

# *The Music Crusaders*

*From Jazz to Classical & from Classical to  
Jazz*

**PIETRO PETE RUGOLO**

**(25/12/1915 - 16/10/2011)**

The *Grandeur and Modesty of a Musician of Genius*



(Photo :Jazz Profiles)



Maurice Creuven 2021

Talking about music is good; listening to it is better!

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*La première version de ce travail fut publiée, très courtoisement,  
 en Septembre 2012, un an après le décès de Pete Rugolo,  
 par le Magazine JAZZ HOT sur son site, sous la rubrique "Biographies".  
 J'en remercie chaleureusement Yves SPORTIS et son équipe.*

## **BIRTH.**

It was in Sicily (Italy), in the charming commune of San Piero Patti (province of Messina), on Christmas Day 1915, that little Pietro was born, son of Anna Di Perna and Antonino Rugolo. The latter, a stonemason and marble cutter for the Fiore funeral monument company, decided in 1920, after being taken prisoner by the Austrians, to take his family to California, to Santa Rosa, north of San Francisco. There, he set up shop as a shoemaker, listening to Italian opera arias sung mainly by Caruso on his old phonograph. One day, one of his customers, unable to pay for the work he had done, sent him a piano, and it was on this piano, placed at the back of the store, that Pietro (later Pete and sometimes Peter or Gene, in TV series) spent hours playing a variety of songs and opera arias, much to Antonino's delight.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

Encouraged by his family (both his sisters were musicians), Pietro began his musical studies in Santa Rosa. In 1935, he also studied at San Francisco State College, graduating in 1939 with a Bachelor's degree in music education, with the intention of devoting himself to teaching.

In autumn 1939, he left for Mills College in Oakland, where he had the great good fortune to study composition with the prestigious French musician Darius Milhaud, a member of the group Les Six, champion of polytonality and very open to jazz, like Ravel, Stravinsky and many others. Dave Brubeck also studied with Darius Milhaud, as did his brother Howard, Burt Bacharach, Philip Glass and Steve Reich.

Among the works written by classical musicians with an interest in jazz, listen to Milhaud's music for the ballet "La Création du Monde", composed in 1923, a year before Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue".

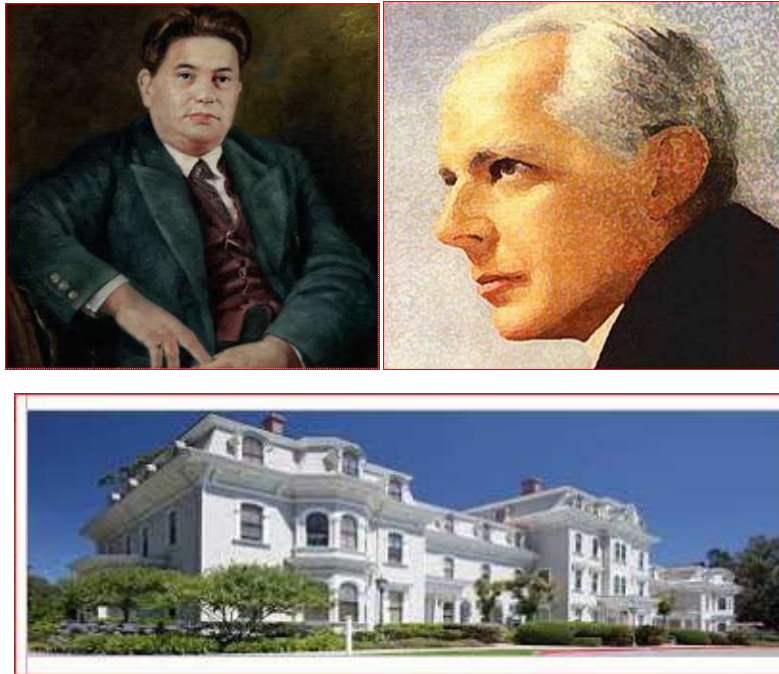
Pete Rugolo was greatly influenced by the master's enormous open-mindedness, but also by his uncompromising knowledge of the great classics such as Bach and Palestrina, which led Milt Bernhart to say: "*Unquestionably, Pete is Milhaud's first disciple.*"

The latter taught at Mills College from 1940 to 47.

Pete graduated from Mills College in June 1941 with a Master of Arts degree, thanks to his composition "Suite for Strings". His first instrument was the baritone horn (brass family, not baritone saxophone), which Antonino also played. Pete soon moved on to the French horn and piano.

Attracted by the music of Schoenberg, Bartok, Stravinsky, Barber, Varèse and W. Schuman, Pete received major recognition for his young talent when Bela

Bartok himself offered to let him take part in his summer courses at Mills College. What a wonderful adventure for this young man whose life had begun so modestly!



Darius Milhaud - Le Mills College - Bela Bartok  
(Photos: Facebook - Collegedunia - Babylon Radio)

But Pete didn't just listen to classical music. At a very early age, he had discovered the orchestras of Duke Ellington, Ray Noble, Gene Krupa, Jimmie Lunceford and, in the early '40s, Stan Kenton, who was just beginning to make a name for himself and became his idol. In an interview with Steven D. Harris, Pete recounts how, during this period, he wrote arrangements for Gene Krupa: "One O'clock Jump", "Three Little Words", "Stardust", ... and was never paid for them! A simple oversight, most likely.

In 1942, after Pete had worked for a few months as pianist for Johnny Richards, replacing Paul Smith, he was called up by the U.S. Army (where he remained until 1945) to direct the Artillery Regiment Band housed at Fort Scott, near San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. Among the musicians was a certain Paul Desmond.

In September 1943, presenter Jimmy Lyons tells Pete that Stan Kenton's orchestra is playing at the Golden Gate Theater, not far from Fort Scott. Pete took three or four of his arrangements, including "Opus A Dollar Three Eighty", under his arm and handed them to Stan, specifying that they were his only copies. Several months passed and no response!

Then, one fine day, Pete gets a call: it's Stan Kenton, who tells him, sorry, that he has

only had time to test his scores with the orchestra. He adds that Pete's music sounds exactly like his own, but more modern, and ends by saying, "*As soon as you leave the Army, you've already got a job!*"

Stan's enthusiasm for Pete Rugolo's musical style can probably be explained by the fact that he, too, had studied composition, in Los Angeles, with a French teacher named Charles Dalmorès (Henri Alphonse Brin), a first prize horn player at the Paris Conservatoire and later an opera singer (tenor) with a brilliant international career. He introduced Stan to the music of Ravel, Stravinsky and Bartok; he died in Hollywood (1871 - 1939).

### **AFFIRMATION.**

Two years later, Kenton hired Pete on his staff at a salary of \$150 (\$2,250 today) per week. As he would later do with many of his musicians and arrangers, Stan firmly encouraged him to develop his own style, even if it meant using unusual musical or rhythmic structures, dissonant voices and unusual instrumental ensembles, but all within the framework of the classic big band: brass, woodwinds and rhythm. Pete would say, "*For Stan, the more modern the better!*"

Pete soon became Stan Kenton's main arranger, bringing an experimental edge to the orchestra that would last throughout its existence, regularly alternating straight-ahead jazz with avant-garde pages in the same concert or on the same record.

It was the start of a wonderful career for Pete, who played a masterful part in the evolution of jazz. His great joy in working for Stan was not only the total freedom he enjoyed in his arrangements, but also the fact that he could compose original pieces with the certainty that they would be played by a formidable orchestra.

In a 2001 conversation with Italian musician Claudio Lo Cascio, Pete recalls:



Claudio Lo Cascio

(Photo: Word Press)

*"Stan would often give me a rough sketch of an idea, a few lines on a staff, and when I'd figured it out, he'd say: OK, Pete, now do it yourself, I've got work to do at Radio City."*

Claudio Lo Cascio continues:

*"Pete Rugolo's writing was cultivated, using sonorities and tempos never before present in jazz, such as 5/4, or more rarely 3/4. Original timbres and expressive innovations, in common use, as well as a more advanced conception of harmony characterized by dilated intervals and complex chords whose familiarity stemmed, for both Pete and Stan, from shared studies of the great contemporary composers... Pete Rugolo made a definitive contribution to ensuring that Stan Kenton's orchestra remains objectively, from a technical point of view, the most perfect orchestral machine in the history of jazz, and still unequalled in some respects."*

It's worth noting that, since the arrival of Pete Rugolo, Stan has told concert audiences the name of the arranger of a piece, whereas in the big band tradition, this function was almost always anonymous.



Stan Kenton and Pete  
Rugolo (Photo: Jazzitalia)

The scores that emerged from the Kenton-Rugolo collaboration, though sometimes criticized by certain conservatives, were nonetheless unexpectedly modern and innovative.

In spite of the often complex writing, they are blessed with the quality of execution of Stan Kenton's orchestra, whose musicians, especially at first, are astonished by the novelty and variety of sounds Pete asks them to produce. At times, they even imagined that they were writing errors, but Pete reassured them: *"No, ... it's intentional!"*

One innovation, among others, is the use of different types of mutes in the brass section, whereas Stan had previously opted for completely open sounds.

Pete Rugolo's compositions and arrangements are spontaneously marked by the immense classical musical culture he acquired through his studies and numerous contacts, but also by listening to the jazz orchestras for which he has such admiration. In his love of detail and virtuosity, we can also detect some childhood memories of Italian opera, with its vocalizations and coloraturas, almost improvisation.

Bill Russo and many musicologists would go so far as to see Pete Rugolo as the true initiator, before the letter of the law, of what came to be known as "Third Stream Music". Stan and Pete will always prefer the expression "Progressive Jazz", while John Lewis and Gunther Schuller, for example, will later stick to the term "Third Stream".



Pete Rugolo - Johnny Richards - Robert Graettinger - Stan Kenton

(Photo: Ebony Band/nl)

Few musicians can bring to their art such a generous and varied background as that which underpins Pete's compositions, which are perfectly in the spirit of jazz, but musically highly evolved, using compositional techniques that are completely new to this idiom, creating a music that is, however, also whimsical and humorous, even light-hearted. With titles that are generally very concise.

### **THE KENTON YEARS.**

Pure chronology tells us that Pete Rugolo's first composition to be performed by Stan Kenton's orchestra is the aforementioned "Opus A Dollar Three Eighty", a recording of which can be found, notably in the "Kenton Era" box set, at a rehearsal of the orchestra in Hollywood on December 6, 1944. This orchestration, "à la Kenton", is already very successful,



a young admirer's tribute to his master.

A worthy heir to the great Italian composers who preceded him, Pete Rugolo is a particularly prolific musician. As well as possessing an exceptional musical culture, a rare facility for writing and a fertile and highly diversified imagination, Pete has shown, throughout his life as an artist, that he is also a real workaholic; his work is there to prove it.

He composed and arranged over a hundred songs for Stan Kenton's orchestra, many of which were never recorded. Between July 1946 and December 1947 (according to A.F.M. records), of the 113 tracks the band recorded for Capitol, 79 were by Pete Rugolo, the others by Ken Hanna, Gene Roland and Stan himself.

Faced with such an abundance, it's virtually impossible to approach, within the limits of this text, all the recordings made by Stan to Pete's arrangements or compositions. However, there are a number that must be mentioned, either for their popularity, or for their great originality, or even for their frank novelty, for our hero also liked to take risks.

The first of Pete's official arrangements uses Duke Ellington's beautiful "Solitude" and was recorded on December 20, 1945 in Hollywood.

In June 1946, Pete continued the "Artistry" series, initiated by Stan Kenton, and developed an "Artistry in Boogie" whose recording features the two buddies at the piano: Stan playing the score right-handed and Pete left-handed. The same session featured the famous "Come back to Sorrento", with another Sicilian, Vido Musso (1913-1982), on tenor sax. There are countless jazz musicians of Italian origin!

Three days later, the orchestra recorded a powerful version of the Rodgers & Hart theme "Lover", featuring soloists Vido Musso and an admirable Kay Winding.

The following month saw "Artistry in Percussion" for drum maestro Shelly Manne, followed by "Safranski" (originally "Artistry in Bass"), a sort of short concerto dedicated to Eddie Safranski, and finally "Artistry in Bolero" with Vido Musso and Kay Winding.

Also in July 1946, Kay Winding appeared in "Yesterdays", "Lover Man" and "Willow Weep for Me".

August 2 sees the first version of "Collaboration" with Kay Winding and Chico Alvarez.

In addition to the above-mentioned soloists, Stan Kenton's orchestra at the time included several highly talented members, such as trumpeters Buddy Childers and Ray Wetzel, the astonishing Boots Mussulli (alto sax), Bob Cooper (tenor), the indestructible Bob Gioga (baritone) and the wonderful singer June Christy.



Milt Bernhart soon joins the trombone band.

With the confidence of this group of exceptional musicians, Pete was able to forge the experimental style he would maintain in all his jazz recordings, here and with his future personal orchestras, a style which, for Stan, would give birth to the "Progressive Jazz.



(Photos: Capitol Records + Indigo)

"Collaboration" will be recorded again on February 27 47, but in a totally different arrangement, again with the very impressive Kay Winding.

On the same day, parts 1 and 2 of "Rhythm Incorporated" (which would become "Capitol Punishment", a title intended by Capitol) and a host of soloists: Stan Kenton, Vido Musso, Chico Alvarez, Buddy Childers, Boots Mussulli, Kay Winding, Skip Layton (trombone), Buddy Childers and Eddie Safranski. A true festival: arrangement and execution!

March 31 was a big day for Pete, as the orchestra recorded only scores signed by him: the famous "Minor Riff", with Chico Alvarez and Vido Musso, "Monotony", with Ray Wetzel, Skip Layton, Boots Mussulli and Vido Musso, then "Interlude" for trombones only, with rhythms.

But the highlight of the day was the remake of "Machito", composed by Pete as a tribute to the great Cuban bandleader Francisco Grillo, known as Machito, after Stan had heard him in Harlem. This re-recording was not only the wish of Buddy Childers and Skip Layton, who were convinced that their duo finale would be even better, but also and above all the wish of Stan, who, for the sake of authenticity, had the excellent idea of hiring two real Cuban percussionists for this version: Ivan Lopes (bongo) and Eugenio Reyes (maracas). This was six months before the legendary "Manteca", for which Dizzy called in Chano Pozo.

Stan paid tribute to Cuban music on several other occasions, calling on other arrangers.

The next day, June Christy is in the studio to record two tracks:

"Please Be Kind", featuring Skip Layton, and Duke Ellington's "I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good", a version without saxophones.

At the same session, the orchestra performed "If I Could Be With You", whose arrangement by Pete intrigued some musicians, who went so far as to provide a detailed musical analysis. It features the usual soloists: Boots Mussulli, Buddy Childers and Skip Layton, whose specialty is his ability to play the high register of the trombone, almost reaching the sound of a trumpet.

Next, a new tribute to the Duke with "Sophisticated Lady", followed by "The Fatal Apple", which will become "Unisson Riff" in a rearranged remake in October.

