This Transcript corresponds to the interview between Glenn Bryan and 5 Penn students made on 8am March 30, 2005.

Bryan – Glenn Bryan

Mary – Mary Droesch

Steven – Steven Ren

Fei – Fei Tian

Zeng Yi – Zeng Yi Wong

Alex – Alexander Yang

Words marked in Red are places where the transcriber cannot figure out the words in the recording accurately.

Sentences marked in Blue are moments that should be given special attention to.

(Track 1)

**Bryan**: get started, tell me exactly how you, I am pre-occupied with so many things, tell me which you want me to, ask me serious questions, and … I can refer you to … also you asked about various articles or music, snippets or that kind of stuff. I have music snippets in the computer in my office, which is just across the hall, and I have a few articles also over there. If you google, and look for my name and you will see some of that stuff as well.

**Fei**: We found an article.

**Bryan**: You did, which one is that?

**Fei**: This one is from 2002.

**Bryan**: Let me give you one that’s a little bit more recent.

*Glenn Bryan left the conference room to get a DP paper from his office*

**Bryan**: I hate my picture but it’s a DP article that came out earlier in this academic year. It’s a couple pages. I don’t know how I got a big DP article like this. Front page, and many from that page. So, anyway …

**Zeng Yi**: So, you didn’t know it was you then.
Bryan: Ok, so say who the hell was that. Anyway, sorry …

[interview slightly interrupted as another faculty member came through the conference room to reach the kitchen for coffee, following that, we asked Glenn Bryan to sign the permission form]

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Bryan: Ok, here’s a little, I need to sign this…

Alex: It would be easier if you can just…

Bryan: So, what do you want me to do? Just sign my name here.

Alex: We need your number and…

Bryan: Social Security? [Jokingly]

Alex: No. Your name, address….

Bryan: Address here at Penn, right?

Zeng Yi: Your phone number.

Bryan: You have my e-mail, right? Just put down there right?

Mary: Also your credit card number.

Bryan: OK, you don’t want that one. Remember, remember, since… So, OK, there are two articles there and there’s a few others if you look back for a different community events started from Philly, across the orders and, so. It’s a locally annual, you know, I played at, what they were called, the Caribbean Jazz Fest, which was nice, very nice.

Zeng Yi: For the purpose of this interview, can you just give us a brief introduction of yourself, like just about you, what you are doing?

Bryan: I am Glenn Bryan, cell block 9. Glenn Bryan, musician for many many years; assistant Vice President here at Penn and director of community relationships. Been at Penn for eleven years, undergrad before grad school, before… West Philadelphia Resident, long term long west Philadelphia resident, I have three kids.

Mary: Are you from Philadelphia originally?
**Bryan**: From Philadelphia originally, from west Philadelphia, went to public schools in west Philadelphia, went to Penn undergrad, Penn grad, stayed away, came back, to this position first, (Track 3)

then director of community relations, and directory of City & community relations and then director of community relations, and for the University system and just some Vice President stuff, so that’s my background.

**Alex**: So, did you played music before your career started?

**Bryan**: Yes, I have taken lessons at young age. Playing the piano since 9 years of age. Classical piano and played rock bands, rhythm & Blue bands, recorded with different people. Have started my own groups and performed in various venues. Basically performed with thousands and thousands of people, cumulatively.

**Mary**: When you first started listening to jazz in Philadelphia, which places did you go to?

**Bryan**: Well, I was a t a very young age, exposed, as you all know. I said that in that class, you were all in that class, correct? You were there that day. I first was exposed to jazz through my parents, my father took me to various different jazz venues in west Philadelphia. Let me name a few of them, one was the aqua bar lounge in west Philadelphia, where I saw a lot of different artists performed from Coltrane to Miles Davis to Sonny Rollins to, all the old timers, jay smith.

**Mary**: How many people performed? How was it publicized, what newspaper would it be in?

**Bryan**: They weren’t publicized. You just knew that. At that point, you just look at the markee to see who was coming and would say John Coltrane from May 5th trough May 8th, May 9th. You would just check out?

**Alex**: What do you say would be particular memorable experience from your early days of jazz?

**Bryan**: My most memorable experience was actually hearing John Coltrane play, around the highrise.

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Geno’s empty foxhole, where did that name came. No one knows. You see back then you never asks questions about names. Geno’s empty foxhole. What? Don’t ask that. It’s just called that. And I saw a couple people that I was blown away with back then, who I had a chance to play with. The guitar, I didn’t mention this in this class. There’s this guy by the name of Mahavishnu John McLaughlin, he’s a guitarist, and he was actually a guitarist for Miles Davis, but he just blew me away. Like I tried to play with him, but he was
just… Am I really a musician, maybe I am gonna give this some kinda, you know, when I play with him. So the people I played with are listed there. One of the people wasn’t listed. I really like melodic kind of music, and I kinda gravitate to people that have melodic textures that penetrate. It was a time when music, jazz and all music were fascinated with the speed of people [started humming fast jazz tunes]. But it’s all there but nothing penetrates. Music is a theory, Jazz is a theory. That’s one thing I have to say about Coltrane. He can run as fast as anybody, but his notes would penetrate, and that’s what I have always tried to do, I have always aspired to do. I have never been there. One of the things about performing is, one of the thing as a musician is, you can play the meanest fast song that you can imagine and audiences are like [imitating snoring sound]. And some of the stuff that you think are not really that good and [clapping his hands]. Oh My God! So all it’s all in a relationship with the listener, how you penetrates

