

# Looking Back

Historic Jazz Flutists Inspiring the Next Generation

# Format

- Timeframe: Earliest recording (1927) through early 1970s
- Short musical examples (two minutes or less); display the widest variety in a brief time
- PDF of slides contains live links to full-length musical examples
- Transcriptions available
- Questions welcome at the end

# Early Years

- Early jazz was loud, with lots of brass, saxes, and drums.
- The flute could not be heard well until good quality microphones came into use in the 1940s.
- Many latin/samba bands featured flutes.

# Alberto Socarras

Shootin' the Pistol  
with the Clarence Williams band 1927  
(First recorded jazz flute solo)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W12sedJF2y0>

# Esy Morales

*Jungle Fantasy* 1948

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2JQ4NSrAxU>

- A big influence on aspiring jazz flutists in the 1950's
- Covered by Sam Most, Herbie Mann, and others

# Wayman Carver

*Sweet Sue Just You*

with the Chick Webb band (circa 1935)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-XhVnFqHK0>

# From Swing to Modern Jazz

- In the 1950s and 1960s jazz flute developed and expanded
- Most players were saxophonists who also played flute
- A few flute specialists: Sam Most, Herbie Mann, Paul Horn

# Frank Wess

- Early performer of flute with big band
- Played with the Count Basie Band 1953–1964

Trezia (1973)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_gXwZ6U9XY&list=RDEM5NdpejIGWsX2rBpUxg-Hkw&index=5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_gXwZ6U9XY&list=RDEM5NdpejIGWsX2rBpUxg-Hkw&index=5)

# Sam Most

- Early flutist in the bebop style
- “The first great jazz flutist”  
—Leonard Feather, jazz  
historian

*Cherokee* (with transcription) 1955

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCDkyZe34qo>

# Buddy Collette's Swinging Shepherds

4 flutes, including alto, bass, & piccolo

Bud Shank, Buddy Collette, Harry Klee,  
Paul Horn; arr: Pete Rugolo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3bVtPPCMZE&t=282s>

*The Four Winds* 1958

# Herbie Mann

- Popularized jazz flute
- Had several crossover hits
- Prolific recordings and tours
- Embraced many styles:  
bebop, Afro-Cuban, bossa nova, pop, disco

# Herbie Mann

*Todos Locos* 1959

Features a smaller Eb flute

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6QiXhO1Ta4>

*Memphis Underground* 1969

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BO\\_Lfk-8P5c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BO_Lfk-8P5c)

# Bud Shank

- Important West Coast jazz figure
- Played in Stan Kenton's big band in the early 1950s
- First-call studio musician in LA for many years

# Bud Shank

*California Dreamin'* 1965

by the Mamas and the Papas

Alto flute solo

California Dreamin'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhZULM69DIw>

The Mamas and the Papas on the  
Ed Sullivan Show 1967

# Yusef Lateef

- Influenced by Eastern music
- Played many instruments, including sax, oboe, and bassoon
- Important jazz educator; earned Ed.D. from University of Massachusetts; taught at University of Massachusetts and Hampshire College

*Take the A Train* (with transcription) 1957

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MItUBCFgWD8>

[BCFgWD8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MItUBCFgWD8)

# Rahsaan Roland Kirk

- Outstanding blind multi-instrumentalist
- Famous for playing three saxophones simultaneously using circular breathing
- “Sound innovator” on flute

*Ain't No Sunshine* 1971

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s49BZYibMiw>

# Rahsaan Roland Kirk

**Extra credit:** *The Inflated Tear*

(video showing close-up three saxes simultaneously)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlqLJmlQQNM>

# Rahsaan Roland Kirk meets Austin Powers!

*Soul Bossa Nova* (Austin Powers theme  
song composed by Quincy Jones) 1962

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5  
ALPzS0QfQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5ALPzS0QfQ)

Mike Meyers as Austin Powers

# Paul Horn

- Successful West Coast jazz player in the late 1950s
- Performed with Chico Hamilton and did session work in L.A.
- Early proponent of world music and new age
- Made recordings in India with Indian musicians
- Solo flute recordings inside the Taj Mahal and the Great Pyramid

# Paul Horn

*Inside* (the Taj Mahal) 1969

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_QaeD5fW1rw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QaeD5fW1rw)

# Hubert Laws

- Studied at Julliard with Julius Baker
- Played with orchestras in New York
- Played jazz with Mongo Santamaria and the Jazz Crusaders
- Distinguished solo career from late 1960s onward
- Great straight ahead jazz player; also produced jazz interpretations of classical themes

# Hubert Laws

*Moment's Notice* 1974

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxnkSj8ooWk&list=PLOmTp5ouhmKO9HEUsG4fDzjgzCEZkP6LA&index=6>

# Honorable Mention

Other great jazz flute players:

- Eric Dolphy
- Joe Farrell
- Joe Henderson
- Bobbi Humphrey
- Bobby Jasper
- Moe Koffman
- James Moody
- Jerome Richardson
- James Spaulding
- Jeremy Steig
- Lew Tabackin

# Transcriptions

*Take the A Train* solo by Yusef Lateef

*Cherokee* solo by Sam Most

Simplified version of *Cherokee* by Sam Most

Available for download from:

<https://jazzfluteproject.com/downloads/>

Questions?

# Contact Info

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