But in early April 1947, the orchestra's schedule is particularly full, as it begins a major concert tour through New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana and Alabama, requiring long, late-night coach trips to several cities in each state. Some evenings feature a two-hour first half, called "Stan Kenton in Concert", followed by a second half, also two hours long, devoted to dance music.

On April 13, June Christy was completely speechless and had to go home to recuperate. Stan is left without a vocalist at all, but he also loses Bob Cooper, who insists on accompanying his young wife; they were married in January. The musicians are dead tired; Stan too, even if he doesn't show it. And it was on April 16, at the end of a concert at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, that Stan made the following statement, with a heavy heart:

*"Tonight is our last; we're stopping; I'm disbanding the orchestra; you can go home on the bus."*

It's a general surprise! Each musician receives two weeks' salary. Stan is hospitalized, unable to return to Los Angeles. Sacrificing his orchestra puts him in such a mental state that he is forced to consult a psychiatrist. The treatment does him a world of good, and Stan recovers all his energy faster than expected.

In the summer of 1947, he was already making plans to set up a brand-new orchestra, but this time to focus on concert music rather than dance. A first in jazz history. Pete Rugolo was enchanted by the idea, and the two spent hours designing the orchestra. The era of the Artistry in Rhythm Orchestra is over, the era of the Progressive Jazz Orchestra has begun.

Stan entrusted Pete with the responsibility of composing the new band's repertoire. For some pieces, he even delegated conducting duties to Pete. The Kenton-Rugolo duo could be compared to the Ellington-Strayhorn duo, but with musically very different productions.



Pete Rugolo - Stan Kenton - Bob Graettinger

The Mosque/Altria Theater - Richmond (Virginia) 1947 or 1948

(Photo: Library of Congress - William P. Gottlieb Collection)

Most of the musicians from the previous band respond positively to Stan's invitation to join him. June Christy accepts. Vido Musso and Boots Mussulli did not return, which Stan initially regretted a little. But he soon replaced them with a younger, more modern duo: Bob Cooper - Art Pepper, in response to the Four Brothers sound initiated by Stan Getz at Woody Herman's house.

In order to maintain the powerful brass section, which was so important to him, Stan hired the perfectionist Al (Angelo) Porcino. With Ray Wetzel and Buddy Childers, the orchestra has three solid lead trumpets.

Milt Bernhart becomes first trombone, and while he unfortunately lacks the improvisational gifts of Kay Winding, he does have a magnificent, full, strong tone.

Among the newcomers is Laurindo Almeida, a talented young Brazilian guitarist who speaks no English, just a little Italian, and almost imposes himself on Pete, the translator, by playing "Laura" and a few classical pieces; he absolutely wants to be in a big band.

Another element of Latin American culture makes its entrance, in the form of percussionist Jack Costanzo, who was initially intended only for pieces with references to South America, but eventually became a permanent fixture in the rhythm section, participating in almost every performance.

The new basic orchestra consisted of twenty musicians plus June Christy: five trumpets (Buddy Childers, Ray Wetzel, Al Porcino, Chico Alvarez, Ken Hanna), five trombones (Milt Bernhart, Eddie Bert, Harry Betts, Harry Forbes, Bart Varsalona), five saxophones (George Weidler, Frank Pappalardo from Charlie's

Barnet, awaiting the return of Art Pepper, who was already in the orchestra in 1943 at the age of 18, Bob Cooper, Warner Weidler, Bob Gioga) and five rhythmists (Stan Kenton, Laurindo Almeida, Eddie Safranski, Shelly Manne, Jack Costanzo). Other musicians, especially percussionists, will be hired from time to time, depending on the requirements of the scores.



Milt Bernhart - Laurindo Almeida - Jack Costanzo - Al Porcino

(Photos: Michael Broschat - Napster - R.espe - N.Y. Times)

You could almost say that Stan Kenton's Progressive Jazz Orchestra is a bit like the Pete Rugolo Orchestra, so much so that Stan gives it maximum trust, initiative and responsibility. The titles recorded by this group would be among the most important and influential of Stan's entire career. And it's with great enthusiasm that Pete gets to work.

On September 24, 1947, three tracks were recorded: "Elegy for Alto", "Soothe Me" and "Chrorale for Brass, Piano and Bongo", the latter with Stan and Jack Costanzo as soloists, the orchestra (without saxes) being conducted by Pete. "Chorale" became, in December, the second movement of the "Prologue Suite".

The following day, four new tracks: "Curiosity" with June Christy and Buddy Childers, "A Theme to the West", "Abstraction" (third movement of the "Prologue Suite") and "Fugue for Rhythm Section" for rhythm section only plus René Touzet (maracas). The last three pieces are conducted by Pete Rugolo.

Stan Kenton's ultimate goal was to create a new form of American music that would subtly combine jazz and classical elements within the same score. And on October 20, a new version of "Monotony" is recorded, much reworked by Pete. Salvador Armenta replaces René Touzet. On this date, it is probably "Monotony" which, of all the repertoire and in both arrangements, best meets Stan's wishes. At Capitol, however, the response was less than enthusiastic.

Two days later, three successive recording sessions began on October 22nd at 1pm, finishing the next day at 12.15pm.

The first session includes "Unisson Riff", an extended orchestration of "The Fatal

Apple" with Ray Wetzel, Art Pepper, Chico Alvarez and Eddie Bert, followed by "Lament", a piece for guitar and orchestra, which Pete entrusted to Laurindo Almeida, Eddie Safranski and Jack Costanzo.

After a slight rest, the second session begins with "Introduction To A Latin Rhythm" (first movement of the "Prologue Suite"), with Bob Cooper, Eddie Bert and Pete Rugolo conducting. The session continues with the recording of "Impressionism", featuring soloists George Weidler and Bob Cooper.

The third part is reserved for June Christy, who performs two tracks: "I Told Ya I Love Ya, Now Get Out" and "He Was A Good Man As Good Men Go", featuring Eddie Bert, Bob Cooper and George Weidler. René Touzet plays maracas on "Lament" and "Introduction". What a busy day and night!

For a month, until the end of November, the orchestra toured various American states. The concert program consists almost entirely of compositions or arrangements by Pete Rugolo.

From November 25 to December 21 (except Mondays), concerts are held at the Commodore Hotel in New York, and various recordings are made for radio by C.B.S., M.B.S. and N.B.C. on acetates (test discs).

Moving on to December 6, 1947 for the recording of "Cuban Carnival" and the very popular "Peanut Vendor" (El Manicero), the latter, in a head arrangement, is led by Stan, followed by Shelly, the mighty Milt Bernhart and the fire trumpets led by Buddy Childers and Ray Wetzel. "Cuban Carnival" also features Laurindo Almeida, Art Pepper and Al Porcino. The rhythms are reinforced by Carlos Vidal, José Luis Mangual and Machito himself on maracas.

In the afternoon of the same day, June Christy recorded "Lonely Woman" and the orchestra performed Bob Graettinger's score "Thermopylae" (which Capitol misspelled "Thermopolae").

On December 13, June Christy and Milt Bernhart record "Over The Rainbow" for a CBS radio show in New York.

As it does every year, Metronome magazine asked its readers to vote for their favorite musicians of 1947. Stan takes first place in big bands. During these years, he is truly the pre-eminent jazz band. Pete is first among arrangers.

On December 21 at 10 a.m. at Capitol Studios (RKO-PATHE) in New York, Metronome's George Simon organizes a big reunion with Stan Kenton's orchestra and a series of prestigious soloists who have won the Metronome poll: the Metronome All Stars: Dizzy Gillespie, Bill Harris, Flip Phillips, Buddy DeFranco, Nat "King" Cole, Billy Bauer, Eddie Safranski and Buddy Rich.

Pete Rugolo produced a new arrangement of "Pete's Riff", which he entitled "Metronome Riff" for the occasion and directs the performance - a historic recording!

Pete did it again in 1949 with a new batch of Metronome All Stars.

But the day is far from over, and by 2 p.m. the usual orchestra is back in action, recording a remake of "Introduction To A Latin Rhythm" and then "Journey To Brazil" (Finale from the fourth movement of the "Prologue Suite"). The soloists are : Laurindo Almeida, Milt Bernhart/Eddie Bert, Bob Cooper, Art Pepper, Al Porcino/Buddy Childers and Jack Costanzo. Finally, it's time for June Christy to perform her "How High The Moon" with Eddie Bert, Chico Alvarez and Art Pepper. Pete's arrangement expands on a first combo score written earlier in the year for June by Neal Hefti.

In short, the "Prologue Suite" consists of four parts:

- 1 "Introduction to a Latin Rhythm", 2 "Chorale for Brass, Piano and Bongo",
3. "Abstraction" and 4. Journey to Brazil".

In the absence of a complete recording of the Suite, Capitol having never been very supportive, we can, however, locate the four scattered parts on separate discs. The idea for the Suite came from Stan Kenton, but the music is mainly by Pete Rugolo, so they are considered co-writers.

On December 22, June Christy accepts the risk of recording the very difficult "This Is My Theme", a long recitative on a poem by Audrey Lacey, for which Pete has written a very abstract accompaniment that rather frightens June, despite her known professionalism. She manages brilliantly, but obtains a promise from Stan that she will never perform it in public, and Stan keeps his promise. As for the trumpet attacks, they are the work of Buddy Childers and Al Porcino.

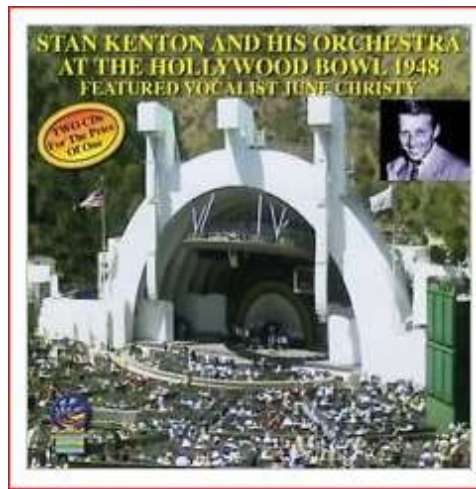
In the afternoon, we join Machito in the rhythm section for the recording of Jack Costanzo is the soloist on "Bongo Riff". Next comes "Somnambulism", a piece penned by Ken Hanna, but which could easily be mistaken for a Pete Rugolo piece, so well has Ken assimilated the writing technique. The session ends with a remake of "Interlude", for trombones and rhythms, a theme Pete composed in just half an hour during a visit to his family in Santa Rosa that year.

47. He told Steven D. Harris that, paradoxically, this was the song that earned him the most royalties; it was performed not only by Stan, but also by Kurt Edelhagen, Herbie Mann, Sal Salvador, June Christy, Marilyn King, Sue Raney and many others. The lyrics were added by Bob Russell.

Unfortunately, the closure of the studios until 1948 meant that this was the last day that the Progressive Jazz Orchestra was able to record, except in public, depriving us of many of the magnificent scores that Pete was able to write during this particularly dynamic period in the orchestra's life. And, this

What doesn't help is that Stan feels obliged to play live the pieces that already exist on record, instead of offering the new compositions and arrangements by Pete Rugolo.

However, we still have an exceptional document recorded on June 12, 1948 at the Hollywood Bowl in front of 15,000 people, with the whole of Hollywood present, including film personalities such as Burt Lancaster and Red Skelton, broadcast on the radio and by a local TV station. A unique event published in November 2011 in memory of Pete Rugolo: "Stan Kenton At The Hollywood Bowl 1948" (2 CD Submarine - Sounds Of Yester Year DSOY870) featuring some fifteen of his compositions and arrangements on a total of 33 tracks.



(Photo: Submarine)

When the recording studios reopened in 1948, Stan, completely exhausted, had just sold out his orchestra again. Pete was hired by Capitol Records. He would continue to collaborate with Stan on and off for another dozen years, but it was the Progressive Jazz period that had the greatest impact on him and helped to establish his style. Indeed, his gratitude and admiration for his former boss never wavered. Hardly surprising for a man renowned for his discretion and modesty, who admired Stan's charisma in public and the ease with which June announced forthcoming songs. Later, he would give his film music students the following advice:

*"Never copy anyone; read scores that have already been published, such as those by Henry Mancini,*

*without ever mentioning his own compositions, which are nonetheless numerous in this field.*

The question that still arises today is whether this is jazz, that "Progressive" music that blends classical and jazz elements. In fact, it often requires the different sections of the orchestra to express themselves in different ways.



an unconventional language, notably the rhythm section, which in some arrangements is actively solicited, as if it were a small orchestra within the orchestra, rather than just for the production of a continuous, unchanging tempo.

It's not an easy task, and it has to be said, quite objectively, that Pete succeeds with flying colors, just as he excels in writing arrangements based essentially on swing and improvisation.

It's obviously revolutionary jazz: you either like it or you don't, but the (unjustified, in my opinion) criticisms in no way prevented Stan Kenton's orchestra, its soloists and arrangers, including Pete Rugolo, from taking top honors in the reader referendums conducted by Downbeat and Metronome magazines at the time. The title of best arranger was awarded to Pete by Downbeat five times between 1947 and 1954.

In early 1950, Pete received a call from Stan, announcing his intention to organize a brand-new orchestra, this time of forty musicians, the "Innovations in Modern Music", and asking for his help as there was very little time left before the first concert in Los Angeles.



LP



The "Innovations in Modern Music" Orchestra 1950

(Photos: Chris Pirie "Artistry in Kenton"/Capitol Records)



2CD

In one week, Pete composed "Mirage" (a score Leonard Bernstein described as brilliant), "Conflict", "Lonesome Road" and "Salute", working day and night. What's more, Stan brought him on board with the orchestra, as an assistant, so that he could be present every night. During this period, Pete composed, among other things, a magnificent "Blues in Riff" and produced an impossible arrangement on "The Hot Canary" for the dazzling Maynard Ferguson, whom he and Stan had discovered in Canada.

## NEW JAZZ

Other composers and arrangers with a wide musical culture soon joined the ranks of what we call the "Crossroads of Music.

This young family includes the likes of Johnny Richards, Bill Russo, Russ Garcia and Shorty Rogers, who, like Pete, are capable of combining complexity and flexibility, rigor and lightness, intelligence and swing, in ensembles perfectly balanced between orchestral and solo moments.

They have all, in varying degrees, studied with Stan Kenton, the great school, but they also like to express their musical admiration for the great names of jazz, such as Duke Ellington for Pete Rugolo and Bill Russo, or Count Basie for Shorty Rogers, for example!

And this brand-new movement expanded with the arrival of numerous musicians such as Bill Holman, Marty Paich, Jimmy Giuffre, Buddy Bregman, Johnny Mandel, Gerald Wilson, Neal Hefti, Billy May and others who truly brought the art of arranging and composing for large jazz orchestra to its brilliant apogee. This is an objective truth, an evidence that jumps out at ... ears that are a little attentive and free of any preconceived ideas!

They are dazzling, if not almost unattainable, role models for subsequent generations. Indeed, failing to do better, some arrangers have sought to do better.

"This has not always been very successful. It's worth noting that today, more and more musicians are "crossing" classical and jazz.