(Track 5)

a person’s feelings. People’s feelings in people as apposed “he’s good, he’s good.” More than just being good is having a unique style and that’s why I like Coltrane and Miles and folks like that who have a unique style. John McLaughlin is another person who has a unique style.

**Alex:** John Mclaughlin is a jazz guitarist?

**Bryan:** yeah, he is a jazz guitarist. He played in a Miles Davis album called Bitches Brew and a few other albums after that. Now he has his own albums and actually his music was influenced by the religious cult that was in at the time. You know, there’s a serious flu at that point. He was involved was several other musicians at that particular time. I happened to be involved in when I was in school at Penn with the same,.you gotta understand that this was the 70s. We used to explore many things in the 70s, I am sorry, much more than you guys do now. It’s from what I can see, I don’t know. You probably explore just as much, but it was quite different in the 70s.

**Mary:** Were you involved in a cult?

**Bryan:** It wasn’t as much as a cult as a sect. It was actually a Sri Chinmoy. I can go into that with a little bit more detail, but I won’t. There were a lot of musicians that kind of followed that. Universal one-ism, there’s all kind of. Yes, I went through that. We had to all wear white all the time.

**Mary:** Wear a suit?

**Bryan:** No, no. They were very classy, but no. Linen kind of. No, leisure suits. This was a hip thing kind of thing. There was a different.

**Mary:** You mentioned that you would play something that you didn’t know what effect it would have on the audience, and the type
of people vs. actually getting through to the people. You talked about how some forms of music get to the audience. How far do you think that jazz, as opposed to just being on the radio, has there been any kind of modifications?

**Bryan**: Well, there are less live recordings vs. studio recording. If you look it that way, less solos, less chances taken musically is usually what happens. Something manageable palatable for the audience. I mean musicians pay for. There’s playing for musicians and there’s playing for music that people like that and into that kind of music as opposed to people that don’t like it. Not don’t like that but really into it that much. So you play accordingly, some people play accordingly, some people don’t. Some people just you know “audience? Fine. I play for myself.” And actually, you have to like what you are playing and you have to get off and yourself, to express yourself. There’s a balance. Something has to happen where you can’t sell out where you just like, “you want to here this? I will just play this.” I mean, you can’t just do that because it’s not going to project to the audience. There’s a balance where that has to strike. So, jazz is very improvisational, it’s based on improvisation, different from classical music, where you might take a little liberty on a note or two, but jazz is a constant improvisation. The pure form of jazz. And it may not be played the same way. So, one of the fascinating things about jazz is that. I am musician. Let’s say I am gonna see John, Josh or Red, I am gonna go see a new artist, Chirstian Mcguirre or different people like that. They play a solo, you better be there that night for that particular solo cause you won’t here that solo again. The same one.

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It’s played, because its improvisation strikes you; it’s a moment in time

**Alex**: in class we talked extensively about the issues of authenticity and the transformation of music when it’s transported on a global scale. As far as you know, when Jazz gets transported to other countries, has it been modified by technology, other people’s mediation or interpretation of Jazz?

**Bryan**: no, it really has not been modified. It’s one of, I think one of the best universal languages of music that really exist. No, it’s not modified. You find some Jazz musicians that have the opportunities to actually take more risks outside of the United States than in the United States. A lot of musicians enjoy playing abroad more than they do in the United States, for the reason the audience is mainly more listening, absorbing, and pulling it in, where as opposed to venues in the United States where sometimes that doesn’t happen. You’re fighting with the audience. In United States, the way I see it, it’s my personal view, when you listen to the airwaves, it’s just giving you a steady diet of mediocrity. The creativity and the variety that exist here is really lessened. I see things happening differently now. I’m starting to see the rise of more creative kinds of music and genres, and different genres, not just Jazz, and that’s a good thing. But for quite some
time, the 80s was a washout, and it bled into the 90s a little bit and the latter part of the 90s, and now in 2000s, in the new millennium you see more of the...

**Steven**: following the same topic, I went to a couple of concerts where, at the Slought Foundation where I attended, they actually got a large number of musicians that seem to be experimenting with new techniques. You mentioned John Coltrane has really nice projection. I went to this concert at the Slought Foundation

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where there was this musician, he was actually intentionally not having full projection on his trumpet (Bryan: he was what?) he was intentionally holding his air back so his trumpet sounds like not full, just half (Bryan: muted like?) yea muted like. He was almost like sucking air

**Bryan**: how did people like that?

**Steven**: some people liked it, some people left in the middle *[Bryan laughs]*. And also I see them experimenting with trying to incorporate South American rituals into the drumming. Hard to see where that was going. Personally I feel like some of that was weird for my taste (Bryan: with the drumming?) yea they were using some rituals from South America. I feel like some caporia influence

**Bryan**: well I wasn’t there to experience it, but I don’t know how did people like it, I mean I asked you that, how did people like it?

