsen (HJCD 1016), three LP's by Christiania Jazzband (issued on the Storyville label) and one by Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble (HJCD 2001). On Herman I concentrated in doing recordings by young, upcoming bands like Canal Street Jazz Band (a good Oliver/Armstrong style band) and Hot Club de Norvege, the latter being famous for it's excellent "String Swing" music.

In 1982 Bendiksen's company ended in an awful bankruptcy, and I got a job outside the record industry. This gave me freedom to do what I really wanted. We purchased a tape from The Norwegian Broadcasting Company containing a wonderful New Orleans Gospel concert in Molde (1981) with Lillian Boutte and the Magnolia Jazz Band (HJCD 1004).

As the years went on I recorded more Morten Gunnar Larsen; "Maple Leaf Rag" (HJCD 1009) in 1990. This is, to my mind, his best ever. The Grand Piano sound is superb, and the music is brilliant. More Magnolia was done in 1990, a concert at the Edward Munch Art Gallery (HJCD 1007).

I have very close relations to Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble, which is by far the most popular of all Norwegian traditional jazz bands. We have made no less than 8 albums together, all selling very well, much thanks to the band's own sale during concerts and at club jobs. They have, more or less, kept Herman Records going!

Of the classic re-issues must be mentioned Stokstad/Jensen Trad. Band with Wild Bill Davison from 1973 (HJCD 1020). Wild Bill was in his

usual top form, and the rest of the band played as good as ever.

In later years I am proud of having brought the very hot quintet Louisiana Washboard Five to light (HJCD 1019). Their second on Herman (HJCD1025), *Ace of Rhythm*, includes the superb pianist, trombonist and vocalist Keith Nichols. Remember Jabbo Smith?

The Odeon Jazz Quartet (formerly Magnolia Quartet) is Herman's chamber jazzband. With Morten Gunnar Larsen on piano, this group makes a splendid mixture of New Orleans and Caribbean music (HJCD 1012, 1022, 1029). Norway's only Hot Big Band is the Christiania 12.

Like Kustbandet, they display the big band music of the 20's and early 30's (HJCD 1015, 1031, 1037).

All 12 members are friends and top Norwegian traditional and swing jazz musicians, with Totti Bergh topping the bill as soloist on tenor saxophone.

In association with Norsk Jazzarkiv we have made a series of five compact discs presenting Norwegian jazz from 1920 to 1980. It is called "Jazz in Norway" (see list for details).

New Years Eve 2004/5 I suffered from a brain stroke. Luckily enough I have recovered quite well, still able to walk and talk relatively properly. From time to time I do some odd productions of material I WANT to make. Among them are the following:

We (which is me!) have released two fine records by a new and promising band, The Jazzin' Babies, "Up & Go" (HJCD 1030) and "Rag'n'Roll" (HJCD 1035). The "Babies" have found pleasure in performing the hot jazz of the 20's and early 30's. They visited the Whitley Bay Jazz Festival in 2006 with great success.

The most complete and best album I have produced was recorded in 2008 by a band named "The Union Rhythm Kings", which is a combination of some of the finest Norwegian and Swedish musicians on the traditional jazz scene.

The music is excellent, reflects shades of Armstrong, Morton and Beiderbecke. Recorded in true SACD Surround Sound, makes listening something different: Just fantastic!

My friendship with Karl Emil Knudsen was sincere. I used to bring fresh fish, airborne from Trondheim, cooked "Hernæs Style", and we had enjoyable meals. I know he always looked forward to those fish suppers.

Interested as I was in European Revival Jazz, I was asked to participate in several projects, some Papa Bue reissues, and above all; *The Golden Years of Revival Jazz*. 16 compact discs, carefully selected from the old Storyville 45 EP releases, added with some alternative takes and unissued material. I remember urging him to add the 8 fabulous and unreleased tracks with "Arne Birger's Jazzsjak", which included the inimitable Steen Vig. And he did! I am an honourable member of the Swedish Bunk Johnson Society.

Recordially

Trygve Hernæs

Trondheim, October 10, 2010.



HERMAN RECORDS CATALOGUE

HJCD 1001 Sammy Rimington New Orleans Quartet:
Clarinet King In Norway.

The first recording made for Herman Records in
December 1977. Wonderful New Orleans style clarinet
inspired by George Lewis.

HJCD 1004 Lillian Boutte / Magnolia Jazzband: New
Orleans Gospel Concert.

One of the first concerts of its kind, presenting the classic
NO style jazz combined with genuine gospel songs.

HJCD 1007 Magnolia Jazzband: The famous concert with
Morten G. Larsen, recorded at the Edward Munch Gallery
in Oslo.

HJCD 1009 Morten Gunnar Larsen: Maple Leaf Rag. A
true classic! Digitally recorded by Jan Erik Kongshaug in
1989.

HJCD 1010 Norwegian Rhythm Kings: Music of
Armstrong, Oliver, Morton

Hot, classic jazz in the Armstrong/Oliver/Morton manner.