But we can't ignore the names of other great arrangers such as Manny Albam, Quincy Jones, Lalo Schifrin, Oliver Nelson, Benny Carter, Gil Evans, the Eddie Sauter-Bill Finegan duo, Hank Levy, Patrick Williams and others.

Some of them spent time in Los Angeles, but too briefly to have left a significant mark, which in no way detracts from their respective merits. One exception is Benny Carter, who moved to California in the 1940s and was very active in recording studios for records, film and television.

As for Pete Rugolo and his Californian friends, they are part of the new West Coast School of the '50s which, without denying the contributions of the great jazzmen of previous decades, strongly reoriented the musicality of jazz and offered it not only the most marvellous arranger-composers but also fantastic soloists, improvisers, virtuosos, remarkable personalities whose own style means that, for the most part, they can be identified just by listening and without the slightest hesitation. Here are just a few of the pianists closely or distantly associated with Californian jazz: Russ Freeman, Hampton Hawes, Pete Jolly, Lou Levy, Marty Paich, Carl Perkins, André Previn, Jimmy Rowles, Frank Strazzeri, Ross Tomkins, Richard Dick...

Twardzik, John Williams (Yes, the film composer), Claude Williamson, Jack Wilson, Mike Wofford, Denny Zeitlin, etc. All names we seem to want to forget today. The same is true of many other instrumentalists and jazzmen of the highest calibre. And that's a shame!

It's also worth noting that, as all these musicians are generally very active in the orchestras of Californian film studios, they are necessarily perfect desk technicians, capable of mastering the most complex scores at sight, and easily overcoming the worst difficulties introduced by the composers, which can give the listener the illusion of great simplicity and ease of execution.

Pete said, "*Today, musicians have evolved so much that you can write anything you want and they'll play it.*"

We can deduce from this that it is by following the example of these big bands that many of today's orchestras are able to interpret even the most sophisticated scores.

In terms of difficulty of execution, we're already familiar with the prowess of the musicians and big bands of the bop school, notably Dizzy Gillespie's orchestra, which is as virtuosic as its conductor.

And then, perhaps most importantly, there's the very special sound of West Coast ensembles, and the intelligence and flexibility of rhythm sections whose drummers, in addition to swinging the tempo, can also turn into brilliant percussionists, qualities that Pete was soon to use abundantly and successfully.

In short, this great Californian School of the Fifties produced a jazz that even today retains all its harmonic freshness and rhythmic vitality, a delight for the ear but also a real enchantment for the mind, comparable to that which the music of the great classical composers has always produced. It's worth noting that some musicologists and musicians apply themselves to the detailed analysis of West Coast scores, such as those by Pete Rugolo, in order to penetrate their structure.

The question that arises is why so many jazz "specialists", the opinion-makers, insist on giving it only minor importance, or even ignoring it altogether, when for ten years at least, from 1950 to 60, the West Coast school not only played a vital and innovative part in the life of American jazz, but also had a major impact on many European musicians and ensembles, and not the least. Could there be a conspiracy?

Some will say that there were few black musicians in this Californian milieu, and this is true, unlike in New York, but today we must consider that jazz has exploded and become a universal art form that has transcended notions of race, origin, ethnicity, culture and also gender, as more and more of the world's jazz musicians have become black.

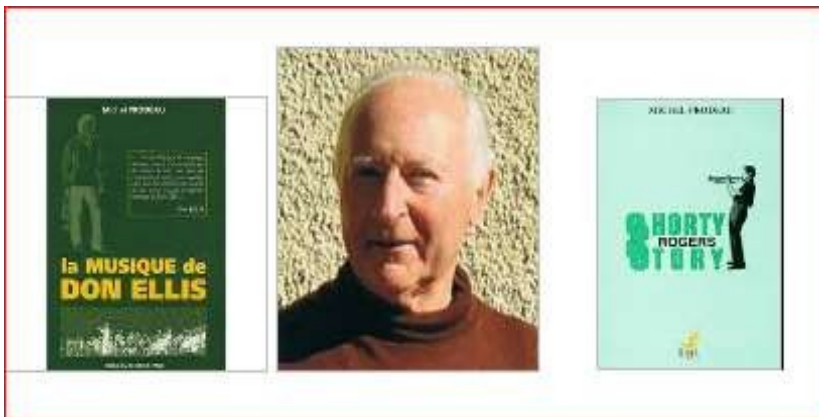
young musicians get into jazz.

This explosion can also be seen among classical music performers, who come from all over the world! In fact, classical music has long ceased to be uniquely European or uniquely white. A few examples: Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Robert Nathaniel Dett, Florence Beatrice Price, William Grant Still, George Walker, etc.

Black jazzmen, of course, occupy a permanent and important place throughout the history of jazz, and their presence continues to this day in modern jazz; no one wants to deny this, and there are many who, in the '50s, made a name for themselves in California, such as: Ray Brown, Benny Carter, Buddy Collette (in 1958, Pete wrote several arrangements for his Swinging Shepherds), Curtis Counce, Sonny Criss, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Teddy Edwards, Art Farmer, Dexter and Joe Gordon, Wardell Gray, Chico Hamilton, Hampton Hawes, Harold Land, Howard McGhee, Frank Morgan, Carl Perkins, Max Roach, Leroy Vinnegar and many more.

And you can appreciate Miles Davis and Chet Baker, Charlie Parker and Art Pepper, Erroll Garner and Martial Solal, John Coltrane and Stan Getz, and so on. They're all great artists!

When it comes to Shorty Rogers (1924-1994), the acknowledged Giant and Leader of West Coast Jazz, it's impossible to ignore the inescapable biography "Shorty Rogers Story" (Opéra Editions) written, with passion, by the inexhaustible and late Michel Prodeau (1930 - 2019), ex-president of the Jazz-Club de la Loire-Atlantique.



Michel

(Photos: Ed. Boutik Pro - Amicale des Ecrivains - Ed. Opéra)



ProdeauShorty Rogers

(Photo: Fresh Sound Records)

He also wrote an admirable and definitive volume devoted to "The Music of Don Ellis" (Editions Boutik Pro); Shorty and Don, two jazzmen unjustly forgotten today, whom Michel Prodeau's writings enable us to get to know better, if not to discover.

Contact: Laurent Prodeau [laurent@pistil.org](mailto:laurent@pistil.org)

## CAPITOL MAN

Early in 1949, after the breakup of the Innovations orchestra, Pete was hired by Capitol Records (Hollywood) as arranger and A&R manager for East Coast activities in New York. A&R stands for Artists & Repertoire, and the incumbent has to be a regular in the music world, with the primary mission of discovering new talent for the record company.

Here again, Pete Rugolo succeeds marvelously. When Capitol stars come to New York, he's in charge of recording them - Peggy Lee and Mel Torme, for example. But the list goes on, of artists for whom he is either arranger-composer and accompanist, or simply director or producer.

Over the course of his career, we'll mention Louis Armstrong, Buddy Collette, Buddy DeFranco, Maynard Ferguson, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Charlie Parker, Shorty Rogers, etc. Among vocalists, we'll find June Christy, Nat "King" Cole, Billy Eckstine, Harry Belafonte, the Four Freshmen, Patti Page, Ernestine Anderson, etc.



Miles Davis



(Photos: Getty Images / Capitol Records)

Among the many discoveries made by Pete Rugolo is, of course, the recording of Miles Davis' legendary "Birth of the Cool".

In 1948, at the Royal Roost club in New York, Pete heard Miles' experimental nonet in arrangements by Gerry Mulligan, John Lewis and Gil Evans, and appreciated the novelty of this music with its hushed, highly controlled tones, relying more on ensemble harmony than on individual interventions, and supported by a rhythm section that played more smoothly than that of the boppers.

In early 1949, Pete decided to take a chance and record Miles' band. The first session takes place on January 21, with Miles Davis, Kai Winding, Junior Collins (horn), John Barber (tuba), Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, Al Haig, Joe Shulman and others.



(bass) and Max Roach. Two more sessions will take place in March and April (including, in addition, a score by Johnny Carisi) with slight changes in the musicians, but always the same quest for a group sound.

These three sessions were recorded on twelve 78 rpm discs, and Pete has no illusions about their commercial success. But, as usual, this aspect of things is of secondary importance to him; what's important is the music and the creativity. In 1957, he insisted that Capitol publish the tracks on an LP that would become the "Birth of the Cool", a record that has gone down in jazz history.

But few admirers of Miles Davis and "Birth of the Cool" realize that, without Pete Rugolo's intervention, these recordings would never have seen the light of day.

It's also worth pointing out that, if the original recordings already sound crystal-clear, it's because Pete has a quality of hearing trained on the classical model. The presence of Pete Rugolo at a recording session, even as producer, means that everything is thoroughly examined, down to the smallest detail, as is done in classical music. The result is convincing.

Leonard Feather said: "*Pete Rugolo is the most unjustly forgotten jazzman!*"

In the realm of pure jazz, the revelation of Miles Davis' nonet was not Pete's only discovery as a producer, for in the same year, 1949, he dared to record Lennie Tristano's equally revolutionary sextet with Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh. Another master stroke!



June Christy

(Photos: Last FM/Meginrunar/Capitol Records)

Among the many recordings made by vocalists under contract to Capitol, several of them have the good fortune to be accompanied by an orchestra arranged and conducted by Pete Rugolo.

June Christy, whom Pete knows from Stan Kenton, is the privileged one in this respect, and he knows perfectly how to bring out the marvellous qualities of her singing.

Of the dozen or so albums produced in collaboration with Pete, the first to stand out is the magnificent "Something Cool", followed later by "The Song is June", "Off Beat", "June, Fair and Warmer" and, finally, "Gone for the Day", Pete Rugolo's favorite.

Nat "King" Cole also had frequent opportunities to work with Pete Rugolo, most notably on the August 1950 recording of "Orange Colored Sky", accompanied by Stan Kenton's orchestra, in a powerful arrangement by Pete, from which Nat emerged completely exhausted.

Between 1949 and 1952, Nat and Pete conducted eight recording sessions together, the themes of which are brought together in the splendid "Lush Life", one of Pete Rugolo's finest orchestrations.

Four sessions take place in New York and the last four in Los Angeles. At this point, Pete decides to relocate to California.



(Photo: Capitol/Blue Note)



Pete and Nat "King" Cole  
(PhotoReuters/The Guardian)

When the two men parted on friendly terms, it was Pete who introduced Nat's manager, Carlos Gastel, to the young Nelson Riddle, who was soon to become the official accompanist and arranger for Nat "King" Cole, the crooner, for some ten years, contributing to many of his greatest hits. Later, other famous singers would compete for his services: Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Dean Martin, Rosemary Clooney, Linda Ronstadt, ...

He's definitely got a good nose, that Pete.

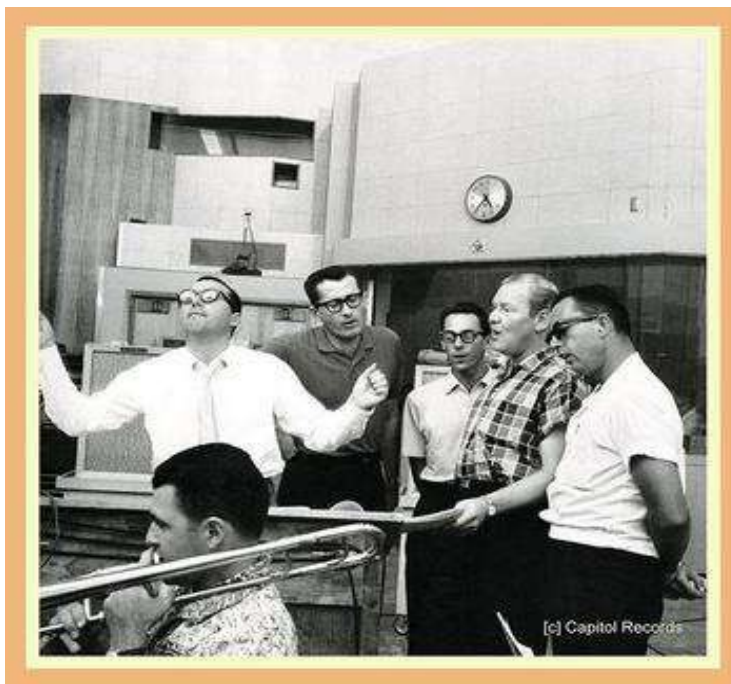
On March 20, 1950, Stan Kenton and his "Innovations in Modern Music" orchestra were on the bill at Memorial Hall in Dayton, Ohio, and that same evening, the Four Freshmen were scheduled to perform at another of the city's establishments, the Esquire Lounge.



The owner, George Vaval, is a good man, but not so good as to postpone their concert in spite of the poor attendance, so they are unable to attend their idol Stan's concert. But during the 10 p.m. intermission, Bob comes in to announce that Stan Kenton is in the room, invited by two of his friends, Gene Barry and Sid Garris, especially to listen to the Four Freshmen, his concert having ended!

The surprise is great and the emotion great. The four of them sing, and the audience grows. Stan is amazed and promises to introduce them to Capitol to sign a contract. Later, George Vaval will say:

*"If I'd known Stan Kenton was that sort of man, I'd have closed the club and we'd all have gone to listen to him."*



Pete and the Four Freshmen (Group #3 - September 1959)

L-R: Pete, Bob Flanigan, Ross Barbour, Ken Albers and Don Barbour

(Photo: The Four Freshmen/Capitol Records)

Two weeks pass and Stan calls them: everything is arranged with Capitol; the Four Freshmen simply have to go to the New York studios to make a few recordings, and Pete Rugolo supervises the session. Happiness!

The Four Freshmen are both singers and instrumentalists, which means they don't depend on any additional accompaniment. However, many of their recordings are backed by a big band: Stan Kenton's, of course, who will always take them under his wing, but also studio orchestras often arranged and conducted by Pete Rugolo, but also by Dick Reynolds, Billy May, Bill Holman or Shorty Rogers.

The collaboration with the incomparable Pete produced several albums: "Four Freshmen and Five Trombones" (1956, the best-known), "Four Freshmen and Five Saxes" (1957, shared with Dick Reynolds), "Voices in Latin" (1958), "Voices and Brass" (1959 - photo) with 10 trombones: Milt Bernhart, Vern Friley, Dick Nash/Joe Howard, Dick Noel, Bob Fitzpatrick, Herbie Harper, Bob Pring, Harry Betts, George Roberts and Ken Shroyer. There's also "More Four Freshmen and Five Trombones" (1964).

Stan liked to joke about his encounter with the Four Freshmen:

*"I was told that the Four Freshmen sounded like my orchestra; now, in view of their success, I have to declare that it's my orchestra that sounds like the Four Freshmen!"*

As for Pete Rugolo, he'll say:

*"I loved arranging for the Four Freshmen. What a talent!"*

And the talent continues today, more than 70 years after the birth of the first group, in 1948, and in an artistic tradition as demanding as ever, by a 10th team of Four Freshmen (the 26th in 2020) with vocal, instrumental and musical qualities perfectly comparable to those of the creators.