**Steven**: I think some liked it, some don’t. I’m just curious about what you think about where Jazz is going with all these more experimental type of music, do you think it’s a good direction?

**Bryan**: yea I mean I think so, it’s an expression of oneself, it fits in Jazz. If you don’t like it you don’t have to go see it. It’s pocketed, it’s branded that way. There’s another major influence I should mention, you brought that up, and that is the influence of my own roots and culture. Bi-culture: African American culture, Latino culture, because of where my family is from. They’re from the Caribbean and Puerto Rico, so I’ve had that in me too. So I grew up Latin rhythms within Jazz. I think I like the Jazz standards to be turned into a Latin Jazz. That’s just who I am, see it’s again who you are, and what’s inside of you, deep inside of you. And sometimes it comes out early, and sometimes it comes out a little bit late. Sometimes you oppress, suppress it, but it eventually comes out. Latin Jazz, I work with the Annenberg early on when

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Dr. Mike Rose came in Annenberg and talked about bringing Jazz artists to Penn. When I first came, we didn’t have anything, ten or eleven years ago, there wasn’t anything happening, zero. And I first had a concert out, and I didn’t know I couldn’t do this, had a
concert out on the College Green. I didn’t know the ways of advertising on Penn campus at that point, so it was a surprise to me there was so many people. We had a wonderful violinist, a Jazz violinist, who passed away, and local Jazz performers to perform on College Green. And then we had Nina Simone, if you’ve ever listened to her music, she’s a Jazz vocalist. She’s up here [gestures high] people here [gestures low] she’s up here. She’s not a regular…Nina Simone, outstanding. We had her here. And I spoke to Mike Gorem, ‘we need some Jazz musicians here’ So that’s when you started to see these people come because Mike Gorem worked in a setting, in a place of performing arts where he brought Jazz folks in. So we had a lot of people like Joshua Redman, Sonny Rollins, Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Christian McBride, and the one I was going back to, the Latin piece was a person named Tito Puente, who also dies two, three months after that concert. Icon in Latin Jazz, icon, icon, cult Icon (Steve: wasn’t there someone like Dwight Brandy?) Yea he’s the timbale player and the vibe player, played vibes and timbales, gave two amazing concerts that night. We’re trying to, the purpose of that was trying to look at how cultures, the African American culture and the Latino culture had something in common in terms of rhythm and the origin of the music, and that type of music coming from Africa. The African rhythms, there are a lot of groups on campus. I’m thinking of that festival this week, the Latino festival this week. So we had that concert

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here, it was almost of an educational kind, we had a seminar afterwards. So we had Bill Cosby, I had called Bill Cosby to come to this concert. Because I remember on his shows, you see these reruns, he always liked Latin Jazz. He was a big Latin Jazz fan. So we had that concert, and it was amazing. Unfortunately Cosby had to go into his comedy thing by bring this trumpet on stage and aping and imitating Tito Puente playing [laughter] the timbales. He did it only the second show. The first show Cosby wasn’t there. But anyways it was good to show that to students. I think it was one of the most memorable moments that I. The most memorable moments I had was probably the opportunity to play with Carlos Santana. That was the… again you kind of hear him going Latin. The way he plays his guitar aren’t like anybody else. The way he penetrates his notes, and the way he evokes feelings. This was a joy. It happened about 10 years ago. That was way, way prior to that Grammy album he had. I forgot the name of it. Smooth…Thomas…all that stuff…Dave Matthews, when he did that whole album. Way before that, way before that…right right. (Alex: Was it in West Philadelphia where you played with him?) No actually that was in North Philadelphia. It was a workshop, and a little simple small concert. It was a very memorable time for me. That was a memorable time.

Mary: I’m sorry, can you..

Bryan: you want the cold turned off? yea good, [adjusting and operating AC] is that good? All right.

Alex: I was just wondering, how would you personally define Free Jazz, because you had mentioned before Jazz’s improvisation, so
how would you distinguish between Free Jazz and Jazz?

**Bryan:** Free Jazz? I don’t know what Free Jazz is.

**Alex:** It’s the concert that Steven was mentioning (Steven: that wasn’t Free Jazz, that was contemporary Jazz) I think all that was Free Jazz. It’s very innovative and there’s totally no (BRYAN: no structure?) no structure..

**Steven:** I didn’t hear any Jazz chords at all, because I was in Jazz Band in high school, and you learn all the Jazz chords, start out with the basic ones and you go up. I didn’t hear any of that. Actually I was like is this really Jazz?