HJCD 1012 Magnolia Jazz Quartet: Coquette. Clarinet,
trombone, drums and the outstanding Morten Gunnar
Larsen at the Grand piano.

HJCD 1013 Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble: Feat. Aline White
of New Orleans.

Recorded in 1994, while Aline White visited Norway.

HJCD 1015 Christiania 12.

Classic Big Band Jazz in the 20's and early 30's styles.

HJCD 1016 Morten Gunnar Larsen: Charleston Rag.

Two great LP's on one CD. Digitally transferred from the
original master tapes.

HJCD 1020 Stokstad / Jensen Trad Band w/ Wild Bill
Davison. 1974 originals

Norway's most popular jazz band in the early 70's with
the inimitable Wild Bill.

HJCD 1022 Magnolia Jazz Quartet: So Different Blues.

Featuring M. G. Larsen. Back in stock, at last!

HJCD 1024 Stokstad / Jensen Trad Band: At The Jazz Band
Ball.

HJCD 1025 Louisiana Washboard Five: Ace Of Rhythm.
Feat. Keith Nichols.

Norway's hottest jazz band paying tribute to Jabbo
Smith.

HJCD 1027 Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble w/ Tricia Boutte
and Lionel Batiste:

Way Down Yonder In New Orleans.

Norway's most popular jazz band with their superb
vocalist Tricia Boutte from New Orleans.

HJCD 1029 Odeon Jazz Quartet(formerly Magnolia):
Tocando Pra Voce.

New Orleans and Caribbean styles played in a very
tasteful manner.

HJCD 1031 Christiania 12: Happy Feet.

Hot, excellent 20's - 30's styles big band.

HJCD 1032 Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble: Something Old,
Something New,

Something Borrowed, Something Blue.

Strictly instrumental by this extremely popular band.

HJCD 1033 Morten Gunnar Larsen: Ragtime and
Rhapsody.

A fantastic concert recording, including Gershwin's
Rhapsody In Blue.

HJCD 1034 Jazzade.

Hot Jazz Quartet playing anachronistic be bop

HJCD 1035 Jazzin' Babies: Rag'n Roll. Young men playing
excellent hot jazz 20's and 30's style, Oliver/Armstrong.

HJCD 1036 Tricia Boutte & Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble:
Oh Mahalia!

A tribute to Mahalia Jackson. Beautiful NO gospel. Hear
it and believe it!

HJCD 1037 Christiania 12: Rhythm Crazy. Superb new disc
wonderful early style big band.

HJCD 1038 Jazzin' Babies: Live in Holland.

You cannot get it "Hotter Than This".

HJCD 1039 JazzMazzørene: Riverboat Shuffle.

The first real hot jazz band from Trondheim, Norway,
playing fine classic style jazz.

HJHDCD 1040 Union Rhythm Kings: A Hot Reunion.
Recorded in true SACD Surround Sound, this is already a
classic. Marvellous music performed by:

Bent Persson, cornet/trumpet; Kristoffer Kompen,
trombone; Lars Frank, clarinet/sax;

Morten Gunnar Larsen, Grand piano; Jacob Ullberger,
banjo/guitar; Frans Sjøstrøm, bass-sax.

HJCD 2001 Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble: With friends
From New Orleans, 1976.

The first album in Herman Records retrospective series, taken from old original master tapes.

HJCD 2002 Magnolia Jazzband: Vintage 1976. Originals w/ Morten G. Larsen

Contains previously unissued recordings

HJCD 2003 Ytre Suløens Jass-ensemble: Memories of New Orleans

Contains previously unissued recordings

HJCD 9001 Jazz in Norway vol 1, 1920 - 1940: Jazz Hot & Swing

HJCD 9002 Jazz in Norway vol 2, 1940 - 1950: Sigarett stomp

HJCD 9003 Jazz in Norway vol 3, 1950 - 1960: Cool, kløver & dixie

HJCD 9004 Jazz in Norway vol 4, 1960 - 1970: Turning pages

HJCD 9005 Jazz in Norway vol 5, 1970 - 1980: Foot prints

Some fine recordings distributed by herman Records:

GTACD 8061 Svein Sundby & the Hot Jazz All Stars.

Great traditional jazz played by clarinettist Svein Sundby and the top musicians of the 70's and 80's.

NJ 4038 – 2 Morten Gunnar Larsen's Ophelia Ragtime Orchestra.

MJB 1 Magnolia Jazz Band: A Lovely Way To Spend An Evening

MJB 2 Magnolia Jazz band: In That Sweet Old garden Of Eden

MJB 3 Magnolia Jazz Band: An Evening Prayer, church concert

MJB 4 Magnolia Jazz Band:

MJB 5 Magnolia Jazz Band: Jubilee Concert w. Topsy Chapman

SOCD 1398 Louisiana Washboard Five w/ Keith Nichols & Matthias Seuffert:

Futuristic Rhythm

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