Band #26: Ryan Howe (b) - Bob Ferreira (dr) - Jake Baldwin (tpt) - Tommy Boynton (g)

(Photo: The Four Freshmen Society 2020)

Since his return to California, Pete has been keen to write for film studios. This desire to write music linked to the adventure taking place on screen can be compared to the orchestral score that, in an opera, accompanies and supports the action taking place on stage. A childhood memory, no doubt, for Pete?

However, he had real difficulty finding work, as producers were wary of his music, which they probably found too complex. In the end, he was hired by M.G.M. and composed a few jazzy scores which, strangely enough, were not credited in the credits.

In 1958, Pete was going through a very difficult period, both financially and morally.

failed to gain recognition in film and television circles. Out of friendship and to keep him active, Stan Kenton decided to ask him to write a series of string arrangements of the orchestra's greatest hits.

Two albums are recorded, "Lush Interlude" in July and "The Kenton Touch" in December. Stan even entrusts Pete with conducting the orchestra.

The 2 LPs are packaged in a 2-CD Collectors' Choice Music box set B00008A818.



(Photo: Capitol Collectors' Choice Music)



L.A. Capitol Tower Building 1956

On the subject of the friendship between the two men, Pete recounts how, one day, the manager told him that he would finally be able to pay him regular royalties on his arrangements and compositions. He would later learn that the sums he was receiving every month were, in fact, Stan's personal money.

In return, when Stan (15.12.1911 - 25.08.1979), who was very ill and nearing the end of his life, was hospitalized for a long time, Pete contributed financially to the medical expenses and waived his copyright in favor of his friend and Creative World, the label created by Stan in 1969, for the reissue of his Capitol records and the publication of his new recordings. How reciprocal!

## ENVOL

In the early 1950s, the big band world was little different from what it had been five or even ten years earlier. The big record companies shared the many active orchestras, both jazz and dance.

A brief, non-exhaustive overview gives an idea of each label's catalog, although it should be noted that switching from one label to another is a frequent occurrence in the record market.

In the early '50s, for example, fans of big bands could find Charlie Barnet, Machito and Ralph Marterie at Mercury; Cab Calloway and Erskine Hawkins at Coral; Tommy Dorsey, Ralph Flanagan, Glenn Miller and Artie Shaw

at RCA, while Decca presents Glen Gray, Jerry Gray, Lionel Hampton, Elliot Lawrence and Sy Oliver. The Capitol big band features Stan Kenton. But it's the Columbia catalog that's best supplied in this field, with : Count Basie, Les Brown, Xavier Cugat, Jimmy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Harry James, Sammy Kaye, Gene Krupa, Ray Noble and Claude Thornhill. What a line-up!

Over the next five years, we saw a number of major moves: Mercury saw the arrival, either directly or through its Clef or Norgran subsidiaries, of Count Basie, Gene Krupa, Buddy Morrow and Chico O'Farrill. Coral welcomes Les Brown and hires Neal Hefti. Lionel Hampton goes to RCA with Perez Prado, Shorty Rogers (after a 25 cm with Capitol) and the new orchestra co-directed by Eddie Sauter and Bill Finegan. Claude Thornhill moves to Trend with young Jerry Fielding. But the most numerous departures were from Columbia to Capitol: Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Harry James; Capitol Tower also welcomes Les Brown, Skitch Henderson, Bobby Sherwood and two new big bands, that of Ray Anthony, a talented trumpeter, and the other, led by Billy May, a brilliant arranger with a very personal style, both former Glenn Miller musicians.

Faced with this slaughter, Columbia reacted intelligently by creating three new orchestras: one for dance with Les Elgart (1917-1995), one for teenagers led by Dan Terry (1924-2011) and the third, for jazz, entrusted to Pete Rugolo.

It's 1954, and in all fairness, this is Pete's real breakthrough as a composer, arranger and conductor. Indeed, at Capitol, his music, though of a high quality, served only to accompany singers, which Pete does very well, with great aptness and sensitivity.



The Elgart



DanTerry



PeteRugolo

(Photos: Alchetron / Dan Terry Band / Jazz Journal)

In Stan Kenton's case, and despite the immense trust the boss placed in him and the spectacular evolution introduced by Pete, the scores still bear the hallmarks of the very serious and formal perfection typical of performances by

Stan's orchestra at that time.

So far, although his work is well paid, writing for others doesn't satisfy the need for total musical independence that is growing ever stronger in Pete's mind.

When will the music he writes really be his? Now everything's about to change!

Two Columbia record executives, Jim Conkling, president, and bandleader Paul Weston, head of Columbia West Coast, knew Pete very well from their days at Capitol. They enthusiastically embarked on the project, considering that Pete had already amply demonstrated his talent and imagination when writing for Stan Kenton, and wanted to offer him a chance to become one of the great orchestras of the future, not only by recording but also by organizing concerts. However, the latter possibility was to have little effect, as it was less in keeping with Pete's highly reserved temperament, who, unlike his friend Stan, was less at ease in public than in the studio.

The contracts were signed in January 1954, and the first recording session took place in Hollywood on February 8. Pete was known to be a hard worker, but this was no mean feat (even if some of the scores already existed in draft form in his cardboard boxes): it was fast without being rushed, the arrangements were particularly meticulous, and the writing was rich and detailed, full of surprises and moments of humor.

Such a musical environment is bound to inspire the soloists, who generously join this new world of jazz with panache. But let's take a closer look at this first orchestra.

Pete wanted a 20-piece orchestra, but he got 21, because he wanted them all: the best, many ex-Kentonians, the best of the best. Impressive!

Four trumpets: Pete Candoli, Maynard Ferguson, Shorty Rogers and Conrad Gozzo. Four trombones: Harry Betts, Milt Bernhart, Herbie Harper and John Halliburton. Two French horns: Fred Fox and John Graas. One tuba: Paul Sarmiento. Five saxophones (also piccolo, flute, oboe): Harry Klee, Bud Shank, Bob Cooper, Jimmy Giuffre and Bob Gordon. Piano (also celesta): Claude Williamson. Guitar: Howard Roberts. Double bass: Harry Babasin. Drums: Shelly Manne. Timpani and percussion: Bernie Mattison.

Pete has at his disposal an orchestra of virtuosos who are, at the same time, marvellous jazzmen, and with whom he can indulge every boldness, every complexity, every nuance.

The second session, on February 22, once again brought together the entire orchestra, with just one slight change: Joe Eager replaces John Graas on horn.





10" (Photos: Columbia Records) 12"

And the result of these two days is nothing short of miraculous!

Eight themes will cover both sides of a 25 cm LP "Introducing Pete Rugolo and his Orchestra" (Columbia CL 6289): "That Old Black Magic", "Laura", "Early Stan" (a tribute to Stan Kenton), "Come Back Little Rocket", "You Stepped Out of a Dream", "California Méloides", "Bazaar" (after Khatchatourian's Gayaneh) and "360 Special".

The original 25 cm. is followed by a 30 cm. under the same name, but with four additional tracks: "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree", "Sidewalks of New York Mambo", "Theme from the Lombardo Ending" and "Mañana".

The soloists include Shorty Rogers with his personal phrasing, Bob Cooper the inspired improviser, Milt Bernhart with his ample, majestic sound, Claude Williamson and Howard Roberts with their exemplary musicality, Shelly Manne the absolute master of both efficiency and finesse. But above all, Bud Shank, whose improvisations on fast tempos are of a strength and virtuosity to give complexes to all the violas in the world. And then there's the stratospheric Maynard Ferguson, who revels in technical feats that only he can afford and always triumphs in, even in his duels with Harry Klee's piccolo.

Throughout his recording career, it's clear how much Pete liked to surround himself with super-instrumentalists such as Maynard, Bud, Bob, Shelly and others. Of course, his scores were by no means easy to execute.

Pete Rugolo's music is meant to be listened to attentively and without preconceptions; words cannot do it justice, for it is at a level of writing comparable to that of the great composers of the 20th century, and arouses, as with Ravel, Milhaud or Bartok, an ever-renewed interest, curiosity and pleasure. And it's jazz, great jazz!

Of course, the original LPs are no longer available (except second-hand), but fortunately there is a two-CD set "Pete Rugolo and his Orchestra: Adventures in Jazz" (Fresh Sound/Jazz City FSR 2213), released in 2006 by the great Spanish producer Jordi Pujol, head of Fresh Sound/Blue Sounds and particularly active in reissuing jazz classics, including

those of the West Coast. This is an absolutely essential boxed set for all big band fans, featuring, in chronological order (from February 8, 1954 to February 23, 1955), all the recordings made by Pete Rugolo for Columbia. Everything is included: the titles and duration of the 42 tracks, the recording dates, the composition of each band, an introduction by Jordi Pujol and comments by Pete Rugolo himself. The technical details of each session are clearly shown here, which was not always the case on the vintage covers. The boxed set also includes tracks not released on LP.

A must-have, to be listened to very carefully, even if Pete would later say that he wasn't entirely satisfied with it, which just goes to show that some great artists aren't always aware of how much genius they put into their work!

An equivalent boxed set, "Pete Rugolo - Rugolovations", was released in 2005 by Jasmine (JASCD 413): two CDs and the same tracks, this time with commentary by Tony Middleton.



(Photos: Sony Collectables/ Jasmine/Jazzcity)

Then came "Adventures in Rhythm" and "Rugolomania", the latter featuring, among other things, three tracks recorded by the band Pete had organized in New York and four tracks recorded by The Rugolettes, an eight-piece combo from his California orchestra, who here authoritatively deliver a musical performance of a particularly brilliant level for a small ensemble, despite the great complexity of the writing.

"Adventures in Rhythm" contains twelve tracks: "Here's Pete", "My Funny Valentine", "Mixin' The Blues", "Poinciana", "Rugolo Meets Shearing", "Sambamba", "King Porter Stomp", "You Are Too Beautiful", "Jingle Bells Mambo", "There Will Never Be Another You", "Conversation" and "Good Evening Friends Boogie". The orchestra is on the same level as the one mentioned above.

"Rugolomania" also features twelve tracks: "Gone With The Wind", "Everything I Have Is Yours" and "Honorama", recorded in 1954 by the New York orchestra ("When Your Lover Has Gone" will be added to the CD);

"Montevideo", "In A Sentimental Mood", "Me Next", "I've Had My Moments" (plus "When You're Smiling" on the CD) are performed, in 55, by the Rugolettes;



"Intermezzo" is played by Bud Shank, Harry Klee, Bob Cooper, Jimmy Giuffre, Bob Gordon, Russ Freeman, Howard Roberts, Harry Babasin and Shelly Manne ; "4.20 A.M." (from 54), "Little White Lies", "Bobbin' With Bob", "Bongo Dance" (and "Quiet Village" on the CD ) are reserved for the Californian orchestra.

In New York, the orchestra includes: Larry Klein, Leon Merian, Doug Mettome, John Wilson, trumpets; Eddie Bert, Kai Winding, Milt Gold, Frank Rehak, trombones; Stan Paley, Julius Watkins, horns; Bill Barber, tuba ; Herbie Mann, flute, piccolo, alto sax, Dave Schildkraut, alto sax and clarinet, Chasy Dean, tenor sax and clarinet, Joe Megro, tenor sax, Marty Flax, baritone sax; Gordon Brown, piano; Perry López, guitar; Whitey Mitchell, bass; Jerry Segal, drums and Teddy Sommer, percussion.

In the New York recordings, several musicians are featured: Doug Mettome (or Mettone), Eddie Bert, Dave Schildkraut, John Barber and Julius Watkins.

The Rugolettes are: Milt Bernhart, John Graas, Paul Sarmiento, Bud Shank, Bob Cooper, Howard Roberts, Harry Babasin and Shelly Manne.

In addition to the above-mentioned soloists, other highlights include Pete Candoli, Herbie Harper, Jimmy Giuffre, Jack Costanzo's masterful performance in "Bongo Dance" and the presence, among the brass, of Uan Rasey, who was MGM's legendary trumpeter for 40 years.

We should also mention the participation of Bob Gordon, already considered one of the greatest baritones in jazz history, who is brilliant in a piece Pete dedicates to him: "Bobbin' with Bob". Sadly, at the age of 27, Bob died in a car accident on August 28, 1955, on his way to San Diego to join the orchestra.

Another LP released in 1957 by Paul Weston on Harmony 7003 (a Columbia sub-brand) is "New Sounds by Pete Rugolo", a compilation of ten tracks from the various recording sessions mentioned above.

The Columbia label is now part of the Japanese Sony Music group, which has produced two CDs, each containing two Pete Rugolo LPs: 1998's "Pete Rugolo and his Orchestra" (Introducing Pete Rugolo + Adventures in Rhythm) COL-5893/SONY-28821 and 1999's "Pete Rugolo & his Orchestra" (Rugolomania + New Sounds) COL-6092/SONY-30915.

But despite the abundance of his output and the importance of his writing for the future of jazz, Pete Rugolo's collaboration with Columbia lasted just one year. It seems that the musical director at the time, Mitch Miller (ex-Mercury), a good musician (oboist) but an often-disputed A&R man, was very unpleasant towards Pete, even though he was well known as the epitome of the perfect chic type: gifted but modest, very reserved, even shy. Mitch

Miller even went so far as to harass him to write fashionable music, since his aim was to sell records.

Columbia loses Pete Rugolo and Mercury welcomes him with open arms!



Bob Gordon - Maynard Ferguson - Bud Shank+Bob Cooper  
(Photos: Jazz Wax - Discography - William Claxton)



Uan Rasey (non Rasey) - Pete Rugolo - Shelly Manne  
(Photos: Swing & Beyond - Vintage Music - Discogs)

U

## **HI-FI PETE**

In the late '40s, the record market underwent a masterful revolution with the invention of the LP, generally attributed to Columbia, and the name Long Playing. Columbia claimed exclusive use of the "LP" acronym on its records and sleeves. Very quickly, the other major labels each found a name to define their own recording system: Capitol called it "f.d.s.", Decca "f.f.r.r." and R.C.A. "f.f.r.r.". "Dynagroove". We also speak of High Fidelity, or Hi-Fi.

Mercury's engineers were not to be outdone, and thanks to the use of the famous Telefunken U-47 microphone, they were able to record large symphony orchestras with such realism that the record reproduction gave the impression of listening to "living" music, which inspired the title of "Living Presence". In 1955, Mercury technicians began recording in stereo, not on magnetic tape, but on 35 mm. audio film developed by Ampex. The result was truly impressive, and the "Living Presence" series continues to delight audiophiles to this day.

All this is to say briefly how far the company had come when, in 1956, it hired Pete Rugolo and offered to publish (on Mercury/EmArcy) the recording of his new jazz compositions and arrangements. The studios were usually the Capitol Tower in Hollywood, but the technology was designed by Mercury.

And the LPs are released in fast tempo, to the delight of big band fans. Already in 1956, "Music For Hi-Fi Bugs" (very original cover) and "Out On A Limb" were released.

Pete also worked for a year (1957) as an A&R man for Barclay Records in Paris, who had a contract with Mercury.