**Bryan:** ok well, I’m glad you said that. I play, I’m actually playing this Monday, coming up Monday evening at a place called Zanzir Bar Blue. Now people may think that you come to a concert that I sold out. I say Jazz is a feeling, it’s a why. Some people feel Jazz is like this: don’t hear the chords, don’t hear the chords, it’s not Jazz, not Jazz! No. Jazz is an expression, it’s improvisational, and it captures various different genres, whether you talk about Acid Jazz, if it’s Latiz Jazz. It may not necessarily be the straight-ahead, as we know it with chords…drummers. It just may not be that. Sometimes when you come to a concert, you’ll hear some of that, and then you won’t, and you say ‘Is this really Jazz?’ Hopefully we keep it locked in, but then the audience to which we’re playing too. It’s a give and take. And Jazz musicians, in order to make money, because it’s bottom line. You got to make money, some money, you got to get paid a little bit, and if you do it full time, you better get paid a lot to make it. Jazz musicians have problems with their teeth…

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Have problems with their teeth and they may have to go to the hospital. I mean, they got to get paid. They have families, you know. So they have to do things in music, especially the way music is today. They can’t be too deep. They can’t be too deep. God forbids us to be too deep. It got to be understandable. And so when you come on Monday and I am inviting all of you. I am playing Mondays in April. And you will see a mixture of jazz, pure jazz, and contemporary jazz. And I have one of the few people that have been able to blend that. Guthrie Ramsey does a great job. He does a fantastic job. His music is… I blend it even more. Sometimes you may think I am playing jazz. He’s always in that genre. I mean, he make sure that. You heard him play. Guy Ramsey. Professor Ramsey. No? He is a music…

**Alex:** I heard him. And I heard he is really good.
**Bryan:** Oh yeah. He is an outstanding musician. He is outstanding. His keyboard is really good. So, anyway, so that’s… I am inviting you Monday night. 7.30. Broad and Walnut. I would love for you to come.

**Alex:** We will email the professor and we will put it on the class blackboard site too. Is it the whole class invited or is it just us?

**Bryan:** Everybody is invited. You know, Monday night is not the big night everybody goes out. That’s the night I hang out obviously.

**Zeng Yi:** Is there a cover charge?

**Bryan:** No. No cover.

**Mary:** How long does the performance last?

**Bryan:** Starts at 7.30, 8.30, 9, 10, 10.30 and 11. I am playing for the love of music. When I play there, compared to what I do at Penn. It’s a hobby. They don’t really pay. Where you go hear jazz in Philadelphia, the places are far and few, which is really unfortunate. I talked about that in your class. Just last night I have a conversation with, this is really timely too, the manager of the Marbar, which is above the Marathon Grill.

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And I said you know. You really need to have some jazz here. I really don’t mean to self promote but I have a band. But I cannot also bring in other musicians as well other bands. But you need to have some jazz here or this campus is dead. Still to me, dead. Now, I mean I am not your age so to you, it may be very much alive. But I think a campus is alive when you have a variety of different kinds of things happening in different places. It’s not the same. Seriality has become big because it’s not all those other things happening. So they stand out. It’s a nice thing but it’s different. But we are missing art galleries, jazz. No venues. The foundation trust but they are off to the side now. I think it’s something and it shouldn’t be just one thing. It should be many things. Many different things happening in many different places. So I’m talking to Marbar. So I said, “Well, Sunday nights we do. What about Sunday nights? It’s kind of a nice night for jazz.” He said, “Sunday night wouldn’t be good because we are already teaching Salsa. Salsa, you know. I said Salsa. Salsa and dancing around. Ok maybe Thursday night would be. Well, what other night do you think? I wouldn’t go with Monday night. Maybe Thursday night which is closer to a weekend. Maybe it could be a little more successful. And I said, “You try a couple times. Don’t try it once. Try it twice. It’s a good way of looking at it. And you can see if it is viable.

**Mary:** I think Friday night could be a good time too.

**Bryan:** You see, I thought most people would want to go dancing and things like that on Friday and Saturday night.
Mary: Thursday night some people do not really go out.

Alex: Most people I know go out on Fridays and Saturdays.

Zeng Yi: You will never really get the whole market.

Bryan: Hopefully we can get the jazz lovers. Marbar jazz. Boom.

(Track 14) Anyway, wish me luck.

Zeng Yi: What other events do you plan to have to bring jazz back to Penn? Any upcoming events for the rest of the year?

Bryan: Annenberg performances if you know, they have free jazz upcoming. World Café may have a couple, they have one but I am not sure. I have to have a conversation with them too and find out what they are doing. And that’s basically all that I know of. I mean there’s some outside performances that are happening across the street. Thursday jazz or something like that. And there’s some things in the community. In the firehouse at Baltimore Avenue, we find a nice pub at 52nd and that’s about it. Nothing else. We had a seminar. Guthrie Ramsey did a seminar about two months ago at Annenberg where we had a panel. I was on the panel. It was a jazz concert. The attendance was poor. It was just not well advertised. It was an excellent seminar. He did a great, great job. There were columnists from the daily news and other newspapers talking about jazz. Penn is a great place to bring jazz to because, as I said in the class, is more international than any other parts of the city of Philadelphia, in terms of the students at Penn, undergrad, grad, families. Most of the rest of Philadelphia is mostly segregated, in terms of its neighborhoods. Penn is a great place. It will be a great place to showcase. What I first thought about was. The best universal musical language is jazz.

