

R.I.P. Oscar Peterson

One of jazz music's piano giants passed yesterday. In a music world where memory, technique, rhythm, composition and feeling have to all meet at one Oscar Peterson was one of the best. His command of the piano reaches back into his heyday of '40's and '50's and reaches forward into the piano-man tactics of John Legend.

2007 Okayplayer Awards



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Nat Hentoff Remembers Max Roach



The Constitution of a Jazzman

Max Roach, at 83, left us on August 16, but his liberating presence lives on in his music

Early one morning years ago, I was at the Blues Alley jazz club in Washington, D.C., to do a television interview with Max Roach. As always, I was early. There was no one in the club except Max, alone at the drums, practicing for the night's gig. He played with as much intensityâ€”and as many surprisesâ€”as if he were before hundreds of listeners.

Like Roy Eldridge and Phil Woods, Max always played as if it were his last gig on earth. With Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, and another drummerâ€”Kenny “Klook” Clarkeâ€”Max changed the direction of jazz as Louis Armstrong had decades before.

Washington Post jazz critic Matt Schudel distills how Max liberated jazz drumming: “By playing the beat-by-beat pulse of standard 4/4 time on the ‘ride’ cymbal instead of on the thudding bass drum, [he] developed a flexible, flowing rhythmic pattern that allowed soloists to play freely, [and] by matching his rhythmic attack with a tune’s melody, Mr. Roach brought a newfound subtlety of expression to his instrument.”

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Gladys Knight Talks About The Music Industry With Lee Bailey



*Gladys Knight has one of the most distinctive and recognizable singing voices in the world today, and her speaking voice isn't so bad either.

Our Lee Bailey recently had the opportunity to speak with Ms. Knight. When asked about the modern state of popular music he touched a nerve. Here's why Gladys says modern music annoys her.

"One of my pet peeves is being categorized, so to speak," the music legend told our publisher. "Not just because of the kind of music you were doing, but how you looked. Whether you could do pop music material sometimes was dependent upon whether you were African-American or not African American and that used to bother me so much."

We would imagine that Ms. Knight is but one of many who remember this 'type casting,' if you will, in the music business. Despite this, Gladys says she was reared by her mother to be versatile from the very beginning.

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