(Photos: Mercury Records)

In 1958: "Percussion At Work", "Rugolo Plays Kenton", "Adventure In Sound - Reeds In Hi-Fi" followed by "Brass In Hi-Fi". The following year saw "The Music From Richard Diamond" and, in 1960, "Music From Out Of Space". In 1961 and 62, Pete published what might be called his Trilogy: "10 Trombones Like 2 Pianos", "10 Trumpets And 2 Guitars" and "10 Saxophones and 2 Bases". Here, it's impossible to ignore, quite objectively, that the music, in addition to its usual qualities, allows Mercury to showcase the high level of its recording technique and stereophony. It was in the spirit of the times.

Meanwhile, Pete transformed Patti Page into a jazz singer on "In The Land of Hi-Fi" in 1956 and "West Side" in 1957, two LPs collected on a magnificent Fresh Sound CD by Jordi Pujol. In 1958, Pete recorded excerpts from "Gigi", sung by Robert Clary, and also accompanied the admirable Billy Eckstine on the LP "Eckstine's Imagination" (now on CD). Also in 1958, Mercury teamed up the Canadian vocal quartet The Diamonds with Pete Rugolo for an LP entitled "The Diamonds".

Meet Pete Rugolo".

Many of these LPs remained unavailable for many years, and when Pete was asked what he thought of them, he said:

*"Yes, they should always be available, if only for those great musicians who played in the orchestra".* What humility!

Indeed, Pete knew how to choose the musicians who would form part of his orchestra. For Mercury, as with Columbia, he used the same type of line-up of around twenty musicians. However, in 1956 for the first sessions, a few names made their debut with Pete, including three musicians from Les Brown: Ronnie Lang (alto sax, flute), Dave Pell (tenor) and Don Fagerquist (trumpet); on piano, the wonderful Russ Freeman returned; on bass, Joe Mondragon; Larry Bunker took over percussion duties and, on trombone, the brilliant virtuoso improviser Frank Rosolino.

Alumni include Maynard Ferguson, Pete Candoli, Milt Bernhart, Harry Klee, Howard Roberts and Shelly Manne, among others. The late Bob Gordon is replaced by either Chuck Gentry or Jimmy Giuffre. Bud Shank and Bob Cooper return at the end of the year, and Barney Kessel replaces Howard Roberts. André Previn makes a brief but noticeable two-day appearance on October 31 and November 1. We'll see him again a year later.

As usual, all this information is detailed in the booklet that completes the two-CD set devoted to 1956 by Jordi Pujol under the title "Pete Rugolo And His Orchestra - Adventures In Sound", allowing us to follow the recording sessions (39 tracks) very closely and in chronological order.

Here again, it's all Pete Rugolo (and he's incapable of saying otherwise). The orchestrations are meticulous down to the smallest detail, the soloists are surrounded and supported to perfection, and the performances are masterfully conducted.

A few highlights from CD no. 1: Russ launches "Later, Team" with swing and his trademark phrasing, only to disappear in a highly technical fade-out after a duet between Frank and Herbie. Pete plays with octaves in his noble arrangement of "Once In A While". His tribute to Count Basie includes a Neal Hefti composition, "Fawncy Meeting You", in which Pete Candoli shows what an excellent improviser he can be, Dave Pell engages in a magnificent, very Lesterian solo, Russ is impeccable and Shelly's breaks are impressive. "Don't Play The Melody" is a long, terrific improvisation that Frank performs in a piece Pete has written for him.

"Can't We Talk It Over?" is reserved for the four trumpets with rhythms, and they go at it at the top of their lungs: Don Palladino, Ray Linn, Pete Candoli and Maynard Ferguson. "Oscar And Pete's Blues", based on Oscar Peterson's orchestration of a number of blues improvisations, features some mighty trumpets.

ensembles and excellent soloists: Larry Bunker, Frank Rosolino and the highly original Don Fagerquist. "Early Duke" is written in honor of Duke Ellington. "Ballade For Drums" allows Shelly Manne, the most melodic of all drummers, to express himself according to his inspiration; it's beautiful! "Repetitious Riff" opens with Larry Bunker on vibraphone, a dialogue between Russ and Barney, another between Bud and Bob, then a final one between Frank and Herbie after a Don Fagerquist solo. "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" concludes the first CD, played by the five saxophonists on various instruments: saxes, flutes and oboes, accompanied by Barney and Joe.

CD n°2 (6 tracks) begins with a reduced ensemble comprising five saxophones plus five woodwind instruments, a harp (replacing the piano) and the rhythm section of guitar, bass and drums. Here we discover a very interior Pete Rugolo, all finesse and discretion, in scores that are, for four of them, reductions of themes written for Stan Kenton's orchestra, notably "Theme For Alto", covered here by Bud Shank, who premiered it in 1951.

Then come four tracks with the orchestra but without the saxes. There are four trumpets, four trombones, three horns and a tuba. Shelly is absent, and Larry Bunker takes over the drums - he's got it all! Soloists include John Graas, Frank, André Previn, Barney, Don Fagerquist and Pete Candoli.

For five tracks, we find the same ensemble as at the beginning, but without the harp; André Previn is at the piano, and the musical climate is less intimate, with even a little humor. Gerry Mulligan's "Walking Shoes" gets Bob, Bud and André swinging, ending with an ensemble of four piccolos. Charlie Parker's "Yardbird Suite" is performed mostly by Bud, with a solo by Bob on oboe and Dave on tenor. One of Charlie Parker's choruses is orchestrated for all ten winds.

The last five tracks are played by brass instruments. Claude Williamson replaces André Previn on piano. "Temptation", a concert piece in a rather crazy orchestration, features Pete Candoli, Don Fagerquist and Claude Williamson. A beautiful melody, "Song For Tuba", is performed by Clarence Karella. Milt Bernhart reprises "Salute", which he recorded with Stan Kenton in 1950. The CD closes with "A Rose For David", an amusing allusion to David Rose's Holiday for Strings.

This boxed set generously shows how Pete can approach jazz from different angles: "*I write music the way I feel it, in complete freedom*". His art of writing music allows him to compose, with the same success, a ballad, a concert piece, a swinger, a singer's accompaniment, for a large ensemble or a small group, in a conventional or innovative instrumental structure. Anything is possible for Pete, except purely commercial concerns!

But the indefatigable Jordi Pujol doesn't stop there. His passion for jazz reissues can be compared to the work of another Jordi, Savall, in favor of early music. The first name, perhaps?

And his admiration for Pete Rugolo led our Jordi to produce another two-CD set: "Pete Rugolo and His Orchestra - Exploring New Sounds", devoted first to the nine pieces on the "Percussion At Work" LP and then to the LPs in the Trilogy.

Percussion was given two sessions, on November 5 and 15, 1957. The first, five tracks, featured a solid brass section: five trumpets, four trombones, a tuba and a horn; the second, four tracks, was reserved for percussion alone. And with what percussionists!

André Previn on piano, Laurindo Almeida on guitar and Joe Mondragon on bass, the versatile Larry Bunker on vibraphone, xylophone, tymbals and drums, Shelly Manne on drums and tymbals, and drummer Mel Lewis added to the November 15 session. But one is missing; the one Pete calls

*The album also features the "man with the magic hands": Jack Costanzo, to whom it reserves a perfectly justified major contribution. Mercury's technicians do their utmost to show him off to best advantage, especially on the dazzling "Bongo Riff"! And in Hi-Fi Stereo, please.*

Most of the pieces had been composed for Stan Kenton's orchestra, but Pete liked to rework them and take advantage of new recording techniques. A brilliant success.

The rest of CD 1 contains the twelve tracks devoted to Pete's first use of a single section of the orchestra's instruments, namely the trombones. But, fearing nothing, instead of the usual four or five trombones, he takes ten and two pianos plus bass and drums, Red Mitchell and Shelly Manne. The two pianists are either Russ Freeman and Johnny Williams, or Russ and Claude Williamson. The ten trombones are Frank Rosolino, Milt Bernhart, Bob Fitzpatrick, Vern Friley, Bob Pring, Harry Betts, Herbie Harper or Dick Nash, Joe Howard or Dick Noel, Kenny Schroyer and Russ Brown or George Roberts. For stereo purposes, we have five trombones and a piano on the left, idem on the right, the rhythm section and the conductor in the center. However, some instrumentalists, such as Frank Rosolino, are sometimes on the left, sometimes on the right.

It's 1960, two sessions, one on May 10, the other on May 12. The themes are standards deftly orchestrated by Pete to suit this unusual ensemble; the final track, "Ten Trombones Like", is one of his own compositions.

The ensembles are majestic, the sonorities very well reproduced, emphasizing the contrast between the tenor and bass trombones. Pete has fun playing bits of phrases through one channel, then the other, which livens up the stereophonic show. But the exercise would be nothing if the music weren't also of the highest standard, and with Pete Rugolo, that's an absolute guarantee of quality. The improvisations are mainly reserved for Frank Rosolino and occasionally Bob Pring, the presentations for Milt Bernhart and Dick Nash, while the pianists are also often called upon to engage in left-right dialogue.

The second CD in the set opens with ten trumpets and two guitars: Howard Roberts and Al Viola. On bass, we find Joe Mondragon and on drums, Alvin Stoller or Shelly Manne; Larry Bunker takes over vibraphone and percussion. The ten trumpeters are Frank Beach, Conte Candoli, Pete Candoli, Mannie Klein, Cappy Lewis, Ollie Mitchell, Uan Rasey, Joe Triscari, Ray Triscari and Bud Brisbois (24), a brilliant disciple of Maynard Ferguson. Don Fagerquist will also be taking part, but as a replacement.

Three recording sessions, June 7, 8 and 9, 1961. Same stereophonic layout as for the trombones: one guitar and five trumpets on the left, idem on the right; the other musicians and Pete in the center. The repertoire, which was very pleasant, again included several standards and two new compositions. The arrangements are clearly oriented towards virtuosity, not only of the performers but also of the writing. And it's a real festival! The first track cleverly mixes two themes: "Whispering" and "Groovin' High"; great, even if a little short. Other tracks include two Harry James hits: "Ciribiribin" and "Groovin' High".

There's also one by Perez Prado on "Carnival Of Venice", "Cherry Pink", one by Satchmo on "Struttin' With Some Barbecue", another by Clyde McCoy on "Sugar Blues", and a thought for the Duke on "Echoes Of Harlem", whose arrangement features Cootie Williams' solo and the trumpet orchestration of a chorus by Ellington's saxophones; even Shelly Manne plays "à la Sonny Greer". The last two of the twelve tracks are reserved for two guitars (without trumpets) with rhythms.

It's fair to say that the performance is all over the place, with Pete asking his musicians to go from high to super-low, from trumpet to flugelhorn, especially in the duets between Cappy Lewis and Mannie Klein. The jazz solos are mostly entrusted to the Candoli brothers, Don Fagerquist and, for the climbs, Bud Brisbois.

The CD concludes with the final part of this Trilogy, featuring ten saxophones and two double basses. The recordings took place in Hollywood on November 8, 9 and 10, 1961, and here too, the performers are of the finest Californian vintage. The two bassists are Red Mitchell and Joe Mondragon. The rhythm section is completed by Jimmy Rowles on piano, Howard Roberts, guitar and banjo, and Shelly Manne, drums. As for the saxophones, they're not to be outdone: Ronnie Lang, Skeets Herfurt, Gus Bivona or Bud Shank for altos, Russ Cheever or Buddy Collette, sopranos, Bob Cooper, Plas Johnson, Gene Cipriano, tenors, Bill Perkins, tenor and baritone, Bill Hood, baritone and bass sax, Chuck Gentry, bass sax. A great team!

In addition to the two bassists, solos go to Bob Cooper, Plas Johnson, Bill Hood, Gus Bivona, Bill Perkins and Gene Cipriano.

The repertoire consists mainly of well-known pieces that Pete has arranged as tributes to certain jazz musicians. The very first is dedicated to Charlie Parker, and consists of two themes crossed using a writing technique that Pete has mastered perfectly: "How High The



Moon/Ornithology". On the same model, the "Four Brothers/Early Autumn" mix is for Woody Herman. Duke Ellington is celebrated with a magnificent "Sophisticated Lady", Charlie Barnet by "Skyliner" and early Stan Kenton are recalled in "Reed Rapture" and "Come Back To Sorrento" played, at the time, by Vido Musso and performed here by Bob Cooper and Plas Johnson.

It's clear that these recordings, in addition to highlighting Pete Rugolo's own art of writing, are also about the intensive use of stereophonic technique, but these left-right sound exchanges are never to the detriment of the music; they are taken as a kind of game in which the musicians seem to enjoy themselves, and so do the listeners.



(Photos: Fresh Sound Records)

To round off the cycle of reissues he has devoted to Pete Rugolo, Jordi Pujol has released a CD in 2007 that includes the entire contents of the Mercury LP recorded on October 25 and 26, 1958, and whose title is highly significant: "Rugolo Plays Kenton". It's a selection of twelve themes made famous by Stan Kenton's orchestra, composed either by Stan or Pete, or as a duo, and of which Pete Rugolo gives here, not a Xth performance, but new interpretations in new arrangements. As always, the orchestra is prestigious: four trumpets, Al Porcino, Ollie Mitchell, Buddy Childers and Don Fagerquist; four trombones, Milt Bernhart, Frank Rosolino, Harry Betts or Dick Nash and Kenny Shroyer; five saxes, flutes, oboes, Bud Shank, Harry Klee, Bob Cooper, Dave Pell and Chuck Gentry; a tuba, Red Callender and, on rhythm, Claude Williamson, Howard Roberts, Don Bagley and Shelly Manne.

The tracks are Kenton classics: "Eager Beaver", "Painted Rhythm", "Minor Riff", "Concerto For Dog House", "Sunset Tower", "Concerto To End All Concertos", "Artistry In Rhythm", "Southern Scandal", "Opus In Pastels", "Theme To The West", "Artistry In Boogie" and "Capitol Punishment". A few soloists stand out from the orchestra, even though ensembles play a very important role in this repertoire.

About these recordings, Stan will say:

*"I'm very grateful to Pete for showing his interest in my music by dedicating this record to him. The years during which we collaborated were, for me, the most musically profitable because, in reality, he was my teacher!"*

### **FROM RALPH MARGERIE TO ROBERT HICKS**

Meanwhile, in May and September 1959, Pete Rugolo produced two LPs for Mercury devoted to the famous trumpeter Ralph Marterie (1914-1978 Dayton/Ohio).

Of Italian origin, born (Raffaele Martire) in Acerra (Naples), Ralph began his professional career at the age of 14 in Chicago, where his father, having left Italy in the early 20s, was engaged with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Ralph played in university orchestras, the NBC Studio Orchestra and the orchestras of Lou Breese, Dan Russo, Percy Faith, André Kostelanetz and Paul Whiteman. During the war, he led the United States Navy Band, then returned to Chicago to make a name for himself with the ABC Orchestra.

In 1951, he joined Mercury (then United Artists), and for some fifteen years conducted his dance orchestra, with which he recorded extensively and scored some real hits, including the hugely popular "Skokiaan" in 1954. A brilliant technician, his "Bumble Boogie" (based on Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov's "The Flight of the Bumblebee") is an enthralling display of virtuosity.