Alex: What kinds of jazz genres have you heard in Philadelphia? Especially in West Philadelphia, before and now, how are they different?

Bryan: Places to play?

Alex: Yes.

Bryan: Different kinds of jazz.

Mary: For example, fusion?

Bryan: Fusion is kind of like John Hofton. I have a little bit. He got caught up between contemporary and something else. That’s not jazz. It’s smooth jazz. That’s a mouthful.
That’s what I mean by people feeding the public. You tell them, “This is such a great jazz concert.” Joe public. Jane public. There is a great concert. Oh yeah. Let’s go. Are we going to hear? They are going to hear the stuff that they hear on one of those syndicated smooth jazz stations of music that they call jazz. And when they get there, they are disappointed. The airwaves have actually really hurt the form of jazz. We have the pure form. There is no places or venues for various different genres. There really isn’t but it’s unfortunate. I named them when I was in your class. Creek, they do stuff. Zimbar. 40th street. Hollywood palace. 52nd street. This is current stuff man. There are places. They are ok but they are not the best. Most of them are upscale. Olive’s and 23rd street café and places like that where you can maybe go see it now and then. But there is really no steady.

Mary: Do you see Penn as an artsy campus?

Bryan: Would we have something like that here? I would think so. The seventies were a little bit more artsy. Eighties died, eighties destroyed a couple of decades. There’s not much left from the eighties.

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And the nineties try to recover. And they are still trying to recover. Penn’s campus will be a great place. It will be a great place.

Alex: Can you give us a detailed description of the couple of venues you played in before jazz sort of faded out in West Philadelphia? Some descriptions of the memories of going to these venues. What were they like? Who have been there?

Bryan: Jazz venues?

Alex: Right. In Philadelphia.

Bryan: In Philadelphia or West Philadelphia?

Alex: West Philadelphia. Before the current scene.

Bryan: Oh. Those places which I told you. There weren’t that many places to go. A couple of bars, more so bars without jazz, small jazz trails in them of local musicians. And then the big bars like Doctor Gay bar. I don’t know how this bar got it but a couple of bar lounges would get top x. And yeah, it’s very vibrant. The pre Zanzibar Blue. That kind of situation. And then there were a kind of mixture. We never really thought that Philadelphia had, like in Chicago, a mixture of jazz and blues. Philadelphia really didn’t have a blues scene. A bunch of musicians came out of that situation. There really weren’t that many places to go. They were limited.

Alex: Did you have a favorite venue to go to?
**Bryan:** Yeah. It was the Apple Bar lounge. That’s where you could see the top acts. The Bishu café, which was in Center City. You could also hear jazz along the South Street Cart before it was fixed up and four people were priced out of there. But there was jazz there. If you go there, you could run across the bridge and go to an upstairs couch where there is jazz as well.

**Zeng Yi:** In class, you mentioned a number of factors that caused a decline of jazz in Philadelphia. You mentioned a lack of venues, you mentioned a lack of musicians, people going up to New York City and entering the international market and you also talked about how people are no longer willing to be challenged by the music. Which of these do you…

**Bryan:** I think it’s all. I think it’s all. I think, I think.

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**Bryan:** I think the society just takes a dive, actually changes of activities, changes of expression and free expression. It’s locked in. It’s all correct. It’s, you know, we all do this, you know. It was not like that before, but I think the tendency now, in a sense is reflected in the music, it’s that people want a steady diet of the stuff that people can really understand, while the music is on, that is good. Don’t let it bother me, oh no, it sounds, oh no, what kind of note is that, it’s not sounding, you know, you just got very sad, you know, what the hell was that. I had a concert. I introduced this it is Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter, top notch guys, it took me to do some ritual. I introduced them to two great giants, you know, great giants, on stage, a whole bunch of people. **Tonight, we have this fabulous, legionary, Herbie Hancock, pianist, you know, extraordinary, played with everybody, the icon, you know, and for sax, the icon for pure tone quality, the incredible Wayne Shorter.** You know, that is the great day. I had to leave. I couldn’t stay for the beginning of the concert. I have to take my wife. She was not feeling well. So, I said, “OK, they do not play well. I came back into the Irvine, and those people grabbed me. I said, I think I spoke to them, I said, “I enjoyed when I was going back, I enjoy the concert.” They said, “We were bamboozled. We were bamboozled.” This was disgrace.

