

My father was in Paris, France during the 1930's when the Hot Club of France was getting started. He had close friendships and ties with Charles Delaunay, who use to visit our home every year in Los Angeles, and Hughes Panassie, the other co-founder of the Hot Club. I grew up with the sounds of Django Rheinart, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Jimmie Lunceford, Fletcher Henderson, Count Basie, and numerous great musicians. My father played his records every day, and many times into the wee hours while we were all sleeping.

My mother, born in Canada, was a professional Spanish Dancer ,and so the other influences were the Flamenco guitarists, the stomping of feet and Spanish rhythms,and lots of fun house parties attended by visiting gypsies and artists.

I began studying the trombone at age 10, taking lessons for nearly eight years with Harold Diner. He taught me all the wonderful fundamentals of the trombone and showed me how the trombone could play beautiful melodies.

My father stressed the importance of improvisation, and we would have nitely jams with him accompanying me on the rhythm guitar, after I practiced my scales and exercises.

Two of the greatest gifts I received from my father were his passions for jazz and fishing. From my mother, I learned to appreciate classical music and Flamenco and learned how to care for your health. She later became a Yoga instructor and vegetarian and continued to teach dancing well into her 80's.

I have been a professional musician for over 40 years, beginning at age 17 while I was still in high school and working at Disneyland and numerous recording sessions. I got to play with Kid Ory, hang-out with Louis Armstrong, Barney Bigard, Rex Stuart, Duke Ellington, and so many wonderful players who helped shape our future for jazz. Probably my two greatest jazz influences and mentors would have to be Trummy Young on trombone, and Benny Carter, for all around musicality. I learned a lot from their teachings and friendships.

Another great teacher who helped me a lot was Dick Nash. I was having a lot of chop wear down after Woody Herman, and he was so gracious and knowledgeable. He is also one of my biggest heroes for the sound he created on the trombone.

I think it is important for young players to study the history of their instrument and also other instruments as well; and it is advisable to be able to emulate or transcribe solos from different instrumentalists. I know I focused a lot on the trumpet players, and use to wear out the recordings and solos of Clark Terry, Louis Armstrong, Lee Morgan, and so many others who inspired me.

I try to keep current and listen to all the new and up-coming players on the scene today. We have to keep our music fresh. I believe in the future of jazz and the young musicians who are going to keep our art form alive and propel it into the future. We have to share our gifts and knowledge with them in order to help them along similar journeys , so that they may have a

bright future and continue to shape the music.