Having never claimed to be a jazz musician, even if some of the tracks are not far off the mark, Ralph Marterie now wishes to realize a long-held dream: to record music that is as much for listening as for dancing.



Ralph Marterie (Photos: Blue Moon Records)

Under contract to Mercury, he spoke to Pete Rugolo, who was at the time director of the company's West Coast activities.

For the first sessions, which took place on May 5, 1959, Pete organized and led a prestigious big band: The All Star Men, made up of Ray Linn, Don Fagerquist, Joe

Triscari and Uan Rasey on trumpets; Frank Rosolino, Bob Fitzpatrick, Tommy Pederson and George Roberts, trombones; Bud Shank, Paul Horn, Bob Cooper, Gus Bivona and Dale Issenhuth, saxes; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Al Viola, guitar; Joe Mondragon, double bass; Irv Kluger, drums and Lou Singer, percussion.

The arrangements are by Pete Rugolo, Skip Martin and Heinie Beau, and feature the best musical themes from some of TV's best-known thrillers.

This first LP, "Music For a Private Eye", contains the titles: "M Squad", "Perry Mason", "Richard Diamond", "Alfred Hitchcock Presents", "The Thin Man", "77 Sunset Street", "Private Eyeball", "The D.A.'s Man", "Riff Blues" and "Peter Gunn".

The second, "Big Band Man", is devoted to the music of Jimmy McHugh (1894 - 1969), whose enormous songbook contains a number of pieces that have become standards of American song.

The recording sessions take place on September 27, '59. The orchestra, still conducted by Pete Rugolo, is of the same caliber as on the first LP: on trumpets, Pete Candoli, Don Fagerquist plus Mannie Klein and Conrad Gozzo or Joe Triscari, Ollie Mitchell and Uan Rasey; on trombones, Frank Rosolino, Vern Friley, Tommy Pederson plus Joe Howard or Harry Betts; on saxes, Gus Bivona, Bud Shank, Bob Cooper, Babe Russin and Chuck Gentry; piano, Jimmy Rowles or Arnold Ross; guitar, Al Hendrickson; bass, Red Mitchell and Jack Sperling, drums.

Arrangements by Morty Corb, Skip Martin, Bill Holman, Johnny Mandel and Frank DeVol.

Title details: "It's a Most Unusual Day", "Don't Blame Me", "Where Are You", "Waltz Medley: Cuban Love Song/Louella/Whisper Waltz", "I Can't Give You Anything But Love", "On the Sunny Side of the Street", "Medley: Anybody for the Blues/A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening/I Can't Get Enough of You", "I'm Shootin' High", "Exactly Like You" and "Diga Diga Doo".

As motivated as ever, in 2016 Jordi Pujol brought the two LPs together on a single Blue Moon CD (BMCD 878) "Ralph Marterie: Music For a Private Eye + Big Band Man".

The music is exciting, the program varied and the arrangements effective, served up impeccably by perfect big band professionals. The sound is firm and, of course, in spectacular Mercury stereo.

Ralph Marterie, whose sound is magnificent, is mainly involved in the rhapsodic tracks.

As for the typically jazz improvisations, the arrangers intended them for Gus Bivona, Bob Cooper, Pete Candoli, Jimmy Rowles, Red Mitchell, Jack Sperling, Conrad Gozzo and Al Hendrickson, all of them excellent, but three soloists stand out in a remarkable way: the always impeccable Don Fagerquist, the incredible

Frank Rosolino and a great Bud Shank.

Much later, between February 19 and 26, 1999 in Hollywood, Pete did a favor for the young tenor-voiced crooner and excellent pianist Robert Hicks, whom he accompanied at the head of a big band featuring, among others, Frank Szabo, Buddy Childers, Conte and Pete Candoli, Roy Wiegand, George Roberts, Steve Wilkerson, Ray Reed, Emil Richards, Al Viola, Don Bagley, Chuck Flores (a worthy pupil of Shelly Manne) and Jack Costanzo ; in short, a bunch of old friends who are still young.



Pete & Robert

The Big Band (Photo: Alan Hicks/Velocity)

Most of the themes covered are representative of Pete Rugolo's career either with Stan Kenton or in film and TV studios. The arrangements are by Pete, except for three by Robert Hicks.

This is the CD "Robert Hicks with Pete Rugolo: Textures in Hi-Fi" on Velocity (VACD-91028).

Titles: "It's Crazy", "Richard Diamond" Theme, "The Ritz Roll & Rock", "Minor Riff", "Interlude", "It Only Happens When I Dance With You", "Bongo Fever", "Firebird Jumps", "Out of The Shadows", "You Stepped Out of a Dream", "That Was The End of Me", "Rika Jika Jack" and "The House of Blue Lights".

Robert Hicks was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. At the age of five, he taught himself to play the piano by ear, listening to 78 rpm records by Tommy Dorsey and Artie Shaw. He began singing jazz at the age of eight and studied classical piano.

and jazz the following year. By the age of sixteen, he was performing professionally in the Portland area. From an early age, he memorized the standards, arrangements and styles of the artists who made up the great era of jazz and big bands. And so, quite naturally, at the age of twenty-two, he moved to California, to Hollywood. For seven years, he worked in the best clubs in Los Angeles, including his favorite, the Ritz-Carlton in Pasadena, where he played with his quintet four nights a week, and where he met his lifelong idol, Pete Rugolo.

At this point, in 1991/92, Robert caused a sensation with his first CD "New Standards" (also on Velocity-VCD 82863), recorded as a combo, in which he gave a dazzling demonstration of jazz singing: voice, swing, imagination, intelligence, scat vocals, it's all there, plus his masterful piano (and vibraphone) interventions, his arrangements and his musicians, with their particularly generous improvisations. Pete Rugolo writes the enthusiastic blurb.

A must-listen!



(Photos: Thomas Hicks/Velocity Records)

Almost all the "New Standards" are well known to jazz fans:

"You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To", "Let's Fall In Love", "I Get A Kick Out Of You", "Don't Worry 'Bout Me", "They All Laughed", "Carambola", "Along The Navajo Trail", "The Song Is You", "Moonlight In Vermont", "Carioca", "Early Autumn" and "I Didn't Like It The First Time".

As for ensembles, they can range from Trio to Septet with :

Morty Corb or Steve Bailey (double bass), Chuck Flores or Dan Greco (drums), Al Viola or Peter Hix (guitar), Doug Webb (flute, tenor sax), Graham Young or Rick Baptist (trumpets), George Bohanon or Alan Kaplan (trombones), Don Roberts (tenor and baritone saxes), Ron Kalina (harmonica), Dan Higgins (alto, tenor saxes and clarinet). Of particular note on "Carambola" is the fine technical performance of Robert Hicks, who sings all seven vocal parts on his own.



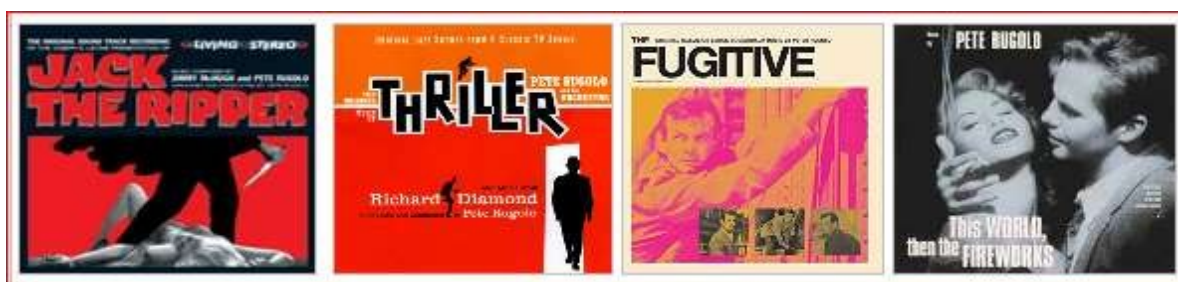
## JAZZ SCREEN

In 1951, Pete Rugolo received a call from Joe Pasternack offering him a job at MGM as a ghost orchestrator. For example: 1951 "The Strip" (with Mickey Rooney, Sally Forrest, Louis Armstrong and Vic Damone), 1952 "Invitation", "Skirts Ahoy" (with Esther Williams and Billy Eckstine), "Glory Alley" (with Leslie Caron, Louis Armstrong and Jack Teagarden), 1953 "The Girl Who Had Everything", "Latin Lovers", "Easy To Love" and "Kiss Me Kate", 1956's "Meet Me In Las Vegas" (with Cyd Charisse, Lena Horne, Frankie Laine and featuring Pete as a very reserved bandleader) and 1957's "This Could Be The Night".

For six years, it was Pete who wrote around 90% of the film music officially attributed to George Stoll alone. As a result, many millions of people heard Pete Rugolo's music, but never knew it was his.

It was in 1958 that he really realized his dream of composing for the cinema. He wrote the music for several films (MGM, Paramount, 20th Century Fox,...): "Jack The Ripper", "The Sweet Ride", "Chu Chu and The Philly Flash", "The Challengers", but above all, alone or alternately, for major American TV series, such as: "Richard Diamond, Private Detective" 65 of the 77 episodes in the 1958/60 series, "The Thin Man" 35 episodes/72 1958/59, "Thriller" 32 episodes/67 1960/62, "87th Precinct" 30 episodes/30 1961/62, "Checkmate" 7 episodes/70 1961/62, "Leave It To Beaver" 28 ep./235 1962/63, "The Fugitive" (version with David Janssen) 79 ep./120 1963/67, "Run For Your Life" 85 ep./85 1965/68, "The Bold Ones: The Lawyers" 16 ep./27 1969/72, "Alias Smith and Jones" 8 ep./50 1971/72, "Family" 7 ep./86 1976/79, "Carter Country" 44 ep./44 1977/79, etc ... etc ...

Thanks to his film scores, Pete finds himself a little better off financially.



(Photos: Blue Moon / Fresh Sound / Silva Screen / Varèse Sarabande)

Having retired in 1985, after some fifteen years in the jazz world and twenty in film and television, Pete came out of retirement in 1997 for one last film: "This World, Then The Fireworks".



It's no secret that, right from the start, cinema has relied on music either as an accompaniment, as in silent films, or to amplify the grandeur of the spectacle in peplums, westerns, war films and so on. The sumptuous era of musicals, with its many masterpieces full of swing, song, dance and comedy, was, and still is, nothing but bliss - for all eternity!

The arrival of jazz musicians in serious, noir and detective films began in the early '50s with "Young Man With A Horn" (1949), which will always be associated with the names Kirk Douglas, Harry James and Doris Day; "The Man With The Golden Arm" (1955), with music by Elmer Bernstein, will always remind us of Frank Sinatra, Shorty Rogers and Shelly Manne, "Ascenseur pour l'Echafaud" (1957) is reminiscent of Miles Davis, "I Want To Live" (1958) is by Johnny Mandel and Gerry Mulligan, while "Johnny Staccato" (1959), again by Elmer Bernstein, features several Westcoasters: Pete Candoli, Barney Kessel, John Williams, Red Mitchell and Shelly Manne, as well as "The Subterraneans" (1960 - after Jack Kerouac), music by André Previn with, among others, André, Gerry Mulligan, Shelly Manne, Red Mitchell, Art Farmer, Russ Freeman, Art Pepper, Bob Enevoldsen, Bill Perkins and Carmen McRae. What an abundance of talent!

The list goes on, and some composers have even specialized in this dramatic genre: Elmer Bernstein, Leith Stevens, Henry Mancini (whom Pete advised to be a bit more jazz), John Williams, Bernard Herrmann and, of course, Pete Rugolo. Their merit, among other things, is to have brought excellent jazz to masses of people who weren't even aware of it.

According to IMDb (Internet Movie Database) figures, Pete has been involved as a composer in 66 films or series in a wide variety of genres: drama, crime, comedy, adventure, mystery, romance, action, thriller, western, musical, horror, science fiction, war and more. In addition, he is listed with 364 compositions in the ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) repertoire, plus 508 in that of BMI (Broadcast Music Inc.).

Pete's astonishing ability to switch from one genre to another is due to the immense melodic and harmonic resources he puts at the service of his writing technique. Of course, it's only logical to assume that, during the years when he devoted himself primarily to film and television, his importance to jazz has diminished year by year, and we jazz fans must certainly regret this, while at the same time rejoicing in the wonderful legacy he has bequeathed to us through the compositions and arrangements he wrote first for Stan Kenton and then for his own orchestra, as well as through his frequent returns to jazz in certain films and TV series.

By its very nature, film music is intimately linked to the action and situations that appear on screen, but the viewer, captivated by the image, doesn't necessarily notice the presence or quality of this music, which is nonetheless of great importance to the smooth running of a film. In fact

It's often the case that perfect film buffs, or even professional reviewers, who give a very pertinent analysis of a production, very rarely talk about the music and the composer.

Of course, we couldn't possibly examine all the films and series in which Pete participated as composer, arranger or orchestrator, but it might be interesting to listen, pure and simple, to the music he wrote for certain films. A few discs will help us in this approach.

Once again, it's thanks to Jordi Pujol for the reissue of two separate CDs, one (Blue Moon BMCD 3510) featuring Pete Rugolo and Jimmy McHugh's music for the film "Jack The Ripper", the other (Fresh Sound FSCD 2015) the music Pete wrote for two major TV series: "Thriller" and "The Ripper".

"Richard Diamond". Arrangements and direction by Pete Rugolo.

For the music of "Jack", Pete uses a very large orchestra composed mainly of jazz musicians: six trumpets, six trombones, five horns, one tuba, ten woodwinds (flutes, clarinets, oboes, bassoons), one piano, one organ, two double basses, four percussion instruments, plus eighteen strings and two female voices.

Although they don't appear individually, they include Pete Candoli, Ollie Mitchell, Manny Klein, Uan Rasey, Don Fagerquist, Cappy Lewis, Milt Bernhart, Dick Nash, Harry Betts, George Roberts, Vince DeRosa, Bud Shank, Harry Klee, Paul Horn, Chuck Gentry, Bob Cooper, Red Mitchell, Joe Mondragon and others.

The recording took place on November 18 and 19, 1959 at the Goldwyn Studio in Hollywood.

As you'd expect, Pete perfectly creates the mysterious atmosphere that suits the film: London, night, fog, lightning, a knife... He skilfully uses the Wagnerian technique of the leitmotif, which accentuates the impact of a repeated action or the return of a character. In this climate of violence and crime, Pete also places some beautiful, more soothing romantic themes; we even hear music by Can-Can.

The orchestra is remarkably effective, especially the brass in the most dramatic moments. Here we have proof that all these instrumentalists, perfectly at ease in jazz, can also fit in with equal ease in a fully written musical suite, a kind of program music, requiring a discipline comparable to that which governs the performance of a work of classical music.

Pete Rugolo likes to take risks, and for "Thriller" he chose to use two very different orchestras, depending on the mood of each scene.