**Mary:** What happened?

**Bryan:** What happened was this is, really, this is shocking to me, you know, after introducing him. Anyway, it was a day. I went into the concert, and Wayne Shorter, and Herbie Hancock. Wayne Shorter was on soprano sax. Herbie was playing the piano. They were playing just those two.

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There was no bass. There was no drum. There were playing propositional music, call and response music, the whole night. So, it just was not meeting the xpecs/expectations that people’s wants, you know, the drum, the bass, you know, it was just these two, just playing with each other…. [sound imitations] people like, oh no, this is too deep, again,
too deep for me, this is not what I want to hear. I want to hear… [sound imitations of drum] That was an amazing experience. I thought those people were gonna tell me “oh it was a great concert. You guys were at PENN. You should have more of these.” Here I am, getting beat up for this concert. I think that really summarizes where the masses of people are, right now. The masses of people are groupings, some of the creativities happening. But mass, numbers, gives me some I can understand.

Mary: What’s wrong with that, I mean, propositional music.

Bryan: That’s right. But what that does, it gives you a smooth jazz format, [laugh], in every major city, we are going to hear, jazz, smooth jazz set. You guys should understand, it is really offensive. Because they said in the smooth jazz stations, because they are syndicated, smooth jazz 106.1, CD 101.9 in New York, in Chicago, in California. It came out, a lot of it came out in Southern California. I remember some people call it “death by sax”, [laugh] because every song has a die on sax playing. It is none-script. You don’t know who is playing. There is no authenticity.

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You do not know the difference, God Forbid I got strike by lightning right now, between Kenny G, Boney James, Mariam Marrows, Dave Koz. It just goes on, it just goes on, and everybody is playing the same thing. Actually playing with Junior Walker, if you know motown sound, if you listen to Junior Walker, of motown play. Back in the 60s, what they’ve done is they take that style, and they made it into smooth jazz. [sound imitation and hand clapping] And you see the people there. Oh My God, this is totally unbelievable. You are right. Your response to me is absolutely correct. That is gonna come in as a part of our play in Zanzibar blue. They want to hear something familiar. They want to hear a saxophone playing a song that, Luther Vandross did, or this person did, and that’s it, just like that. [hand clapping] It’s just rough to true jazz musician psyche. Now, in order for them to get paid, they have to go down that road, the road some people called sell-out. They have to sell-out. They have to give the soul up to that particular music, umm, which is where Philadelphia actually is right now.

Mary: How about the vocals?

Bryan: I see another thing. I go to the Zanzibar Blue. We play propositional music, vocals coming out soon, vocals. If you understand where I started the conversation, you’ve never heard that I mentioned the vocals. You heard me mention instruments, that penetrate. It’s one thing. Everything is fit. It does not mean anything with imagination. Just the music that’s out. That’s why I am so happen that jazz musicians do not do those dumb videos. I am against the videos. I am against the videos. From marketing standpoint, from business standpoint, if you are looking at this point,

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We love it. We sell CDs. But it does not allow the creativity. Sound is really supposed to, true music is really supposed to inspire you, remember I talked about feelings. Voice, visuals, but your imaginations, you and your song, it would mean one thing to you, it would mean another thing to you, it will mean another thing. Now it means the same thing to every person. (referring to videos) The whole thing is just… here, here, here, microwaved, it’s all here for you. That’s what happened in 80s. I blame the 80s. The 80s that really help to create that kind of in-the-box, kind of situation. In my discussions with my daughter. My youngest daughter who is 16, and my oldest daughter who is 24. It’s always interesting to see her and her cousins, it’s one cousin affected by the 70s, don’t know what happened. She wasn’t around in the 70s. You run into those people, comes from somewhere, maybe deep down in somewhere it comes out, that you must have been there before. We are talking about music in the 70s and 60s, compare to the 80s and 90s. You had such a variety of music. You turn FM radio station on. You have all kinds of music. You have 4 hip-pop music stations, you have rap, rock, rap. They are all labeled now, classic rock station, metal, mixed. You may hear jazz 3 am, further down the path, gospel music, Latina music, and classic, one classical station in Philadelphia. And that’s jazz station, 90.1, half jazz, half classical, half jazz, pure jazz. That’s the only station in Philadelphia that you are gonna hear any kind of jazz.

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Now, you got 106.1, you know, smooth jazz. And you turn them on and you win a trip to the Carribbean, Hawaii. And you listen to smooth jazz artists, concert, death by jazz. In Honolulu, or whatever, they are playing the same music. And on the next set, we’ll have Mariam Marrows, Luther Vandross, what the hell are they becoming jazz musician. Mariah Carey. You see what they are pushing, that’s smooth jazz.

Mary: People make fun of smooth jazz. Like, haha Kenny G, people ridicule. It’s not like people totally accepted.