The first is an authentic jazz big band. Four trumpets: Frank Beach, Don Fagerquist, Ollie Mitchell, Uan Rasey; one tuba: Red Callender; three horns: James Decker, Vince DeRosa, Dick Perissi; four trombones: Milt Bernhart, Dick Nash, Frank Rosolino, George Roberts; five saxophones: Bud Shank, Harry Klee, Gene

Cipriano, Bob Cooper, Ronny Lang; piano: Jimmy Rowles; organ: Jack Cockerly; bass: Joe Mondragon; drums: Alvin Stoller; percussion: Larry Bunker, Milt Holland and Lou Singer.

The recording sessions for this ensemble took place on February 23, 1961 at United Recorders Studios in Hollywood.

The second orchestra includes Red Callender, tuba; Vince DeRosa and Dick Perissi, horns; Milt Bernhart and George Roberts, trombones; Ronny Lang, flute; Norman Herzberg, bassoon; Caesar Giovannini, piano; Jack Cockerly, organ; Bob Bain, guitar; Joe Mondragon and Red Mitchell, basses; Alvin Stoller, drums; Frank Flynn and Louis Singer, percussion. Plus seventeen violins and eight cellos.

Recorded the following day, February 24 1961, same studios (U.S.R.).

The music for "Richard Diamond" was recorded in three sessions, on March 10 and 31, then on April 9, 1959 in Hollywood (U.S.R.) by a traditionally conceived big band whose participants varied according to the dates of the sessions.

Alternating are trumpeters Ray Linn, Buddy Childers, Jimmy Salko, Vito Mangano, Pete Candoli, Joe Triscari, Stu Williamson, Ollie Mitchell and Don Fagerquist; horns: Claude Sherry or Vince DeRosa; trombones Frank Rosolino, Joe Howard, George Roberts, Milt Bernhart, Francis Bob Fitzpatrick; saxophones: Paul Horn, Bud Shank, Buddy Collette, Bob Cooper, Dale Issenhuth, Chuck Gentry; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Al Viola, guitar; Philip Stephens, Rolly Bundock, Red Mitchell, bass; drums: Irv Kluger or Shelly Manne; vibraphone and percussion: Larry Bunker or Edward Martinson; cello: Edgar Lustgarten.

As with "Thriller", the musicians are among the finest Californian instrumentalists of the moment, most of them excellent soloists.

Listening to the 24 tracks on this CD, it's easy to understand why Jordi Pujol has brought together the music from both TV series on a single disc, despite the fact that the recording sessions were separated by two years. The scores Pete Rugolo wrote for "Thriller" and "Richard Diamond" are a model of the use of jazz as film music. The dramatic, romantic and even sentimental moods are perfectly supported by the orchestral ensembles, but it comes as a great surprise when, in virtually every sequence, the musical language takes on the accents of the most authentic jazz, a powerful swing, typically Rugolian arrangements and masterful contributions from such masters of improvisation as Ronny Lang, Bud Shank, Bob Cooper, Buddy Collette, Paul Horn, Red Mitchell and Joe Mondragon (ensemble), Frank Rosolino, Don Fagerquist, Pete Candoli, Stu Williamson, Milt Bernhart, Laurindo Almeida, Al Viola, Larry Bunker, Jimmy Rowles and Shelly Manne.

Jazz is indeed present in these scores, but Pete goes further; he expands its boundaries and makes it dark, dramatic and capable of expressing mystery, suspense, when necessary. Nevertheless, regardless of the film, the pure

jazz lover will find much pleasure in listening to this music, because here it's clear that Pete hasn't given up on jazz.

Let's move on now to a CD in which Pete Rugolo pays tribute (always, modestly) to several composers, both American and French, who have worked for film and television. Pete conducts his orchestra and writes the arrangements. The music is easier, even lighter, and includes some very fine themes, most of which are well known to film buffs.

The CD "Pete Rugolo And His Orchestra: TV Top Themes" (Gambit Records 69247) brings together recordings from two long-unavailable LPs.

The first, a twelve-track CD with the same name, features themes from the following series: "Ben Casey" (author David Raksin), "Dick Van Dyke Show" (Earle Hagen) and "Dobie Gillis TV Show" (Max Shulman-Lionel Newman), "General Electric Theatre Logo" (Stanley Wilson), "87th Precinct" (Morton Stevens), "Route 66" (Nelson Riddle), "Andy Griffith Show" (Herbert Spencer-Earle Hagen) and "My Three Sons" (Frank Devoll), "The Case of The Dangerous Robin" (David Rose) and "Barbara Stanwyck TV Show" (Earle Hagen), "Bonanza" (Ray Evans-Jay Livingstone), "Dr. Kildare" (Jerrald Goldsmith), "Ichabod And Me" (only Pete Rugolo), "Naked City" (Billy May) and "Dick Powell Show" (Richard Shores). Kildare" (Jerrald Goldsmith), "Ichabod And Me" (only Pete Rugolo), "Naked City" (Billy May) and "Dick Powell Show" (Richard Shores).

The recordings took place on February 26-27-28, 1962, in Los Angeles, with a vast orchestra comprising brass, woodwinds, two pianos, bass, drums and a large string section (the names of the musicians are not known).

The second LP, with ten tracks, is entitled "Pete Rugolo And His Orchestra - Behind Brigitte Bardot" and features themes, not from TV series, but from major French films, five of which star Brigitte Bardot: "Manina, Fille sans Voile" (Jean Yatove), "Et Dieu ... créa la Femme" (Paul Misraki - two excerpts), "Une Parisienne" (André Hodeir), "Les Bijoutiers du Clair de Lune" (passage signed Hal David-Burt Bacharach) and "En Cas de Malheur" (Henri Contet-René Cloërec). The others are: "L'Homme et l'Enfant" (Jeff Davis), "La Peau de l'Ours" (Marc Lanjean), "Sans Famille" (Paul Misraki) and "Le Grand Bluff" (Bill Byers).

Two sessions, on December 18 and 30, 1959, by a jazz big band featuring Pete Candoli, Ollie Mitchell and Jack Sheldon, Frank Rosolino, Milt Bernhart and Kent Shroyer, Richard Perissi and Vince DeRosa, Bud Shank, Paul Horn, Buddy Collette, Ted Nash and Chuck Gentry, Larry Bunker or Gene Estes (vibraphone), Fred Katz (cello), Laurindo Almeida, Phil Stevens and Buddy Clark or Joe Mondragon, and Mel Lewis.

The music on this CD is very pleasant and melodious, with arrangements that are obviously very well written, animated by a swing in half-tones, ensembles that swing gently and orchestrations that are varied and sometimes even amusing, notably in certain tempo variations and in the dialogue between two violas.

style or a highly effective caricature of rock and roll. Pete Rugolo also perfectly captures the finesse and poetry of French film music as he approaches and interprets this repertoire.

A number of soloists fit in wonderfully with this low-key ambience, with priority given to Bud Shank's alto, but also to Larry Bunker's vibraphone, Shelly Manne's supple drumming, Laurindo Almeida's technical perfection and the contrast between Pete Candoli's mute and Jack Sheldon's warm breath.

Special mention, however, to virtuoso vocalist Gloria Wood, the voice with four octaves, who caused a sensation in 1953 with her biggest hit "Hey, Bellboy!" (one million copies sold) in the company of Pete Candoli. Here, she tackles the music André Hodeir wrote for "Une Parisienne" and, under the guidance of Pete Rugolo, turns it into a fantastic display of vocal fireworks, so much so that even the inveterate Frank Rosolino, in his intervention, seems a little intimidated. Very impressive!

The detective series "The Fugitive", starring David Janssen as Dr. Richard Kimble, aired on ABC from 1963 to 67 and became the most watched drama series in its first two seasons, winning an Emmy Award.

For the music, creator-producers Roy Huggins and Quinn Martin decided to call on Pete Rugolo, already well known for his innovative work with Stan Kenton, his stint with Capitol and his personal recordings. Roy Huggins, a great admirer of Pete Rugolo, arranged to meet him and was delighted to discover that Pete and David Janssen, a great jazz fan, knew each other very well, having worked together on "Richard Diamond".

Pete Rugolo writes his music guided only by a reading of the script and a few hints about the hero's character and his behavior in the action, particularly during the sometimes very fast chases.

The musical theme of the main character, the Fugitive, is based on a set of four notes that Pete places in all the sequences, but in different presentations each time, thanks to writing subtleties that he possesses to perfection. Each sequence becomes a great variation on the initial theme, which Pete entrusts to brass, strings and percussion, in slow or fast tempo, dramatic, sentimental or suspenseful, to create a whole range of moods that should suit the course of the series' episodes. And the result can, quite objectively, be compared to the great orchestral suites we know from classical music, a masterful, modern work written by a master of composition and orchestration. Pete, the musician, here takes on another, even broader dimension that we can't ignore, even if it takes us quite a long way from our beloved jazz.

The original music for "The Fugitive" series was recorded in London (Silva Screen Records SILDO 1106) by an excellent, efficient and precise 55-piece orchestra, the London Studio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Harry Rabinowitz.

In 1997, at the age of 82, Pete Rugolo met producers Michael Oblowitz and Brad Benedict, who showed him a draft of the film "This World, Then The Fireworks", set in the 1950s. They talk about bongos and percussion, and finally confess that the film's credits already bear Pete's name for the music.

Michael and Brad had long been admirers of the music Pete had written for Stan Kenton, an avant-garde-sounding jazz linked to Bartok, Stravinsky, Schoenberg... that would suit the era in which their film was set. The project appealed to Pete, who got back to work as he had done fifteen years earlier.

And the result is wonderful: mysterious atmospheres underpinned by modern 20th-century music, and a host of totally jazz sequences of the finest vintage and diversity, perfectly representative of the Fifties.

Contrary to his usual practice, Pete provides for a relatively small orchestra, but its musicians are among the best professionals of the moment, enabling them to render, with extreme ease, the particularly varied musical atmospheres Pete has written for the film.

Four saxes: Gary Foster, Pete Christlieb, Don Menza and Jack Nimitz; two trumpets: Warren Luening and Conte Candoli; trombone: Chauncey Welsh; basses: Dave Carpenter and John Leitham; piano and organ: Pete Jolly; drums: Anton Fig and Steve Houghton; percussion: Efrain Toro and, guitar: Dennis Budimir.

Pete makes abundant use of percussion, Warren Luening's magnificent tone and Conte Candoli's highly personal mute, the harshness or gentleness of the two tenors, Gary Foster's limpid phrasing, brilliantly reminiscent of Bud Shank in the Fifties. As for Pete Jolly, known as a great pianist and excellent jazz accordionist, here he proves to be a brilliant organist with dazzling technique and devastating swing, especially when, with Gary Foster, he launches into a fast tempo on a clever Pete Rugolo-style blend of blues and counterpoint.

In his orchestrations, Pete repeatedly recaptures the beautiful sounds of the West Coast era, and even goes so far as to include on the soundtrack two interpretations recorded at the time by Chet Baker, the first: "The Thrill Is Gone", from October 27, 1953, with Russ Freeman, Joe Mondragon and Shelly Manne, the second: "You Don't Know What Love Is", from March 7, 1955, with Russ Freeman, Carson Smith and Bob Neel.

The soundtrack to the film "This World, Then The Fireworks" is a great success, both in terms of the quality of the music and the quality of the music itself.



for both jazz and film, and it's all down to a true genius, Pete Rugolo, composer, arranger, orchestrator, conductor and even producer of the record (Varèse Sarabande VSD 5860), a multi-talented musician who has never forgotten jazz!

### THE LOS ANGELES JAZZ INSTITUTE

Pete also led the orchestra at the two major "Jazz West Coast" festivals organized by Ken Poston (LAJI), in Los Angeles, in 1994 for the first and in 1999 for the second.



Shorty Rogers and Ken Poston

(Photos: Los Angeles Jazz Institute / San Diego City College District)

In 1994, the festival lasted four days, a major historic moment, as it still brought together a large number of musicians representative of California in the '50s. They are all well known: Teddy Edwards, Buddy Collette, Ernie Andrews, Conte and Pete Candoli, Herb Geller, Gabe Baltazar, Bill Perkins, Jack Nimitz, Buddy Childers, Dave Pell, Bud Shank, Pete Jolly, Claude Williamson, Lou Levy, Gerald Wiggins, Gerry Mulligan, Jack Montrose, Jimmy Giuffre, Paul Bley, Charlie Haden and Dave Brubeck.

In addition to Pete Rugolo, Stan Kenton's Innovations-type orchestra is also led by Lennie Niehaus, Marty Paich, Jack Montrose, Gerald Wilson and Bill Holman.

Illness prevents Shorty Rogers from taking part; he died eight days after the festival closed. His scores are conducted by Mark Masters.

The 1999 festival, again over four days, features sixteen concerts, five discussion sessions and film screenings on West Coast jazz.

The concerts are of two types: firstly, the restitution of ensembles from the period and the reworking of their repertoire by similar groups formed for the occasion;

secondly, concerts featuring veterans in their current styles. In the latter category, we hear Bud Shank (the weekend's great soloist), Harold Land, Jack Montrose, Teddy Edwards' band, Claude Williamson, Bill Holman's orchestra and the Jack Sheldon Big Band. The first category features a tribute to Shorty Rogers, leader of the West Coast, followed by the recognition of several historic ensembles: Cy Touff's Octet, Lennie Niehaus' Octet, Art Pepper's band Plus Eleven, the alto being Herb Geller, Shelly Manne's Quintet, with Mike Wofford, the Lighthouse All-Stars, Gerry Mulligan's Tentette, Dave Pell's Octet and, finally, Fifties South American Jazz. Accompanied by Pete Rugolo's Orchestra, the talented Stephanie Nakasian sings June Christy. Bobby Shew, in quartet, plays the themes Russ Freeman wrote for Chet Baker. The Lighthouses launch into a Jam on "Ornithology" with Conte Candoli, Jack Sheldon, Buddy Childers and six saxophones including Bud Shank. Other heroes of this sumptuous weekend include Carl Saunders, Pete Jolly, Lou Levy, Jack Costanzo and indefatigable drummer Joe LaBarbera.

As Scott Yanow (Jazz Now) puts it with real bitterness, this Festival is probably the last chance to bring together so many veterans of the great West Coast era. So congratulations to Ken Poston on this historic initiative for a beautifully organized festival.

Pete Rugolo's participation in these events is a guarantee of high musical quality and purity of intention on the part of the organizers, for the remarkable thing about Pete is that he never succumbs to the incessant appeals of a certain fashion, very popular and invasive; Pete Rugolo knows how to do everything, but doesn't do just anything! In the words of his wife: *"Pete never worried about money; music was the only thing that mattered to him."*

Even today, unfortunately, this fashion persists. It's all about the easy way out, crowd success and, above all, high financial profitability, generally linked to real musical poverty and brain pollution, all too often camouflaged by excessive and hopelessly primitive gesticulation.

And there's a very large and very young audience for this kind of exercise, but in reality they're unwittingly manipulated by the enormous commercial promotion of this pseudo-culture, supposedly "musical", that most of the media indulge in with their advertising bludgeoning, without the slightest scruple.