Bryan: Oh, no, no, People like Kenny G. People like that stuff. I know it doesn’t go anywhere. It’s music to me, it’s just, it’s so typeset. You could put video to his music, you could put music to a lot of these smooth jazz music. I think smooth jazz are gonna have videos soon, really hot video soon. Because the way they play. There is a new jazz musician, 25 years old, totally different, listen to her, her name is Lizz Wright. I mentioned her in the class. Listen to her. That’s different. Are you gonna listen to Lizz Wright, on the radio station? NO! You are not gonna hear. And most people don’t have the guts to go into a free record, I still call it records, or CDs, anyway, records (CD) store, a CD shop, really experiment and hear other things that opens up people’s minds. They want them all comfortable. When you come in [to Zanzibar] on Monday, you will hear a part that’s comfortable, and a part that’s not, ordered by the management of Zanzibar Blue. Not what Glen wants to do. Glen just wants to have fun. But now ordered by the management.

Roy: Just want to clarify, the vocalist is part of your band, or it’s separated?
Bryan: I’ll have to have a vocalist. When does the vocalist come out? The managers would come to me, and ask, “Are the vocalists coming out soon?” would play some serious jazz music, “Are the vocalists coming out soon?” See, that’s what the world… My tendency I to go up my own place and chill.

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Bryan: that’s what I want to do, so I don’t have to put up with stupidness like that, and you know, so that it will be a place where people can experience jazz in a true form, you know, they go to Ortlieb’s but Ortlieb’s is… have you ever been to Ortlieb’s? It’s in Old City it’s down by 9th or 10th street. It’s the only jazz venue there in the area where musicians come in and they share, they play and they have sets where people can come up and play and things like that. I have a student that, he may be, um Penn student, plays in a jazz band at Penn. He has no venue to play in. No venue. Jazz band, he has to play something for Penn or something and four people come in or something, and they have no places for them to really express themselves. He’s gonna play with, he’s been playin with, I invited him to play with me. And whenever there’s an opportunity, you know, I invite him to play with me. He’s a trombone player—absolutely fantastic. Just—if you come you’ll hear him, I invited him to play with me but that was the other part of our discussion there are no places for, there are not enough places for jazz musicians to play. And there are not enough places for new young jazz musicians to play. That’s even worse. And that needs to even be better. Cause a lot of these old people, these old guys, there, you know, you gotta allow room for… and that’s not happening. And that’s one, that’s, that’s one of my worries. The venues, the smooth jazz stuff—sorry— the smooth jazz stuff…

Mary: I don’t like smooth jazz!

Bryan: Oh, okay, well good, good, good, good. You sound like you were uh… Didn’t it sound like she was a little bit? [laughs]

Mary: I just like jazz with words.

Bryan: and that’s what my wife likes. And I say, forget the words. Take a real… be in yourself for a minute, in your house, or your apartment, whatever you’re going through, good or bad, listen to something that’s very melodic and I’ll bet you you’ll make words out of it. I bet you words will come. It will be an expression of

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what you’re feeling. ), if you’re really… the better, you know, for me, I’m just gonna tell you about for me, the best feelings I get out of the music are actually the notes that people, the notes that people play or the combination of notes that people play that evokes a feeling, it gets to you. It goes in you. Words? Yeah. That’s why my band, they never, I was introduced to… one of my most memorable experiences was to go back to this was the Franklin Institute, in Philadelphia. It was a series there that I was… I felt
like a real big star there, too, this was back... I felt like, you know, this was too much for me, and this was my own group and you know, my name was there marqued, and we were in this place called the planetarium in the uh, the Institute, and it was called, the series was called “Jazz Under the Stars”. So the planetarium, this was, it was really nice. You know, starry sky, this was just up Glenn’s alley, it was make-believe world. And it was different kinds of starry skies while you’re playing the music, and it was like a real concert. I had, I brought a vocalist in, finally. I never like vocalists. I couldn’t stand vocalists. You know, I just did not, I thought that the notes were words. I grew up thinking that...

Mary: You know, film people are always like, you know, true cinema is silent cinema and words pollute it, and I think that musicians and...

Bryan: [laughing]

Mary: You know, I’m a literature major and I like the words!

Bryan: All right, we both have different answers.

Mary: Although, you know, my favorite song doesn’t have very many words.

Bryan: Which is yours?

Mary: “Dark Star”. That’s almost all just jamming with guitars.

Bryan: Well I just, you know, there’s a guy that came to me and I brought this story up because he played with, um, sang with Grover Washington, and a woman by the name of Phyllis Hymen… different, a bunch of different people. And he came to one of the performances, which, you know, I was very honored, and the way that he sang… He used words, but he used his voice as an instrument, and I was very turned on with that, and you know, he used his voice as an instrument,

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and he sold me. And I haven’t had anyone as good as him since, that was that creative. But that was my first feel with vocalists. I love, I love people like, you won’t hear him on Smooth Jazz, but a guy out of Boston, a guitarist named Pat Metheny, who… have you heard of him? Pat Metheny? [pounds fist on table] You haven’t heard of Pat Metheny? You haven’t heard of Pat Metheny?

All: laughing

Bryan: No, no, no. Write this down please… write this down, this is my assignment. Okay? You wanted my interview, I’m now telling you to… Liz Wright, she’s for vocals…
Steven: She’s performed at Kimmel center, right?