## **RECOGNITION**

After several nominations, Pete went on to win the prestigious Emmy Award three times and the Grammy twice.

The Emmy Awards (or Emmys) are presented by The Academy of

Television Arts & Sciences, which has honored the best programs and professionals in American television every year since 1949.

The Grammy Awards (or Grammys, originally Gramophone Awards) have been presented annually since 1958 in the USA by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences to the best artists and technicians in the field of music.

Pete Rugolo was the subject of countless one-off events, such as the City of Los Angeles' commemoration of "Pete Rugolo Day" in 1991, when Tom Bradley (1917-1998), Mayor of Los Angeles from 1973 to 1993, paid an official public tribute to Pete at City Hall.

Already on November 28, 1990, a great friend and former student of Pete's, trumpeter Paul Cacia, brilliant virtuoso, champion of the high register and a particularly open, sympathetic, even obliging man, organized and conducted a magnificent concert in Pete's honor at the Grand Avenue Bar of the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, during which the All Star Big Band performed a selection of the best arrangements Pete had written for Stan Kenton and for his own orchestra.

Several old-timers take part in the evening: Buddy Childers, Bob Cooper, Ray Reed, Vince DeRosa (horn), surrounded by the best studio musicians in Los Angeles, including Herman Riley on tenor sax and trumpeters Walt Johnson and Charlie Davis (lead). Laurindo Almeida played Artistry in Rhythm and Paul Cacia took over the scores that had been written for Maynard Ferguson, while his wife, singer Janine Cameo, remembered June Christy, who had died a few months earlier. In attendance were Henry Mancini, Leonard Feather, Lalo Schiffrin and many others, musicians and non-musicians alike, including Mayor Tom Bradley.

Before the concert, Pete and Paul are interviewed on Klon Radio by jazz columnist Chuck Niles, which almost makes them late for the start of this wonderful musical evening, and gives Pete the opportunity to say, with his usual kindness:

*"I'd like to come back to jazz, but I don't know where to turn.*

On the subject of Paul Cacia, I'd like to digress for a moment to say how much he admires Stan Kenton, and expresses this in a CD dedicated to his memory, a veritable monument recorded in 1986, musically brilliant in its repertoire and performers, and terribly moving in the spoken testimonials Paul solicits: "Paul Cacia Presents The Alumni Tribute To Stan Kenton" (Empressario 5400).

The booklet features a Prologue by Frank Sinatra and an Epilogue by comedian Mort Sahl. Of course, the great Kenton classics are also included: "23° N & 82° W", "Lonesome Road" (arranged by Pete Rugolo), "Stella By Starlight", "Artistry In Silhouette", "Autumn In New York", "Solitaire", ... and, of course, "Artistry In

Rhythm". "What's New" is sung by Paul Cacia, and has nothing to envy the dazzling version Maynard Ferguson recorded in 1951.

The big band is impressive: 20 musicians plus 10 strings, joined by a dozen alumni, Carl Fontana, Jack Sheldon, Lee Konitz, George Roberts, Buddy Childers, Dick Shearer, Ray Reed, Roy Wiegand, Bob Cooper, Laurindo Almeida, Bob Fitzpatrick, Jerry McKenzie and singer Janine Cameo.



Paul Cacia with Pete Rugolo circa 1997 in interview

(Photos: Paul Cacia / You Tube)

*The 37-minute interview with Pete Rugolo by Paul Cacia can be viewed at the following link*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Es-9JcjOi5E>

In addition to Paul Cacia, three conductors took over the helm of the orchestra: Pete Rugolo, Shorty Rogers and Bill Russo, the 3 Rs (the fourth, Johnny Richards, died in 1968).

The outstanding souvenir track "Kenton In Portrait", by Pete Rugolo and Paul Cacia, presents a number of themes dear to Stan's heart, and features contributions from Bob Gioga, Lee Konitz, Carl Fontana, Laurindo Almeida, Bob Cooper, Jack Sheldon, Shorty Rogers, June Christy, Pete Rugolo, Milt Bernhart, Buddy Childers and Dick Shearer.

Now we're in the Absolute! Thank you, Paul!

And Paul Cacia continues with the publication, in 2006, of a CD that took him 15 years to conceive, the aim of which is both to recall some of the great eras in jazz history and to enable great soloists at the end of their careers (not the end of their lives) to take part in a "final" recording session.

The title of this marvel: "The Paul Cacia Concert Jazz Orchestra - Legacy - The Last Sessions" (Empressario 5500). The booklet includes a magnificent introduction

by Nat Hentoff.

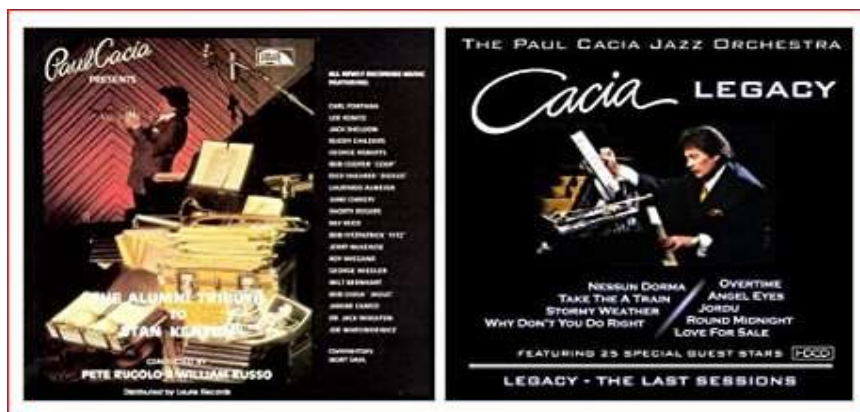
In addition to Paul Cacia, four arrangers, and not the least, put their finest pens to work on this wonderful idea: Sammy Nestico, Ernie Wilkins, Bill Holman and Pete Rugolo.

Four themes were collaboratively arranged by Paul and Pete: "Angel Eyes", "Round Midnight", "Love For Sale" and a giant "Overtime", which Pete had composed for the 1949 Metronome All Stars, and which here allows us to hear a dozen different soloists. Ernie Wilkins arranged "Take The A Train", Sammy Nestico "Stormy Weather" and Bill Holman "Jordu". Paul has taken on "Why Don't You Do Right" sung by Jennifer Wood, and he begins the CD by distilling his version of Puccini's "Nessun Dorma" (Turandot), a breathtaking interpretation by La Scala's finest tenors; same fantastic impression with "Stormy Weather".

The basic orchestra comprises some twenty musicians plus singer Jennifer Wood. Guests, all of whom deserve a mention, include: Marshal Royal, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Tito Puente, Conte and Pete Candoli, "Snooky" Young, Louie Bellson, Jimmy Rowles, Buddy Collette, Vince DeRosa, Jack Sheldon, Paul Smith, Gabe Baltazar, Don Menza, Ray Reed, Bill Watrous, Pete Christlieb, Sal Marquez, Jack Nimitz, Jay Migliori, Stacey Rowles and Chuck Findley.

Unfortunately, during the fifteen years of preparation and recording, a number of musicians from the various sessions passed away, so we didn't have the pleasure of hearing the full range of interpretations.

Paul Cacia is a "Jazz Memory". And, as with the other CD, just one wish: when's the next one?



(Photos: Empresario Records)

But back to Pete Rugolo: in 1993, he received the Golden Score Award, the highest accolade bestowed by the prestigious ASMAC (American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers) in California.

Founded in 1938 (initially ASMA until 1987) by a group of composers-arrangers working in the film industry, this association decided to focus on the defense of arrangers whose rights were virtually non-existent.

The first president was Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981), an American composer, orchestrator, arranger and conductor who wrote extensively for film and Broadway, as well as many strictly classical works.

ASMAC regularly organizes seminars, master classes and musical workshops, distributes annual scholarships and promotes encounters between its members (over 500) and young students wishing to become composers or arrangers. It also has three prizes: "The Golden Score Award", "The President's Award" and "The Irwin Kostal Award", which it awards each year to highly deserving personalities from the world of music. Irwin Kostal (1911-1994) was an arranger and orchestrator for television, Broadway and Hollywood, and President of ASMAC at the time of his death. Since 2004, he has been a member of the Disney Legends.

On Monday June 3, 1996, Pete (81) conducted a major concert in Portland, Oregon, organized in his honor by the aforementioned jazz singer Robert Hicks: "Pete Rugolo Retrospective". The band is Portland's excellent Art Abrams Swing Machine Big Band, whose conductor, Art Abrams, admits to being influenced above all by Stan Kenton, Count Basie and Woody Herman. The soloists have both great technique and personality. The program includes, of course, a selection of the great arrangements written by Pete plus the creation of his "Design For Brass". Rebecca Kilgore and Robert Hicks respectively sing songs arranged by Pete for June Christy and Nat King Cole. The concert takes place at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, and tickets range from \$11 to \$15. Pete had already played in Portland, on tour, in 1940, when he was pianist in Leon Mojica's orchestra.

On May 19, 2002, from 2 to 7 p.m., Steven D. Harris presents his annual concert "He has been organizing the Kenton Clan Party since 1993 in Monrovia (California), but unfortunately had to close it in 2006 for lack of funds.

The aim of the concerts is to bring together, in a single big band, some twenty ex-Kentonians and to perform a wide selection of themes illustrating the forty years of Stan Kenton's orchestra. The majority of the audience are Stan The Man fans.

This year, Steven is delighted to announce the presence and participation of Pete Rugolo, who will lead the orchestra in "Artistry In Rhythm", opening and finale, as well as in two of his arrangements: "Something Cool", sung by Tierney Sutton, in memory of June Christy, and "Come Back To Sorrento", created in 1946 by Vido Musso but played here by Bill Trujillo. He will lead his own composition, "Artistry In Percussion", recorded, again in 1946, with Shelly Manne on drums, while tonight it's Peter Erskine's turn.



The orchestra will also be led by Buddy Childers, Lennie Niehaus and Kim Richmond. It includes five trumpets: Buddy Childers, Steve Huffsteter, Bob Rolfe, Larry McGuire and Carl Saunders; five trombones: Jim Amlotte, Kenny Shroyer, Bob Olsen, Jack Redmond and Jeff Apmadoc; five saxophones: Billy Root, Med Flory, Bill Trujillo, Gary Lefebvre and Kim Richmond; bass: Dave Stone; drums: Peter Erskine; percussion : Jack Costanzo and Mike Pacheco; pianist is Sydney Lehman, who replaced the ailing Stan in 1978; vocalist: Tierney Sutton.

Despite the short rehearsal time, the performances are of an excellent standard - this is Stan Kenton all over again. The atmosphere is totally relaxed, both in the orchestra and in the hall, with the musicians sharing a wealth of anecdotes with the audience, who are clearly delighted by these moments of encounter.

That same year, Pete was also honored by the renowned and very serious Los Angeles Jazz Institute, whose main mission, as we saw above, is to preserve, promote and perpetuate the heritage of the important American art form of jazz, primarily that of Southern California.

On October 11, 2002, LAJI organizes an all-day event: Rugolomania, at the Beverly Hills Hotel in Los Angeles, with film screenings, direct conversations between Pete and the public about his career, and the playing of rare recordings from his personal archives.

The highlight is the dinner concert, during which Pete conducts his own orchestra, augmented by several guest soloists.

The participants in this day are fans of Pete Rugolo's music, many of his friends including composer John Williams, Red Buttons (1919/2006), the actor with 81 films and many other celebrities.

Finally, let's quote again the very sympathetic testimony of Bob Belden (Jazztimes March 2012) who remembers writing an arrangement on "Virgo" (by Wayne Shorter) for Woody Herman's orchestra and was particularly proud to hear Woody say to him, after a first audition: "*It sounds like Pete Rugolo!*".

Bob Belden says: "*I took it as the nicest of compliments.*"

What an impressive and eloquent list of achievements, reflecting the highly justified recognition that the American music world has given to one of its most prestigious representatives.

The greatness of a modest man!

The enormous repertoire of compositions, arrangements and recordings linked to Pete Rugolo's personality, which mobilized so many excellent musicians around him, reflects the particularly intense musical activity that reigned in California, especially during the 1950-60 decade.

And, as mentioned above, Pete wasn't the only one to express himself with such profusion, creating a revolutionary jazz that would change the entire future of this age-old art.

by then already half a century old, and whose career had been deeply marked and musically enriched by a succession of different styles and new schools, whose strongest personalities are not only part of the history of jazz, but are also part of the great and beautiful adventure of what we can call: Music, a universal art!

Jazz is now more than a century old, and its history is so rich and diverse that, for a young music lover wishing to discover this marvellous musical genre, there's a great deal of listening, as well as documentation, to be done. And the satisfaction is equal to the effort, because, as Franz-Olivier Giesbert used to say:

*"You have to earn real culture!"*

### **FINALE.**

Pete Rugolo passed away on October 16, 2011 at the Sherman Oaks Clinic (Los Angeles), he was almost 96 years old.

Stan called him back one last time to complete his great quintet of arrangers, "Les 5 R":

Johnny Richards, Shorty Rogers, Gene Roland, Pete Rugolo and Bill Russo!

Pete leaves Edye Gaffney, his wife since 1958, their three children: Gina, Pete Jr. and Tony, and three grandchildren: Tyler, Will and Jordan.

The funeral is reserved for the immediate family. A memorial service will be announced at a later date.

It is hoped that any flowers sent will be replaced by a donation to ASMAC:  
"Pete Rugolo Scholarship for Big Band Arranging and Jazz related Master Classes,  
Van Nuys, California.

Someone rightly said: "**He was the last of the Titans!**"



(Photo: Steve Banks - MPTV images)

#### REMERCIEMENTS.

Soyons honnête et rendons justice à ces nombreux chroniqueurs de jazz qui, dès le lendemain du décès de Pete Rugolo ou auparavant même, ont publié quantité d'éloges à son sujet dans la Presse ou autres écrits, à savoir : Andrew Barker, Bob Belden (JazzTimes), Jon Burlingame, Paul Cacia, Arnaldo Desouteiro, (feu) Leonard Feather, Karl Gehrke, Richard S. Ginell, Ted Gioia (West Coast Jazz), Florent Groult, William Grimes, Steven D. Harris (The Kenton Kronicles), Robert Hicks (Jazzscene), Ray Hoffman, Rich Kienzle, Claudio Lo Cascio, (feu) Howard Lucraft (ASMAC), Brian McCoy, Dennis McLellan, Matthew Milam, Marc Myers, Ken Poston (LAJI), Bill Powers (Jazzscene), Doug Ramsey, Matt Schudel, Stephen Smoliar, Michael Sparke (Stan Kenton - This Is an Orchestra! + The Studio Sessions), Jeff Sultanof, Jeff Tamarkin (JazzTimes), Steve Voce, Terry Vosbein, Wikipédia, Richard Williams, Scott Yanow (Jazz Now).

Tous ces écrits m'ont été très utiles et j'en remercie sincèrement les auteurs. - M.C.