Bryan: Yeah. She was at Zanzibar. They let her do what she wants, you know, not me, but anyway, that’s a different story. Pat Metheny: P-A-T M-E-T-H-E-N-Y. He’s a guitarist. And if you really want to listen here, it’s a different type of music. It’s still jazz, but it’s a different type of jazz. Different than smooth jazz, different than pure jazz, different than acid jazz, different than Latin jazz. And his music is, well, you need to hear it. Let’s… can we… can you come into my office now? Can you come in now, my office?

Fei: Yeah, uh, can I have one last question?

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Bryan: Yeah.

Fei: You say there is a decline of the live jazz, so what could you say to encourage young musicians to prefer a career as a live jazz musician?

Bryan: I don’t know the answer to that, I really don’t know, because I don’t see enough venues, and I don’t see enough venues on the horizon.

Mary: Well, what did you say to that kid who you offered to play with you guys?

Bryan: What did I say to him?

Mary: Yeah, like did you encourage him to keep trying…

Bryan: Oh, yeah. Yeah. And he has it in his soul. He’s gonna keep trying. He’s gonna keep trying. May not be in Philadelphia, may be someplace else, but he’s gonna keep trying. You could tell when you, you know, when he walks in with his trombone, all those years of music, he’s coming out of midterms or finals here, and you could see him coming to his love. You know, and it’s got to be a love of music. And it usually is. For musicians. But it’s… the places where they can play… the lack of places, venue, can be very discouraging. So that’s why a lot of… that’s why new things have to be created. And wherever we can create them we need to create them. Penn’s campus would be a great place to create, to create such a… atmosphere. It would be really wonderful. And you know folks are talking it, but I haven’t seen enough of the… you know, I’ve seen the talk but not enough of the walk, so to speak. People are not really… you know “Oh, that would be good to have jazz on 40th street” and okay, well, okay, implementation? Can we do that

Alex: I’m sorry, but could I ask one last question?

Bryan: Yeah.
Alex: your point in class that jazz should be neighborhood socialization?

Bryan: Yes.

Alex: And I’m just wondering, what type… what sort of people would uh what races were integrated, and socio-economic standing, and what age were the people who listened to jazz, who went to listen to jazz at these venues? And like, what could we do, and would be like, the same group to see these artists?

Bryan: Yes, I think it would have to be neighborhood… the neighborhood’s changed as well. You know, I mean, things have an effect on people, you know, all people, for the most part and we have jazz concerts in west Philadelphia. Councilman Blackwell has a series of… a jazz heritage series in a park. I’m gonna be playing for that. It’s you know, it’s not hip-hop. You know, hip-hop is just like [makes a rocketing gesture] Pshoooo! It’s all over,

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it’s like the big thing, or oldies, or old rhythm and blues stuff, it’s got to be re-introduced into the community. It has not been transferred.

Alex: in terms of actually, was it a diverse audience?

Bryan: No, no, it was African-American. Basically, straight-in…

Mary: Young?

Bryan: Yeah, I guess at that age, like, twenties, thirties, forties, that’s what… you know, now people who come to see jazz are like in their fifties, sixties [laughs]…you know, they haven’t brought the other ones in, you know, they’re in the car waiting for Mom to come, you know, with the boom boom hangin in the car listening to hip-hop. They’re… they haven’t made, it hasn’t been transferred. And that’s the key. In Philadelphia, I don’t know about New York. Or other places, but I think it’s some some sort of… Now, jazz is more accepted by many cultures. And it’s one of the more leading. Musicians like to go away and play because of the receptivity of the audiences internationally. Whether it’s in Australia, whether it’s in China, whether it’s in Japan, whether it’s you know Paris, France, you know, even England. That’s where musicians like to go play. And when they come back to the states, it’s difficult. Even Caribbean tours, Caribbean tours, jazz is, you know, JazzFests, you’ll hear a lot of pure jazz there. When you get back to the states, it’s a struggle. You know, it’s a struggle for some musicians, for many musicians.

Mary: Montreal has…

Bryan: Montreal, yeah.

Mary: I mean when I was there, that was the first time I’d ever gone to a jazz show and there were no words, but I was with…
Bryan: [applauding] yay!

Mary: I was with these two girls and one of them like actually knows jazz, and she was like sitting there listening with rapt attention, and I was like: “oh I’m in a jazz club, I’m in a jazz club” and it was more the experience, but she was the first person I ever saw be, you know, so into it. I think there were a lot of clubs like that around the French quarter or whatever…

Bryan: mmm-hmmm.

Mary: so much so that we even went into one, and you know, I haven’t seen that in awhile.

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Bryan: and where was this, Montreal? And that’s a great place for jazz, too. And it’s right outside of the country. It could be different there! Go to the Caribbean, it could be different there! It’s a good feeling for a lot of musicians. So why don’t we all… did I answer all of your questions?

All: Thank you!